LAW AND CHILD LABOUR IN MALAYSIA:
A CASE STUDY IN BALAKONG NEW VILLAGE

By

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I also appreciate the help of various people in Balakong New Village who accompanied me and helped me in my fieldwork, especially those who helped me to seek out child workers and interview them. I also like to thank those who responded to my interviews.

I extend my appreciation to Professor Tan Chong Tin of the Department of Medicine, University Malaya and Dr Yew Yeok Kim for their concern for my study. Their care and encouragement was often my strength in difficult times. I also wish to thank last but not least my parents and family for their support and understanding. I love them.
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SYNOPSIS

Child Labour is a widespread global phenomenon. Many international organisations, particularly the United Nations and International Labour Organisation have included the abolition of child labour in their agenda.

In Malaysia child work is regulated by the Children and Young Persons (Employment) Act 1966. This Act is designed to protect children at work against exploitation and work hazards. However, this Act does not seem to be effective. This study is an attempt to show that the ineffectiveness of the law could be due to its inability to respond to local social and cultural factors, which influence the practice of child labour.

Poverty is often cited as the root cause of child labour. However, this study shows that this may not be accurate. This study shows that some social and cultural factors are better explanation of Chinese children’s participation in work activities. In turn, these social and cultural factors make the law ineffective because the law is formed on the belief that poverty is the root cause of child labour and on western concepts of individual rights.

Chapter One gives a general background of the study while Chapter Two provides a description of children’s work activities and working conditions in Balakong.

Chapter Three examines the determinants of child work. The writer shows that contrary to common belief, poverty is not the root cause of child work in Balakong. Rather, social and cultural factors are better explanation of children’s participation in work activities.
The positive and negative impacts of work on child workers are examined in Chapter Four. Chapter Five surveys the relevant international and national law which regulate child work. The effectiveness of the law is also examined. The concluding Chapter summarises the findings and policy implications of the study and recommends some measures to deal with the problem of child labour.
SINOPSIS


Bab Satu tesis ini memberi latar belakang penyelidikan ini. Bab Dua menghuraikan perkerjaan kanak-kanak dan keadaan perkerjaan di Balakong.

Bab Tiga adalah bab yang terpenting kerana ia memeriksa penentu-penentu perkerjaan kanak-kanak. Dalam bab ini pengarangnya menunjukkan bahawa, bertentangan
dengan kepercayaan biasa, kemiskinan bukan punca utama kegunaan buruh kanak-kanak
di Balakong, tetapi faktor-faktor sosial dan kebudayaan adalah keterangan lebih baik.

Bab Empat meneliti kesan-kesan positif dan negatif pekerjaan terhadap kanak-
kanak. Bab Lima meninjau undang-undang antarabangsa dan dalam negeri yang
mengawal kegunaan buruh kanak-kanak. Kesalan undang-undang ini akan diperiksa dalam
bab ini. Bab penutup akan memberi ringkasan pendapat-pendapat dan implikasi polisi
penyelidikan ini, serta menyarankan langkah-langkah untuk mengatasi masalah kegunaan
buruh kanak-kanak di Malaysia.