

Child labour in the philippines



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Introduction

Do you know where that pretty shirt you are wearing was made? Or, that soccer ball you love to play with so much? Do you know if it was made in a fair and ethical way, or made by hard working, poor children who should be spending their time playing and in the school benches? This essay will be about child labour in the Philippines. Child labour is an important issue because affects people in a negative way, and because it, unfortunately, still happens a lot. There are different views on this issue that will be discussed in this essay. This essay will consider arguments for and against child labour in the Philippines, with factors such as money, conditions, health and education.

Child labour is a term that is known for a very long time. Child labour stands for: employment of boys and girls when they are too young to work for hire, or when they are employed at jobs that are unsafe and/or unsuitable for their age (according to the US department of Labour). The legal age limit is shown in the Philippines is shown in the following article:

Art. 139. Minimum Employable Age. –

(a) No child below fifteen (15) years of age shall be employed, except when he works directly under the sole responsibility of his parents or guardian, and his employment does not in any way interfere with his schooling.[1]

The Philippines is a young nation with a high percentage of young people in its overall population. In the past, 1995-1997, one sixth of the children worked. Around this time 22. 4 million children where aged between 5-17,

which meant that this age group was about one third of the overall population of the Philippines at that time. (Initiating and Mobilizing Action Against Child Labor in the Philippines).

Money

Money is one of the main reasons why children work in the Philippines. The Philippines is a poor country. Many households depend on children to work. The contribution of kids is financially needed within these households. According to the NSCB (National statistical Coordination Board)[2], who investigated the poverty statistics for the government, thirty three out of one hundred Filipinos were poor in 2006, compared to thirty in 2003. Poverty incidence increased to 26. 9% for families in 2006 compared to 24. 4% in 2003.

The investigation also shows that, in 2006, a Filipino family comprising of five members needed a monthly income of 4, 1477 PhP (Philippine Pesos) to be able to sustain their family's minimum basic food needs, an increase of 23% from 2003.

To be able to provide for both food and nonfood basic requirements, a family of five needed 6, 274 PhP monthly income in 2006, an increase of more than 22% from 2003.

The schools in the Philippines are tuition free, but the parents have to pay for the other expenses. The expenses include uniforms, projects and materials. In fact, even if schools would be cheaper, they still wouldn't be able to pay for it; since the families are so poor they need the children to work as well.

There are also positive sides of child labour. Both children and employers profit from child labour. The children benefit from child labour by earning money for the work they do. Children that work and contribute to the total income of their family, help the family survive. Usually, the parents cannot afford food and other needs for every family member, that is why the children's contribution is need. Not working could lead to starvation, and eventually, to death. Children working in factories receive between 15 and 25 pesos per day (approximately 61 cents to \$1) . The children in mines reportedly earn between 40 and 50 pesos per day (approximately \$1. 62 to \$2). Older packers earn between 250 and 300 pesos per day (approximately \$10 to \$12).[3]

Employers also benefit from child labour, because the salary of children is lower than those of adults. Low salary allows the employer to sell cheaper goods, and with cheaper goods, the employers can generate more profit. As shown above the difference in salary is high

Conditions/health

children are significantly smaller than adults. In some sectors, like in the mines, this might come in handy, because children fit in places and holes adults do not. Children are also said to have more energy than adults, which means they can be more productive and maybe even work a bit longer. Children also have smaller hands, which makes them work more precise.

Even though children seem perfect for these kind of jobs, the conditions they have to work in affect their health. Many of the kids that work, work in hazardous and dangerous areas, such as mines and factories.

Not only is working in mines and agriculture dangerous for the children, some children are even forced to work as child prostitutes, in the porn industry, as child soldiers or as servants.

Another bad side to child labour is that children are weaker than adults, and have to do heavy work that affects their health. Children also have to work long hours. Long hours take toll on children's not fully developed body.

Education

Education is very important. Schools are the children's sources to obtain knowledge and other information. Instead of working, children should learn from books. Without education, the hope of a better life is far away, since the probability of those children ending up with a good job is low. Labour often interferes with children's education. There are children that work and attend school. This is bad for the child, since the child cannot only focus on school but still has the responsibility of earning money. Children that do not attend school might end up being poor, which might result in their kids having to work. This might become a vicious circle.

Children that work have the advantage of learning, from an early age, how to deal with money. The children get taught how to deal with money and they end up knowing the value of money. They also learn how it feels to have responsibilities and how to provide for their families.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are a lot of factors that you should consider before forming an opinion about child labour in the Philippines. Factors like, money, education, health and conditions. Children should have the chance to be a

children. They should spend time playing and learning one another in school, and not wasting away their youth in hazardous factories. Every child has the right to have basic human needs, such as a healthy environment, shelter, nutrition, clean water, proper education and clothes. According to Unicef, a possible solution would be: "One of the keys would be ensuring that all children go to school and that their education is of good quality." [4]

[1] The Philippines National Laws, http://ipecephils.tripod.com/phillaws/p2_2.htm

[2] NSCB, http://www.nscb.gov.ph/pressreleases/2008/PR-200803-SS2-02_pov.asp

[3] United States Department of Labor, <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/sweat/philippines.htm>

[4] Unicef, http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_childlabour.html