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COMPARATIVE WAGE RATES OF OCCUPATIONS IN MANUFACTURING IN SELECTED ASIAN COUNTRIES



(Third of a series)

The October 1997 Occupational Wages Survey (OWS) covered non-agricultural establishments employing at least 50 workers. Aside from the average (mean) wage rates of **time-rate workers on full time basis** in 159 occupations, the survey also inquired into the distribution of these workers across industries and regions. From these distributions, the average (median) basic pay and allowance (guaranteed and regularly paid cash payments) were derived.

For purposes of wage comparison across selected Asian countries, reference was made to the results of the 1997 ILO October inquiry which is a worldwide annual survey of wages and hours of work for 159 occupations in 49 industry groups. Although the ILO has taken efforts to ensure continuity and comparability of data, there remain unavoidable differences in concepts used, specifications of occupations and items, reference periods, types of sources and data collection procedures across countries. Wage rates were standardized to US dollars based on the October 1997 dollar rates for comparability of data.

Given the availability of limited wage and foreign exchange data for October 1997, wage rates in the country were compared to only three countries, China, Hongkong, and India. This issue serves to provide indications of wage differences across countries of varying levels of development.

Wage rates of selected Trades and Related Workers



Among trades and related workers, welders and flamecutters (manufacture of fabricated metal products except machinery and equipment) and pressman, letterpress and related workers (publishing and printing) were selected for purposes of wage comparison.

The monthly average wage rate of welders and flamecutters in the country was estimated at Php 5,532 or US\$ 161. In India, average wage rates were lower at 782 to 2,018 rupees or only US\$ 22 to US\$ 56.

Pressman, letterpress and related workers had an average monthly wage rate of Php 6,941 or US\$ 201. In Hongkong, average

wage rate for male workers was HK\$ 14,458 or US\$ 1,869. Of the countries covered, India had the

lowest wage rate averaging only 1,095 to 2,214 rupees or US\$ 30 to US\$ 61.

Wage rates of selected Machine Operators

Among Machine Operators, weaving and knitting machine operators (manufacture of textile); sewing machine operators (manufacture of wearing apparel) and; papermaking plant operators (manufacture of paper and paper products) were selected for wage comparison.

In China, weaving and knitting machine operators had an average monthly wage rate of 963 yuan or US\$ 116. This is lower than the monthly wage rate in the Philippines which was estimated at Php 4,928 or US\$ 143. Highest average wage rate was in Hongkong at HK\$ 8,276 or US\$ 1,070 for male workers and HK\$ 7,929 or US\$ 1,025 for female workers.

Among sewing machine operators workers in India had the lowest average wage rates ranging from 782 to 2,042 rupees or US\$ 22 to US\$ 56. This was followed by the average wage rate of workers in China at 647 yuan or US\$ 78.

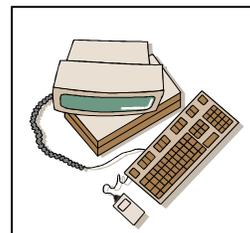
In the country sewing machine operators were paid wage rates averaging Php 4,716 or US\$ 137. Hongkong had the highest average wage rate at HK\$ 6,518 or US\$ 843.

Papermaking plant operators in the country were paid wage rates averaging Php 7,096 or US\$ 206. In China, wage rates averaged 708 yuan or US\$ 85. Wage rates were lowest in India from 782 to 1,764 rupees or from only US\$ 22 to US\$ 49.

Electronics and telecommunications engineering technicians and electronic equipment assemblers in Hongkong had higher wage rates

Technicians and assemblers in the manufacture of radio, television and communication equipment apparatus in Hongkong had relatively higher average monthly wage rates than their counterparts in the country.

Male electronics and telecommunications engineering technicians in Hongkong received an



average wage rate of HK\$ 12,618 or US\$ 1,631. This was higher than the wage rates of workers in the country at Php 8,260 or US\$ 240. Lowest was in China at 962 yuan for male workers or US\$ 116 and 997 yuan for female workers or US\$ 120.

Similarly, electronic equipment assemblers in Hongkong had the highest average wage rate at HK\$ 7,290 or US\$ 942 relative to

workers in the country at Php 4,908 or US\$ 142. In China, workers received an average wage rate of 517 yuan for female workers or US\$ 62.

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**COMPARATIVE WAGE RATES OF SELECTED OCCUPATIONS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, HONGKONG, INDIA,
CHINA AND PHILIPPINES: OCTOBER 1997**

Industry / Occupation	Wage Rate							
	Hongkong		India		China		Philippines	
	(HK dollars)	US dollar	Rupees	US dollar	Yuan	US Dollar	Peso	US dollar
<i>(October 1997 dollar rates)</i>	0.1293		0.0276		0.120285		0.029	
Manufacture of Textiles Weaving and Knitting Machine Operator	8,276 ^a	1,070 ^a	-	-	963 ^b	116 ^b	4,928	143
Manufacture of Wearing Apparel Sewing Machine Operator	7,929 ^b	1,025 ^b						
	6,518	843	782 - 2,042	22 - 56	647 ^b	78 ^b	4,716	137
Manufacture of Paper and Paper Products Papermaking Plant Operator	-	-	782 - 1,764	22 - 49	708 ^a	85 ^a	7,096	206
Publishing and Printing Pressman, Letterpress and Related Workers	14,458 ^a	1,869 ^a	1,095 - 2,214	30 - 61	-	-	6,941	201
Manufacture of Fabricated Metal Products except Machinery and Equipment Welders and Flamecutters	-	-	782 - 2,018	22 - 56	-	-	5,532	161
Manufacture of Radio, Television and Communication Equipment Apparatus Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering Technicians	12,618 ^a	1,631 ^a	-	-	962 ^a	116 ^a	8,260	240
Electronic Equipment Assemblers	7,290	942	-	-	997 ^b	120 ^b	4,908	142
					517 ^b	62 ^b		

a - Male workers.

b - Female workers.

Sources of data: 1997 Occupational Wages Survey.

1997 October Inquiry on Wages, Hours of Work and Food Prices, International Labour Office.
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.