Child participation in the Brazilian art & entertainment market: a challenge to legal system and public health

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Introduction:

In Brazil, because of the constitutional prohibition of labor before 16 years-old and the law absence that sets limits and conditions to protect the young artist health, court orders have authorized the children and adolescents participation in artistic and advertising productions, based on the international standard and the subjective judges’ criteria. This scientific research aims to describe and analyze the young artist activity and its possible impact on the child’s development, according to the reports from such youth and their parents, as well as to understand characteristics and drawbacks of the Brazilian legal system to protect the health and safety of child artists.

Method:

Data has been gathered through qualitative exploratory research by interviewing 25 individuals plus three days of directed observation. The technique used in the field for data collection was the semi-structured or semi-open interview. This study interviewed separately ten child artists and their respective responsible persons who accompanied them during the artistic activities, as well as five professional artistic area that work directly with children's artists. The observations were made in soap opera recording, event for talent selection and film release. The field study was conducted in the second semester of 2011.

Results:

The results show bio-psycho-social health effects (positive and negative) in the child artist lives, organizational aspects of the artistic segment evidence that child participation does in fact have the characteristics of labor and that there is no special care to adapt the production process to the young artist needs. The relationships are established in an atmosphere of pressure, competition and vanity, and the accompanying mothers are aware of the presence of risks.

The law is often disregarded, in Brazil, due to lack of court permits or due to the fact that the accompanying parent is not allowed to remain in set to supervise the child artist during testing, recording or presentation.

Discussion:

This study aimed, on existing controversy surrounding the topic and the few existing studies on the subject, do an interdisciplinary analysis with the beginning and end in workers' health. From the observation and interviews, it was possible to bring some elements to better describe the phenomenon and know what those involved think about.

This research recommends that the subject should be regulated with specific rules to protect the health and safety of young artists, so that it could base public policy for this sector, as surveillance and actions to promote the health and wellness of this population. After all, the work must adapt to the worker, and not otherwise. What about a talented but vulnerable human being, exposed early to the workplace in show business?!

The study recommend that further studies be developed this theme: detailed investigation of the risks present in this segment through the ergonomics of the activity; verification of the impact of the phenomenon through the schools and building mechanisms that allow the protagonism of society and especially the school in the notification to the authorities of the excesses committed by parents because of the accumulation of isolated artistic activities.
**Keywords:** children, occupational health, artistic activity, television, child worker