

Thesis Title                      Day Care Services at the Workplace  
   : Needs and Desired Arrangements

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### Abstract

The main objectives of this research are 1) to assess the needs for day care services at the workplace of female workers employed in different industrial factories, whose last child is under the age of three and a half; 2) to investigate the desired arrangements of day care services at the workplace in the opinion of these female workers; 3) to study the relationship between demographic, social and economic factors of the study population and the needs for day care services at the workplace; and 4) to analyse the relationship between demographic, social and economic factors and desired day care arrangements. To achieve these objectives, the research used first-hand data obtained from survey interviews of 315 female workers in 9 factories in Bangkok selected through a multi-stage sample technique. A set of statistical indicators such as mean, percentage, and Chi-Square Test was used.

About one-third of the study population were 25-29 years of age, which is the largest group compared to those in other age groups. The majority had one living child and live in small families consisting

of about 4 people. Most were migrants who completed primary education, worked in the production section with mean work hours of 58 hours per week. Their average family income was about 7,700 baht per month. Nearly half of the sample women (45%) had their children taken care of by close relatives (maternal grandparents) while they were at work. About only 35% of the children of these women were cared for at home and the rest were cared for outside the home, most at locations outside Bangkok. However, only about one-third of those whose children were cared for outside the home could be with their children every night; the rest could see their children on weekends. More than one-fourth of these women (27%) could see their children only about 3-4 times per year, largely at holidays. The mean expenses for child care were 900 baht per month. But only about half of these women said that they were very satisfied with their existing child care.

Eighty-seven percent of the respondents (N=275) thought that day care services at the workplace were a good thing. According to these mothers, good day care services should teach children to help themselves, provide solid food and milk to children, allow the mother to see her child during her break, and have activities among mothers, child care workers and children. The day care services, according to these respondents, should be located in a separate building from the factory. The appropriate expenses that these women were willing to pay were not more than 1,000 baht per month. Respondents also felt that provision should be made for transportation, a play room, playground, music lessons and overtime care as necessary.

More than 80% of the respondents who agreed with the idea of in-plant day care services said that they would use these services if they were available. Obviously, this could allow them to be closer to

their children. The analysis shows that family structure, family size, type of factory, family income, child care problems and mother's satisfaction with existing child care were related to mother's needs for in-plant day care services. ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The analysis also indicates that the age of the child and family income were related to the type of nutrition that the mothers wanted for their children. The child's age, mothers's education and mother's average work hours per week were found to be related to the preference for mother to see her child during the break time, and finally mother's education was also found to be related to preferred expenses to the child care services.

The significant policy implications of these findings are that in-plant day care services are highly desirable and it can contribute not only to the worker's family welfare but also to the child development.