ABSTRACT:
Modern parents-workers today contribute to the survival and maintenance of their households. However, work-life-balance is always their perennial issue. This research explores the attitudes of parents-workers in handling the childcare/pre-education centres issues. Do they feel indifferent in their decision and action as long as there are people or bodies that able to mind their children while they are away at work? Or do they find in-house domestic helpers sufficiently adequate to do so? The research is a quantitative research project using questionnaire to 558 working parents-workers who work in Cheras, Gombak and Shah Alam areas. It is concluded that parents-workers incline to have a convenient attitude in sending their children to childcare/pre-education centres as long as they are cared while they are away at work. The result is definitely distressing. The research consequently recommends to induce in communitarian commitment of parents-workers and employers, with the help of the Government, by setting an integrated childcare/pre-education centres within the community that may reduce their dependency on in-house domestic helpers, if any.

KEYWORDS: Malaysia, Parents-Workers, Social attitudes, Questionnaire, Childcare, pre-education centre, In-house domestic helpers, Integrated childcare/pre-education centres

RESEARCH QUESTION:
1. What are the social factors that lead to their decision and action in sending their children to childcare/pre-education centres?
2. Do parents-workers concern about the welfare of their children in sending them to childcare/pre-education centres?
3. To what extent do they feel happy to accept an integrated childcare/pre-education centres within the community that may reduce their dependency on in-house domestic helpers, if any?

HYPOTHESES:
H1: Parents-workers incline to have a convenient attitude in sending their children to childcare/pre-education centres as long as they are cared while they are away at work.
H2: But at the same time, they feel happy to accept an integrated childcare/pre-education centres rather than to have an in-house helpers to manage their children while they are away from homes working.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:
1. To explore parents-workers’ attitudes in sending their children to childcare/pre-education centres.
2. To identify factors behind their decision and action in sending their children to childcare/pre-education centres.
3. To recommend policy measures and strategies by setting an integrated childcare/pre-education centres within the community to assist parents-workers particularly mothers in coping with the demands of the two life spheres – personally and professionally.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE:
This research provides groundwork to understand macro societal issues such as the contemporary parenting styles adopts by parents-workers today as well as their dependence on in-house helpers in Malaysia. Consequently, an integrated childcare/pre-education centres may be the solution that is suitable to parents-workers and their children.

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES
It is a quantitative research project by means of purposive sampling. A two-page questionnaire items were distributed to 800 samples to parents-workers or guardians to a child of the age between 0-18 years old. They are found at various childcare/pre-education and tuition centres around Cheras, Gombak and Shah Alam areas. The sampling frame was conveniently obtained from site-searching and the internet. The research received 558 respondents, with a return rate of 69.75 percent.

SELECTED REFERENCES

IIUM Research, Invention and Innovation Exhibition 2012