

AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOR CODE ON MERCHANDISING BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to determine the level of awareness and implementation of the labor code between the employee and employers of merchandising businesses in Cateel. The researchers employed a quantitative descriptive study and utilized a researcher-made questionnaire to gather the data. The questionnaire contents are based on the provisions under Articles I and II of the Labor Code of the Philippines, specifically focused on the Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits. The respondents are 214 employees and 64 employers from 278 merchandising business employees and employers chosen through stratified random sampling; the study was conducted at Cateel, Davao Oriental. Furthermore, the researchers used Mean and T-tests in analyzing the data. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between awareness and implementation of the Labor Code in Merchandising Business. The researcher recommends that the LGU-Cateel and NGO's government institutions promote gainful employment opportunities, develop human resources, protect workers and promote their welfare, and maintain industrial peace.

Keyword: *labor codes, conditions of employment, health, safety, and social welfare benefits, merchandising business, Cateel*

1. INTRODUCTION

Manufacturers have freely adopted and applied labor codes. For the past 20 years, assuming a labor code has been a successful human resource investment in growing markets, improving operational and financial performance, and rising economies to guarantee minimum or core labor standards for workers (Jayasinghe, 2016). However, various barriers impede firms from establishing a system and implementing policies to enhance efficiency, including staff awareness, attitude, drive, and technical and financial resources (Javied et al., 2015). There is also a need for legislators and representatives to work closely with non-profit human service organizations to ensure effective and efficient service delivery (Smith et al., 2016).

The Labor Code of the Philippines is a legal code that determines all employment practices and labor relations in the Philippines. With aims to protect and empower employees, labor laws exist. They guarantee to oversee employer-employee interactions, holding both sides liable for their deeds (Global People Strategist, 2021). It is also done to ensure that none is vulnerable to exploitation or unjust treatment (Global People Strategist, 2020).

In India, to ensure that workers in all industries receive economic and social justice, the Indian Government passed labor law compliance (Prompt Personnel, 2021). These regulations typically provide employers and manufacturers with guidelines about pay, incentive pay, worker amenities, and the working environment. Labor is an organization's most valuable resource, and labor laws are enforced to guarantee that workers' rights are upheld and protect them from exploitation. It controls businesses, employees, and labor unions. Penalties may be taken against the organization for breaking the law.

In the Philippines, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has consistently faced difficulties due to the labor inspectorate's insufficient technical resources and disproportionately small staff size compared to the growing number of inspectable establishments spread throughout the archipelago. Even though ILO Convention No. 81 on Labor Inspection stipulates that inspections of all establishments should be carried out as frequently as

possible, the labor inspectorate's current capacity and the human and financial resources allotted to it are insufficient to allow for the proper execution of such inspections (Hirose & Vitasa, 2017). Due to the high frequency of workplace accidents and injuries, workplace inspections to promote compliance with the current national labor laws have been uncommon and ineffective. In addition, the traditional idea of labor protection has been significantly impacted by globalization, accompanying technical advancements, changing work patterns, and employment relationships. In this regard, to help determine the extent of awareness and implementation of the Labor Code in the Philippines, especially in the hometown of Cateel, the researcher believed this research could be a yardstick for understanding and assessing it. To be precise, this paper delved into the two major parts of the labor code - the

Labor Code's Books III and IV, which set the minimum requirements for wages and other financial benefits, occupational safety and health, and working conditions such as hours of work, rest periods, holidays, and working conditions for particular groups of employees. Furthermore, this study aims to generate baseline data that contributes to the Local Government's effective and efficient delivery of services to its people.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research aims to determine the level of awareness and implementation of the labor code to merchandise businesses in Cateel. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents when analyzed according to their role in the industry of merchandising business?
2. What is the level of awareness of the labor code of the employees in merchandising business in terms of:
 - a. Conditions of employment and;
 - b. Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits
3. What is the level of awareness of the labor code of the employers in merchandising business in terms of:
 - a. Conditions of employment and;
 - b. Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits
4. What is the level of implementation of the labor code of the employees in merchandising business, in terms of:
 - a. Conditions of employment and;
 - b. Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits
5. What is the level of implementation of labor code of the employers in merchandising business, in terms of:
 - a. Conditions of employment and;
 - b. Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits
6. Is there any significant difference in the level of awareness of the labor code in merchandising business when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry?
7. Is there any significant difference in the level of implementation of labor code in merchandising business when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry?
8. Is there any significant relationship between awareness and implementation of labor code in merchandising business?

1.2 Scope and Limitation

This study was conducted on November 2022 at Cateel, Davao Oriental. This research aims to build awareness and assess the implementation of the labor code to the employees in the merchandising business in Cateel. The respondents of this study were the employers and employees who worked in a registered merchandise business in Cateel before and within the years 2022-2023.

This research includes the provisions in the Philippines Labor Code, categorized into seven books. More specifically, this only focused on two major parts – the third and fourth books, Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety, and Social Benefits, respectively. The questionnaire on the respondent's level of awareness will cover all the articles within the third and fourth books of the said labor code, such as the minimum requirements for wages and other financial benefits, medical and dental benefits, occupational safety and health, and working conditions such as hours of work, rest periods, holidays, service incentive leave, and working conditions for particular groups of employees.

However, items under the implementation questionnaire, such as medical services, holidays, rest periods, occupational safety, and health, were omitted to tailor-fit the needs applicable to the respondents.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual diagram represents the relationship between the study's independent and dependent variables. The Independent variable contains the following indicators: Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety, and Social Welfare. Furthermore, the dependent variable covers the Awareness and Implementation of the

Philippines Labor Code. It further explains that the said independent variable affects the dependent variable. This study's conceptual framework is based on a self-made questionnaire developed from the two major books mentioned above under the Philippines Labor Code.

Two laws govern labor relations in the Philippines the Labor Relations Code and the Labor Relations Act (2014). President Ferdinand Marcos exercised his then-existing legislative powers to implement it on Labor Day in 1974. It outlines the procedures for hiring and firing private employees, the terms of employment, such as the number of hours that can be worked in a day and overtime pay, the remuneration of employees, including holiday pay, thirteenth-month pay, and retirement benefits, as well as the rules for organizing labor unions and participating in collective bargaining. It comprises seven provisions that comprehensively explain and interpret each. These provisions include Pre-Employment, Human Resources Development Program, Conditions of Employment, Health, Safety, and Social Welfare, Labor Relations, Post Employment, and Transitory Final Provisions.

As shown in the figure below, the framework contains the indicators of the independent variable, which are Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety, and Social Welfare. Book three of the Labor Code of the Philippines, also known as the Conditions of Employment, are the rules, requirements, and policies an employer and employee agree to abide by during the employee's service to the company. They spell out the rights and obligations of each party. Conditions of employment are also known as terms of employment. It includes rules regarding work hours, night shift differential, weekly rest periods, holidays with pay, service incentive leave, and service charges.

On the other hand, the guidelines for health, safety, and social welfare benefits are outlined in book 4, titled "Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits." It also establishes standards for fines and punishments. Occupational safety, health, and medical and dental services are covered in Chapters I and II of Title I (OSH) (Congressional Policy and Budget Research Development, 2016).

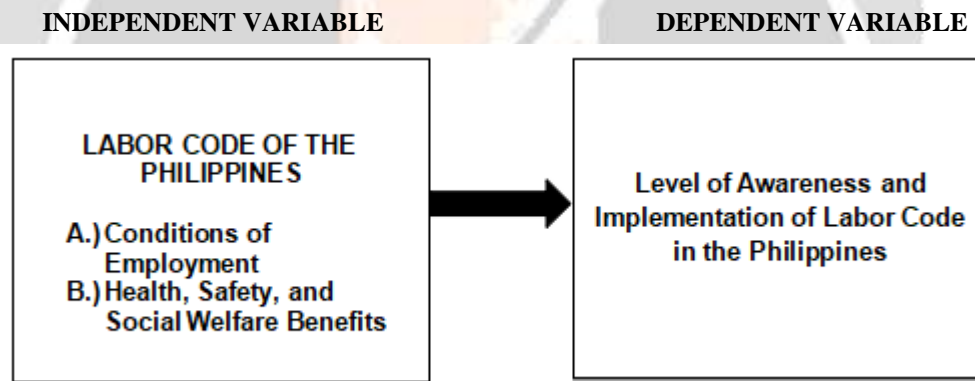


Figure 1. Conceptual Diagram showing the variables of the study

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the description and discussions of the related literature and studies. The following sections will discuss relevant information about the Labor Code of the Philippines and the Effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the labor code.

2.1 Labor Code of the Philippines

"Labor" refers to the physical, mental, and social effort to create goods and services in an economy (Amadeo, 2021). The corpus of laws, administrative decisions, and case law dealing with the legal rights and limitations of working individuals and their organizations are known as labor and employment laws. Two major categories of groups under labor law are the relationship between the employee, employer, and union, referred to as the tripartite relationship in collective labor law, and individual labor law, which focuses on the rights of employees at work and under the employment contract.

According to the 1987 Constitution and the 1974 Philippine Labor Code, the Department of Labor and Employment is responsible for defending workers' rights and advancing their welfare (Department of Labor and Employment, 2017). As stipulated in this edition of the Department of Labor and Employment (2017), the Labor Code's Books III and IV set the minimum requirements for wages and other financial benefits, medical and dental

benefits, occupational safety and health, and working conditions such as hours of work, rest periods, holidays, service incentive leave, and working conditions for particular groups of employees.

In addition, DOLE (2017) also states that the Labor Code establishes measures to administer its provisions and swiftly and fairly enforce the rights established. Workers will quickly access their benefits and rights through the enforcement system without waiting for arbitration or protracted legal proceedings. The Secretary of Labor and Employment is responsible for administering and enforcing labor laws through authorized agents such as the Regional Directors and Labor Employment Officers (formerly known as labor inspectors) in the Labor Standards Enforcement Division. The Bureau of Working Conditions (BWC) of DOLE offers technical guidance and support to the Regional Offices of DOLE and aids with policy formulation.

Conditions of Employment. Book 3 of the Labor Code of the Philippines includes rules regarding the following: hours of work, nights, weekly rest periods, holidays with pay, and service charges. A study by Canales (2014) showed that rising minimum wages harm work hours for both wage earners and those who make 50% more than the minimum wage. Workers at the minimum wage and those making 50% more than has a reduced chance of finding and keeping a job.

According to DOLE (2017), workers in the Philippines must put in at most 8 hours daily. The employee deserves a lunch break of one hour every day, without fail. Workers are only obliged to spend a maximum of 8 hours every day at their place of employment. Any laws do not require working from home. The time the employer must spend at work, all requested working hours, and any breaks needed to prevent burnout are considered working hours.

Article 82 of the Labor Code (DOLE, 2017) states that all employees of establishments and undertakings are required to work a set number of hours per week, with the following exceptions: government employees, managerial employees, field personnel, dependent family members of the employer, domestic help, people who provide personal services to others, and workers who receive wages/salaries based on Secretary of Labor regulations. The book also states that all employers must receive a meal break of at least 60 minutes. During day shifts, the typical time is noon. The minimum overtime pay for each hour an employer needs a person to perform during the night, defined as any period between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM, is 10%.

Under-time work on a business day has no bearing on overtime work on any given day, according to Article 88 of the Labor Code. This means that if an employee quits early from work, he cannot be required to put in extra time the next day to make up for those lost hours. This is so because the overtime rate exceeds the missed hours per hour. According to the Labor Code, if an employee is permitted to take a day off work, his employer is still obligated to pay for any overtime or additional compensation that was worked in the past or would be worked in the future.

DOLE also contends that after every stretch of six consecutive working days, all employers must take a full 24-hour rest day (2017). Each party may choose their rest day. However, if a worker would instead get a day off for a religious celebration or a holiday, he can make his case. All employees are entitled to holiday compensation. His usual daily salary will be included in this. If they are summoned to work on a holiday, they must be compensated twice as much as usual. Employees must be given a yearly service incentive leave of five days with regular pay if they have worked for their company for at least a year.

Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits. The whole range of social welfare, safety, and health benefits accessible to every employee in the Philippines is outlined in Book IV of the Philippine Labor Code (Global People Strategist, 2021). According to Article 162 in Book IV of the Labor Code, workplace safety and health standards are laws that must be followed. The standards serve as the legal foundation for all DOLE safety and health programs, putting obligations on all workers and employers to adhere to safety and health regulations at the corporate level.

The ILO demands to be aware that the term "employee" refers to any individual who is lawfully employed in the Philippines, as well as any individual who is mandated to receive GSIS or SSS coverage under Commonwealth Act 186 or Republic Act 1161, respectively. Book IV of the Philippine Labor Code is divided into two main titles. Each is further subdivided into several sub-chapters. The first book focuses mainly on the physical side of safeguarding an employee's health and well-being at work. The second term primarily refers to intangibles supporting employees' health benefits.

Any workplace should prioritize safety and health (CPBRD, 2016). An economy's viability depends on how productive its workforce is. A nurturing and secure work atmosphere is necessary for productivity. Illness, injury, and even death can occur from poor living conditions. The laws in Book IV of the Philippine Labor Code govern health, safety, and social welfare benefits. It also establishes standards for fines and punishments. Chapters I and II of Title I. (OSH) cover occupational safety, health, and medical services. The Secretary of Labor and Employment is mainly in charge of establishing standards.

A section on research and training to advance OSH can be found in the Labor Code. In order to create OSH policies that are efficient, adaptable, and long-lasting, Executive Order No. 37, which was issued in 1987, established the Occupational Safety and Health Center as a research and training organization. The OSH provisions of the Labor Code are skewed to define the various work-related injuries or fatalities and allocate benefits and liabilities for employers and employees, respectively. Further information is needed regarding the institutionalization of an OSH program. Thus, a comprehensive OSH policy is required to improve workers' welfare successfully. This would reduce work-related fatalities and create a workplace prioritizing safety and health for businesses and employees.

2.2 Effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of labor code

Labor codes have been voluntarily adopted and used by manufacturers. Adopting a labor code can be an effective human resource investment in developing markets, enhancing operational and financial performance and emerging economies for the past two decades to ensure minimally acceptable or core labor standards for workers (Jayasinghe, 2016). However, several difficulties, such as employee understanding, attitude, drive, and technical and financial resources, prevent businesses from implementing an energy system and measures to improve energy efficiency (Rackow et al., 2015). In order to ensure effective and efficient service delivery, legislators and representatives must collaborate closely with non-profit human service organizations (Smith et al., 2016). Labor protection can effectively improve firms' operational efficiency. The positive effect of labor protection on firms' operational efficiency is more significant in higher legal governance regions and state-owned enterprises, which represent a better macro and micro law enforcement environment, respectively, after the implementation of the Labor Contract Law (Xue et al., 2022).

In a working paper submitted by Robertson et al. (2016), they concurred that Asian factories, in particular, are frequently criticized for their "poor" or "unacceptable" labor practices, according to the International Labor Organization, which stated that roughly 9.5 million people in Asia work in "slave-like conditions" in 2005. Poor labor practices include things like paying less than the minimum wage, working longer hours and days per week than necessary, discriminating against people, abusing people physically and verbally, stifling trade unions, and causing accidents that could have been avoided but still killed people (Worker Rights Consortium, 2013). One of these preventable disasters was the collapse of Bangladesh's Rana Plaza, which gave an impression of very poor labor practices.

More than 1,100 garment employees died when Rana Plaza's industrial complex collapsed on April 24, 2013 (Robertson et al., 2016). Since then, European and US purchasers have significantly tried to remedy Bangladesh's safety issues. The National Initiative, the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, and the Agreement on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh are associations of clothing buyers (mostly from the United States and Europe) that currently cover around 89% of Bangladeshi garment workers (Anner & Bair, 2016). These initiatives aim to support factories in making safety investments while minimizing the negative effects on their ability to compete. Recent factory fires on February 1st, 2016, show that continual efforts are required to reduce safety concerns in these textile manufacturers.

Even with common belief, it is crucial to emphasize that Asia is incredibly diverse: Bangladesh and Japan have very different labor laws. Poor factory practices are frequently a reflection of development, according to Robertson et al. (2009). Compared to industrialized countries, manufacturing practices in developing countries are deemed subpar (Robertson et al., 2016). Robertson and his colleagues defined the term developing nations as characterized by low levels of production, relatively low levels of education, poor incomes, and unstable economic situations. Poor living conditions, such as hunger, infant mortality, low levels of education, and other issues associated with poverty, result from these circumstances and are not limited to factories. Hence, poor working conditions in industries and low wages are frequent indicators of a country's level of development.

The working paper by Robertson et al. (2016) and colleagues, which focuses on the apparel industry, found that, like manufacturing practices, the propensity to export goods varied with development level. Producing apparel is one of the first steps that nations have historically taken to succeed in the manufacturing sector (Fukunishi & Yamagata, 2014). Exporting apparel from developing countries increased significantly after the Second World War, with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, China, and Taipei, China leading the way. In recent years, Bangladesh, the PRC, Viet Nam, and Cambodia have surpassed other nations in garment manufacture as these economies became wealthier and moved their apparel production to lower wage economies.

While the manufacture of clothing, the state of development, and unfair labor practices are similar, it would be wrong to conclude that working conditions are especially poor in the apparel business. In contrast to other industries where fashion workers could be employed, the garment sectors are usually safer and offer greater wages.

Five case studies (Robertson et al., 2016), for instance, suggest that earnings are higher and accidents are less common in the other industries where the "typical" garment worker would work instead (especially in agriculture). Many of the changes in this area are correlated in terms of compliance. Using a factor analysis, an empirical technique designed to uncover hidden relationships between different variables, Brown, Dehejia, and Robertson (2015) discover that shifts in compliance typically fall into six main categories: communication, workplace safety, modern human resource practices, compensation, unions, and core labor standards. By improving some categories, future modifications in others may be made easier. For instance, according to Rossi and Robertson (2011; Robertson et al., 2016), gains in relationships with supervisors and communication are frequently preceded by improvements in other areas, which shows that enhancing communication may be a crucial first step toward enhancing other aspects of performance.

Increased productivity and business earnings are also associated with better working conditions. According to Brown et al. (2015)'s analysis of firm-level data from Vietnam, compliant businesses are more successful. Profits also rise when businesses adopt new compliance standards. Over five Better Work assessment cycles, the price-cost ratio almost doubles. Levine, Toffel, and Johnson give proof of a causal connection (2012). Random OSH inspections of California businesses were analyzed, and it was discovered that inspected businesses afterward saw a large decline in expenditures related to accidents and injuries without reducing the number of their workforce. Of course, it is challenging to draw comparisons across industries due to the need for more information on working conditions. However, several studies, like Robertson et al. (2016), contend that circumstances in the garment industry may be worse than in other industries. The fact that many apparel factories are globally active may be one element in why working conditions are better than other domestic alternatives. Vertically integrated value chains that involve customers (such as Gap, H&M, Levi's, and other brands) and factories that manufacture for these buyers but are typically not owned by the purchasers characterize the current structure of global apparel production. Some contend that such disaggregation distances customers from compliance concerns while getting a financial advantage from decreased labor expenses (Glynn, 2011; Robertson et al., 2016).

According to popular wisdom, consumers want products with minimal production costs. Many scholars cite specific instances where rising exports from Bangladesh (Yunus & Yamagata, 2014), Viet Nam (Goto, 2014), and Madagascar are significantly influenced by low salaries (Fukunishi & Ramiarison, 2014). For example, Goto (2014) contends that the modest wage growth in Vietnam through expanding exports may have contributed to the industry's long-term expansion.

However, according to scholarly literature, the picture of the unorganized sector is not as straightforward. In the academic literature, informality is the subject of two major arguments. The question is whether formality benefits employees. The case for informality is frequently made regarding issues of control and flexibility, but it can also occasionally touch on salaries. Robertson et al. (2016) cited Maloney and Staneva and Arabsheibani's studies which both find that workers in the informal sector in Latin America and Tajikistan get greater pay than their equivalent counterparts in the formal sector. In a similar vein, Harrison and Scorse (2010; Robertson et al., 2016) note that before the anti-sweatshop movement of the 1990s, salaries in Indonesian textile, garment, and footwear enterprises providing the export market were lower than those supplying the local market in the mid-1990s. However, the gap closed after a period of attention from foreign purchasers worried about the reputational externalities caused by their sellers.

This result is frequently viewed as unexpected because it defies accepted thinking and might not apply to South Asia. Several studies have demonstrated that larger, formal-sector exporting companies pay higher wages. The fact that the (bigger) foreign-oriented enterprises frequently offset the wage premiums they pay with longer work hours could contribute to the gap (Fukase, 2014). Although it is frequently true, it is not a given that workers in the unorganized sector are always in a worse situation.

One of the lessons learned from the distinctions between the formal and informal sectors is that these distinctions lead to working population sorting. According to McCaig and Pavcnik (2015) and Babbitt, Brown, and Mazaheri (2015), women's preferences for employment in the formal economy vary. Younger people are likelier to select employment in the formal sector if given the option. According to McCaig and Pavcnik (2015), less educated, older, and rural employees have fewer opportunities to enter the formal economy, consistent with the widespread belief that employment in the unofficial sector is frequently an option for those unable to acquire regular employment. Workers in the informal sector who make more money are frequently self-employed or like the flexibility it offers. Although the government frequently restricts how long certain employees may be covered under short-term contracts, many anecdotal instances exist of firms getting around these restrictions.

Robertson et al. (2016) explained that subcontracting is one-way businesses can get around restrictions on short-term contracts. Subcontracting by exporting businesses creates connections between exporters from the formal sector and considerably smaller producers from the informal sector frequently. Nonetheless, the connections

between businesses in the official and informal sectors are crucial for the garment industry in particular. During periods of peak demand, formal sector exporters frequently subcontract work to businesses in the informal sector. Regulators and other stakeholders have unique challenges when subcontracting with informal sector companies because these companies are, by definition, not held to the same standards as formal sector contracted companies. For instance, the buyers or their agents may inspect formal, contracted enterprises, but subcontracted firms are rarely audited. According to Mukim (2015), there may be advantages for both the contracted and subcontracted organizations from the complex linkages between formal and informal sector businesses in India. Similar findings are made by Basole, Basu, and Bhattacharya (2015), who likewise conclude that there is complexity in the connection between formal and informal enterprises. For instance, subcontracting might help smaller, more rural businesses by transferring technology, but it can harm larger, metropolitan businesses.

Based on a survey of 409 micro- and small businesses (MSEs) in Nepal, it was determined the status quo of the ongoing policy dialogue in Nepal on strategies to support the formalization of the informal economy (ILO, 2014). The survey covered the four sectors of agro-processing, garments/carpets, tourism, and information technology (IT). In Nepal, a sizable regulatory structure controls the growth of businesses. Even with this, the survey analysis shows several problems, including a need for more clarity about numerous regulations, despite the widespread existence of such a framework. This does not bode well for the promotion of MSEs, which are susceptible to internal and external shocks, frequently, though not always, small in size and founded to address subsistence and livelihood requirements. The informal structure of MSEs, the presence of a sizable percentage of unpaid family workers, and the desire to avoid regulatory and other restrictions are additional signs of MSEs' limited capacity.

The extreme politicization of labor, frequent strikes, political involvement, lack of flexibility in managing labor expenses since it is difficult to let go of workers when economic conditions worsen, and excessive regulation are all current sources of disincentives in Nepal (ADB, DFID, and ILO, 2009 as cited by ILO, 2014). Care must be used while handling the delicate issues relating to labor relations, trade unions, and employment law. Effective institutions and policies must be developed and strengthened while considering the numerous issues from multiple points of view. This includes encouraging dialogue and negotiation to find solutions, especially considering that imposed solutions are unlikely to be successful.

It was found that most MSEs were not properly aware of several labor rules. A lack of knowledge and various avoidance techniques contributed to low compliance with some business regulations that applied to all enterprises in Nepal. Also, it was shown that the surveyed organizations had a mediocre awareness of the consequences of broken legislation.

In the Philippines, for instance, due to the labor inspectorate's inadequate technical resources and disproportionately small staff size compared to the expanding number of inspectable establishments dispersed throughout the archipelago, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has consistently encountered challenges. Inspections of all establishments should be conducted as regularly as feasible, according to ILO Convention No. 81 on Labor Inspection. However, the labor inspectorate's present capacity and the resources given to it need to be increased to enable the proper execution of such inspections (Hirose & Vitasa, 2017). Workplace inspections to encourage compliance with the current national labor rules have been rare and unsuccessful due to the high incidence of workplace accidents and injuries. In addition, globalization, its associated technological improvements, altering work patterns, and employment relationships have profoundly impacted the traditional idea of labor protection.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) of the Philippines recently took action to implement a new Labor Standards Enforcement Framework in response to the difficulties posed by the limited resources of its labor inspectorate and emerging changes in today's global economy (LSEF) (Hirose & Vitasa, 2017). The goal is to strengthen the labor inspectorate's institutional capability through cooperation and engagement with employers, employees, and other social partners. It promotes self-control and voluntarily adhering to Philippine labor laws. Through technical collaboration, the ILO has helped the tripartite elements of the Decent Work Country Programme for the Philippines implement the new framework for enforcing labor standards.

According to National Statistics Office (NSO) data, there were 810,362 enterprises in 2003. Examining these establishments would take more than 4,000 inspections each year from each inspector, according to a simple division of the number of establishments by the number of inspectors. On the other hand, the current work standard mandates that each labor inspector inspect at least 1.5 businesses per day for 10.5 months per year, divided into four inspection days (about 240 establishments per year). This essential criterion would require 48,000 inspections annually at the current inspector count.

It should be emphasized, nevertheless, that since 2000, the actual number of inspections has been lower than this bare minimum. The dearth of labor inspectors is another factor in underreporting workplace sickness and

accidents. DoLE developed the new Labor Standards Enforcement Framework (LSEF) in 2004 in response to these issues and difficulties. Given the shortage of labor inspectors and the rising number of inspectable facilities, this framework looks for a different way to carry out the labor inspection function.

Using the visitorial and enforcement powers granted to the Secretary of Labor and Employment by Articles 128 and 129 of the Philippine Labor Code, the new Labor Standards Enforcement Framework (LSEF) went into effect on January 31, 2004, as a result of Department Order 57-04 series 20042. To guarantee voluntary compliance with labor laws, the regional implementers must follow the procedures and strategies outlined in the LSEF.

As stated by Department Order 57-04, the LSEF promotes establishments' proactive involvement in labor standards enforcement through any one of the three following methods: - Regular Inspection for establishments employing 10-199 workers; - Training and Advisory Visits (TAV) for establishments employing 200 or more workers; - Self-Assessment for establishments with certified collective bargaining agreements regardless of employment size. Hirose and Vitasa mentioned that the longer-term objectives of the LSEF include developing a workplace culture that prioritizes safety, health, and welfare, as well as an ethic of self-regulation and voluntary adherence to labor laws (2017). Implementing corrective steps to eliminate and mitigate the negative consequences of workplace risks and hazards is also emphasized.

The new LSEF demonstrates DOLE's dedication to safeguarding employees and upholding their right to a safe and healthy workplace. Although the LSEF is a cutting-edge strategy for addressing the new labor market difficulties, its influence has been somewhat muted. Between 2004 and 2006, the LSEF covered approximately 11% of all national establishments. Several programs have been started to hasten the implementation of the LSEF. However, more is needed to gauge their effectiveness (Hirose & Vitasa, 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Locale

This study was conducted in the Municipality of Cateel. It is a second-class municipality in the southern tip of the province of Davao Oriental. This study lasted the second semester of the Academic Year 2022-2023.



Figure 2. Map of Cateel, Davao Oriental

3.2 Research Design

The researchers utilized a quantitative descriptive study. Descriptive quantitative research collects quantifiable data from the population sample for statistical analysis. The descriptive research method is used to describe a population or situation accurately. According to McCombes, (2022), descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon.

3.3 Research Instrument

The instrument that was used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaire. The questionnaire contents were based on the provisions under Articles I and II of the Philippines Labor Code. The questionnaire was

specifically focused on the Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits of Merchandising businesses in Cateel. Furthermore, it underwent reliability and validity testing through a pilot test study before being administered to the actual respondents of the research study in Cateel. An authority expert in this field has validated the instrument.

It is suggested that reliability should be equal to or above 0.60 have suggested four cut-off points for reliability, which include excellent reliability (0.90 and above), high reliability (0.70-0.90), moderate reliability (0.50-0.70) and low reliability (0.50 and below).

3.4 Respondents of the Study

The target population of this study was the employees working in a merchandising business in Cateel Davao Oriental, who were officially listed in the Municipal Treasurer's Office. This study has involved a total of 278 merchandising business employees and employers. The sample size was identified through total population sampling. According to Iliyasu and Etikan (2021), stratified random sampling is a sampling method that involves selecting a subgroup of items from a population based on classification and random selection. It entails dividing the target population element into equal, mutually exclusive segments and selecting simple random sampling from each segment.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the discussion on the presentation and analysis of findings. The following headings center the discussion on the profile of the respondents, the level of awareness of the labor code, and the significant difference in the level of awareness of the labor code of employees, a significant difference of awareness of the labor code of employers, the level of implementation of employees, level of implementation of employers, and significant relationship between awareness and implementation of labor code.

4.1 Profile of the Respondents

The profile of respondents in terms of their age, sex, and role in the industry. Followed by the level of food safety and sanitation practices among karenderyas in Poblacion Cateel. Lastly, the significant difference on the level of Food Safety and Sanitation Practices among Karenderyas in Poblacion Cateel when grouped according to age, sex, and role in the industry. A total of 50 respondents.

Table 2. Profile of respondents in terms of their role in the industry

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Employers	64	23.0
Employees	214	77.0
Total	278	100.0

Table 2 shows the profile of the respondents according to their role in the merchandising business. With this, it illustrates that the employers have a frequency of 64, equivalent to 23.0 percent; meanwhile, the employees

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS		
RESPONDENTS	POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
Employees	214	76.98
Employers	64	23.02
TOTAL	278	100.0%

have a frequency of 214, equivalent to 77.0 percent, with a total frequency of 278 and a total of 100 percent. According to Amadeo (2021), the corpus of laws, administrative decisions, and case law dealing with the legal rights and limitations of working individuals and their organizations is known as labor and employment law. This indicates that there are two major categories of groups under labor law; these are the relationship between the employee and employer, and union, referred to as the tripartite relationship in collective labor law, and individual labor law, which focuses on the rights of employees at work and under the employment contract.

4.2 The Level of Awareness on the Labor Code of the Employees in Merchandising Business in Conditions of Employment

Table 3. Level of awareness on the labor code in terms of conditions of employment of employees

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Conditions of employment			
The employee only works 8 hours per day.	.815	3.89	High
An employee is required to be on duty or to be at a prescribed workplace, during which an employee is suffered or permitted to work at all times.	.806	3.81	High
Rest periods of short duration during working hours are counted as hours worked.	.800	3.80	High
The employee is given 30 minutes break in the morning and in the afternoon.	.869	3.78	High
The employees have not less than sixty (60) minutes of time off for their regular meals.	.824	3.84	High
Every employee is paid a night shift differential of not less than ten percent (10%) of his regular wage for each hour of work performed between ten o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning.	.883	3.79	High
The employee is not allowed to go out or do any personal transactions/errands outside the working place.	.876	3.89	High
The employee is well compensated, especially in overtime work.	.911	3.78	High
The employee receives double pay if he/she works during the holiday.	.857	3.83	High
The employee experience a salary deduction for every under-time work he/she committed.	.957	3.81	High
Permission given to the employee to go on leave on some other days of the week does not exempt the employer from paying the additional compensation required.	.924	3.85	High
The employee is required to work if there is a declared	.932	3.74	High

local emergency.			
The employee is required to report on duty if there is urgent work to be performed.	.885	3.72	High
The employee is required to work if there is a necessity to prevent loss or damage to perishable goods, an employee may be required to work.	.889	3.75	High
The employee is required to report on duty, which starts before the eighth hour is necessary to prevent serious obstruction or prejudice to the business or operations of the employer.	.916	3.78	High
The employee who is required to render overtime work shall be paid additional compensation.	.878	3.75	High
The employee received overtime pay depending on his/her overtime work hours.	.896	3.74	High
The "regular wage" of an employee includes the cash wage only, without deduction, on account of facilities provided by the employer.	.822	3.80	High
The employer, whether operating for profit or not, provides each of his employees a rest period of not less than twenty-four (24) consecutive hours after every six (6) consecutive normal work days.	.794	3.87	High
The employee is given a two-day break after 5 or 6 consecutive days of work.	.824	3.78	High
The employee is paid with additional 30% compensation if the employer requests him/her to work during his/her rest day.	.830	3.78	High
The employee shall be entitled to additional compensation for work performed on Sunday only when it is an established rest day.	.869	3.76	High
The employee received double pay if the employer required him/her to report on duty during holidays such as Thursday, Good Friday, the ninth of April, the first of May, the twelfth of June, the fourth of July, the thirtieth of November, the twenty-fifth and thirtieth of December and the day designated by law for holding a general election.	.865	3.89	High
The employee is given a 5-day incentive leave, which can be converted into cash if not used.	.873	3.87	High

Service charges collected by hotels, restaurants, and similar establishments are distributed at the rate of eighty-five percent (85%) for all covered employees and fifteen percent (15%) for management.	.877	3.93	High
The employer gives the benefits such as SSS, PAG-IBIG, Philhealth, 13 th Month Pay, and bonus that an employee should receive under the mandates of the Labor Code.	.908	3.77	High
The employee receives his/her salary on time. No promissory notes, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits, or any object other than legal tender, even when expressly requested by the employee.	.907	3.84	High
The employee is paid at least once every two (2) weeks or twice a month at intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days.	.905	3.73	High
The employee received his/her salary at the office of the bookkeeper.	.932	3.76	High
The employee received his/her salary personally with payroll.	.897	3.74	High
The employee is paid even if his/her employer experiences financial instability.	.952	3.78	High
The employee is not allowed to receive his/her co-worker's salary or payroll.	.869	3.74	High
The employee receives a notice in case there might be deductions to his/her salary.	.842	3.86	High
The employee pays for any damage to tools, materials, or equipment I use.	.888	3.85	High
The employee is not obliged to pay for any damage to tools or materials.	.935	3.69	High
The employee has no experience that his/her employer or co-worker asked for a salary deduction served as payment for employment or retention.	.882	3.77	High
There is no salary deduction that is against the mandate of the Labor Code.	.889	3.80	High
The employer establishes standards that will ensure the safety and health of women employees	.814	3.78	High
Employees are provided with a comfortable working place.	.837	3.91	High

There are separate toilet rooms and lavatories for men and women and provided a dressing room for women.	.777	3.89	High
There is a nursery in a workplace for women employees.	.901	3.88	High
Women employees are given 2-week maternity leave with compensation.	.859	3.85	High
Women are given a 4-week additional leave after they give birth or experience a miscarriage with compensation.	.923	3.84	High
Women are given maternity leave for the first 4 deliveries.	.877	3.85	High
Employees are encouraged to attend symposiums and meetings for family planning.	.877	3.83	High
Employees are required to attend the given seminars for family planning.	.917	3.78	High
Employees do not experience gender discrimination in the workplace.	.888	3.79	High
Employees are not forced to resign or separate due to the reason for marriage.	.909	3.83	High
Women employees do not experience being discharged during pregnancy periods.	.987	3.76	High
Women employees are given the adjustment time to go back to work normally after giving birth.	.926	3.73	High
Women employees are not separated or discharged during their pregnancy leave.	.909	3.82	High
There are no employees below 15 years old in my workplace.	.938	3.89	High
Employees aged 18 years old are only given minimal working hours.	.906	3.79	High
Employees did not experience age gap discrimination.	.957	3.86	High
A woman worker shall not lose benefits regarding her status, seniority, and access to promotion which may attach to her regular night work position.	.911	3.79	High
Grand Mean	.31340	3.81	High

Table 3 shows the statistical result on the level of awareness of the labor code of the employees in merchandising business in terms of conditions of employment for employees' normal hours of work. This indicator showed a grand mean rating of 3.81. This means that the level of awareness of the labor code of the employees in merchandising businesses in terms of conditions of employment is high, which indicates that the employees of

merchandising businesses are aware of the labor code in terms of conditions of employment. According to Section 83 of the Labor Code of the Philippines, employees' normal work hours shall not exceed eight (8) hours daily. This idea was supported by DOLE (2017) that workers in the Philippines must put in at most 8 hours daily. The employee deserves a lunch break of one hour every day, without fail. Workers are only obliged to spend a maximum of 8 hours every day at their place of employment. Any laws do not require working from home. The time the employer must spend at work, all requested working hours, and any breaks needed to prevent burnout are considered working hours (Grant et al., 2013).

4.3 The Level of Awareness of the Labor Code of the Employees in Merchandising Business in terms of Health, Safety, and Social Welfare

Table 4. Level of awareness on labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits of employees

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits			
Employees are provided first-aid equipment and training for first-aid responses.	.914	3.86	High
Employees receive free dental check-ups twice a year.	.907	3.78	High
The working environment has a part-time/regular nurse or physician.	.924	3.90	High
The working place has its own emergency clinic.	.864	3.88	High
The workplace does not have an emergency clinic or attending dentist/nurse/physician due to its close distance from the hospital or dental clinic.	.854	3.82	High
The attending physician provides a health program to raise awareness regarding health issues.	.845	3.79	High
In case of emergency, the employer provides necessary health assistance for sick employees.	.861	3.93	High
Employees shall have the right to undergo health assessments without charge and to receive advice on how to reduce or avoid problems associated with their work.	.846	3.89	High
The employer is required to provide safety standards and safety devices.	.849	3.92	High
Safety inspections are done annually by the Department of Labor and Employment, specifically the regional office.	.876	3.89	High
Employees are compensated for loss resulting from injury, disablement, or death through industrial accidents, casualty, or disease.	.865	3.94	High
The Government provides compensation for work-related injury or disease, such as financial assistance and monetary benefits depending on the kind of disability or disease the worker suffers.	.888	3.82	High
All employers and employees not over sixty years of age have a government insurance fund.	.886	3.86	High
An employee who is over sixty years old and is paying contributions for retirement or life insurance benefit is covered by the government insurance fund.	.861	3.80	High

Employees are provided with medical services and appliances depending on the nature of their sickness or injury and the progress of their recovery may require.	.795	3.83	High
Employees who unreasonably refuse to submit medical examination or treatment will stop receiving payment of further compensation at such time as such refusal continues.	.870	3.85	High
The employee who sustains an injury or contracts sickness resulting in temporary/permanent/permanent partial disability is, for each day of such a disability or fraction thereof, paid by the System.	.906	3.73	High
The government pays the primary beneficiaries upon the death of the employee an amount equivalent to his monthly income benefit, plus ten percent thereof for each dependent child, but not exceeding five, beginning with the youngest and without substitution.	.822	3.73	High
The government pays the primary beneficiaries upon the death of the employee who is under permanent total disability eighty percent of the monthly income benefit and his dependents to the dependents' pension.	.882	3.73	High
Employers and employees are entitled to a Philippine Medical Care Plan.	.878	3.63	High
Employers render assistance in establishing and operating adult education programs for their workers and employees.	.708	3.78	High
Grand Mean	.40050	3.83	High

Shown in Table 4 is the statistical result on the level of awareness of the labor code of the employees in merchandising business in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits. This indicator showed a grand mean rating of 3.83. This indicates that the level of awareness of the labor code of the employees in merchandising businesses in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits is high, which means that the employees of merchandising businesses are aware of the labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits.

According to the study, the whole range of social welfare, safety, and health benefits accessible to every employee in the Philippines is outlined in Book IV of the Philippine Labor Code (Global People Strategist, 2021). They also added that workplaces should prioritize safety and health (CPBRD, 2016). An economy's viability depends on how productive its workforce is. A nurturing and secure work atmosphere is necessary for productivity (Kessels, 2013). Illness, injury, and even death can occur from poor living conditions.

4.4 The Level of Awareness on the Labor Code of the Employers in Merchandising Business in Terms of Conditions of Employment

Table 5. Level of awareness of the labor code in terms of conditions of employment of employers

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Conditions of employment			
The employee only works 8 hours per day.	.814	3.44	High
An employee is required to be on duty or to be at a prescribed workplace, during which an employee is suffered or permitted to work at all times.	.745	3.88	High
Rest periods of short duration during working hours are counted as hours worked.	.719	3.92	High

The employee is given 30 minutes break in the morning and in the afternoon.	.690	4.00	High
The employees have not less than sixty (60) minutes of time off for their regular meals.	.787	3.98	High
Every employee is paid a night shift differential of not less than ten percent (10%) of his regular wage for each hour of work performed between ten o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning.	.962	3.80	High
The employee is not allowed to go out or do any personal transactions/errands outside the working place.	.881	3.95	High
The employee is well compensated, especially in overtime work.	.799	3.89	High
The employee receives double pay if he/she works during the holiday.	.917	3.98	High
The employee experience a salary deduction for every under-time work he/she committed.	.990	3.81	High
Permission given to the employee to go on leave on some other days of the week does not exempt the employer from paying the additional compensation required.	.957	3.81	High
The employee is required to work if there is a declared local emergency.	.935	3.83	High
The employee is required to report on duty if there is urgent work to be performed.	.854	4.03	High
The employee is required to work if there is a necessity to prevent loss or damage to perishable goods, an employee may be required to work.	.807	4.13	High
The employee is required to report on duty, which starts before the eighth hour is necessary to prevent serious obstruction or prejudice to the business or operations of the employer.	.925	4.03	High
The employee who is required to render overtime work shall be paid additional compensation.	.826	4.02	High
The employee received overtime pay depending on his/her overtime work hours.	.786	4.22	Very High
The "regular wage" of an employee includes the cash wage only, without deduction, on account of facilities provided by the employer.	.955	3.91	High

The employer, whether operating for profit or not, provides each of his employees a rest period of not less than twenty-four (24) consecutive hours after every six (6) consecutive normal work days.	.908	3.97	High
The employee is given a two-day break after 5 or 6 consecutive days of work.	.918	3.83	High
The employee is paid with additional 30% compensation if the employer requests him/her to work during his/her rest day.	.890	3.97	High
The employee shall be entitled to such additional compensation for work performed on Sunday only when it is an established rest day.	.814	3.94	High
The employee received double pay if the employer required him/her to report on duty during holidays such as Thursday, Good Friday, the ninth of April, the first of May, the twelfth of June, the fourth of July, the thirtieth of November, the twenty-fifth and thirtieth of December and the day designated by law for holding a general election.	.766	4.02	High
The employee is given a 5-day incentive leave and, if not used, can be converted into cash.	.859	4.16	High
Service charges collected by hotels, restaurants, and similar establishments are distributed at the rate of eighty-five percent (85%) for all covered employees and fifteen percent (15%) for management.	1.067	4.06	High
The employer gives the benefits such as SSS, PAG-IBIG, Philhealth, 13 th Month Pay, and bonus that an employee should receive under the mandates of the Labor Code.	1.061	4.05	High
The employee receives his/her salary on time. No promissory notes, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits, or any object other than legal tender, even when expressly requested by the employee.	.981	3.92	High
The employee is paid at least once every two (2) weeks or twice a month at intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days.	.978	4.11	High
The employee received his/her salary at the office of the bookkeeper.	1.031	4.02	High
The employee received his/her salary personally with payroll.	1.015	3.95	High
The employee is paid even if his/her employer experiences financial instability.	1.080	3.91	High

The employee is not allowed to receive his/her co-worker's salary or payroll.	1.030	4.05	High
The employee receives notice if in case there might be deductions to his/her salary.	1.038	4.03	High
The employee pays for any damage to tools, materials, or equipment I use.	1.044	3.92	High
The employee is not obliged to pay for any damage to tools or materials.	1.061	3.98	High
The employee has no experience that his/her employer or co-worker asked for a salary deduction served as payment for employment or retention.	.988	4.09	High
There is no salary deduction that is against the mandate of the Labor Code.	.872	4.03	High
The employer establishes standards that will ensure the safety and health of women employees	.948	3.92	High
Employees are provided with a comfortable working place.	.931	4.08	High
There are separate toilet rooms and lavatories for men and women and provided a dressing room for women.	1.094	3.70	High
There is a nursery in a workplace for women employees.	1.011	3.80	High
Women employees are given 2-week maternity leave with compensation.	.957	4.06	High
Women are given a 4-week additional leave after they give birth or experience a miscarriage with compensation.	.785	4.05	High
Women are given maternity leave for the first 4 deliveries.	.723	4.22	Very High
Employees are encouraged to attend symposiums and meetings for family planning.	.785	4.05	High
Employees are required to attend the given seminars for family planning.	1.054	4.00	High
Employees do not experience gender discrimination in the workplace.	1.015	3.72	High
Employees are not forced to resign or separate due to the reason for marriage.	1.052	3.94	High
Women employees do not experience being discharged during pregnancy periods.	1.123	3.77	High

Women employees are given the adjustment time to go back to work normally after giving birth.	.945	4.11	High
Women employees are not separated or discharged during their pregnancy leave.	.890	4.03	High
There are no employees below 15 years old in my workplace.	.992	4.00	High
Employees aged 18 years old are only given minimal working hours.	.882	3.98	High
Employees did not experience age gap discrimination.	.873	4.00	High
A woman worker shall not lose benefits regarding her status, seniority, and access to promotion which may attach to her regular night work position.	.896	4.08	High
Grand Mean	.35503	3.97	High

The statistical finding on the level of awareness of the labor code of the employers in merchandising business in terms of work conditions is presented in Table 5. This indicator had a 3.97 grand mean rating. With a mean of 3.97 employees aware of the labor code in terms of employment conditions, employers in merchandising businesses are generally aware of it. The analysis supports DOLE's position that all employers must take a 24-hour rest day following each stretch of six consecutive working days (Dole, 2017). Each side is free to select their day of rest. A worker can argue that he should be granted a day off for a religious observance or a holiday (Mathews, 2012). Furthermore, suppose an employee is permitted to take a day off work. In that case, his employer is still required by the Labor Code to pay for any overtime or additional compensation that was previously done or would be worked in the future.

4.5 The Level of Awareness of the Labor Code of the Employers in Merchandising Business in terms of Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits

Table 6. The Level of awareness in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits of employers

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits			
Employees are provided first-aid equipment and training for first-aid responses.	1.000	3.72	High
Employees receive free dental check-ups twice a year.	1.137	3.59	High
The working environment has a part-time/regular nurse or physician.	1.234	3.52	High
The working place has its own emergency clinic.	1.140	3.55	High
The workplace does not have an emergency clinic or attending dentist/nurse/physician due to its close distance from the hospital or dental clinic.	1.113	3.75	High

The attending physician provides a health program to raise awareness regarding health issues.	.974	3.81	High
In case of emergency, the employer provides necessary health assistance for sick employees.	.845	4.02	High
Employees shall have the right to undergo health assessments without charge and to receive advice on how to reduce or avoid problems associated with their work.	1.000	3.88	High
The employer is required to provide safety standards and safety devices.	.930	3.84	High
Safety inspections are done annually by the Department of Labor and Employment, specifically the regional office.	.934	3.87	High
Employees are compensated for loss resulting from injury, disablement, or death through industrial accidents, casualty, or disease.	.845	4.02	High
The Government provides compensation for work-related injury or disease, such as financial assistance and monetary benefits depending on the kind of disability or disease the worker suffers.	.854	4.00	High
All employers and employees not over sixty years of age have a government insurance fund.	.762	4.08	High
An employee who is over sixty years old and is paying contributions for retirement or life insurance benefit is covered by the government insurance fund.	.811	4.09	High
Employees are provided with medical services and appliances depending on the nature of their sickness or injury and the progress of their recovery may require.	.965	3.92	High
Employees who unreasonably refuse to submit medical examination or treatment will stop receiving payment of further compensation at such time as such refusal continues.	.845	4.02	High
The employee who sustains an injury or contracts sickness resulting in temporary/permanent/permanent partial disability is, for each day of such a disability or fraction thereof, paid by the System.	.833	3.94	High
The government pays the primary beneficiaries upon the death of the employee an amount equivalent to his monthly income benefit, plus ten percent thereof for	.678	4.02	High

each dependent child, but not exceeding five, beginning with the youngest and without substitution.			
The government pays the primary beneficiaries upon the death of the employee who is under permanent total disability eighty percent of the monthly income benefit and his dependents to the dependents' pension.	.762	4.08	High
Employers and employees are entitled to a Philippine Medical Care Plan.	.909	4.00	High
Employers render assistance in establishing and operating adult education programs for their workers and employees.	.906	4.19	High
Grand Mean	.562996	3.90	High

The statistical finding on the employers' level of awareness of the labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits is displayed in Table 6. A mean rating of 3.90 indicates that employers in merchandising businesses have a high level of awareness of the labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits. This suggests that employers in merchandising businesses are aware of the labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits. According to Macaraya (2022), every employer is required by law to provide free medical and dental care to his or her employees in any locality, including (a) the services of a full-time registered nurse when the number of employees exceeds fifty (50), but not more than two hundred (200), unless the employer does not maintain hazardous workplaces, in which case the services of a graduate first-aider shall be provided for the protection of the workers, when necessary; and (b) the services of a full-time registered nurse, a part-time doctor and dentist, and an emergency clinic when there are more than 200 but no more than 300 employees; and the services of a full-time doctor, dentist, and registered nurse as well as a dental clinic and an infirmary or emergency hospital with one bed for every 100 (100) employees when there are more than 300 employees.

4.6 The Level of Implementation on the Labor Code of the Employees in Merchandising Business in Terms of Conditions of Employment

Table 6. The Level of implementation in terms of conditions of employment of employees

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Conditions of employment			
The employee only works 8 hours per day.	.829	3.73	High
An employee is required to be on duty or to be at a prescribed workplace, during which an employee is suffered or permitted to work at all times.	.800	3.77	High
The employee is given 30 minutes break in the morning and in the afternoon.	.879	3.83	High
The employees have not less than sixty (60) minutes of time off for their regular meals.	.870	3.75	High

The employee is not allowed to go out or do any personal transactions/errands outside the working place.	.924	3.83	High
The employee receives double pay if he/she works during the holiday.	.891	3.85	High
The employee experience a salary deduction for every under-time work he/she committed.	.970	3.75	High
The employee is required to work if there is a declared local emergency.	.965	3.71	High
The employee is required to report on duty, which starts before the eighth hour is necessary to prevent serious obstruction or prejudice to the business or operations of the employer.	.905	3.68	High
The employer, whether operating for profit or not, provides each of his employees a rest period or day off for one day.	.835	3.83	High
The employer gives the benefits such as SSS, PAG-IBIG, Philhealth, 13 th Month Pay, and bonus that an employee should receive under the mandates of the Labor Code.	1.006	3.80	High
The employee receives his/her salary on time. No promissory notes, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits, or any object other than legal tender, even when expressly requested by the employee.	.994	3.86	High
The employee is paid at least once every two (2) weeks or twice a month at intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days.	1.001	3.76	High
The employee is paid even if his/her employer experiences financial instability.	1.037	3.74	High
The employee is not allowed to receive his/her co-worker's salary or payroll.	.955	3.71	High
The employee receives notice if in case there might be deductions to his/her salary.	.915	3.80	High
The employee pays for any damage to tools, materials, or equipment I use.	.969	3.79	High
There is no salary deduction that is against the mandate of the Labor Code.	.917	3.78	High
The employer establishes standards that will ensure the	.887	3.79	High

safety and health of women employees			
Employees are provided with a comfortable working place.	.848	4.00	High
There are separate toilet rooms and lavatories for men and women and provided a dressing room for women.	.918	3.92	High
Employees do not experience gender discrimination in the workplace.	.935	3.77	High
Women employees are given the adjustment time to go back to work normally after giving birth.	.886	3.82	High
There are no employees below 15 years old in my workplace.	.934	3.96	High
Employees aged 18 years old are only given minimal working hours.	.908	3.87	High
Employees did not experience age gap discrimination.	.947	3.90	High
Grand Mean	.366	3.80	High

The statistical data on the level of labor code implementation for employees in the merchandising business in terms of employment conditions are displayed in Table 6. The mean rating for this indicator was 3.55. The level of implementation of the labor code among employees in merchandising businesses in terms of working conditions is high, suggesting that these employees adhere to the labor code's requirements for working conditions. Even with common belief, it is crucial to emphasize that Asia is incredibly diverse: Bangladesh and Japan have very different labor laws. Poor factory practices are frequently a reflection of the level of development, according to (Robertson et al., 2016). Compared to industrialized countries, manufacturing practices in developing countries are deemed subpar (Robertson et al., 2016). Robertson and his colleagues defined the term developing nations as characterized by low levels of production, relatively low levels of education, poor incomes, and unstable economic situations. Poor living conditions, such as hunger, infant mortality, low levels of education, and other issues associated with poverty, result from these circumstances and are not limited to factories. Hence, poor working conditions in industries and low wages are frequent indicators of a country's level of development.

4.7 The Level of Implementation of the Labor Code of the Employees in Merchandising Business in Terms of Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits

Table 7. Level of implementation in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits of employees

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits			
The working place has its own emergency clinic.	1.023	3.76	High
In case of emergency, the employer provides necessary health assistance for sick employees.	.900	3.92	High
The employer is required to provide safety standards and safety devices.	.907	3.91	High

Safety inspections are done annually by the Department of Labor and Employment, specifically the regional office.	.917	3.90	High
Employees are provided with medical services.	.790	3.79	High
Grand Mean	.461	3.83	High

Shown in Table 7 is the statistical result on the level of implementation of the labor code of the employees in merchandising business in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits. The level of implementation of the labor code by the employees in merchandising businesses in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits is high, with a mean of 3.59 which indicates that the employees observed the implementation of the labor code in terms of health, safety, and social welfare in merchandising businesses. In the UK, the retail sector is a major source of flexible and local employment, providing a wide variety of full and part-time roles for approximately 3 million people. At the same time, employers in every industry must protect their employees' health, safety, and welfare under government legislation and regulations, the retail industry, and indeed (WRM, 2023).

4.8 The Level of Implementation on the Labor Code of the Employers in Merchandising Business in Terms of Conditions of Employment

Table 8. Level of implementation in terms of conditions of employment of employers

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Conditions of employment			
The employee only works 8 hours per day.	.907	3.45	High
An employee is required to be on duty or to be at a prescribed workplace, during which an employee is suffered or permitted to work at all times.	.807	3.87	High
The employee is given 30 minutes break in the morning and in the afternoon.	.730	3.60	High
The employees have not less than sixty (60) minutes of time off for their regular meals.	.755	3.53	High
The employee is not allowed to go out or do any personal transactions/errands outside the working place.	.926	3.52	High
The employee receives double pay if he/she works during the holiday.	.872	3.45	High
The employee experience a salary deduction for every under-time work he/she committed.	1.002	3.39	High
The employee is required to work if there is a declared local emergency.	.975	3.45	High
The employee is required to report on duty, which starts before the eighth hour is necessary to prevent serious obstruction or prejudice	.996	3.34	High

to the business or operations of the employer.			
The employer, whether operating for profit or not, provides each of his employees a rest period or day off for one day.	.919	3.61	High
The employer gives the benefits such as SSS, PAG-IBIG, Philhealth, 13 th Month Pay, and bonus that an employee should receive under the mandates of the Labor Code.	.906	3.69	High
The employee receives his/her salary on time. No promissory notes, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits, or any object other than legal tender, even when expressly requested by the employee.	.881	3.78	High
The employee is paid at least once every two (2) weeks or twice a month at intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days.	.854	3.59	High
The employee is paid even if his/her employer experiences financial instability.	.869	3.58	High
The employee is not allowed to receive his/her co-worker's salary or payroll.	.824	3.64	High
The employee receives notice if in case there might be deductions to his/her salary.	.949	3.64	High
The employee pays for any damage to tools, materials, or equipment I use.	1.023	3.47	High
There is no salary deduction that is against the mandate of the Labor Code.	1.067	3.56	High
The employer establishes standards that will ensure the safety and health of women employees	.809	3.61	High
Employees are provided with a comfortable working place.	.881	3.72	High
There are separate toilet rooms and lavatories for men and women and provided a dressing room for women.	.956	3.58	High
Employees do not experience gender discrimination in the workplace.	1.027	3.34	High
Women employees are given the adjustment time to go back to work normally after giving birth.	.940	3.42	High
There are no employees below 15 years old in my workplace.	.908	3.53	High
Employees aged 18 years old are only given minimal working hours.	.908	3.47	High
Employees did not experience age gap discrimination.	.932	3.64	High

Grand Mean	.396	3.55	High
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Table 8 shows the statistical result on the level of implementation of the labor code of the employers in merchandising business in terms of conditions of employment. This indicator showed a mean rating of 3.55. The level of implementation of the labor code of the employers in merchandising businesses in terms of conditions of employment is high, which indicates that the employers of merchandising businesses observe the implementation of the labor code in terms of conditions of employment. According to the GOVPH (2023), the employer shall determine and schedule the weekly rest day of his employees subject to the collective bargaining agreement and to such rules and regulations as the Secretary of Labor and Employment may provide. However, the employer shall respect the preference of employees as to their weekly rest days when such preference is based on religious grounds.

4.9 The Level of Implementation of the Labor Code of the Employers in Merchandising Business in Terms of Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits

Table 9. The Level of Implementation in terms of health, safety, and social welfare of employers

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Health, Safety, and Social Welfare Benefits			
The working place has its own emergency clinic.	.877	3.84	High
In case of emergency, the employer provides necessary health assistance for sick employees.	.952	3.83	High
The employer is required to provide safety standards and safety devices.	.863	3.72	High
Safety inspections are done annually by the Department of Labor and Employment, specifically the regional office.	.903	3.70	High
Employees are provided with medical services.	.959	3.53	High
Grand Mean	.488	3.59	High

Table 9 shows the statistical result on the level of implementation of the labor code of the employers in merchandising business in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits. The level of implementation of the labor code of the employers in merchandising businesses in terms of health, safety, and social welfare benefits is high, with a mean of 3.60 which indicates that the employers observe the implementation of the labor code in terms of conditions of employment in their merchandising businesses. GOVPH (2023) also stated that every employer shall keep in his establishment such first-aid medicines and equipment as the nature and conditions of work may require, following such regulations as the Department of Labor and Employment shall prescribe. The employer shall take steps to train a sufficient number of employees in first-aid treatment.

4.10 Significant Difference in the Level of Awareness of the Labor Code in Merchandising Business when Respondents Are Grouped According to their Role in the Industry

Table 10. Significant difference in the level of awareness of the labor code in merchandising business when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry

Factor	t-value	p-value	Statistical Inference
Role in the industry	3.439	.093	Not significant

Table 10 shows the significant difference in the level of awareness of the labor code in merchandising business when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry. The result shows a P-value of 0.93 below the tabular value of 0.05. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of the labor code in merchandising businesses when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry. This means that, as supported by, Lun (2022), employers and employees (except part-time employees) must establish employment relationships by entering into written employment contracts. However, even if the parties fail to execute valid written employment contracts, an employment relationship can still be deemed to exist if the parties act as if such a contract binds them..

4.11 Significant Difference in the Level of Implementation of the Labor Code in Merchandising Business when Respondents Are Grouped According to their Role in the Industry

Table 11. Significant difference in the level of implementation of the labor code in merchandising business when respondents are grouped according to their role in the industry

Factor	t-value	p-value	Statistical Inference
Role in the industry	-4.822	.607	Not significant

When respondents are classified according to their role in the industry, Table 11 shows no significant difference in the level of labor law application in merchandising. The P-value for the result is 0.60, which is less than the 0.05 tabular threshold. When respondents are divided into groups based on their role within the industry, there are no appreciable differences in the degree of labor code application in the merchandising business. According to Jung (2022), in terms of implementation, the Labor Standards Act (LSA) applies to all workplaces where five or more employees are ordinarily employed, while for workplaces that ordinarily employ fewer than five employees, only some provisions of the LSA apply. In particular, those provisions directly affect employee working conditions, such as unfair dismissal and eligibility for severance pay (before December 2012).

4.12 Significant Relationship Between Awareness and Implementation of Labor Code in Merchandising Business

Table 12. The significant relationship between awareness and implementation of labor code in the merchandising business

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Statistical Inference
Awareness and Implementation	-.196**	.001	Significant relationship

Table 12 shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). As a result, for each combination of variables, the estimate of the correlation, a corresponding p-value, and the sample size used for determining the correlation are all repeated twice in the table. This indicates a strong correlation between labor code awareness and implementation in the merchandising business (Beauducel et al., 2013). Furthermore, as stated by Kilei et al. (2016), it is critical for marketing to continue developing and implementing successful awareness strategies in order to draw and increase customer attention to the company's products, thus improving market brand performance. This approach can be successful by consistently approaching customers and developing long-term relationships with them through a two-way conversation using a variety of effective media platforms, such as offline communications and social media platforms.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that:

- 1.The role of industry in the labor code of merchandising business has a frequency of 64, which is equivalent; meanwhile, the employees have the frequency. Therefore, this concludes that employees have more frequency than an employer in terms of the role of industry on the labor code of merchandising business.
- 2.The level of awareness of employees on the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment is high, and health, safety, and social welfare benefits, which concludes that the employees of merchandising businesses are aware of the labor code in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare benefits.
- 3.The level of awareness of employers on the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare benefits are high. This means that the employers are fully aware of the labor code of merchandising business in terms of its condition and health, safety, and social welfare benefits.
- 4.The level of implementation of employees on the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare benefits are high. This means that the employees duly observe the implementation of the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare.
- 5.The level of implementation of employers on the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare benefits are high. This means that the employers observably carry with the implementation of the labor code of merchandising business in terms of condition of employment and health, safety, and social welfare.
- 6.There is no significant difference in merchandising businesses' awareness levels when analyzed according to their role in the industry. This implies that the level of awareness being classified according to their role as employees and employers does not have a significant difference.
- 7.There is no significant difference in the level of implementation in merchandising business when analyzed according to their role in the industry. This also means that the level of implementation of employees and employers does not have a significant difference.
- 8.The result shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). As a result, for each combination of variables, the estimate of the correlation, a corresponding p-value, and the sample size used for determining the correlation are all repeated twice in the table. This indicates a strong correlation between labor code awareness and implementation in the merchandising business.

Recommendations

- 1.First, after analyzing the data, the researchers recommend that the employers of Cateel's merchandising business can be aware of the labor code that safeguards their rights and motivate them to regulate the proper treatment of the employees. This will also aid them in being cognizant of their rights and determining how they will improve their services to their employees to foster good rapport by providing some seminars, workshops, or any related activities that can help merchandising businesses.
- 2.Second, in line with the results, the researchers recommend that the employees of merchandising businesses in Cateel may know their rights in the workplace and be aware of the labor code for them to be protected, acquire fair treatment, and live in a harmonious work environment. Knowing the labor code will also be an advantage, for they will be knowledgeable not only of their rights but also of the benefits of their jobs, i.e., required weekly rest, contributions, and the like.
- 3.Third, it was found in implementation that no clinic is necessarily included in the labor code. The researchers will recommend coordinating the businesses and government clinics, especially in the most needed time or emergency.

4. Lastly, based on the findings, the researcher recommends that LGU-Cateel and NGO's government institutions can promote gainful employment opportunities, develop human resources, protect workers and promote their welfare, and maintain industrial peace. Specifically, they serve as a framework or foundation to help the LGU-Cateel and other non-government organizations implement appropriate, effective mechanisms to deliver good services to their people.

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