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Module 1 Sweatshop analysis

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There are a lot of pros and cons that go into the production of sweatshops but in my opinion, there are more cons than have been looked upon and talked about in the public eye. Sweatshop's history has gone back to the nineteenth century when the United States started to industrialize and low-skilled workers were hired long hours and paid low wages from the beginning. (*History of sweatshops* 2019). The development of fair trade overall in time has made mainstream businesses more aware of their social and environmental responsibilities. Sweatshops are a good example of how fair trading started to develop and benefited workers such as farmers as well, both workers not having benefits when they first started working. Fairtrade allowed an opportunity to stabilize, secure the rights of disadvantaged workers and producers, overall ethical and sustainable practices. On the other hand, fair trade can also be seen as not so reliable based on readings and my own opinion as well, regardless of the "certification" any employer, producer, or manufacturer has, it can be unreliable for workers because their success is more so limited to local population centers where the workers actually are. Not all workers are eligible to be a part of the cooperative and may not receive many benefits that other coop workers are able to receive (possibly due to their social status). Even big buyers aren't interested in fair trade and this is because they are looking at overall costs of their inventory purchases, for example, if assembly line productions and farmers can make goods that are similar quality for a lower price percentage, then the buyers will definitely purchase the cheaper products (Gaille, 2019). This brings up the profitability of practices. Profitable practices versus

sustainable practices, Profitable practices would be implemented more rather than sustainable ones. Even so, most retailers are aware that a small percentage of wealthy consumers want socially responsible products so they will pay high dollars to get the products and this money strictly goes directly to the retailer versus workers and producers (Guillermo C. Jimenez and Elizabeth Pulos).

I believe when it comes to producing garments and etc that sweatshop workers are located at, the manufacturers are the ones that should be responsible for the factor disasters because they are in charge of running operations in the factories. Manufacturers should be overseeing the conditions and operations at all times. Increasing safety and accountability in factories should be the number one objective so disasters are less likely to happen. Most incidents that occur are due to the workers being “imprisoned” in the shops. For example, the article (Guillermo C. Jimenez and Elizabeth Pulos, *9. CSR and Sweatshops*) states “some of these workers were exposed to flagrant human rights abuses and, in the worst of cases, outright slavery. In one notorious case, workers were literally imprisoned in the factory and forced to work without pay. Eventually, these abuses were revealed and US prosecutors filed charges against factory owners, some of whom were sentenced to substantial prison sentences.”

Throughout reading the article I can understand the assumptions of why certain people believe retailers are a part of the problem because they knowingly know that there is a possibility that child labor is involved in making their products with these manufacturers. When certain incidents do come to light and are on the news that is when brands want to clear their name to resolve the problem but they often sometimes aren't knowledgeable about what can occur in sweatshops and often overlook regulations. I do believe to a certain extent that popular fashion brands like Nike are responsible and should be held accountable when an incident occurs

because these workers are the ones producing their products, and without them, there wouldn't be anything to sell within their company. Sweatshop workers are a big part of helping companies get revenue because they're producing what sells. I believe that these brands and the factories should be held accountable 50 / 50 as well after reading "Nike's contracts with its sourcing factories required the factories to obey labor regulations and, in Nike's view, this meant that any abuses were the factories' responsibility." Overall I believe high-status brands should help with the cost of destruction in any given incident, it's the least they can do.

Most labor standards/ laws are the ones required to pay workers minimum wage and operate in a safe and healthy working environment. I think that workers' rights should follow the labor laws within their company's country if it benefits them, so every worker and manufacturer can be protected and safe rather than not following labor laws, this way there more secure versus not having any law act to fall back on. On the other hand, laws like The Fair Labor Association was a kind act but it did raise concerns and suspicions because FLA didn't offer their services to everyone. It was limited to union members, which is seen as an act of unfairness and discrimination. Furthermore, FLA was giving out certifications for the corporations they were partnered with but haven't done inspections. My thoughts on this are that it sounds as if laws were just passed for a title and for people to hush, but no work and enforcement to actually progress labor laws were in the act. I can understand why workers' rights wouldn't want to follow labor laws on acts passed such as this one because they didn't work on eliminating sweatshops abuse 100 percent. As a result of this, the workers right consortium decided to fight for all rights, and as a result, inspections were actually done because brands had to require factories to be open to inspections to follow codes of conduct, but voices and rights still weren't heard and today it still hasn't changed.

I don't see a huge change forthcoming in the apparel industry because there are high demands of fast fashion apparel and the demand is high as ever and everything is all about money. It will continue to be in this economy and country, and I believe sweatshops are still going to be heavily relied on even if there are still labor laws protecting workers and even so if it's safer than before. Nowadays some sweatshops are even managed to be running illegally and based on my readings I've learned that higher power doesn't care for human rights and regulations. “ Life is by no means easy for American workers in the garment business and there is still much work to be done in fair labor policy, but the comparative progress is staggering. We must continue to advocate for progressive labor policy as well as direct our hard-earned earnings to brands that support and care for workers” (Muzquiz Full Bio View our Editorial Policy & Policy, 2018)

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