

My B.A. thesis entitled “The Problems of Nurses returning to Work after Maternity or Parental Leave” tries to map out the difficulties that nurses usually encounter during the process of returning to work. One of thesis’s aims is to define the nature of the problems facing nurses when returning to the work-place. What interested me was whether motherhood can influence the choice of work-place and what the chances are for the nurses to return to the same position at work. The related question that I examine is up to which point can the professional life be combined with the personal life and how can the nurses keep up with their further education and qualification during their maternal or parental leave.

The theoretical part of the thesis deals with the family history, parenthood and motherhood, discrimination in the work-place and the options of care for a small child generally available. I also try to consider the factors influencing the return of women to their professions and the specific characteristics of the nursing professions.

The empirical part of my thesis is presented as a piece of qualitative research, in which, on the basis of semi-structured dialogues with five correspondents, I try to describe the situation facing them after their return to work. The data collected in the interviews are divided into several categories using the method of open coding. Some categories resulted in axial relationships. The results of this research are described in detail.

The research shows that a smooth return to work is influenced by three basic factors: conditions in a work-place, the mental well-being of a working mother, and help with child-care provided by other members of the family.

Key words: parenthood, motherhood, nurse, discrimination, child-care.