

Poor families with stay-home moms trapped by lack of child care

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Source: The Nikkei

Format: Article

Publication Date: 28 Mar 2012

EXCERPTS:

TOKYO (Nikkei)--Though households with stay-at-home moms have higher average incomes as a group than households where the wife works part time, a greater percentage live in poverty, according to a survey conducted by the Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training.

The institute conducted a nationwide survey of 4,000 households with children and ranked them by annual income to calculate a median. Households with an annual income less than half the median were considered to be living in poverty.

The survey found that 12.4% of households with stay-at-home moms have poverty-level incomes, compared with 8.6% of households where both partners work.

Yet households with stay-at-home moms have an average annual income of 6.17 million yen, some 600,000 yen higher than the average annual income of households where the husband works full time and the wife holds down a part-time job.

The higher income may not seem surprising given that one reason wives can afford to stay at home is because their husbands earn enough to make that possible. However, this group is actually polarized between wealthy households where the wife does not need to work and poor households where the wife cannot afford to work.

For poor households with stay-at-home moms and a youngest child less than 6 years old, the lack of child care options was cited by 75% of households for why the wife is not working.

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Region: Asia [2]

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