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# Child Labour in Fast Fashion

## DEFINITION OF CHILD

"This fundamental convention sets the **general minimum** age for admission to employment or work at **15 years** (**13 for light work**) and the minimum age for **hazardous work** at **18** (**16 under certain strict conditions**). It provides for the **possibility** of initially setting the general minimum age at **14** (**12 for light work**) where the **economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed**,"  
(ILO, Minimum Age Convention, No. 138, 1973 ).



Japanese Version  
Poster

Article 1: "For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."

-(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

Article 27(2): "The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the **primary responsibility** to **secure**, within their abilities and **financial capacities**, the conditions of living **necessary** for the child's development."

-(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

Article 31 (1): "States Parties recognize the **right of the child** to **rest** and **leisure**, to **engage in play** and **recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child** and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts."

-(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

Article 32:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be **protected** from **economic exploitation** and from performing any work that is likely to be **hazardous** or to **interfere with the child's education**, or to be **harmful to the child's health** or **physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development**.

2. States Parties shall take **legislative, administrative, social and educational** measures to ensure the **implementation** of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

- (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
- (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
- (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

-(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

"'Child labour' is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development."(ILO, n.d)

The classification of certain types of **"work"** as **"child labour"** hinges on factors such as the child's age, the nature and **duration** of the tasks carried out, the **working conditions**, and the **specific objectives** set by individual nations. This determination differs across countries and even among different sectors within those countries. (ILO, n.d)

Why they employ children:

- "(1) [C]hildren are docile,
  - (2) they are cheaper,
  - (3) they are highly motivated and efficient,
  - (4) they do not form unions and their employment reduces the possibility of 'hartal' or strike,
  - (5) management of children is easy, and
  - (6) the owners feel sorry for poor children and give them work
- ." ( Brewster ,1997, p. 196 )

## CASE STUDY

## LIMITATION OF LAW

"Law enforcement is **not adequate** in **certain parts** of the world as even the countries which have strong laws against child labour often **do not have sufficient funds** or are understaffed in their labour department and labour inspections offices, sometimes the **court fails to enforce certain laws as well**,"  
(The university of Iowa Labour Centre, 2009).

International organisation conventions and treaties (such as the ILO convention) do not have higher power over domestic law and even if it is a violation of the convention it is still difficult

## IMPACT OF CHILD LABOUR

- **Violation** of basic human rights
- Not being able to receive a **right** to **education**
- Effecting **mental** and **physical damage**
- **Robbed** of **freedom**, recreation and **health**

## CONSEQUENCES & REINFORCEMENT

Children are stripped from a right to education and safe well being. Simply eliminating child labour and these companies will not make a difference as it puts as strain on economic of that nation and may lead to further exploitation for the children. Corporate regulations must be made as well as changes within these states. In order for reinforcements programmes implemented by International Organisations are able to embrace a larger impact from an international stance.  
eg. The ILO IPEC

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