**Should child labor ever be justified?**

Alejandra, a 12-year-old from Usulutan, El Salvador, gets up every day at four in the morning to gather curiles, tiny mollusks, from the mangrove swamps on the island of Espiritu Santo. Instead of eating breakfast every morning, she ensures that she has everything needed to survive a workday that might involve spending up to 14 hours in the mud. Alejandra has to deal with inclement weather, insect bites, and scratches from trying to extract the curiles from the thick muck. If she’s lucky, Alejandra is able to gather two baskets of curiles (150 shells), which are only worth around 12 colones, or $1.40. She frequently feels different from the rest of society, and she views life as a tunnel with no way out.

Child labor is considered to be one of our society's oldest and most pervasive concerns. The International Labor Organization (ILO) indicates that 1 in 10 of all children worldwide experience child labor each year. And according to UNICEF, there were around 160 million children subjected to child labor at the beginning of 2020, and COVID-19's effects put an extra 9 million children at danger.

Child labor can be defined as ‘the hiring of a child in a business or sector, particularly in defiance of local, state, or federal laws that forbid hiring minors under a certain age’. Like Alejandra, children ages 5-17 are often employed as domestic slaves in prostitution, armed warfare, pornography, or other dangerous activity that directly jeopardizes their health, safety, and moral development. Although child labor declined as a result of improvements in the economy, education, and the establishment of labor regulations, it is still a major issue in many developed and developing nations throughout the world.

Throughout this essay I will discuss two major aspects: the advantages of child labor, and the disadvantages of the topic being discussed, in order to conclude weather or not child labor should be ethically justified. Although some researchers such as ’The ILO’ or ‘UNICEF’ claims that child labor is clearly a disadvantage, other researchers believe that child labor is essential for businesses around the world.

Firstly, let's consider the perspective that “ Child labor should never be justified”. An article that supports this perspective is “Hazardous child labour” by the Internantional Labor Organization (ILO). ILO’s argument mainly focuses on the effects of working in dangerous environments on a child’s safety and mental health.

ILO mentions that hazardous child labor is defined as work done by children in risky or unhealthy situations that have the potential to cause a child's death, or illness due to lax safety and health regulations and working conditions. It may lead to health problems, and psychological harm. Often, health issues brought on by child labor do not manifest themselves until the child is an adult.

Moreover, with an estimated 79 million children, aged 5 to 17, working in hazardous conditions in a variety of industries, including agriculture, construction, and manufacturing, as well as in markets, and domestic service, hazardous child labor is the largest category of the worst forms of child labor. Both developed and underdeveloped nations contain it. At extremely young ages, children frequently begin performing dangerous tasks. Children are more susceptible to occupational dangers than adults because their bodies and minds are still growing, and the effects of hazardous employment are frequently more severe and long-lasting for them.

The article is considered credible as it is written by the International Labor Organization. ILO is without a doubt knowledgeable about the subject under discussion. It enhances the credibility and validity of the arguments put forward since it suggests that the author is qualified to back up his or her claims with appropriate sources, facts, and examples, strengthening the overall document. However, The article is considered weak as the article is published in 2017. Readers may feel that the evidence provided is unfair as there may have been steps done by the government on resolving the issue being discussed as time passes.

Another article that supports this perspective is “ What (if anything) is wrong with child labor?” By Nicolás Brando, a Derby Fellow at the School of Law and Social Justice in the University of Liverpool. He is particularly concerned in matters involving children's position in theories of justice. Nicolás’ article mainly focuses on the ethics of child labor why it is ethically unacceptable.

In his argument, he mentions that the ethical dimension of child labor is crucial. When children are compelled to labor against their will and without their agreement while receiving an unjust wage or no wage at all, it becomes unethical. Despite the numerous laws that have been passed to outlaw child labor, corporations and organizations like Nike, Nestle, and Adidas, as well as nations like Chad, India, and Myanmar, continue to use children as a source of "cheap" labor.

Similar to the ILO, Nicolás believes that a child's mind is still developing and learning new things, thus they are highly vulnerable and gullible. On a Child’s mental, emotional, physical, and social health and welfare, child labor can have long-term impacts. Children who work in industry and agriculture are exposed to explosive gasses, loud sounds, dangerous chemicals and pesticides, which increases their risk of injury, poisoning, hearing and vision loss.

Therefore, the psychological effects of child labor, such as poor self-esteem, sadness, and anxiety must also be taken into consideration .Youngsters who work are often under pressure to develop considerably more quickly than a typical child would, which causes them to lose their childhood. Children should receive an education that will enable them to realize their hopes and aspirations since they are the generation of the future.

This article is considered up to date as it contains evidence from 2019- 2021. Readers may learn how the problem is now being handled thanks to current evidence. It enables readers to assess how well the issue is being handled . Recent data might therefore increase the validity and dependability of the data. However, The author did not mention his sources. This would give the impression that the document is not reliable. This is due to the fact that if the source of the information is not stated explicitly, it raises doubts about the accuracy of the information because it may just be an opinion from a person whose knowledge on the subject matter is questionable.

Next, let's consider the perspective that “ Child labor should be justified”. An article that supports this perspective is “Challenges and perspectives of child labor” by : Amir Radfar, Seyed Ahmad Ahmadi Asgharzadeh, Fernando Quesada, Irina Filip, who are all experts in the medical science. Their argument mainly focuses on the benefits of child labor to most developing countries.

They believe that there are multiple justifications for child work despite all of these national and international regulations forbidding it. Some contend that without the additional financial support provided by children, poor families would be further destitute. They won't have access to basic necessities like food and shelter, which will lower their chances of surviving. In addition, children would be significantly more vulnerable to exploitation if poverty rose.

According to some cultural ideas, a girl's education may not be as significant as a boy's, and as a result, females may be forced into underage labor as domestic helpers. Child labor is mainly influenced by sociocultural factors such as the cast system, cultural biases, and discrimination. Many cultures from different parts of the world believe that employment helps kids develop their skills such as : responsibility, hard work, and independence and establish their character in positive ways. They argue that in some households, it is a tradition for kids to take after their parents and start learning the job at a young age.

The article is considered credible as it is written by experts in the field of medical science. It enhances the credibility and validity of the arguments put forward since it suggests that all four authors are qualified to back up his or her claims with appropriate sources, facts, and examples, strengthening the overall document. However, the article is considered weak as the evidence provided shows uncertainty and vagueness. Giving evidence of vagueness/uncertainty undermines the whole document in that it makes it less legitimate and dependable since it gives the impression that little study was done, leading to the estimations, and thus it calls into question the extent of the evidence's reliability.

Another article that supports this perspective is “Job Benefits for Kids in High School” by Jennifer Kimrey. From St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, Jennifer Kimrey graduated with a bachelor's degree in English writing and rhetoric. She regularly contributes to the Houston Chronicle, and her writing has been featured on several different websites and magazines. Jennifer believes that having a child work a high school job is one of the finest methods to help teach a child important life skills.

The article mentions that The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that for every year a person works while still in their teens, their income increases by 14–16 percent when they are in their 20s. If kids decide to work, doing so teaches them responsibility and excellent work habits, enhances their time management and organizational abilities, and enables them to save money. Teens who have jobs have the chance to network with adults who could be references in the future. Working a part-time job teaches teenagers their capabilities, which in turn fosters confidence and self-reliance. This can provide teenagers a sense of more independence and give them the assurance to advance in their development with a sense of responsibility.

Jennifer also mentions that previous studies on teen employment shows that 20 or less hours per week is the ideal amount of time for a high school student to work in order to efficiently manage the stress of academics and employment. According to several studies, children who labor between 10 and 15 hours a week throughout the school year have better marks than those who don't. Therefore, she strongly believes that children working at a young age is the key to a successful future.

Firstly, the article is considered credible as it possesses a range of examples. Giving readers a variety of examples improves their capacity to comprehend the subject matter. This is because readers are better able to picture the problem. However,

The absence of sources would give the impression that the material is not credible. This is due to the fact that if the source of the information is not stated explicitly, it raises doubts about the accuracy of the information because it may just be an opinion from a person who lacks knowledge of the subject matter.

After carefully weighing the arguments made by both sides I feel that the child labor should never be justified argument is demonstrably more compelling for a variety of reasons. First off, I think this viewpoint is more trustworthy because it is well-cited and contains references to publications with a scientific background, like the ILO. These sources refute the justifications offered by the opposite viewpoint. Furthermore, the vagueness and uncertainty of the author's arguments, which support the opposing viewpoint, also cast doubt on the validity and dependability of the entire document because it suggests that little research was done by the author.

After researching several sources, i believe that more research on the multiple perspective of child labor should be done. But, I strongly believe that child labor should never be accepted and that our society needs a flexible strategy to address the issue. Because it impedes children's physical, intellectual, and emotional growth, I do not believe that such behavior should be permitted. Children frequently have to labor in dangerous conditions, endangering their health. I firmly think that since education affects a child's future, it should be their main priority. A comprehensive international agreement banning child labor does not yet exist. This public health concern necessitates a multidisciplinary response, ranging from child and family education to the creation of thorough child labor legislation and regulations.

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