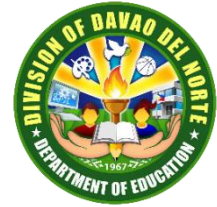




Republic of the Philippines  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Region XI  
DIVISION OF DAVAO DEL NORTE  
Mankilam, Tagum City



# Wanted, Children at Work: A Multiple Case Study on the Experiences of Young Laborers

A Research Paper

Presented to the Division Research Management Team

Division of Davao del Norte

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the qualitative study was to describe the lived experiences of the young laborers who work at a very young age at the same study, their coping mechanism on the challenges they have experienced and the different hopes and aspirations that can be derived from their experiences. This study was conducted using multiple case study through in-depth interview among the five participants namely: *The Little Househelper, The Little Caretaker, The Little Balut Vendor, The Little Nanny and the Little Rice Harvester*, they all came from the public school of Carmen, Davao del Norte. There were four essential themes emerged on the lived experiences the following were; having self-dependence and self-sufficiency, tiredness and burnout, poverty and financial constraints and having poor school performance. Meanwhile as to their coping mechanism, the themes that were generated were: time management, resourcefulness, resilience and optimism. Moreover, hopes and aspirations of young laborers were: learn to balance work and education, be determined in reaching goals and learn to help family. In view of the above, the Department of Education needs to review the law pertaining to child labor in order to address the high percentage of child labor. The school heads should also address the problem through constant information drive to parents on child labor and adapt the MISOSA program of the DepEd to help the young laborers realized their dreams in life.

**Keywords:-** *Wanted, Children at Work, Young Laborers, Multiple Case Study.*

## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

### A. *Rationale*

Child labor remains a significant problem worldwide, particularly in developing countries due to poverty and economic deprivation. According to the International Labour Organization, around 217.7 million children aged between 5 and 17 years are engaged in child labor across the globe (ILO, 2006). The Asia-Pacific region has the highest number of working children worldwide, with 122.3 million economically active children aged between 5 to 14 years (ILO, 2006). The region is plagued with the worst forms of child labor, including child trafficking, bonded child labor, child domestic work, hazardous child labor, and more. Furthermore, many countries in Asia have a high tolerance for child labor, which, when combined with political volatility, gender inequality, and other conflicts, worsens the problem and impedes efforts to combat it (Jiali Pan, 2010).

Child labor is a significant issue in Cambodia, with approximately 1.5 million children engaged in labor in 2006, which is a shameful figure for a country with a population of only 13.8 million people. Over 75% of these working children are in the agricultural sector, mostly in the rural areas, where many are involved in dangerous labor practices that have a detrimental impact on their education and physical development. The primary reason behind this problem is the scarcity of resources, which forces children in rural areas to contribute to the family's income by working on the farms. In the urban areas, children are often compelled or encouraged to earn money through selling goods, begging, stealing, and even prostitution to support their parents' livelihoods. The Department of Labor (DOL) reported these findings in 2007.

According to a report by the European Union, child labor is rampant in the Philippines, with children as young as 5 years old being made to work. The most alarming cases involve children being given drugs so they can work for up to 16 hours in mining areas. Poverty is the main reason why children are made to work in the country. Many families depend on the income their children bring in. Child labor deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity. It also harms their physical and mental development. In 2011, the Philippine Statistics Authority conducted a survey that found 2.1 million child laborers aged 5-17 years old. Of these, 95% were in hazardous work. Surprisingly, 69% of these children were aged 15-17 years old, which is beyond the minimum age allowed for work but still exposed to hazardous work, according to the International Labor Organization.

According to a research study conducted by the National Statistical Coordination Board in 2006, the poverty incidence in the country increased by 2% after three years, from a marginal 24.4% in 2003. This means that Filipino families with an average of five members needed a monthly income of at least Php 4,000 to meet their basic needs (NCSB, 2006).

In the local setting, I personally observed that child laboring and schooling is existing. Despite the campaign of the government on "No To Child Labor or Stop Child Labor", I would say that the incidence of children working in agriculture and domestic work is probably even higher. It is noticeable every afternoon in the market where children are rampant in the vicinity. You will see them retailing fruits, selling vegetable, fish and other goods together with their parents. Others were working in the rice field during planting and harvesting seasons.

Furthermore, the child workers are somehow being deprived to play and enjoy themselves while they are still young and likewise parents deny their children from the chance to attend school and learn the skills, they need to become productive adults and force their kids to work to earn income for their families. Therefore, children are usually absent from class due to this reason. However, these children really wanted to go to school but since working for them is more important than schooling, they opt not to go to school in order to earn for a living from rice fields or in the wet markets.

In order to better understand child labor, it is necessary to identify the child learners who at the same time earn a living for their family. More research is needed on child labor in the community to better comprehend if and how much the rural environment impacts child labor. Subsequently, this investigation was done to specifically give basis on how the school can help the child who experienced child labor. Hence, a qualitative study on child labor had been done to reinforce the great deal on quantitative researches that had been conducted on students who experienced child labor. The research also discussed the matter of informal examination of news articles. According to media reports, young Filipinos are still being transported from rural to urban areas for the purpose of performing involuntary domestic work, as well as being taken advantage of in the agricultural sector. They are also often hired as household helpers or to work in home-based production, such as creating fireworks. (Source: Manila Times, 2015).

Many studies have been conducted on the issue of child labor, however, none of them have dealt with the topic in a qualitative multiple case study, similar to the one that I have undertaken. This study fills a research gap and its contribution is of great social relevance to the beneficiaries of the study. It sheds light on the plight of child laborers and emphasizes the need for strong legal and policy frameworks to combat the illegal employment of children by employers. This study is a step towards curbing the abuses that child workers are subjected to and improving the overall well-being of children who have been forced to work in harsh conditions. The findings of this study would be instrumental in helping the government to strengthen its legal and policy frameworks against child labor, and would also raise awareness on the issue among the public.

#### *B. Research Questions*

The study specifically answered the following research questions:

- What are the lived experiences of young laborers in school and at home?
- How do young laborers cope with the challenges they encountered while working?
- What are the insights of the young laborers as they journey life?

#### *C. Theoretical Lens*

This study was perceived on the Basic Model of Household Decision-Making Theory designed by Becker in 1981, articulated by Rosenzweig and Evanson, et. al (1977), and summarized by Schultz (1997).

Numerous studies have been conducted on the issue of child labor. However, none of them has dealt with the topic in a qualitative multiple-case study, similar to the one I have undertaken. This study fills a significant research gap and its contribution has great social relevance for the beneficiaries of the study. It highlights the plight of child laborers and emphasizes the need for strong legal and policy frameworks to combat the illegal employment of children by unscrupulous employers. This study is a crucial step towards curbing the abuses that child workers are subjected to, and improving the overall well-being of children who have been forced to work in harsh conditions. The findings of this study would be instrumental in helping the government strengthen its legal and policy frameworks against child labor, and raise awareness on the issue among the public.

According to Schultz's (1997) review, most theoretical analyses suggest that having more children lessens the quality of their upbringing. However, Rosenzweig and Evanson's (1977) study shows that having fewer children can actually improve their quality of life. This occurs when a mother's wage increases, as it raises the cost of raising children and makes it more difficult to balance work and parenting. As a result, having fewer children frees up resources that can be used to enhance their quality of life. For instance, the services that children provide to their parents can be defined as the product of the number of children and their average quality. In this context, quality and quantity are substitutes. However, Cigno and Rosati (2000) pointed out that this only applies if the net cost of having a child is negative.

When it comes to educating one's children, there is a time component to the decision-making process. This has been discussed by many authors, especially Becker (1974). Baland and Robison (2000) have directly linked the formation of human capital to child labor when evaluating the efficiency characteristics of household decisions. Therefore, they suggested that investing in their children's education is efficient when parents are altruistic towards their children, could leave a bequest for them, and have free access to capital markets. In this setting, parents optimize the value of their dynasty's income by equating the earnings of the last hour of a child's labor to the present discounted value of earnings that would accrue to the family due to the last hour of human capital acquisition in school.

The decision to educate one's children has a long-term aspect, as discussed by many authors, especially Becker (1974). Baland and Robison (2000) also draw a direct connection between human capital development and child labor, when evaluating the efficiency characteristics of household decisions. Therefore, they observed that if parents are altruistic towards their children, can leave an inheritance to them and have free access to capital markets, then investing in their children's education is efficient. In this setting, parents optimize by equating the earnings of the last hour of their child's labor to the present discounted value of earnings that would be generated by the last hour of human capital acquisition in school. In other words, parents act to maximize the dynasty's income.

Albert Bandura has built on Sears' work by exploring how children and adults perceive their social experiences and how these perceptions affect their behavior and development. He has introduced several novel concepts, such as reciprocal determinism and self-efficacy. In 1986, Bandura renamed his theory the social cognitive theory, which he believed was a more accurate and descriptive title.

Albert Bandura has further developed Sears' work by exploring how people of all ages interpret their social experiences and how these interpretations shape their behavior and growth. Bandura has introduced several innovative concepts, including reciprocal determinism and self-efficacy. In 1986, Bandura renamed his theory to social cognitive theory, which he believed was a more accurate and descriptive title. Bandura's social cognitive theory offers the most comprehensive explanation of how parents pass down behavioral values and expectations to their children through household chores. Additionally, the theory explains how children interpret these experiences, internalize them as symbolic controls, and then replicate them in their behavior.

According to the social cognitive theory, most human behavior has a purpose and is driven by an individual's ability to motivate themselves and make choices about their actions. Bandura introduced the concept of "reciprocal determinism," which suggests that individuals have control over their own fate, but are also influenced by external forces. Past experiences shape an individual's ability to anticipate the outcome of their behavior, leading to an expectation of anticipated results. These expectations then affect the individual's decision-making process, enabling them to regulate their own behavior.

Finally, parents have a significant influence on their children's social environment and may use different techniques to shape their learning. As children mature, parents tend to use more persuasion and teaching instead of physical punishments. Social sanctions are used in place of external demands and sanctions, and these work by substituting symbolic and internal controls. For instance, when a child accepts responsibility for keeping their possessions tidy, they understand that it is not always reasonable to expect others to clean up after them.

#### D. Significance of the Study

This study intends to contribute to helping the students who experienced child labor. Moreover, findings of this research would give rise to the role of progressive schools in educational research and the development of alternative and pedagogical systems. In particular, this study is expected to benefit the following entities:

First one is the *Department of Education (DepEd), Davao del Norte Division*, the results of this study would provide significant contributions to the agency's local policy formulation in the local system under its jurisdiction. This would further aid the division officials who have undertaken localized adjustments that are applicable to the local situation where the needs of students who experienced child labor will be addressed. They will intensify the program which are the Alternative Delivery Mode, Alternative Learning System and the MISOSA. This program will surely benefit the children who are working while schooling.

Second, the *school administrators*, the results of this study will serve as baseline data to improve program of child laborer.

Third, the outcome of this study beneficial mostly to the *young laborers* who hurdle the challenges and struggles for them to be motivated to work in order to finish their studies.

Lastly, to the *future researchers*, the outputs of this study will provide helpful inputs in their study. They can make use of the findings and recommendations to reinforce their own undertakings similar to this work.

#### E. Definition of Terms

To provide a clearer understanding of the content of this paper, conceptual and operational definitions were used in this study:

##### ➤ *Children at Work.*

This refers to children who work, depriving them of childhood, potential, and dignity, and harming their physical and mental development.

##### ➤ *Young Laborers.*

This refers to the employment of children in hazardous occupations below the age of eighteen (18) or without the proper conditions and requirements below the age of fifteen (15). Children in these situations are compelled to work regularly to earn a living for themselves and their families, which can result in educational and social disadvantages

In this study this refers to the children who are working as household helpers in order to support their studies or families for a living.

*F. Organization of the Study*

This study was organized in the following chapters:

- *Chapter 1* consisted of the purpose, research questions, theoretical lens, significance, definition of terms, delimitations, and organization were clearly provided.
- *Chapter 2* consisted of the research design in which the researcher stated the multiple case study. The researcher stressed his role in interviewing the participants. Research participants were the informants who answered the interview guide and were also called interviewees. Data collection in this study was done through interviews. Trustworthiness and credibility showed how and why we must enhance the understanding of the young laborers. The ethical consideration had been done through protect the name of the participants due to privacy reasons.
- *Chapter 3* had presented the results wherein it reflected characteristics of the qualitative multiple case study. It also showed the process in obtaining the data from the informants.
- *Chapter 4* supplied the in-depth interview results of the first participant of this study.
- *Chapter 5* provided the in-depth interview results of the second participant of this study.
- *Chapter 6* included the in-depth interview results of the third participant of this study.
- *Chapter 7* imparted the in-depth interview results of the fourth participant of this study.
- *Chapter 8* transited the in-depth interview results of the fifth participant of this study.
- *Chapter 9* presented the cross-case analysis of this study. It had also discussed the different themes emerged from the various answers of the informants.
- *Chapter 10* provided the discussion of the study, the implication for practice, implication for future research and the concluding remarks about the study.



## CHAPTER TWO METHOD

Presented in this chapter is the methodology used in this study. This comprises the research, role of the researcher, research participants, data collection and analysis, and ethical issues of the study. This introduces the methodology used in this investigation on the query in gathering the laboring and schooling, struggles and motivations of child laborers.

### *A. Research Design*

For this research, I used a qualitative multiple case study design to collect rich descriptions of the participants' experiences. A qualitative approach allows for a deeper understanding of individual's reported experiences and observations. The chosen method enabled me to collect data directly from five young laborers, including clear descriptions of their life experiences and insights that others can learn from.

On the one hand, qualitative research employs a flexible approach to gather data, using methods such as open-ended questions, observations, and interviews to explore and understand phenomena (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). On the other hand, quantitative research requires a more structured approach, involving objective measurements and statistical analyses of numerical data to investigate cause-and-effect relationships (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). This type of research follows a deductive approach, using standardized instruments on large samples of subjects to study phenomena. In quantitative studies, data is typically collected using standardized survey forms from a sample of 400 subjects, which is then analyzed using statistical methods.

In this study, the case study approach was used. This approach is beneficial when the focus is on contemporary phenomena in a real-life context, or when questions about how, who, and why are being asked (Holloway and Wheeler, 2004). According to Creswell (2008), a case study is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system, such as an activity, process, event, institution, social group, or individual, based on extensive data collection. He emphasized that the term "bounded" means that the case is separated out for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries.

According to Yin (2003), case study research is a rigorous method of conducting qualitative research. This approach offers several advantages, including the ability to study a wide range of educational phenomena and the capability to detect significant variables that may be missed in quantitative studies. Yin emphasized that case studies are necessary to understand complex social phenomena and allow researchers to examine events in real life.

Furthermore, it is essential to keep in mind that case studies only represent the specific cases that are under investigation. Therefore, it's crucial to avoid making generalizations beyond the cases. If one wants to generalize to a population based on the selected cases, it is essential to ensure that the cases are representative of the whole population. As a result, the usefulness of the case study may be more important than the ability to make great generalizations (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2002).

According to Holloway and Wheeler (2004), case studies are a means of exploring a phenomenon within its context, making them both holistic and contextual. They also serve as exploratory devices, acting as a pilot for larger studies. Harling (2002) expressed similar views, emphasizing that case studies are holistic inquiries that focus on investigating contemporary phenomena within their natural settings. He defined "holistic" as involving the collection of in-depth and detailed data that are rich in content.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), there are three types of case studies that were originally identified by Stake. These are intrinsic case studies, instrumental case studies, and multiple case studies. The last type, also known as collective case studies, involves studying the same questions and asking the participants for their responses. The responses are then compared to each other to draw a conclusion.

Patton (2002) argues that interviews are used to uncover information that cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, intentions, and thoughts. Behaviors that have occurred in the past cannot be observed either, nor can situations where no observers are present. Therefore, we must ask people questions to obtain insight into these hidden aspects. The primary purpose of interviewing is to enable us to gain an understanding of the other person's perspective.

The purpose of conducting an in-depth interview with young laborers was to listen to their experiences, daily struggles, thoughts, outlook, and empathize with their feelings. This study used semi-structured or focused interviews, containing questions in an interview guide that focused on issues or topic areas relating to young laborers.

### *B. Role of the Researcher*

In qualitative studies the role of the researcher is quite different from other kind of research. The researcher is considered as an instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln), 2003). This means that rather than through inventories, surveys or machines, the data are mediated by this human instrument. Following from the qualitative case study framework chose for this research, the researcher was the primary means of data collection, interpretation and analysis.

In preparing for the interview, I had prepared the signing of the informants and participants consent form. Then, recording equipment was set-up in the location of the interview. The interviews were conducted at the Computer Laboratory of the school to ensure its confidentiality and privacy from bystanders. With the video camera, I conducted the interviews together with my partner who was the one who manipulated the camera. I recorded all the five (5) individual interviews including the group interview.

The researcher conducted thorough interviews with the informants using validated questionnaires, supplemented with follow-up questions to ensure comprehensive responses. The interviews were semi-structured and in-depth, allowing participants to share their perspectives, concerns, and insights beyond the scope of the questions. As noted by Seidman (1998), semi-structured interviews guide the conversation while still allowing participants to share information that is important to them. This approach enables the researcher to understand the viewpoint of the participants and ensures that their voices are heard.

In the case of group interview, I had taken the role and acted as mediator, whose responsibility was to focus the discussion on the important issue and not the conversation to stray too far from the track. This means that the moderator must have the ability to control the group, direct it and create an environment that develops and encourages mutual conversation.

During the mediation process, I made sure to remain impartial and guide the discussion without injecting my own opinions or suggestions. I wanted to avoid any bias that could impact the outcome I was seeking. After the interview, the responses were collected and transcribed verbatim using a media player to ensure accurate interpretation and understanding.

Additionally, it was not just about understanding the participants, but also empathizing with their craft and work. It is important to set a positive example for younger generations, and gaining a deeper understanding of these individuals is essential to providing them with the necessary interventions and support.

Lastly, as the primary researcher, it was my ethical duty to protect the rights of the participants and ensure that the study did not leave any negative or harmful impressions on them.

### *C. Research Participants*

The participants of the study were the five young laborers from the secondary school of Carmen, Davao del Norte. Participants were working in the different houses in the vicinity. These participants were identified by friends and friends of friends. And upon recommendation of the Guidance Facilitator and Advisers. Each were given written informed consent signed along with the assurance that all the data that will be gathered from the interview would be solely for the purpose of the study.

To ensure confidentiality, the five young laborers who participated in the study were given pseudonyms. The recruitment process involved personal contact with the interviewer, and the participants were well-informed about the interview. The time and place of the meeting were set based on the interviewer's preferred location and the convenience of the informants. To conduct the interview, the interviewer followed the guidelines for qualitative research provided by Boyce & Neale (2006), Creswell (2013), and Hancock, Ockleford, & Windbridge (2009).

During the interview, I made sure that the atmosphere was comfortable and conducive to discussion so that the participants would feel at ease and willing to share their responses. To ensure confidentiality, I obtained informed consent from them, and they agreed to participate in the interview. This helped to establish a good rapport between myself and the participants.

### *D. Data Collection and Analysis*

The data collection process in this study followed the five steps outlined by Creswell (2008). These steps include obtaining permission to conduct the study, purposefully selecting participants and sites to best understand the phenomenon, identifying data from various sources, administering, and recording data using protocols such as observational and interview protocols, and collecting data in a way that is sensitive to individuals and sites. As such, the researcher acted as both the facilitator and recorder of the collected data.

During data collection, it was important to identify the types of data that addressed the research questions and sub-questions in the interview guide. To get the perspective of the participants and allow them to share their views, less-structured and open-ended research questions were used (Creswell, 2008). For this study, three open-ended research questions were formulated, each with sub-questions that served as a guide during the face-to-face interview with each young laborer.

Qualitative researchers face various challenges when collecting data in the field, as highlighted by Creswell (2008). These challenges include the need to adjust data collection methods as they enter the field, limiting data collection at the beginning of the study, conducting one or two interviews at a time to manage time effectively, and maintaining a high level of energy and concentration to establish a comprehensive database.

According to Merriam (1998), a multiple case study can gather data from three sources: observations, interviews, and documents. However, for this study, data was collected solely through interviews and documents. The data was recorded using audio recordings. This method ensured accuracy in the content shared during the focus group or in-depth interview, as well as the speaker's intonation. The interviews were conducted in private settings such as participants' homes, private offices, or neutral venues like quiet coffee shops or private rooms (InSites, 2007).

Bricki and Green (2007) emphasized the importance of audio recording the interview to be transcribed verbatim. After transcription, participants were given the opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the transcription. To ensure confidentiality, all participants were consistently addressed by pseudonyms to protect their real identity. Prior to the interview, I had prepared open-ended research questions, which were shared with the participants. I also informed them that there could be additional questions that might be necessary to provide helpful insights to the study. This approach helped to establish trust and openness with the participants.

The study utilized content analysis to examine the data collected. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), content analysis is a research method that involves the subjective interpretation of text data through a systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. Mayring (2000) describes content analysis as an empirical, methodological approach to analyzing texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step-by-step models, without rash quantification. Lastly, Patton (2002) defines it as any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that seeks to identify core consistencies and meanings in a volume of qualitative material. These three definitions clarify that content analysis emphasizes an integrated view of speech or texts and their specific contexts. Data reduction involves abstracting data from the transcriptions, deleting irrelevant information, and transforming it into a comprehensible material that can be easily understood by many (Namey et al., 2007; Paul, 2006; Suter, 2012). Thematic analysis, which involves sorting and categorizing data, is often referred to as pairing and sieving of data.

I sought the help of a professional data analyst for data analysis and reduction. She was able to handle large volumes of qualitative data and assisted me with sorting, organizing, retrieving, and locating words and phrases. The data was eventually consolidated and organized after being categorized and sorted. Data display, however, involves organizing data and presenting it in the form of graphic organizers such as matrices, charts, and graphs. This enables the viewer to draw their own conclusions based on the information presented. It goes beyond data reduction as it shows the data in a more arranged and orderly manner, making interrelationships of bits of information clear and readily available to the viewer. At this stage, higher order categories that were beyond the initial phase of data reduction could be discovered (Namey et al, 2007; Paul, 2006; Sitko, 2013).

In qualitative analysis, conclusion drawing and verification are the final steps. They involve revisiting the analyzed data and assessing their implications for the research questions. Verification is integral to conclusion drawing, and requires cross-checking emergent conclusions as many times as necessary. There are no definitive judgments, as the data are allowed to "speak for themselves" through the emergence of conceptual categories and descriptive themes that are structured into interconnected ideas that make sense.

The framework is interpreted with reference to related literature to explain the phenomenon being studied using a theory. The researcher is assisted by two independent readers and analysts who form a triangulation team to examine and compare individual findings for a deeper and broader understanding of the issue. Triangulation is used to ensure the validity of the data by collecting it from more than one person, increasing its reliability. If the findings of different investigators arrive at the same conclusion, then the researcher can be confident that the result of the research study is reliable.

The researcher considered many different interpretations before forming a rational argument in the most obvious way possible, so that others could judge the validity of the study. The interpretation is clear and precise, properly identifying factual descriptions and the researcher's personal views. An interesting and readable report "provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation, and sufficient interpretation to allow the reader to understand the description".

To analyze the data collected during the interview, I applied Colaizzi's (2007) steps. The following steps were taken during the analysis: I read the description of each participant to understand the context of the study. I extracted statements that had significance to the research question, ensuring that the statements were in direct quotations from the participants to reflect the data accurately. I articulated the meaning of the significant statements and created themes from them. I grouped similar themes together and organized them into categories. Finally, I integrated the results into a comprehensive description of the topic and verified the results with each participant.

### E. Ethical Issues

As my research involved students, some of them may have been hesitant to disclose information out of fear, resulting in withheld data. However, to ensure the integrity of my study, several safeguards were applied that removed their fears and promoted trust. I made sure that my research adhered to ethical principles, specifically those described by Mack et al. (2005), which include respect for persons, beneficence, justice, consent, and confidentiality.

#### ➤ *Respect for Persons.*

In research, it is crucial to ensure that participants have autonomy and are protected from exploitation, particularly when their autonomy is compromised. Therefore, before conducting any study, permission must be obtained from the Division Heads and Superintendents of the relevant college or school. As part of this process, data collection for the study will involve obtaining permission from the school heads of research participants at an early stage (Creswell, 2012). I underwent these processes to show respect for those involved in the study.

#### ➤ *Informed and Voluntary Consent.*

Informed consent is a crucial procedure that ensures individuals fully understand what it means to participate in a research study before deciding whether they want to participate. By obtaining informed consent, respect for the subjects' rights is upheld during research (Mack et al, 2005). Before conducting my in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, I communicated the objectives and purpose of this research study to the participants both in writing and verbally. I also informed them that their conversations would be recorded. After receiving their approval, I asked them to sign a written consent form. The informants were also informed of the study's findings and results since they were the ones involved in the first place, and I believed they had the right to know and receive due recognition.

#### ➤ *Beneficence.*

Conducting research comes with a responsibility to minimize any potential risks, be it psychological or social, that participants may face, while also maximizing the benefits they receive (Mack et al, 2005). To ensure that participants are not exposed to any harm, their anonymity was maintained during interviews to protect their identity (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Additionally, the data collected from participants was kept secure at all times, and measures were taken to make sure that no information was left unattended in notebooks or unprotected computer files (Bricki and Green, 2007).

#### ➤ *Confidentiality.*

The researchers explained to the informants that their identities would be protected using a coding system which would hide their true identities (Maree and Van der Westhuizen, 2007). As recommended by Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2007), the pupils will be informed that the entire database, including digital voice recorders, typed transcripts, field notes, and other related materials, will be destroyed upon completion of the analysis.

During my research, I encountered some informants who were initially reluctant to be interviewed due to the fear of intimidation and prejudice. However, I was able to convince them to cooperate by reassuring them of their confidentiality. As a responsible researcher, it is crucial to prioritize the safety of research participants and consider the possibility of stigmatization and trauma that they may experience during the interview process (Bricki and Green, 2007). Hence, I made sure to be careful and considerate with my questions, avoiding any language that may cause discomfort or hurt their feelings. I also offered support and comfort to those who shared their grief with me. Moreover, I respected their right to privacy by informing them that they had the right to decline answering any questions that they were not comfortable with.

#### ➤ *Justice.*

Research requires a commitment to ensuring a fair distribution of risks and benefits. It is crucial to acknowledge the contributions of participants and provide them with appropriate reimbursements for their efforts (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). During my study, I made sure that participants did not have to spend any money for the interview and their comfort was my top priority. They received tokens of appreciation for their valuable contributions. The legacy of their involvement will benefit not only the author's career but also the wider community, especially teachers. The study aimed to enrich the freedom of participants rather than just benefit the author's career, as suggested by Bloom and Crabtree (2006).

### **CHAPTER THREE**

### **INTERVIEW RESULTS**

The focus of this qualitative multiple case study was to obtain information of the lived experiences of the young laborer that created a present dilemma to the academic institutions. Moreover, the study had come to understand the feelings and emotions of these young laborers, concerning the reasons and aspirations that resulted them to this kind of activities. The participants were from students Carmen, Davao del Norte.

The study had three research questions, each with sub-questions that guided the in-depth interview. The first research question focused on the reasons why students work and their experiences as young laborers. The second research question dealt with the coping mechanisms of these students in balancing work and studies, as well as their challenges in school and life. The third research question explored the aspirations of child workers regarding their future.

During the in-depth interview, each participant was given ample time to answer the questions, allowing for a comprehensive profile to be created. The entire interview was recorded to ensure complete confidentiality of the gathered data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CASE 1- LITTLE HOUSE HELPER

Little House Helper (not her real name) was teary-eyed when I uttered questions pertaining to her lived experiences and challenges of being a child laborer. She started working at the age of 12 and she has been working for four years now. According to her, she is the second of the four siblings raised by a rice farmer and a plain housewife. She is studying in one of the public high schools in the barangay. At first, she was hesitant to be interviewed for she was ashamed of her status as a child worker. However, I made sure that she was comfortable in answering the questions before I proceeded to the main purpose.

#### A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Financial Declination

Little House Helper, with a sigh, undeviatingly told me the reason of being a child laborer:

*It's because of poverty sir. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ2\_P2.1)*

##### ➤ Financial Predicament

Little House Helper was emotional when I asked about her lived experiences as a child worker. She spoke out the reason why she served as a house helper. She said:

*It is because I came from a broken family sir. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ2\_P2.2)*

##### ➤ Resource Delinquency

Little House Helper revealed to me the worst experiences she had while working. She narrated:

*That was when I encountered being blamed even if it's not my fault. It's never easy being poor. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ3\_P3.1)*

#### B. Coping Mechanisms of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Low Academic Performance

Little House Helper did not hesitate to mention the real scenario of her life, the cause why her life turned out such way. She had struggled a lot, especially in her studies, it was affected though she was able to get through to it:

*My grades are really affected sir because of my work and I can't focus anymore in my lessons and that is also because I am exhausted already. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ4\_P4.1)*

*Ingenious*

Even to the learning of Little House Helper, she made mentioned on the most important matter in the world in her own little understanding.

*For me, I was able to buy things I needed using my own money from working. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ3\_P3.2)*

*Having Initiative*

She even added that she has difficulty in accomplishing her school projects and homework due to financial constraints:

*I have no enough time sir for my projects. Sometimes I can't comply with the projects due to lack of resources. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ3\_P3.3)*

##### ➤ Coping with Time

Little House Helper shared as well about the triumphs she has gone through in order to surpass the difficult times in her life. She revealed that:

*I see to it that my time is well-managed so that my work and class will be balanced. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ4\_P4.2).*

### C. Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers

#### ➤ *Diligence*

Little House Helper is not happy with her status in life working and schooling, she confessed. She even seriously told me:

*I must endure the hardships. I aimed at both work and study to succeed. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ4\_P4.2)*

#### *Purpose-driven*

She was also optimistic in her life, she firmly believed she can surpass the struggles. Through this, she said:

*It is just part of my life and it will help me to become a better student. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ5\_P5.3)*

#### ➤ *Goal-Oriented*

Little House Helper also shared to me her learning insights as a child worker. She exclaimed:

*Your family cannot provide you all the way. In studying, we cannot avoid struggles so you need to understand your family. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ6\_P6.1)*

#### ➤ *Thinking Positive*

She further shared that:

*I am still fortunate, though I am in this condition, through my work I can still finish. (LHHMC\_RQ6\_P6.2)*

#### ➤ *Filial Love*

She was also futuristic in her life, she confessed:

*I really dreamed of being a professional teacher sir and help my family. I plan to work too while studying college. (LHHMC\_001\_RQ7\_P7.1)*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CASE 2 – LITTLE CARETAKER

Little Caretaker (not his real name) was among the funny participants. He belongs to the LGBTQ Community. Most of the time he shared a lot with humorous thoughts because he is bubbly.

Little Caretaker took the chance of becoming a nanny since he was 12 because his father died and her mother's income as a factory packer cannot suffice the needs of eight siblings. He loves to cook. In fact, he enrolled himself in school under the TLE Cookery specialization. He is originally residing at Carmen, Davao del Norte. He has been doing all-around helper for four years now. Thus, I gave him a pseudonym "Little Caretaker" because he is not only working as a helper in the house but taking good care of the baby as well.

#### A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Resource Scarcity

Little Caretaker admitted that his life is not simple and easy. He struggled a lot, he conferred:

*To lighten the burdens of my family because my mother has no stable job. (LCMC\_002\_RQ2\_P2.1)*

##### ➤ Economic Instability

He added:

*I feel pity for my mother for she shoulders the finances in school. (LCMC\_002\_RQ2\_P2.2)*

##### ➤ Exhaustion

Little Caretaker also experienced unjust treatment while he has been working, he concretized:

*I can't rest even if I'm very tired. (LCMC\_002\_RQ3\_P3.1)*

##### ➤ Being Drained

As Little Caretaker continued, he then recalled the times when he suffered a lot of sacrifices. He told that:

*I am stressed, tired and sleepy in school. (LCMC\_002\_RQ3\_P3.3)*

#### B. Coping Mechanisms of Young Laborers

##### Time Consciousness

Little Caretaker started working at the age of 12 because his father died. Consequently, he saw how difficult it is for her mother to be working alone. So, he decided to work though his mother would not allow him to do so. He thought that if he will not work no one will give him money for allowances and other school expenses.

*Yes, sir especially during submission of projects, I don't know where to get money for printing. (LCMC\_002\_RQ4\_P4.1)*

##### ➤ Being Stimulated

He added, how he hurdled life challenges while studying. He mentioned:

*Yes sir, because I feel tired and bored. But, I can handle! (LCMC\_002\_RQ4\_P4.3)*

##### ➤ Reinforced

He, then, continued:

*Strive hard to finish sir. (LCMC\_002\_RQ5\_P5.2)*

##### ➤ Being Hopeful

He emphasized:

*It is so difficult if you have incomplete family. I hope we are complete. (LCMC\_002\_RQ5\_P5.3)*



C. *Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers*

➤ *Persistence*

Little Caretaker wanted to be a professional chef someday. For him, he will not stop from reaching his dreams in life.

*I wanted to become a professional Chef because I love cooking. I'm fond of cooking. (LCMC\_002\_RQ7\_P7)*

➤ *Concern for Family*

He stated his insight:

*At an early age, you will learn to help your family, in that way you can lessen poverty. (LCMC\_002\_RQ6\_P6.1)*

➤ *Being Confident*

Accordingly, he was still happy working:

*I am still happy though I am working, because I always think I could finish. (LCMC\_002\_RQ6\_P6.2)*

➤ *Invigorated*

Finally, he conveyed, he was optimistic and hopeful what lies ahead in his life:

*Do not lose hope and trust yourself to conquer all problems. (LCMC\_002\_RQ6\_P6.3)*

## CHAPTER SIX

### CASE 3 – LITTLE BALUT VENDOR

A princess-like face who faced a tough battle- a battle for basic survival and fulfilling of one's dream. Little Balot Vendor, as I assumed to be perfect substitute to her real name, had been suspending tears from her deep-seated eyes as she decided to unleash some pitfalls on her journeys to this what she seemed to call a "difficult life".

Little Balut Vendor, a 17-year-old from Salvacion, Carmen, Davao del Norte, is neither like any other teens who normally spend the nights chatting and surfing, nor like any other extraordinary students who devote the nights for reading and studying. As being one of the six children to a father who is a farmer and a mother who is a housewife, the nights for more than a year now are saved for Php 4,000.00 being a "Balut Vendor".

#### A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Economic Insufficiency

Little Balut Vendor told me her reason why she needed to work to earn money.

*I need money sir so I will not be an additional burden for my parents. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ2\_P2.1)*

She expressed why she needed money:

*I want money sir. I can't afford asking from my mother. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ2\_P2.2)*

##### ➤ Self-Reliance

She elaborated how she learned so much from working as Balut Vendor:

*I know how to work independently. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ2\_P2.3)*

##### ➤ Being Worn-Out

She continued:

*Yes, you have money but it's tiresome. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ2\_P2.3)*

##### ➤ Trusting One's Self

She also told me that sometimes she is being harassed by some customers. Some were sarcastic because she is just a Balut Vendor. They looked at you as a very low- class citizen. She even told me:

*Sometimes you will be harassed, sometimes by riches or drunk people. Still, I can manage. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ3\_P3.1)*

##### ➤ Self-Sufficiency

She also had good and bad experiences while selling Balut. She had the chance to mingle with people in different walks of life. There were rich, feeling rich and some were very annoying customers. She said:

*You can have more friend's sir. there were rich, feeling rich and some were very annoying customers. I enjoyed. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ3\_P3.2)*

##### ➤ Tediousness

I happened to ask her about the barriers she had encountered being a Balut Vendor. She expounded:

*The hindrance is tiresome because I prefer sleep than go to school. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ3\_P3.3)*

### B. Coping Mechanisms of Young Laborers

#### ➤ *Being Rational*

Little Balut Vendor did not even deny the possible risk of her present situation. When asked if there are any aspects have been affected by her work, she answered:

*Yes, sir it decreases. My grades decreased but there are a lot of ways. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ4\_P4.1)*

She added:

*Yes sir, I can't participate because of tedious work. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ4\_P4.3)*

#### ➤ *Time-Boundedness*

However, Little Balut Vendor is confident that she can cope with the said problem above. Hence, she assured:

*I just have my time managed. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ4\_P4.2)*

#### ➤ *Being Practical*

She further said that:

*I just work harder in individual tasks. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ5\_P5.1)*

#### ➤ *Sustaining*

Little Balut Vendor is evidently a strong-willed individual. Despite the difficult situation, she is in, she managed to say:

*Endure. Just make it. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ5\_P5.2)*

#### ➤ *Positivity*

It was also overwhelming to note that in her age, she is matured enough to accept the things that is precisely out of her control. She said:

*It's acceptance sir because we are not rich. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ5\_P5.3)*

### C. Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers

#### ➤ *Compassion For Family*

Little Balut Vendor recognized the idea that she is not like with other children. She stressed:

*Doing work and study is a challenging task but for my family, I can! (LBVMC\_003\_RQ6\_P6.1)*

She is a young girl with mountainous goals. Unsurprisingly, she works day and night, restlessly. When asked about the very reason of her hard works, she ardently said that:

*To finish and be able to help my family. To be a professional. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ7\_P7)*

#### ➤ *Family Consideration*

Certainly, Little Balut Vendor has endured various forms of hardships. Therefore, she has formed a desirable perception of herself:

*I am proud of myself because I can support my needs. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ6\_P6.2)*

#### ➤ *Endurance*

Lastly, we completed the deep conversation with her words, that to some might just be an understatement:

*Just Fight for the dreams. (LBVMC\_003\_RQ6\_P6.3)*

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CASE 4 – LITTLE NANNY

As young as 17, she became a mother to a child she had never deliver herself. She became a housekeeper which she is technically not one of the households. But, she is always part of the vivid vision she dreams for the better “she”. The image was clear on how Little Nanny (not her real name), had tremblingly open her mouth the first time she narrated about herself and her strides as a working student.

Little Nanny is a native from Kitobo, Bukidnon, who was bold to chase its fortune in Anibongan, Carmen, Davao del Norte as young as 13 years old. She unsurprisingly managed to execute roles not appropriate to her age in the enthusiasm to help her mother who is a housewife to a farmer in sustaining the needs of 13 children. Indeed, taking good care to a child while studying at the same time is the silver-lining she sees to succeed from her strives.

#### A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Minimal Resources

Little Nanny became the pseudonym I called her because of the reason she pointed out:

*It is because we are a big family sir. (LNMC\_004\_RQ2\_P2.1)*

As she is fated to be not in a comfortable situation, I felt guilty of the little complains I had through her positive disposition towards life:

*I want to show that I can do it despite scarcity. (LNMC\_004\_RQ2\_P2.2)*

##### ➤ Taking Responsibility

She pointed out:

*I can reach my dreams despite the challenges. (LNMC\_004\_RQ2\_P2.3)*

##### ➤ Lack of Resources

Little Nanny has definitely walked the untrodden road. However, she seems to display the appropriate behaviors. In fact, she declared:

*None sir because I am doing my work well because I focus on earning. (LNMC\_004\_RQ3\_P3.1)*

Meta-cognition is apparent to Little Nanny. She knows what she has to do in order to be triumphant. She highlighted that:

*I made it. Ma'am would always assist and encourage me. It is hard to earn. (LNMC\_004\_RQ3\_P3.2)*

##### ➤ Being Weary

Subsequently, Little Nanny shares the same clamor as with her fellow participants. She bluntly said:

*Sometimes it is tiring to work and study after. (LNMC\_004\_RQ3\_P3.3)*

#### B. Coping Mechanisms of Young Laborers

##### ➤ Keeping a Balance

Experiences come with different struggles. So, questions were asked to unveil how Little Nanny effectively deal with the problems she has encountered.

Little Nanny values time-management. That's why, she manifests good academic performance. She revealed:

*It is ok sir. After cleaning, I study. (LNMC\_004\_RQ4\_P4.1)*

*Time management sir. (LNMC\_004\_RQ4\_P4.2)*

She further insisted:

*None sir, I really set time. (LNMC\_004\_RQ4\_P4.3)*

➤ *Being Able to Devise Ways*

Little Nanny clearly works hard both as a baby-sitter and a student. Her study is always one of her priorities:

*I would always approach my teacher what to do if there is project. (LNMC\_004\_RQ5\_P5.1)*

➤ *Being Motivated*

She as well exhibits faith towards the Divine Creator and always finds courage to thrive. She denoted:

*God sir. It is first. And trust in yourself that you can conquer it. (LNMC\_004\_RQ5\_P5.1)*

➤ *Strengthened*

From the complexity of life, Little Nanny has formed the concept, and boldly affirmed that:

*I consider this as a challenge. And that you will be brave. (LNMC\_004\_RQ5\_P5.3)*

C. *Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers*

➤ *Sympathy for Family*

The trouble in finances did shut Little Nanny from achieving her goals. Her genuine concerns towards her fellow men have eventually led her to set standards. Thus, she confidently asserted:

*To become a teacher sir. I want to help myself and those children in our place in Bukidnon. I want to help my family. (LNMC\_004\_RQ7\_P7)*

➤ *Working Under Pressure*

Eventually, her situation, that others may consider as unfortunate, has molded her to be spirited and positive that everything will be in its right places. Then, Little Nanny said:

*It is a big help sir. Like me, I cannot imagine that I was able to make it. (LNMC\_004\_RQ6\_P6.1)*

➤ *Having the Sense of Equilibrium*

She sees herself not as helpless and unfortunate. For her, the situation made her a responsible, dedicated, and goal-driven being. From that, she remarked:

*I am determined person, because I found ways to sustain my studies. (LNMC\_004\_RQ6\_P6.1)*

➤ *Intrinsically Stirred*

Very true that Little Nanny and her story are not something that is ground-breaking. Though, to be in the shoe of Little Nanny could be nerve-wracking. Thus, she ended her story with the piece of advice to her fellow transients:

*If you are determined to reach your dreams, just think positive. (LNMC\_004\_RQ6\_P6.3)*

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CASE 5 – LITTLE RICE HARVESTER

Little Rice harvester started as a child worker at the age of 13. He has been working for a year since he encountered financial declination. His father is a farmer and his mother, plain housewife. He studied in one of the public schools in the barangay. Aside from being a child worker, he is also a student-athlete.

He was deluged thinking that of all students in the school, he was the most palpable one. Maybe because teachers and even students learned about his toil. In some point, I saw him as a diffident youth but he knew for himself that the very purpose of having him interviewed was not to impugn his work. He conferred his experiences with willingness and sincerity. Later, the interview just went smoothly.

#### A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers

##### ➤ *Being Self-Reliant*

Little Rice Harvester admitted to himself that he needed to work so he can contribute as well to his family.

*So that when I grow older sir, I will become independent. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ2\_P1)*

##### ➤ *Inadequacy of Finances*

As he revealed, he needed to work and earn money for him not to feel useless to his family. He acknowledged:

*So, I would not be labelled as useless. We are poor. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ2\_P2.2)*

##### ➤ *Self-Driven*

Little Rice Harvester is optimistic and persevere despite the fact that life can be sometimes so unfair and difficult. He actually said:

*I know that if you will not persevere, you will not prosper. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ2\_P2.3)*

##### ➤ *Being Jaded*

When I asked him about his worst experience as a harvester, he willingly told me that:

*I was bullied sir. But it's just a mere joke. It's tiring sometimes sir. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ3-P3.1)*

##### ➤ *Self-Contentment*

Considering the fact that no single child deserves to be involved in child labor, I was astounded knowing that he was elated and saw the perks of his current situation. He revealed without hesitation that:

*I am happy despite the everything just to finish the work. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ3\_P3.2)*

##### ➤ *Fatigued*

I find the parents of Little Rice Harvester as lucky. Along with our conversation, he comfortably shared some portions of his life. He told me that:

*I go to school every day and I do the work every weekend. And if it is for harvest season I will work. It's tedious. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ3\_P3.3)*

#### B. Coping Mechanism of Young Laborers

##### *Standing Amidst Challenges*

Little Rice Harvester is contented about the outcome of his grades even though he is working. He doesn't have any problem when it comes to complying his project. He always asked assistance from his teachers and classmates.

*It is ok sir and not decreasing. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ4\_4.1)*

##### ➤ *Finding Means*

Little Harvester has found ally in his pursuit of success through his classmates who accordingly have never left him. He said:

*I would ask my classmates for the copies of our activities. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ4\_4.2)*

➤ *Being Strategic*

His means to gain extra profit did not hinder him to perform well in school. In fact, he highlighted that:

*It is not affected sir. Everything can be solved. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ4\_4.3)*

➤ *Considering Ways*

Working in his young age, does not only offer little harvester a chance for monetary earning but a chance to develop the sense of responsibility as well. When I asked him about the things he will do if he will make some absences, he directly answered me with:

*I used to send excuse letter to my teachers' sir. And I ask my teacher what are the lesson I missed. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ5\_5.1)*

➤ *Being Inspired*

The situation has probably strengthened the commitment and persistence of Little harvester to elevate his status in life. Thus, I was very glad to note that after all, he knows the truest cause of his strives.

*It is ok having this kind of work so that I can finish school. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ5\_5.2)*

➤ *Having a Well-balanced Schedule*

He further said that:

*Sometimes, I prioritized my study because I know this would help me the most. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ5\_5.3)*

He also stated:

*I make sure I have time to relax. Prioritize school above all. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ6\_6.3)*

C. *Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers*

➤ *Showing Determination*

Little Rice Harvester does not limit himself in the rice field. Thus, he earnestly aspires to continue his venture in the oceans of the world. He said without delay:

*To finish study. I want to be a seaman. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ7\_7)*

➤ *Adjusting Study and Work*

Finally, the significant insights being a rice harvester at a young age that he was gratified to share was:

*I already know farming and studying as well. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ6\_6.1)*

He further reassured that:

*It is ok sir just like others who also have their works. (LRHMC\_005\_RQ6\_6.2)*

## CHAPTER NINE CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

Creswell (2007) stressed that when multiple cases are used, a typical format is to provide detailed description of each case and then present the themes within the case, called within-case analysis. This followed by thematic analysis across cases or simply called cross-case analysis. The method is simply identification and comparison of units or sections of data. Likewise, according to Patton (2000), comparison of data can be used to deepen the understanding of unique cases and generate the greatest number of descriptive categories and themes possible.

Previous chapters, from chapters 4 to 8, presented the lived experiences of children who are working at a very young age. It addressed primarily questions that mainly concentrated on their journey as child laborer. This chapter presents a comparison of similarities and differences that emerged from among the five children who are working in a different setting through in-depth interviews conducted. The comparison is accomplished with the three research questions: lived experiences of the children who are working at the same time studying, their coping mechanism as child worker, and the hopes and aspirations of these child worker.

Significant phases that emanated from the transcripts and comments were identified as thematic statements. They were listed and grouped accordingly to determine patterns and connections of themes. The first round produced more than four themes for Table 2. Regroupings were done to produce the essential themes or main themes into fewer items. The process of numeration was adopted in the determination of thematic statements. Numeration is the number of times that supporting statements or emergent themes occur in the transcripts (Smith et al.2009). In a study, a theme was identified when a particular idea or experience was highlighted by at least two participants in a group. Those that occurred only once, were not included in the thematic statements.

### A. Profile of Young Laborers

Aside from the face-to-face interview, I also asked the participants to fill up information regarding their family background and data concerning the subject of the study. It was found out that they start working at a very young age, especially in their elementary years and high school. Since, they came from a family with numbers of siblings and raised by the parents came from a very underprivileged family, which could not suffice the needs and even wants of the family members.

There were only five participants having been identified who came from the same school since no one had voluntarily participate in this investigation. Therefore, through the referral of the Guidance Counselor and the advisers of the school, I was able to identify the following individuals which I gave pseudonyms: The Little Househelper, The Little Caretaker, Little Balut Vendor, Little Nanny and Little Rice Harvester.

Furthermore, I had preferred pseudonyms to cover their identity but would perfectly best exemplify at the same time their personalities and struggles in life. The pseudonyms that had denoted the hope they firmly clung with – the kind of work that they supposed not to be in. These five individuals that had certainly epitomized the bitter-sweet tussles that few of the less-fortuned but surprisingly spirited teenagers are boldly overcoming. Finally, it was also revealed that their income ranges from 600 Php to 4,000 Php per month. The money is used to compensate for their school requirements and projects, and other school needs. Bit oftentimes, the earned money is used to sustain their necessities at home.

Table 1 Profile of Informants in the In-Depth Interview

	<b>Little Househelper</b>	<b>Little Caretaker</b>	<b>Little Balut Vendor</b>	<b>Little Nanny</b>	<b>Little Rice Harvester</b>
<b>Age</b>	16	16	17	17	17
<b>Birth Place</b>	M'lang, North Cotabato	San Isidro, Carmen, Davao del Norte	Salvacion, Carmen, Davao del Norte	Kitaotao, Bukidnon	Salvacion, Carmen, Davao del Norte
<b>Family #</b>	4	8	6	13	8
<b>Father's Work</b>	Farmer	Deceased	Farmer	Farmer	Farmer
<b>Mother's Work</b>	Housewife	Factory Worker	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife
<b>Age Started Working</b>	12	12	16	13	13
<b># Of Yrs in Work</b>	4	4	1	4	1
<b>Income</b>	600 per month + 500 allowance per month	600 per month + 500 allowance per month	4,000 per month	1,000 per month	800 per day during harvest season
<b>SCHOOL</b>	Anibongan National High School	Anibongan National High School	Anibongan National High School	Anibongan National High School	Anibongan National High School



*B. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers*

The data on the lived experiences of the participants are summarized into four essential themes shown in Table 2. This presentation of table forms was patterned after the study of (Smith et al. 2009). The process of numeration was adopted in determination of thematic themes. Among the essential themes were Having Self-dependence and Self-sufficiency, Tiredness and Burnout, Poverty and Financial Constraints, and Having Poor School Performance.

All the informants of the in-depth interview revealed that being a young laborer is not easy. You may have what you want when having an income but on the other way around, you will experience tiresome and burnout due from working.

Moreover, participants also revealed that you will learn from being independent. You can earn while studying. To them they should not be doing this one but because of too much poverty that they have experienced, they cannot do otherwise but to work and survive the financial constraint they have been through from the time they were born.

On the other hand, most of the participants also exposed that from the time they were working, their grades were affected. They cannot focus from their studies because they need to work for them to be compensated. Other participants could no longer participate to school activities for the reason that they were already tired from working. They do not have the focus, which sometimes resulting to failure of grades. But because the teachers understand their situation, they consider them as much as they could. They give them ample time to submit the requirements needed for them to pass from the subjects.

Table 2 Cross Case Analysis on the Experiences of the Young Laborers

Themes	Supporting Statements
Having self -dependence and self-sufficiency	It's ok for me sir. At least I have learned helping my family. I know how to work independently. None sir because I'm doing my work well. For me, I was able to buy things I needed using my own money from working. I made it. Ma'am would always assist and encourage me. So that when I grow older sir, I will be independent. I've learned to stand on my own sir. I became independent. I know how to work independently. I am happy despite the everything just to finish the work.
Tiredness and Burnout	I can't rest even if I'm very tired. Yes, you have money but it is tiresome. I have no enough time sir for my projects. Sometimes I can't comply with the projects due to lack of resources. I am stressed, tired and sleepy in school. The hindrance is tiresome because I prefer sleep than go to school. Sometimes it's tiring to work and study after. I go to school every day and I do the work every weekends. Yes sir, because I feel tired and bored. Yes sir, I can't participate because of tedious work.
Poverty and Financial Constraints	It's because of poverty sir. To lighten the burdens of my family because my mother has no stable job. I need money sir so I won't be an additional burden for my parents.

	<p>It's because we are a big family sir.</p> <p>It is because I came from a broken family sir.</p> <p>I feel pity for my mother for she shoulders the finances in school.</p> <p>I want money sir.</p> <p>I want to show that I can do it. So I would not be labelled as useless.</p>
<p>Having Poor School Performance</p>	<p>Yes sir it decreases.</p> <p>My grades are really affected sir because of my work and I can't focus anymore in my lessons and that is also because I am exhausted already.</p> <p>Yes, sir especially during submission of projects, I don't know where to get money for printing.</p> <p>Sometimes sir, Sometimes I don't because</p> <p>I need to seek money so I'd chose not to participate.</p>

The life of the participants is not easy and simple, they have also experienced triumph and defeat on the other way around. All of them have several experiences which are incomparable to others. I have seen on their faces how they struggle the challenges that brought by poverty.

*C. Coping Mechanism of Young Laborers*

The data on the coping mechanism of young laborers are summarized into four essential themes as indicated in the Table 3 below. The responses were identified as supporting statements based on the theory of Smith (2009). The essential themes were the Time Management, Resourcefulness, Resilience, and Optimism.

All the participants from the in-depth interview were optimistic and resilient. They find ways and means in order to solve the problems concerning poverty. They do not rely on their parents alone when it comes to providing their needs in school, instead they work in order to support their school projects and other obligations. Likewise, they work to support their family needs, because at a very young age, they already experienced pitfalls in life.

Time Management was also one of the themes that emerged during the analysis of the data given by the participants. They described on how they managed their time just for them to cope the lesson they had missed during their absences. Similarly, they elaborated how they manage their time in accomplishing tasks from their respective subjects and classes. It was also observed that the participants were very resourceful. They always arrange to their subject teachers their class schedule for them to cope their projects, assignment and other school-related tasks.

The participants were evidently resilient for they believed that everything has a reason why they are poor and why they need to work. They accepted the fact that though they are poor and that will never be a hindrance for them to succeed in their respective lives. Also, having been engaged in different kinds of work would somehow serve as a springboard of achieving their goals. They accepted the challenges that they were facing from the very beginning. Furthermore, the participants even endeavored getting into multi-tasking just to finish study. Indeed, being a child laborer costs so much sacrifices that one may stop doing so but that was not the mentality of the participant. On a lighter note, they need to get their dreams awakened all the time. It should not be taken into discount that resilience always comes with optimism. Both features are interconnected to be taken and embraced by the participants. As a result, standing amidst every struggle implies that a person is optimistic and is acquainted with the aim of persisting all the way.

Table 3 Cross Case Analysis on Coping Mechanism of Young Laborers

Themes	Supporting Statements
Time Management	<p>I see to it that my time is well-managed so that my work and class will be balanced.</p> <p>Time management sir. At home, I do the chores first and then the assignments.</p> <p>I just have my time managed.</p> <p>Time management sir.</p> <p>I would ask my classmates for the copies of our activities.</p> <p>None sir, I really set time.</p> <p>It's ok sir. After cleaning, I study.</p>
Resourcefulness	<p>I had a list of my subjects with the activities needed to be complied so that it will be organized.</p> <p>I ask my classmates to lend their notebooks. I also ask my teachers about projects.</p> <p>I just work harder in individual tasks.</p> <p>I would always approach my teacher what to do if there is project.</p> <p>I used to send excuse letter to my teacher's sir. And I ask my teacher what are the lesson I missed.</p>
Resilience	<p>I have to endure the hardships. I aimed at both work and study to succeed.</p> <p>Strive hard to finish sir.</p> <p>Endure. Just make it.</p> <p>God sir. It's first. And also trust in yourself that you can conquer it.</p>
Optimism	<p>It's ok having this kind of work so that I can finish school.</p> <p>It is just part of my life and it will help me to become a better student.</p> <p>It's so difficult if you have incomplete family.</p> <p>It's acceptance sir because we are not rich.</p> <p>I consider this as a challenge. And that you will be brave.</p> <p>Sometimes, I prioritized my study because I know this would help me the most.</p>

#### *D. Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers*

The data on the aspirations of young laborers are summarized into three essential themes and the responses were identified as thematic statements to maintain the theory of Smith et al. (2009). The themes explained the hopes and aspirations of young laborers and their plans to alleviate the life that they are living. Among these essential themes are as follows: Learn to Balance Work and Education, Be Determined in Reaching Goals, and Learn to Help Family.

It is true that education is the key to succeed. This is what the participants uphold. To them, learning while working will lead them to a better and successful life. Also, participants took the risk in order to achieve positive outcomes in every undertaking. Further, one must be determined in reaching goals through hard work, dedication and commitment.

Table 4 Cross Case Analysis on Hopes and Aspiration of Young Laborers

Themes	Supporting Statements
Learn to Balance Work and Education	<p>Doing work and study is a challenging task.</p> <p>It’s a big help sir. Like me, I can’t imagine that I was able to make it.</p> <p>I am still fortunate, though I am in this condition, through my work I can still finish. I am still happy though I am working, because I always think I could finish.</p> <p>I am determined person, because I found ways to sustain my studies.</p> <p>It’s ok sir just like others who also have their works.</p> <p>I make sure I have time to relax. Prioritize school above all.</p>
Be Determined in Reaching Goals	<p>I am proud of myself because I can support my needs.</p> <p>My advice sir is strive hard, do whatever it takes, you need not to be ashamed if you are working because it is a decent way of earning, so long that you provide your needs.</p> <p>Don’t lose hope and trust yourself to conquer all problems.</p> <p>Just fight.</p> <p>If you are determined to reach your dreams, just think positive.</p> <p>I really dreamed of being a professional teacher sir and help my family. I plan to work too while studying college.</p> <p>To finish study. I want to be a seaman.</p> <p>I wanted to become a professional Chef because I love cooking. I’m fond of cooking.</p> <p>I can reach my dreams despite the challenges.</p> <p>I know that if you will not persevere, you will not prosper.</p>
Learn to Help Family	<p>Your family can’t provide you all the way.</p> <p>In studying, we cannot avoid struggles so you need to understand your family.</p> <p>At an early age, you will learn to help your family, in that way you can lessen poverty.</p> <p>To finish, and be able to help my family. To be a professional.</p> <p>To become a teacher sir. I want to help myself and also those children in our place in Bukidnon. I want to help my family.</p> <p>I already know farming.</p> <p>It’s ok for me sir. At least I have learned helping my family.</p>

All of the participants consistently strive harder. The road for them may seem rough but with the perseverance and determination that they possessed; everything will just fall into its place in the right time. Learning and working at one time, necessitates ample amount of balance for them to obtain good results. It is because the participants dreamt of being professionals in the field they are about to tread. This has been one of the many purposes why they keep on working.

Participants were full of dreams, hopes and aspirations to get a degree and be professionals someday, get a decent job, and build a family of their own.

## CHAPTER TEN DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the discussion, conclusion, implication for practice, and implication for future research based from the themes developed during the data analysis.

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the lived experiences of young laborers who are working at a very young age. This case study also pointed out the reasons why they turned to be a child worker based on the foregoing results of analysis. This also enumerated the aspirations of the young laborers as they have gone the futuristic approach through numbers of in-depth interview.

The participants were exposed to linguistic pluralism approach, so as to express their ideas, thoughts and opinions in the in-depth interview. They were allowed to speak their native language (Bisaya) for vivid and clear understanding of their answers. In fact, they were as well free to express their feelings and emotions during the interview process.

It was in this context that the participants were invited to share their lived experiences, recount the time on the reasons of working at a very young age, and the aspirations as they continue the journey.

### *A. Lived Experiences of Young Laborers*

There four essential themes that had emerged were the following: having Self-dependence and Self-sufficiency, Tiredness and Burnout, Poverty and Financial Constraints and Having Low School Performance.

The first essential themes that developed was having Self-dependency and Sufficiency. This simply means that students who used to engage oneself to working had the belief that they can provide their own needs once they are working. Research has shown that as humans develop throughout their lifespan, they prioritize their personal control over themselves and their environment. This desire for control, also known as autonomy, begins in infancy and continues into old age. Everyday tasks such as preparing food, keeping a clean-living environment, and washing clothes help individuals to achieve self-sufficiency and personal environmental control. These competencies are essential for successful development (Schulz & Heckhausen, 2016).

Further, assigning household chores to children not only instills in them the skills required to be self-sufficient as adults but also helps them learn how to care for a family of their own in the future. These competencies can have a positive impact on their self-worth and perception of personal efficacy at every stage of life.

According to Langer and Rodin (2016), positive self-perception and self-worth are closely related to the feeling of competence, which is essential for developing personal control and responsibility. Grams and Albee (2016) emphasize the importance of feeling valued and worthy, which are crucial components of self-esteem. Therefore, life skill competencies, including personal control and responsibility, are among the most critical factors that shape an individual's perception of personal efficacy and satisfaction in life.

Second essential theme was Tiredness and Burnout. This implied that children's experiences in working at a very young age have been shown to affect them positively or negatively at the physiological level. Burnout from work-related demands or tension is a major concern for organizations, as it can result in negative outcomes and high costs. According to Jeung's (2016) study, burnout is a negative emotional reaction to one's job, which occurs due to prolonged exposure to a stressful work environment. It is a state of exhaustion and emotional depletion that is detrimental to the employee, leading to absenteeism, turnover, and reduced job performance.

Poverty and Financial Constraints were the third theme that arose. It presented the reason of the participants towards working even at a very young age. Their families have no enough income to support the needs of their family or even school contributions. So, this was the motive why most of them turned from working. According to a study conducted by the International Labor Union (ILO), child labor is a result of the vicious cycle of poverty. Poverty leads to the belief that having more children leads to more income. Child labor arises due to poverty and illiteracy. Poor people tend to have more children in the hope of sending them to work. In economic terms, the opportunity cost of going to school is high and, therefore, not an attractive option. For poor parents, the advantage of any earnings opportunity open to children outweighs the money, time, and effort spent on school education. In the case of poor families, the benefits of child labor usually exceed the costs of schooling. As a result, child labor is likely to remain widespread (ILO, 2017).

Further, Dessy (2014) expanded the analysis of poverty trap mechanisms to include fertility choices. Rather than focusing on lumpiness in schooling time, she emphasizes the time required for child care. For each child, a certain portion of the parent's time must be dedicated to child care, taking away from income-earning activities. As the number of children increases, the parent earns less income and becomes more inclined to rely on child labor instead of sending the children to school. A vicious cycle can arise, as in previous studies. Parents with low skills (and low wages) have less incentive to work and care for their children and more to gain by having their children work. As a result, a poverty trap emerges with low parental skills, high fertility, and child labor reinforcing each other through generations.

The last essential theme that occurred in the lived experiences of young laborers was Having Low School Performance. This indicated that children who are working while studying tend to make absences because they need to work and find extra income to support their family and their selves. Strikingly, children may suffer in various ways when their parents are unemployed. Thus, their current situation is a threat as they used to have grades in average, below average or the worst-case scenario they could be a candidate for drop-out. It is undeniable that parental unemployment has a negative impact on children's education. Children of unemployed parents are more likely to perform poorly at school, repeat grades, and have a lower chance of completing their education. This poor performance can persist into high school and college, and can have a significant impact on their future success in the labor market. Therefore, it is crucial for policymakers to understand the size and persistence of this issue to improve the educational attainment of children with unemployed parents (Bakker & Reci, 2015).

### *B. Coping Mechanism of Young Laborers*

There were four essential themes appeared from the analysis of data for research in Question number two.

The first essential theme was Time Management. According to the participants, to finish the race they must have to balance their work and their studies. They need to balance their time from working and studying, but most often than not, they could not do it for sometimes their works has demanding more time than their studies. But to the participants, persistency in doing your work and study was the desirable attitude for an optimistic person.

Second essential theme was Resourcefulness. Children who worked at a very young age were considered resourceful. They don't rely on their parent's income alone. They looked for a solution to which they thought to be of help to the family in providing their needs. According to a study conducted by Mitchell in 2015, children develop the ability to use and apply knowledge as they acquire skills in planning, organizing, decision-making, and problem-solving. These skills are the foundation of resourcefulness, which involves finding and utilizing available resources to achieve one's goals. When students imagine multiple outcomes, set objectives, experiment with new approaches, and overcome challenges, they establish important connections between knowledge and goal achievement. Consequently, they become responsible creators of their own futures.

Moreover, resilient people are dedicated to achieving their goals and living their best lives. They have strong reasons to wake up in the morning, not just for work, but also for their relationships, friendships, beliefs, and causes they care about. Resilient individuals focus their time and energy on situations and events they can control, which allows them to feel empowered and confident. Conversely, those who worry about uncontrollable events can feel helpless and powerless.

In summary, resilient individuals are those who embrace challenges and use them as opportunities to learn and grow. They are committed to their goals and values and focus their energy on what they can control, leading to feelings of empowerment and confidence.

In challenging times, there are three attitudes that can help us cope better: commitment, control, and challenge. If we adopt these attitudes, we will be more likely to stay involved with the people and situations around us (commitment), rather than withdrawing; keep trying to influence the outcomes in which we're involved (control), rather than giving up; and try to learn and grow through the stress (challenge), rather than just feeling sorry for ourselves.

Thus, the participants tended to demonstrate resilience despite the dire situation they are presently in. They tend to strategize in order to manage their studies and work.

The final and most important theme of the study was optimism. Despite the struggles and challenges that life brings, participants remained hopeful and positive. According to Fisher's (2015) research, optimism plays a crucial role in a person's life. It enables them to tackle difficult tasks without giving up easily, even if they are less talented, less educated, or less intelligent than others. While talent, education, and intelligence can be helpful, they are not the only factors that determine success.

### C. *Hopes and Aspirations of Young Laborers*

The three essential themes appeared from the hopes and aspiration of young laborers are specified below.

First, Learn to Balance Work and Education. This explained that children who were working still have time to study. They were courageous in facing the realities in life. Though they were working and studying at the same time, for them this would never hinder them to finish the race. In fact, Little House helper is one of the top students in the school. Many individuals fail to achieve their goals due to their tendency to give up too quickly, according to the study. If you have been trying to reach a certain objective for an extended period and have not succeeded yet, the likelihood of you quitting is high. The key difference between those who achieve their goals and those who do not is that the former perseveres and persists.

Second essential theme was Be Determined in Reaching Goals. The statement holds true that determination is a valuable and honorable trait. Pursuing excellence and being determined in achieving goals is about giving your best and letting the outcomes unfold. Perfectionism is a futile approach to life because the objective is always changing. There will always be someone else who can do things better.

It is better to have a determined attitude than to pursue excellence. When we approach things with an attitude of excellence, it can lead to positive behaviors, accepting our efforts with grace and patience in pursuing our goals, both for ourselves and others. However, the pursuit of perfection can often lead to a sense of dissatisfaction. Perfectionism demands extreme efforts and a rigid adherence to expectations and standards set by others, who are likely to be perfectionists themselves.

Likewise, with the participants, they were very much driven to reach their goals because of their situation. The poverty they experienced has pushed them to strive harder in life.

Third, Learn to Help Family. It is indeed true that children are forced to work to survive and support their families. This issue is often caused by unscrupulous adults who take advantage of their vulnerability. Additionally, the problem is rooted in the inadequacies and weaknesses of national educational systems. Furthermore, it is deeply ingrained in cultural and social attitudes and traditions.

Further, children are often prompted to work by their parents. A study shows that in most cases, parents are the ones who encourage their children to start working, accounting for around 62% of cases. Children, on the other hand, independently decide to work in only 8% of cases (Syed, 2011). In developing countries, parents may have children with the expectation that they will contribute to the family's income. Children in developing countries tend to be a less significant financial strain on their families than in developed countries, and they usually contribute more to their household than they take away, unlike in developed countries (Lindert, 2016). Therefore, parents in developing countries often rely on their children to work and contribute to the family's income.

Moreover, child labor is a major concern worldwide. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2018), poverty is the biggest factor driving children into the workforce. Children often feel that working is vital for their own survival or that of their family. Experts suggest that child labor is most prevalent in larger cities due to unhealthy family dynamics and economic struggles. Financially troubled families may struggle to provide their children with adequate nutrition and care, leading children to seek their own sources of income. In families with problems such as alcoholism or moral bankruptcy, financial difficulties can be compounded by destructive relationships, which can push children to the streets to make decisions beyond their years. Therefore, economic hardship and family dysfunction are the main causes of child labor. Experts also point out that the overall social and economic situation in the country can contribute to the problem.

The causes of child labor are complex and include poverty, lack of education, and social and cultural traditions. Eradicating it is a long-term goal that cannot be achieved with a simple law. However, certain forms of child labor are so inhumane that they can no longer be tolerated. In the 1990s, it was agreed that the highest priority should be given to eliminating the worst forms of child labor, visible results should be achieved within a short time-frame, and a coordinated program of action should be launched at the national and international levels to achieve rapid results.

#### D. Implication for Practice

*On the lived experiences of young laborers there were four essential themes generated, to wit: Having Self-dependence and Self-sufficiency, Tiredness and Burnout, Poverty and Financial Constraints and Having Low School Performance.* This simply means that students who are working believed that they can provide their own needs once they are working. According to a study on human development, personal "control" over oneself and one's surroundings is a crucial aspect that characterizes human development throughout life. This drive for increasing control, also known as autonomy, starts from infancy and continues to old age. Such control or autonomy is essential for individuals to optimize their development successfully (Schulz & Heckhausen, 2016).

In 2014, Dessy conducted a study on poverty trap mechanisms and included fertility choices as one of the factors. According to Dessy, the time needed for child care is a significant aspect that leads to poverty traps. For each child, a certain amount of time must be dedicated to child care, which ultimately takes away from income-earning activities. As the number of children increases, the parent's income decreases, and the incentive to rely on child labor rather than sending children to school increases. This creates a vicious cycle that reinforces poverty traps through generations. Furthermore, parents with low skills and low wages have less to lose by not working and taking care of children instead, and more to gain by having each child work. This results in a poverty trap where low parental skills, high fertility, and child labor reinforce each other.

*On the coping mechanism of young laborers there were four essential themes generated, to wit: Time Management, Resourcefulness, Resilience and Optimism.* As per Mitchell's (2015) study, children develop the ability to use and apply knowledge as they acquire skills in planning, organizing, decision-making, and problem-solving. These skills collectively form the foundation of resourcefulness, which refers to the capacity to identify and utilize available resources to achieve objectives. By envisioning multiple outcomes, setting goals, experimenting with new strategies, and overcoming challenges, students establish crucial links between knowledge and goal attainment. They become responsible architects of their own futures.

According to research conducted by Maddi and Khoshaba (2016), resilient people view difficulties as challenges, not paralyzing events. They perceive failures and mistakes as opportunities for growth and learning rather than negative reflections of their abilities or self-worth.

These attitudes can be summed up as commitment, control, and challenge. When faced with challenging times, individuals who hold these attitudes are more likely to stay involved with the people and events around them (commitment), keep trying to influence the outcomes in which they are involved (control) rather than giving up, and seek ways to grow and learn from the stress (challenge) rather than simply bemoaning their fate.

The last and final essential theme was Optimism. Participants of the study were optimistic and hopeful amidst the struggles and challenges that brought by life's predicament. According to a study by Fisher (2015), optimism plays a crucial role in one's life. A person who does not give up easily and tends to move forward without worrying about the obstacles in their way can accomplish any task, even if they are less talented, less educated, and less intelligent than others. Talent, education, and intelligence are only supplementary factors that can lead to success more easily.

*On the hopes and aspirations of young laborers, there were three themes emerged, which are; Learn to Balance Work and Education, Be Determined in Reaching Goals and Learn to Help Family.* The results on the aspiration of the young laborers imply that young laborers are courageous in facing the realities in life. Though they are working at the same time studying, in them this will never hinder them to finish the race. Most people do not reach their goals because they give up too easily.

According to Dessy (2014), having a determined attitude is a better predictor of success than striving for excellence. Cultivating an attitude of excellence can promote positive behaviors, a gracious acceptance of effort, and a patient pursuit of goals. Conversely, seeking perfection can lead to discontent, as it demands extreme efforts and adherence to rigid expectations and standards imposed by others who may also be perfectionists.

It is important to learn how to support one's family. In some cases, children are forced to work as their survival and that of their families depends on it. Additionally, unscrupulous adults may take advantage of their vulnerability. This issue is also perpetuated by inadequacies and weaknesses in national educational systems, as well as deeply ingrained cultural and social attitudes and traditions (Jeung, 2016).

Finally, the issue of child labor has been studied extensively and it has become clear that poverty, inadequate schooling, social and cultural traditions and structures are some of the complex causes of child labor. Eliminating child labor is a long-term goal that cannot be achieved solely through legislation. However, there is growing concern that some situations of child labor are so severe and inhumane that they must be stopped (ILO, 2018).



### *E. Implication for Future Research*

This study opens avenues for future research enhancements. Future studies can address the problems that were not covered in this study and provide remedies. Additionally, researchers can add more relevant questions to gather more data for analysis and further studies. There is always room for improvement.

The results of this study will help future researchers to level up their process and methods of obtaining, gathering, and interpreting data. A more systematic approach, including campaigns and vigilance, will be applied.

The next research can focus on how young laborers cope with the critical society in their changing social circles as professionals in their field of choice. Furthermore, there are opportunities for other research to consider in terms of the research participants' scope, as this study is limited to young laborers in the Municipality of Carmen.

### *F. Concluding Remarks*

Based on the results of the study, I indicated numerous remarks:

First, lived experiences of young laborers pertain not only to overcome the hardships of economic status or simply survival but also define the aspirations and dreams of every young worker. Also, they are still aiming to augment themselves to become more productive in what they are striving.

Second, the very reason of these five young laborers on working at early ages is mainly due to economic instability. Several factors may also influence the prevalence of the said condition.

Third, the young laborers should not be looked upon as hopeless because they, themselves are trying to bring out their best. In fact, they should be considered as inspiration to everyone. They are attempting to do good despite life's imperfection. Moreover, they can give in with the music life is offering us.

The results of this study may transform everyone to empathize and not criticize the current situation of the young laborers. Not all of us are favored with much resources to be sent to school. Therefore, these workers per se, do not have the choice of blaming themselves but always have the options of uplifting their own lives.

To teachers, who judged working students as low performers in school, this study will somehow illumine their minds that these students are battling their own unique war. Let us be gratified for they did not surrender after all.

To the young laborers who are around and struggling for similar purposes, I acknowledge your determination! In spite of all, you still have the courage in not saying no to the challenges and struggles you encountered. You never lose hope for you got the conviction that we are all deserving to succeed.

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