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KEY WORD : PRE-SCHOOL CHILD CARE CENTERS/THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS
AFFAIRS/EASTERN REGION

RATHDOW PHISALAPHONG : A STUDY OF THE OPERATION OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILD
CARE CENTERS IN THE EASTERN REGION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. THESIS ADVISOR : ASST. PROF.SOPAPAN
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The purpose of this study was to explore the current situation and problems under the operation of Pre-school Child Care Centers in the Buddhist Temple Compounds within Eastern Region. The findings could be summarized as followed:

Most of the administrators of the centers are the Abbots of the Buddhist Temples. The general education of the Child-care takers are at secondary education level or higher. Approximately one fourth of the administrators and child-care takers have never had any pre-service or in service training in early childhood education. The main policies of almost all of these centers are ; to emphasize a readiness program for the Pre-school children in all developmental aspects ; to socialize the children some basic Thai values, moral, culture and traditions, as well as to promote health and nutritional condition of the children. However, more than half of the administrators of the centers indicated that they were also emphasizing on academic aspects, i.e., to teach reading, writing and arithmetics. The study also revealed that a minority of the child-care takers did not understand how to set up and manipulate readiness program for the children. It was also found that eighty percentage of general outlook of the centers were in appropriate condition, shady and safe. However, ten percentage of the centres do not have playground equipments. Forty one point two percentage of the centers did not provide lunch program for the children. Twenty percentage of the centers provided insufficient number of toilets for the children. nine point eight percentage of the centers provided well water for the children to drink. The majority of the centers charged very small amount of fee from the parents (about 30 to 100 baths per month). Twenty one point six percentage of the centers were fee exempted.

The problems found in most of these centers were lack of sufficient income to cover the expenses. The personnel problems were about quality and quantity aspects. Few centers have problems about unproper locations and buildings. Inadequate amount of toys and play-ground equipments were found in some centers. Problems of insufficient hardwares and learning materials also existed in few centers. Most of the administrators and child-care takers needed more training in early childhood education both in theoretical and practical basis.