

Abstract

The study on “Working Life and Welfare for Single-Parent Mothers” is a qualitative study, aiming at exploring working condition problems, welfare received and welfare needs of single-parents mothers. Data collection include reviews of documents, observation, and in-depth interviews with 2 groups of single-parent mothers consisting of 10 self-employed and 10 employed workers.

The study finds that both groups of single-parent mother are between 34-55 years of age. The self-employed mothers earn the lowest monthly income at 8,000 baht and the highest at 30,000 baht while the employed mothers earn 40,000 baht a month. Persons rendering assistance and support to single-parent mothers are neighbors, members of the family and fellow employees or partners. Problems faced by single-parent mothers the most are financial problems, followed by working problems, child rearing problems, and personal problems respectively.

The kind of work performed by single-parent mothers are Thai massage, sale of clothings, bags and shoes, sale of sundry goods, laundry and child care, pork selling, and domestic work both continuously and occasionally with 9 hours of work or more per day. Those mothers who are private and government employees work 8 hours a day with working condition and welfare as provided in the Labour Law. Factors effecting their occupation are economic status of the family, marital status and persons who persuade them to take up the occupation. Important problem for self-employed mothers is investment money, while that of the employees is the lack of opportunity for advancement. Welfare needed by both groups of single-parent mothers are free medical care, educational attainment of their children up to Bachelor’s Degree or at least compulsory education (12 years) with totally no payment or partial payment. Self-employed mothers who do not have houses of their own need to have one with the help of the government to negotiate hire-purchase conditions with financial institute to enable them to pay without too much hardship.

The study recommends that government agencies concerned should coordinate, support or push for the establishment of single-parent mothers network and promote the provision of fundamental welfare and social services for single-parent mothers in the form of alternative welfare. Should any single-parent mothers who have tried their best but fail to be able to help themselves, they may ask for assistance from their intimate persons. Employers of single-parent mothers should give them the opportunity for position mobility and work equality. Last but not least, single-parent mothers themselves should be at their best responsible for their duty for the benefits of themselves and of the organization.