

# Constant Destitution: A Comparison of Philippine Minimum Wage and Living Wage

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Poverty has always been a problem in the Philippines. This has been recognized as caused by underpayment of employed individuals, along with high unemployment rates. This is due employers' desire to maximize profit at the expense of workers who are doomed in a state of poverty. Despite the government's desire to resolve the situation by providing a minimum wage, workers continue to suffer because of the insufficiency of the minimum wage mandated by law.

In this Essay, the Author recognizes the right of workers to an adequate wage that would enable them to survive despite the rising cost of living. The living wage, unlike the minimum wage, considers the needs and demands of everyday life in order for the workers and their families to live in a dignified manner. The Author takes the United States as an illustration in saying that a state's incapacity to give a decent wage is not related with the financial capacity of a country, but on the ideology and priorities of the government. With this, the Author asserts that the Philippines has the capacity to provide Filipino workers with a living wage. As mandated by the Constitution, along with the international treaties which forms part of the law of the land, the Philippines is bound to protect the Filipino workers by ensuring that they are given sufficient wage to live a dignified life.

Furthermore, the Author asserts that gross inadequacy of wage hinders improvement and development of Filipino workers and their families. Insufficient wage perpetuates the vicious cycle of poverty and hopelessness that entraps millions of Filipinos. However, the Author also recognizes the need to not stifle the productivity of private enterprises and business. Hence, the Author recommends government intervention by giving tax exemptions and other forms of benefits to employers. Through this, balanced interests of employers and workers shall be attained.