

Subjective well-being of Filipino farm children

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Abstract

How do farm children evaluate their lives as a whole? Using the framework of Ed Diener, this paper explores farm children's positive emotions, negative emotions, global life judgment and work satisfaction that will ultimately reflect their subjective well-being (SWB). It also discusses the nature of farm work engagement of these children and their positive and negative experiences on it. Using qualitative data, the paper found out that children are involved in different farming activities. In particular, the theme found on children's positive experiences on farm includes the social reward of farming while prominent on their negative experiences are linked with innate conditions on farm, task-related injuries, negative bodily response and interactions with others on farm. Using quantitative data the paper found out that they have high level of SWB. The high level of SWB among children engaged in farming is characterized by high levels of positive emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction, and low level of negative emotion. More so, differences on the level of SWB between in-school and out-of-school farm children were explored. The paper concludes that in spite of difficulties on farm these children are happy and evaluate their lives positively; hence, the virtue of resiliency.

Keywords: subjective well-being; Filipino children; farm children; happiness; positive psychology

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1. Introduction

According to the 2008 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor in the Philippines, more than 2 million children (aged 5 to 14) are already working and 65% of this figure are engaged in agriculture works (United States Department of Labor, 2009). Moreover, the recent 2011 Philippine Survey on Children reports that out of 5.59 million child laborers, aged 5 to 17, 60% of them (more than 3 million) are engaged in farming (National Statistics Office, 2012). It is clear that there is an emerging workforce of children in the field of agriculture.

Children are now becoming more visible and functional on Philippine farms across farming seasons. An account from de Castro (2012) reported that children are already tasked on land tilling using hand-tractor, cleaning the field using bare hands, planting seedlings, applying pesticides, carrying sacks of palay, harvesting and threshing, among others. Indeed, besides the increase in numbers of children engaged to farming, the scope of agricultural works vested to this young population is also expanding.

Agricultural works place children to many health and safety threats, making it one of the three most dangerous sectors in the world in which to work, along with mining and construction (Environmental Justice Foundation, 2007). According to Castro (2010), children working in agriculture have five times relative risk of injury compared to children working on other industries and the agricultural activities highly risky for them include the use of tools/equipment and it increases the odds of injury by three times. It was also found out that children working in agriculture are most highly exposed to chemical, biological and physical hazards than children working in other sectors like services and industry (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2002). These children report problems and concerns about their working conditions such as work-related illness, accidents and unsanitary conditions. They usually suffer from educational drawbacks, workplace hazards, and physical harms due to direct exposure to sun and operating dangerous farm equipment, direct handling of chemicals, fatigue and malnutrition.

Although they are compromising the important aspects of their life, the financial gain they get through farming is still not a good compensation to what they are losing (i.e. education, health and safety). They earn much less than the cost they pay. On another study, it was found out that adolescents in hazardous work are more likely to have left school early which would make them disadvantaged educationally and prevent them from securing decent work in the future (International Labour Organization, 2015). According to World Vision Australia (2012) working children, especially those who are exposed to hazardous conditions can suffer serious psychological harm which may result to behavioral problems as well as negative impact on their social development and education. Given this kind of condition, it is very interesting to know how these children evaluate their life as a whole. Much focus has been given in studying the well-being of these children in terms of economic and physical indicators, and often by means of parents as survey respondents and experts as data sources (Casas, 2011) but letting these children subjectively measure their own well-being is left undone. Moreover, the SWB of working children, specifically those who are working in agriculture sector, is still understudied (E. Diener, 2010, personal communication, June 25, 2010). As complement to the research findings focusing on the objective well-being of these children (i.e. economic, occupational and health condition), this study aims to know the well-being of children based from their own perspective, internal judgment and feelings or their *subjective well-being*.

1.1 Subjective Well-being

The concept of subjective well-being is considered as an “umbrella” term of how a person judges and evaluates his or her life as a whole (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2009; Crivella, Camfield, & Woodhead, 2009). It

can be contended that SWB is a broad construct and cannot be directly observed. However, by looking to his or her positive emotion, negative emotion, global life judgment and domain satisfaction (which can be observed and measured), we can evaluate how a person judge and affectively react to his/her life events and circumstances.

To determine the farm children's SWB, we measured their level of positive emotion, negative emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction. Positive emotion is a person's affective experience and response to life events in a pleasant way, such as joy, elation, etc., while negative emotion is a person's unpleasant affective reaction to life such as sadness and anxiety. Moreover, global life judgment (also called life satisfaction) is a cognitive evaluation of a person on his/her life in general which includes a report of how well one's life is going, such as purpose, direction, success and fulfillment (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2009). Although extremely subjective, this component of SWB can provide an idea of the over-all judgment of a person about his life. Domain satisfaction is a judgment that a person makes focusing on specific area of his/her life, such as work, family relationship, social relationship, health and leisure.

1.2 SWB on Children

Given this concept of SWB, one may think how data gathering technique may fit to children's capacity to participate in the research inquiry. This might be true since the concept of subjective well-being (such as "emotion" and "satisfaction") may not be completely reached by the children's level of understanding. However, children-focused researchers are optimistic that children, despite the young age, are still the key informants of their lives and relevant agents in providing data on the realities they experience (Casas, Bello, Gonzales, & Aligue, 2013) especially when proper techniques on data gathering are practiced (Langsted as cited by Crivella, Camfield & Woodhead, 2009). To understand the concept of well-being from the standpoint of children, Young Lives (an organization following the lives of 12,000 children growing up in the context of poverty in Ethiopia, Peru, Vietnam and India) developed an activity-based data collection especially designed to capture the children's conception of their well-being –one of which is the draw-and-tell activity (Crivella, Camfield, & Woodhead, 2009). Draw-and-tell method usually begins with an ice-breaker game which can help them get into thinking about the research topic. For example, children are asked to imagine in their mind someone (a child) they consider as happy or the one having well-being or ill-being. They will then be asked to draw what they have thought of and instructed them to discuss it. Follow-up questions relating to the experiences of the children are done. This method can help the researchers get a clue on children's conception of well-being as well as their personal thoughts and feelings on their own. It can provide rich description about the children's response. The current paper used this activity (not as a data gathering technique) but only for questionnaire development for the quantitative part, particularly on determining the level of their positive and negative emotions.

1.3 SWB of Children

After conducting the National Survey of Young People's Well-being, Rees, Bradshaw, Goswami, and Keung (2008) found out that some of the ten key concepts of well-being identified from children are family, school (e.i., education and learning), friends, local environment, community, money, attitude and health. In the Philippines, the concept of happiness among adolescents was qualitatively examined by Datu and Valdez (2012). According to the participants' responses, they described happiness as satisfaction of personal wants, absences of worries, having pleasant emotions, a motivational drive to accomplish things and fulfillment of relational needs. Also in another study in the United Kingdom, it was found out that children tend to have decreased level of SWB when they belong to households with lower income and higher adult economic concerns in the future (Rees, Pople, & Goswami, 2011). Taken these results altogether, it seems that the subjective well-being of children is generally dependent on how well their economic and physical necessities are met, also along with other kinds of personal needs.

On another study of Datu (2012), the SWB of Filipino adolescents with ages ranged from 15 to 19 was

measured using the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire; it was found out, among other findings, that the respondents have high level of happiness. Such studies established a basis on estimate regarding the subjective well-being of children, particularly Filipinos. Though, the findings may not be generalized to children involved in farming since the participants are college students in the metropolitan areas of the Philippines. However, an interesting finding of Lau and Bradshaw (2010) may give us a good clue. The well-being of children living in the countries in the Pacific Rim (such as Philippines, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, China, Indonesia, and Vietnam) was accounted. They used multi-dimensional indicators including subjective well-being (along with material situation, health, education, living environment and risk and safety). Surprisingly, Filipino children who have one of the lowest well-being in terms of material situation, health, education, living environment and risk and safety have one of the highest level of subjective well-being among other countries. From this, it may be presumed that Filipino children have favorable assessment of their lives despite being deprived of material, economic and physical well-being. Given these ideas, we hypothesized that child farmers in the Philippines might also have high level of subjective well-being.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The NSO (2012) provided an overview of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of working Filipino children in agriculture and one of the findings include that across different regions in the country, Central Luzon (Region 3) accounted for the highest incidence of children engaged in hazardous work with an estimated 316,000 child laborers apparently most of which belong to the agricultural field. Also, this study aimed to investigate the overlooked variable of these neglected population. While other studies tried to examine the phenomenon of child labor in agriculture using economic and socio-political approaches, this study attempted to understand it in the light of Positive Psychology. This study asserts that while it is important to consider the point of view of economic and social experts, scholars and academicians on understanding child labor in agriculture we should also acknowledge the children's own standpoint about their lives (i.e., how they think and feel about it). Policy-making and program implementation, which is the primary needs of children engaged on farming (US, DOL, n.d.) and is also the primary aim of SWB researches (Diener et al., 2004) is the major implication of this study, and hence it's potential significance.

1.5 This Present Study

Generally, this study seeks to answer on what Filipino children do on farm and how happy they are in their lives as well as in farming. Therefore, this present paper examined the following: the nature of farm work engagement of children in the Philippines and their experiences on farm. The level of their subjective well-being (positive emotion, negative emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction) were explored in this study.

2. Methodology

The paper used a mixed-methods design (specifically the partially mixed concurrent equal status design) wherein we conducted two phases of parallel studies. A qualitative study on the farming experiences of children in Quezon, Nueva Ecija, Philippines was used and a quantitative study was utilized so that we can objectively describe their level of SWB. The locale of the study was chosen because apparently the main source of living of its residents includes rice farming for the whole cropping seasons. Although the municipal social welfare development office and the municipal agriculture office do not have available data regarding the statistics of children engaged in farming in the town, there were noticeable numbers of children working in the farm as the researchers have observed.

2.1 Farming Experiences among Children in The Philippines

The participants were children who are engaged in rice farming. Using purposive sampling, the study included participants who were, in the first place, engaged in farming (they should either be attending school or

not). They were selected through the help of neighbors and Sangguniang Kabataan officials and/or by the school principal. It was composed of four participants [2 males (1 in-school and 1 out-of-school) and 2 females (1 in-school and 1 out-of-school)]. Participants came from three barangays: Dona Lucia, Sto. Cristo, and Pulong Bahay, Quezon, Nueva Ecija, Philippines.

After identifying the participants, interviews were being conducted at the participants' houses (for the out-of-school) and school (for the in-school participants) on November 23, 2010. The medium of communication was on Filipino and rapport building was established first by asking ordinary questions about the children's personal information. Interview was on the semi-structured form that included main questions about the kinds of work they do on farm, time allotment, the amount of wage obtained from it, their personal judgment about working on farm, as well as the positive and negative experiences they have while farming. Children's statements during the interview were clarified by rephrasing the questions, repeating it and interpreting their answer and validating their responses to them. The whole interview process was recorded with the permission of the children and their school head/parent.

The recorded responses were then transcribed in verbatim and the whole texts were initially read and the researchers identified two major themes arising from their statements, these are the positive and negative experiences of children on farm. To help in categorizing the two major themes into sub-topics, the researchers invited another colleague from the department of Psychology. The raters then create a coding scheme that best define the identified sub-topics after reading the transcription and reviewing their responses. From the identified codes, the raters agreed to have data divided into the following themes and sub-topics: engagement of children in farming (with sub-topics: how they started to farm, their reason to work, how they assess farming as a work, the nature of their farm works), positive experiences on farm and negative experiences on farm (with sub-topics: innate conditions on farm, task-related injuries, negative bodily response, interactions with others on farm).

2.2 Subjective Well-being of Children Engaged in Farming

The participants were also children having the mean age of 13.4, ranging from 8-19. To be qualified as research participants, these children should primarily be a worker on farm whether in a full-time (out-of-school) or part-time (in-school or out-of-school) basis. Children who work on family farms were also included. The average work duration of all the participants is 5.9 hours per day as they have estimated while the average wage they obtained per work is 137.50 PhP (peso) according to their recall. Using purposive sampling, such participants were identified. It was composed of 116 (64 in-school and 52 out-of-school) respondents from the selected barangays such as Bertese, Dona Lucia, Santo Tomas Feria, Sta. Clara, Sto. Cristo, and Pulong Bahay. Permissions were asked to school principals to conduct the survey during class hours; completing the survey only took approximately fifteen minutes on the average. On the side of the out-of-school participants, one of the researchers went house-to-house with an apprentice to identify possible participants through the help of neighbors and SK officials.

To measure the SWB of the participants, the first move was to come up with a valid and reliable questionnaire that would fit to children's capacity to participate in the research inquiry. The researchers then used the technique of draw-and-tell activity (discussed at the first part of this paper) for questionnaire development in measuring positive and negative emotions. The prime objective of using this activity was to know the positive and negative emotions that children normally experience. Ten (10) children were instructed to draw two situations (good and bad) that they experience in their lives. After that, the researchers let them answer the question: "What do you feel during those situations?" in written form and let them orally express it so that the researchers can clarify some of their statements. The researchers then arrived at identifying eighteen emotions commonly experienced by the sampled children from this activity (the list of emotions were provided at the appendices section).

The kinds of emotion obtained from their reports were included in the questionnaire for the part of positive

and negative emotion scales subject for reliability testing. It was also made certain that those who participated in the questionnaire development activity were not included in the instrument's reliability testing and actual data gathering process. In addition, the researchers constructed a six-item global life judgment questions based on the Satisfaction with Life Scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985). Another five items for work satisfaction were also patterned from the global life judgment scale. All in all, a 28-item questionnaire which is a type of self-report global retrospective survey of SWB was developed. It was also in Filipino and in a multiple choice form answerable by a 4-point scale. Data gathering was conducted on November 8, 10, 17 for the in-school participants and on December 4, 2010 to out-of-school participants. The participants were guided on answering the questionnaire specially those who have reading and instruction difficulties. Sample items were provided at the appendices section. Using Cronbach's alpha analysis, the reliability of the instrument was .838. The collected data were then encoded and analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. To test our hypothesis, descriptive mean analysis was used to determine the level of the participants' SWB.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Farming among Children in the Philippines

This section discusses how the participants started to farm, their reason to work, how they assess farming as a work, the nature of their farm works. The children started to work on farm as early as seven (7) years old. At this age they are already involved in planting rice stalks. They were taught to do so by their family members (e.g. by brother or uncle) or the cabsilla (the farm leader). However, it is their own decision to work on farm and they were not forced by their family members.

"hindi naman po ako pinipilit ng mama ko. Hinahayaan po ako." (My mother doesn't force me to work. They just let me do it.)

"ayaw nga po nila kong pagawain e. kasi po may allowance naman po ako." (They don't even want me to work, because I have my money.)

Some of the reasons why they go on farming are: to support their study, to be able to have food, to earn money so as not to depend on their family members and to help their family.

"Umm, pinangbibili ko po ng sapatos ko, tapos iniipon ko po para makapag-aral ako." (I use the money to buy shoes, I also save some of it to support my studies.)

"Para po maka... may pambili po kami ng kakainin." (So that..we can buy something to eat.)

"Yung kuya ko nga po e, gusto nga po e wag na kong magtrabaho e, dahil sya na lang, sasaluhin na lang kami. E ala na rin naman po e, may asawa naman na po sya e. Nakakahiya naman po sa asawa nya. Di tutulong tulong ka na din po. Nagsasarili na din po ako nagtatanim." (Even my older brother, he doesn't want me work on farm, he is willing to support us. But he already has his own family, I have to be considerate to his wife. I might as well help.)

In contrast to the study of U.S. Department of Labor (2009) showing that the reason why children opt to work on farm is because they have little value on education, the result of this study suggests the opposite. Children work to support their education and they see farming as a means to provide their needs in school (so as not to depend on their parents). This, on the other hand, supports the finding of De Vries (n.d.) that an educational aspiration is one of the reasons of children's engagement to farm. This is also consistent with the assessment of International Labor Organization (2013) on the simplest economic model of household behavior regarding child labor that, with some limitations, child work aims to augment current domestic income while education is still seen as an investment in generating future income.

Despite their willingness to farm, these children consider farming as a difficult work.

“umm hindi po masyadong maganda, kasi po mahirap sa bukid.” (It’s not really fine because farming is difficult.)

”mahirap po, kasi mainit.” (It’s hard, because of scorching heat.)

”nahihirapan din po. Kaya lang konting tiis lang po.” (I find it difficult. But I have to bear it.)

“masaya naman po..Kahit mahirap basta may mapulot.” (It’s good, although it’s difficult, as long as we pick yields.)

The farm children usually work throughout a day. However, this varies according to the type of work they are going to do. Farm tasks that children do are planting (*pagtatanim*), harvesting (*paggapas*, *pagtitimbon*, *pamumulot*, *pagsasangang-buko*, *pagbubuka ng sako*) and bearing rice sacks (*pagkakaryada*). As early as 9 years old, one participant is beginning to learn how to plow the furrow (*pag-aararo*) using hand-tractor. He had also experienced to go to other places to plant palay during weekend.

“Dumadayo pa po kaming magtanim... [sa] Isabela po, Maligaya, Sta. Rosa” (We go to other places to plant, in Isabela, Maligaya, Sta. Rosa.)

Two of the participants who are also studying opt to make absences in class to go to the farm when they are running out of food.

“kung minsan po napapa-absent naman po kami pag wala kaming kakainin.” (Sometimes we have to miss our classes if we run out of food.)

This is consistent with the finding of Castro (2010) that educational drawback among these farm kids was reflected by missing school attendance when they have to farm and look for food.

There are three forms of wage that these children obtained through farming: money, palay, and allowance (when they work on their own farm). They usually earn one hundred twenty pesos (P120.00) for a whole day of planting palay seedlings or fifty (P50.00) to seventy (P70.00) for a three-hour picking or reaping excess palay on the field (*pamumulot*). When harvesting, they were given palay as a form of wage. The amount of palay being given depends on the total amount harvested. The ratio is 12:1 ; meaning, in every 12 sacks they will harvest, they will be given 1 sack of it.

3.2 Positive Experiences of Children on Farm

Basically, the positive experience of children on farm is when they harvest good amount of palay or rice grains.

“kapag po marami kaming napupulot ng mga kasama ko.” (When we pick more yields, with my friends.)

Children also consider their collective working on the field as one of the positive experiences on farming. They usually go farming with their friends, neighbors and relatives of their age. They also regard the act of helping each other on farm as a rewarding experience. Moreover, they also do some conversation and chatting while planting and when the work is done they usually play on the field -all these make them happy on farm.

“ayun po, sama-sama kaming nagtatanim, nagtutulungan. Tapos po nagkwe-kwentuhan po kami habang nagtatanim, pagkatapos po namin mamulot e naglalaro na kami ng mga kasama ko.” (That’s when.. we plant together, and help each other. Then we talk about things while planting, and after the work we play with other kids.)

"a... ano po kapag po sama sama kaming namumulot sa bukid. Naghihintayan po kaming magkakaibigan na pumunta sa bukid...saka umuuwi para para-parehas kami ng nakuha." (When we are picking yields together on farm. Me and my friends wait for each other to go on farm, we also come back home together so we have the same amount of reaps/harvest.)

Despite the difficulty of the work, farm children in the Philippines consider the social rewards of farming (such as their collective working, the act of helping each other on farm and playing with their friends) as bringing positive impact to them. Rollolazo and Logan (as cited in Aldaba, Lanzona & Tamangan, 2004) stated that child workers are deprived of social rights to socialize and play with their peers which hamper their psychological and emotional development. Interestingly, in the context of Filipino child farmers, working on farm becomes an avenue for them to socialize and play with their peers. This element makes them happy on farm and seems to lighten up the heavy works these children have to do. Moreover, the findings is consistent with the studies of Dullas and Acoba (2013), Manzano and Dullas (2013), and Villena (2006) that young farmers have high level of happiness and are also resilient despite of the hardships that they are facing. They are also motivated and optimistic and have high hopes for their work and family. Moreover with the context of happiness on the family of landless farmers as a whole, they considered themselves happy despite of their current situations (Sarmiento, 2011).

As they work on farm, being connected to their friends serves as their protective buffer from this physically-taxing work that they have to bear. According to (Minujin & Nandy, 2012), children's relationships with their friends are crucial for understanding their resilience in dealing with adverse circumstance. From a country with a naturally collectivist disposition, the idea of social connectedness must be what drives and motivates Filipino children to work, and continue work on farm.

3.3 Negative Experiences of Children on Farm

On the other hand, negative experiences are observed mostly from the child farmers' statement which includes the innate conditions on farm, task-related injuries, negative bodily response and interaction with others on farm. The conditions on farm create negative experiences among child farmers such as limited harvest, the scorching heat of the sun and unexpected rainfall.

"kapag po kokonti lang yung napupulot namin." (When our harvest is little.)

"hindi po ako makatagal sa init." (I cannot stand the heat.)

"dati naman po e inabutan kami ng malakas na ulan habang namumulot." (Before, a heavy rain poured out while we are harvesting.)

Task-related injuries were identified as causes of negative experiences among child farmers. This includes skin irritation and cuts due to scythe (lilik) and grass (talahib). Moreover, the use of hand-tractor at an early age brings danger to them that is why they consider it as a negative experience.

"minsan po pag gumagapas ako e nahihiwa yung daliri ko, matalim po kasi yung mga talahib, saka yung lilik po." (Sometimes while reaping, my finger had been cut, the grass and scythe are too sharp.)

"mahirap po...dahil po mangangati po kayo. Tapos yung kamay niyo rin po magdudugo kapag dinakot nyo po yung palay...magkakasugat, masakit. Tapos dun naman po sa may pag-gapas pag po nasugat kayo hindi ka na makakagawa." (It's hard, you will get itchy skin. Your hands will bleed if you pick palay without protective gloves, you'll get wounded, painful. And when you're injured you will not be able to work.)

"Yung makina po, tumaob. Buti naalalayan po ni Kuya tapos...yung ganito ko (pointing to right

cheek) namaga." (The machine fell down, good thing I was aided by my brother, and my right cheek it got marred.)

Children reported fatigue due to prolonged work on the field. They also experience headache, hunger and thirst in the midst of their involvement to farm works. Moreover, some forms of body aches caused by whole day farming also bring negative experience on them. The finding of Castro (2010) was also reflected on children's response regarding the risk of injury brought about by operating agricultural equipment.

"minsan naman po sumasakit yung katawan ko saka nahihilo sa sobrang pagod saka sa init ng araw po." (Sometimes, my body aches, I also get sick because I am too tired and due to sun's heat.)

"nanlalambot po ako pag nasa bukid, madalas po kasi ako mauhaw saka magutom dun." (I get weary when I am on farm, because I always get thirsty and starved there.)

"kwan po, masakit po yung likod. Kung minsan po nasusugat po ako, tapos po nagdudugo yung mga paa." (My back aches. I get bruised, my feet are bleeding.)

Physical hazards brought about by their engagement to various farm works were noticed and it confirms the findings of Del Rosario and Bonga (2000) that children working in agricultural sector suffer from fatigue, backaches, wounds and over-exposure to the sun. The reported experiences on farm of the participants are the same with that of other children included in the study of NSO (2012) that working children in rice farming suffer from back pain, headache, cuts and wounds as they work.

Aside from physical injuries and health hazards on farming, children recognize other negative experiences on farm due to their interaction with others. They cited working alone, being caught stealing palay, having conflicts with their friends on farms, their interaction with older farmers and being punished by parent when committing mistakes as not-so-good experiences on farm.

"kapag po mag-isa lang ako mamulot, malungkot po." (When I am alone at farm, it's sad.)

"nung po nagkaaway-away kami ng mga kasamahan ko." (When my friends are fighting)

"minsan po pinapagalitan ako [ng matatanda] pano nga po humihinto ako kasi nakakapagod po..pag tumatayo po ako pinapagalitan po ako dahil mabagal daw po ako." (Sometimes, the elders there get mad at me when I needed to pause because it's tiring, whenever I stop bending my back they shout at me and say I'm slow at work.)

"tapos po pag nagkakaryada e pinapagalitan pa po ako ni Tatay pag mali yung ginagawa ko." (When I carry sacks of palay, my father gets mad when I don't do it right.)

3.4 The Subjective Well-being of Children Engaged in Farming

This section is a quantitative description of farm children's level of SWB which also includes to the differences on the level of SWB between in-school and out-of-school participants.

Table 1

Mean and description of the subjective well-being of children engaged to farming

SWB Domains	Mean Score	SD	Description
Positive Emotions	2.82	.42	High
Negative Emotions	2.17	.30	Low
Global Life Judgment	2.92	.61	High
Work Satisfaction	2.67	.65	High

Statistical criteria were set for the intention of expedient interpretation of the mean scores of each item and domain. The total mean scores between 1.00-1.74 (on the 4-point scale) indicated very low rating, means scores between 1.75-2.49 suggested low rating, means scores between 2.50-3.24 implied high rating and means scores between 3.25-4.00 denoted very high rating.

To be more specific, the respondents report experiencing the following positive emotions: being active (M=2.69, SD=.76), happy (M=2.99, SD=.69), love (M=2.88, SD=.92), comfort (M=2.87, SD=.68), joyful (M=2.87, SD=.89), fun (M=2.93, SD=.81); with hope (M=3.04, SD=1) having the highest scoring positive emotion and enthusiastic (M=2.42, SD=.80) being the lowest.

The respondents highly experience pleasant emotional response in their lives. Among the positive emotions, hope is the highest emotion experienced by the respondents which reflect their good expectation for their future. While on the negative emotions domain, the following are the breakdown of each items: feeling sad (M=2.20, SD=.75), ashamed (M=2.34, SD=.76), nervous (M=2.17, SD=.65), upset (M=2.24, SD=.68), hostile (M=2.17, SD=.64), irritable (M=2.15, SD=.66), distressed (M=2.12, SD=.75), guilt (M=2.10, SD=.36) and affliction (M=2.29, SD=.64) -all fall under the low classification. Their collective scores on this domain suggest that they also lowly experience having unpleasant affective reaction in their lives.

The global life judgment domain reflects the respondents' satisfaction with life. Their collective response shows that they are pleased with the life they have now (M=3.10, SD=.76), their lives are satisfactory (M=3.89, SD=.89), their lives are going well right now (M=2.90, SD=.76), they think their lives have direction (M=2.99, SD=.90), they are contented with the life they have (M=2.82, SD=.90) and that there is nothing more they could ask in life (M=2.64, SD=.99). Their global life judgment is actually the highest scoring domain among the four domains of SWB. This indicates that Filipino children engaged in farming are highly satisfied with their lives and that they cognitively assess their lives as good.

Their satisfaction on farming indicates that they are contented with farming (M=2.51, SD=.92), happy on farm (M=2.68, SD=.82), enjoy farming (M=2.74, SD=.87), think that farming is a satisfactory work for them (M=2.79, SD=.88) and that they really like to farm (M=2.64, SD=.87). Filipino farm children are also highly satisfied, and have good appraisal on farming. This high score on work satisfaction complements the finding on qualitative data with regards to participants' appraisal on farming. We can say that although children consider farming as a difficult work, they are still highly satisfied with it. It may be that when these children assess farming by considering the nature of their farm work engagement, it may appear to be difficult. However, when they subjectively evaluate their engagement to it (that is, appealing to their contentment and satisfaction on farm) the work appears to be satisfactory for them.

Like what we hypothesized, farm children in the Philippines have high levels of positive emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction and low level of negative emotion which strongly suggests that they have high level of subjective well-being. This partially supports the finding of Lau and Bradshaw (2010) that Filipino children possess high level of subjective well-being. That said and considering these children's poor socio-economic background, the finding validates the premises from past empirical studies that household income and/or child material deprivation has no clear linear relationship with their subjective well-being (Knies, 2011; Rees et al., 2011) and that the direct association of subjective well-being with objective circumstances of children (such as material well-being, health and environmental conditions, among others) still has not been clearly observed (Klocke, Clair, & Bradshaw, 2013).

To respond to the call of curiosity, the researchers also explored whether in-school and out-of-school farm children differ on their SWB domains level since we have set a relatively equal number of respondents to each sub-group. It is presented on the next table.

Table 2

The mean scores of SWB domains of children engaged in farming according to their education.

Group	Positive Emotions		Negative Emotions		Global Life Judgment		Work Satisfaction	
	μ	SD	μ	SD	μ	SD	μ	SD
In- School	2.87	.37	2.08	.31	3.11	.53	2.81	.58
OSY	2.76	.47	2.25	.26	2.69	.63	2.5	.70

In-school farm children have higher levels of positive emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction than their out-of-school counterpart. While it is noticeable that out-of-school farm children have higher level of negative emotion than their counterpart. It should be noted though that the out-of-school children's levels positive emotion, global life judgment and work satisfaction still lie on the "high" bracket and their level of negative emotion still lies on "low" bracket.

4. Conclusion

The paper investigated two separate studies about Filipino farm children, both based from their own accounts: their farming experiences and subjective well-being. While this study generally aimed to know what they do on farm, what we have found out generally speaks of what farming does to these children. This just further reflects how vulnerable these kids are to the circumstance of early labor, whether it can be considered as positive or negative. They engage themselves to farming because of a clear sense of financial scarcity at home and at the same time a mature perception of their responsibility over themselves and to their family. Now, their significant involvement on farming calls for the government to recognize that these children are also stakeholders in the agriculture field. The physical and health hazards brought about by their engagement to farming call for local and government officials to develop appropriate programs and policies to protect the welfare of these informal workers.

This study also found out that Filipino farm children have good cognitive and affective appraisal about their lives, although further inquiries are still needed to fully understand it. It will be more meaningful to use indigenous theoretical framework, which is unique to the Filipino psychology, when assessing these children's SWB and happiness. Future researchers might think of other methods on accounting Filipino farm children's SWB that will fit favorably to their capacity of participation, aside from self-report and global retrospective measurement. They may be interested on knowing the satisfaction of farm children to other areas of their life such as family, social relationship, leisure, local environment and health, among other. The psychological or eudaimonic aspect on the model of subjective well-being as presented by Rees et al (Main, 2014) which includes self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy, purpose in life and personal growth will greatly contribute to deeper understanding on the total SWB make-up of these farm children.

Since it was found out that out-of-school farm children have lower level of SWB than in-school farm children, future researchers should focus their attention on exploring the impact of education to their over-all happiness basing from a well-established body of literature and theoretical framework and using a more appropriate statistical tools. At the beginning of this paper, the researchers were interested to determine how the participants evaluate their lives as a whole, what is being found is that with the difficulty at work and its associated risks Filipino farm children report feeling happy in general and have positive view about their life circumstance.

5. References

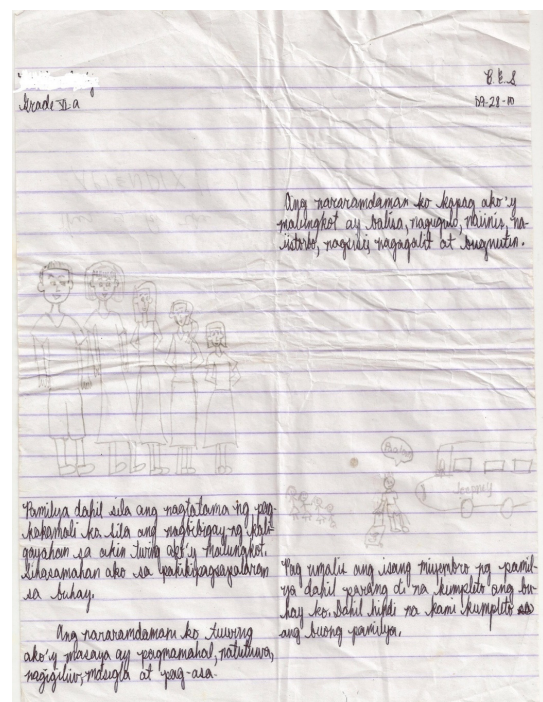
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Appendices

Draw and tell activity for questionnaire development.



Sample Items on SWB instrument:

1. *Gaano ka kadalas makaramdam ng tuwa?* (positive emotion)
a. *Hindi ko pa nararamdaman*
a. *Paminsan-minsan*
b. *Madalas*
c. *Palagi*
2. *Gaano ka kadalas makaramdam ng lungkot?* (negative emotion)
a. *Hindi ko pa nararamdaman*
b. *Paminsan-minsan*
c. *Madalas*
d. *Palagi*

Translation:

How often do you feel happy (or sad, in negative emotion items)?

- a. I have not feel it yet
b. Seldom
c. Often
d. Very Often

3. *Ang buhay ko ay kasiya-siya.* (global life judgment)
a. *Lubos na hindi sumasang-ayon*
b. *Hindi sumasang-ayon*
c. *Sumasang-ayon*
d. *Lubos na sumasang-ayon*
4. *Masaya ako sa pagsasaka.* (work satisfaction)
a. *Lubos na hindi sumasang-ayon*
b. *Hindi sumasang-ayon*
c. *Sumasang-ayon*
d. *Lubos na sumasang-ayon*

Translation:

My life is satisfactory/ I am happy on farming.

- a. Strongly disagree
b. Disagree
c. Agree
d. Strongly agree

English-Tagalog Translation of Positive and Negative Emotion based from The New English-Tagalog Dictionary 4th Edition (2008) by I-read Foundation

active-sigla	fun-saya	jittery-takot
affliction-sakit ng loob	guilt-sisi	joy-kaligayahan
ashamed-hiya	happy-tuwa	love-pagmamahal
comfort-kaginhawahan	hope- pag-asa	nervous-kaba
distressed-balisa	hostile-galit	sad-lungkot
enthusiasm-giliw	irritable-bugnot	upset-inis