

## Investment into Human Capital by Women Who Are Temporarily away from Labour Market

**Abstract.** Success of working attitude and labor market integration of women who bring up a child mainly depends on their level of education and labor market experience which they had before having a child. Returning back to the world of work is not easy in every case, because their knowledge may reduce, their status and jobs may disappear. In that case returning back to work can be helped by joining a kind of training which can be a language or computer course or even they can have a degree as well, while mothers are at home on maternity leave. So they can prepare for labor market integration. We examined in our research how mothers prepared consciously for returning back to the labor market while they were on maternity leave. We also would like to know whether they invested anything into their human capital while they were at home.

**Keywords:** women with a baby, human capital, maternity leave, labor market integration

**Rezümé.** A kisgyermeket nevelő nők munkavállalási attitűdjének, munkaerőpiaci integrációjának sikeressége nagymértékben függ a gyermekvállalást megelőzően megszerzett iskolai végzettségtől, munkaerőpiaci tapasztalattól. A gyermekgondozási szabadságról a munka világába való visszatérés nem mindig könnyű feladat az érintett nők számára, hiszen a gyermekkel otthon töltött időszakban tudásuk elavulhat, státuszuk, munkahelyük megszűnhet. Ebben az esetben a munka világába való visszatérést segítheti, ha az anyák a gyermekgondozási szabadság alatt bekapcsolódnak valamilyen képzésbe – lehet ez nyelvi vagy számítógépes képzés vagy akár egy diploma megszerzése is – mintegy felkészülvén a munkaerőpiaci integrációra. Jelen tanulmányunkban azt vizsgáltuk, hogy a gyermekükkel gyermekgondozási szabadságon lévő anyák mennyire készültek tudatosan a munkaerőpiaci visszatérésükre, vagyis, hogy az otthon töltött időszakban beruháztak-e az emberi tőkéjükbe.

**Kulcsszavak:** kisgyermeket nevelő nők, emberi tőke, gyermekgondozási szabadság, munkaerőpiaci integráció.

**Резюме.** Успіх інтеграції трудових відносин та інтеграції жінок, що виховують маленьких дітей, на ринку праці значною мірою залежить від рівня освіти та досвіду ринку праці, отриманого до пологів. Повернення на роботу з відпустки по догляду за дитиною не завжди є легким завданням для зацікавлених жінок, тому що в період, який вони, знаходяться удома, проводячи з дитиною, їх знання можуть стати застарілими, їх статус або їх робота можуть бути усунені. У цьому випадку повернення до світу роботи може бути корисним, якщо матері під час підготовки до інтеграції ринку праці беруть участь у певному тренінгу – незалежно від того, чи це мовна або комп'ютерна підготовка, чи навіть диплом – тільки щоб підготуватися до інтеграції ринку праці. У нашому дослідженні ми вивчали, наскільки свідомо матері під час відпустки по догляду за дітьми наскільки свідомо готувалися повернутися на ринок праці, тобто чи вони інвестували вдома в свій людський капітал.

**Ключові слова:** жінки, що виховують маленьких дітей, людський капітал, відпустка по догляду за дитиною, інтеграція ринку праці.

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### ***Introduction, description of the theme***

The most important duty of the mother when she is at home after delivery is to take care and look after the child. There is no doubt that the maximum presence of the mother is determinative in the child's first years, which greatly contributes to the child's cognitive and emotional development. In addition, several national studies mention, Bukodi and Róbert (1999), Váradi (2006), Gábos (2008) if the mother stays at home for a long time on maternity leave that reduces her chances in the labor market. Spending too much time away from the world of work erodes the useful knowledge and skills which can be used in the labor market and it increases the mother's human capital loss. On the other hand, returning too early back to the labor market reduces the time that mother can spend on bringing up a child and thereby the family-work conflict is intensifying. Feeling unwell in the workplace and doing overtime are not good for the harmony of the two areas and it can be even worse if the mother feels guilty because of going back to work too early.

We do not resolve the dissonance of these two ideas in our analytical work. We rather examine if the mother consciously prepares for returning to the labor market while she is at home with her baby, tales any are. In this context, we examine whether the mother has used any of the in human capital investment during the maternity leave. It was examined from two points of view while she was at home. Labor market is one of the human capital investment's scenes where mothers with a child can join while they are on maternity leave. The other one is to involve mothers who are on maternity leave to the training or retraining. The work which is done while the mother is at home with her child contributes to the increase of the human capital of the mother. Working while she is on childcare allowance is good because the mother does not miss a lot of time from her workplace so she can improve her labor market's experience. When she joins the labor market before the end of the childcare allowance it makes it easier to integrate into the eventual labor market by keeping her knowledge and skills up to date. In the future they have the opportunity to get a better job which fits to their changed family circumstances when there is the end of their childcare allowance by being involved in the education and deepening her knowledge. This human capital investment contributes to the increase of the total income of the family and it also allows that the expenditures of the child grow which helps the human capital investment of the child (Gábos 2008).

The basis of our study is our research titled '*Kettős kötődés – A munkaerőpiaci karriertől a familiarizmusig*' in which the labor market integration opportunities of women with a baby were examined in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county. The main questions of our research included the duration of mothers' staying at home on maternity leave, their plans to return to work and what factors influenced their decisions. We tried to show if women take part in any organized trainings and if they do any paid work while they are on maternity leave and if they do some, what the motivation is and how it influences their returning to the labor market.

We created two sub-groups. In the first group the women were on maternity leave and in the other group there were women who returned to work after being on maternity leave. Surey method was used to collect data. We had 500 questionnaires from which we used 427 for further processing.

One segment of the human capital investment will be presented because of its large extent. The following hypotheses were defined: we suppose that those women who took part in some trainings while they were on maternity leave were more effective when returning to the labor market. Referring to Koltai (1999), Török (2006) and Szűcs (2005) we expected that joining a training provided an opportunity for better labor market positions. According to Bukodi (2005), educational qualification influences the labor market chances more in case of women than men. We hoped that those who study while they are at home on maternity leave do it because they want to find a better job which suits better to their new living conditions. Furthermore, we were interested in answering another question: if the positive bonus effect which was demonstrated several times is detected or not as an explanatory variable of studying in case of mothers having a baby, similar to economic capital of the family. The main question of our research is whether there is any connection between the features of social, human and economic capitals and mothers who take part in the education.

### ***Theories of human capital-theoretical frames of our research***

The results of several Hungarian empirical researches (Kovács 1983; Kertesi és Köllő 2001; Szanyi 2005; Galasi 2004; Kertesi and Varga 2005) say that educational qualification and the labor market experience influence the chances of being employed. Qualifications of mothers who bring up a child may be degraded and depreciated depending on how long they were at home on maternity leave or what kind of qualification they had before having a child. One of the most obvious alternative solution for this problem is to join a training. This can be that learning a totally different profession or improving the knowledge or getting some kind of practical skills such as computer skills, writing tenders or language learning. Joining to education has advantages not only in case of job market but it may make their everyday's life more different (Mrs Váradi 2006).

According to the economical theory, the capital is the basic of economy and it is a production factor as well. The ancient economics attached great importance to knowledge which was considered the source of social differentiation and social mobility. The concept of human capital was first used by William Petty and Adam Smith (Varga 1998). Examination of various aspects of capital got more emphasis in the 50's and 60's years when economists began to search the source of economic growth. Its first representatives were Schultz, Rosen and Coleman who supported a relationship between the investment of human resources and physical capital. The first developer of the concept of human capital was Schultz. Accord-

ing to his theory, investment in human capital of a person who acts economically rational will be payed of in the future and its profit will be more than the costs of investment were. Labor market is one of its areas. Schultz worked out the theory of human capital investment. He defined the human capital investment as the engine of economic growth (Lengyel and Szántó 1998).

As Rosen said: 'human capital is a kind of capital which was formed by people's productive capabilities and knowledge' (Rosen 1998:71). Schultz thought about the factors of this theory in a wider sense. He means that the acquisition of knowledge, in addition to investment in education as a source of development are the improved health condition, expected average age at birth, reduction of infant mortality and the increased family resources devoted to child rearing (Schultz 1998).

Another aspect of the impact of human capital on economic growth is managing the problems of poverty. Economists focused on the explanation of allocation of income and earnings among individuals. They found that there is a relationship between studying and the personal economical success. Becker worked out the areas of the effects of human capital investment. His theory was focused on the yield rate of investment. According to it 'who acts rationally will do his investment untill the marginal dividend rate of the investment will be equal to the possible costs of cash fund' (Rosen 1998:74) so the income growth compensate the costs of the previous investments.

### ***Yield of engagement in studying***

Labor market benefits of human capital investment is indisputable. In terms of our research it is also an interesting point of view how the available educational level and the obtained labor market experience how influence the timing of starting work of women who are on maternity leave, whether any tendencies emerge in decisions of women who link wider or more strongly to the labor market, regarding their start of work.

Another interesting point of view is that how the study which was done while mothers were at home characterizes the studied sample and what was the motivation. To understand this point of view we have to look through the human capital as an influencing factor which we define as a predictor of our own research. In the followings we describe the theoretical point of view of this thought.

The theory of human capital says that involment of the individual in the education and trainig is a kind of investment the costs of which get back in the labor market in different times (Varga 1998). Examination of the relationship of investment in the development of human capital and the recovery are based on microeconomic foundations in economy. The sociological aspect follows the practice of acquisition of status models. There is a main difference between the two approaches. The economists examine the relationship of the investment / recovery by objective standards, along material lines while in the sociology, the individual's subjective satisfaction

indicators also appear as explanatory variables. The latest status attainment tests show that the level of education is predicting the impact of weakening labor market opportunities (Altorjai and Róbert 2006). However, the activity rate of those who have a degree is higher than those who have lower level of education. Downturn has been experienced in our case as well since 2000 (Scharle 2008).

Human capital is the sum of an individual's knowledge and abilities. When we invest in human capital we increase our know-how and its profit can be enjoyed in the labor market. As we think that our enforcement in the world of work is the income of human capital so the production of human capital increases the bargaining power of the individual. Although the classic sense of the word means that the principle of the shorter side those who are in a better position, those shape the conditions of their labor markets that are fewer. It is supposed that the more human capital you have, the more you will be able to control your own destiny and exclude external limiting factors in the decision-making mechanism. There is no need to give further down the claims that were made against working condition and payment. For example, when a woman returns to the world of work after being at home on maternity leave, she considers her own or her family situation, resources. She compares the factors that keep her at home with the factors that are directed towards working. Subjective judgment also comes into play so women who bring up a child how they judge their labor market situation, whether they are afraid of losing their jobs, or whether they feel safe as an employee.

A number of factors form the decision about education. For example, the family background, the personality and motivation of a person (Becker 1998). These factors significantly affect or restrict the possibility of obtaining further education. Measures of education policy relieves these barriers that compensate the disadvantage – for example: when attending to higher education extra points are given during the entrance exam. Financial background inhibit the further education of those who want to study because the tuition fee is made up only a portion of the direct costs that are associated with studying (Rosen 1998). So the economic disadvantage is a significant explanatory factor when decision is made in case of education.

There is a strong connection among involvement in education, income and employment chances. Those jobs that need higher educational level mean better option material and non-material points of view (Rosen 1998). In addition to rise of income the higher educational level means working conditions that are better and less harmful for health, more comfortable work, increased leisure time. These are the external or additional yields. Rosen (1998) says: 'the value of quantity and quality of leisure time should be taken into account in every welfare measure. Human capital is a significant value in processing, mainly in case of women whose activities are changing between market and non-market sectors' (Rosen 1998:93).

Szűcs (2005) conducted a research among women with a baby and it was shown that a major motivation for learning was the changed circumstances - from

small children to care for, educate - to achieve well-adapted occupation. The increased value of leisure time becomes dominant, even if the income level is a retrograde step. Women intention of further education is often limited by family obligations and therefore less human capital is invested in the formal economy. The lack of women in high positions may explain it exactly. Less human capital not only restricts the chance of labor market but according to Parcel (2006) it partly reflects the preferences and aspirations. Becker (1981) – who examined households as economic units– determined the result of a rational calculation which is that while the woman took more energy in doing the housework and taking care of the children, the man put energy into his profession.

Most of the sociologists interpret the preferences and aspirations as a result of socialization, which primarily strengthen the role of women in family care (Marini és Brinton 1984). This may be one of the reasons why women mainly look for a job which they can attune with family responsibilities while their children are young and taking care of them needs more energy and time.

### ***Impact of investment in human capital for returning to labor market***

According to human capital theories the higher educational level, time spending on studying and the experience that is taken in the workplace encourages individuals to capitalize the acquired human capital in the workplace. So the higher educational level prompts people to get a job as soon as possible which leads to postpone having a family and a baby.

As it was mentioned before women give up their work while they are at home with their baby on maternity leave and later they decide the date of the return, taking various factors into account. In this context, others have investigated the effect of education on having a baby's plans. As relationship between postponement of having a baby and chances of uncertain employment were demonstrated in several Hungarian and foreign researches that is why results of those researches are showed in this part which were regarded as main explanatory variable according to educational level and labor market position of women.

Effect of maternal human capital was examined in Hungary by Bukodi and Róbert (1999), Szűcs (2005), Spéder (2006), Frey (2002) and Váradi (2006). Basic data collection of the research of Bukodi and Róbert was made in the period immediately after regime change. They examined if married women with a child return to the world of job after maternity leave. Nowadays, after more than twenty years it is no longer a question whether the mothers are going back to work, but rather how long they stay at home after giving a birth to a child and when they return to work. Spéder, in her work titled *Életünk fordulópontján* showed labor market effects of the child's willingness. Frey and Mrs Váradi examined the job opportunities of mothers with children in the labor market with the help of Labour Force Survey data and national representative database of Szűcs. Investigating

the labor market impact of the mother's human capital works, without exception, they found that the labor market embeddedness negatively affect the length of absence from the labor market. So the more time is spendit on carrier, the less it is worth to stay for an extended period of time away from the world of work in case of women. The results of the above mentioned research supported the theory of human capital thesis, according to which the labor market experiences have a positive influence on mothers' decision to return to the paid work.

Higher educational level of women and their occupational status positively influence their return to the labor market. There are very high proportion of those who return during the first three years of maternity leave among leaders and intellectuals against those who do the routine white collar jobs or who are unskilled (Bukodi and Róbert 1999). Those women who are in a favorable social position strive to preserve continuity of their careers in the labor market because long break means 'benefit sacrifice'. Women's occupational and professional ambitions may be hindered if they stay at home for a long time because it destroys the occupational career which is the most associated part of the human capital (special skills, knowledge, contacts) (Bukodi and Róbert 1999:222). In this context Frey (2002) and Váradi (2006) said that the knowledge that was got during maternity leave was depreciated but more qualified women returned to the world of paid work earlier and trained themselves during this period.

Kenjoh (2005) made a comparative research about the features of employing mothers in the UK, Germany, Netherland, Sweeden and in Japan. The increase in education levels showed a strong positive effect on being employed, especially in case of full-time jobs. It is because women who have higher level of education and who are trained, get higher salary so it motivates mothers to retun to the world of work. Positive effect of being educated was found in the UK, Germany, Netherland and in Japan. but there were different degrees. The strongest effect was seen among women in the Netherlands. Kenjoh examination showed no significant correlation between labor market participation and education level in case of Swedish women with a child and the same conclusion can be seen in the earlier research of Gustaffson and Stafford (1994). They explained it with egalitarian character of the possibility of daily care in institutions and paid parental leave.

Gerson (1985) emphasizes the importance of human capital as a motivation when women with a child return to the world of work. He found in the research that he had made among American women that their educational level and the position they fullfilled in the wokplace and the experience they had had in the labor market had the biggest role when they were thinking about returning to work.

The motivational background of the research of Boushey (2008) was the highly educated mothers with a child who were over thirty and who left the labor market in a significant proportion in the USA. Based on data of „Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Survey” (ASEC) she examined

whether leaving the labor market because of having a child is becoming really more common among those who were concerned. She mentioned that relieving of 'child-effect' can be seen since the end of 1970s. At that time 'child-effect' was 21,8 per cent which continuously decreased over the past two decades and it had been 12,7 per cent by 2005. The results of the study do not support the above mentioned hypothesis, but rather conflicting results are reported. According to her restraining effect from labor market of having a child has rather weakened in case of mothers who have college or university degree or who are single mothers.

Stier and Yaish (2008) examined that factors which determined the dynamics of female employment among Israeli women. Their research was based on the human capital of women. Referring to previous research, it was assumed, and confirmed by achievements, that women who have more work experience, or who have a higher role in the labor market and occupational prestige, are more likely to maintain longer employment relationship than those who have less human capital.

Henau et al. (2010) examined the effect of mother's level of education on taking care of the children in fifteen countries. In their work they distinguished not three but two educational levels which are less educated and higher educated (middle and upper-level graduates) groups. According to their hypothesis young children who are brought up in a family have a negative impact on employment and this negative effect is stronger in those cases where the mother is undereducated. We had adequate results. Employment opportunities and features of women, who have higher educational level and bring up a child (in this case children are under fifteen), are nearly the same with women who have older child/children or have not got any children. So negative effect of having a child on being employed is determined by educational level of the mother the of. Exceptions are the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria. We found that because of the negative family policy in the United Kingdom and in Austria there is a dissonance among highly educated mothers when they try to return to work again. These observations even though they are more moderate true for Germany as well.

### ***Family support system as a means of investing in human capital***

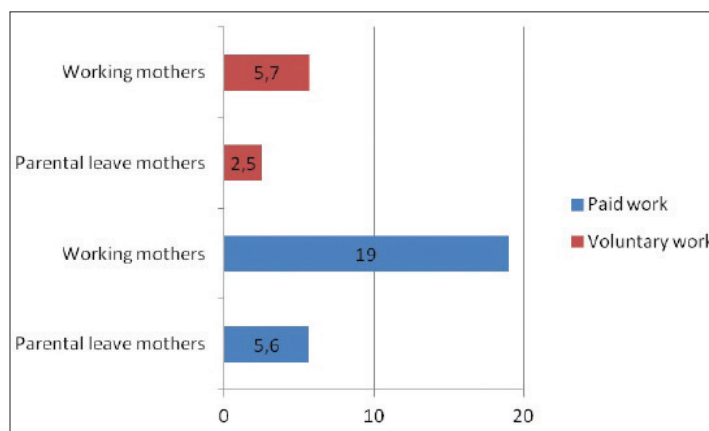
The main function of family support system is to relieve the financial burden that is related to childbearing. Gábos (2008) has a new vision for the means of family support. He thinks the total investment in human capital accumulation are promoting factors that recruitment has four areas. On the one hand, they contribute to an increase in the number of children and on the other hand they affect the emotional and cognitive development of children. Children whose parents have insufficient financial, human, cultural resources, it promotes the accumulation of human capital. Helping in coordinating employment and child care, they reduce the mother's human capital loss (in our own research we pay attention to the latest one). For this purpose it is possible to work during maternity leave, which

prevents the mother staying out of work for a long time. Frey (2002) and Váradi (2006) showed that those mothers who worked and so kept contact with their workplace during maternity leave integrated to the labor market than easier those who did not work while they were at home on maternity leave.

Regulation of gainful employment during the period of maternity leave has been modified several times since 1999. Nowadays mothers may work while they are on maternity leave and raising support but they can take only part-time job. From 2006 to mid-2011, this feature is extended to full-time employment. Data collection was made in this period (2010) so those who were asked could work full time while they were on maternity leave. According to the national experience, based on the ILO-OECD definition, a small proportion of mothers with young children, average 4 per cent, did gainful work while they were on maternity leave. Data of LFS (Labour Force Survey) are better. In their survey the above mentioned 4 per cent modified to 15-20 per cent. The reason is that recent surveys showed not only the legal work but the hidden work as well (Ferge 2010).

Our own research results are between the above mentioned survey's indicators. but they are close to the average national data of LFS. We did not specifically define the definition of gainful activity in our question, we just simply asked if mothers did or do any paid or voluntary work while they were on maternity leave. 11.5 percent of mothers who took part in the total sample did paid job while they were on maternity leave and 5.4 per cent of them did some voluntary work. It should be noted that the participation rate among working mothers and mothers who are on maternity leave is significantly different. The former's 19 per cent and the latter's 5.6 per cent worked and received wages during maternity leave. This difference is obvious because those who are on maternity leave now may appear in the labor market later (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. The proportion of women who work during maternity leave (%)**



Source: own edition

Nearly three times more mothers did paid job than voluntary work while they were on maternity leave. Most of mothers who did paid work 53,1 per cent worked part time and 37.5 per cent of them worked occasionally and 9.4 per cent of the mothers worked full time.

Those mothers who had been employed before and while they were on maternity leave but they worked during that period as well, had better labor market activity. There were only two mothers who had not been employed before delivery but they worked while they were on maternity leave. They belong to those who worked occasionally so they answered 'yes' for getting occasionally income. Our results show that the fact which was said several times before, that the possibility of being employed is less for those who have not got some connection with the world of work than those who have more working experience and worked while they were on maternity leave.

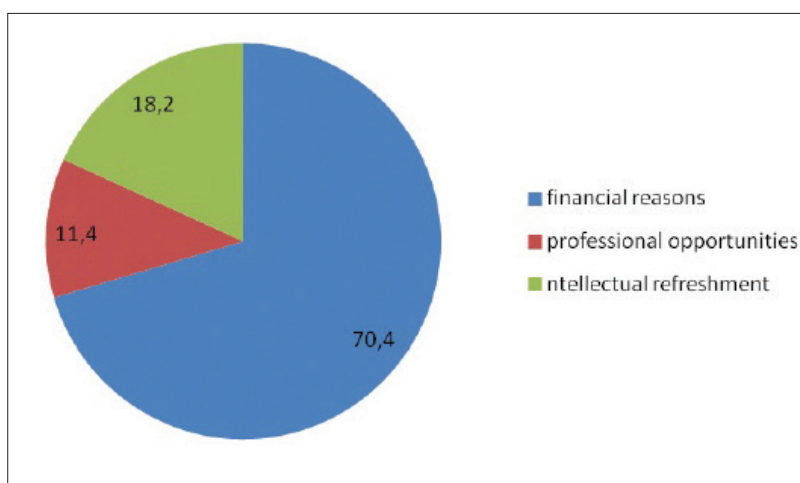
It can be seen that there are more mothers who worked while they were on maternity leave and they have higher educational level both in case of having a final exam or a degree. In this situation there were twice more higher rate of women who did paid work than those who finished primary or technical school. Its reason may be the fact that women who got maternity allowance between 1995-2003, those numbers were more who were not employed before having a baby. So their connection with the labour market is weak and they may 'stock in' the system. Employment opportunities of these mothers are more limited not only during maternity leave and while getting raising support but also after their expiry (Bálint és Köllő 2007).

Significant part of mothers (70.4 per cent) who worked while they were on maternity leave return earlier back to the world of work for financial reasons. There was much smaller proportion of those who were motivated by intellectual refreshment, the possibility of career advancement. Reasons for working of graduates showed the most diverse image while other reasons of educated can be considered as a homogeneous group. Among these, with the exception of two people (they marked the spiritual refreshment) all of them explained their working while they were on maternity leave for financial reasons. Extra income was the determining factor among those who have a degree but there were also some respondents who evaluated negatively the career opportunities, professional refreshment and too long absence as well (Figure 2).

According to our results, it can be said that in case of the examined mothers the family allowance which is a tool for promoting the harmony between child care and work as it was determined by Gábos (2008), contributed to the national data to human capital investment. Because 11.5 per cent of working mothers in the sub-sample, and 5.6 per cent of mothers who are on maternity leave and return back to the labor market while they were at home with their child/children. Returning to the human capital-investment it was illustrated by respondents that their

bosses, colleagues were very supportive when they returned to work again. They were less worried about the difficulties of taking on work rhythm again. In this sense, the yield of paid work which is done while the mother is at home with her child has an integrating role, besides more salary, to an easier, tension-free labor market. Beneficiaries of this are not only the mother but the child or children in the family and the husband/partner as well.

**Figure 2. Work motivation (%) (whole sample)**



Source: own edition

### ***Learning attitudes while mothers are at home- on the basis of our empirical studies***

As it was mentioned above, labor market integration of women with young children was presented in one aspect of our empirical work, the pattern of involved mothers to human capital investment was introduced, as it was measured by education, training with the level of involvement. According to the results of our study, 19 per cent of mothers that were asked had joined some kind of training. Most of the high school graduates decided to study parallel to childcare. Almost equal interest can be seen among those who have a degree and studied in the primary school only and those who are skilled workers

21.2 per cent of working mothers studied while they were on maternity leave. Most of them took part in some kind of NQR and higher vocational trainings but there were many mothers who got their first or second degree.

**Table 1. The distribution of participants according to the type of training (%)**  
(N=81)

	<b>working mothers</b>	<b>mothers are on maternity leave / care allowance</b>
Training that gives final exam	4,4	9,5
NQR	26,2	23,8
No NQR	-	-
Higher vocational training	6,5	23,8
Specialised further training	26,1	9,5
Language course	8,7	14,3
graduate training (first)	15,2	4,7
second or third degree	21,7	14,3
PhD training	2,2	-

*Source: own edition*

Examining the relationship of education level and studying we found that nearly a quarter of high school graduates, 18.3 per cent of graduates, 17.2 per cent of those who have no final exam trained herself while she was on maternity leave.

83.6 per cent of mothers answered that their partners supported them to continue their education, 10.4 per cent of mothers said that their partners were incurious and 1.4 per cent of them mentioned that her partner did not support her. Among mothers who bring up their children alone there was only one who studied while she was on maternity leave. This means that studying is mainly typical among those who have a husband or a partner. This is confirmed by the fact that during the learning and training time child care was done by husband or partner in 32.5 per cent of the examined cases. Grandparents help is even more significant (44 per cent). Others enrolled their children to nursery schools (19.6 per cent) and asked other relatives help (3.9 per cent) while they took part in a training.

Further education was chosen by those who thought that further education and training would help their future employment opportunities, changing jobs, hierarchical progress and keep their jobs. Educational motivations of studying and working mothers while they are on maternity leave are the same. Nearly the same number of working mothers (18 and 19 per cent) thought that studying while they are on maternity leave was not or mainly influence their labor market opportunities. Most of the mothers who were asked formulated a kind of "middle-way" opinion. In their view, joining in training will slightly improve their opportunities (59.3 per cent). 13 per cent of mothers who are on maternity leave now think that education does not affect, 14 per cent say that it influences and 62 per cent think that it slightly influences their further labor market success. Higher rate of those who studied while they were on maternity leave thought that training had positive effect on the labor market.

55.6 per cent of those who took part in a training went back to their previous workplace in the same position. 17.8 per cent had other position and 15.6 per cent

look for other workplace and 13.3 per cent of those who went on further education had not got any workplace before delivery. Training was the last chance for prospering in the labor market for those who belonged to the last group. Reason for further education shows close connection with this. Most of them, half of them who were asked explained the intention of studying to refresh, develop further their knowledge by the training. Purpose of one quarter of them was to strengthen their position in the labor market and others wanted to move away from home. Among mothers who are on maternity leave or care allowance there is nearly the same number of them who would like to go back to their previous workplace after finishing their education and those who look for another workplace.

Comparing the education level of the husband or partner against studying attitude of mothers we find that there are no significant differences except in case of those who had primary education.

Costs of education, tuition fees, travel expenses, purchase of textbooks are significant burden on the family. This accounts for the fact that there was only one mother who did not have a husband and the others lived in marriage and their maternity allowance was completed by their husband's salary and this is a kind of financial guarantee. Our opinion about the financial burden supported the fact that despite of 21.2 per cent (employed mothers) and 9.5 per cent (being on maternity leave) studied while they were on maternity leave, they answered 'yes' in both sub groups 72,5- 72,3 per cent for the question which was whether they would prefer to study if the education were free.

We also examined the learning attitude of those who were on maternity leave during that period. As it is a period of ongoing child care it was not a surprise that there was only 9.5 per cent who wanted to study at that time. Most of them applied for further vocational training or wanted to get a degree. Among the group in which there were mothers we examined separately those who were on maternity leave and we found that during the time they spent at home the acquired knowledge becomes obsolete and their labor-market value is getting less. So studying while being at home on maternity leave is a kind of preparation which makes the returning to the labor market easier and building own career. Education is an investment to the human capital and of course it has costs. However paying the related costs of education may cause problems for families and financial problems may break the studying plans of motivated mothers. This leads to deterioration of labor market opportunities, and ultimately to exclusion. That is why the state support is essential in case of training opportunities.

### ***Our results***

It was assumed in our study that women who studied while they were at home, would like to use their knowledge in the labor market as soon as possible so they return to the world of work earlier. This hypothesis was not confirmed because

there was no statistically relevant manner in this case. So we can say that training while mothers are at home on maternity leave, does not mean the earlier return back to the labor market. The thing is that the education prepares them for getting a better paid job. In this context we examined those who think that education at that time while they are at home has advantages on the labor market whether they take part in great number in a kind of education or not. We suppose in this case that those who think that education has advantage on the labor market that motivate them for further studies. Our assumption was not right in our sub groups (Kruskal-Wallis  $p=0,111$ ,  $p=0,381$ ).

As education costs money we suppose that those who have more income are more likely to start to study. Connection between the financial background of a family and the willingness to learn confirmed in case of mothers who are at home, because the income of the family, in all likelihood, significantly changed while the mother was at home. Reduction of income was also typical in case of working mothers when they were at home on maternity leave but in their case we could not confirm the relationship between two variables. In addition we found if the government pays their education, more mothers will study. Nearly half of the asked people would like to study if this is free or they get some reductions. But significant relation was found in the group where mothers were on maternity leave (Kruskal Wallis  $p=0,027$ ).

Willingness to learn of mothers does not grow in a statistical sense despite free education because there was a valid regulation for some of them which said that they got free education when they were on maternity leave. On the other hand, our question about free or preferential education was not current in their case.

Results of Hungarian researches show that insignificant proportion of the stakeholders took the opportunity of free education. Greater willingness to learn free is explained by the fact that free education is attractive for those who do not expect the yield of labor market or they have not got any specific purposes. In this case the motivation is to break out of the monotonicity of every day's life monotonous or they say: 'It will be good for something'.

### ***Training sub-component, as a possible solution***

Several national researches showed that one of the drawbacks of the time that was spent at home before having children that acquired knowledge and skills become outdated. Studying while mothers are at home can partly solve this problem. On the other hand, it is a possibility for mothers that with this new knowledge they do a job which is more compatible with their changed family circumstances. However the costs of the training could undermine the educational intentions of the mothers as it has been demonstrated in our research. To solve this, the so called *training sub-component* as family policy instrument could be the solution. It is incorporated into family allowance of the parent and it will provide an opportu-

nity for families where one or the other parent who is on maternity leave would like to study. So the training sub-component integrate into the family allowance instrument, relieves the financial burden of studying of those who are on maternity leave. Higher family allowance will be given to the families where one of the parents studies. We think that this training sub-component will be a fixed amount of money, only one parent will get it in case the family income conditions would justify it. This idea seems utopian, but against any disadvantages (limited resources) many advantages can be mentioned. Firstly, it helps to improvise labor market situation of women with young children, relieves child poverty and encourages them to adapt to requirements of the changing labor market. On the other hand, it fulfills the gap which occurred due to abolishing free education of mothers who were on maternity leave in January 2007 and by abolishing tax credit of in January 2012 (R. Fedor 2010, 2015).

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