

**CONTRIBUTING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AFFECTING  
THE WELLBEING OF WINE FARM WORKERS:  
PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONALS**

**by**

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## SUMMARY

Existing literature on wine farm workers is extremely scarce, with most sources either being outdated, or only focused on a specific aspect, like the 'dop' system. There has been no recent literature published which incorporates a holistic approach to identifying and addressing various challenges within their professional and personal lives. Consequently, wine workers are one of the most marginalised groups within South Africa. For this reason, leaving the unique challenges they face unidentified and unaddressed can lead to it having a serious negative impact on their wellbeing.

Wine farm workers currently face a plethora of challenges within their professional and personal lives stemming from a disadvantageous past. Within the work context, these challenges include the nature of employment, work intensity, contracts, wages and deductions, occupational health and safety and risks to employment. On the other hand, challenges pertaining to living conditions include on-farm housing, alcohol abuse, patriarchal families, and lack of access to resources. Both the current work context and living conditions result in factors negatively contributing towards the wellbeing of wine farm workers. To combat these negative factors, they have various protective factors at their disposal, which are in principle designed to protect and promote their wellbeing. These include policy and legislation, ethical trade associations, trade unions, agritourism, advocating and activist groups and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), as well as Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs). Against this backdrop, this research study was aimed at identifying and understanding the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers through the perceptions of professionals.

A qualitative research approach was used in order to record rich accounts from participants, whereas descriptive and exploratory research designs were utilised to affirm their various perceptions. The study utilised non-probability, purposive and snowball sampling in particular to identify appropriate participants. Ultimately, a total of 16 participants participated in the study consisting of two equally split groups. Because of the study's focus on the perceptions of professionals regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers, these two groups consisted of farm

managers and social workers working within the field of EWPs. Interviews incorporated a semi-structured interview schedule, with data gathered being analysed using a thematic content analysis approach.

The study's research document consisted of two literature chapters, an empirical study and conclusions and recommendations. The first literature chapter explored the various factors that negatively contribute towards the wellbeing of wine farm workers. In short, it described historical factors, work context and living conditions as being the main contributors negatively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. The second literature chapter identified protective factors such as policy and legislation, ethical trade associations, trade unions, agritourism, advocating and activist groups and NGOs, as well as EWP services. It went on to evaluate the effectiveness of each of the abovementioned protective factors in positively contributing towards the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Chapter four, the empirical study, presented data collected from participants and literature in an integrated manner. The final chapter contained the conclusions and recommendations of the research study based on the data collected.

The main conclusion drawn from the findings is that wine farm workers work under extreme working conditions, defined by a physically high workload for minimum pay. This is often accompanied by issues regarding relationships, job insecurity and a lack of new employment opportunities. On-farm housing remains volatile, with many wine farm workers having to live in inadequate and overpopulated housing. This is worsened by cultural habits exemplified by habitual drinking and violence, as well as ignorance and inexperience. Wine farm workers have been left powerless in addressing their current working- and living conditions due to the lack of effectiveness from protective factors. This has resulted in workers having limited resources at their disposal, in most cases only ethical auditing associations, agritourism and EWPs. Ultimately, policy and legislation, trade unions and advocating and activist groups and NGOs have all failed in their functions contributing towards the vulnerability of wine farm workers. These protective factors should reassess their contributions and improve co-operation for holistic intervention.

## OPSOMMING

Bestaande literatuur oor wynplaaswerkers is besonders skaars in die sin dat meeste bronne verouderd is of fokus op 'n spesifieke aspek soos die 'dop' sisteem. Daar is geen onlangse publikasies wat 'n holistiese benadering insluit om verskillende uitdagings binne die professionele en persoonlike lewens van wynplaaswerkers te identifiseer en aan te spreek nie. Wynplaaswerkers is dus een van die mees gemarginaliseerde groepe in Suid-Afrika. Gevolglik, as die unieke uitdagings wat hulle ervaar ongeïdentifiseer en onaangeraak gelos word kan dit lei tot 'n ernstige negatiewe uitwerking op hul welstand.

Wynplaaswerkers ervaar tans 'n magdom uitdagings in hul professionele en persoonlike lewens wat spruit uit die ongeregthede van die verlede. Binne die werkkonteks sluit hierdie uitdagings die aard van indiensneming, werkintensiteit, kontrakte, lone en aftrekkings, beroepsgesondheid- en veiligheid, sowel as werkrisikos in. Andersins sluit leefomstandighede behuising op die plaas, alkoholmisbruik, patriargale families en toegang tot hulpbronne in. Beide die huidige werkkonteks en lewensomstandighede lei daartoe dat faktore negatief bydra tot die welstand van wynplaaswerkers. Om die bogenoemde te bekamp is daar verskillende beskermende faktore wat in beginsel bedoel is om hul welstand te beskerm en te bevorder. Hierdie faktore is beleid en wetgewing, etiese ouditverenigings, vakbonde, agritoerisme, advokaat- en aktivistegroepe, nieregeringsorganisasies (NROs), asook werknemerhulpprogramme (WHPs). Teen hierdie agtergrond was die navorsingsstudie gemik om die bydraende en beskermende faktore wat die welstand van wynplaaswerkers beïnvloed te identifiseer en te verstaan.

'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is gebruik om ryk narratiewe van deelnemers op te neem, terwyl beskrywende en verkennende navorsingsontwerpe gebruik is om die verskillende persepsies van deelnemers te bevestig. Die studie het ook gebruik gemaak van nuwaarskynlikheidsteekproewe, doelbewuste steekproefneming en sneeubalsteekproefneming om moontlike toepaslike deelnemers te identifiseer. Altesaam 16 deelnemers het aan die studie deelgeneem, bestaande uit twee ewe verdeelde groepe. Weens hierdie studie se fokus op die bydraende en beskermende faktore wat die welstand van wynplaaswerkers beïnvloed te identifiseer en te verstaan deur middel van professionele persone se persepsies het dié groepe bestaan uit plaasbestuurders en

maatskaplike werkers wat binne die WHP-veld werk. Onderhoude het 'n semi-gestruktureerde onderhoudskedule gebruik, en data wat versamel is is geanaliseer volgens 'n tematiese inhoudsanalisebenadering.

Hierdie navorsingsdokument bestaan uit twee literatuurhoofstukke, 'n empiriese hoofstuk en gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings. In die eerste literatuurhoofstuk is die verskillende faktore wat negatief bydra tot die welstand van wynplaaswerkers en -bewoners ondersoek. Gevolglik het dit die historiese faktore, werkkonteks en lewensomstandighede as die belangrikste bydraers wat die welstand van wynplaaswerkers negatief beïnvloed bespreek. In die tweede literatuurhoofstuk is beskermende faktore geïdentifiseer, naamlik beleid en wetgewing, etiese vakverenigings, vakbonde, agritoerisme, advokaat- en aktivistegroepe, NRO's en WHP-dienste. Tot hierdie doel het dit die doeltreffendheid van elk van die bogenoemde beskermingsfaktore se vermoë om positief by te dra tot die welstand van wynplaaswerkers geëvalueer. Hoofstuk vier, die empiriese studie, het bestaan uit 'n analise van die data wat uit die narratiewe van die deelnemers en die literatuur ingesamel, geïntegreer en aangebied is. Ten slotte, het die finale hoofstuk die gevolgtrekkings en aanbeveling van die navorsingstudie bevat.

Die hoof gevolgtrekking wat uit die bevindings gemaak word meen dat wynplaaswerkers onder uiterste werksomstandighede werk, gedefinieer deur 'n fisiese hoë werkklas vir minimum betaling. Dit gaan dikwels gepaard met probleme rakende verhoudings, werksonsekerheid en 'n gebrek aan nuwe werkgeleenthede. Behuising op die plaas bly wisselvallig omdat baie wynplaaswerkers in gebrekkige en oorbevolkte behuising moet woon. Dit word vererger deur die huidige kulturele gewoontes wat getoon word deur gewone drankgebruik en geweld, asook 'n toestand van naïwiteit. Wynplaaswerkers word magteloos gelaat om hul huidige werk- en lewensomstandighede aan te spreek weens die gebrek aan doeltreffendheid van beskermende faktore. Dit het daartoe gelei dat werkers beperkte hulpbronne, meestal slegs etiese ouditverenigings, agritoerisme en WHP's, tot hul beskikking het. Beleid en wetgewing, vakbonde en advokaat- en aktivistegroepe en NRO's het almal misluk in hul beskermende funksies wat bygedra het tot die kwesbaarheid van wynplaaswerkers en moet dus hul bydrae herevalueer en samewerking verbeter om holisties in te gryp.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

In a world with a history of infringement on human rights, society has made a change for the better since the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the abolition of slavery, the establishment of the United Nations (UN), which has facilitated the formulation of important documents to address the protection of human rights (UN, 2019). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is considered the pioneering document which set a standard of human rights for all people and all nations (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). This paved the way for the creation of South Africa's Constitution (1996); said to be one of the most progressive constitutions in the world. However, despite these improvements, South Africa is still faced with injustices that threaten to infringe on people's basic human rights, notably the challenges faced by poor and marginalised groups (Noyoo, 2004).

Atkinson (2007) argues that, among the poor and marginalised groups in South Africa, farm workers (individuals employed on the farm) and farm dwellers (individuals who live on the farm but are not employed by the farm) are among the groups who have received the least attention from policy makers, politicians, social service organisation and the media. This has resulted in many cases of working conditions that are exploitive, unsecure, unsafe and unregulated (Du Toit, 1993). Similarly, living conditions are often inhumane and subpar, characterised by excessive alcohol use, patriarchal families and limited access to resources (Atkinson, 2007). Both working- and living conditions have thus contributed towards negatively impacting the wellbeing of farm workers and -dwellers (Devereux, 2019).

Many authors agree that history has significantly contributed towards the various problems plaguing farm workers and farm dwellers today (Devereux, 2019; Devereux, Levendal & Yde, 2017; Eriksson, 2017; Visser, 2016; Visser & Ferrer, 2015; Falletisch, 2008). Despite South Africa having many different agricultural industries, all of which present its own unique challenges, the wine industry is notorious for inequality and

violation of human and working rights. The wine industry can be considered one of the oldest industries and labour practices in the country, with the first bottle of wine being produced by Jan Van Riebeeck in 1659 (Estreicher, 2014). Since then, it has blossomed into a multi-billion-rand industry consisting of more than 3 029 farmers who cultivate roughly 94 545 hectares of winelands and employ around 300 000 workers annually (WOSA, 2019). Nonetheless, the success of the industry has come at a price, with wine producers aiming to maximise profits at the expense of farm workers and farm dwellers. This capitalistic mentality has influenced cost-cutting strategies concerning working- and living conditions and has had adverse effects on the wellbeing of these groups (Kheswa, 2015).

Within the wine industry, history laid the foundation for the use of exploitive practices and infringement on human rights, resulting in damaging effects for farm workers' and farm dwellers' wellbeing (Falletisch, 2008). Evidence of this can be dated to 1652, when slaves were imported from neighbouring African countries to be used as a source of cheap labour. Workers worked in gruelling conditions with no pay and little care, as it was cheaper to replace a slave than to properly care for one (Calitz, 1998). Later, under the apartheid regime, little was done to improve this, as farmers had monopoly over the entire industry and dominated boards controlling production, pricing, distribution and export. They purposely kept wages to a minimum and ramped up production to maximise profit, benefiting from a regime that turned a blind eye towards the exploitation its workers (Van Dongen, 2004; Estreicher, 2014). Even in the aftermath of apartheid, with a progressive constitution and various legislations, the working- and living conditions on many South African farms have remained unchanged (Visser, 2016).

However, recent publications and events, such as the Human Rights Watch Report (2011) and De Doorns farm strikes of 2012, have shocked the industry and forced wine producers to acknowledge injustices and take action (Devereux, 2019). The Human Rights Watch Report (2011) detailed the conditions under which farm workers in the Western Cape wine sector work daily. It highlighted that workers have to work long hours (an average of 9 hours per day) in harsh weather conditions (heat of over 40°C during summer), in many cases without access to water, toilets or adequate protective gear against toxic pesticides. For the gruelling work and working conditions, they receive

among the lowest wages of any labour sector in South Africa and are granted little to no benefits (Devereux, 2019; Naidoo, London, Rother, Burdorf, Naidoo, & Kromhout, 2010). The De Doorns farm strikes of 2012 clearly illustrates the effect of neoliberalism's tendency towards cost-effectiveness in the wine industry. Farm workers and residents voiced concerns regarding the ever-decreasing job security with the significant increase in casualisation, externalisation, mechanisation, and increased use of migrant workers (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). This clearly showcases the wine industry's reluctance to adhere to legislation and the government's inability to monitor it (Spierenburg, 2019).

Despite the injustices perpetuated by the wine industry as a whole, it would be unfair not to acknowledge efforts of certain wine producers in addressing injustices and improving and protecting the wellbeing of employees. This has been achieved through the use of a variety of protective factors, namely ethical auditing, trade unions, agritourism, advocating and activist groups, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), as well as Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs). These factors have encouraged change within the industry, albeit slow and with varied results (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). At its core, each protective factor aims to achieve "community development," which is described as "a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community" in order to achieve wellbeing for all working and living on the farm (Dhavaleshwar, 2016:61). Interestingly, social work has only been involved in the changing process to a limited degree. This has drawn sharp criticism, as Dhavaleshwar (2016), Botes, Van der Westhuizen and Alpaslan (2014), as well as Attridge (2012) argue that social workers should be the primary change agent involved in community development. They describe social workers as having specialised knowledge and skills to take on various roles in engaging with communities. These roles (e.g. community organisers, project managers, facilitators) are key in ensuring successful community development (Dhavaleshwar, 2016). Thus, the inclusion of social workers in a greater capacity has the possibility to greatly improve the effectiveness of protective factors available to wine farm workers (Ruddock, 2012).



Although there are various policies and legislations in place to safeguard the rights of wine farm workers, the absence of effectiveness has had varying consequences on the wine industry. In a sense, it has created an ideal framework for the protection of farm workers working and residential rights through legislation such as the Employment Equity Act (1998), the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (2002) and the Security of Tenure Act (1997). Simultaneously, the introduction of these laws has had unforeseen catastrophic consequences (Atkinson, 2007). For example, the introduction of the National Minimum Wage Act (2018) in principle aimed to provide a national minimum pay that workers must receive, enforced through law. The Act aimed to decrease exploitation and ensure workers receive a decent wage (Devereux, 2019). However, with its introduction, Visser (2016) and Minnaar (2008) argue that it has provided wine producers an opportunity to act on their capitalistic tendencies, which saw large scale retrenchments. Instead, wine producers opted to make use of casualisation, externalisation, mechanisation, and migrant workers as cheaper alternative options (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Furthermore, the government's inability to properly enforce and monitor policies and legislation have been alarming. The lack of enforcement by government and many wine producers' reluctance to adhere to it has resulted in farm workers' and farm residents' wellbeing being severely impacted (Kheswa, 2015).

Currently there remain various negative working- and living conditions that severely impair farm workers and their families' wellbeing. These conditions not only consist of superficial aspects such as wages, working hours and housing, but also deeper underlying contributing factors. Even the success and impact of protective factors within the industry remain vague. Ultimately, many contributing and protective factors are still unidentified, unexplored, and unexplained. Atkinson (2007:132) warns that "it is futile and even dangerous to generalise about farm workers' and farmers' needs and wishes," and that it can only be addressed through further investigation that will help to tailor developmental programmes to maximise peoples' strengths and minimise their distress. Consequently, this study aimed to address the identifying historical influences, negative working- and living conditions as well as protective factors.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The wine industry is notorious for its infringement of human rights through its provision of subpar working- and living conditions which severely impact farm workers' and farm dwellers' wellbeing. This has been largely due to wine producers' lack of adherence to legislation, coupled with the government's inability to implement and monitor legislation. There remains great uncertainty regarding what exactly influences farm workers and their families' wellbeing, both within a working and living context. This uncertainty has made it difficult for the wine industry and government to obtain and implement solutions. Furthermore, the injustices of the past have been dismissed as irrelevant, with few considering the lingering effect it has had on the wine industry and all involved. Despite these difficulties, the wine industry and its partners have made active attempts to address the abovementioned infringement of farm workers' and farm dwellers' wellbeing through the use of protective factors. This includes the introduction and use of EWPs, ethical auditing, trade unions, advocating and activist groups, NGOs and agritourism. Each of these protective factors have made contributions in improving the wellbeing of farming communities. Unfortunately, as mentioned previously, social work has remained an underutilised resource in implementing these protective factors. Social work and social workers have the potential to significantly increase the effectiveness of these measures if properly integrated. This study thus aimed to identify the contributing and protective factors that affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers through the perceptions of professionals. To ensure a well-rounded engagement, this included farm managers and social workers working within the field of EWPs, since both of these parties have daily interactions with farm workers and their families. The study focused on their perceptions regarding factors that negatively affect farm workers' wellbeing, as well as the protective factors put in place to ensure their wellbeing.

## **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTION**

What are the perceptions of professionals regarding the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers?

### **1.3.1. Goal**

The goal of this study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions of professionals regarding the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

### **1.3.2. Objectives**

The aim of the research was to identify the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. To this end, its objectives were:

- To describe contributing factors that negatively affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa by using the systems theory and holistic approach relating to historical factors, work context and living conditions.
- To examine the protective factors that positively affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa – including EWPs, ethical auditing, trade unions, advocating, activist groups and NGOs, as well as Agritourism – through the lens of the social justice perspective and holistic approach.
- To analyse perceptions of social workers and farm managers regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers.
- To offer conclusions and recommendations regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa.

## **1.4. THEORETICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

The study was conducted from a theoretical point of departure that incorporated the general systems theory and social justice perspective, both of which were framed within a holistic approach. A holistic approach considers the person as a whole. Therefore, it takes into consideration where they live, as well as what is going on with their bodies, minds, emotions and spiritual wellness (Toner, 2016). This allows for the broadest possible understanding of a person's situation and what is creating the issues in their lives. Having a holistic approach thus assists in being knowledgeable on what causes the

specific problem and can assist in preventing the problem from reoccurring (Hutchinson & Oltedal, 2014).

Holism (i.e. a holistic approach) is an essential part within the general systems theory. Authors Von Bertalanffy (1968) and Miller (1978) laid the foundation for the general systems theory, which viewed organisation as a whole and not just as individual pieces. The systems theory's goal is to describe and explain how organisations work and to prove that there are multiple ways of accomplishing various goals within an organisation. This is a departure from the old classical management, which views organisations as machines with only one right way of doing things (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). Building on this, Katz and Kahn (1966) described organisations as consisting of three parts, namely inputs (resources, information and workforce), throughputs (processes for creating product) and outputs (outcome, products and services). They further applied the systems theory to organisations by stating that these are open to their environment and constantly impacted by it. The environment is unpredictable, and the organisation constantly needs to manage and adapt to ensure its health (Katz & Kahn, 1966).

On the other hand, the social justice perspective, at its core, refers to human dignity, and that oppressed people have the right to fair treatment and to share the benefits of society, based on their human rights and the equality of all people. This enables a learning environment that encourages the participation of all groups in addressing issues of oppression, privilege and power (Loewen and Pollard, 2010).

In order to combat the injustices faced by wine farm workers, key texts regarding their susceptibility to injustices were used from Visser and Ferrer (2015) and Atkinson (2007). These texts helped to guide the investigation process to be able to identify further contributing factors towards vulnerability. Regarding protective factors, vital texts such as the Wine Industry Ethical Trade Association's (WIETA) auditing process (2016), Botes *et al.* (2014) and Bek, McEwan and Bek (2009) assisted in identifying the processes and organisation in place to protect farm workers. South African Policy and Legislation also served as key points of departure, including the National Minimum Wage Act (2018), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (2002), Employment Equity Act (1998), Extension of Security of Tenure Act (1997) and the Bill of Rights (1996), all of which assisted in

setting a basis for working- and living conditions. By utilising the key texts, policy documents, the holistic approach and social justice approach, the study was able to provide a clear holistic understanding of the various factors that impact farm worker vulnerability, as well as the various existing factors that protect farm workers and encourage social justice.

## **1.5. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **1.5.1. Contributing factors**

For the purpose of this study, contributing factors were related to risk factors. Corcoran and Nichols-Casebolt (2004) describe risk factors as the forces that contribute to a problem or directly results in a problem. This impacts an individual's ability to function effectively and can place them under further stress, severely impacting their wellbeing.

### **1.5.2. Protective factors**

Protective factors refer to internal and external resources available to assist with protection against any risk factors. The protective factors assist an individual in ensuring their ability to function adaptively despite stressful life events that may influence this (Corcoran & Nichols-Casebolt, 2004).

### **1.5.3. Wellbeing**

Ancient civilisations described wellbeing as a state of good health that was seen as the highest commodity in life. Wellbeing was not merely an end, but a means to creating a sustainable, good society (Sigerist, 1941). Today, this statement still holds true, as mental and physical health are considered forms of human capital. This is due to various studies linking mental illness and chronic physical disease to high levels of social and economic burden. Good health or a state of wellbeing can only be achieved by having a healthy mental- and physical functioning. A state of wellbeing is considered a nation's greatest wealth as it is directly tied to growth and development (Keyes, 2013). Wellbeing and social work are coherently connected, as social work is described as "a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people" (The International

Federation of Social Workers, 2014). The link between wellbeing and social work is clearly stipulated in the purpose of social work, which engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.

#### **1.5.4. Wine Farm worker**

Viljoen (2008) refers to a farm as a piece of land that is used to grow a crop or feed animals. Accordingly, a worker assisting with the cultivation on the piece of land is considered a farm worker. In turn, if grapes are planted on the farm, that worker is considered a wine farm worker. For the purpose of this study the term wine farm worker referred to a person who lives and works on the farm permanently.

#### **1.5.5. Perceptions**

Schacter, Gilbert and Wegner (2011) describe a person's perception as the organisation, identification and interpretation of sensory information that allow a person to understand the presented information or environment. Consequently, it forms their perception/view of what they experience.

#### **1.5.6. Professionals**

A professional can be described as a person who earns their income using specific skills or expertise acquired through research, education, and training at a high level (Evetts, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the participants included social workers and farm managers, who are each considered professionals as they have unique knowledge in their respective fields.

#### **1.5.7. Employee Wellness Programmes**

EWPs are similar to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), as both are defined as worksite-based programmes designed to identify and address productivity problems of employees. These barriers to productivity stem from personal problems, which include difficulties with health, marriage, family, finances, alcohol, drugs, legal matters, emotions, stress, or other personal concerns (Jantjie, 2009). EWPs, however, place a greater emphasis on a person's wellness and have a more "conscious and deliberate approach

to an advanced state of physical, psychological, and spiritual health” than EWP’s (Ardell, 1985:38).

### **1.5.8. Ethical trading association**

Ethical trading associations refer to organisations that monitor companies and farms in compliance with ethical trade standards, which refers to the sourcing of products from producers in a way that promotes and protects core labour laws and human rights standards in the workspace (Bek *et al.*, 2009). This is done through the use of trainings, technical assessment and audits to determine the employer’s compliance in upholding ethical trade (WIETA, 2016).

## **1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology for the study is presented below in relation to the approach, design, sample, instrument for data collection and data analysis.

### **1.6.1. Research approach**

The study incorporated a qualitative approach, which focused on information expressed in words pertaining to the experiences, understandings and opinions of selected research participants (Walliman, 2011). By using a qualitative approach, the researcher was able to gather information on participants’ perceptions rather than dealing with numbers, which are ineffective in identifying factors as negatively and positively contributing toward the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Within the study, the researcher made use of a deductive approach by starting with the research question based on the researchers perceived knowledge within the specific domain and building on this with the literature study, the gathering of empirical data and data analysis moving from the general to the specific (Bryman, 2012). However, a movement between deductive and inductive reasoning occurred within the research in order to assist the research process. Inductive reasoning starts with specific observations such as real events, trends or social processes. Using this data, the researcher broadened generalisations and theories to explain the observed situation, moving from the general to the particular (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011). By having movement between the two, the study was able to produce more

accurate findings regarding the factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Using both approaches allowed for new information to be introduced throughout the study, which can increase its overall quality.

### **1.6.2. Research design**

Within this research study, a combination of exploratory and descriptive research designs was utilised. An exploratory research design aims to allow the researcher to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual with the need for such a research design stemming from the lack of basic information or a new area of interest (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, a descriptive research design illustrates a clear picture of specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship and places emphasis on 'how' and 'why' questions. Therefore, the researcher started with a well-defined subject and conducted research to describe it accurately (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:96). Combining both research designs was thus ideal, as it enabled the researcher to provide a clear picture of all of the factors negatively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers while allowing for further exploration into protective factors available to assist them.

### **1.6.3. Sample**

The study utilised non-probability sampling, meaning that that each unit in the sample size did not have an equal chance of being selected, as the researcher sought out individuals, groups, and settings where the specific processes being studied were most likely to occur (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). This sampling approach utilised both purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample participants in a strategic manner so that there is a great deal of variety and where different characteristics of the participants can contribute to the answering of the research question (Bryman, 2012). Snowball sampling refers to a sampling technique whereby the researcher uses existing participants to identify future, harder to reach participants, thus relying on each participant to lead the researcher to the next participant (Bless, Higson & Sithole, 2013). Accordingly, purposive sampling was used to find initial participants, after which snowball sampling was used to identify further participants. This contributed to the



development of a network of participants who all have direct experience in working with wine farm workers.

A total of 16 participants were used in this study, which was lower than the initial plan of interviewing 20 participants. Covid-19 played a role in obtaining a sample of 20 participants, as potential participants did not all return to work. Despite the fact that fewer participants were used, data saturation was reached. Saturation is reached when data that has been collected and analysis confirms the research question, thus meaning further data collection is unnecessary (Bryman, 2012). The participants consisted of two groups, with each having a unique experience directly and indirectly within farming communities. The first group consisted of eight social workers working within the field of EWP who deliver direct services to farm workers. Registered social workers considered for the study were required to be directly involved in an EWP on a wine farm with at least one year of experience. The second group consisted of eight farm managers working on wine farms. Participants had to be employed by a farm owner or company and have no personal connection to the farm. This specification was included to prevent bias and to allow farm managers to share their true perceptions. Furthermore, farm managers were required to have at least four years of experience as a farm manager within the wine industry to be able to have a clear understanding of the industry's unique challenges.

The eight social workers that participated were all part of one EWP organisation. The researcher obtained institutional permission (annexure 6) to ensure access to the organisation's staff that met the inclusion criteria for the study. Interviews with the group's participants were conducted outside of their working hours to avoid interfering with their work schedule. As for the eight farm managers, institutional permission was not obtained. Instead, the interviews were conducted in the participants' personal capacity with their informed consent. This was done to ensure that participants could share their true experiences, and that their decisions to participate and share information was not influenced by their employers.

As mentioned with the definitions of purposive and snowball sampling, the researcher utilised his professional network to identify possible participants, who then identified other possible participants who met the inclusion criteria. The interviews were conducted

outside of their working hours and offsite to protect the participants' anonymity. Furthermore, the researcher showcased utmost integrity to ensure that participation interviews remain confidential so as not to tarnish their professional reputation.

As discussed previously, this study made use of a variety of sampling methods to identify the participants for each group. Firstly, purposive sampling was used to identify an EWP organisation comprising of at least eight social workers available for interviews. As for the eight farm managers, the researcher utilised his professional network to identify participants. Snowball sampling was then utilised to identify further possible participants until saturation was achieved. Interviews with the farm managers were conducted in the participants' personal capacity with their informed consent. This was preferred to ensure participants were not coerced or influenced to give favourable answers and opinions. The sample ensured that all role players within the farming network were included within the study to ensure a holistic understanding.

#### **1.6.4. Instrument for data collection**

Before the main research was conducted, a pilot study was done to assess the feasibility of the study and to identify possible deficiencies (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). This entailed a small-scale implementation of the planned investigation and consisted of two participants meeting the inclusion criteria for the study, namely a social worker and a farm manager. With the study having a qualitative approach, it utilised semi-structured interviews with open and closed ended questions (annexure 1). The researcher utilised semi-structured interviews, as this allowed for deeper exploration and a more detailed account of a participant's beliefs, perceptions, and accounts of a certain topic (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). In turn, the utilisation of semi-structured interviews allowed for greater flexibility between researcher and participant and allowed for maximum expression from each participant. Further, incorporating open and closed ended questions within the semi structured interview allowed for specific answers and more detailed responses from participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). To guide the semi-structured interview, the researcher made use of a semi-structured interview schedule (annexure 1). These themes included biographical information (e.g. age, gender, race, occupation), contributing factors towards the wellbeing of farm workers and protective factors that buffer against them.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researcher using a tape recorder, after which data was stored on a password protected device and hard copies were stored in a safe within the researcher's residence. Interviews were conducted in Afrikaans or English, both of which the researcher is fluent in, depending on the participant in question's preferred language. Data collection only commenced after the research proposal and literature study were concluded, with interviews commencing from April to July of 2020.

#### **1.6.5. Data analysis**

Bless *et al.* (2013) describes data analysis as a process where the researcher inspects, transforms and models collected data with the aim of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and making recommendations. One of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis involves thematic content analysis that emphasises the examination of recorded data to identify patterns and themes within the collected data (Bryman, 2012). Themes can be described as a category identified by the analysis of data, which relates to the researcher's focus and provides them with a basis for a theoretical understanding of the data. Through the process of data analysis, the researcher made use of tables and figures with the sole purpose of illustrating the data visually. However, this did not make the research a quantitative study. With regards to the thematic content analysis, a six-step process of coding was utilised to create and establish patterns. Its phases include familiarisation with collected data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and producing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **1.6.6. Data verification**

Bryman (2012) describes data verification as a process whereby data is checked for accuracy or any inconsistencies to ensure quality data collection. This is done through ensuring reliability and validity. Reliability is concerned with whether the results of the study is repeatable in order to ensure consistency. Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research (Bryman, 2012). However, De Vos *et al.* (2011) propose four alternative constructs they believe more accurately

measure the quality of qualitative research, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

#### 1.6.6.1. Credibility

The goal of credibility is to ensure that the subject is accurately identified and described within the parameters of the research participants' views and experiences in order to match it with the researcher's reconstruction and representation of them (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). The researcher of this study ensured credibility by emphasising the narratives of the social workers and farm managers with their own views regarding their experiences. Member checking was also used, whereby participants were asked to confirm the study's findings in order to ensure that it correctly presented their narratives. Member checking (annexure 4) was conducted with 2 participants from the study, with participants receiving their interview transcriptions to ensure that these were a true reflection of the interviews.

#### 1.6.6.2. Transferability

Transferability is concerned with whether the findings of the research can be transferred from a specific situation to another (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). However, this can be problematic within qualitative research, as it utilises participants' unique experiences, and this may differ in other populations, settings and treatment arrangements (Bryman, 2012). De Vos *et al.* (2012) suggest that, to counter this, the researcher should refer to the original theoretical framework to illustrate how data collection and analysis were guided by concepts and models. These concepts and models state the theoretical parameters of the research. For this reason, a person conducting research within the same parameters can then determine whether cases described can be generalised. The researcher achieved transferability by producing thick descriptions, as well as detailed methodology on how data was acquired, analysed, and presented.

#### 1.6.6.3. Dependability

Dependability refers to whether the research process is logical, well documented and audited (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). Bryman (2012) states that the researcher should adopt an auditing approach, which entails ensuring that complete records are kept of all phases of

the research process to prove that the study was conducted in a correct manner. The researcher achieved this by adopting an auditing approach whereby all information relating to the study was stored in an accessible manner. Further, he ensured that all information was accessible to his allocated supervisor. An independent coder was utilised to confirm that themes, sub-themes and categories were a true reflection of collected data (annexure 5).

#### 1.6.6.4. Conformability

Bryman (2012) recognises that complete objectivity in social research is impossible. However, conformability assists in showing that the researcher acted in good faith and did not allow personal values to influence the conducting nor findings of the research. He achieved conformability through literature control, whereby he compared findings with literature. The researcher wrote a reflective report in order to maintain objectivity (annexure 7).

### **1.7. ETHICAL CLEARANCE**

Ethical clearance for this study was obtained by the Department of Social Work at the University of Stellenbosch and the Department of Ethical Screening (DESC), as well as the Research Ethical Committee (REC) (annexure 3). The study was a low risk study as it does not directly involve the target group, namely farm workers. Instead, it focused on the perceptions of professionals (social workers and farm managers) regarding the target group. Therefore, participants did not experience discomfort.

Ethical consideration included avoidance of harm, informed consent, and confidentiality. Avoidance of harm refers to the ethical rule within social research to avoid harm in several facets including physical harm, harm to participants' development, loss of self-esteem and stress (Bryman, 2012). Informed consent is a participant's voluntary agreement to participate in the research, with the participant understanding the risks involved in the research (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). Confidentiality refers to not recording or revealing any personal identifying information from the participants and ensuring that all shared information is only used for the purpose of the study in a manner that ensures anonymity (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). Anonymity is further ensured by keeping all electronic data of

participants on a password protected computer and all hard copies in a safe in the researcher's home. By applying the ethical considerations to the study, the researcher ensured that no participant was put at risk or harmed throughout the process of the study.

### **1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

According to De Vos *et al.* (2011) the researcher must constantly be aware and explain any limitations of which there were several present in the study on contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This included the sample size, with 16 participants being a relatively small number that prohibits the researcher from making generalisations. Furthermore, the study was conducted in the Western Cape, South Africa, and results could differ within different settings in other parts of the country or world. Further, participants in the study were not the direct target group in that the narratives collected were based on perceptions of professionals and not the lived experiences of wine farm workers. Literature review and control was also a challenge throughout the study as existing literature is scarce, outdated and lacks in a holistic approach to identifying and discussing challenges pertaining to wine farm workers.

### **1.9. PRESENTATION**

The research study consists of five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction towards the research topic, with an overview of the rationale behind the study, along with the problem statement, aims and objectives, and the research methodology utilised. Chapter two and three comprises the two literature review chapters. Chapter two focuses on identifying and discussing contributing factors that negatively impact the wellbeing of wine farm workers, including historical factors, work context and living conditions. In turn, chapter three focuses on identifying and evaluating contributing factors that positively impact the wellbeing of wine farm workers, and incorporates EWPs, ethical trade associations, trade unions, advocating and activist groups, NGOs, agritourism and the role of social work. Chapter four, the empirical study, consists of data collection and data analysis. Lastly, chapter five draws conclusions and suggests recommendation based on the analysed data.

## CHAPTER 2

# CONTRIBUTING FACTORS THAT NEGATIVELY IMPACT THE WELLBEING OF FARM WORKERS

### 2.1. PRESENTATION

Du Toit (1993) describes a farm as being a different world where, upon entry, one is transported to a new universe where logic is vastly different from that which you would find in a city or town. Due to this, farming has a unique history that has left a legacy within the industry and on all working and living on farms. This legacy has shaped various working- and living conditions, and accordingly, the aim of this chapter is to illustrate how historical factors and current working- and living conditions have negatively impacted the wellbeing of wine farm workers. In this light, colonialism, apartheid, and post-apartheid are unpacked to frame the historical context of the economic inequalities they are subject to. Further, working conditions such as the nature of employment, work intensity, contracts, wages and deductions, occupational health and safety and risk to employment are considered, whereas living conditions such as housing, alcohol abuse, patriarchal families and access to resources are discussed.

### 2.2. HISTORICAL FACTORS

The history of the farming industry is highly complex, characterised by issues surrounding land, race, and labour. It is this history that has created a legacy of gross exploitation, which has negatively impacted the wellbeing of wine farm workers and their families. This was done through various eras, namely colonialism, apartheid and post-apartheid, where a wide variety of practices were utilised to secure land and cheap labour by oppressing workers.

#### 2.2.1. Colonialism

The 15<sup>th</sup> century marked the beginning of colonialism around the globe, as European nations raced to establish trade routes between continents, transporting various goods to and from Europe. This era saw the creation of the Dutch East-India Company (DEIC),

which appointed Jan van Riebeeck as the first Commander of the Cape Colony (Estreicher, 2014). He was instructed to establish a supply point in the Cape of Good Hope (Cape Town) by building a fort for protection, growing vegetables and befriending local Khoikhoi in order to obtain cattle. On April 6 of 1652, Van Riebeeck's three ships with 90 men arrived and began their mission. However, Van Riebeeck quickly realised that the area was appropriate for growing grapes. He ordered thousands of cuttings to be shipped, and the first of these were planted in 1655 to produce the first bottle of wine in 1658 (van der Merwe, 2010).

Since the early days of the Cape Colony, there was never enough manpower to deal with the amount of work that needed to be done. The nomadic nature of the indigenous people and the constant conflict over land made them unsuitable to use as labourers (Falletisch, 2008). The DEIC's solution was slavery, and between 1652 and the end of the slave trade in 1807, around 60 000 slaves were brought to the Cape Colony from coastal countries such as India, Malaysia, and the African coast, mostly Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique (Van der Merwe, 2010). The male slaves were used for hard labour on farms, especially wine farms, and were either bought by the farm owners or rented out to them by the DEIC's officials that owned slaves. The female slaves were kept in a slave lodge that turned into a brothel at night, and as a result, any children born were also owned and used by the Dutch East-India Company as slaves, allowing for an endless supply of labourers (Estreicher, 2014).

The Cape Colony slowly grew, with farms' main production being wheat and vegetables to resupply merchant ships and only a small number consisting of vineyards. However, this changed when Simon van der Stel – known as the founding father of South African wines – was appointed the Governor of the Colony and gave large lands to immigrants for agricultural use. These lands were situated in today's Stellenbosch, Paarl, Franschhoek and Constantia. This was the start of the wine industry as we know it today (Van Der Merwe, 2010). Large numbers of slaves were moved to the various wine farms and influenced the total output, meaning more slaves, equalling more wine. Wine farms employed large numbers of slaves that were forced to work and live in appalling conditions. Due to the profitability of winemaking, workers were forced to do backbreaking work for long hours on end in the blistering summer heat. Some farm owners did little to



properly care for their slaves, as it was cheaper to acquire a new slave than to properly care for one (Estreicher, 2014).

Slaves were often merely seen as property, and once the property lost its value, it was either sold or left to die. Several slave owners controlled every aspect of a slave's life, as they were stripped of their birth name and given a new one their owners could pronounce and remember, thereby depriving them of their identity (Falletisch, 2008). Essentials such as food, clothing and shelter were only provided on the basis that the slave worked for it. Torture and punishment were regular occurrences and accepted methods of dealing with disobedient slaves. In essence, a slave's quality of life was determined by their master, and as a result, it was often marked by brutality, humiliation, and trauma (Ruddock, 2012).

Slaves' quality of life somewhat improved during the first British occupation of the Cape Colony (1797-1803), but again deteriorated when the Cape returned to the Dutch. Only during the second British occupation (1806-1814) did slaves see significant changes in their treatment, as the British passed laws banning slavery throughout the British Empire and provided slaves with basic rights. This made slaves more expensive within the Cape colony and resulted in better treatment, as slaves became expensive to replace (Van Der Merwe, 2010). Only in 1834 was slavery abolished in all British colonies, and slaves were set free. Ironically, slave owners were financially compensated, with slaves receiving nothing. This meant that slaves did not own land and had no means to make a living other than continuing to work on the wine farms under the same working conditions in turn for food clothes and shelter (Ruddock, date). Slaves, now 'free,' were still dependent on their former masters despite having free will. This profoundly shaped labour practices on farms for years to come, as the legacy of slavery left a racially divided society characterised by unequal distribution and segregation, which increased the vulnerability and exploitation of wine farm workers (Falletisch, 2008).

### **2.2.2. Apartheid**

After slavery was abolished, racial separation was still present within South African society, and some aspects of apartheid such as forced segregation was already being implemented. After the National Party came to power in 1948, apartheid was adopted as a formal policy. As the term apartheid (separation) suggests, this policy entailed

segregation of public facilities, social events, housing and employment opportunities based on race (Gossage, Snell, Parry, Marais, Barnard, De Vries, Blankenship, Seedat, Hasken & May, 2014). The system favoured 'baasskap' (white supremacy), where white people were seen as civilized, more intelligent and more technologically advanced than other races. This idea was reinforced by a complex and lengthy process of European colonialism that had taken place in South Africa (Worden, 2012).

Apartheid had a unique impact on the farming industry, and more specifically, the wine industry. The apartheid period from 1948–1994 saw a surge in various systems on wine farms that significantly impacted the wellbeing of wine farm workers. These systems included paternalism and the use of the 'dop' system, where alcohol was used to pay individuals instead of financial compensation. Despite these systems being present since colonialism, it was under apartheid that they evolved and had damaging effects that still linger on within farming communities today.

#### 2.2.2.1. Paternalism

The word paternalism is derived from the Latin word 'pater,' meaning father, and encompasses the essence of paternalism (Young-Hauser, Coetzee & Maramnco, 2015). Unlike the master-servant relationship of the colonial era, paternalism differs, as the farmer and worker are not seen as separate atoms only united by a formal contract, but rather in a more intimate way, namely father and son (Du Toit, 1993). Accordingly, paternalism sees the farmer as the father figure, with knowledge and power far superior to that of the worker, who is the dependant within this relationship. Due to this dynamic, the farmer sees his position as "pa staan vir die werkers" (father representing the workers), thereby taking responsibility not only within the workplace, but also in the workers' personal lives (Du Toit, 1993:320). The farmer is thus responsible for providing economic production (work) and social reproduction (residence), and as a result, he has complete control over his workers, leading to an increase in dependency, powerlessness, and exploitation (Kheswa, 2015).

A farm can be viewed as a micro-community, where work and personal life is integrated and regulated to fit the farmers' needs. The paternalistic nature of the relationship means that it is not mutually beneficial, because the farmer determines the workers' rights, wants

and needs. This paternalistic relationship flourished under the apartheid era, where non-whites were viewed as being inferior and marginalised, strengthening the perception of the farmer as father of the farm family (Young-Hauser *et al.*, 2015). To start work on a farm was not merely seen as entering a business premises, but as entering a family to become “*deel van die plaas*” (part of the farm) (Du Toit, 1993:320). The worker either accepted the farmer as the father figure and allowed paternalism to exist or risked losing access to economic production and social reproduction. In essence, paternalism is an authoritarian relationship with an extreme imbalance of power in favour of the farmer based on servitude and dependence, and it is maintained through various practises and institutions (Van Ryneveld, 1986).

#### 2.2.2.2. Characteristics of paternalism

Falletisch (2008) compiled four key characteristics of paternalism that help maintain it as an institution on farms, these being tied housing, self-sufficient communities threatened by change and newcomers, the role of farmer as patriarch and the political marginalisation of farm labourers.

##### 2.2.2.2.a. *Tied housing*

Van Ryneveld (1986) argues that housing is the most central aspect of the farmer-worker relationship. He further states that it is used as a weapon by farmers to gain leverage over workers, seeing that housing or the lack of it is a constant threat to the workers. If a worker loses his job, he also loses access to housing, and this has a significant impact on the whole family. Considering South Africa’s housing crisis, workers fear being homeless with no income to support their families. This fear is used by farmers to ensure low wages and exploitive practices (Falletisch, 2008).

##### 2.2.2.2.b. *Self-sufficient communities threatened by change and newcomers*

Within a paternalistic environment, the community is self-contained, with its own forms of culture and language. In such a community, verbal contracts between farmer and worker are considered binding, with no need for any form of legislation. There is an emphasis on trust and loyalty expressed by “*ons verstaan mekaar*” (we understand each other) (Falletisch, 2008:40). This understanding requires that the workers remain loyal and

respect the farmer's authority, and in return the farmer repays them with 'gifts' in the form of housing, financial aid, protection, and old age pensions. This further highlights how paternalism extends far beyond employee-employer relationships found in other sectors. Consequently, workers tend to rely only on the farmer to help them solve personal issues, and any help from the outside is rejected. They antagonise any newcomer, be it social workers, lawyers, trade unions or legal centres, and view any assistance from the outside world as a threat to the 'family' dynamic created by paternalism. The fear that help from the outside might impact their relationship with the farmer, which will affect the benefits they receive from this dependency, is ever present (Falletisch, 2008). Accordingly, Du Toit (1993) argues that the workers' picture of family is flawed, damaged, and characterised instead by violence, conflict, jealousy, and insecurity.

#### *2.2.2.2.c. The role of farmer as patriarch*

According to Du Toit (1993), within a paternalistic relationship, the worker has no authority or judgement, whereas the farmer's opinion is considered correct at all costs. The worker would under no circumstance question or disagree with a farmer's decision. The farmer's authority extends beyond the workplace and is used to resolve issues within the workers' personal lives (Kheswa, 2015). This paternalistic relationship that entails the giving of 'gifts' creates security for workers, considering that they are able to maintain a good relationship with the farmer. However, it has come at a cost, as they trade security for dependency, which in turn results in powerlessness, insecurity, naivety and uncertainty (Falletisch, 2008).

#### *2.2.2.2.d. Political marginalisation of farm labourers*

The colonial and apartheid eras significantly impacted the position of the worker as an oppressed party. Throughout history, farm workers in the Western Cape were classified as 'slaves' or 'coloureds' and treated as second class citizens. These experiences have a significant impact on their lives, as it leads to hopelessness, powerlessness, and a lack of motivation to change. As a result of this negative cycle reinforced by marginalisation and paternalism, given the opportunity, farm workers often fail to initiate change, since they are dragged down by a history of oppression (Falletisch, 2008).

### 2.2.2.3. The 'dop' system

The 'dop' (drink) system refers to the practice of substituting the wages of wine farm workers for wine. This system has its roots in the colonial era, where workers were given wine at regular intervals throughout the day as motivation to keep working. However, it is a practice that has evolved over time, and was used throughout the apartheid era despite it being illegal (Williams, 2016). The 'dop' system served as a way to control labour on farms and to ensure that wages were kept to a bare minimum, benefitting only the farmer. This system became a powerful tool for social control, as workers became increasingly dependent on wine to function in and out of work (Kheswa, 2015). This dependency meant farmers were able to strengthen their hold on workers. Through the 'dop' system farmers also ensured that workers were working daily, as they received wine in return for labour. In short, this guaranteed that productivity would stay high at the expense of their health (Gossage *et al.*, 2014).

### 2.2.2.4. Abolishment of the 'dop' system

The 'dop' system became illegal in 1961 under the Liquor Act, and employers found guilty of using it would receive a R1 000 fine or up to six months in jail (Gossage *et al.*, 2014). Despite this legislation, there has not been any evidence of prosecution through the years, despite the practice continuing throughout the apartheid era (Falletisch, 2008). The abolishment of the 'dop' system resulted in mixed reactions from workers, with some welcoming the decision and others refusing to work without receiving alcohol. This serves as evidence of how dependent workers have become on alcohol, as they risked losing everything for a drop of wine. If a farmer would apply the ban, workers would move to neighbouring farms where the practice was still being implemented. This resulted in farmers continuing to use the system rather than risk losing workers (Loxton, 2015).

Farmer were also able to find loopholes in the system to be able to supply workers with wine on credit, such as giving wine as a reward or bonus and selling wine to workers at a discount (Falletisch, 2008). Rendall and Mkosi (2005:97) argue that these are examples of an "old practice with a new label." Through the use of ambiguities, farmers have thus been able to continue with the system, thereby increasing their hold on workers.

Simultaneously, the workers have increased their dependence on wine, which has resulted in widespread alcoholism on farms that continues to this day (Loxton, 2015).

#### 2.2.2.5. Commercial agriculture during Apartheid

The commercial agriculture during the apartheid era was state-subsidised and heavily state regulated in order to ensure success within a futile industry struggling to turn a profit (Kheswa, 2015). The government only favoured white commercial farmers at the expense of others, who were vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by state intervention (Devereux, 2019). This mutually beneficial relationship was based on the state gaining valuable electoral support from white farmers. In return white farmers acquired land and labour along with the necessary legislation to maintain control over their estates. Workers became increasingly oppressed and over-exploited by this relationship between state and farmers (Loxton, 2015).

Farm workers' situation was further impacted by the fact that, prior to 1994, the agricultural industry fell outside nationwide labour legislation, resulting in an industry which was labour regulation free. This meant that farmers had complete control over their farms, and within these parameters, they had free rein to do what they wanted regardless of it impacting the wellbeing of others (Kheswa, 2015). However, this power started crumbling during the 1960s–1980s, as South African goods were boycotted worldwide due to apartheid. Farmers suffered from declining prices of their goods and the wine industry was hit especially hard by this, since international wine markets had garnered large revenue prior to the boycotts (Gossage *et al.*, 2014).

As a response to the economic difficulties brought on by South Africa's exclusion from international markets, the state and leading players in the commercial agriculture started to merge farms, eliminate less successful producers and cut back on state subsidies in an effort to recover from the financial loss. This resulted in many farmers going bankrupt, in turn, causing a significant reduction in labour. This had disastrous effects on farm workers, many of whom lost their jobs, and their families. Furthermore, many workers were forced to move from the farms where they had previously been provided with an income and housing, with an estimated million farm dwellers being forcefully evicted between 1980 and 1985 alone (Spierenburg, 2019). Nonetheless, the state's attempt to

combat the economic crisis was unsuccessful, with the decline of commercial farming continuing even after apartheid had ended. This also had a significant impact on employment. Between 1988 – 1998, the commercial farming sector shed 140 000 regular jobs, a decline of around 20%. Once again, this significantly impacted the wellbeing of farm workers and their families (Atkinson, 2007).

### **2.2.3. Post-Apartheid**

Although apartheid legislation was repealed in 1991, it was only after the 1994 elections, which saw the ANC come into power, that apartheid was considered over. What was to follow was a complete overhaul of South African policies and legislation in order to achieve equality amongst all South Africans (The Constitution, 1996). The government believed in achieving equality in relation to economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, including labour laws which would assist in regulating the relationship between employers and employees. This was aimed at protecting workers' rights and ensuring fair compensation for their work (Devereux, 2019). Despite a consensus among authors that equality and policy change was necessary, many such as Devereux (2019), Spierenburg (2019), Visser (2016), Kheswa (2015), Stanwix (2011), Bek *et al.* (2009), Falletisch (2008), Minnaar (2008) and Atkinson (2007) agree that lack of implementation and monitoring of legislation has negatively impacted wine farm workers. Furthermore, policy and legislation have been unsuccessful in addressing a new exploitative practice called modern slavery.

#### **2.2.3.1. Policy and legislation**

The fall of the apartheid regime in 1994 paved the way for a new democratic republic, and the government focused on ensuring equal rights for all. This was done through the introduction of various policies and legislations, the aim of which was to address the injustices of the past. The Constitution (1996) and Bill of Rights (1996) are arguably the biggest policy introductions, seeing that they set out the supreme law of the country, as well as every citizen's rights and duties. The introduction of these policies named all South Africans as equal for the first time since the dawn of colonialism. For the purpose of this study, less focus is placed on these policies and more on those that directly affected the working- and living conditions of wine farm workers.

There are four major policies and legislations that improved working- and living conditions on farms, namely the Employment Equity Act (1998), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (2002), National Minimum Wage Act (2018) and Security of Tenure Act (1997). The purpose of the Employment Equity Act (1998) is to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment by eliminating unfair discrimination. It further requires the implementation of affirmative action to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by various groups in order to ensure equal representation on all levels of employment. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (2002), on the other hand, regulates labour practices by setting out the rights and duties of employees and their employers. It further ensures social justice and reduces exploitation by establishing the basic standards for employment regarding working hours, leave, payment, dismissal, and dispute resolution. The purpose of the National Minimum Wage Act (2018) is to advance economic development and social justice by improving the wages of the lowest paid workers, protecting workers from unreasonably low wages, preserving the value of the national minimum wages, promoting collective bargaining and supporting economic policy. Lastly, the Security of Tenure Act (1997) sets out to protect South Africans that do not have secure tenure of their homes and the land which they use. It also protects occupants against unfair evictions, which can lead to great hardship, conflict, and instability.

#### 2.2.3.2. Impact of post-apartheid policies and legislation

Aimed at improving the lives of many working and living on farms, post-apartheid policies, legislations and extensive labour regulations have resulted in a significant change in farm workers' wellbeing. However, authors such as Devereux (2019), Falletisch (2008), Atkinson (2007) as well as London and De Kock (2003) argue that, due to lack of implementation and monitoring, new post-apartheid policies and legislations have resulted in loss of jobs with little change to working- and living conditions.

According to Devereux (2019), there are three stakeholders in ensuring workers' rights on farms are upheld, these being employers (farmers or farm managers), government (Department of Labour) and workers organisations (trade unions). He highlights that there have been significant failures on the part of all three parties in ensuring the rights of



workers. This is due to employers' unwillingness to enforce labour regulations, as in many cases this would result in an increase in wages and money spent on upgrading facilities and housing, ultimately resulting in less profit for the farmer (Devereux, 2019). London and De Kock (2003) add that this mentality from employers is due to the culture of non-regulation entrenched on farms over decades. Government has also failed to ensure labour inspections on farms due to being seriously understaffed and under resourced (London & De Kock 2003). Another challenge is the agreement that the Department of Labour needs to inform the farmers in advance of a visit, meaning that farmers have ample time to correct any labour law infringements (Bek *et al.*, 2009). Lastly, trade unions have been ineffective in recruiting members from farms. This is due to the geographical isolation of many farms, as well as the lack of education of workers surrounding trade unions and the hostility from employers that deny trade unions access and threaten workers who join them (Devereux, 2019). The lack of policy and legislation implementation and monitoring has resulted in the vulnerability and exploitation of farm workers, as well as contributing towards modern slavery, which will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

The lack of compliance with labour regulation is not the only issue that has arisen with the introduction of post-apartheid policies and legislation. Authors Devereux (2019), Spierenburg (2019), Visser (2016), Kheswa (2015), Stanwix (2011), Falletisch (2008) and Minnaar (2008) agree that post-apartheid policies and legislation have resulted in significant unemployment and mass evictions. The National Minimum Wage Act (2018) has had the greatest influence by setting out the minimum amount farmers need to pay their workers. Prior to the National Minimum Wage Act (2018), farmers could easily underpay their workers and thus maximise their profits. However, since the National Minimum Wage Act (2018) was implemented, farmers have resorted to downsizing their workforce (Atkinson, 2007). This has resulted in a need to increase productivity to make up for financial loss of wage increase. This, combined with a reduction in workforce, meant workers had to work harder and longer hours to make up for any loss in profit (Minnaar, 2008). All of this has impacted the motivation behind why employers fail to implement labour regulation (Devereux, 2019).

With many workers unemployed in the wake of downsizing their labour force to maximise profit, many farmers issued evictions to remove unwanted workers from their farms. Despite the Security to Tenure Act (1997) protecting farm workers' right to live on the farm, many of them did not meet the set-out criteria, resulting in eviction (Visser, 2016). Kheswa (2015) further argues that, during the apartheid era, farm workers were the responsibility of the farmer, who thus had to provide them with basic needs (e.g. housing, transport). However, within the post-apartheid republic, this responsibility shifts to the state, which allows the farmer to evict workers, as he has no obligation to provide basic services to his workers or ex-workers (Kheswa, 2015).

#### 2.2.3.3. Modern slavery

Despite the abolishment of slavery throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Crane (2013) argues it is far from being eradicated, stating that it has merely taken on a new form within modern society. Farm workers today do not work in similar conditions to those in the colonial era. However, on farms, elements that tie workers to the farm and farmer remain. These can be classified under modern slavery, as will be discussed below.

Slavery has gradually transformed from the officially approved practice, based on legal title and ethnic classification, to an outlawed, criminalised practice within the modern economy. This has made it difficult for an international definition of modern slavery, as all references to slavery is based on that of the past. This new form of slavery has therefore gone unnoticed, as it does not meet the parameters of historical slavery (Crane, 2013). For this reason, the closest definition to work from is the one from the 1926 League of Nations Slavery Convention, which defines slavery as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.” This definition has a greater focus on ownership, whereas modern slavery is more concerned with the control of employees (Crane, 2013:50).

Control of employees is an essential aspect in identifying modern slavery. According to Anti-Slavery (2019), the international human rights organisation, four features need to be present in order to be classified as modern slavery. These include being forced to work through threat, being controlled by an employer (typically through mental, physical, or threatened abuse), being dehumanised and treated as a commodity, and being physically

constrained or restricted. Crane (2013) argues that an additional dimension must be present within classification of modern slavery, namely economic exploitation through underpayment. This is based on the fact that dated estimates place the cost of modern slavery in terms of underpayment at \$19,6 billion, a sum much greater today considering inflation (International Labour Office, 2009). It is important to note that, in order for a situation to be considered representative of modern slavery, all dimensions must be present with degrees of variability.

What is concerning is the presence of many of the abovementioned dimensions on wine farms. For example, the dimension that comprises being forced to work through threat closely resembles farmers threatening workers with the removal of their on-farm housing rights or docking their pay if they do not agree to work certain hours or days. On the other hand, paternalism on farms, which sees the farmer as father figure controlling every aspect of his workers' lives, strongly resembles second dimension of modern slavery, namely being controlled by an employer. The third dimension, which involves dehumanisation and commodification, closely resembles many farmers' non-compliance with labour regulations, thereby exacerbating inhumane working conditions. The fourth dimension of being physically constrained or restricted in freedom of movement may refer to the fact that housing is tied to employment on farms, restricting workers' freedom to move to better or new employment. Lastly the fifth dimension, being subject to economic exploitation through underpayment, is clearly seen throughout history in that workers were and continue to be underpaid.

Equally concerning to its prevalence on farms is the increased use of modern slavery as a management practice. Shelley (2003) describes this phenomenon as a business model that incorporates slavery in an attempt to under-price a key resource (labour) through illegitimate means. In essence, the dimensions of modern slavery are used to varying degrees to keep costs low and profits high. Authors Gold, Trautrim and Trodd (2015) and New (2015) argue that this is done within the supply chain. For example, within the wine industry, this would be the process from growing the grapes, harvesting the grapes and bottling of the wine. Within both mega corporations and small businesses, maximising profit is of utmost importance, and this is done by creating a cost-effective supply chain. This might be seen as nourishing modern slavery and using it as a management practice.

Accordingly, Gold *et al.* (2015) argue that this creates an environment open to exploitation, where employers retain the bulk of the profits which rarely reach employees. Furthermore, supply chains are concealed from the public, with 'slave made' commodities not being directly sold by the employer. Instead, these are mixed with other commodities at the next supply chain (e.g. the exporter or wholesaler), hiding the origin from the public.

By no means is modern slavery as a management practice present in each and every company, nor has each commodity supply chain been exposed to modern slavery conditions (New, 2015). However, one needs to consider the effect it might already have within the wine industry. The industry is at high risk, as it has a history of exploitation of its workers, continued noncompliance with labour regulations, lack of implementation and monitoring of policies and legislation, as well as a majority workforce with a low social status.

### **2.3. WORK CONTEXT**

According to Du Toit (1993:315) farms cannot be merely seen as "factories in the field," as they are widely different from any other source of employment. Employment on farms is often tied to housing, free electricity and water, transport, and support systems. Due to this, workers become dependent on the farm, not just for a source of income, but to sustain their livelihood and standard of living. Commercial farming's primary goal is productivity and profit. This has resulted in the increase of exploitative practices on farms, where workers' dependency is used to increase productivity and profit (Kheswa, 2015). In many instances, farm workers are powerless to address these exploitative practices, as they will not risk losing employment and being evicted (Falletisch, 2008). The practices in question will be explored within the work context by looking at the following sections: nature of employment, work intensity, contracts, wages and deductions, occupational health and safety and risk to employment.

#### **2.3.1. Nature of employment**

Employment on a farm can either be permanent or temporary, with the type of work depending on the worker's position, gender, skills, and duration of employment (Human Rights Watch, 2011). For example, lower level, unskilled permanent males and females would do basic tasks concerning cultivation, preparation and harvesting of vineyards.

Permanent male workers with tractor licenses would in turn be used to for irrigation, transport and operating heavy machinery. The roles of farm managers differ vastly from farm to farm, with their main concern being overseeing the production of grapes for wine. However, the resources and assets available to the farm will depend on the various roles farmers take on.

Employment and the various systems in place on farms illustrate the correlation between the general systems theory and a farm. As the theory describes, there are multiple correct ways of achieving goals within a system which are representative of the various managing styles farm managers use to achieve the same goal (Miller, 1978). As portrayed by the general systems theory, a farm consists of three parts, namely: inputs (farm workers and the various tasks they perform), throughputs (harvesting of vineyards) and outputs (grapes from the harvest used for making wine). The greatest similarity between the general systems theory and farming operations is the unpredictability within the environment that has a significant impact on the farming operations (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). The farming industry's inability to manage and adapt environmental issues has had a significant impact on its workers' wellbeing.

### **2.3.2. Work intensity**

According to the Department of Labour's Sectoral Dimension 13 for Farm Workers, they are only allowed to work a maximum of 45 hours per week (Meyer *et al.*, 2006). However, Visser (2016) and the Human Right Watch Report (2011) indicate that farmers regularly push their workers to work up to 65 hours per week without compensation for overtime. In the Quarterly Labour Force Survey of 2014 (Stats SA, 2014), data from 696 299 workers, 65.7% of which worked as farmhands and labourers, were collected. Concerning working hours, 41% of men and 47% of women said they worked 41 to 45 hours a week in line with maximum work hours allowed. With regards to working past the maximum, 14% of men and 13% of women indicated they work longer hours per week. This indicates that 55% of men and 60% of women who participated in the survey work in line or over the maximum number of hours per week. This is an indication that workers are being pushed to the limit and even beyond.

The Department of Labour has no industry standard regarding the amount of leave a worker is entitled to, as this differs farm to farm. However, according to the Sectoral Dimension 13 for farm workers, farmers are obligated to pay workers on public holidays even if they do not work. If they do work, workers need to consent to working and should either be paid overtime or be allowed to negotiate for extra leave (Meyer *et al.*, 2006). Most permanent workers are allowed annual leave, paid sick leave and family responsibility leave. However, the farmer still has authority over when leave is taken, with workers' requests regularly being denied, especially during harvesting season. Temporary workers (seasonal workers) are not allowed any sort of paid or unpaid leave. If they are unable to work, they lose their wages for that day (Visser, 2016; Falletisch, 2008). Long working hours and limited leave means permanent and temporary workers alike are overworked, significantly increasing their risk of injury and negatively impacting their wellbeing (Human Right Watch Report, 2011).

### **2.3.3. Contracts, wages and deductions**

The Department of Labour's Sectoral Determination 13 for Farm Workers states that all workers must have a formal written contract and must be paid at least minimum wage set at hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly rates. Furthermore, an employer may not make any wage deductions unless clearly prescribed within the contract to which the worker has agreed. If deductions are agreed upon, these may not exceed 10% of the farm workers' wages (Meyer *et al.*, 2006). Despite clear instructions regarding employment, authors Deveraux (2019), Visser (2016), Visser and Ferrer (2015), Falletisch (2008) and Atkinson (2007) all allude to the fact that, on farms, contracts are not given to all individuals. Further, wages are often below minimum and deductions in many cases exceed the prescribed 10%.

Visser (2016) explains that, on farms, contracts are often more of a legal formality rather than a truly legal agreement. In many cases contracts are verbally agreed upon, favouring the terms of the employer. If a written contract is present, workers are unable to change any terms on the contract and must agree or risk losing employment. Workers are also forced to agree to contracts exempting the farmer from any liabilities regarding work related injuries. Copies of contracts are not distributed, and workers are refused access

to contracts after signing. This is especially true in the case of seasonal workers (temporary workers employed during harvesting season), who must agree employment terms before starting work (Devereux, 2019). In this light, the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2014) found that 92% of permanent workers have written contracts, whereas only 40% of seasonal workers have written contracts. The same study found that 81,4% of workers negotiate future employment and contract directly with their employer. As a result of this, workers constantly find themselves at the mercy of an employer's terms, often rendering them underpaid (Visser & Ferrer, 2015).

At the time of writing, the minimum hourly wage is set at R18 per hour, which Devereux (2019) views as an unsuitable living wage. Low agricultural wages result in employees needing to rely on state grants, their own networks and survival instincts. In many cases, this serves as the workers' only reliable income source, as there might only be work available during harvesting season. Workers thus resort to buying food in bulk, buying less food, or buying food on credit from the farm store (Visser, 2016).

According to Devereux (2019), Visser (2016), Visser and Ferrer (2015) and Falletisch (2008), finding accurate data concerning the minimum wage is extremely difficult because farmers tend to be protective of this information. Multiple Department of Labour funded research projects have turned up inaccurate and unreliable data. However, one can argue that, given the irregularities regarding formal contracts and wages not being suitable living wages, workers receive below or the bare minimum in wages. A survey by Devereux (2019) adds weight to this argument, as he administered 343 questionnaires on farms throughout the Western- and Northern Cape. In the section concerning wages, 137 (40,7%) reported receiving below minimum wage, 121 (35,9%) received equal to minimum wage, and only 79 (23,4%) received more than the minimum wage. This data by no means proves that farmers are not complying with paying minimum wage, but it does indicate that a significant number of workers do not receive suitable living wages.

Deductions also have a significant impact on farm workers' wellbeing, as these further diminish their already low minimal pay. According to Visser and Ferrer (2015), some deductions are legitimate as prescribed by the Sectoral Dimensions 13 set out by the Department of Labour, as long as these do not extend more than 10% of the workers' monthly wages (Meyer *et al.*, 2006). These deductions include Unemployment Insurance

Fund (UIF), funeral policies, housing expenses, electricity, work clothes, transport, as well as loans to a third party or the farmer himself. However, many farmers extend deductions to include health costs, medical aid, union fees, TV rentals, savings, rent for children and food bought on credit from the farm shop (Devereux, 2019). Therefore, in many cases, the deductions exceed the 10% from wage limit and places farm workers in financial turmoil, severely impacting their wellbeing as they struggle to afford necessities (Visser & Ferrer, 2015).

#### **2.3.4. Occupational health and safety**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (1993) sets out the guidelines that employers must follow to ensure adequate working conditions. It states that “[e]very employer shall provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of his employees” (Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993). However, as reported by the Human Rights Watch (2011), farmers have deliberately ignored these regulations with regards to hygiene and sanitation, work injuries and exposure to pesticides.

##### **2.3.4.1. Hygiene and sanitation**

Within the report by the human rights watch (2011), farm workers are said to have a lack of toilets and access to clean drinking water when working in vineyards, which is a violation of labour regulations. Devereux (2019) elaborates on this and states that it is compromising the dignity of farm workers because they seek alternatives with negative health implications. This is especially difficult for women, as they must use a secluded part of the vineyard as an alternative. During menstruation, the situation is worsened, seeing that women need to change sanitary towels in the vineyards. This has a significant impact on them, as it increases the risk of sexual harassment or rape. Even if toilets are provided, they are seldom hygienic, increasing the risk of infection and severely impacting workers’ wellbeing (Kleinbooi, 2012). Accordingly, Devereux (2019) states that the lack of access to toilets and sanitation facilities is a form of gender discrimination, as well as noncompliance with labour regulations.



#### 2.3.4.2. Work-related injuries

The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (1993) states that all employees who suffer an occupational injury or disability at work are entitled to compensation from the Compensation Fund. The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (1993) requires all South African employers to register with the Compensation Commissioner and to report any accidents to determine if compensation should be paid. However, Devereux (2019) and Falletisch (2008) argue that workers are uninformed regarding the correct procedure to follow to report an injury. This has allowed farmers to take advantage, as they deliberately do not report injuries, nor do they register with the Compensation fund. The effect of this is that, if an injury requires medical attention, workers are responsible to pay for it. If they cannot afford it, which is often the case, the farmer will pay and deduct it from their pay. This has resulted in workers not reporting injuries and continuing to work for fear of losing money, thereby compromising their physical health (Devereux, 2019).

#### 2.3.4.3. Exposure to pesticides

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (1993) requires all employers to protect their workers against any exposure to potential hazardous substances. The Act states that employers should not permit any employee to handle hazardous substances unless precautionary measures have been taken. However, correct guidelines have not been followed by all employers, which has led to many farm workers being constantly exposed to hazardous substances like pesticides (London & De Kock, 2003).

Farm workers who have been exposed to pesticides may experience a range of negative health side-effects severely impacting their physical health, including skin problems, nasal problems, eye problems, breathing difficulties, headaches and nausea. Pesticides are especially dangerous to women, as they are more likely to be exposed to them considering that only men are given protective gear while they spray from a tractor. Despite the risks, women are required work in the vineyards that are being sprayed without any protection from the toxins (Devereux, 2019). Pesticides can also affect the health of farm workers' families, as expressed by Naidoo *et al.* (2010) who indicate that women and children are exposed to it when washing the clothes of men who work with

the substance. Pesticides remain largely unregulated because of outdated legislation. Use has also increased with a need for more commercial farming, along with land distribution and the creation of smaller farms. This means an increasing number of workers and their families are being exposed to pesticides (Naidoo *et al.*, 2010).

Authors Devereux (2019), Naidoo *et al.* (2010), Falletisch (2008) as well as London and De Kock (2003) all discuss a need for greater education regarding pesticides, along with appropriate protective gear and washing facilities. However, this is challenging considering many farms only provide washing facilities during an audit visit. Farmers are also reluctant to buy protective gear, instead forcing workers to buy their own or deducting the price from their pay. For this reason, workers who are unable or unwilling to buy their own gear risk exposure and damage to their physical health (Devereux, 2019).

### **2.3.5. Risk to employment**

Ewert and Du Toit (2006) allude to the fact that farmers are beginning to feel financial pressures due to increased minimum wage, labour regulations and natural disasters that have forced farmers to rethink the structure of their businesses. This has resulted in farmers downsizing their permanent labour force to save money. These efforts include casualisation, externalisation, mechanisation, migrant workers, gender stereotypes and current events that have all limited employment. The abovementioned efforts have resulted in widespread retrenchments and increased evictions, significantly impacting farm workers social status and quality of life.

#### **2.3.5.1. Casualisation**

Within the farming industry, labour has become significantly expensive, which has forced farmers to restructure their businesses to become more profitable. This has resulted in an increase in casualisation, namely the act of replacing permanent workers with seasonal workers. Differently to permanent workers, seasonal workers are only employed for a specific period during the harvesting season (Visser, 2016). This makes seasonal workers less expensive than permanent workers, as they require no additional wages during the off season. This trend has had a major impact on employment, as farmers resort to only hiring during a specific time and keeping a much smaller permanent

workforce (Ewert & Du Toit, 2006). Within the wine sector, seasonal workers comprise 80% of the work force during peak seasons (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). This increase in casualisation has resulted in an increase in retrenchment and evictions from farms. Further, it has caused a major loss in permanent income and housing, negatively affecting wine farm workers and their families' quality of life (Atkinson, 2007).

#### 2.3.5.2. Externalisation

Similar to casualisation, externalisation is also used as a cost cutting measure which reduces the need for a larger permanent work force (Visser, 2016). Externalisation refers to the use of workers employed by labour brokers, whereby the farmer can use the workers for various tasks when needed. The farmer directly pays the labour brokers who recruit and maintain the workforce (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Externalisation contributes towards a smaller permanent workforce as there is always labour available at the farmers' disposal. It also shifts the responsibility from the farmer as employer to the labour broker, who has to deal with labour issues in these cases. Similar to casualisation, externalisation negatively impacts farm workers' quality of life, as it also increases retrenchments and evictions (Ewert & Du Toit, 2006).

#### 2.3.5.3. Mechanisation

Mechanisation has been an ever-increasing option for farmers who wish to do away with labour issues (Falletisch, 2008). Within the wine industry, grape harvesters have become an important tool, as one machine can replace as many as 70 workers per 12-hour shift. Further, they offer advantages, seeing as they can quickly harvest when needed and can work at night to ensure grapes stay cool, thereby improving quality (Ewert & Du Toit, 2006). Mechanical harvesters alone have not had a large-scale impact on permanent employment. Mechanical harvesters cost around R3 million and are accompanied by high maintenance cost, meaning only the wealthiest farmers can afford them (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). However, according to Visser (2016), Falletisch (2008) and Ewert and Du Toit (2006), it has been the combination of casualisation, externalisation and mechanisation that has led to retrenchment and eviction of permanent workers.

#### 2.3.5.4. Migrant workers

The situation concerning the decline in permanent work and increase in applicants for seasonal work has been worsened by the growing number of migrant workers. Large numbers of migrants from Zimbabwe and Mozambique have relocated to De Doorns. This area is one of the Western Cape's biggest employers within the wine industry (Wisborg, Hall, Shirinda & Zamchiya, 2013). According to Theron (2012), migrant workers are favoured in applications for seasonal work. Farmers prefer to hire migrant workers, seeing that they are open to working in exploitive conditions for minimal pay. Further, they are selected on the grounds that they are more reliable, skilled, and educated than their local counterparts.

This favouritism has had a significant impact on the wellbeing of local farm workers, who lose permanent- and seasonal jobs to migrants (Visser, 2016). This is evident in De Doorns' 2012 strikes, which later spread throughout the province. The strike demanded migrant workers be replaced by local workers, along with other previously discussed issues concerning casualisation, extermination, evictions, and low wages (Erasmus, 2012). Despite the demand for change, migrant workers still occupy many permanent- and seasonal jobs and are continually used by farmers as a cheap source of labour. This, in turn, impacts the wellbeing of local wine farm workers as a result of losing access to employment, income and housing, all of which significantly impact their livelihood (Atkinson, 2007).

#### 2.3.5.5. Gender stereotypes

According to Visser (2016), Wisborg *et al.* (2013) and Ewert and Du Toit (2006), women comprise the bulk of seasonal workers (casualisation) and contract workers (externalisation), meaning that they have less job security. Further, they earn lower wages and have less opportunity for career advancement due to the stereotype that women are less skilled than men. As already discussed, women work in far worse conditions compared to their male counterparts regarding hygiene and sanitation (Devereux, 2019). In addition, they struggle to gain access to housing, since it is reserved for permanent male workers, which means that housing is often only attainable via their relationship with a permanent male worker (Visser, 2016).

The influx of migrants has especially impacted women, who make up the bulk of seasonal workers. Male migrants are increasingly being chosen as seasonal workers, since farmers view males as physically superior and less of a burden (Theron, 2012). Stereotypes surrounding women within the farming sector have limited their access to employment and career advancement. Ultimately, their dignity is being severely compromised, considering that they are being discriminated against, both within employment and seeking employment (Visser, 2016).

#### 2.3.5.6. Current events

Recent events within the farming industry have seriously impacted the wellbeing and employment of wine farm workers and employers alike. These events include drought, farm murders, land distribution and the Covid-19 pandemic.

##### 2.3.5.6.a. *Drought*

Since 2015, the Western Cape has been enduring a drought, and if below average rainfall continues, it could have disastrous long-term effects, with consecutive loss-making years bankrupting farmers and leading to widespread job losses. This has already begun to take effect in the wine sector, where the lack of rain has led to lower crop production by an estimated 10%-30%, which in turn has led to an increase in the use of casualisation and externalisation instead of permanent workers (Johnston, 2018). Furthermore, the number of seasonal workers needed for harvesting has significantly lowered due to lower crop production (Visser, 2016).

##### 2.3.5.6.b. *Farm murders*

According to Maré (2015), farm murders should not be viewed solely as an act of violence but should be considered for the rippling effect they have on farm employees, the economy and society. Farm attacks go beyond the pain and suffering of a family and has an enormous impact on the functioning of the rest of the farm. Maré (2015) explains that farms are like businesses, constantly producing goods in exchange for money. When a farm attack occurs, the farm goes out of production for a period of time. A single farm attack, without a murder, halts production for at least six months. Farm murders potentially halt production for anything from two to eight years. Estimates placed the

economic impact of all farm murders in 2014 at around R752 million. This results in major job losses or periods where workers receive no income due to the economic hardship on the farm (Maré, 2015).

#### *2.3.5.6.c. Land distribution*

Land distribution has been an aim of the government since the end of apartheid for the sake of redistributing land to previously disadvantaged individuals. It has been a topic of numerous debates, with compelling arguments on both sides. This debate has recently been reignited with Parliament's vote to amend the Constitution to allow for the expropriation of land without compensation (Land Expropriation Without Compensation, 2017). Authors such as Lebone (2018) argue that land redistribution is a necessary process to ensure equality. However, he states that the way it has previously been done has been disastrous. Farms that were previously productive are now lying fallow because of failed attempts by the state to carry out land reform projects. It is estimated that 70%-90% of redistributed farms are struggling with inadequate state support where farmers lack the skills to succeed (Hlomendlini & Makgolane, 2017).

The National Development Plan 2030 (2012) identified agriculture as a key sector in development with a potential to create one million jobs by 2030. However, Lebone (2018) is doubtful, and argues that this is impossible if current land distribution processes do not improve. He states that, if unsuccessful, the continued distribution of land and expropriation of land without compensation could lead to increased unemployment and diminishing of workers' quality of life.

#### *2.3.5.6.d. Covid-19 pandemic*

The Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (WHO, 2020). The disease forced many countries to take extreme measures in limiting the spread of the disease. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, South Africa confirmed its first Covid-19 positive case, and soon after on 15 March, the South African government declared a state of disaster, with a national lockdown coming into effect on 26<sup>th</sup> of March. Only essential staff were permitted to work, and only essential products could be sold. Alcohol was classified as non-essential, effecting a total ban on legal sales

of alcohol (Reuter *et al.*, 2020). The alcohol ban was accompanied by a six-week export freeze. Both the ban on the legal trade of alcohol and the export freeze have since had disastrous effects on the wine industry as a whole. Job security is severely impacted, as estimates are that around 18 000 jobs will be lost within the sector, with at least 80 wine cellars at risk of permanently closing (Steenkamp, 2020). This could have a tremendous effect on the wellbeing of many wine farm workers, who could soon find themselves unemployed.

## **2.4. LIVING CONDITIONS**

It is not only within the work context that farm workers face difficulties. Problems transcend into their living conditions as well, affecting not only them, but also their families and farm dwellers. Living conditions on farms are historically known to be subpar, with an array of issues effecting residents' quality of life (Atkinson, 2007). Despite numerous new policies and strategies to address living conditions, serious problems regarding housing, alcohol abuse, patriarchal families and access to resources still negatively affects the wellbeing of all farm residents.

### **2.4.1. Housing**

On-farm housing has been a controversial topic, as farmers have begun to reduce the number of residents living on the farm. This has resulted in poor housing conditions and an increase in evictions, which has been made more complex due to the introduction of the Security of Tenure Act (1997). Ultimately, the current housing situation is negatively impacting the wellbeing of farm residents, seeing that they are living in subpar housing and face evictions daily (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

#### **2.4.1.1. Housing conditions**

Housing on farms is predominately reserved for permanent employees and their families. However, it also extends to farm dwellers, people who live on the farm but do not work there, who have received tenure through The Security of Tenure Act (1997). Housing on farms is extremely complex, as the availability, size and conditions differ immensely from farm to farm (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Despite the variation, all farm owners providing housing must abide by the housing minimum standards set by the National Housing

Policy and Subsidy Programmes (2010). These set out that housing should consist of a floor area at least 40 square metres as well as electrical installation, and must comprise of two bedrooms, a separate bathroom with a toilet, shower and hand basin, a combined living area and a kitchen with a wash basin.

Numerous authors have argued that on-farm housing is in many cases uninhabitable, with serious structural damages as well as a lack of basic necessities such as water and electricity. The Human Rights Watch (2011) use the example of a farmworker who lived in a former pig stall with his wife and children. They had been living there for 10 years with no electricity, water, or adequate shelter from the elements. Viljoen (2008) refers to other examples, where wine farm workers live in small one-bedroom houses, often with limited access to running water. In turn, rooms are often shared by various family members, and overcrowding is common. Falletisch (2008) reported that only a small number of workers have access to electricity, running water, flushing toilets and telecommunication. These basic utilities are often considered as a given, but to farm workers and dwellers, these are luxuries. Kleinbooi (2013) concurs with Falletisch (2008), and adds that, with no access to running water, their sanitation is severely impacted leading to hosts of problems (e.g. illness, infection). Lastly, Devereux *et al.* (2017) shared experiences from farm workers and dwellers who have resorted to borrowing water from neighbouring farms. Water is prioritised for crops and cattle, resulting in empty water tanks and limited water for farm residents. If water is supplied, it is often dirty and undrinkable. Ultimately, authors Devereux *et al.* (2017), Kleinbooi (2013), Human Rights Watch (2012), Falletisch (2008) and Viljoen (2008) are all in agreement that overall housing conditions on farms are poor. This has a significant impact on farm workers' and dwellers' wellbeing considering that they need to survive in uninhabitable conditions that severely impact their health and safety.

#### 2.4.1.2. The Extension of Security Act

Farmers' reluctance to comply to the minimal standards set by the National Housing Policy and Subsidy Programmes (2010) have drawn criticism from the various authors discussed above. However, Visser and Ferrer (2015) and Atkinson (2007) write that on-farm housing is not as clear cut as it seems due to the introduction of The Extension of



Security Act (1997) combined with the financial costs associated with the building and maintenance of housing.

The Extension of Security Act (1997) is based on Section 25(6) of the Constitution, which states: “[a] person or community whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled, to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament, either to tenure which is legally secure or to comparable redress.” This enabled farm workers and dwellers to claim tenure on housing on farms. Similar to the National Minimum Wage Act (2018), the Extension of Security Act (1997) is aimed in principle at helping vulnerable individuals. However, it has resulted in unseen negative consequences. According to Cronje (2015), with farm workers and dwellers now able to claim tenure, farmers thought it unnecessary to maintain or improve housing, since occupants with tenure indirectly owned the house. Furthermore, if an eviction were to take place, the Extension of Security Act (1997) requires the farmer to supply alternative accommodation of the same standard. Thus, farmers intentionally kept housing conditions poor to protect themselves in case of evictions (Cronje, 2015).

Even if the Extension of Security Act (1997) was not a factor, Visser and Ferrer (2015) state that farmers are still reluctant to build and maintain housing due to the financial cost. Agri (n.d.) in Cronje (2015) estimate that it costs between R220 000 to R280 000 to build a basic on-farm house, coupled with separate yearly maintenance costs. Farmers are required to supply everything, from portable water, sewage, and an electrical system. In return, the farm receives no municipal service (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Undoubtedly, the Extension of Security Act (1997) along with high building and maintenance costs have resulted in farmers being defiant in improving building and housing, as it does not benefit them. On-farm housing was once seen as an investment by farmers, and is now increasingly being seen as a liability, which has forced them to limit on-farm housing through evictions (Ruddock, 2012).

#### 2.4.1.3. Eviction

Evictions, both legal and illegal, are a harsh reality on many farms and result in widespread homelessness. Needless to say, the process seriously upsets the affected families’ functioning, inevitably impacting their wellbeing. Evictions are legal, provided the

farmer follows the correct procedures laid out in the Extension of Security Act (1997), a process that can take up to two years and rack up legal costs between R30 000 and R60 000 (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). This has resulted in an increase in illegal evictions and various tactics to reduce farm housing. Eviction tactics include cutting electricity or water, harassment and bribing residents to force them to move. In these cases, farm workers and dwellers rarely open legal proceedings, since they have limited resources and a lack of knowledge regarding legal procedures and tenure rights (Human Rights Watch, 2011; Ruddock, 2012). In cases where evictions are carried out legally, the farmer is required to provide alternative housing equal in value to the house the individuals are evicted from. Consequently, the alternative housing is rarely equal, and, in most cases, farmers provide Wendy houses (a temporary wooden structure). These Wendy houses are a serious downgrade and force a whole family into one small room that barely offers protection from the elements (Human Rights Watch, 2011; Atkinson, 2007).

Visser and Ferrer (2015) and Atkinson (2007) state that it is difficult to understand the scope of evictions considering that municipalities keep no official record. Even in cases of legal evictions involving court proceedings, records are limited. Nonetheless, illegal evictions outnumber legal eviction 20:1, and it remains difficult to assess the full extent of the problem. Visser and Ferrer (2015) further argue that the real issue is not the amount of evictions, but the lack of support evicted families receives from municipalities. Authors such as Cronje (2015), Human Rights Watch (2012), Ruddock (2012) and Atkinson (2007) all allude to the fact that there are currently massive amounts of state resources being used to combat evictions, whereas these resources could be better used in assisting the evictees. Farmers have been predominately blamed for the outcome of evictions. However, in retrospect, municipalities have failed in assisting evicted families and must share the blame (Human Rights Watch, 2012; Atkinson, 2007).

#### **2.4.2. Alcohol abuse**

The 'dop' system made considerable contributions in personifying a 'drinking culture' within agricultural communities that promotes the excessive use of alcohol during leisure time or for recreation. Alcohol abuse amongst farm workers and dwellers has led to high rates of habitual drinking, violence and trauma associated with alcohol use and high rates

of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), all of which have had devastating effects on wine farm workers' and dwellers' wellbeing (Evans, 2015).

#### 2.4.2.1. Habitual drinking

Falletisch (2008) argues that drinking amongst farm workers and dwellers has become habitual, and even that the process of drinking has become a ritual on farms. Gossage *et al.* (2014) further warns of the alarming drinking habits that have developed since the abolishment of the 'dop,' system with both men and women drinking at risky levels over weekends. According to Health and Medicine Week (2014) in a study conducted between farm workers and other occupations, farm labourers were more likely to be a current drinker and there was a high level of binge drinking among both male and female farm workers. Farm workers and dwellers are primarily concerned with the present day instead of the future, therefore consuming alcohol at the end of a workday regardless of the long-term effects. Further, habitual drinkers often intentionally refrain from buying essentials to save money for alcohol (Falletisch, 2008). Weekend drinking is seen as a tremendous occasion, and a lot of planning and thought is put into it.

As the above factors imply, alcohol consumption on farms has become institutionalised and poses major threats to the health and safety of farm workers and their families. This is done not only by the direct effect of alcohol, but also indirectly through social interaction (Ruddock, 2012). The effects of prolonged alcohol abuse include health problems, such as fatal liver damage and slowed brain function. Further, women who drink excessively during pregnancy may expose their unborn children to FASD. This contributes towards a cycle of damage, disability, and disease within farming communities. In addition, alcohol abuse leads to emotional instability, irrationality, anger, and aggression, which in turn may lead to physical abuse, violence against women and children and disruptions to family functioning. Alcohol abuse even extends to the workplace, as intoxicated workers operating machinery can create a dangerous environment possibly resulting in serious injury or death (Evans, 2015).

#### 2.4.2.2. Violence

There is a strong correlation between habitual drinking and social violence on farms, seeing that for both adults and children alike, drinking and violence is a part of everyday life (Falletisch, 2008). This cycle of violence is sometimes hard to understand and even harder to break. Such behaviour is considered a social pathology resulting from colonial and apartheid history, inequality, poverty, and marginalisation (Ruddock, 2012). In situations of alcohol abuse, part of the problem is that alcohol is given the blame and the drinker is forgiven. The drinker is allowed to say and do things they cannot do when they are sober. People refer to the drinker as “nie mens” (non-human) when they are drunk, as if the alcohol is in control of them (Falletisch, 2008:161). Thus, they cannot be held accountable for what they did while they were drunk. This gives the drinker the freedom to behave as they wish and allows them to resort to violent behaviour. More concerning is the fact that retaliation through violence is socially acceptable. This behaviour directed at a bystander or victim is done in order to “leer vir hulle ’n les” (teach them a lesson), which clearly showcases how violence is the main form of conflict resolution (Visser, 2016; Falletisch, 2008:190). Even in situations of sobriety, violence is still seen as the answer. Violence and aggression are so integrated in the way of life on farms that a non-aggressive person is considered an outsider. Both males and females alike speak aggressively, threaten aggression, and behave aggressively. This is worsened when alcohol is added, and results in widespread violence and abuse that significantly impacts both farm workers’ and dwellers’ wellbeing (Devereux *et al.*, 2017; Van Dongen, 2003).

#### 2.4.2.3. Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

FASD is a range of conditions that occur in a person whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. The effects can include problems with behaviour and learning. A person with FASD may have abnormal facial features, a smaller head size, shorter than stature, poor coordination, difficulty with attention, poor memory, learning disabilities, speech and language delays and a low IQ (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). FASD is directly linked with high or recurrent drinking. However, even small quantities of alcohol may have severe consequences on a women’s child (Sarman, 2018). This is alarming considering the prevalence of habitual drinking on farms. Statistics add cause for concern, as Gous (2017) reports that South Africa has the highest prevalence of FASD in the world,

with more than 14 times the global average. South Africa has an incidence rate of 111.1 per 1000 children, almost double that of second place Croatia, which has a prevalence of 53.3 per 1000 children. Farming communities, especially the Western Cape wine farms, contribute significantly towards the high FASD rates. On wine farms, drinking has become a habitual recreational activity, especially amongst pregnant women (Rendall-Mkosi, London, Adnams, Morojele, McLoughlin & Goldstone, 2008). This prevalence is significantly contributing towards FASD, thereby severely impacting the wellbeing of future generation of farm workers and dwellers.

### **2.4.3. Patriarchal families**

Considering the previously discussed gender stereotypes, it is no surprise that authors Devereux (2019), Visser (2016), Wisborg *et al.* (2013), Theron (2012), Falletisch (2008), Viljoen (2008) and Van Dongen (2003) all refer to the unequal power relations between men and women on farms. Due to this, women on farms are vulnerable to high levels of domestic abuse, as men consolidate their power through violence. Having already discussed violence previously, it is clear to see how it is used within patriarchal families as a form of punishment, an expression of anger and a way of gaining power and control (Viljoen, 2008). This is exacerbated when alcohol is involved in that men use it as an opportunity to enforce dominance on the family. As previously discussed, when individuals are intoxicated, it is believed they cannot be held accountable for their actions (Falletisch, 2008). Women are viewed as being the property of their husbands, exacerbated by the fact that they are financially dependent in many cases. This view is further perpetuated by farmers only regarding males as a head of a household, and, for this reason, only providing housing for permanent male staff (Visser, 2016).

As a result of these deeply entrenched inequalities, women are unable to act independently. If they decide to leave their husbands, they are left without anything, including housing for themselves and their children (Falletisch, 2008). Within these patriarchal communities, domestic abuse is common, and despite everyone knowing about it, the matter is never acknowledged. Viljoen (2008) describes how, if someone was badly hurt or absent from work, everyone would know, but the matter would not be discussed. Accordingly, if someone were to speak out against the domestic abuse, or if

a woman wanted to apply for a protection order, it would be met with criticism. Related to this, criticism extends to occasions where there are injuries, as victims are blamed for their own injuries. In turn, women encourage victims of domestic violence not to use the law as protection, but to hit back. Further, they are discouraged from leaving their husbands or the farm (Falletisch, 2008). Once again, this demonstrates the pattern of violence and how it is used as a tool for establishing power within patriarchal families. This does not only negatively impact women but extends to the whole family. Children are exposed and learn this type of behaviour, thereby strengthening the cycle of violence and patriarchy (Viljoen, 2008).

#### **2.4.4. Access to resources**

The geographical position and vast distance between towns and farms remains central to the way that farm workers and dwellers struggle to access resources in cases of emergency and in general (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). The inaccessibility of farms, as private property, remains a major issue, since government officials, NGOs and social workers all complain that visits to farms are unwelcome and even dangerous (Atkinson, 2007). Limited access to resources further strengthens the paternalistic hold farmers have on their workers (Kheswa, 2015). Atkinson (2007) has criticised the government by arguing that the definition of the modern state is its ability to provide universal services. Accordingly, she asserts that it reflects poorly on a government that if it is unable to access certain privately-owned land. Furthermore, Cronje (2015) and Atkinson (2007) state that farmers still supply the bulk of services to farm workers and dwellers. They argue that local farming communities are entitled to basic services and resources provided by the state. Through this limitation, it is clear that the lack and inaccessibility of government resources is negatively impacting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. They are continually relying more on the farmer and less on the state, thus strengthening the paternalistic hold.

## **2.5. CONCLUSION**

The chapter set out to illustrate the contributing factors that negatively impact the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Literature delineates three overarching factors, namely historical factors, work context and living conditions. Historical factors refer to the various

eras throughout South African history, and how these time periods have shaped the wine industry. It is within these historical eras that exploitive practices, poor working- and living conditions, paternalism and the 'dop' system were developed and maintained. This was done to ensure that the farmer had complete control over their workforce to maximise profit, and led to a legacy within the wine industry where farm workers and their families are left vulnerable, powerless, and dependent.

The work context highlights current working conditions and its effect on farm workers. Further, it depicts employment on farms as a physically draining job characterised by long working hours and days in gruelling conditions. In addition, numerous workers are not being adequately compensated, with devious contract negotiations, subpar wages, and unfair deductions being common. This is worsened by the continued non-compliance to labour regulations on the part of some farmers, which results in a failure to provide a safe working environment. The increase in factors leading to unemployment and how this is being used by farmers as weapons to force employees to work on exploitive terms was also discussed.

Living conditions entail the various problems affecting the wellbeing of farm workers and their families outside of work. On-farm housing remains a central and complex issue, seeing as there are considerable problems relating to subpar housing conditions, ownership, and evictions. Furthermore, alcohol abuse among residents remain a concerning issue, with a high number of individuals engaging in risky levels of drinking. On wine farms, alcohol use has become a ritual and habitual in nature, and remains a fundamental source of violence. Especially within patriarchal families, men use violence to establish dominance. The continued use of alcohol and violence assists in preserving issues that are plaguing farming communities. Farm workers are left powerless to address their circumstances, since many have limited to no resources. This culmination of issues regarding living conditions has severely impacted the wellbeing of various farm residents, as a result of them being stuck in a cycle of poor housing, alcohol abuse and violence, with a lack of resources to address it.

In short, chapter 2 focused on identifying contributing factors that negatively impact the wellbeing of wine farm workers, whereas chapter 3 will shift the focus to identifying contributing factors that positively affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This will be

done by highlighting contributing factors and the role of social work within a social justice perspective.



## CHAPTER 3

# CONTRIBUTING FACTORS THAT POSITIVELY IMPACT THE WELLBEING OF WINE FARM WORKERS

### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

The current social and economic challenges wine farm workers in South Africa face, as discussed in the previous chapter, stem from a long history of colonialism, segregation, apartheid and post-apartheid perceptions, as well as marginalisation (Atkinson, 2007). This damaging history has had a significant impact on their wellbeing. Ever since, the wine industry has been seeking solutions to rectify the past and to promote and protect the wellbeing of current and future wine farm workers (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). This has seen the utilisation of various contributing factors that have positively impacted their wellbeing, including EWPs, ethical trade associations, trade unions, advocating and activist groups, NGOs and agritourism. Consequently, this chapter, will discuss the effectiveness of each of these protective factors and illustrate the various roles social workers occupy within them through the lens of a social justice perspective.

### 3.2. SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

According to Rawls (1971), social justice is primarily concerned with the fair distribution of primary goods within a society. The concept is based on three defining principles, the first, otherwise referred to as the freedom principle, asserting that everyone has to be entitled to equal right to basic liberty. The second, otherwise referred to as the difference principle, considers social and economic inequalities to be unacceptable unless arranged to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged. Finally, the third, also known as the equal opportunity principle, commands that differences or inequalities should be “attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity” (Rawls, 1971:302). In this light, Swenson (1998) puts forth that populations at risk are those from whom social resources have been unfairly withheld.

Kam (2014) asserts that the aforementioned social justice principles impact the social work profession and have directed the profession to working with disadvantaged groups

whilst upholding human rights, liberty, and equal opportunity. Taking into consideration the previous chapter regarding the contributing factors that negatively impact the wellbeing of wine farm workers, it is evident that they have often been treated unfairly, disrespected and stripped of their dignity. A social justice perspective allows for an acknowledgement of the injustices wine farm workers have been subject to – such as oppression and harmful working- and living conditions – whilst exploring and investing in the protective factors that positively impact them. It is also important to understand that social justice is the responsibility of all social workers, and involves attention to diversity, oppression, and populations at risk (Swenson, 1998). Accordingly, the roles of social workers within the identified protective factors will be highlighted, as they are expected to influence social policy, engage in social action and advocate for disadvantaged groups such as wine farm workers.

### **3.3. EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMMES**

Within post-apartheid South Africa, many wine farm workers still face problems, both within their working and personal lives. For instance, service delivery, especially in rural areas, remains poor. Considering that most farms and its workers are geographically isolated, they thus receive very little support from social service organisations (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Due to this, various authors argue that EWP companies and services are becoming increasingly important within the agricultural sector (Botes *et al.*, 2014; Attridge, 2012; Barrett, 2012).

EWPs can be described as worksite focused programmes designed to provide confidential information, support, and counselling to employees with personal and work-related problems (Barrett, 2012). From a social work perspective an EWP, as a specific method of service delivery, is a programme or service offered by employers to employees in order to prevent, alleviate or eliminate employment and social problems by promoting job satisfaction, productivity and overall social functioning (Barker, 1995). Many wine farm employees suffer from emotional issues, substance abuse, family conflicts, mental health concerns and other health disorders that interfere with work effectivity. A loss in effectivity severely impacts work performance and ultimately costs the producers money, which is why many employers have turned to EWP services to address the abovementioned

problems (Attridge, 2012). EWPs are mutually beneficial for both employer and employee, as employees gain access to on-site social services assisting them in addressing work-related and personal problems, whereas employers are ensured that employee productivity remains high (Botes *et al.*, 2014). Having quick and easy access to professionally trained and licensed counsellors from EWPs is an important benefit for any organisation, especially as, although they are profoundly undertreated, substance abuse and mental health disorders are among the most common problems affecting work performance (Attridge, 2012).

### **3.3.1. Models of EWPs**

Although the types of services offered through EWPs vary from organisation to organisation, they are typically delivered through one of three basic staffing models. The internal model employs EWP staff directly within the organisation, whereas the external model occurs when the sponsoring organisation enters into a contract agreement with an outside EWP service provider. Finally, the hybrid model shares elements from both models in that there is a full-time EWP employee who is also assisted by an external contact personnel (Botes *et al.*, 2014; Attridge, 2012). According to Attridge (2012), EWP providers perform five types of activities, including service to individuals, services for managers and supervisors, services for the organisation, liaison services to support other programmes and services and administrative services for the sponsor. However, arguably the most essential service of an EWP is to provide confidential counselling services to employees, management, and their family members when needed on a 24/7 basis.

### **3.3.2. Core practices of EWPs**

Attridge (2012) discusses the core practices that define the distinguishing properties of delivering EWP services. The first is work focus, which refers to the main reason organisations purchase EWP services, which is to improve at-work performance. This is essential, considering that work problems impair work effectivity and efficiency (Botes *et al.*, 2014). Thus, an EWP must first and foremost ensure that work performance is improved and remains stable. The second practice is the EWP counsellor's expert ability in identifying employee behavioural problems that might impact performance. This also includes a thorough assessment of job performance issues (e.g. tardiness, absence, work

relationships) to address issues that are present or that might arise (Attridge, 2012; Barrett, 2012). Attridge (2012) argues that EWP services should be judged primarily on their ability to improve job performance and ensure an improvement in employee wellbeing. Accordingly, the third practice is manager training, as EWP services can only be successful if key employees within the organisation understand and cooperate with them. This is essential, as managers and supervisors are required to refer workers to the EWP service for assistance (Attridge, 2012). The fourth core practice is that of linkages and referrals, as an EWP provider must be able to utilise resources available to assist the employee. This involves referring employees to possible resources if the EWP councillor is unable to assist with the problem. Offering this link to individuals' tailored problems within their local environment serves to be extremely empowering and encourages confidence and self-efficacy, characteristics that are needed for an employee to make lifestyle changes (Attridge, 2012). The last core practice is that of addressing alcohol and drug abuse, which is a particularly significant problem for many employees working on wine farms (Gossage *et al.*, 2014). EWP services should offer support and management programmes equipped in assisting the employee to change their habits or referral for further professional assistance if needed (Attridge, 2012). The abovementioned core practices are what is required for EWP services to be beneficial for the employees.

### **3.3.3. Benefits of EWPs**

If implemented correctly, EWPs can have significant benefits for those participating in the services (Berrett, 2012). These services typically focus on relieving the stress of employees regarding finances, substance abuse, health problems, career crises and job demands. They also allow employees to take responsibility for their own wellbeing, which may hold further benefits such as increasing mental wellness, energy, resilience and life and job satisfaction (Sieberhagen, Pienaar & Els, 2011). EWPs also benefit employers, who, without them, are often left to try and assist employees with problems that reach beyond their field of expertise. Therefore, the introduction of EWP services contributes towards reduced absenteeism, increased presenteeism, meeting labour legislation requirements, improved industrial relations, increased employee performance and productivity, reduced health care costs and a reduction in accidents (Sieberhagen, Pienaar & Els, 2011). It is clear to see how these benefits have motivated employers

within the wine industry to commit toward providing EWP services within their organisation (Botes, van der Westhuizen & Alpaslan, 2014).

#### **3.3.4. Effectiveness**

It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness and success of EWPs within the South African context, and more specifically, within the agricultural sector. This is because, as evident from the study's literature review, there is a clear lack of information pertaining to EWP services in South Africa. However, the researcher's e-mail correspondence with a company specialising in the field of EWP services on farms in South Africa provided a glimpse of the effectiveness of EWPs on wine farms. The respondent illustrated this by referring to a company that they render services to, which consists of four wine farms in the Western Cape (Le Roux, 2020). In explicating the work done by this company, they stated that in 2019 there were 101 cases requiring intervention, of which all received counselling services by the respective social workers. In such cases, the employees and their family members could utilise the service (Le Roux, 2020). Regarding the effectiveness, the respondent confirmed that 37 cases were successfully terminated, which indicates the success of the EWP service. They further asserted that the cases that remain open continue to receive maintenance and support despite many reported problems being addressed effectively. Hepworth *et al.*, (2013) agrees with this, and asserts that cases should not be terminated unless there has been progress and readiness for termination, in which case the client can function optimally without the assistance of the social worker. Related to this, the e-mail respondent further elaborated that, where reactive services such as individual counselling is more successful, more time and attention could be given to preventative services such as wellness promotion, talks, alongside trainings aimed at relevant topics such as substance abuse, interpersonal skills and domestic violence among others (Le Roux, 2020).

#### **3.3.5. Need for EWPs**

Despite the effectiveness and increased use of EWPs on wine farms, there remains many farm workers who receive no social services and are completely dependent on their employers, only strengthening the already existing paternalistic hold (Young-Hauser *et al.*, 2015). This can be seen in a research study conducted by Botes *et al.* (2014), where

farm workers were asked how they deal with their problems on the farm. In their responses, they indicated that they receive assistance from God or the farmer. Assistance with personal or work-related problems from social workers were indicated to be non-existing, as participants pointed out that social workers are more there for people whose pay is taken away (Botes *et al.*, 2014). As can be seen from studies like this one, the need for EWP services on farms remains high amongst employees and employers alike. Assistance with personal and work-related problems should not come down to divine intervention or a paternalistic employer but should rather be dealt with through the use of EWPs.

### **3.4. ETHICAL TRADE ASSOCIATIONS**

South Africa's wine industry has seen considerable growth throughout the past decade, and despite a decrease in vineyard areas, wine production has significantly improved (Greenberg, 2013). While the domestic market has stagnated, exports have flourished, as wine has become the single largest agricultural export of South Africa (Sawis, 2018). This has provided new opportunities for the wine industry to expand but has also caused additional challenges. Whereas the domestic market in South Africa had little concern for aspects of ethical trade or fair trade, international markets view it as paramount. To gain access to international markets, this has led to the creation of ethical trade associations that work to ensure that basic minimum social conditions are met. Codes of conduct are developed, setting out standards that must be adhered to combined with a verification process (Greenberg, 2013). In other words, for farmers to gain access to international markets, they must agree to an ethical trade association's code of conduct, ensuring basic minimum social working- and living conditions for their workers, as well as its verification process. Within South Africa, the two largest ethical trade associations are WIETA and Fairtrade.

WIETA is a multi-stakeholder consisting of civil society groups, labour inspectors, producers, and the Department of Labour. Further, it is a non-profit voluntary organisation which aims to promote ethical trading along the wine value chain. This is achieved by entering in dialogue with various farms, providing training to employers and employees within the industry and through independent assessments (ethical audits) on farms

(Devereux *et al.*, 2017). In 2012, WIETA launched its Seal of Origin, which is an authentication of ethical accreditation. This also meant that the producers complied to the set-out code of conduct in providing basic minimum social working- and living conditions (Losh, 2012). Since the seal's launch, many major importers (e.g. Systembolaget, a Swedish monopoly and large buyer of South African wines), have insisted that all wines imported must be WIETA accredited (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). This has forced many producers to reluctantly apply for membership and accreditation. Since then, WIETA's membership has grown significantly and the association has become the biggest driver for social change within the wine industry (Bek *et al.*, 2007). Like WIETA's seal, Fairtrade also offers ethical accreditation needed for producers to export wine. In 2003, the world's first Fairtrade ethical accreditation was given to wine producers in South Africa (Herman, 2012). Since then, Fairtrade has continued providing ethical accreditation and working on establishing various Fairtrade project foundations (e.g. crèches, mobile clinics and sport fields for farm workers). This was done through the Fairtrade foundation, which aims to improve labour and living condition for farming communities (Devereux *et al.*, 2017).

#### **3.4.1. WIETA auditing process**

Seeing as WIETA is the biggest ethical trading association within the wine industry, in order to evaluate its impact on farm workers' wellbeing, one must first consider how its independent assessments (ethical audits) have forced employers to comply with WIETA's code of conduct in providing adequate working- and living conditions. It is important to note that WIETA is no more than a codification of existing law. The association's standards do not imply a transformation of existing labour relations. Instead, it requires producers to do what they should already be doing, as prescribed by law (Greenberg, 2012). As already discussed in chapter 2, the Department of Labour has struggled to implement and monitor policies and legislation, which has left a gap which WIETA has been able to fill (Devereux, 2019).

WIETA members seeking ethical accreditation must commit themselves to undertake an independent participative and multidisciplinary assessment of their ethical trade and labour practice by undertaking an ethical audit (Bek *et al.*, 2007). The ethical audit process requires members, as well as their wine or grape suppliers, to undergo the audit process.

This means that, in order for a cellar to export wine, both they and their grape suppliers (various wine farms from the region) must participate in the audit. According to the WIETA Audit Process and Methodology (2016), the first step in this ethical process is the risk evaluation system. This involves training in suitable ethical business practices, where members are encouraged to attend workshops on the WIETA code of conduct requirements. It also includes the development of risk evaluation systems through a self-assessment questionnaire that helps members to identify key areas of potential risk. The second step in the process is the request for a social audit to be conducted. This can be requested by the member, member of employment site, supplier, buying company or any other party with an interest in the commercial relationship and social performance of the employment site. Upon the audit request WIETA requires the employment site to complete a pre-audit employment site profile, which includes a comprehensive overview of the site and all its employees (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016).

Step three of the WEITA auditing process involves preparation for the audit, which includes background and content review, audit organisation (type, team, length), communicating audit arrangements and supplier preparation. Audits must take place during full operation (harvesting season), when all staff, including seasonal workers are present. In addition, audits can be announced (at a mutually convenient date agreed with employment site), unannounced (the employment site has no prior warning of the audit) and semi-announced (the employment site is aware that an audit will take place during a given time). The audit is conducted by a social auditor who is self-employed, or chosen by WIETA, whereas the auditor conducts individual interviews with 15% of the workforce and thoroughly checks all documentation (working contracts, etc.) to ensure that the employment site adheres to WIETA's code of conduct (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016). Step four of the process consists of the audit itself. and involves an employment site tour, management and workers' interviews, document reviews, meetings concerning the findings, as well as off-site visits (contract workers) if necessary (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016). In turn, step five consists of the audit output, which includes audit reporting. The report consists of a description of the current situation, including how specific requirements are managed, and is accompanied by evidence. If any infringements or non-compliances are found, this is clearly described in terms of



frequency and the number of people involved and accompanied by evidence. Further, the report incorporates confidentiality, as none of the workers' personal information is shared. The purpose of this measure is to protect the workers from backlash from employers if any infringements do arise (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016). If members are not fully compliant with WIETA's code of conduct, they are requested to develop and sign an improvement plan in consultation with workers (Greenberg, 2013).

The intervals between audits are determined by the risk evaluation systems that provides the employment site with an audit risk category, which is based on their first audit and the amount of infringements or non-compliances. Risk classification is split into four categories from A to D. Category A is no risk, with an audit every 3 years, while B is low risk, with an audit every 2 years, C is medium risk with a yearly audit, and D is high risk, with a yearly audit as well as a follow-up audit after corrective actions have been taken (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016). The final step in the auditing process is where the employment site receives ethical certification, which stipulates that employers will continue to improve and review ethical business practices (WIETA audit process and methodology, 2016).

It is clear to see how the auditing process is extremely thorough, as it incorporates an evaluation of all elements of a working farm. In short, WIETA's auditing process has placed the responsibility to implement and maintain various policies and legislation that help to ensure that working- and living conditions remain fair and just back on employers (Bek *et al.*, 2007). Further, the association has played an integral role in improving working- and living conditions on farms throughout the past century and has had unparalleled success within the industry (Devereux *et al.*, 2017).

#### **3.4.2. Evaluation of the success and limitations of ethical trade associations**

Both WIETA and Fairtrade have achieved considerable accomplishments within the wine industry, as they have been able to influence producers who have been otherwise reluctant to change (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). This has increasingly caused producers to comply with policies and legislation, which in turn has ensured adequate working- and living conditions for workers (Losh, 2012). Additionally, ethical trade associations have allowed workers to have greater interactions with trade unions that have been otherwise

barred from entering and engaging on farms (Devereux, 2019). This allows trade unions to assist farm workers to negotiate for decent wages, housing and health and safety standards, as well as programmes to improve environmental sustainability (Greenberg, 2013). According to Herman (2012), the Fairtrade Foundation has had a positive social, economic, environmental and empowering impact on farm workers. This has influenced negotiations between employers and employees to incorporate fairness, while still benefitting both parties. Furthermore, ethical trade associations have encouraged employers to empower workers and farming communities through worker equity schemes (Bek *et al.*, 2007).

The influence of consumers has also been enhanced through ethical trade associations, as consumers would rather buy ethical accredited wines where they can be reassured that the product has been produced or sourced ethically. This has influenced various international retailers to conform to consumers' demand to only buy ethically accredited wines (Bek *et al.*, 2007). This transfers the pressure back to local farmers, who either must conform to joining ethical trading association and bring their practices up to ethical standard, or risk losing international trade (Greenberg, 2013). Along with the ethical auditing process, WIETA has made available additional programmes that aim to empower staff and managers of wine farms. These include programmes such as Foundations of Personal Leadership, which incorporates self-worth and confidence that can be used in participating in community life and Foundations of Healthy Community, which helps build the insights and skills needed to manage a responsible, ethical, and thriving farm communities through improved relationships and communication (WIETA, 2019). Both of the aforementioned examples, along with the ethical auditing process, help to ensure that all farm workers within the wine industry work and live in adequate conditions, along with assisting in community development.

Despite its success, limitations regarding ethical trade associations that draw criticism from various authors still loom. According to Devereux *et al.* (2017) and Losh (2012), ethical certification has led to improvements on farms. However, what is concerning is that trade unions, NGOs and civil rights groups continue to discover and report labour rights violations on WIETA and Fairtrade accredited farms. Currently, there is no mechanism that can speedily and effectively deal with such violations. Further criticism

regarding the ethical audit process includes that inexperienced and unprofessional auditors are involved in the process. Workers argue that they have little knowledge regarding agriculture and have limited insight into farming communities or the challenges they face (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). Further, they indicate that, in many audits, the farmers select participants for the interviews, which are conducted in the farm management offices. Here, workers feel too much discomfort and are too intimidated to share their true experiences, as they fear victimisation if the farm gets a poor report. The ethical auditing processes have also been criticised as being too lenient, as most audits are announced, giving the farmer ample time to prepare and fix any infringements. The audit cycles every three years (in the case of an A risk evaluation), also allows for multiple infringements to occur in the time between audits (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). Fairtrade has received similar criticism, as numerous cases of labour and housing rights violations have been reported on Fairtrade accredited farms. Farmers have complained that Fairtrade only benefits the retailers, who retain the bulk of the revenue and power within the value chain (Greenberg, 2013). Similarly, workers have accused farmers of retaining most of the profits from worker equity schemes, stating that money is never invested into the farming communities as promised (Bek *et al.*, 2007). Workers further complain that ethical trade initiatives (e.g. Seal of Origin) tend to only benefit the permanent workforce and ignore the wellbeing of seasonal workers (Du Toit, 2003).

The rise of WIETA, as the leading ethical accreditor within the wine industry, has had a damaging effect on Fairtrade and its accredited wines. WIETA aims to enforce basic rights throughout the industry, whereas Fairtrade is far more ambitious in trying to ensure basic rights and reinvigorating entire communities through selling wine. This makes WIETA a far more attractive partner for farmers trying to get their wines accredited and creates unnecessary competition between both ethical trade associations which does not benefit the workers (Losh, 2012). Despite WIETA's membership increasing, it has struggled to recruit new members, whereas some have viewed it as an opportunity and many still perceive it as a threat (Bek *et al.*, 2007). According to Devereux *et al.* (2017), most farm workers are unaware of any ethical trade association, with instances where they do know only existing because the farm had been recently audited. Farm workers working on farms that export wine were more knowledgeable regarding the ethical

accreditation. However, this illustrates a limited impact of ethical trade associations on the broader wine industry.

Despite numerous limitations and critique, ethical trade association's success cannot be underestimated. WIETA and Fairtrade have made significant contributions in establishing and monitoring adequate working- and living conditions on farms, where the Department of Labour has otherwise failed. Seeing as ethical accreditation (e.g. WIETA's Seal of Origin) is relatively young, it remains to be seen whether current successes will be able to transcend to the whole wine industry.

### **3.5. TRADE UNIONS**

There are three groups that play an active role in ensuring that farm workers' rights within the workplace are upheld. These role players include employers, such as farmers and farm managers, government organisations, such as the Department of Labour, and workers' organisations, such as trade unions (Devereux, 2019). Webb and Webb (1920) define a trade union as a continuous association on wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their employment. Trade unions are responsible for engaging with their members to guard against violations within the workplace and to assist in collective bargaining regarding wages and benefits (Falletisch, 2008). Section 23 of the Constitution (1996) gives all workers the right to join and participate in trade unions. According to Webb (2017), the impact of trade unions is far reaching, as they play an essential part in eliminating paternalism on farms. However, this has been difficult within the agricultural sector, with trade unions struggling to attract and maintain members (Devereux, 2019).

The primary reason for the failure of trade unions has been employers' attitude towards them. Where workers consistently viewed them as helpful resources, farmers felt threatened by their motive regarding farms (Falletisch, 2008). This has resulted in hostility from farmers and actions to discourage workers from joining. Within Loxton's (2015:41) study, one participant eloquently summarises a farmer's view of trade unions as "wanneer 'n vakbond by die deur instap, verhoudings by die agterdeur uitstap," which can be translated to mean that, when a trade union enters the front door, relationships exit the back door. Accordingly, some farmers refuse trade unions access to the farm, making

recruitment impossible. This, combined with the geographical isolation of certain farms, prevents trade unions from gaining a foothold (Devereux, 2019). Loxton (2015) describes how employers try to deter their workers from joining, stating that, when employees join, some farmers resort to taking away benefits (e.g. transport, bonuses) and refuse to assist workers with any problem, suggesting that they ask their trade union instead. Therefore, according to Devereux *et al.* (2017), low membership amongst farm workers can also be attributed to farm workers' view of trade unions. In general, they have a bad reputation, as members complain of lack of visibility and communication, false promises, and high member fees. Farm workers further view joining a trade union as a waste of money due to poor service delivery (Devereux, 2019). Memberships have also been on a steady decline after the minimum wage increase in March 2013, with a constant increase in the minimum wage deterring workers from joining (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). The sheer amount of active trade unions is also not assisting in unifying the industry. Visser and Ferrer (2015) describe how there are 22 different unions in the Boland district alone, with only 12 being registered. This damages their image, and discourages new members from joining while only encouraging farmers from boycotting trade unions on their farms.

Trade unions have been reluctant in engaging with various activist groups, NGOs and social service organisations to deliver improved services. Instead, they have been accused of 'stealing' union members and operating without authorisation from farm workers (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Considering all the above-mentioned factors, it can be concurred that trade unions' current modes of operation are hampering their growth within the agricultural sector, although they have potential in eliminating paternalism, as well as protecting and promoting the wellbeing of farm workers.

### **3.6. ADOVOCATING, ACTIVIST GROUPS AND NGOS**

Advocating, activist groups and NGOs play a vital role in protecting and enhancing farm workers' wellbeing, as they aim to educate them regarding their rights, mobilise them to claim these rights and campaign for their improved lives and livelihoods (Devereux, 2019). Grassroots organisations such as the Women on Farms Project (WFP), Pebbles Project and Vinpro only make up a small portion of the various NGOs working on farms. However, the abovementioned all offer a unique perspective in their mode of operation.

WFP is a registered NGO working with women in commercial agriculture, mainly within the Western Cape Province. In so doing, the project utilises trainings and events to strengthen the capacity of women who live and work on farms and assists women to claim their rights and fulfil their needs. Further, it influences society to treat women living on farms with dignity and respect (Women on Farms Project, 2019). According to the WFP's annual report, activities are divided into four programme categories, namely Health and Empowerment Programmes, Labour Rights Programmes, Land and Housing Programmes and Young Women's Programmes. Each category includes various programmes and events that enhance and protect the wellbeing of women residing on farms and their families (Women on Farms Project, 2013).

Health and Empowerment Programmes combine various trainings (e.g. substance abuse), mentoring and support, community initiatives (e.g. Women's day events) and campaigns to raise awareness and educate participants regarding their physical and emotional health. This also includes casework in general, where WFP assists with cases of substance abuse, gender-based violence, child abuse and family counselling (Women on Farms Project, 2016). Labour Rights Programmes are geared towards educating workers regarding their rights within the workplace and empowering workers to act where their rights are neglected. This is done through the use of trainings (e.g. labour rights trainings), participation in labour research, monitoring (e.g. site visits by WFP), campaigns (e.g. workers day) and case work, where WFP assists farm workers with labour disputes with employers (Women on Farms Project, 2016). Land and Housing Programmes address workers' access to land and on-farm housing through trainings (e.g. land rights workshops), participation in establishing legislation (e.g. public hearings regarding land and housing issues) and case work, where WFP assists with eviction cases and protecting workers against illegal evictions (Women on Farms Project, 2016). Lastly, Young Women Programmes focus on educating and empowering young women on farms, enabling them to reach their full potential. This is done using trainings (e.g. career planning), structure building (e.g. gender-based violations support groups) and community-wide initiatives (e.g. mother and daughter relationship building) (Women on Farms Project, 2016). Here, WFP activities aim to address the vulnerability of women on farms and make considerable contributions towards protecting their wellbeing.

WFP places great emphasis on education, which is used to drive empowerment amongst women on farms. Similarly, the Pebbles Project's main emphasis is also placed on education in that it is focused on enriching the lives of disadvantaged children and families within the Winelands farming communities. This is done through providing support and intervention within five key areas, namely education (e.g. early childhood development centres), health (e.g. clinics), nutrition (food schemes), community (e.g. building provisions) and protection (e.g. social work services) (Pebbles Project, 2019). The Pebbles Project has seen success within each of its key areas. This has allowed for the NGO's expansion into more farming communities. Currently, the Pebbles Project works in various farming communities in and around Stellenbosch, Wellington, Citrusdal and the Hemel en Aarde Valley.

According to the Pebbles Project's 2016 statistics regarding education, 1 393 children were educated within 35 early childhood development centres and 28 after school clubs (Pebbles Project, 2017). Furthermore, with assistance from them, 6 learners graduated from tertiary education. Moreover, regarding health, 5 290 clients accessed medical, dental, and psychiatric care through the Pebbles Project's association with the Owethu Clinic. With reference to nutrition, they provided a total of 85 000 meals, fed 894 children per day and served an additional 126 124 meals at the various early childhood development centres and after school clubs. Within the various farming communities, four outdoor playing areas were created. Lastly, regarding protection, the Pebbles Project provided 35 families including 52 children and 43 adults with therapy and intervention programmes. Additionally, 115 parent training sessions were presented. Despite these statistics being relatively small considering the sheer size of the wine industry, the Pebbles Project has still managed to succeed in addressing the various issues plaguing farming communities. Through their addressing of the five key areas identified on the farms they work with; they have made considerable contributions in protecting and improving the wellbeing of the farm workers and their families.

Unlike the WFP and the Pebbles Project, who focus on addressing the wellbeing of farm workers and their families, Vinpro is more concerned with the wider wine industry. It is a non-profit company which represents 2 500 wine producers, cellars, and industry stakeholders. Accordingly, its focus is on cooperating with government and industry role

players to ensure the profitability and sustainability of the industry (Vinpro, 2016). Vinpro's operations incorporate four areas, namely advocacy, specialised products and services, information transfer and people development. The latter, in particular, is critical when discussing the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

In 2013, Vinpro established the Vinpro Foundation to assist with addressing people's development. The foundation assists the wine industry and greater agricultural sector to fund meaningful programmes, primarily in rural farming communities. The foundation identified three areas in which it aims to assist and drive social change, including ethical trade, harm reduction and early childhood development, as well as leadership and skills. With reference to ethical trade, the Vinpro Foundation assists producers with a subsidy for WIETA's ethical audit process, as well as supporting producers in improving working- and living conditions (Vinpro Foundation, 2019). Regarding harm reduction and early childhood development, the foundation funds registered social workers to offer their services on farms. The focus of this is to address the high rate of substance abuse in order to quit or manage usage. This is done through individual counselling and mobilising state and private resources to assist farm workers. Social workers also monitor early childhood development centres for signs of abuse or neglect. Furthermore, social workers are used to train aftercare facilitators in order to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills (Vinpro Foundation, 2019). Lastly, the Foundation focuses on leadership and skills by investing in deserving workers and providing them access to supporting training initiatives that help them realise their full potential, thereby strengthening the wine industry (Vinpro Foundation, 2019).

Despite the differences between the WFP, the Pebbles Project and Vinpro, all of which operate differently, each of these organisations are geared towards achieving social change and improving and preserving the wellbeing of wine farm workers and their families.

### **3.7. AGRITOURISM**

Unlike the other protective factors, agritourism is not primarily concerned with protecting the wellbeing of farm workers. However, it offers copious amount of benefits for wine farm workers and employers alike. Agritourism can be defined as a commercial enterprise on



a working farm conducted for the enjoyment of visitors which generates ancillary income (Van Niekerk, 2013). In so doing, it involves the introduction of supplementary tourism activities on a working farm to add an extra revenue stream. It has been identified as a potential economic pillar for rural development within South Africa (Barbieri, Sotomayor & Aguilar, 2019). According to Van Niekerk (2013), agritourism is critical to promote employment, vitality, and sustainability of rural and farming communities. Thus, it includes various advantages that contribute towards enhancing the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

Firstly, agritourism increases the revenue of the farm, which influences its sustainability. With a more sustainable farm, workers are guaranteed permanent employment. If a farm has a healthy revenue stream, farmers are less likely to turn to alternative employment practices (e.g. casualisation, externalisation, mechanisation) to save money (Van Niekerk, 2013). Secondly, increased tourism activities (e.g. wine tastings, food vendors and retailers) all provide employment. This means that on-farm residents have increased employment opportunities (Barbieri *et al.*, 2019). Related to this is the third benefit, namely that farm workers' standard of living is improved, as when tourists spend money, farmers are obligated to improve on-farm housing. This is because poor housing can affect the aesthetic composition of the farm deter tourists from visiting (Kim *et al.*, 2019). Fourthly, with increased tourism and the money it generates, funds become available to improve infrastructure. Rural communities, including wine farm workers, thus benefit from new and upgraded roads, parks and public spaces improved to suit tourists' needs (WESGRO, 2017). Taking all of these benefits into consideration, it is clear that, overall, agritourism builds resilience by providing added revenue stream, employment, improve standard of living and infrastructure.

Van Niekerk (2013) insists that agritourism does not have inherent disadvantages, but maintains that there are risks and limitations in establishing tourism on farms. Similarly, Sharpley and Vass (2006) warn that agritourism is not a 'magic wand' that will speed up economic development. It does not guarantee success, as there are a variety of factors that have an influence. For instance, success is linked to natural scenery or cultural heritage, and not all farms will be able to offer this, thereby impacting the success of introducing tourism (Sharpley & Vass, 2006). Further, the cost of diverting resources from

farming to tourism may negatively impact on the farm's financial stability. Many farmers and workers lack the required skills to successfully establish and maintain an agritourism business. Lastly, there remains legal risk in allowing the public to enter a farm where heavy machinery and vehicles operate (Van Niekerk, 2013).

Unlike other protective factors, agritourism does not fall within the framework of social work. This makes it difficult to evaluate social work's position within agritourism. Nonetheless, the system clearly has the potential to develop a community, and thus social workers have the responsibility to connect farm workers and their families with the appropriate resources regarding it. Social workers need to educate community members as well as farmers on the inherent benefits associated with agritourism. Despite its primary goal being to increase revenue, one can clearly see how the system does not only benefit the farmer, but also all individuals working and living on the farm. In short, agritourism thus provides an additional revenue stream, employment, improved standard of living as well as infrastructure. All the aforementioned factors make considerable contributions towards protecting and improving wine farm workers' wellbeing.

### **3.8. ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK**

A function of social work is that of social justice, which, as previously discussed, takes into consideration the disadvantaged position of the farm workers whilst promoting the protective factors that positively impact their wellbeing. In order to achieve this, social workers take on various roles to achieve specific tasks. These roles are illustrated within each of the previously discussed contributing factors. Some of the roles social workers perform include enabler, analyst/evaluator, negotiator, and advocate. The role of enabler consists of the social worker helping the clients to cope with situations or transitional stress. In so doing, the social worker conveys hope, reduces resistance and ambivalence, recognises and manages feelings, identifies personal strengths and social assets and assists in identifying goals and achieving them (Chechak, n.d.). This role is featured within EWP services, where social workers work to provide confidential information, support, and counselling to employees with personal and work-related problems (Barrett, 2012).

The role of analyst/evaluator in turn requires social workers to be knowledgeable of how various systems function to be able to analyse or evaluate their effectiveness (Hepworth,

Rooney, Rooney & Storm-Gottfried, 2013). This role speaks directly to the role social workers need to play with assisting both farmers and ethical auditing associations. Chechak (n.d.) describes the role of negotiator as representing an organisation, a group, or an individual that is trying to gain something from another group or system. This role needs to be utilised by social workers when navigating the tenuous relationship between farm workers and the various unions. The social worker needs to take on the role of negotiator to assist both parties in forming a working relationship. Lastly, the role of advocate involves directly representing a course of action on behalf of an individual, group or community with the goal being to secure or retain social justice (Chechak, n.d.; Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney & Storm-Gottfried, 2013). This role is mostly utilised by social workers working within various activist groups and NGOs that play a vital role in protecting and enhancing farm workers' wellbeing. It is important to note that one role is not necessarily linked to a specific protective factor, but instead that the various roles are used interchangeably by social workers where necessary.

### **3.9. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, all of the protective factors discussed are continuously growing and expanding within the wine industry, reaching more and more farming communities. This has resulted in an ever-increasing improvement of the wellbeing of wine farm workers. EWPs have provided farm workers with on-farm assistance to help them in dealing with personal and work-related problems while also encouraging autonomy and improved production to benefit both employee and employer (Attridge, 2012). Ethical trade associations (e.g. WIETA and Fairtrade) have promoted ethical trade along the wine value chain through the use of dialogue with various farms, providing training to both employers and employees through ethical audits that force farmers to respect and comply with labour laws (Devereux *et al.*, 2017). Trade unions, where successfully active, have assisted farm workers in maintaining or improving working conditions and assisted in wage discussions with employers (Webb, 2017). Further, activist groups and NGOs have played a vital role in protecting and enhancing wine farm workers' wellbeing through educating them regarding their rights, mobilising them to claim these rights and campaigning for their improved lives and livelihoods (Devereux, 2019). Lastly, agritourism

assists in building resilience through providing added revenue stream, employment, improved standard of living and infrastructure opportunities (Barbieri *et al.*, 2019).

However, despite all the above-mentioned successes, there remain limitations within each of the discussed protective factors. This includes an overall reluctance from farmers to utilise protective factors and adhere to labour laws (Devereux, 2019). Furthermore, the various protective factors are expensive to maintain and have failed in reaching rural farming communities. There has also been little collaboration between the various organisations, as they have been discouraged from working with one another (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Of the different role players, social work has remained central within each of the protective factors, as the various roles taken on by social workers have assisted in the improving the wellbeing of wine farm workers. With this in mind, social workers need to have a greater representation within each protective factor in order to allow for further improvements. Accordingly, the next chapter will consist of the empirical study on the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This will be done by interviewing social workers and farm managers.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE CONTRIBUTING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AFFECTING THE WELLBEING OF WINE FARM WORKERS**

### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the fourth chapter is to analyse perceptions of social workers and farm managers, regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Chapter one laid the groundwork by providing literature on the research topic, presenting farm workers and farm dwellers as a marginalised group within the South African society. It also expressed the goal of the study, namely, to gain an understanding of the perceptions of professionals regarding the contributing- and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Chapter two set out to describe contributing factors that negatively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. This incorporated historical factors, the work context and living conditions. Chapter three focused on examining the protective factors that positively affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers within South Africa. The chapter identified and discussed protective factors, including EWPs, ethical auditing, trade unions, advocating, activist groups, NGOs, agritourism as well as the role of social work within each protective factor. Taking this background into account, this chapter will present the findings and perceptions of social workers and farm managers, regarding contributing- and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This will be presented in the form of graphs, tables, themes, sub-themes, and categories.

### **SECTION A**

Section A contains an overview of and reflection on the research methodology that was utilised for the research. The research methodology was discussed in more detail in chapter one.

## **4.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The following section will discuss the research approach, research design, sampling methods, data collection and data analysis utilised within the research study.

### **4.2.1. Research approach**

The study utilised a qualitative approach to reach the set objectives. Walliman (2011) describes a qualitative approach as focusing on information expressed in words, thoughts and experiences that assist in understanding the ideas and opinions of selected research participants. This research approach was used as it assisted in highlighting the narratives and voices of the participants regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Furthermore, a deductive logic of reasoning was utilised, which can be explained as moving from the general to the specific (Babbie, 2007). In other words, the literature study is done first to establish a general theoretical framework, after which the empirical study provides specific information regarding how this theory is applied in a real-world context through the narratives of the participants (Babbie, 2007). Utilising this approach allowed the researcher to first gain a deeper understanding and knowledge regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Despite the research being predominantly deductive, a movement did occur between inductive and deductive reasoning, as the researcher revisited literature after the empirical study.

### **4.2.2. Research design**

The study utilised a combination of exploratory and descriptive research designs. An exploratory research design aims to allow the researcher to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual with the need for such a research design stemming from the lack of basic information or a new area of interest (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). Conversely, a descriptive research design illustrates a clear picture of specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship and places emphasis on 'how' and 'why' questions. Accordingly, the researcher started with a well-defined subject and conducted the research to describe it accurately (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:96). Combining both of these research designs was ideal, as it enabled the researcher to provide a clear picture

regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. utilising in-depth information and descriptive accounts of contributing and protective factors.

#### **4.2.3. Sample methods**

The study utilised non-probability sampling, whereby each unit of the sample does not have an equal chance of being selected (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). In so doing, the researcher specifically identified certain individuals based on their experience with the processes. As part of non-probability sampling, both purposive sampling and snowball sampling were utilised. Purposive sampling interviews participants in a strategic manner where their characteristics contribute to the answering of the research questions. Alongside purposive sampling, snowball sampling was used, as the researcher utilised existing participants to identify other participants (Bless, Higson & Sithole, 2013). The reason for this combination of purposive and snowball sampling was due to the study's specific criteria of inclusion, which made it difficult to find appropriate participants. Thus, purposive sampling assisted in identifying specific participants that meet the criteria for inclusion, whereas snowball sampling enabled the researcher tap into the participants' personal network and knowledge base to find the harder to reach participants. Hence, the sampling methods used assisted the researcher in continuously identifying new participants from previous participants' recommendations.

The sample size for the study originally planned to be 20 participants. However, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the sample size was decreased to 16, as participants became more difficult to identify with a nationwide lockdown and transport limitations in place. This did not have a major impact, as saturation was reached with the reduced sample size. Saturation is reached when data that has been collected and analysed confirms the research question, which means that further data collection is unnecessary (Bryman, 2012). The sample size of eight social workers and eight farm managers was thus sufficient.

For social workers, the criteria for inclusion were that they be:

- Registered at the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP).

- Directly working within the field of EWPs and be delivering services on a wine farm.
- Have at least one year of experience.

The criteria for inclusion for farm managers were that they:

- Be employed by a farm owner or company and have no personal connection to the farm.
- Have at least four years' experience.

All of the eight social workers were from the same EWP organisation. For this reason, institutional permission was obtained, as illustrated in annexure 6. As for the eight farm managers, participants were contacted in their respective personal and professional capacities via telephone. All participants were informed of the purpose, benefits, and potential risks of the study prior to their respective interviews. Furthermore, they were briefed regarding how the research is an attempt to understand their personal experiences. As a result, they had the right to refuse to answer specific questions or to withdraw from the study at any time if necessary. See annexure 2 for the complete consent form. All interviews were conducted offsite and outside of their working hours so as not to interfere with their working processes and to protect their anonymity.

#### **4.2.4. Data collection**

A pilot study was utilised to assess the feasibility of the study and identify possible deficiencies (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). The pilot study was a small-scale implementation of the planned investigation, and consisted of two participants, one from each of the sample groups. It proved to be beneficial, as it highlighted flaws within the original semi-structured interview schedule. These flaws were addressed and rectified to ensure for a more sufficient and accurate interview schedule that ultimately led to successful interviews.

The research study was qualitative in nature and utilised a semi-structured interview schedule consisting of open and closed ended questions. The duration of interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes. The use of a semi-structured interview schedule was chosen, as it allows for deeper exploration and a more detailed account of a participant's beliefs, perceptions, and accounts regarding a certain topic (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). This was important, as participants were required to tap into their experiences and perceptions



regarding the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. The nature of a semi-structured interview schedule combined with open- and closed ended questions thus assisted in participants expressing their narratives. For a general overview of the semi-structured interview schedule see annexure 1.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the data collection process. The South African Government implemented strict lockdown procedures and social distancing measures to prevent the widespread disease from worsening (Reuter *et al.*, 2020). This impacted the study and was the main driving force behind why the sample size decreased from 20 to 16 as it became more difficult to identify and access participants. The Covid-19 pandemic also impacted the timeframe in which data was collected and extended the period due to participants having complicated working hours. The researcher took the decision to conduct all 16 interviews in a face-to-face manner, but under strict health and safety conditions. In each interview both the researcher and participant adhered to social distancing regulations (sitting at least 1.5m apart), wore masks and frequently sanitised their hands, before, during and after the interview. Ultimately the face-to-face interviews were a success as the researcher was able to gather vital information regarding the participants beliefs, perceptions, and accounts on the research topic. The participants who took part in this study were also not regarded as vulnerable, so face-to-face interviews were not seen as a threat to their health and wellbeing.

#### **4.2.5. Data analysis**

Data analysis is the process where the researcher inspects, transforms and models collected data, with the aim being on the discovery of useful information, drawing conclusions and making recommendations (Bless *et al.* 2013). The process of data analysis began after all 16 interviews were completed and manually transcribed to text format. The data collected was analysed using thematic content analysis, whereby the emphasis was on the examination of recorded data and identified patterns and themes within the collected data (Bryman, 2012). A denaturalised approach was utilised as the focus was more on what is said as opposed to how it is said (Oliver, Serovich & Mason, 2005). Accordingly, silences, involuntary actions, pauses, repetitions and stutters were removed from the transcribed data. Grammar was also corrected where necessary to

illustrate a clearer comprehension of the data. This was done with extreme caution to avoid changing the meaning and interpretations of the participants' comments. Regarding data verification, as indicated in Chapter one, member checking, the use of an independent coder and a reflexive report were included (see annexures 5 & 7). The findings of the research will be presented in the sections that follow.

## **SECTION B**

Section B presents the specific characteristics of the participants that were examined during the empirical study.

### **4.3. PARTICIPANT PARTICULARS**

The profiling of the participants who participated in the study will be done in terms of working experience and work context. This will assist in interpreting the context of the narratives from participants as presented in the next section. This is a short section, as this was a qualitative study and the focus was thus more on participants' narratives. Particulars such as gender and age of participants were also not considered to be relevant to this study.

### 4.3.1. Working experience



Figure 4.1. Participants' years working experience (N=16)

This figure indicates that most of the participants have more than 10 years of experience directly working with wine farm workers. This assisted in providing credibility around participants' narratives, as they have ample knowledge regarding the various challenges wine farm workers face. Further, some participants' working experience allows them to draw comparisons between wine farms during and after apartheid, which assists in identifying persisting issues plaguing farming communities from the industry's unique history.

### 4.3.2. Work context

The study's participants were equally split into two groups with eight farm managers and eight social workers working in the field of Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs). Both participant groups were chosen due to their knowledge and involvement with wine farm workers within their everyday lives. Farm managers are responsible for the management and general maintenance of a wine farm, where they will supervise fertilising, planting, spraying, cultivating, and harvesting procedures involving the grapes required to produce wine (What does a farm manager do?, 2020). In turn, social workers

working within the field of EWP are required to provide confidential information, support, and counselling to employees with personal and work-related problems (Barrett, 2012).

## SECTION C

Section C presents the themes, sub-themes and categories relating to the data collected from the participants who took part in the research study. The narratives are presented in italics for the reader's ease.

### 4.4. THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

A total of three themes, and subsequent sub-themes and categories were identified from the participants' narratives. Following is a table summarising these aspects.

Table 4.1. Themes, sub-themes, and categories

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>SUBTHEMES</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>
<b>Nature of work</b>	Working conditions	Workload
		Leave
		Remuneration
	Challenges	Health and safety
		Relationships
	Challenges to employment	Casual and contract work
		Drought
		Mechanisation
		Farm murder
		Covid-19
<b>Living conditions</b>	Physical environment	Structure
		Inhabitants
	Evictions	

	Culture and habits	Substance abuse
		Relationships
	Living on the farm	
<b>Protective factors</b>	Policy and legislation	
	Ethical auditing	
	Trade unions	
	Agritourism	
	Advocating, activist groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	
	Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP)	

The researcher made use of both sub-themes and categories, as these provide structure to the narratives and serve as a framework for analysing the data in correlation to the literature. A table presenting a summary of each respective identified theme and its related sub-themes and categories will be provided before discussing it in detail.

#### 4.4.1. Theme 1: Nature of work

Table 4.2. Theme 1: Nature of work

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>SUBTHEMES</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>
<b>Nature of work</b>	Working conditions	Workload
		Leave
		Remuneration
	Workplace challenges	Health and safety
		Relationships
	Challenges to employment	Casual and contract work

		Drought
		Mechanisation
		Farm murder
		Covid-19 pandemic

In this section, participants were asked to describe the working conditions, workplace challenges, and challenges related to employment as these apply to wine farm workers. The abbreviations SW (social worker) and FM (farm manager) were used to distinguish between the two groups of participants within the narratives.

#### 4.4.1.1. Working conditions

In describing the working conditions of wine farm workers, participants all described the workload as being challenging due to it being physically draining with long working hours in harsh weather conditions. According to them, this is worsened by the fact that wine farm workers have little to no say over when they can take leave or sick leave. In terms of remuneration for the work, however, participants differed in opinions, with the farm managers viewing the wine farm workers' minimum wage as an adequate amount, while social workers considered it to be an insufficient living wage. Nonetheless, all participants agreed that there were some benefits in place to which wine farm workers are entitled, such as free or subsidised housing, water and electricity amongst others. Participants unanimously considered these to be an add on to the workers' wages.

##### 4.4.1.1.a. *Workload*

Participants were asked to describe the general workload of wine farm workers. Most of them defined it as challenging due to the work being physically intensive, combined with long working hours in harsh weather conditions throughout the year. Some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): "They do strenuous work for a very long time and many complain about being tired, fatigued and not having enough time to spend with their family or their own time. Their entire day goes to their work."*

*Participant 4 (SW): “The shifts can then stretch to 12 hours.”*

*Participant 5 (SW): “They work physically hard. They are exposed to the elements, it is hard. They don’t always have access to water and other amenities [...] I think a big challenge is the hard, physical labour. The workers have to work in the scorching sun. The work is very physical. The women in their 50’s struggle with the physical labour and people with disabilities. I see the physical impact of this hard work.”*

*Participant 10 (FM): “We have a relatively big workload throughout the whole year.”*

*Participant 11 (FM): “Why can’t the government lessen the working hours per week for farm workers? They work the hardest, longest and in the most difficult conditions.”*

These narratives, which include the perspectives of social workers and farm managers alike, indicate that wine farm workers work under challenging circumstances characterised by physical work with long working hours in harsh weather conditions. This correlates with The Human Rights Watch Report (2011), which detailed the conditions under which wine farm workers must work. The report highlighted workers having to work long hours (on average 9 hours per day) in harsh weather conditions (blistering heat of over 40°C during summer days), in many cases without access to water and toilets. Similarly, Atkinson (2007) states that farm work is physically draining, which is exacerbated by hostile weather conditions. Participants also indicated working hours as a challenge for wine farm workers, as these often exceeded 45 hours per week. This is a direct violation of the Department of Labour’s Sectoral Dimension 13 for Farm Workers, which states that workers are only allowed to work a maximum of 45 hours per week. This correlates with Visser (2016) and the Human Right Watch Report (2011), which both made statements regarding farmers pushing their workers to work an excess of 45 hours per week without compensation.

#### *4.4.1.1.b. Leave*

Participants were asked to describe the leave of wine farm workers and the procedures pertaining to it. All participants described that wine farm workers have access to leave but differed concerning the procedures surrounding gaining access to leave and sick leave. However, most acknowledged that the wine farm workers do not have control over when

they get leave and sick leave in that their access is entirely dependent on the decision of the farm owner. Accordingly, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 5 (SW): “Leave for vacation will be denied. But if the leave is for family responsibility, then it will be given. Leave is tough to give during season time.”*

*Participant 6 (SW): “Not for the farm workers, only management. There are sometimes exceptions, but they are few and far in-between [...] I’m sometimes unhappy about their sick leave. The HR doesn’t pay the people when they have to go to clinic. I feel that this is unfair. They also don’t give sick leave easily [...] It is not denied but they are not paid for it. The worker doesn’t know whether they will be paid or not.”*

*Participant 9 (FM): “They don’t really have a say in when they can take leave, we usually tell them when they can take leave.”*

The narratives above indicate that wine farm workers find it difficult to take leave, be it for holiday, sickness or emergencies. Leave is predetermined by the farmer, and usually occurs right after harvest, while outside of this period is denied or granted without pay. Participants also illustrated that any type of leave during the harvesting season is considered taboo. As described in the narratives, leave is solely up to what the farmer or farm owner deems appropriate. This lack in autonomy directly correlates with the conclusions of Visser (2016) and Falletisch (2008), who state that wine farm workers have little say in when they are allowed to take leave, and that, in many cases, when they choose to do so, it is unpaid. According to the Human Rights Watch Report (2011), the lack of say wine farm workers have in their leave, combined with their workload as previously discussed, means that they are overworked. This significantly increases the risk of injury and negatively impacts their wellbeing.

#### *4.4.1.1.c. Remuneration*

Participants were asked to describe the remuneration of wine farm workers, and if they deemed it adequate. Many of the participants described wine farm workers’ remuneration to be on par with minimum wage in that certain farms were able to pay their workers above minimum wage. For the most part, the participants who were farm managers



indicated the wages to be sufficient for basic needs, whereas the social work participants indicated the wages to be inadequate. To shed light on these perspectives, some of these narratives are presented below:

*Participant 9 (FM): “Enough will never be enough. However, for their living circumstances, the money is enough.”*

*Participant 13 (FM): “Yes, I think so. Food is expensive, but you can buy enough food with R4000 a month.”*

*Participant 1 (SW): “I know this differs from farm to farm, with more prominent farms with wealthier owners paying their workers more. This is still marginally less compared to other South African occupations. While most are paid above minimum wage, I don’t think it is enough to maintain a well-balanced lifestyle. I think your lifestyle and expenses are very limited.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “I think that most farm workers live hand to mouth on a monthly basis.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “The worker is seen as only a worker and paid minimum wage. Minimum wage is not enough.”*

*Participant 8 (SW): “It’s debatable. But I don’t think that it is enough. It can’t really provide for their needs, but they are used to it.”*

From the narratives above, it is evident that the opinions surrounding the adequacy of wine farm workers’ wages vary. For the most part, farm managers indicated that the minimum wage is an adequate living wage for wine farm workers. This directly contradicts statements made by Devereux (2019), who argues that minimum wage is not a suitable living wage, and social work participants, who state that minimum wage is not nearly enough to provide for a wine farm workers and their families.

Despite the difference in opinion regarding minimum wage, participants unanimously indicated that wine farm workers receive numerous benefits:

*Participants 5 (SW): “It also differs from farm to farm, but some have a lot of benefits, such as medical benefits.”*

*Participant 8 (SW): “Some farms give housing while others ask a reduced price for the housing. Crèche, transport, etc. can also be benefits.”*

*Participant 10 (FM): “Yes. I mean the people who work at this company get a lot of benefits. They get housing, they don’t pay for their water and electricity and they get free bread.”*

*Participant 14 (FM): “Our workers get free housing, water and electricity. We take the people to the clinic or doctor. Our people have pension funds, but not medical aid.”*

Taking the abovementioned into account, it is evident that wine farm workers do receive certain benefits from their work. Most participants indicated that the most common benefits are housing, including water and electricity, with the more privileged farms even extending these benefits to include medical aid, pension funds and free bread. This is contradictory to Devereux (2019), who stated that wine farm workers receive little to no benefits.

#### 4.4.1.2. Workplace challenges

With regards to workplace challenges on the farm, participants reiterated that there are numerous dangerous and hazardous machinery and chemicals present on a farm. However, they also stated that farms have made the safety of workers a top priority, although the responsibility of implementing safety measures remains in the workers’ hands. In terms of relationships on the farm, participants illustrated this to be the biggest challenge. Relationships between the employer and employees, as well as amongst the employees themselves, are all impacted by race, culture, and power dynamics.

##### 4.4.1.2.a. *Health and safety*

Participants were asked to describe possible health and safety risks for wine farm workers. Most participants described wine farms as having multiple encounters with dangerous or hazardous machinery or chemicals, but that there were strict measures in place to protect wine farm workers. Further, they described that appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was provided, and that workers were educated on how to appropriately use machinery and chemicals. Participants also reiterated that wine farm

workers are only at risk if the workers do not follow the guidelines, or if they act recklessly. In this light, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 5 (SW): “I think that farms are very strict about safety, in order to prevent someone from getting hurt. Here and there, there has been a tractor accident, but this is because of speeding etc.”*

*Participant 9 (FM): “The biggest danger is probably the toxic chemicals they must work with, or the scissors, where they can cut off a finger, but only if they use it irresponsibly. But besides that, we don’t really use dangerous machinery of equipment [...] you must have gloves and the right person needs to work with it, The workers who spray the chemicals must also have a mask on, along with protective clothes, hand gloves and top boots.”*

*Participant 12 (FM): “I think there are more than enough protocols and measures in place that protect them. The modern farm doesn’t take any chances with the workers’ safety, and safety is a very serious matter.”*

*Participant 13 (FM): “We give training for everything. We give training to the grinders, the tractor drivers, etc. We also provide the workers with the appropriate PPE, especially when spraying the vineyards. They are as safe as can be.”*

From the narratives above, it is evident that employers on wine farms provide their employees with correct PPE, and have strict guidelines and rules in place to protect their safety, Devereux (2019), Naidoo *et al.* (2010) and Falletisch (2008) all acknowledge that there is a need for greater education and protective gear regarding hazardous machinery and chemicals. However, the above narratives also serve as an indication that there is an increased awareness of the risks related to farm work, and thus a strict implementation of safety protocols and requirements to curb the implication of the associated dangers. On the other hand, narratives also indicate that the responsibility of implementing the safety protocols lie in the hands of the wine farm workers, and that the safety measures in place are redundant if not followed correctly by them.

#### 4.4.1.2.b. Relationships

Participants were asked to describe whether relationships pose a challenge within the workplace. They discussed that interactions between the farmer and worker, as well as between the workers themselves, are impacted by race, culture, and power dynamics. In this light, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): “I think this is also often due to a power struggle, as general workers experience conflict with their supervisors. I know the conflicts are intensified due to what happens at their homes over the weekend, for example gossiping. They bring a lot of their personal issues to work which creates the conflict, and they live together, so it’s inevitable.”*

*Participant 5 (SW): “In-season time is the time of the year when there is the most conflict. This is because they are physically tired. What also plays a role is “jy sê nie vir my nie” (you don’t tell me what to do) and jealousy. The management and other role players’ tempers are also shorter during season time.”*

*Participant 6 (SW): “One of the main challenges is the style of management. The way that management communicates to the farm workers or the way in which management disregards something that the workers ask for poses a challenge. Gossip is also a challenge, especially amongst the women [...] the supervisors sometimes talk down to the workers and are condescending [...] Another challenge is a lack of humane treatment.”*

*Participant 11 (FM): “There haven’t been any relationships between management and the workers. Race makes it difficult. When I started working here, no one but management was allowed to come into this office.”*

*Participant 12 (FM): “The culture differences are a challenge for the traditional farm workers. They feel threatened, and that their job is not as secure as it always was.”*

Through the narratives above, it is clear to see that relationships between the workers, as well as those between management on the farm, are complex, and influenced by various factors. Participants indicated that the farmer’s management style impacts the relationships, as the employer often talks down to the workers. This condescending

attitude causes that the workers lack humane treatment from their employer. Further, this management style closely resembles the paternalism which Du Toit (2003) discussed, where the farmer is seen as the father figure with knowledge far superior to that of the workers, who are seen as children. Kheswa (2015) further illustrates that this relationship can lead to an increase in dependency, powerlessness, and exploitation. Furthermore, participants discussed that the relationship among workers is heavily influenced by gossip and jealousy, which results in regular conflict and is especially heightened in the harvesting season. Participants also mentioned that race and cultural differences play an integral role, as the racial bias lends to workers from one race looking down on others. This bias makes it difficult for the employer and employees to form a functioning relationship.

#### 4.4.1.3. Challenges to employment

The challenges to employment focused on the various factors that have an impact on current permanent wine farm workers' employment security, as well as possible future employment opportunities. These factors include casual and contract work, drought, mechanisation, farm murders, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges all pose a risk to job security, ultimately impacting the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

##### 4.4.1.3.a. *Casual and contract work*

Participants were asked to describe the effect of casual work (casualisation) and contract work (externalisation) on employment security for permanent wine farm workers. Participants said that, in recent years, there has been an increase in farms utilising both casual and contract workers, since they are more financially viable. They said that this has had a profound impact on employment security and permanent employment opportunities for wine farm workers. It has also been a point of conflict, as permanent workers view casual and contract workers as a threat to their way of life. Accordingly, some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding this issue are presented next:

*Participant 1 (SW): "I think using more seasonal and contract workers is more convenient for the farmer. Why would you insource the work when you can outsource it for so much cheaper with less responsibility?"*

*Participant 2 (SW): "I think the impact is that it is more financially viable for an employer to have contract workers but I think that there is a lot of conflict in season time between the casual workers and the contract workers."*

*Participant 10 (FM): "They always said that the contract workers were taking the food out of their mouths."*

*Participant 11 (FM): "They are taking the jobs of the permanent workers and this can lead to a loss of jobs. The contractors and the permanent workers are being played off against each other."*

By looking at the narratives, one can conclude that casual and contract work has a profound impact on permanent employment on wine farms. This correlates with statements made by Visser (2016), Visser and Ferrer (2015), and Atkinson (2007) who all warned of the impacts of casual and contract work where employers will start to favour having a smaller permanent work force and utilising casual and contract workers to a greater extent. Participants also expressed a grave concern for casual and contract workers, describing employers as labour brokers taking advantage of them. They indicated that casual and contract workers only work for a certain part of the year at a lower wage and are thus unable to sustain themselves throughout the year and unable to plan for their future. Despite the fact that the temporary workers are exploited, their employment is also a direct threat to existing farming communities, as an increase in use of casual and contract workers could spell disaster for permanent wine farm workers, who may be forced to work in unfavourable conditions by labour brokers. The following narratives illustrate these tensions:

*Participant 4 (SW): "It is uncertainty. There is no sustainability and if the worker does not plan financially, then he will have an income for a time and then no income at all. No security... The casuals are sometimes so desperate that they are willing to work for any amount of pay."*

*Participant 9 (FM): “But we do not have that many seasonal workers that we need to personally deal with. What we did, we hired labour brokers to provide seasonal workers, which is less work for us. It’s their responsibility to deal with these workers and not ours. To state it in plain Afrikaans: “Ons voel fokkol vir hulle” (we feel nothing for them) as they are not our responsibility.”*

*Participant 11 (FM): “If we are talking about specific contractors, then they bring in workers who are being paid a lower wage. They do their job and then leave.”*

Taking the narratives into consideration, it is clear to see that casual and contract work is ushering in a new era of farm workers who are far more likely to be exploited by their employers since they have no job security. Accordingly, Ewert and Du Toit (2006) make specific reference to casual and contract work, describing it as negatively impacting farm workers’ quality of life.

#### *4.4.1.3.b. Drought*

Participants were asked to describe the effect of drought on employment security for permanent wine farm workers. In so doing, they indicated that drought has had a tremendous impact on many farms, as a smaller harvest results in less capital. As a result, employers must turn to alternatives such as retrenchment to alleviate the pressure on the farm. Interestingly, participants also stated that drought also has an impact on casual or contract workers, as a smaller harvest requires fewer external workers. These ideas are expressed in the narratives below:

*Participant 1 (SW): “I think the drought has led to a lot of job insecurity with many wine farm workers having to be laid off as the farms perhaps can’t afford them anymore or the farm not being so effective or efficient due to the drought having resulted in loss of produce.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “It has an enormous impact on them. If there is no water, then you cannot farm and then you do not have anything to sell. The income of the producers decreased enormously, and all development was stalled. Producers had to lend money to operate their farms and thus they could not give increases and leave. They did not have money to do any home improvements.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “The effect of drought is not always realised. The first line of impact is on management, but the effect of drought can mean loss of jobs for the workers or retrenchment because of a loss of income. This means fear, stress and insecurity. This leads to relationship problems.”*

*Participant 7 (SW): “It does have an effect on casual and contract workers. They will not get work.”*

As indicated by the narratives, drought places a great financial burden on the farm, which means that the employer must consider where money can be saved. As a result, various options are considered, such as retrenchment, limiting casual and contract workers, pay cuts and limiting benefits, all of which negatively affects the wellbeing of wine farm workers. The narratives correlate with statements made by Johnston (2018), who discussed how drought leads to a smaller harvest, which in turn directly results in job losses. Furthermore, Visser (2016) argues that drought limits job opportunities for casual and contract workers.

#### *4.4.1.3.c. Mechanisation*

Participants were asked to describe the effect of mechanisation on employment security for permanent wine farm workers. Most of them described it as a natural process occurring on most farms with a devastating effect on employment opportunities for permanent, casual and contact workers. Some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding mechanisation are presented below:

*Participant 2 (SW): “It has a positive impact for the employers because it is better in an economic sense, but it is negative for the workers. On one of my wine farms I now have client that has a job which requires her to use her hands for something but now it is done by machines. Now she is a cleaner. She had a specialised job but because machines took over, she now has to be a cleaner.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “They can lose their jobs. The more the farms mechanise, the less manual labour they need. Mechanisation is more cost effective and mechanisation is the new way, but how fair is it? The human factor has come a long way with this farm. If I*



were a worker, then I would feel that I am not appreciated anymore and that my role and that of my forbearers are disregarded.”

Participant 9 (FM): “Definitely it impacts employment opportunities, I can see here on the farm we rather harvest with the machine before we use human labour. It is cheaper, faster and you have less drama.”

Participant 14 (FM): “It is something that is happening increasingly, especially harvesting machines. The whole issue around housing is irritating for producers [..] they lessen the number of workers and mechanise. It is not what one wants. We want to give the people jobs. Sixty five percent of our grapes are harvested by machines. It is a lot.”

In considering the narratives, there is no disputing that mechanisation has and continues to limit employment opportunities on wine farms. Participants also reiterated that a driving force behind mechanisation remains various labour-related problems, where workers and trade unions are constantly demanding higher wages and more benefits. This correlates with the observations of Falletisch (2008), who attributed the increase in mechanisation directly to farmers wishing to do away with labour issues.

Some participants, however, indicated that mechanisation does not negatively impact job security:

Participant 8 (SW): “On the positive side, a few people were upskilled and now work with expensive heavy machinery.”

Participant 12 (FM): “The permanent workers become more effective. I don’t think that mechanisation on farms have reached a level of sophistication where the workers are rendered obsolete. The workers are empowered and educated in the use of machinery.”

Participant 14 (FM): “Yes, it is so. The workers have to operate the harvesting machines. There are opportunities for them to learn how the machines work.”

Despite mechanisation’s effect on employment, various participants acknowledge that there is a silver lining in the transition to machines, as some workers are taught new skills as they learn to operate the machinery.

#### 4.4.1.3.d. Farm murders

Participants were asked to describe the effect of farm murders on farms and, by extension, on the employment security of wine farm workers. Participants described farm murders as being extremely traumatic and disruptive for the entire farm. Ultimately, such an incident can bring the farm to a standstill and be a risk to permanent wine farm workers' employment. Some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding farm murders are presented below:

*Participant 4 (SW): "Apart from causing trauma, I also think that it can create job insecurity, because the farmer has been murdered. The employee can also be discriminated against."*

*Participant 6 (SW): "It is important to keep in mind that a farm does not operate like a company, but rather as a family. If the owner is killed, then the workers feel as if a family member has been killed. It is outside people that commit the farm murders and not the workers. The workers are also usually the ones that stumble onto the scene of the crime and it is very traumatic for them."*

*Participant 8 (SW): "Yes, definitely. The farmer is suspicious about who visits the farm. The farmer sits in his house with an alarm installed and surrounded by walls, but the workers are literally staying on the dark side of the farm with no safety features to protect them."*

*Participant 9 (FM): "I think it can have a big impact. I take it as, if my boss was to get murdered it would be chaos, concerning the wages and who makes the calls. If a new owner was to come in, he might not have a need for all the workers which would lead to retrenchment."*

Often with farm murders, the focus remains only on the hardship of the deceased employer/farmer and their family. However, from the narratives above, it is clear to see that it has a much broader impact on the farm. This correlates with Maré (2015), who states that farm murders should not be viewed solely as an act of violence, but that one should also consider the rippling effect it has on the farm employees, the economy and society. Participants also elaborated on the economic side of farm murder, where the farm is brought to a standstill. This can lead to financial issues with the farm being sold or

collapsing, resulting in massive job losses. The above-mentioned is also highlighted by Maré (2015), as he describes that a single farm attack, without a murder, halts production for at least six months. On the other hand, farm murders potentially halt production for anything from two to eight years, resulting in economic hardship for the farm.

#### *4.4.1.3.e. Covid-19 pandemic*

Participants were asked to describe the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the farm and its employees. In so doing, they described how it has resulted in a national lockdown, with legal alcohol sales being prohibited. Needless to say, this resulted in many wine farms being financially impacted. Some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding the matter are presented below:

*Participant 3 (SW): "Covid-19 led to enormous financial losses in the wine industry because wine is not being sold during the lockdown. Wine farms dipped financially. Wine farms with restaurants dipped doubly and some of these farms with restaurant decided not to open them. This will definitely lead to a loss of jobs and that people will not receive the bonus or increase that they normally would."*

*Participant 10 (FM): "The people on our farm did not work for a month and a half. We are behind with our work at the moment. We are now pressed for time and productivity. We can't afford to stop production for more time [...] there could be retrenchments."*

*Participant 13 (FM): "Next harvesting season will be the problem. The cellars will have to cut their costs. Our turnover will drop and we will have to increase our loan at the bank to keep afloat. We will make it for one more season."*

*Participant 14 (FM): "The lockdown put the country's economy in jeopardy and the job market [...] It is devastating for us in the wine industry because we can't sell alcohol. We have an oversupply of alcohol that we can't sell. The people that don't have jobs and food are extremely worrying."*

Participants' narratives describe and warn how the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a national lockdown and alcohol ban has already taken a financial toll on the wine sector as a whole. Wine cellars and farms have started suffering financial losses which participants described as being the start of mass-retrenchments within the sector if

alcohol exports and sales do not improve. This correlates with Steenkamp (2020), who estimated 18 000 jobs being at risk, with at least 80 wine cellars at risk of permanently closing. The Covid-19 pandemic could result in the considerable downsizing of an employment juggernaut, while impeding on thousands of wine farm workers' wellbeing.

#### 4.4.2. Theme 2: Living conditions

Table 4.3. Theme 2: Living conditions

<b>Living conditions</b>	Physical environment	Structure
		Inhabitants
	Evictions	
	Culture and habits	Substance abuse
		Relationships
	Living on the farm	

In this section, participants were asked to describe the living conditions of wine farm workers, with specific reference to the physical environment, evictions, culture and habits as well as living on the farm.

##### 4.4.2.1. Physical environment

Regarding the physical environment of on-farm housing, participants discussed how on-farm housing differed from farm to farm. Overall, on-farm housing was described as adequate in size. Nonetheless, the condition of the housing was debatable, with many having to live in broken-down houses. Maintenance on these houses are mostly done at irregular intervals, with both employees and employers blaming each other for breakages. Along with this, most on-farm houses have a serious issue regarding overpopulation.

##### 4.4.2.1.a. *Structure*

Participants were asked to describe the general structure and state of on-farm housing for wine farm workers. They indicated that the physical aspects surrounding the on-farm

housing were adequate. However, opinions differed regarding the state and maintenance of the houses. Some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 3 (SW): “The conditions of the homes are not always up to standard. There are two factors involved here. Firstly, the owner does not have the money to improve it and, secondly, the worker does not take responsibility to maintain the home. And when there is conflict then the windows are smashed, and the owner puts in new windows and two weeks later they are smashed once more. The owner puts in a stove and two weeks later it is broken. Their conditions are not always up to standard such as not having electricity or running water but there is a lot of growth.”*

*Participant 6 (SW): “They suffer [...] there is a blame game going on. Management says that the workers don’t look after their houses and the workers complain that maintenance is being deducted from their salaries, but the maintenance is done on the farmer’s house...they have a toilet, but it maybe doesn’t work. They have most things, but they don’t work.”*

*Participant 9 (FM): “All you see is cockroaches running all over the place, we recently had a situation where one worker’s music stereo’s wires were chewed off by cockroaches.”*

*Participant 10 (FM): “I think our farm houses look good. If there is a problem at one of the houses, such as a geyser that burst or a leaky tap, then we immediately have it fixed for them. They always have water and electricity. We paint the houses on the inside and outside every three years, one this cycle of three years and the other the following years. We maintain our houses. Their houses are in a good condition.”*

*Participant 13 (FM): “The sad part of the story is that when you get something for free, then you don’t look after it. They receive good things but they don’t look after it. They don’t worry, all of the workers [...] it is a perk to get a house. I don’t see it as a must, but the workers do. We fix the houses for the audits but then the people destroy it again.”*

*Participant 14 (FM): “The producers have done a lot to produce all the amenities for the workers, such as water and electricity. I think that the houses are looking good. There might be a house with a broken window but generally they look good. Some of the farms have schedules whereby they upgrade the houses every year. They paint the houses. If something is broken, then we have it fixed.”*

In light of the narratives above, participants unanimously agreed that the physical size of the houses is adequate, as these usually consist of two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen, and a bathroom, complete with electricity and running water. There were, however, various opinions regarding the state of the houses, as well as how regularly maintenance was performed. Some participants blamed the employer/farmer for not regularly doing maintenance which resulted in on-farm housing becoming run down and unliveable with cracked walls, broken windows and leaking roofs. On the other hand, other participants blamed farm workers for not taking responsibility for the house and allowing on-farm housing to deteriorate. The narratives concur with statements made by Visser and Ferrer (2015), who describe on-farm housing as differing from farm to farm. Furthermore, from the narratives it is clear to see that most on-farm housing was in line with the National Housing Policy and Subsidy Programmes (2010) which set out the minimum housing standards. These programmes require that each house consist of a floor area of at least 40 square metres, two bedrooms, a separate bathroom with a toilet, shower and hand basin, a combined living area and kitchen with a wash basin, as well as electrical installation.

Overall, the narratives consisted of various opinions regarding the current state of on-farm housing. To a degree, the narratives add weight to statements made by Devereux *et al.* (2017), Kleinbooi (2013) and Falletisch (2008), who describe on-farm housing as inadequate. On the other hand, the narratives contradict these authors, as they identify housing as being adequate and above par. Participants also illustrated the difference between on-farm housing and housing options available for workers not living on the farm. Narratives of the respective participants regarding the quality of on-farm housing are presented below:

*Participant 3 (SW): “The living conditions of the most farm workers are in the most cases better than those of people that live in towns. Firstly, they live in a relatively safe environment. Secondly, most of the homes, 80-90%, are built. It is not “sink hokke” (shacks).”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “There are people who work on the farms, and it seems to be increasingly common, but they live in informal settlements where the living conditions are atrocious. This has, without a doubt, a negative impact on the worker, his family and his*

children. It has an effect on their hygiene, health and morale. I think that those that do not live on the farm have bad living conditions.

Participant 5 (SW): “The living conditions of farm workers are generally better than people who only work on the farm and live elsewhere. The farm worker’s house is maintained. On most farms the workers are expected to keep their houses neat and tidy, i.e. a high standard. They have the protection of inspections and legislation which prevents their living conditions from becoming bad. They are generally privileged in this regard. Their houses are bigger than the people who live in shacks or Wendy houses. Most of them have running water.”

As can be seen from the narratives, participants described on-farm housing as being objectively better than housing options available outside the farm, with workers living outside the farm usually residing in informal settlements in shacks or Wendy houses (wooden houses). This is in many cases far inferior to housing available on the farm which is held to a standard and governed by legislation.

#### 4.4.2.1.b. Inhabitants

Participants were asked to describe the number of inhabitants living in on-farm housing, and whether they deemed it as a challenge for the inhabitants. Accordingly, they indicated that overcrowding in farm housing was a common occurrence. Some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding the inhabitants of on-farm houses is presented below:

Participant 1 (SW): “Most often it’s not a nuclear family, its usually a lot of residents. In many cases people will have their extended family live with them for example grandmother, grandfather, nieces and nephews [...] Very often you find a house with three or four generations of a family living under the same roof [...] For a two-bedroom house I would say 6-8 people easily, not all have their own bed and many have to sleep on the floor and couches.”

Participant 2 (SW): “Usually not just two or three people. It will be at least two families. Maybe two sisters with their children and the grandparents. Normally it is not only one family in one house.”

*Participant 11 (FM): “I don’t know. There are a lot of people. One of the people who work for me had 13 people living in his house a few years back. This was in a two-bedroom house.”*

Through these narratives, participants illustrated that overpopulation is very common, with many households having 10 plus members in a two-bedroom house. In many cases, some residents sleep in the living room, and not all of them have beds. Participants indicated that South Africa’s housing crisis has contributed to overpopulation, as family members move from informal settlements to the farm since this ensures a roof over their head. This correlates with statements made by Viljoen (2008), who describes on-farm housing as being overcrowded with unliveable conditions if the house is not maintained.

#### 4.4.2.2. Evictions

Participants were asked to discuss the nature of evictions and the effect of this measure on wine farm workers. Most of them described evictions as a long legal battle, with both negative effects on the evictee, who must relocate, and the employer/farmer, who must spend large sums of money to lawfully evict a person. To shed light on the difficulties that accompany the process, some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding evictions are presented below:

*Participant 3 (SW): “Usually evictions are connected to a worker breaking rules for a very long time and this leads to evictions. At this moment, I think that most evictions do not happen willingly. Most of them have a legal route that has big financial implications for the farmers.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “There are also evictions which are handled in an inhumane manner. I think it is the humane option that, for example, a woman’s husband who has passed away is still allowed to live on the farm. If they are evicted, then it is very traumatic for them because they have to go and live somewhere else, in a new environment. It has detrimental effects for children because everyone is uprooted.”*

*Participant 9 (FM): “I don’t think you can still do an eviction illegally, with the reason that here there is a lot of unions and politics involved so I don’t think you can do it illegally, because “jy kan jou vingers lelik verbrand” (you can burn your fingers badly). We currently*



*have a situation [...] we have had to resort to cutting his power to try and see if he would hit the road but with no success.*”

*Participant 13 (FM): “The evictions are done legally. The farmers nowadays don’t do things illegally. The process takes long and is very expensive. This seems quite unfair for the farmer. Our contract states that housing is a benefit. The worker resigns, gets another job but still lives in the house on this farm. The farmer now has to spend R100 000 or more to evict the person from the farm. It is wrong to do this to your employer.”*

Most participants described illegal evictions as a thing of the past, with most evictions nowadays being done lawfully and with valid reason. In most cases, the evictee would have broken farm rules that might lead to an eviction. The narratives did, however, mention that some farmers resort to harassment tactics, as described by Ruddock (2012), where evictees’ access to power and water were cut to force them to leave. This may be an indication that, although the eviction process is being done legally, there are still various illegal activities involved. Whether done legally or illegally, the narratives describe the process of eviction as extremely traumatic. This correlates with Visser and Ferrer (2015), who state that evictions result in widespread homelessness and seriously upsets the families’ functioning, inevitably impacting their quality of life.

Ironically, participants pointed out that, when it comes to evictions, the Extension of Security Act (1997) heavily favours the evictee, as evictions can take up to two years with the employers/farmer forced to pay large amount of money in legal fees. In such cases the farmer is also required to provide alternative housing despite not being in the wrong. Participants pointed out that this was deeply unfair, as at the end, in many cases, the worker would refuse to leave the premises. This correlates with Visser and Ferrer (2015), who describe the process of evictions as time consuming with average legal costs between R30 000 and R60 000.

Although most participants described evictions as being difficult and traumatic for the whole farming community, there were some participants who focused on the positive side of evictions, as can be seen in the following narratives:

*Participant 6 (SW): “The person that is evicted is a troublemaker and the community feels that he has become a problem. This person becomes an outcast. They want him gone and then they know that someone that needs the house can come and live there.”*

*Participant 14 (FM): “A new worker can benefit from it and live in that house but sometimes the new worker can’t live in the house because the evicted person is still living there.”*

The narratives focus more on the positive side of evictions, where an evictee’s house can be made available to other permanent workers and their families which could have a significant impact on their wellbeing as they receive a new home on the farm. Other participants described evictees as being troublemakers, stating that their evictions served the broader farm community. These narratives directly contradict statements made by the Human Rights Report (2011), who primarily blame employers/farmers for the outcome of evictions. These narratives thus serve to showcase the positive side of evictions, where the process can assist in enhancing the farming community’s wellbeing through the employer/farmer getting rid of troublemakers.

#### 4.4.2.3. Culture and habits

On the topic of culture and habits, participants described substance abuse as being prevalent during weekends, with excessive binge drinking. Many participants considered this to be stemming from the ‘dop’ system. Substance abuse is further characterised by conflict and violence. This detrimentally affects the relationship of the wine farm workers and those working and living on the farm. Relationships amongst wine farm workers and the broader farming community are negatively impacted by mistrust, gossiping, jealousy and envy.

##### 4.4.2.3.a. *Substance abuse*

Participants were asked to describe the substance abuse of wine farm workers. In so doing, they discussed the fact that the drinking culture on farms is unparalleled to anywhere else, consisting of weekend binge drinking, leading to conflict and violence. Some participants also added that drugs have led to the worsening of this situation. Some of the narratives concerning substance abuse are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): “Most of the wine farm workers experience issues with binge drinking over weekends. On a Thursday they would already start planning their drinking rituals for the weekend, for example if they stop working on a Friday, they would start drinking, Saturday is characterised by drinking at home or at the rugby field and even Sundays the drinking continues.”*

*Participant 2 (SW): “People that live on farms have a “kuier kultuur” (party culture), which means that they have a good work ethic from Monday to Friday afternoon. But from Friday night to Sunday night, then they will party and drink something. It also depends if they have been paid because when the workers have been paid, then they like to party.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “But there are psycho-social problems, such as alcohol abuse and drunkenness at work. This leads to the worker using heavy machinery and dangerous equipment while under the influence of alcohol.”*

*Participant 5 (SW): “People drink on the weekends. The young people see their elders drinking on the weekends and accept this as the norm. The drinking creates other problems, such as family violence, child neglect. It is a hallmark of a farming community and it is acceptable. It takes long to change this culture of this is what we do on the weekends.”*

*Participant 9 (FM): “Alcohol is definitely the biggest problem, especially when they pay, and you know those first three days after they have paid they will be drinking. However, each weekend is a risk that a worker might show up drunk to work on a Monday.”*

*Participant 12 (FM): “I think alcohol has the biggest impact on their lives and that it involves the entire household. The use of tik and daqqa is becoming more prevalent because of the younger generation using it. The older workers drink.”*

The narratives clearly describe a drinking culture on farms, pertaining to both young and old, and consisting of excessive weekend binge drinking. Participants shared experiences of how drinking has become the norm on farms, reinforcing the behaviour on the younger generation. This ties into habitual drinking described by Falletisch (2008), where drinking has become a ritual on wine farms, with severe consequences leading to physical abuse, violence against women and children and disruptions to family functioning. Furthermore,

narratives correspond with Roddock (2012) regarding excessive drinking contributing towards a cycle of damage, disability, and disease within farming communities

The narratives also clearly illustrate that alcohol is at the root of conflict and violence on farms. This is in direct correlation with Falletisch (2008), who emphasises the strong relationship between habitual drinking and social violence on farms. Devereux *et al.* (2017) directly attaches excessive drinking to widespread violence and abuse that significantly impacts the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This excessive binge drinking has had detrimental effects on wine farm workers, not only in their personal lives, but also within their careers. This adds weight to an assertion made by Evans (2015), namely that alcohol abuse extends to the workplace as intoxicated workers may create a dangerous working environment. Participants shared experiences of some workers desperately trying various remedies to cure drunkenness in an attempt to sober up for work on the Monday. This behaviour places the whole farm at risk, as some workers operate heavy machinery intoxicated.

Drugs, like methamphetamine (tik) and marijuana (dagga) have exacerbated the current situation and has led to an increase in violence on farming communities. Participants also detailed the careful planning that goes into drinking, as wine farm workers utilise the week to carefully discuss and plan their weekends of drinking as if it were an event. This correlates with Falletisch (2008), who describes weekend drinking as a tremendous occasion on farms, with a lot of planning and thought put into it.

Some participants attributed current drinking patterns on farms to the 'dop' system, which they argue is ingrained habitual drinking. Taking all of these factors into account, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participants 3 (SW): "The reality is that, even though the 'dop' system has been stopped many years ago, there are many people, especially men from the ages of 35-60, that grew up in homes where alcohol abuse was prevalent because of the 'dop' system. A lot of them have untreated childhood trauma and a bad childhood because of alcohol abuse."*

*Participant 5 (SW): "It had an influence years ago when it was the norm and the people who grew up with this system are the older people on the farm. It was a reward. The negative aspect thereof is that people still reward/ treat themselves with alcohol when*

*they worked hard. It is seen as acceptable because they have worked hard. This culture stayed and was carried over to the people who did not grow up with the 'dop' system.*"

*Participant 6 (SW): "It created the current drinking culture of weekend drinking. Alcohol was their reward and they can't have fun without alcohol. The current drinking culture is a descendant of the 'dop' system, almost like its cousin."*

By looking at the narratives, one cannot dispute the fact that the 'dop' system had a tremendous effect on drinking patterns and is a significant contributor towards problems with current habitual drinking. Participants described how the 'dop' system normalised everyday drinking and how it altered the perceptions around alcohol. The 'dop' system allowed alcohol to be seen as an incentive or reward. Many participants argued that this is why, even today, drinking is seen as a reward and is why many wine farm workers drink over weekends. Participants also pointed out that the 'dop' system still exists, although not in its original form. Instead, it has manifested itself as excessive binge drinking over weekends. The narratives around the 'dop' system tie in with Falletisch (2008), who describes the 'dop' system as a big contributor towards habitual drinking on farms at present. The participants' narratives further add weight to warnings from Gossage *et al.* (2014), who describes the alarming drinking habits of men and women on farms, drinking at risky levels over weekends since the abolishment of the 'dop' system.

#### *4.4.2.3.b. Relationships*

Participants were asked to describe the relationships between the wine farm workers, as well as broader farming community. They indicated that relationships on farms are characterised by mistrust, gossiping, jealousy, and envy. They further described the relationship as being peaceful during the week, but violent on weekends if problems are not resolved. Substance abuse also plays a crucial role, as it aggravates violence among individuals in farming communities. Taking these factors into account, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): "The relationships between a farm community is very complex, I think it is characterised by a lot of conflict, they live so closely to one another and they work together so their lives are enmeshed; there is a lot of mistrust."*

*Participant 12 (FM): “The aggressive behaviour goes hand-in-hand with the use of alcohol. They have a positive attitude but it’s a different matter on the weekends.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “There is a lot of conflict on the weekends due to substance abuse and this creates an uncomfortable and awkward atmosphere on Mondays and Tuesdays. This is resolved by Wednesday, usually. There is also jealousy, despite the feelings of community and togetherness. They don’t necessarily want what is best for each other [...] Yes, especially over weekends. There is definitely physical violence/ abuse and verbal abuse that take place. It 100% goes hand-in-hand with substance abuse. This happens between colleagues but also in families.”*

*Participant 5 (SW): “They take criticism and jokes too seriously. This creates a lot of conflict. They are very jealous of others. This holds them back. Gossip is also a problem. They don’t react well when someone differs from them and this creates conflict [...]During the week they don’t resort to violence, but they do on the weekends. The parties involved are already angry at each other and the abuse of alcohol only exacerbates the conflict. The conflict that happened during the weekend spills into the working week.”*

*Participant 6 (SW): “I feel that there aren’t any healthy friendships on the farms and that the people don’t trust each other. The friendships don’t have any depth. The relationships are distant because the people are scared that the other will blab their secrets. The farm workers are very paranoid.”*

The narratives provide a clear indication of relationships among individuals in farming communities, with conflict being at the centre of most relationships. Participants provided various reasons for the conflict, including mistrust, gossiping, jealousy, envy and the inability to take criticism. Relationships appear normal during the week, as individuals try to peacefully resolve conflict, but many can quickly turn to violence over weekends. Participants described violence to be at the core of conflict resolutions amongst farm workers, which is intensified if substance abuse is prevalent. The violence includes physical and verbal abuse between intimate partners, parents, and children, and among neighbours. The situation is further worsened by individuals living closely to one another, as the whole farming community are enmeshed.

The narratives described a cycle of violence on farms, where relationships are peaceful during the week, before escalating on weekends and dwindling as the new week starts. This directly correlates with Falletisch (2008), who blames substance abuse for this cycle of violence. She argues that substance abuse, more specifically alcohol, is used as an excuse for the individual's behaviour during weekends, as many blame the substance and not the person for the violence. Visser (2016), agrees and elaborates that victims of violence will retaliate with more violence the following weekend. Individuals keep relationships healthy and peaceful during the week only to resort to violence as payback for previous grievances. Devereux *et al.* (2017) argues that this cycle of abuse amongst wine farm workers and the broader farming community significantly impacts the wellbeing of all working and living on the farm.

#### 4.4.2.4. Living on the farm

Participants were asked to describe the challenges wine farm workers experience due to living on the farm. They described the biggest challenges as being transport, a lack of resources as well as ignorance and inexperience. This has an influence on wine farm workers becoming more dependent on the employer/farmer. Some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participants 1 (SW): "Farms are not often situated in urban areas, hence far from the nearest town or city. I think that leaves the farm residents quite isolated from their broader community, but also, they are further from crucial resources such as shops, hospitals, police, etc. As I said previously, they don't necessarily get transport to and from town. I would say that is by far the greatest challenge as they are isolated from the rest of the town and their resources and not always having the means to get to the resources."*

*Participant 4 (SW): "Once again I am thinking of the limiting factors that we spoke of earlier, I now think of their lifestyle, free time, recreational activities, lack of transport, they are dependent on the employer for transport or public transport. It is difficult for them to do "nice things" in the outside world. Another challenge is their lack of exposure to other cultures and other lifestyles. Their type of life is the only one that they know. They need to be exposed to other socialisation locales and lifestyles. This creates a culture of 'everything needs to be done for me'."*

*Participant 5 (SW): "A big challenge is their way of living and thinking, a lot of children get an opportunity to go and study and they don't make it. It is not because of their lack of intellect, but rather because it is too great a change from the farm to the university. Many of these children come back to the farm and work there. They are too protected but this leads to the fact that they don't have the general knowledge that other people have. They are also hesitant to ask questions, they do what they are told. They accept what they are told [...] Their frame of reference is very small. When you ask the children on the farms what they want to be when they grow up, then they will answer something like "tractor driver," "farm manager" or "teacher". Their potential and talent are lost, to a certain extent."*

*Participant 9 (FM): "Transport is a big problem, especially for going into town. Luckily, we are not far from the town, but it remains an issue. They must walk to where they want to be, I am unaware of anyone that has a vehicle. We give them on a pay weekend transport into town, but after that they must sort it themselves. I also think services are hard to reach and when they call the police or ambulance they take forever to arrive or just don't show up."*

*Participant 13 (FM): "The transport each weekend to town was stopped after the workers got drunk and one worker was shoved off the lorry and he was killed."*

Participants described wine farm workers' greatest challenges as being a lack of transport, a lack of resources as well as ignorance and inexperience. Many employers have moved away from providing transport to town due to them being legally responsible for any accidents that might happen. Participants described that this leaves many workers without means to reach the town and its resources. Since most of them do not have their own vehicle, they must make use of unreliable and expensive public transport. The narratives also depict the struggle wine farm workers and their family members have with accessing resources. Resources such as police and ambulances do not prioritise farming communities due to their geographical location. This directly correlates with statements made by Visser and Ferrer (2015), who identifies farms' remote geographical position as being the main reason behind farm workers and farm dwellers struggling to access resources in cases of emergency and in general. The lack of access to resources has also brought strong criticism from Atkinson (2007), who has blamed farm workers' inability



to access resources on the state that has failed in providing basic services and accessing certain privately-owned land.

Participants also indicated that living on a farm also has the effect on wine farm workers and their family members becoming increasingly naïve as a result of ignorance and inexperience. Participants described how the farm becomes the individual's only frame of reference, due to the lack of exposure to the outside world and other ways of thinking and doing. This results in many lacking ambitions to leave the farm, and influences the youth as they see their only employment opportunity as being on the farm. Altogether, the lack of transport, inability to access resources, along with ignorance and inexperience make wine farm workers and dwellers more dependent on their employer/farmer. Narratives that describe these factors are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): “Without a doubt, they rely heavily on the farmer to provide transport for them, I think that’s where it gets quite difficult as many farm- workers and dwellers start to become very dependent on the farmer to provide them with their basic needs. This is by no means the farmer’s responsibility, but due to farm workers and dwellers having no other option they can only turn to the farmer.”*

*Participant 6 (SW): “Yes, and that creates a paternalistic culture on the farms because then they have to ask the farmer for the thing that they need [...] they don’t have any other option, they have to ask him.”*

*Participant 8 (SW): “Yes, there is a mentality like that. One the one hand they don’t want anything to do with the farmer but on the other hand they are dependent on him and expect stuff from him.”*

The narratives clearly showcase how the increase in dependency from wine farm workers further strengthens the paternalistic hold employers/farmers have on their employees. Participants described how employees rely on their employer for everything, leading to an imbalance within the relationship. This correlates with Du Toit (1993), who describes how the paternalistic relationship views the employer/farmer as the father figure, meaning that the employee/farmer exercises control over the workers’ professional and personal lives. Even decades later, paternalism is still relevant, as Young-Hauser *et al.* (2015) describe how the nature of a paternalistic relationship means that it is not mutually

beneficial, because the farmer determines the workers' rights, wants, and needs. Kheswa (2015) agrees and describes how this increase in dependency directly results in a paternalistic relationship where the farmer has complete control over his workers leading to an increase in dependency, powerlessness, and exploitation.

#### 4.4.3. Theme 3: Protective factors

Table 4.4. Theme 3: Protective factors

<b>Protective factors</b>	Policy and legislation
	Ethical auditing
	Trade unions
	Agritourism
	Advocating, activist groups and non-governmental organisations (NGO)
	Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs)

In this section, participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of protective factors assisting in securing and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Protective factors include policy and legislation, ethical auditing, trade unions, agritourism, advocating, activist groups, NGOs and EWPs.

##### 4.4.3.1. Policy and legislation

Participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of policy and legislation pertaining to wine farm workers' employment. They unanimously agreed that various policies and legislations were effective in protecting the rights of wine farm workers. However, participants did illustrate that, despite the success, there are still various issues with the current policy and legislation. To this end, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): "I think it provides a basic standard for the working condition so that they can't be exploited... most policy and legislation has a loophole and when it is a higher earning farm, they can afford good attorneys to find loopholes and to get away with it. I*

*think policy and legislation protects the workers, but it is not always as effective as it should be. I think the basic gist of the policies are conveyed to the workers, but I don't think workers are informed of their rights. I know of a lot of farms where the Employee Equity Act is nicely stuck up on the walls, but in reality, not all the farm workers are literate and for those who are literate they won't always understand the legal jargon. Despite that they can see the policy and legislation they won't always understand it and they will remain uninformed and I think it is in many cases done deliberately.*"

*Participant 3 (SW): "The policies are good, but a lot of attention can be given to their implementation. There is room for improvement. The policies are on paper and on the walls, but it is not implemented. It is important to remember that the management of wine farms are people who have skills for a certain job, but not necessarily human skills. This is one of the biggest problems. These people do not have the skill set to implement the policy and legislation."*

*Participant 9 (FM): "It is important, because you can't just do what you want to do. It protects you as well as the worker. Policy and legislation protect both sides where the employees can't misuse the employers and where the employers can't misuse the employee [...] I think the employers wants to hide it that the employees don't get to wise."*

*Participant 12 (FM): "It is important because everyone has to maintain the ethical standards and therefore the policy and legislation have to be taken more seriously and have to be adhered to even more closely. It is sometimes difficult to implement policy and legislation precisely as it is written. I therefore think that it is important to find the perfect degree to which the policy and legislation is practically feasible and applicable. It is a challenge, but it has to be done."*

Looking at the narratives above, it is undisputed that policy and legislation is necessary within the workplace and that it has been effective to an extent. Participants highlighted various flaws with current policy and legislation that have an impact on workers' rights. Issues include a lack of implementation and enforcement, loopholes, and workers being uninformed. Regarding the lack of implementation and enforcement, participants stated that, despite policies and legislation looking good on paper, it did not mean that it can be practically translated to the workplace. Furthermore, participants highlighted employers

being uneducated with regards to policies and legislation, which makes it difficult for them to implement it within the workplace. This correlates with authors Devereux (2019), Falletisch (2008) and Atkinson (2007), who all highlight issues regarding implementation and monitoring. Devereux (2019) attributed this lack of implementation and monitoring to three parties responsible for the process, namely employers, government, and workers organisations.

Regarding loopholes, various participants argued that it was relatively easy for employers to find exploits within policy and legislation, if they can afford a good legal team. This means bigger companies or farms can get away with dubious actions regarding implementations of policies and legislation. Lastly participants identified an issue regarding workers not being informed about what policies and legislation are in place to protect them, nor details pertaining to each policy. Participants discussed how all policies and legislation is put up against the wall, however that not all employees are literate and that the language and terminology used is very complex. Despite this, participants also said that some employers, intentionally withhold trainings or information sessions about policy and legislation to keep them uninformed. Participants' views correlate with those of Devereux (2019) who argued that employers had an incentive to keep employees uninformed as them abiding to all policies and legislation would probably mean they would have to spend more money on upgrading facilities and housing. London and De Kock (2003) further argue that there has been this non-compliance mentality from employers, which has stemmed from a culture of non-regulation entrenched over decades on farms.

#### 4.4.3.2. Ethical auditing

Participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of ethical auditing on the farm as well as its employers. They unanimously agreed that ethical auditing is necessary, and that it has been effective in forcing employers/farmers to address subpar working- and living conditions on the farm. Despite the success, participants pointed out that there are still many challenges regarding ethical auditing, which include the negative views surrounding ethical audits, financial costs, lack of skills to prepare for audits and issues regarding auditors. Some of the narratives of the respective participants delineating these factors are presented below:

Participant 1 (SW): *"I think auditing provides a standard for working conditions that must be followed by the farmer or owners of the farm to provide at least decent working conditions [...] I don't feel these standards are always 100% in place before an audit has taken place. I think ethical auditing is a good idea, but I don't think it is done effectively. I don't think farmers should be given the opportunity to prepare for an audit, because when they prepare for an audit it is not a true image of the working standard year-round. I think it can easily be faked or made to appear a lot better than they are. Ethical auditing still leaves the farm workers vulnerable, because when the auditor leaves, working conditions go back to the normal, the verbal abuse continues."*

Participant 3 (SW): *"I think the manner in which they are done, and the way that people think about it, gives it a negative image. I think a big problem is that the auditors don't have the necessary training and skills in order to do the audit or to handle any problem that might arise. The problem does not lie with the ethical audit, but rather with the manner in which they are done, the way that certain auditors do it and that not all auditors are 100% neutral. And if there is a problem, then the producer might feel that he is being punished. Ethical audits would be much more effective if the audit treats specific problems and then a team is formed to treat and solve these problems. The auditing process should be more about assisting the farmers/ producers, rather than punishing them. Things should not be done in a certain way just because of ethical audits. It is sad that ethical audits are necessary. I think the manner in which they are done and implemented need to be better."*

Participant 4 (SW): *"It depends on the auditor, their attitude and approach. I think ethical audits have become something which generates a lot of tension and pressure. The farmer immediately becomes stressed when he hears that he is going to be audited. The farmer, depending on his personality, is already wary of the auditor the moment that he walks in. They immediately start rubbing each other the wrong way. So, if the auditor does not have very good perception and interactive skills, then the situation can be read wrongly, and this is where everything starts going wrong. The audits are effective, but there is a lot of room for improvement."*

Participant 11 (FM): *"Yes, it should be in place. They can hear the concerns that the workers voice. It is not to complain but the people need to be treated fairly. It is a good*

*thing and it has a good effect. If all your paperwork and admin is in order, then you have nothing to worry about. We get an audit and we make sure that everything is in order.”*

*Participant 14 (FM): “There are four or more different audits that the producers have to do. You almost have to appoint someone to handle all the audits. The producer has to manage the farm and not all the audits. It is hard but we try our best [...] All these audits cost money and the producers did well with their audits last year. But with Covid-19 the producers will make far less money and the audits will still be expensive. It will be a problem in the future.”*

*Participant 15 (FM): “I think ethical audits are necessary and effective on farms, as it creates a standard to which all employers must adhere to and this protects the workers from any harm. However, I think that ethical audits are not always accurate as it can only take one or two workers who might not like management and who only think of negative things to say, which could be dangerous. I also think there must be looked at who does the audit, as in many cases it is someone who knows nothing about a farm or its operations. Furthermore, they also usually speak English, whereas all the workers and management are Afrikaans, which creates a language barrier.”*

As can be seen from the narratives, participants emphasised the importance of ethical auditing on farms and highlighted its role in providing a standard for working- and living conditions. They described how ethical auditing has forced employers to comply with the various policies and legislation that are set out to provide adequate working- and living conditions. This correlates with statements made by Losh (2012), who argues that the use of ethical auditing has seen producers increasingly complying with policies and legislation, which has in turn ensured adequate working- and living conditions for wine farm workers. The success of ethical auditing is also discussed by Greenberg (2013), who states that ethical auditing has allowed workers to negotiate for decent wages, housing, and health and safety standards, as well as programmes to improve environmental sustainability.

Despite the success of ethical auditing, however, participants also identified various issues surrounding the process that has made its implementation throughout the wine sector difficult. Participants discussed how the image of ethical audits were viewed as a

process of scrutiny or punishment, and that this placed a negative connotation on the process. Further, it is accompanied by tension, stress, and high stakes, which furthers this negative image. Devereux *et al.* (2017) also discuss this as they point out that, despite the success of ethical auditing, producers remain sceptical, hesitant, and reluctant to change. The process also holds financial implications, as the employer needs to pay a significant amount for the process and preparations. Many participants felt that this was unfair, as employers were paying for someone to point out their flaws.

Participants also discussed how employers do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to prepare and deal with ethical auditing. They conveyed that many farmers are specialists in agriculture, not human relations or law experts. Participants further discussed how the person conducting the audit influences the process. They described many auditors as being biased, with personal agendas focused on finding flaws on the farm. Participants were concerned with auditors' lack of knowledge surrounding the operations on the farm and the struggles wine farm workers and the broader farming community face. This was also pointed out by Devereux *et al.* (2017), who implies that auditors have little knowledge regarding agriculture and have limited insight into farming communities or the challenges they face. Along with this, participants also felt that there was a language barrier present which influenced the audit as information gets lost in translation.

Lastly, participants pointed out how employers were given too much time to prepare for an audit, and that the auditing results were not a true representation of the working- and living conditions of their workers. Employers would fix everything for the audit, and afterwards all would go back to normal. This strongly correlates with Losh (2012), who argues that despite ethical audits leading to improvements, there has also been concerning reports regarding labour rights violations on farms that have been ethically audited. Devereux *et al.* (2017) attribute these violations to the ethical auditing process being too lenient, as most audits are announced, giving the farmer ample time to prepare and fix any infringements.

#### 4.4.3.3. Trade unions

Participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of trade unions pertaining to farms. Despite trade unions in principle being a good idea, most of the participants described them as being ineffective and disruptive. They further indicated how trade unions do not act in the best interest of wine farm workers, detailing the destructive effect trade unions have on the relationship between the employer and employee. Accordingly, some of the narratives of the respective participants are presented below:

*Participant 2 (SW): “Workers think it is a positive thing but in my experience that a lot of things are promised to them and they think something will happen. But this belief in trade unions creates a negative relationship between the employer and the employees because it affects the trust that they have in each other. The workers have an attitude of: ‘if you don’t give me what I want, then I am going to the trade union.’ When I just started working on one of my farms, the trade union demanded that the workers’ wages be increased by 80%. This was very unrealistic. The relationship between the employer and the employees is negatively impacted and the trade union does not always deliver what it promises.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “What is negative is that many unions in South Africa are politically motivated. A union’s role should be to protect the worker and to promote the relationship between employer and employee. At this moment, we see a lot of politics and that unions foster negativity against employers. This leads to strained relationships. On the other hand, the unions are not free [...] I don’t think that they get value for their money.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “Trade unions have their place, but I don’t feel positive about it. The trade unions with which I have dealt didn’t have an objective perspective and way of doing things. This creates problems. If the trade union is focused on mediation, then it can have a positive impact. But, in most cases trade unions have a tendency to rile up people [...] It breaks trust. The employer feels that the employee should have spoken to him, rather than the trade union. It also stops communication and creates conflict. It also causes employers to withdraw from their employees.”*

*Participant 8 (SW): “In the 16 years that I have worked as a social worker I have never had a positive experience with a trade union. They offer no protection. There is a*



*perceived notion that the unions are only there to find fault with the farmer. The unions do not really care about the workers. They have a political agenda.*”

*Participant 13 (FM): “We are not involved with trade unions at all. Our workers can belong to a trade union, but they don’t. It is a farce. It worsens the situation and relationship. Issues can be better resolved internally, without the help of a trade union.”*

From the narratives above, it is clear to see that participants emphasised the ineffectiveness of trade unions on wine farms. They illustrated how trade unions come with a political agenda, making unrealistic promises which cannot be fulfilled, or which act against the best interest of the workers. Along with this, trade unions were described as entering the farm with an accusing and aggressive attitude towards the employer. This is a far cry from the mediation role most trade unions advertise themselves of fulfilling. Participants’ narratives depict a different picture from Greenberg (2013), who praises trade unions for their efforts in assisting farm workers to negotiate for decent wages, housing and health and safety standards. Narratives are much more in line with statements made by Devereux (2019), who states that trade unions have a bad reputation within the wine sector due to members complaining of a lack of visibility, lack of communication, false promises, and high member fees. Regarding the member fees, participants indicated that many employees felt that joining a trade union was not value for money, as they were getting nothing in return.

Participants also discussed the effect trade unions have on the relationship between employees and employers. Narratives discussed how the presence of trade unions have had detrimental effects on relationships. The presence of these organisations has encouraged mistrust, with trade unions sharing inaccurate information with workers. It has also discouraged communication regarding possible issues, as workers refuse to engage with their employer without their trade union present. The participants’ experiences correlate with Falletisch (2008), who describes farmers as feeling threatened by trade unions’ motive on farms. This is in agreement with Loxton’s (2015) study, where farmers described trade unions as being detrimental to their relationship with their employees.

#### 4.4.3.4. Agritourism

Participants were asked to describe the role and effectiveness of agritourism on the farm and its employees. They praised agritourism for its contributions towards creating employment opportunities, increasing skill development, and ensuring financial sustainability. Some of the narratives of the respective participants regarding agritourism are presented below:

*Participant 1 (SW): “Yes, I think agritourism leads to job creation. There are specific roles needed within hospitality and receiving guests and rendering services to them. For example, if it is a wine farm with a really good image and reputation, they have a standard that needs to be met. Tourists will often look at the working and housing conditions of the employees, as this reflects the image of the farm, hence forcing the farm to ensure that houses are maintained and working standards met. That said, I think there are farms that focus so much on the tourist aspects that they aim to hide on farm housing from the public. You often drive onto a wine farm and only see the beautiful flowers, trees and vineyards that you forget just behind the row of trees are the workers broken down housing.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “I think it is the most amazing thing for the creation of jobs. Secondly, the farms that partake in agritourism educate and develop their workers well and fully because the tourists come from overseas. They do not only educate them in terms of skills but also interpersonal skills. This leads to the development and betterment of the workers. It also creates a lot of opportunities for children who have just finished matric. They can now work in the restaurant or guest house. The people also develop and change because they build interpersonal relationships with the tourists. Their horizons broaden immensely. I think it has an amazingly positive impact of the people and the farm because the workers are developed and educated, their worlds get bigger, the tourists treat them very well, and it teaches them the basics of good service and good client service.”*

*Participant 4 (SW): “It can be very positive because it improves the financial sustainability of the farm and this in turn influences, in a positive manner, the job security of the employee [...] I would also like to believe that the possibility exists that some workers feel degraded. They could feel that they have to work extremely hard so that the farm can have all these fancy things and attract all these fancy people. And they still have to live in a ‘hokkie’ in a township.”*

*Participant 11 (FM): “A wine tasting on a farm is a good thing, especially the one on this farm. The wine sales have boosted our finances. It is a good thing. We can do more [...] But sometimes outside people are given the jobs, rather than the children on the farm who don't have jobs. We have a lot of young children who don't have jobs. Our people are unhappy about this.”*

Based on the narratives, it is clear to see that agritourism has undoubtedly had a positive effect on farms and all working and living on the farm. Participants described how agritourism directly leads to employment opportunities for farm dwellers, as a host of new positions open. Specific emphasis was placed on providing employment for the youth and open a different career path for them. Besides agricultural work, this correlates with Barbieri *et al.* (2019), who state that an increase in tourism activities (e.g. wine tastings, food vendors and retailers) provide additional employment on farms, meaning that on-farms, residence has increased employment opportunities.

Along with employment, participants described how agritourism leads to skill development for those working in the industry, which ultimately leads to empowerment in farming communities. Additionally, tourism provides a revenue stream for farms to become more financially secure. Participants illustrated how this also meant that farm workers would benefit, as the farm is made more presentable for tourism, the implication being that on-farm housing is improved to appear appealing to the public. These narratives from participants correspond with Van Niekerk (2013), who describes how agritourism provides a farm with additional revenue. This means that farms are financially stable, which decreases the chances of the farm looking at alternative employment practices (e.g. casualisation, externalisation, mechanisation) to save money. This creates long term permanent employment for a larger group of farm workers. Kim *et al.* (2019) further elaborates that, with the farm having additional revenue, employers would be more inclined to improve on-farm housing to boost the overall presentation of the farm.

Despite agritourism having an undisputedly positive effect on farm workers and farm dwellers, participants did share some concerns regarding how it is implemented. They shared concerns around the employment opportunities not going to on-farm residents, but to outsiders instead, which defeats the purpose of agritourism benefitting the broader farm community. Participants also warned how employers could opt to improve

infrastructure instead of farm housing. These observations directly contradict Van Niekerk (2013), who states that there are no inherent disadvantages to agritourism. The narratives by participants serves as a reminder that, if not implemented for the good of the whole farm, agritourism serves only to enrich the employer and offers no protection to employees.

#### 4.4.3.5. Advocating, activist groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of advocating, activist groups and NGOs on the farm and those who employ these measures. Their narratives drew strong criticism against the various organisation who render a variety of services on farms. In so doing, they accused these systems of being ineffective due to them being understaffed and under-resourced, with political and personal agendas. Some of the narratives engage with these limitations:

*Participant 2 (SW): “Your social work NGOs come to the farms very little. They do not see the farms as being a priority and they do little work there [...] The social work NGOs also sometimes have a mindset of ‘what I don’t see, I don’t need to address,’ and this is also a problem.”*

*Participant 3 (SW): “The activist groups are supposed to be positive. I think that if politics can be removed from the equation, then it will be much better. The moment when politics are involved in any organisation who renders services, it loses its effectiveness. At this moment, the activist groups have their own goals and motives which are not necessarily the best for the person who they are representing. Politics play a big role and therefore it leads to negative relationships between these groups. If politics were to be gotten rid of, then it would have a much more positive impact.”*

*Participant 5 (SW): “ACVVs and NGOs don’t have the capacity to do what is expected of them. There are not enough social workers and they don’t go to the farms. Their areas are too big. Honestly, their service is not effective. I don’t see community development on farms being done by ACVV, because they don’t have the time or capacity. Very few services care about the people and helping them. Promises are made but never kept. A service or a project should have an impact and kept up. Something should be sustainable.”*

*Participant 13 (FM): “They are not at all effective. I have had to do with Women on Farms and the advice that they give useless. They only come to look for money, even though they are a non-profit. They have never come to us. I had to call them for help. I think they shouldn’t even exist.”*

In these narratives, participants made references to various organisation and evaluated their effectiveness. Most participants discussed social services, to which they were sympathetic, acknowledging that these organisations serve massive communities, often being understaffed and working with limited resources. For these reasons, participants indicated that social services almost never render services on farms, with farm workers and farm dwellers having to go into town to be assisted. The narratives are extremely concerning, considering the vital role NGOs play in protecting and enhancing farm workers’ wellbeing. Devereux (2019) describes how NGOs aim to educate farm workers regarding their rights, mobilising them to claim these rights and campaigning for improved lives and livelihoods.

Participants also commented on certain advocating and activist groups which they described as being ineffective and disruptive with political and personal agendas. Participants described how these organisations serve no real purpose, as their focus is not on improving relationships on farms, instead worsening it. The fact that participants describe ineffective social service organisation as well as advocating and activist groups should be concerning, considering that these organisations boast about the various services they provide and the effectiveness of said services.

#### 4.4.3.6. Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs)

Participants were asked to evaluate the role and effectiveness of EWPs on farms, along with those who employ them. In so doing, they depicted EWPs as being highly effective on farms, describing them as filling the void left by social service organisations and trade unions, which are understaffed and under-resourced with political and personal agendas. Participants stated that the effectiveness EWPs depends on the employers’ attitude towards the service, as well as its sustainability on farms. Participants indicated EWP services to be affordable and adaptable to a smaller farms’ budgets. Some of the narratives regarding these factors are included below:

Participant 1 (SW): “EWP’s give farm workers the opportunity to benefit from social services that they wouldn’t otherwise receive, due to a lack of resources and information. EWP’s are effective when there is equal input from the employees and the farmer. EWP’s can also be ineffective if only one party is motivated about the service. If you don’t get cooperation from the farmer to allocate time for the services that can assist in prevent a variety of issues, then it’s not going to work. In general, I think EWP’s are very effective in providing basic social services to very vulnerable farm workers and their families, which they would have otherwise not received.”

Participant 3 (SW): “Employee wellness is definitely effective, and we see the proof of it. I have worked in employee wellness on farms for the past 22 years and we see that the top five problems that had in the past have disappeared. These problems have been replaced by less serious ones. Employee wellness is definitely effective on farms and brings about great change. But if there is no consistency, then there shouldn’t be EWP’s. Employee wellness can’t be done for only a year. Wellness programs only mean something if there is consistency and if it is part of a long-term plan on farms.”

Participant 5 (SW): “If EWP’s are done right, then it has a tremendous impact. EWP’s mean that you are involved for a long period of time. EWP services on a farm that only last 6 months is not sufficient. A place where you have a contract for one, two, or three years, there you can see progress [...] My personal opinion is that it is much more profitable for the farmer to buy a few hours of EWP services, rather than deal with the consequences of not having EWP services. I do think it is affordable.”

Participant 13 (FM): “It is excellent. It takes the people forward and it helps them to think differently. Most of the workers didn’t even finish grade eight and that is why they are farm workers. They won’t be educated further, and EWP’s are a way of educating them and broadening their horizons. EWP’s help people to manage their own lives and this makes them take responsibility for their own lives [...] It costs a few Rands, but it must be done. I feel that farms need to be obligated to do it. EWP’s can level the playing field.”

Participant 14 (FM): “EWP’s are most certainly effective. I would like more money to do more. I feel that we need to spend more money on EWP’s because it is the only way that the workers can become more effective [...] I don’t think that its value to be converted to

money, but I think it is affordable. A part of your income should be spent on something like EWPs.”

Looking at the narratives, it is clear to see that EWPs have drawn strong praise from participants, social workers, and farm managers alike. Participants described how EWPs are highly effective in assisting employees with their personal problems, whereas assistance would have been ineffective if they had gone to another organisation within the community. This is also pointed out by Visser and Ferrer (2015), who state that farms are geographically isolated, meaning they receive little support from social service organisations. EWPs also do not disrupt the farming operations, as services are rendered on-site, meaning workers do not have to take leave to go into town. Participants described how this ultimately leads to increased productivity, benefitting both the employee and employer. This correlates with Botes *et al.* (2014), who emphasises EWPs as being mutually beneficial, as employees gain on-site social service assisting them in addressing work-related and personal problems, whereas employers are ensured that their employees' productivity remains high.

Despite the benefits, participants did warn that the effectiveness of EWPs is determined by both an employer's attitude towards EWPs, as well as the sustainability of the EWP. Participants described how employers' attitude and motivation towards EWPs must be positive, with employers wanting to encourage change on the farm. EWPs must not be a tick-box exercise by employers looking to boost their farm reputation. Instead, it must be seen as a change agent on the farm. This closely resembles Attridge (2012), who emphasises the importance of management in EWPs, with managers being key in the service in that they are required to refer workers for assistance.

Participants furthermore placed emphasis on EWPs' sustainability on farms, describing how change is not possible within six months. Change is only possible if EWP services are a regular occurrence throughout a few years. Even after changes have occurred, prevention is still key to encourage constant improvement and empowerment. Participants described EWPs as being affordable, as each farm has a specific program tailored to their budget. Further, EWPs are adaptable, which is why participants stated that, even for smaller farms, EWPs provide an affordable service. The narratives clearly

state how EWP's have been effective in protecting and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers within a society where other services and organisation have failed.

#### **4.5. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the fourth chapter was to analyse the perceptions of social workers and farm managers, regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. This was done through three sections. Section A focused on analysing the research methodology utilised in this study. Section B presented the participant particulars, with a brief account of participants who took part in the study. Lastly, section C showcased three themes, subsequent sub-themes and categories, along with various narratives from participants. The themes included the nature of work, living conditions and protective factors. Building on this, the next chapter will present the various conclusions and recommendations drawn from the empirical study.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 2.4. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study has been to gain an understanding of the contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers through the perception of professionals. Various studies concluded that, amongst the poor and marginalised groups within South Africa, farm workers and farm dwellers are representative of groups who have received the least attention from policy makers, politicians, social service organisation and the media (Atkinson, 2007). This has resulted in many cases where farm workers fall victim to working conditions that are exploitive, unsecure, unsafe, and unregulated (Du Toit, 1993). Along with terrible working conditions, on-farm housing is often inhumane and subpar, worsened by farm workers' and farm dwellers' excessive substance abuse, violence, and limited resources (Atkinson, 2007). The described working- and living conditions significantly contribute towards negatively impacting the wellbeing of wine farm workers and dwellers (Devereux, 2019). Despite the challenges these parties face, there have been active attempts to improve and rectify the above-mentioned infringements. This has been done through the use of various protective factors, including policy and legislation, ethical auditing, trade unions, agritourism, advocating, activist groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs).

With the wellbeing of wine farm workers in mind, the study attempted to describe the contributing factors negatively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Furthermore, the study made provision for examining the protective factors that positively contributes towards their wellbeing. An empirical study regarding these contributing and protective factors was conducted, which incorporated the perceptions of 16 professionals, eight of which were social workers and eight of which were farm managers. Interviews with these participants were conducted utilising a semi-structured interview schedule with face-to-face interviews. The findings of the empirical study were presented and analysed in the previous chapter.

In light of this, this chapter addresses the fifth objective of the study, which is to conclude and make recommendations regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa.

## **2.5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The conclusions drawn will be based on the findings from the empirical study, with recommendations subsequently based on the conclusions made. The key findings from the literature and empirical study will be presented in an integrated manner. The conclusions will follow the same structural format as the themes and sub-themes identified within the previous chapter. Specific recommendations will be made following the conclusions on each theme identified.

### **5.2.1. Participant particulars**

Profiling of participants is important, as it creates context for interpretation regarding the conclusions and recommendations in relation to the themes and sub-themes within the study. Participants of the study were equally divided into two groups of professionals, namely farm managers and social workers working within the field of EWPs. Farm managers are responsible for the management and general maintenance of the farm, whereas social workers working within the field of EWPs provide confidential information, support, and counselling to employees with personal and work-related problems. Most of the participants from both groups were highly experienced, having a great deal of knowledge regarding the various challenges wine farm workers face.

### **5.2.2. Nature of work**

In discussing working conditions, participants described wine farm workers' workload as being physically intensive, combined with long working hours in harsh weather conditions throughout the year. They explained how workers are left physically vulnerable due to them not having control over when they can access leave and being entirely at the mercy of their employer. Despite these harsh conditions, wine farm employees receive minimum wages, far less than their work's worth. Taking this into consideration, some participants indicated how their earnings are insufficient in providing for their basic needs, although

the farm managers interviewed tended to deem their salary as sufficient for their standard of living.

In terms of workplace challenges, there are various health and safety risks, along with difficulties regarding workplace relationships. Participants explained that, regarding health and safety, wine farm workers are exposed to multiple dangerous or hazardous machinery or chemicals. However, they elaborated that there are strict safety measures in place, with workers also receiving training and personal protective equipment (PPE). Accordingly, it was stressed that wine farm workers are only at risk if they do not follow the guidelines or act recklessly. Although their work entails physical risks, however, it was deduced that the greatest workplace challenge faced by wine farm workers was that of relationships within the workplace. The relationships between the farmer and worker, as well as between the workers themselves are impacted by race, culture, and power dynamics.

Along with difficult working conditions and workplace challenges, wine farm workers also struggle with challenges to employment. Participants described various factors that have led to a decrease in the permanent workforce and resulted in limited employment opportunities. Casual and contract work has led to many employers decreasing their permanent workforce and replacing them with casual or contract workers, as it requires less commitment and responsibility from the farmer. Drought has devastated various farms, which forced farmers to decrease their workforce, as they have smaller harvests requiring less workers. Further, the increase in mechanisation has seen machines replace workers, as employers regard them as being more efficient and causing less problems, resulting in a decreased workforce. Participants described how farm murders have impacted wine farms, with the farm coming to a halt without the farmer. This results in a lack of income, and in some cases, the farm going bankrupt or being sold. Needless to say, this directly places wine farm workers' employment at risk. Lastly, participants described the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic as being detrimental to the wine sector as a whole. This is due to the loss of income stemming from weeks of lockdown and an alcohol ban. Participants described how this impacted the long-term sustainability of the wine sector, placing thousands of wine farm workers' employment at risk.

## Conclusions

The working conditions of wine farm workers have a negative impact on their wellbeing, as workers must work in extremely difficult conditions, with extended periods of work in harsh weather conditions being physically draining. Working hours regularly surpasses the 45 hours per week, as described by policies and legislation, with workers often not getting any extra money for their efforts. This is a direct violation of various policies and legislations which are in place to prevent this type of exploitation from happening. The situation is worsened as physically drained workers cannot access leave when they want to and can only do so when the farmer deems it the correct time for the whole farm to take a break. Ensuring physical health is further hampered as workers struggle to access sick leave, often having to take unpaid leave just to go to the doctor or clinic. Wine farm workers are threatened, as their employer vows to take away benefits or payment if a worker wants to take leave at an inconvenient time. This behaviour by the employer forces workers to prioritise the farm's operation above their own physical and mental health. It also tightens the farmer's paternalistic hold they have on their employees, with the farmer exercising total control over the workers' professional and personal lives.

Regarding workplace challenges, it is not a question of whether there are health and safety measures in place, but rather whether these guidelines are being followed by those it aims to protect. Employers have become increasingly aware of possible health and safety regulations and have tremendously improved protection for their employees. The issue lies with employees ignoring these guidelines as they act irresponsibly, placing not only themselves, but the whole farm at risk. Working relationships on farms remain difficult, due to some farmers' management style, characterised by talking down to employees in a condescending tone with inhumane treatment. This behaviour stems from the paternalistic hold some farmers still maintain over their workforce, where the farmer is seen as the most important individual, with all having to fall in line with his commands, ideas, and opinions. Furthermore, race and power dynamics influence relationships between all individuals on the farm. This is a direct result of the unique South African history of apartheid, where individuals were classified according to their race. This continues on farms to date, as certain individuals classify themselves above others due to them being a specific race. The paternalistic hold some farmers have over their

employees reinforces race and power dynamics on wine farms, as the farmers, mostly white males, are seen as superior to their employees who are mostly from other ethnicities.

There have been various challenges to employment that have resulted in job insecurity for wine farm workers. There has been a shift within the wine sector with efforts aiming at reducing permanent employment on wine farms. This is due to the benefits of casual and contract work, where farmers can hire workers only for a short period of time, reducing their contractual and financial responsibilities towards permanent workers. Permanent workers are ever increasingly seen as a burden in that employers frequently have to comply with various policies and legislation regarding working- and living conditions. With casual and contract work, employers have passed the responsibility to labour brokers. This is concerning, as casual and contract work is much more insecure, with fewer policies and legislation in place to protect workers, ultimately impacting their wellbeing. The process of decreasing permanent employment has been sped up by mechanisation that has allowed employers to replace employees with machines capable of doing the same work more efficiently with less issues. Current events such as drought, farm murders and the Covid-19 pandemic have all reinforced the idea around decreasing permanent workforce, as all these events have had significant financial implications. Due to this, farmers want to be more financially flexible and less responsible for permanent employment and housing. This should be extremely alarming considering the wine sector is not only one of the biggest contributors towards employment within the Western Cape, but also in South Africa. If processes continue as they are currently, it could significantly worsen South Africa's unemployment and housing crises.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the aforementioned conclusions, some recommendations include that:

- The Department of Labour should improve efforts to monitor and evaluate policy and legislation implementation within the wine sector, specifically on wine farms.
- Ethical audits on wine farms should improve investigations regarding workplace relationships, superficially pertaining to management styles, unequal power dynamics and challenges involving race and culture.

- The Department of Labour should consider increasing subsidies for wine farms, depending on the number of permanent employees to incentivise permanent employment and on-farm housing.

### **5.2.3. Living conditions**

In discussing the living conditions of wine farm workers, the physical environment, evictions, culture, and habits, as well as challenges pertaining to living on the farm are relevant. Regarding the physical environment of the workers, participants indicated that the structure of the houses was adequate, since they were brick houses, usually consisting of two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen, and a bathroom, complete with electricity and running water. Participants described how this is far better to alternative options available outside the farm. However, they did disagree on the maintenance of on-farm housing. Despite the fact that most houses were adequate in size, on-farm houses differed from farm to farm in terms of the conditions. Some participants blamed the employer/farmer for not regularly doing maintenance, which resulted in on-farm housing becoming run down and unliveable with cracked walls, broken windows, and leaking roofs. On the other hand, some blamed farm workers for not taking responsibility for the houses and allowing on-farm housing to deteriorate. The biggest issue identified by participants regarding the physical environment was the number of inhabitants, with overpopulation being a common occurrence. Many households were described as having an excess of 10 plus members within a two-bedroom house, with not everyone even having a bed. South Africa's housing problem was identified as having influenced overpopulation on wine farms.

Participants described the eviction process as being a long legal battle, with both negative effects on the evictee, who must relocate, and the employer/farmer, who must spend large sums of money to lawfully evict a person. Most participants indicated illegal evictions as a thing of the past, with current evictions being done lawfully and with valid reason. Accordingly, in most cases, the evictee would have broken farm rules which lead to the eviction process. Despite the process being legally followed, participants indicated that there are still numerous illegal activities involved in an eviction, where the farmer would resort to cutting utilities to force the evictee to move. Despite the illegal activities on the

part of farmers, participants did sympathise with employers, as they felt that current policy and legislation heavily favoured the evictee, with the farmer having to spend large sums of money in legal fees and providing alternative housing despite not being in the wrong. Even after taking the legal route regarding an eviction, farmers still struggle to remove evictees, who simply refuse to leave.

With reference to culture and habits, participants described substance abuse on wine farms as being unparalleled to anywhere else, consisting of weekend binge drinking leading to conflict and violence. They described how drinking is habitual on farms, where workers would be sober during the week while meticulously planning their weekend drinking. This is worsened by the use of drugs like methamphetamine (tik) and marijuana (dagga), which has led to an increase in violence on farming communities. Participants indicated that the 'dop' system made a significant contribution towards current drinking habits, describing how it normalised everyday drinking and altered the perception around alcohol. The 'dop' system allowed alcohol to be an incentive or reward. Also affected by the frequency of substance abuse, participants described relationships on farms as characterised by mistrust, gossiping, jealousy, and envy. Relationships would be peaceful during the week but would quickly turn violent on weekends if problems were not resolved, a situation aggravated by substance abuse. The violence includes physical and verbal abuse between intimate partners, parents and children, and neighbours. The situation is further worsened by individuals living closely to one another.

In discussing challenges to living on the farm, participants described wine farm workers' greatest challenges as being a lack of resources as well as ignorance and inexperience due to a lack of exposure to the outside world. Participants illustrated how employers have moved away from providing transport to town, due to the legal responsibility in case of an accident. This has left many without access to resources, as they do not have their own transport and must solely rely on unreliable and overpriced public transport. Due to most farms' geographical locations, wine farm workers further struggle with call out services such as police, ambulances, and social services. Participants further indicated that living on the farm affected wine farm workers' and their family members' way of thinking, in that staying in an environment with only others sharing their perceptions caused them to become set in their ways. Participants described how the farm becomes

the individual's only frame of reference, due to the lack of exposure from the outside world and other ways of thinking and doing. Ultimately, wine farm workers' lack of access to resources and inexperience when it comes to the outside world results in them staying and becoming increasingly dependent on the farmer to provide them with what they need. This only serves the farmer, as it increases the paternalistic hold they have on all working and living on the farm.

## **Conclusions**

On-farm housing in its current state seems to be improving, with farmers taking more responsibility to upgrade and maintain housing. However, both farmers and residents continuously blame each other for the deterioration of on-farm housing, although both parties are at fault. Farmers are quick to dismiss workers' request when something is broken as they believe the workers to be deliberately breaking down the houses. Furthermore, many farmers only fix on-farm housing if they have an upcoming ethical audit. On the other hand, residents are overpopulating on-farm housing and exceeding the number of individuals allowed to stay in the house. As a result, things may break more quickly, as more residents are making use of the tools and utilities designed for one small family. Substance abuse also plays a part, as inhabitants resort to violence when under the influence of alcohol or drugs often results in broken windows, doors etc. The farmer then uses the resident's substance abuse as justification for not maintaining the house, as they argue that fixing things is pointless if they are just going to be broken again.

A lot of progress has been made regarding evictions, with illegal evictions becoming less frequent and most current evictions being conducted legally. That being said, the process of legal evictions has been put in place to protect on-farm residents and their livelihoods, but instead have resulted in the opposite. An eviction can only take place if the evictee has broken the rules, resulting the eviction. Even then, the farmer must pay expensive legal fees to evict a person, despite farmers not breaking the rules. Even after all the legal proceedings and legal fees, many residents simply refuse to leave, leaving the employers powerless, with more legal proceedings needed to forcefully remove the resident. It is for this reason that many farmers turn to illegal activities, such as cutting utilities or intimidation tactics, as many farms simply do not have the financial capabilities to pay for legal fees. As mentioned previously, the process of eviction aims to protect the evictee.



However, instead, it diminishes future on-farm housing opportunities, since the tedious and expensive eviction process only reinforces farmers' beliefs in not providing on-farm housing for future employees. This results in farming communities slowly dying out, as more evictions take place with less replacements.

Wine farm workers' and dwellers' cultural habits, specifically pertaining to substance abuse, remains one of the greatest threats to their wellbeing. Substance abuse on farms are characterised by habitual binge drinking over weekends, with meticulous planning during the week. This is extremely concerning considering the detrimental effect of alcohol on an individual's physical and mental health. It further has dangerous implications on an individual's family, as relationships are affected, often leading to domestic violence, especially against woman and children. Weekend drinking often spills over to the Monday, as workers go to work under the influence, risking not only their employment but their safety as well as the safety of others. Habitual drinking on farms is often supplemented by drugs like methamphetamine (tik) and marijuana (dagga), which exacerbates health and safety risks. Wine farm workers and dwellers struggle to break the cycle of habitual drinking, as the drinking patterns are reinforced from generation to generation. The 'dop' system played an integral role in introducing and reinforcing habitual drinking. This influenced individuals' perceptions of alcohol as a reward for working hard. Nonetheless, drinking patterns on wine farms have significantly worsened since the abolishment of the 'dop' system, which speaks to a new drinking culture on farms, complemented by drugs.

Relationships amongst wine farm workers and dwellers remain complicated. Most farms have elements of gossiping, jealousy and envy which serve as focal points from which conflict arises. During the week, relationships remain peaceful, but quickly turn violent over weekends. Conflict resolution and violence goes hand in hand on wine farms, as problems are often solved through violence. This is heavily influenced by substance abuse, which, as previously mentioned, occurs on weekends. Individuals strategically use alcohol to resolve problems that might have arisen from the week. This often leads to physical and verbal abuse between intimate partners, parents, and children, and neighbours. In the end alcohol is used a scapegoat for an individual's behaviour. However, the conflict is never really resolved, with problems being suppressed and

grievances being built up, only leading to bigger altercations in the future. This speaks to serious lack of conflict resolution skills and indicates how alcohol and violence influences various aspects of their lives.

Many wine farm workers' and dwellers' development are limited by them living on the farm, as they are geographically isolated. They struggle to access resources to further skilled development. Often their world revolves around working and living on the farm. With this they become increasingly set in their ways and dependent on their employer. The lack of autonomy means they regularly rely on their employer to assist them with various issues (e.g. conflict resolution and financial problems), which deprives them of valuable skills and development opportunities. This has an impact on future generations, who struggle to adapt to life outside the farm, as there is no farmer to turn to for assistance. This forces many to continuously work and live on the farm, instead of searching for other opportunities. Ultimately this only serves the farmers, who strengthen their paternalistic hold on their workforce, as workers become increasingly dependent on them. It also ensures that farmers continuously have a reliable, cheap source of labour.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions regarding the living conditions wine farm workers are subject to, it can be recommended that:

- Ethical trade associations should conduct ethical audits on a yearly basis and incorporate more frequent unannounced ethical audits to investigate the current and actual state of housing.
- Social service organisation should increase projects and initiatives aimed at preventing substance abuse and promoting healthy relationships.
- Public services, such the police, ambulances and social services should familiarise themselves with rural farming communities to make their services more accessible.

### **5.2.4. Protective factors**

Protective factors refer to the various factors that are in place to protect and contribute towards the wellbeing of wine farm workers, and include policy and legislation, ethical

auditing, trade unions, agritourism, advocating and activist groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and, lastly, employee wellness programmes (EWPs). With regards to policy and legislation, participants praised current policies and legislation protecting the rights of wine farm workers. However, they raised concerns regarding a lack of enforcement, resulting in occasions where workers are exploited, seeing as employers are not always monitored. Participants also discussed how loopholes were used by the legal teams of certain farms to succeed in bypassing certain policies and legislation to benefit the employer. Lastly, participants illustrated that, although the various policies and legislations were shared on notice boards, workers did not understand them as many were illiterate. Similarly, training regarding policy and legislation was not being done on a regular basis, as some employers deliberately wanted to keep their workforce uninformed.

Taking the frequent thwarting of justice into account, participants emphasised the importance of ethical auditing on farms and highlighted its role in providing a standard for working- and living conditions. In so doing, they pointed out how ethical auditing forces employers to comply to policies and legislation by providing industry standard working- and living conditions. Despite the emphasis on the positives regarding ethical auditing, participants did list flaws. Firstly, they discussed how the process still has a bad reputation amongst farmers, as they see it as being there to scrutinise and penalise them. This discourages the broader wine farming community from investing in ethical auditing. Furthermore, ethical auditing's success is hampered by biased auditors who want to find flaws on the farms and lack knowledge on farming operations. This is made even more difficult in that many farmers do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to prepare and deal with ethical auditing. Lastly, participants pointed out flaws regarding the ethical auditing process itself. They indicated that the process needs to be done more frequently, as the farm returns to subpar working- and living conditions after an audit has concluded. Participants also added that farmers are given too much time to prepare for audits, and that the process should better utilise unannounced inspections.

In a manner similar to the ethical auditing process, participants praised the ideology behind trade unions. However, they described it in its current form on farms as being ineffective and disruptive. In so doing, they criticised trade unions as coming with a

political agenda, making unrealistic promises which can never be fulfilled, or which acting against the best interest of the workers. Trade unions approach the farm with an accusing and aggressive manner, which influences the communication and relationship between the employer and employees. Participants described how relationships are broken down and how the presence of trade unions discouraged communication regarding possible issues, as workers refuse to engage with their employer without their union present. The ineffectiveness of trade unions within the wine sector has been attributed to lack of visibility, lack of communication, false promises, and high member fees.

Participants praised agritourism for its unorthodox approach towards assisting in the protection of wine farm workers' wellbeing, despite it not directly being a protective factor. They expressed how agritourism directly leads to employment opportunities for farm dwellers as a host of new positions open. Specific emphasis was placed on the fact that it can create employment opportunities for the youth by providing them with the possibility of a different career path to agricultural work. Besides employment, agritourism leads to skill development, as individuals occupy new positions. Furthermore, participants placed emphasis on how agritourism provides an additional revenue stream for the farm. This also benefits the employees, as the farm is made more presentable for tourism, meaning on-farm housing is improved to appear appealing to the public.

Regarding NGOs, specifically social service organisations, participants were sympathetic, acknowledging that these organisations served massive communities, often being understaffed and working with limited resources. The ineffectiveness of these organisations is not necessarily due to a lack of trying, but a result of having to work with limited resources. Participants described how these organisations could be accessed by wine farm workers and dwellers. However, it would require them to go into town, which is difficult concerning the geographical locations of most farms and transport issues they are faced with. Participants were much more critical of advocating and activist groups, who they described as being ineffective and disruptive, with political and personal agendas. Participants described how these organisations serve no real purpose, as their focus is not on improving relationships on farms, ultimately rather worsening them. Further, the organisations would often start projects or movements on farms, only to abandon them as soon as they stop benefitting them.

Lastly, participants praised EWP, who they described as being highly effective in assisting employees with their personal problems. They elaborated on how EWP have been able to fill the void left by social service organisations, who have largely been ineffective in assisting wine farm workers and dwellers. Part of the success attributed to EWP has been on-site service delivery, which has contributed towards the service being beneficial for both the employer and employee. Employees can access assistance in addressing their personal problems, whereas employers benefit from increased productivity. Participants did however indicate that the effectiveness of EWP depended on the employers' attitude and the sustainability of the service. Employers play an integral role in EWP services, as they need to encourage employees to seek assistance, as well as refer employees. Sustainability is crucial, as change cannot happen within a short time, with EWP services needing to be present on a permanent basis to continuously assist in protecting and enhancing wine farm workers' wellbeing.

## **Conclusions**

Policy and legislations are meant to be the cornerstone in providing various rights for wine farm workers in order to protect and enhance their wellbeing. Despite policies and legislation being well formulated and stated, there have been serious challenges regarding implementation and monitoring. For instance, the Department of Labour has failed in enforcing various policies and legislations. Instead, they have solely relied on third parties, such as ethical auditing associations and trade unions, to implement and monitor compliance with policies and legislation on farms. This is not the responsibility of these third parties, who are only in place to enhance and assist the Department of Labour in enforcing policies and legislations. Furthermore, these measures should be present and adhered to on every single wine farm. However, not all wine farms have third parties on their farms, leaving a large portion of them unregulated due to the Department of Labour's negligence. The wellbeing of some wine farm workers has been negatively impacted by loopholes within current policy and legislation, which have been exploited by employers. These loopholes, along with lack of enforcement, have left employers open to continue with exploitive practices.

The Department of Labour requires all employers to educate their employees on the various policies and legislation in place to protect them. This is an impractical request, as employers do not continuously inform their workers, since this would not personally benefit them as employers. In fact, farmers are aware that, if their employees are too informed, it could render them harder to exploit. The Department of labour further requires employers to put up posters of all policies and legislation. This only serves as a decorative piece, since many wine farm workers are illiterate or unable to understand the legal jargon. The Department should be solely responsible for the implementation and enforcement of all policies and legislation pertaining to wine farm workers, and should be assisted, not informed by third parties.

Ethical auditing has had an overwhelmingly positive effect on wine farms and the wellbeing of its workers. It has been the sole enforcer of policy and legislation in ensuring industry standard working- and living conditions. Ethical audits being done on a regular basis has assisted many wine farms in rectifying past injustices and exploitation regarding noncompliance with policies and legislation. Despite its success, ethical audits remain exclusive to only a small percentage of wine farmers who aim to sell their wine internationally. It excludes a large portion of the wine industry, which remains sceptical of its necessity, effectiveness, and purpose. Although ethical auditing has become a more common occurrence within the wine industry, it still requires a lot of expanding and improvement. Ethical audits have struggled to find appropriate auditors, as many have been biased, aiming to find flaws on the farm. Auditors often have little to no knowledge regarding farming operations or the challenges the relevant communities face. This has resulted in resistance from employers and employees alike, who argue that they need auditors who understand their situation and needs. For these reasons, many audits have been inaccurate in determining a farm's compliance with working- and living conditions. This is why, after many audits, violations still occur. The process has also presented a challenge, as it is conducted only every few years. In between audits, many farms simply return to their previous noncompliant state. With audits being announced and conducted at the farmers' convenience, the employer will always have enough time to cover up evidence and silence workers regarding noncompliance before their next audit.

Trade unions remain a highly disputed subject. If they stick to the mediation role, they claim to fulfil, then their effect on wine farms should be undoubtably positive. However, in their current state, the effectiveness of trade unions in protecting and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers remains unreliable. Trade unions have been criticised on grounds of political agendas, unrealistic promises, being absent, acting in an aggressive manner and being financially costly. All of these factors have contributed toward their downfall on wine farms and have impeded their ability to assist wine farm workers and fulfil the mediation role between employer and employee. Farmers and trade unions have always had a strenuous relationship, with both parties contravening each other. This fighting has often been at the expense of the wine farm workers, who have been neglected by both their employer and their trade union. When considering that trade unions are among the third parties assisting the Department of Labour in implementing and monitoring compliance with policies and legislation, one has to question whether they are fulfilling this role. Trade unions currently seem more occupied with pushing their personal agendas and criticising the farmer than focusing on protecting and promoting the wellbeing of farm workers.

Agritourism has been an unconventional, yet effective method in protecting and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. It has been crucial in providing employment opportunities for largely unemployed farm dwellers who struggle to gain stable employment. Agritourism furthers skill development, as its employment is much more socially centred than the traditional physical farm work. Further, it directly combats the previously discussed inexperience on farms, as workers experience new cultures and ways of living from interaction with visitors. This greatly broadens their perception of life and assists in breaking the habits established from working on the farm generation after generation. Furthermore, it encourages workers to become more independent, allowing them to seek employment and living opportunities outside the farm. From a financial perspective, agritourism provides farms with a much-needed revenue stream which can assist in paying workers higher salaries or improving on-farm housing. In addition, agritourism builds a brand on a local and international stage, forcing employers to become more presentable to the public. Having a recognisable brand provides workers with much needed pride in what they do for a living. It also motivates workers to change their habits,

specifically pertaining to substance abuse, as they look to align their values with their brand's image. Agritourism is by no means the answer to the wine industry's issues regarding the wellbeing of its workers. Nonetheless, its positive effects are worth exploring, especially for farms situated within tourist hotspots.

The current state of and effectiveness of advocating, activist groups and NGOs is disheartening, considering that the intentions of these organisations are positive. In short, their aim of protecting and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers and dwellers have been plagued by limitations and stumbling blocks. For instance, social service organisations serve massive communities, while having limited staff, funding, and resources available at their disposal. They simply do not have the capacity to assist farm workers and farm dwellers with their wide range of serious issues. Further, the remote geographical locations of farms have worsened the problem, with individuals struggling to reach social service organisations and vice versa. Similarly, the effectiveness of advocating and activist groups has been debatable, with their success differing from farm to farm. There are serious concerns regarding these organisations and their motive and commitment to farms and its residents. Many have turned farms into a political battleground aimed at empowering the farm workers and dwellers through violence. This has been detrimental to employer/employee relationships, which have worsened.

The contributions of EWP's towards protecting and promoting the wellbeing of wine farm workers have been unparalleled and invaluable. They have filled the void left by the previously discussed protective factors that have been incapable and ineffective. EWP services have been exceptional in assisting wine farm workers and dwellers in addressing their personal problems, especially regarding substance abuse and violence. This has been extremely empowering, as it has assisted in breaking the cycle of habitual drinking and violence. EWP services have drawn praise from employees and employers alike, as they have assisted employees while ensuring that production was not impacted. On the contrary, EWP services have resulted in a more productive workforce, as workers are able to address stressors within their lives. In short, EWP's remain the only protective factor in which social workers have continued to be active and effective. Considering the success of EWP's and the integral role social work has played within it, social workers



should consider and improve their involvement with other protective factors to improve their implementation and enhance the wellbeing of farm workers and farm dwellers.

EWPs have been able to do what many other protective factors have failed to, which is to gain access to farms and be able to build the trust of all living and working there. This has enabled EWP services to ensure various protective policies and legislation are being implemented and adhered to in a manner that preserves employer/employee relationships. EWP services have encouraged employers to take responsibility for their employees, as the service requires employers to be actively involved. For this reason, these services should be present on all wine farms, as they are accessible, affordable, and effective, positively contributing towards the wellbeing of all within the wine industry.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the engagement with various protective factors and their effectiveness above, it can be recommended that:

- The Department of Labour should improve efforts regarding the implementation and monitoring of policies and legislation on wine farm and should take greater responsibility in educating wine farm workers regarding the policies and legislation in place to protect them.
- Ethical auditing associations should utilise collaborative partnerships with trade unions and EWP services to limit language and cultural barriers, and identify and address actual challenges instead of perceived challenges.
- Ethical audits should become an industry standard, with it being conducted on all wine farms instead of a selected number.
- The ethical auditing process should be adjusted to conduct audits more frequently, while making greater use of unannounced audits to address non-compliance.
- EWP services should become an industry standard on all wine farms in order to facilitate knowledge and skill development and promote wellbeing.
- Ethical auditing associations should make use of EWP feedback, specifically pertaining to the wellbeing of the wine farm workers and related challenges.

## **2.6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The research study was aimed at gaining insight into contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. In order to do this, it elaborated on the various challenges wine farm workers face within the workplace that negatively affect their wellbeing. Moreover, the study also explored possible protective factors and their role and effectiveness in positively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Findings from the empirical investigation showed that there are various challenges within the workplace that negatively affect their wellbeing, and further, that many of the protective factors were ineffective in the changes they set out to implement.

For this reason, it is crucial that the following research areas be further explored:

- A qualitative study about the habits and relationships on wine farms pertaining to employers, employees, and farm dwellers.
- An in-depth study regarding the effect of the 'dop' system on current drinking habits on wine farms and how drinking habits are generationally enforced.
- A qualitative study regarding the role and effectiveness of EWP services on employees.

In addition, this research study should be replicated in other provinces in South Africa and examine other agricultural sectors in order to generalise the results, as this study only investigated the perceptions of a small number of social workers and wine farm managers within the Western Cape.

## **2.7. KEY FINDINGS AND MAIN CONCLUSIONS**

This research study was aimed at gaining insight into contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. The research was warranted due to wine farm workers being one of the most marginalised groups within South Africa. Furthermore, there are only a limited number of studies focusing on the challenges wine farm workers face, both within a professional and personal capacity. Studies available are either outdated or focus on specific issues, ignoring the holistic context.

The researcher interviewed 16 participants, equally split into two groups, namely social workers and farm managers. Interviews were transcribed and analysed to illustrate participants' perceptions regarding contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. Their narratives identified the following key finding and conclusions:

1. Wine farm workers work under extreme working conditions, defined by a physically high workload for minimum pay. which is often accompanied by issues regarding relationships, job insecurity and a lack of new employment opportunities.
2. On-farm housing remains unreliable, with many wine farm workers having to live in inadequate and overpopulated housing.
3. This is worsened by current cultures and habits exemplified by habitual drinking, violence as well as ignorance and inexperience.
4. Wine farm workers have been left powerless in addressing their current working- and living conditions, due to the lack of effectiveness from protective factors, which has resulted in workers having limited resources, mostly only ethical auditing associations, agritourism and EWPs.
5. Policy and legislation, trade unions, advocating, activist groups and NGOs have all failed in their functions, contributing towards the vulnerability of wine farm workers.

The implication of these findings is that the wellbeing of wine farm workers remains complex, as they experience a myriad of challenges which require collective interventions and efforts from all stakeholders, including the wine farm workers themselves, employers, the Department of Labour, ethical trade associations, trade unions, advocating and activist groups, social service organisations and EWP services. The dissemination of these findings and recommendations contributes to the body of knowledge regarding wine farm workers in South Africa in order to protect and enhance the wellness of these vulnerable and marginalised communities.

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## **ANNEXURE 1**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

#### **1. Biographical information**

- Occupation
- Years of exposure to farm workers

#### **2. Contributing factors towards vulnerability of farm workers**

- Legacy of farm work
- Nature of farm work
- Housing conditions
- Health
- Access to resources

#### **3. Protective factors that buffer against vulnerability of farm workers**

- Employee wellness programs
- Ethical trade associations
- Other protective factors



**ANNEXURE 2**

UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY****CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

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You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Gerhard Burger le Roux, from the Department of Social Work at Stellenbosch University. The result of this study will contribute to the fulfilment of a Masters Researcher Thesis.

You were approached as a possible participant because you possess one of the following criteria for inclusion:

- A social worker in the field of Employee Wellness with at least one year of experience working with farm workers.
- A farm manager employed by a farm owner/organisation with at least four years of experience.

**1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study aims to investigate contributing- and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. This will allow for the researcher to make conclusions and recommendation to owners of wine farms, ethical auditing associations, policy makers and social workers working within the field of Employee Wellness.

**2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to describe your experiences and perceptions of contributing- and protective factors that negatively and positively affect the wellbeing of wine farm workers in South Africa. This will be done in a once of individual interview lasting an hour at a location convenient to you.

**3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

By volunteering to participate in the interview, there will be no physical or phycological threat. You will be responding to questions in your personal capacity regarding the target group unrelated to you. All interviews are confidential, and you will be treated with respect and dignity. As this is a low risk study the risk for emotional discomfort is limited.

#### **4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY**

The results of the study can lead to wine farm workers significantly benefitting from the study, as the study sets out to identify contributing- and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. By doing so the study will make recommendations and conclusions on what can be done to improve wine farm workers' wellbeing. This may prompt farm owners, ethical trade associations and social workers to all act towards improving the lives of wine farm workers.

#### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not be paid for participation in the study, neither will they receive compensation of any kind. By partaking in the study participants agree to do so at their own cost with no financial or material reward.

#### **6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY**

Any information you share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by having complete anonymity in not including any names or organisations within the final report. Interviews will be tape recorded and stored, with the soft copy being stored in a password protected computer and redacting any personal information on hard copies, before being stored in the researcher's private residents. On conclusion of the study all soft- and hard copies of recordings will be erased. Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the personal information and will apply full confidentiality.

#### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if it is warranted.

#### **8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Gerhard Burger le Roux at [18979599@sun.ac.za](mailto:18979599@sun.ac.za) and/or the supervisor Dr Ilze Slabbert at [islabbert@sun.ac.za](mailto:islabbert@sun.ac.za).

#### **9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [[mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

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**DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT**

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Gerhard Burger le Roux.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.                                                                                                                                          |
|  | The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent. |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ANNEXURE 3

**NOTICE OF APPROVAL**

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

21 January 2020

Project number: 13115

Project Title: Contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers: Perceptions of professionals

Dear Mr Gerhard Le Roux

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on **06 November 2019** was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities.

Please note the following for your approved submission:

**Ethics approval period:**

| Protocol approval date (Humanities) | Protocol expiration date (Humanities) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 21 January 2020                     | 20 January 2023                       |

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

**If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.**

Please use your **SU project number (13115)** on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

**FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD**

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

**Included Documents:**

| Document Type              | File Name                                | Date       | Version |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------|---------|
| Research Protocol/Proposal | 18979599 - RESEARCH PROPOSAL             | 06/11/2019 | 1       |
| Budget                     | 18979599 - BUDGET                        | 06/11/2019 | 1       |
| Informed Consent Form      | 18979599 - INFORMED CONSENT              | 06/11/2019 | 1       |
| Data collection tool       | 18979599 - THEMES FOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE | 06/11/2019 | 1       |

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at [cgraham@sun.ac.za](mailto:cgraham@sun.ac.za).

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

**ANNEXURE 4**

**MEMBER VERIFICATION FORM**

Participant number: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby declare that I have read my transcribed interview, completed for the study on contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

(Please tick the appropriate answer)

Yes:

No:

I hereby declare that I agree with the transcribed content of the interview.

(Please tick the appropriate answer)

Yes:

No:

**ANNEXURE 5****INDEPENDENT CODER VERIFICATION FORM**

I hereby acknowledge that I have read all provided transcribed interviews completed for the study on contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. I also declare that I am in agreement with all the themes, sub-themes and categories derived from the transcriptions.

(Please tick the appropriate answer)

Yes:

No:

| <b>THEMES</b>              | <b>SUBTHEMES</b>         | <b>CATEGORIES</b>        |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>6.Nature of work</b>    | Working conditions       | Workload                 |
|                            |                          | Leave                    |
|                            |                          | Remuneration             |
|                            | Challenges               | Health and safety        |
|                            |                          | Relationships            |
|                            | Challenges to employment | Casual and contract work |
|                            |                          | Drought                  |
|                            |                          | Mechanisation            |
|                            |                          | Farm murder              |
|                            |                          | Covid-19                 |
| <b>7.Living conditions</b> | Physical environment     | Structure                |
|                            |                          | Inhabitants              |
|                            | Evictions                |                          |
|                            | Culture and habits       | Substance abuse          |
|                            |                          | Relationships            |
|                            | Living on the farm       |                          |

|                              |                                                                      |  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>8. Protective factors</b> | Policy and legislation                                               |  |
|                              | Ethical auditing                                                     |  |
|                              | Trade unions                                                         |  |
|                              | Agritourism                                                          |  |
|                              | Advocating, activist groups and non-governmental organisations (NGO) |  |
|                              | Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP)                                   |  |

**ANNEXURE 6**



11 February 2020

To whom it may concern

**Concerning: Institutional Permission for Research Study**

We hereby agree to provide institutional permission to MSW student, Gerhard le Roux-18979599, to conduct interviews with Employee Wellness Programme social workers provided that identifying details and personal information remain confidential.

Kind regards

Operational Manager





**ANNEXURE 7****REFLEXIVITY REPORT**

Reflexivity can be described as “[becoming] aware of [one’s] own projections, attachments, assumptions, agendas, and biases—like an eye that sees itself while simultaneously seeing the world” (Probst, 2015:38). Ruokonen-Engler and Siouti (2016) argue that biographical reflexivity in narrative research is a useful approach to reflect on the meaning of one’s own entanglements in a research process. Accordingly, Ruokonen-Engler and Siouti (2016) offer six questions for the researcher to explore their reflexivity, which will be addressed below.

**1. What personal experience do I have with my research topic?**

At the time of the study I am a qualified social worker, working for a private social work organisation specialising in Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs) on farms. On a weekly basis, I am confronted by the various challenges farm workers face. I am responsible for conversing and coordinating with various community resources to address farm workers’ issues. Thus, I have witnessed the various contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers.

**2. How did I come to study the specific topic in the field?**

When I started working within EWPs on farms, I quickly realised that the situation on farms was vastly different from any other workplace. Traditional social work methods in addressing problems are challenging, as situations are much more complex. The various challenges farm workers and farm dwellers face is unique and require additional actions to address it. Being a social worker and struggling to understand and address these unique issues prompted me to consider the research topic in order to gain a greater understanding the various contributing and protective factors affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers, as there was a clear lack of literature on the topic.

**3. What is my relationship to the topic being investigated?**

Daily, I am confronted by the topic, as my job requires me to address the various contributing factors negatively affecting the wellbeing of wine farm workers. I also work with and mobilise the various protective factors to promote and protect their wellbeing.

The topic focused on perceptions of professionals, namely social workers (working within EWPs) and farm managers, both of whom I work with daily.

#### **4. How did I gain access to the field?**

I gained access to participants by utilising my personal and professional networks. Working in EWPs means that most of my colleagues are social workers with whom I work with on a daily basis. Furthermore, through work, I have met and work with various farm managers who utilise EWP services on their farms. Having grown up in a small town surrounded by wine farms also allowed me to gain access to various farm managers through my personal network.

#### **5. How does my own position (age, gender, class, ethnicity, economic status, etc.) influence interaction in the field and the data collection process?**

Being a social worker working with both participant groups meant that participants were more inclined to participate in the research. This also assisted with the data collection process, as the participants and I were familiar with one another, which allowed them to speak freely regarding their experiences and perceptions. Moreover, working within EWPs on farms assisted me in learning the farms' functioning and terminology, which made conversing with the participants more efficient.

#### **6. What is my interpretation perspective?**

Whilst dealing with the narratives, I realised that I took on a subjective perspective, as I found myself agreeing with and, at times, judging narratives. This is due to working with wine farm workers on a daily basis and having to deal with the aforementioned challenges. To combat this, I made an intentional effort to conduct member checking to ensure that I was unbiased in my analysis and presentation of the data.