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**THE MODELING OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL  
EDUCATION BASED ON PARENTS- CONSUMERS' NEEDS**

Summary of Doctoral Dissertation  
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**DALIA MARTIŠAUSKIENĖ**

**IKIMOKYKLINIO UGDYMO PASLAUGŲ KOKYBĖS VALDYMO  
MODELIAVIMAS TIRIANT TĖVŲ-VARTOTOJŲ POREIKIUS**

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## INTRODUCTION

**The relevance of the work.** In democratic society implementing the equality of possibilities, the aim of education allows to elaborate “people’s responsibilities and capacities” necessary for the realization of individuals’ personal functions in society. Thus a big attention is paid to pre-school education as well (Blackledge and Hunt 1997). In the age of pre-school education a child’s socialization is taking place, that is conveyed by social maturity and the quality of maturity processes. In accordance to scientific research data (Bokhvin, 1996; Berchmann, 1995; Ch.Cooley, 1989) and the experience of the best children’s education institutions shows that “childish” activity and the logics of the development of the forms of “childish” world cognition (especially if it is exceptionally tolerated by adults) lead towards the origin of children’s psychosocial features, such as ability to communicate and collaborate (Ivoškaitė, 2007). Nevertheless, the pre-school education is significant not only for children and their successful socialization, but also for parents as when a child starts to attend the pre-school institution, his/her life obtains new purport. He/She has to divide his/her life into two essentially different social environments – family and preschool (Dencik 2005 p.81), as in accordance to the situation of socialization, a child conceives family as private and preschool institution as social life environment. A child, who attends the institution of pre-school education, has to adapt to this situation and to strive that it would become the space of socio-cultural life.

The pre-school education in Lithuania is legitimated (Education Law of the Republic of Lithuania, 2003; The Conception of Pre-School Education of the Republic of Lithuania, 1989) as specific, independent sub-system of education system integrating children’s education in family as well as in institution of preschool education in the humanistic direction, encouraging the implementation of socio-cultural diversity and the principles of democratic lifestyle. Pre-school education helps a child purposefully to self-educate and helps a family successfully to combine responsibilities which allow to participate in work market and children’s education. It is very important for a family to know what possibilities and what responsibilities as well as what services and what qualities are provided in the institutions of pre-school education (Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė and Kazlauskienė 2009). The quality and accessibility of pre-school education are especially important for the further children’s (self-) education, however, parents’ participation in children’s education processes is a concurrent condition of children’s successful (self-) education. Thus the main role in child’s education falls on family and pre-school education and it is a specialized help for a family. So Lithuanian and foreign scientists always special attention paid to a family and its role in children’s pre-school education involving the problems of both family’s collaboration (Monkevičienė, 1999, 2008; Kontautienė, 2000; Dahlberg, Taguchi,

1994; Faberis, Mazlinskas, 1995) and participation in children's education (Gražienė, Rimkienė, 1993; Kaufman, Saifer, 1997; Juodaitytė, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003; Monkevičienė, 1999, 2008; Kontautienė, 2000; Ušeckienė, 2000; Andriekienė, Ruzgienė, 2001). Other scientists went deep into the problems of child's socio-cultural welfare in a family and preschool institution (Fendler, Dahlberg, Hultqvist, 2001; Karash, 2002; Kabašinskaitė, 2007) and analyzed family's functions, relationship between children and parents, family's role in child's education, interrelationship between family and institutions of pre-school education. In this trend of researches, family's role is increasingly actualized while preparing a child to live in the diversity of phenomena determined by economics of modern market where not only parents, but also a child become consumers of different services (material and ideal) (Glinskienė, Skrudupaitė, 2005; Statt, 2003). Other authors (Statt, 2003; McLainghlin 1997) while analyzing the problems of child's preparation for modern economic, social, and cultural life especially actualize not only the relationship between family and educational institution, but also solve the question related to parents' (not only children's) rights in education. Parents' rights in education are explained as fundamental and dominant, as parents can decide on the content of education, aims, directions, form or results. McLainghlin (1997) especially concretizes parents' rights, pointing out, that parents perform the threefold role in the institutions of children's education and according to this he divides parents into three groups, stating that parents are not only deciders, but also participants and lawyers, who are interested in the quality and accessibility of children's education.

In Lithuania, the institutions of pre-school education are described as the institutions which provide public services for parents and children (LR Education Law, 2003; LR State Provisions of Education Strategy for 2003-2012 Years, 2003; The Conception of Pre-School Education of LR, 1989). However, there is an insufficient orientation to parents' as consumers' needs and the appropriate quality. The quality of pre-school education also is not determined as the service oriented to consumers in the sense of process and result. Though, in education management, while investigating the senior pupils' needs for education quality, the methodology of research of consumers' needs has been started to apply. (Barkauskaitė and Bruzgelevičienė, 2004). The scientists indicated that, the quality is "the sum of features that allows to decide how educational institution, education system or separate its sub-systems carry out appropriate national and regional aims and correspond to child's/consumer's needs" (Barkauskaitė and Bruzgelevičienė, 2004, p.13). However, in the institution of pre-school education, a child is especially dependent on the family so the parents become the main consumers of service which quality is substantiated by "consumers' needs and expectations" (Garvin, 1988). Lithuanian scientists

(Monkevičienė, 2001; Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė and Kazlauskienė, 2009) state that parents are especially interested in the service of pre-school education which is becoming marketable and involve the children of juvenescent pre-school age (even since one year old).

Modern, pre-school institutions as organizations strive to provide the services of qualitative education and satisfy children's and parents' needs, which are as "particular consumers' wishes, the conception that something is lacking or everything is good" (Pociūtė 2007), and the expectations are related to desires aimed at perspective. Thus any organization in accordance to the opinion of quality management theorists (Harvey and Green, 1993), has always to be interested in consumers' needs and expectations, because in this way it wins trust and loyalty. The educational organization is described as organization of services (Sallis, Van Damme, 2002), but the conception of quality of each educational institution, including the institution of pre-school education, may be different as each of them assess as the proceeding processes of education in its own way (Valiuškevičiūtė et al 2008). In accordance to practical management view (Ališauskas, 2004), the particular content of quality is *agreement*. The subjects of agreement (service providers, consumers, politicians, etc.) represent different interests and their agreements concerning the service quality are also conceived differently. However, the lack of explicitness of family's role and participation in pre-school education impedes the achievement of this agreement. Both parents and heads as well as teachers of institutions of pre-school education have yet oriented to *the model of interaction of traditional family and pre-school institution*. Thus parents often conceived the teachers' invitation to take part in children's education processes as an obligatory activity which is delegated to them (Juodaitytė, 2001). So, till now, the model of collaboration between institutions of pre-school education and family is left indefinite. Furthermore, it is not explicated what place is occupied by a family in the system of pre-school education. Parents' needs in the sphere of pre-school education are changing in both content and form, because parents' occupation market and family model itself are changing as well. Both parents start to get interested in children's education in this way complementing the content of family needs in the education of pre-school age children.

The quality of service is governed and modeled by provider (Pociūtė 2007; Barkauskaitė and Bruzgelevičienė, 2004; Ališauskas, 2004). So the ethics of heads, teachers and other employees of pre-school institutions is very important as well as the competences in the cognition of consumers' needs. Parents' as consumers' needs and wishes for service are rather individual and so not always are foreseen in advance. They depend on the strategy of institution, programmes of education, the financial tariffs of service and other factors which are significant for service quality. The state of work quality of educational institution, its analysis intensify the

feedback among the participants of education process, increases their personal responsibility for service quality, helps them to conceive the institution of pre-school education as flexible and open to changes organization (Gumuliauskienė and Gedminienė, 2008). The assessment of service quality is the comparison of its features with consumer's needs and expectations (Pociūtė, 2007). Only in this way, in her opinion, any organization can compete with others similar to it.

In foreign countries, the practice of quality management of pre-school education is different to Lithuanian one. Thus the essence of quality of this institution is conceived differently as well. The service of pre-school education is assessed as *an indicator of social welfare of society*. Various questions related to children's education and financing of social services are raised, different financing models are suggested (first of all – related to consumption); the state financing for children's pre-school education is constantly increasing as well as state and private institutions function equivalently, but on the basis of competition (Žalimienė 2003). The models which guarantee children's care and education are created (e.g. children's supervisors, nurses, play, care, teaching groups that arrive at home, etc.). The tendency of disciplined inspection of work quality of education institutions which are financed by state is getting more significant. The interaction among families and education as well as institutions providing social services and communities are emphasized. Thus the traditional conception of quality of early institutional children's education is essentially changing as the quality is related to consumers' (parents', child's and society's) diversity and satisfaction of needs and expectations.

In Lithuania, the services of children's education and the questions of its quality and management as well as their correspondence to consumers' needs have not been sufficiently investigated. In this sphere, there are only several scientists who in their works discussed the questions of quality of preschool institutions. (Monkevičienė, 2001, 2009; Gražienė, 1993). However, these problems were extensively discussed in the commissioned researches by the Ministry of Education and Science in the period of 2004-2009. The option of possibilities of service of pre-school education in Lithuania was researched in them (Jonutytė, Braslauskienė, Grinevičienė et al., 2004); the factors limiting the option and the reasons were indicated. In accordance to the researches' opinion, one of the most important impediments in the option of service is the inadequacy to parents' needs to educate children, even in the early age, in the institutions of pre-school education. The types of educational help for families upbringing pre-school and school age children have been investigated (Bužinskas, Filipavičienė, Mataikaitė et al., 2006). It was ascertained what families, according to social groups, have the possibilities to receive the services of children's education and educational help as well as what types of help



are the most appropriate for them. By means of the other research “Educational help for the families with children of 1-6 years old” (2008), the situation of pre-school education service (as educational help) in Lithuania was ascertained. The parents’ and foster-parents’ provisions for *relevance, accessibility, and necessity* of this service have been investigated. The problem of diversity of pre-school education services as well as the correspondence of services to society’s expectations were investigated and analyzed (Monkevičienė, Glebuviienė, Jonilienė et al., 2008). The scientists ascertained the diversity of programmes of pre-school education; their correspondence to the requirements of quality of education as well as indicated the spectrum of services of pre-school education and the financing sources. The state of quality of pre-school education was investigated in relation to the content and forms of informing the residents (Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė, Kazlauskienė et al, 2008). In the present research, the parents’ *needs for the content of information, quality and educational help* were ascertained. However, in Lithuania, there is a lack of systemic investigations of quality and management of pre-school education services that answer to the following questions: how is it possible to model the procedures of service quality management while investigating parents’ as service consumers’ needs under the changing conditions?

Furthermore, there is no theoretical conception about the service of pre-school education and consumer, so it is difficult to define the peculiarities of modeling of service quality management while orienting to parents’ as consumers’ needs. As stated by Juodaitytė and Martišauskienė (2009), the analysis of the documents regulating the education of LR (LR Education Law, 2003; The Provisions of State Strategies of LR for 2003-2012 Years, 2003; The Conception of Pre-School Education of LR, 1989; The Law of Basics of Children’s Right of LR, 1996; The Law of Special Education of LR, 1989; The Law of Non-Formal Children’s Education of LR, 2005) is oriented to the final aim which is conceived as the upbringing of child’s competences (social, health care, cognition, communication, etc.). The content of services is not indicated as well as the following question is not answered: how the quality of services can be researched while applying the diversity of the methodologies of consumers’ behaviour, needs and expectations. Due to the inefficient theoretical and empirical substantiation of pre-school education service, the relationship between providers and consumers, the possibilities of modeling of quality management while investigating parents’ as consumers’ needs have not been analyzed. **Thus the following research question may be formulated: in what way the management of service quality of pre-school education can be modeled while researching parents’ as consumers’ needs.**

**The object of the research:** The research of parents’ as consumers’ needs in the context

of quality modeling of pre-school education.

**The aim of the research:** to research parents' as service consumers' needs and to establish the peculiarities of modeling of service quality management of pre-school education.

**The objectives of the research:**

1. While analyzing the scientific literature (educational, sociological, literature in political sciences, literature in management, psychological) theoretically to substantiate the modeling of service quality management of pre-school education while investigating parents' as consumers' needs.
2. To prepare and substantiate the empirical methodology of parents' as consumers' need for pre-school education services and the corresponding instrumentation which allows to establish the peculiarities of modeling of service quality management of pre-school education.
3. On the basis of theoretical and empirical research results of the dissertation, to prepare the recommendations for the modeling of service quality management of pre-school education while researching parents' as consumers' needs.

**Research hypothesis:** it is presumed that after the preparation of design and its instruments of interrelationship of quantitative and qualitative research appropriate for the research of parents' as consumers' needs, it is possible to research parents' their needs and on this basis to model the management of quality of pre-school education.

**Dissertational research is substantiated by philosophical and managerial theories and conceptions:**

*The modeling of quality management of pre-school education while researching parents' as consumers' needs is paradigmatically substantiated by the conceptions of philosophy and management to the modeling of service quality management as process while continually appealing to parents'/consumers' needs as well as the corresponding theoretical provisions.*

*The social interactionalism allows to conceive service providers' (teachers' and heads') as well as service consumers' (children's and parents') intercommunion as a permanent interaction in which they get involved through the general aim and communicative outcomes. The teachers of pre-school education during the period of verbal and non-verbal communication transfer the information to pupils and their parents. At the same time the feedback is taking place, because on the basis of social communication, the product (education) and its values are developed and changed as well as the social novelty is created, that is significant for the participants (heads, teachers, and parents) of communication.*

On the basis of propositions of *social participation* theory, it is possible to state that

both service providers and consumers (as any person) can take part in a daily and important for society activity, which involves the service of pre-school education as well as to develop significant *feelings, the means of their expression or behaviour*. The theoretical conception proposed by Kar, Colman, et al. (1988) is important for the research of pre-school education service: any person's participation in activity as is expressed by means of activeness which is important not only for everybody personally, but also for social action and society which entrusts this action to individuals, their groups involving both consumer(s) and provider(s). The activeness of person's or group's social participation in the processes of service creates sociality as well, because society is open to both individual's and society's needs. Thus consumers' and service providers' social interest in the service quality and management have to be equivalent activities.

The theory of *social constructionism* allows to substantiate the management of quality of pre-school education by means of providers' and consumers' approach to the process of knowledge which is important for them while emphasizing the previous experience and applying the knowledge to new situations. The management of quality of pre-school education may be perceived through the stages of social learning processes (Durkheim, 1974; Vygotsky, 1987), that allow to emphasize the possibilities of individual's adaptation in society, while mastering to perform some definite social roles (service providers and consumers) as well as to construct the general conception which means that *only having the definite aim and regarding the situation of pre-school education and external and internal factors that determine this situation, it is possible to look for the common agreement on the modeling of quality of pre-school education service*.

*The theory of general quality management* is one of the most important which permits to substantiate the organization of modeling process of service quality management of pre-school education in the activities of organizations (Vanagas, 2004; Ewaus, 2003; Zairi, Kaziliūnas, 2007; Zink, 2007; Mackay, Bititci, Maquize, Ates, 2008). While substantiating the modeling peculiarities of service quality of pre-school education the following theoretical conception (Zairi and Idris 2006) was taken into consideration: one of the most important aims of modeling peculiarities of service quality of pre-school education is the harmonization of activity permitting to look for the interrelationship between product and quality of process, as the quality may be modeled and managed. The paradigm of management is applied to the modeling of service (including pre-school education as well), because the following senses are inherent to this process: comprehensibility, settlement and responsibility (Garvare, Isaksson, Johansson (2004, 2007); Bagdonienė D., Galbuogienė A., Paulavičienė E., 2009).

*The theoretical conception of systems of organization's management* forms the possibilities to model the process of interrelationship between organization's politics and aims, as while creating the system of quality management one of its most important elements is *the emphasis of the mission as sense of organization's existence, systemic and procedural approach to management*, explicitness of processes as well as permanent security of interrelationship with customer (Vilkas, 2005; Bagdonienė, Galbuogienė and Paulavičienė, 2009).

*The theory of management of service quality* allows to substantiate the services of pre-school education as a process which was influenced by consumers' needs, expectations and possibilities of agreement between provider and consumer concerning service quality (Albrecht K., Zemke R., 1987; Lehtinen J.R., 1983; Wollet J., Haywood – Famer J., 1992). On this basis, the service of pre-school education may be substantiated as *help to consumer*, when service provider consciously strives to transform it as a product-boon which belongs to consumer (Gadrey J., 1996).

*The research of consumers' needs is substantiated by the methodology of consumers' behaviour* (Virvilaitė, Banytė (2000), that allows to explicate how individuals behave in some definite, related to consumption conditions as well as what internal and external factors determine one or another behaviour.

*The modeling of service quality management of pre-school education* while researching parents' as consumers' needs is substantiated by *two philosophical paradigms of explication of social phenomena – normative (positivist) and interpretative (phenomenological)*. This allows to harmonize two approaches, preferring quantitative research methods, when the information is compiled by means of questionnaire, statistically determining the representative scope. The interpretational methodology of consumers' behaviour allows to analyze the problems in a broader context, because it determines the necessity of consumer's decision on service quality.

*The theory of systems* constitutes the basis for the description of modeling of service quality of pre-school education as a system. Then accessibility, confidence, convenience, perfection of service become important and significant not only in some definite situations, but also in the process of permanent development of service. This function as an integral system, where the activity of one segment affects the activity of whole system as reciprocal influence and dependence, is appropriate for this interaction. (Bertalanffy, 1969; Klir, 1991).

### **Research methods:**

1. *Analysis of scientific literature and metaanalysis* permitting to contextualize the essence of quality service management of pre-school education, identify parents' as service consumers' needs as well as to determine the possibilities of modeling of service quality

management.

2. *Quantitative and qualitative researches* are substantiated by systemic approach to scientific research while revealing the connections between qualitative and quantitative research making preference to the quantitative research as it allows to obtain the results of broad spectrum that are essential for wider population of service consumers and providers while the qualitative research produces the context of individual senses of service quality management.

3. *Quantitative research methods*. The questionnaire with *multiple-choice* questions was given to service providers (teachers and heads) and consumers (parents whose children attend the institutions of pre-school education). By means of this questionnaire it was strived to ascertain the experience of quality management of pre-school education in providers' and consumers' population as well as the typology of service consumers' needs.

In the quantitative research, the descriptive and multidimensional statistical methods were applied as well as factorial and correlative analysis.

4. *Qualitative research methods*. In order to research parents' as service consumers' needs the questionnaire with *write in* questions was applied; the methods of interpretational and semantic analysis as well as the *content* analysis of documents regulating pre-school education and its quality of the Republic of Lithuania were conducted on basis of which the propositions of education politics contextualizing the management of quality of pre-school education were clarified.

**The empirical research was conducted** in the region of western Lithuania (in the districts of Klaipėda, Telšiai, and Tauragė), in 2007 - 2009.

*In the quantitative research (questionnaire) the group of service providers of pre-school education took part.* The group consisted of 130 heads of institutions and 340 teachers as well as the group of service consumers: 400 parents, whose children attend the institutions of pre-school education. In total, 870 respondents who were randomly selected were questioned.

By means of the questionnaire with *write in* questions (qualitative method), the answers of service providers (50 heads of institutions and 50 teachers) as well as the answers of service consumers (70 parents) were analyzed on the basis of method of *content* analysis. In total, 170 samples took part in qualitative research. More information about the scope and participants of empirical research is presented in the section "*Research methodology and methods*".

**The research was conducted in three stages:**

*The scheme of the logics of dissertational research process* is presented in the section "*Research methodology and methods*".

*I stage* (in January-December, 2006). The creation of research strategy. The research design

was compiled. Educational, sociological, political, managerial and psychological literature was analyzed. The features relevant to pre-school education were indicated; the research methods were chosen; the means and scope of respondents were established; the principles of data basis compilation were projected. The documents regulating the pre-school education were qualitatively analyzed (January-May, in 2007).

*II stage* (in June-December, 2007). The formation of research methodology and instrumentation. The questionnaires were prepared. While preparing them, the questions permitting to reveal the diversity of social reality and problems were projected. The quantitative research was conducted in July-December, in 2008.

*III stage* (in January-December, 2009). The qualitative research was conducted. The hypothetical model of service quality management of pre-school education was designed, the conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

**The scientific-theoretical novelty of research:** (1) While applying the general conceptions of quality management and management of quality of education (management of general quality, management of quality of organizations' activities), the conception of quality management of pre-school education is theoretically substantiated as well as the possibilities of modeling of quality management are projected conceiving this process as a system in which all factors (external and internal) influencing the quality of organization's activities and its management are functioning. They give a sense to the process of quality of management not only through material, but also through human resources; (2) With reference to general philosophical theories of service quality management (especially of social interactionism and social participation) the theoretical conception of service quality of pre-school education is substantiated, explicating, that when consumer and provider are in permanent reciprocity then quantitative and qualitative context of senses allows them to agree on the usage of service/product and opportunities of product stability. They are determined by "hard" and "soft" resources of organization and the features of service network (accessibility, convenience, confidence, attention, reliance, security, and competence); (3) The research methodology of consumers' needs is theoretically substantiated while applying the normative and interpretative philosophical approaches when in the reciprocal agreement quantitative and qualitative parameters and contexts of service management are investigated; (4) While applying the systemic approach to the service which represents the public interest of social welfare of organization, for the first time in Lithuania, its quality is substantiated by the system of permanently functioning qualitative interactions between service providers and consumers, whose reciprocal agreement on the quality of service as a product of public welfare is socially

significant in both senses: social and individual. (5) While applying the approaches of social constructivism, the service/ product of pre-school education and valuable intentions of people (who provide and create this product), one of which is the most important – permanent learning striving for innovative knowledge not only of the processes of production and provision of product, but also of the philosophy of service quality conception inherent to consumer.

**The practical value of dissertation:** (1) For the first time in Lithuania, the strategy of service quality management of pre-school education is prepared, the basics of design of interrelationship between quantitative and qualitative research and the research instrumentation related to it (questionnaire with *multiple choice* and *write in* questions) are prepared that give possibilities to the service providers of pre-school education to systemically investigate qualitative and quantitative changes in the parents' as service consumers' population (mass, group, and individual); (2) On the basis of research results, the practical possibilities of modeling of service quality of pre-school education are revealed while systemically investigating parents' as consumers' changing needs, systematizing their groups according to participation in the processes of quality management (passive and active) as well as inherent to them normative and interpretative approach to the features of service quality (stability, reliability of “soft” and “hard”/ human resources, span of process, perfection, accessibility, reliance, convenience and esthetics of environment); (3) The qualitative analysis of the documents regulating the education of the Republic of Lithuania was conducted, the research of the texts contextualizing the interrelationship between service provider and consumer will allow the strategists of education politics of Lithuania to orient to the modeling of service quality management of pre-school education as political, social, cultural, valuable sphere; (4) The research of the service providers' (heads' and teachers') competence in the field of modeling of processes of quality management as well as the identification of content of new knowledge and senses will allow to prepare objective, managerial and research competences influencing the educational programmes of continuous studies institutions which organize the courses or seminars of qualification or re-qualification for heads, teachers of preschool institutions as well as for parents; (5) The research of the competence of service providers of pre-school education in the field of service management and identification of consumers' needs will allow to prepare the study programmes for the specialists of management of preschool institutions oriented to practical activity in high schools of Lithuania and oriented to their new spheres of management activity – the modeling of service quality of pre-school education while investigating parents' as consumers' needs.

**The statements for defence:**

1. For the modeling of service quality of pre-school education the general conceptions, principles, conceptions of quality management as well as the research methodology of consumers' behavior oriented to consumers' needs of quality management can be applied.
2. The service quality of pre-school education can be researched on the basis of the concepts of proliferation and efficiency of social services as well as the levels of quality assessment of education services. Furthermore, the services may be applied, such as the stability of consumption of product as well as *the categories describing* the feature of service (the means of service provision, the possibilities of its provision and consumption, the span of process, exactness, reliability, trust in consumers, their competence, confidence in accessibility of service and its convenience for a consumer).
3. For the modeling of service quality management of pre-school education general educational principles such as management principles of socio-cultural service can be applied which are oriented to external and internal resources involving both the significance of service for external and internal environment which is made of "hard" / material and "soft" / human resources which allow a service provider to decide on service network or consumers' scope, their needs or the possibilities of satisfaction of expectations.
4. Parents' as consumers' needs can be researched while applying the methodology of qualitative and quantitative interrelationship which corresponds to normative and interpretive access for the identification of content of needs and the identification of direction. One of the main research instruments is the questionnaire with *multiple choice* and *write in* questions, which helps to diagnose both parents' as consumers' typology and the significance of the quality of the provided services on the basis of which service providers and consumers can agree interdependently on the model of service quality management.



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## **GENERAL REVIEW OF THE CONTENTS**

**In the Introduction** the key methodological parameters of the dissertation are presented and substantiated. In the introductory part of the present research the key methodological considerations of the dissertation are presented as well.

### **1. The theoretical prerequisites of the research of quality management and consumers' needs of pre-school education.**

#### **1.1 The theory of qualitative management as the basis of service modeling**

The quality as a polysemous phenomenon is one of the most meaningful conceptions and dynamic notions of modern alterations, whose treatment is changing and depends on the peculiarities of the problems under pending as well as the type of context and quality object. The principle approaches to the quality are presented in the scientific context: transcendental conception is based on the common understanding of goodness and perfection. This does not require the exact measurements or assessment of quality: the conception substantiated by means of product assessment is based on the fact that it is understood as a unity of features and characteristics of products or services. This unity is related to their correspondence to some definite requirements. Furthermore, the conception which is substantiated by means of consumers' needs and expectations treats the quality as a harmony between something what should be, i.e. consumers' requirements and something what is at the moment: what service is actually provided. The conception which is substantiated by means of production practice, which is based on the approach to quality, is formulated by Crosby (cited in Garvin, 1988). The quality substantiated by value reveals the quality relations with the product production and other expenses as well as prices. While an organization is orienting to the quality management, the determination of quality becomes especially relevant as such things like what management will be implemented in an organization, what culture will be organized in an organization, what influence it will have on employees, etc. are based on it. The quality ideas may be implemented by means of understanding the basic principles of quality management: systemic and process approaches, constant improvement, leadership, the participation of employees, reciprocal useful contacts with providers and orientation to consumers. Referring to the principles of quality management recommended by International Organization of Standardization (ISO), the identification of work processes and the management of organization have to be based on systemic approach. This approach helps an organization to understand and assess its possibilities and difficulties, eliminate defects and endeavour for aims, work productively as the processes are assessed as interdependent

elements. The continuous approach helps to seek desirable results in a more effective way, as this approach requires to determine activity processes, define the managers of processes and their responsibility. The conclusion could be drawn that quality is conceived as a polysemous notion and phenomenon, as perception of quality, measurements and criteria by means of which the quality is assessed differ.

### **1.2. The services of education and pre-school education, their functions and assessment**

The conception of pre-school education as primary and probably the most essential link in educational system which is perfected according to general upbringing ideas of public education and human's development. In accordance to education policy of European Union, which is targeted to the integration of education and social services, supporting child and family, Lithuania shifts from narrow specialization of institutional direction ( i.e. nursery, pre-school, school, foster home) to versatile upbringing and new way of teacher training – childhood upbringing. This aim is substantiated by stimulation of parents' economical activeness and employment as well as new formation of society's contemplation as pre-school upbringing greatly influences subsequent children's academic achievements and abilities of social adaptation necessary for competitive and substantiated with knowledge society. The alterations in the development of society as well as in political, cultural and social settings determine the expansion of work of modern pre-school institutions. The pre-school upbringing becomes concurrent with globalization processes in society what demands new upbringing syllabus, forms and methods which correspond both to society's and parents' and children's expectations. In accordance to its purpose, the pre-school institution relating to mission, philosophy, aims and strategy as well as meeting the society's social orders, children's and parents' inner needs and its inner potential is commissioned to provide the following services: educational, children's rights, children's health, child's care and social protection, nutrition, children's (who have special needs) upbringing, integration of social disjuncture, artistic training, physical training, and parents' education. Firstly, the functions and service contribution of pre-school education institution have to correlate with educational and social education; furthermore, while organizing and providing the mentioned services to a consumer, it is necessary to assess the demand of these services. The assess of social and educational needs is the identification and the determination of their extent in particular domain of a person's or society's needs in accordance to resources, aims and objectives of pre-school institution. Various assessment levels of education services differ in both criteria and demand of services and methods of assessment. While elaborating it is possible to point out the following levels of social and educational service demands: national level, regional (county, village and town) level, community (municipality and sub-district) level, and

individual level. The economic and social processes, social differentiation, migration which take part in Lithuania reflect in families as well. However, a child has to be provided with all necessary opportunities in order to get versatile education which helps to nature child's natural capacities as well as improve special skills. This right is understood as formation of conditions of child's total (self-)education, the creation of stimulating and substantial environment for education, approachability of education, offer of qualitative services, training of excellent teachers, etc.

### **1.3. The orientation towards consumer's behavior of educational organizations and pre-school institutions**

In Lithuania, pre-school education aims to provide each child, who is developed in different economic, social and cultural conditions, with equal upbringing opportunities, thus the number of institutions of pre-school education and education modeling is increasing. The institutions of pre-school education are named as service providers and parents who make use of the service provided by such institutions are consumers. To put in management terms, educational organizations are distributors which provide consumers with their services together with the production provided by different producers. Thus it could be presumed that not only the providers of educational service but also the producers of educational production are responsible for the quality of education, though consumers of educational service have influence as well. The consumers of pre-school institution are children and their parents thus the educational institution while providing educational and social services has to consider their needs. The appropriate identification of consumers' needs and their involvement into upbringing activity and strategic syllabus of pre-school institution enable to collaborate with service recipients more effectively. The institution of pre-school education while aiming to identify the needs of its service consumers has to assess their expectations, objectives, appropriate outcomes which are necessary for different age groups. The institution of pre-school education aiming to provide the qualitative services and to satisfy the consumers has to know their behavior as this is one of the most significant individual's activities while obtaining and using a product, service involving the processes of solution acceptance, which are carried out before the service is provided and after this. A consumer's behavior involves mental decisions and physical activities which result from these activities, so a consumer as a personality is a complex subject whose behavior is not easy to predict. The consumer of pre-school education is a child, his parents or, to put in other terms, family that can orient the behavior of child's purchasing relating to religion, politics, economics, personal ambitions, affection, etc. A family forms the system of values, culture, within which children learn about their social class, learn how to create the environment of learning and

cognition, structure their role in social life. It means that already in a family appropriate child's as consumers behavior develops, so lately a family is named as a separate unit of consumer's behavior formation. The practice of pre-school institutions reveals that many solutions in a family are carried out by means of consensus (e.g. what pre-school a child will attend, state or private, what additional services he /she needs, the choice of food, separate physical load, etc.), thus while collaborating with consumers it is necessary for educational institutions to know better the family types, family structure, the cycles of families and their households and their influence to the purchasing of services.

## **2. THE METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF RESEARCH**

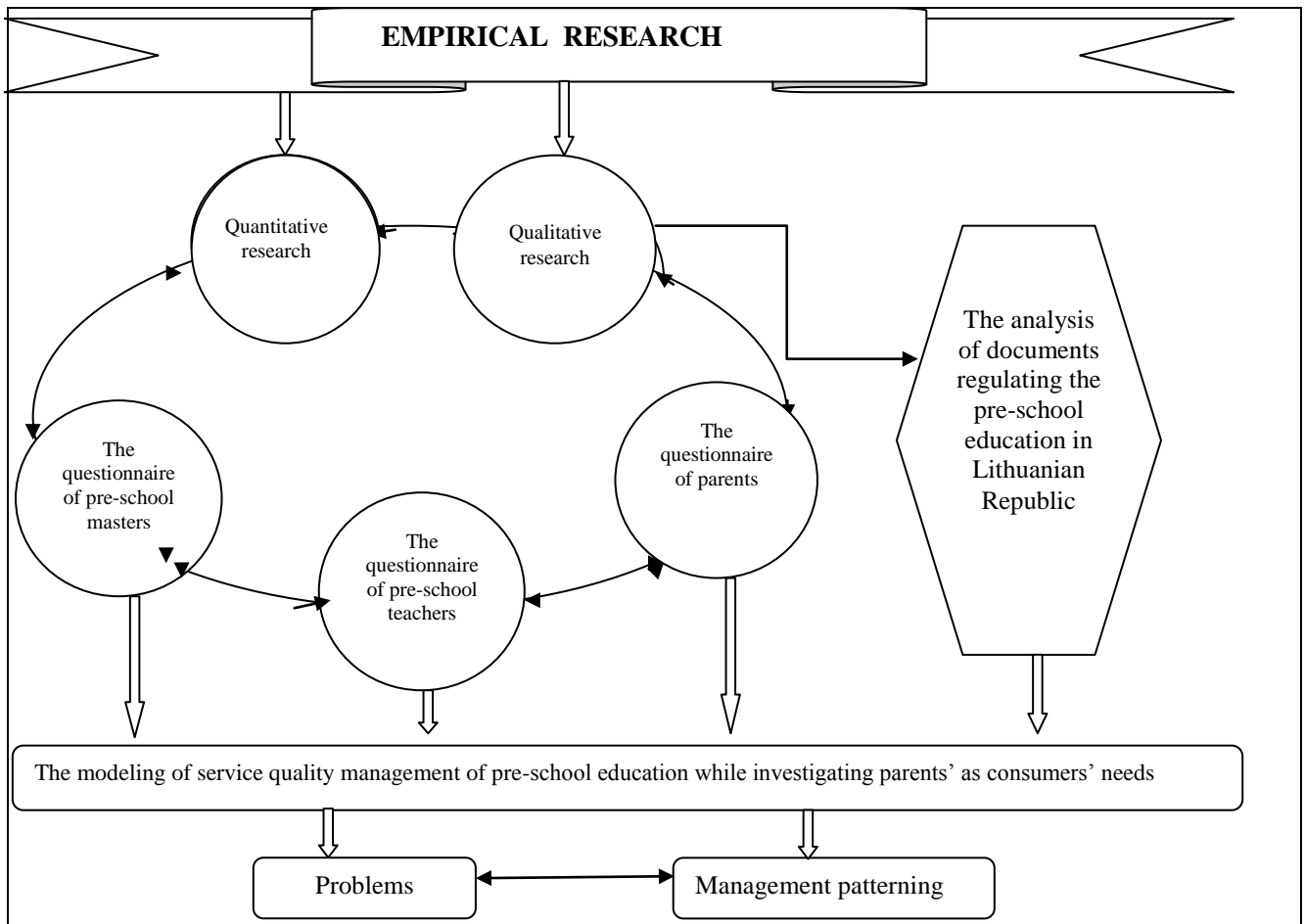
### **2.1 The methodological substantiation of the strategy of empirical research**

The modeling of service quality management of pre-school education while investigating parents' as consumers' needs the empirical research is substantiated by means of paradigmatic approach, educational and social theories, managerial and philosophical attitudes of quality management as well as conceptions: management of general quality, system of organizational management, theories of service and consumer behavior, phenomenology, conception of social interaction, philosophy of constructionism and pragmatism, etc. The methodology of qualitative research which is substantiated by interpretational paradigm allows to analyze a person as a personality as well as tries to grasp human being's world and reveal the subjective attitude to this what is going on. In qualitative researches substantiated by phenomenological attitude, the emphasis is put on conception which is based on the individual and methodological traditions of people's social problem research. Such traditions are obtained by means of observation, analysis of text and document content, interview, recordings and their transcriptions. In the present doctoral dissertation, the empirical qualitative research is substantiated by normative paradigm which allowed to determine pre-school heads', teachers', parents' attitude to the quality of pre-school service and to identify parents' as service consumers needs and the influence to management of education service quality.

### **2.2. The general logics and ethics of research process**

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the present research. By means of research methods it was aimed to ascertain and investigate parents' as service users needs and to substantiate the opportunities of pre-school education quality management modeling. The strategy of integrated research realized in the present doctoral dissertation involves both quantitative and qualitative research methods and combination of different data types. The application of different data collection methods helps to form better understanding of the problem, so data collection involved the analysis of regulation documents of Lithuanian pre-

schools and questionnaire of pre-school masters, teachers, and parents whose children attend pre-school institutions. The questionnaire is analyzed by means of quantitative and qualitative methods. In dissertation the priority is given to quantitative approach. The Figure 1 below presents the research process:



**Figure 1.** Visual scheme of logic of research process

The first stage is based on qualitative research which is realized in order to clear out pre-school institution masters', teachers', and parents' attitude towards the quality of service provided by pre-school institutions and needs while investigating parents as consumers to substantiate the modeling opportunities of pre-school education service management. The second research stage is quantitative research which gave the opportunity to supplement the qualitative research and additionally to clear out parents', teachers' and pre-school heads' approach to the responsibility for service quality, efficiency of quality system, offering of additional service, and to parents' expectations. The analysis of scientific literature include qualitative and quantitative research. The analyzed scientific literature enabled the interpretation of data, elaborated and extended the awareness of research object, i.e. the quality of service and management modeling. The analysis of regulating documents of pre-school education of

Lithuanian Republic extended the qualitative research during which it was aimed to ascertain the policy essential of pre-school education quality in educational documents.

### **2.3. Quantitative research methods**

In the first part of the research, aiming to research parents' as service consumers' needs and to substantiate the opportunities of management modeling of service quality of pre-school education, the method of data collection, i.e. the questionnaire was chosen. In the questionnaire, both the *multiple-choice* and *write-in answers* questions are presented. The questionnaire is made of five diagnostic components: 1) the awareness of quality management and influence to service quality of pre-school education; 2) the results of child's (self-)education in pre-school institution; 3) the orientation of nursery school work and quality of educational service to parents-consumers; 4) the quality of parent conveyance; 5) the quality of pre-school education service. The scope of research was structured after the assessment of pre-school masters', teachers', and children's total number of pre-school institutions from Klaipėda, Tauragė and Telšiai counties. In accordance to the data of education departments in Klaipėda, Tauragė, Telšiai towns and districts (period 2008-2009 school year), 104 pre-school education institutions were working, 174 pre-school masters and 1 926 teachers were working, 16 075 children were taught (in accordance to children's number, the scope of parents was determined for the research). The scope of the research was structured of 130 pre-school masters, 340 teachers, and 400 parents.

### **2.4. The methods of qualitative research**

In the second part of the research, aiming to investigate parents' as consumers' needs and to substantiate the opportunities of management modeling of pre-school education service quality, the methods of qualitative data collection and analysis were employed. By means of qualitative method, the guiding documents regulating the pre-school education of Lithuanian Republic were analyzed and the meaning of contexts of pre-school (self-)education quality, which explicate its essence and management peculiarities, was determined. In order to supplement the qualitative research the direct questions of questionnaire were analyzed by means of qualitative methods. The scope of respondents was made of 70 parents, 50 heads of pre-school institutions, and 50 teachers. Altogether 170 respondents took part in qualitative research. The opinion presented by the respondents was grouped into categories, subcategories, and the number of subcategories was determined.

### 3. The empirical research of service providers' and consumers' management factors as well as assessment means of pre-school education

#### 3.1. Qualitative research: the politics of service quality management of pre-school education and the experience aimed at consumers' requirements

##### 3.1.1. The contextualization of service quality management of pre-school education in the education documents of the Republic of Lithuania

In Lithuania, the quality of pre-school education is substantiated by normative education documents (LR Education Law, 2003; The Conception of Children's Pre-School Education of Lithuania, 1989; The Provision of the Strategies of State Education for 2003-2012 Years, 2003, etc.). The documents determine the following: the heads' and teachers' orientations towards the quality of children's education, assessment and self-assessment results, project the teachers' work, represent some definite education values that are significant for the understanding of quality conception. The analysis of documents is one of the most important heads' competences that allows to manage the processes of quality and the result.

The documents giving sense to the strategic direction of LR education that substantiate the singleness of the activities of preschool institutions towards the qualitative process and the result (The Provisions of the Strategies of state Education for 2003-2012 Years, 2003) are significant for the quality conception as well. The documents under analysis may be conditionally divided into the following groups: child's social-political and his/her safety of rights, the documents of education development strategy as well as the specialized documents regulating the process of pre-school education, the result and the activities of institutions (Table 1).

**Table 1.** The documents regulating the education of Lithuanian Republic and pre-school education

The group of documents	The name of documents
Social-political documents	The Law of the Basis of Children's Rights of LR (1996)
The strategic documents of education development	The Education Law of LR (2003); The Provisions of the Strategies of State Education for 2003-2012 Years (2003) of LR
The specialized documents regulating the process of pre-school education and the result	The Conception of Pre-school Education (1989); The Conception of Non-Formal Children's Education of LR (2005); The Law of Special Education of LR (1989)
The specialized documents regulating the activity of preschool institutions	The Law of Child's Minimal and Average Care (2007); The Methodologies of Schools' Inner Audit of Pre-school Education

In the documents under analysis, a big attention is especially paid to the final aim of pre-school education revealing it through the systems necessary for a child's social and cognitive competences. The process is substantiated by a new conception of (self-)education culture while conceiving a child as a participant and a partner of (self-)education. In the education documents



of LR, the quality is conceived as a purpose in the sense of perfection of education process, for whose realization the sum of external conditions is important, such as: child's care, the realization of care, the security of natural as well as socio-cultural rights. One of such conditions is the effective management of preschool institution as an organization which is aimed at the relationships with parents and society. The quality is not contextualized as a modern value of pre-school education whose expression in the reality is conceived as a condition for a child's successful (self-)education.

### **3.1.2. The experience of service providers (teachers and heads) of pre-school education while assessing the quality of services of education aimed at parents' needs**

The teachers of pre-school education were given the questions in order to ascertain the features which help them to decide about the efficiency of the system of service quality management of pre-school education; by what means it would be possible to improve the service quality of pre-school education and what additional services would be possible to provide for parents and children. After the analysis of the content of propositions by means of the content analysis method their categories and subcategories were generalized and presented.

The heads of pre-school education institutions do not emphasize the service quality and its management, but all their attention pay to the quality of work of pre-school institution. The teachers conceive the development of the quality of pre-school education as the development of material resources, i.e. the supply of training aids and the sufficient security of state financing. A big attention is paid to the recruiting of additional staff. In summarizing the teachers' opinion about the possibilities of the additional services provided for the parents and children, it is possible to state that there are not enough services, especially provided for the children, in the institutions of pre-school education. The teachers, after the analysis of the consumers' (parents' and children's) needs, especially emphasize additional services for children by parents' request: artistic training, specialist's help, foreign language teaching and children's sports activity. The teachers suggest the heads of pre-school education and founders to orient towards the parents' employment and accordingly to solve the services of children's care and education, i.e. to establish evening and weekend activity groups.

The heads of the pre-school education institutions were given three questions. Their aim was to ascertain the heads' responsibility for the quality of the service of pre-school education; according to what features the heads judge about the quality of the services of pre-school education and by what means to develop the management system of the service quality of pre-school education. After conducting the content analysis of collected propositions, their categories and subcategories were distinguished. It is possible to state that the heads' conception

is explicated the most significantly: the responsibility for the whole activity of institution. The heads conceive that they have the least experience in quality management and service management. As the most important criteria characterizing the quality of the services of pre-school education the heads emphasize the following: child's knowledge and skills, child's development of competences, child's advancement and achievement, child's maturity for school, child's emotional state, child's requirement of social and emotional needs as well as parents' involvement and participation. It is possible to state that the heads conceive the development of the management system of the service quality of pre-school education as the elaboration of service network and emphasize that a child is the main subject (i.e. a service consumer). The heads relate the possibilities of service network development with artistic training and the recruiting of specialist staff in order to help a child. They relate the possibilities of service development with teachers' and heads' teaching, qualification and the development of material facilities. The heads see the meaningfulness in the management of service quality of education, i.e. enlargement of state financing, reduction of documentation, enlargement of specialists' help of education department. Moreover, the heads indicate the service elaboration of private education as well as payment increase for the services provided to a child and family as the possibilities of system management of pre-school education.

### **3.1.3. The correspondence between the services of pre-school education and parents' needs as well as expectations**

The parents whose children attend the institutions of pre-school education were given the questions in order to ascertain what services the parents wish in the institution of pre-school education and what are their expectations related to the development of children's education quality. After the analysis of the content of propositions by means of the content analysis method, their categories and subcategories were generalized and proposed.

To sum up, it is possible to state that in parents' wishes the significant elaboration of service network is in the following sectors: children's education (especially artistic), children's sports education, children's self-service as well as foreign language teaching. The parents also wish additional services which are related to specialists' help to a child and have influence to a child as a process participant. For example, they do not indicate a speech therapist's service as it does not exist now, but propose the specialists' services which are now rarely provided such as a psychologist and a social worker. In parents' view, child's education is a continuous process, so it should not be interrupted during the summer as a child is left without a specialists' help. The parents relate the quality of pre-school education to the organization of education process, the quality of the content of knowledge and skills and all this relate to the process itself which

has to be creative. The parents orient themselves to the final result – child’s preparation for school and to the formation of qualitative conditions in the educational environment. However, their expectations are not related to their as service consumers’ needs, their participation and the presentation of information. The parents while stating their expectations about the development of the quality of pre-school education orient themselves towards a child, but not towards himself/herself as a service consumer.

### **3.2. Quantitative research: service providers’ and consumers’ knowledge of pre-school education as well as the experience while assessing the quality of service**

#### **3.2.1. The empirical knowledge of service providers’ (teachers’ and heads’) related to the system of service quality management and consumers of pre-school education**

In the first stage of the research, while applying the method of questionnaire, it was strived to investigate *the empirical knowledge of service providers’ (teachers’ and heads’) related to the system of quality management and consumers*, i.e. to establish the respondents’ knowledge related to the understanding of quality and management; the conditions and functions of quality management; to identify the features of quality management system that are characteristic to the institution of pre-school education; to ascertain the understanding of parents as consumers of pre-school education service and to emphasize their needs.

The results of the conducted research have revealed that the heads of the institutions of pre-school education relate *the quality conception* to the usefulness of provided services, oneness and accordance with the aim; meanwhile the teachers conceive the quality conception as the correspondence to the requirements of provided services, their oneness and changes. The heads consider the conditions of successful quality management as the continuous range of interrelated activities meanwhile the teachers claim that this process is determined by the structural elements of institution as well as the unity of activity processes. Furthermore, the providers of pre-school education service conceive differently the functions which determine the successful quality management as well, as the teachers relate the quality management to such functions as organization and planning while the heads emphasize motivation and planning. In accordance to the opinion of pre-school education institutions as well as teachers’ opinion, the most significant management conceptions are the properly managing persons as well as the development of relations with external world.

The heads of pre-school education institutions consider *the features characteristic to the system of quality management* as the perfect conduction of employees’ responsibilities; however, they do not conceive at all the permanent development of a child’s upbringing as the feature characteristic to the quality management system of pre-school education institution. Meanwhile,

the teachers consider a child's permanent development of upbringing as the most important feature characteristic to the system of quality management of pre-school education institution, though, as the heads, they pay little attention to the requirements of consumers' needs and expectations.

The heads, while defining the conception of quality, emphasize *the consumers' needs* and their requirements. Not only the heads, but also the teachers are concerned about parents' proposals and decisions concerning the development and management of institution, as they conceive them not only as the consumers of pre-school education service, but also as the members of community. Moreover, the teachers and heads consider the latter as the consumers of pre-school education service: the ones whose needs are the quality and price of pre-school education service.

### **3.2.2. The consumers' (parents') knowledge related to the system of pre-school education quality and the experience of participation**

In order to assess comprehensively the system of quality management of pre-school education, in the research, not only the service providers, but also the consumers (parents) are used for the purpose of investigation. On the basis of the method of questionnaire, *the service consumers' (parents) viewpoint to the system of quality management and consumers was revealed*, i.e. their knowledge related to the conception of quality and management was revealed; the functions of quality management; the features of quality management system that are characteristic to the institution of pre-school education were identified; parents' needs as service consumers of pre-school education were ascertained; the means that enable the latter to take part in the quality management processes of institution.

After the assessment of parents' opinion, it is possible to state *that the consumers conceive the quality* as an economical usefulness of the service though they do not relate the requirements of the consumers' needs to the conception of quality. The consumers (parents) of pre-school education service see the close interaction of the functions determining the quality management (planning, organization, motivation, coordination, and control), only the motivation and organization, according to their opinion, are not enough correlated in management functions in the preschool education institution. In accordance to the viewpoint of the parents as service consumers of pre-school education, the essential constituents of management conceptions is the observance of the rules of law while properly implementing strategic decisions and envisaging the direction.

On the basis of the research results, it is possible to state that the service consumers (parents) of education relate *the system of quality management* of institution to their as

consumers' requirements purposeful establishment, educators' work efficiency as well as they emphasize those features characteristic to the system of quality management.

On the grounds of the research results, it is possible to presume that for *parents as service consumers* the services of informational-communicative and wellness are important that are provided by the teachers of pre-school education, though the parents not always identify themselves as the community members of pre-school education institution. Moreover, in the processes of quality management of pre-school education institutions, the parents generally take part while making suggestions and expressing their own opinions during the meetings.

### **3.2.3. The teachers', heads' and parents' experience while assessing the quality of children's (self-)education in the preschool institutions**

In the second stage of the research, on the basis of the method of questionnaire, *the quality of children's (self-)education process was assessed* in relation to the teachers', heads', and parents' experience: the essential aims of pre-school education were emphasized; the features characterizing the quality of the educators' and heads' work; the factors determining the quality of communication between the educators of preschool institutions and parents were identified; the means and forms informing the parents.

On the basis of the research results, it is possible to presume that the heads consider the following *most important aims and objectives of pre-school education*: child's communication, thinking and emotionality; for the teachers the most important aims and objectives are child's communication and collaboration, psychophysical wellness as well as the further successful education in school. Meanwhile, for the parents the most important aims and objectives of pre-school education are child's education of communication and emotionality.

The heads of preschools emphasize such *features characterizing the quality of educators' activities*: the upbringing of communication skills as well as the activity in nature. According to the parents' opinion, the most important features describing the quality of teachers' activities are teachers' care about children's wellness, the assessment of education achievements.

On the basis of the research results, it is possible to state that for the teachers and the parents the information given to parents is one of the most important *features describing the quality of heads' activity*. The teachers also emphasize the heads' capacity to encourage the parents to get involved into pre-school activity, take part in the self-government of institution as well as expeditiously react to parents' remarks and offers. According to the parents' opinion, the features characterizing the quality of heads' work are the following: the acquaintance with the activity aims of institution, the programmes, the projects as well as the outcome of efficiency and productivity of preschool institution.

The results of the conducted research revealed that for the heads, teachers and parents one of the most significant factors determining *the quality of educators and parents collaboration* is the benevolent parents' communication and participation in the activity of institution. The heads and teachers also emphasize the information provided by the educators and the recommendations for parents. Meanwhile for the parents such things as the involvement into preschool activity and collaboration are important. The most effective features of the parents' involvement into collaboration processes are the following: preschool specialists' help to the parents as well as the opportunities to take part in the activities of the team.

It is possible to state that for the teachers, heads and parents whose children attend the preschool *the most effective means of informing the parents* is by the telephone. The heads and teachers also emphasize the individual way informing the parents – the individual leaflet in written form, though for the parents the significant are such informing ways as the information via e-mail and the allocation of information during the seminars. Mostly the teachers and the heads provide the parents with information in the institutions of pre-school education.

#### **3.2.4. The assessment of service quality of pre-school education in accordance to consumers' view**

In the third stage of the research, while applying the method of questionnaire, the service consumers' (parents'/foster-parents') view to the pre-school education service is revealed, i.e. their opinions related to the services provided in the preschools as well as the quality are ascertained; the financial sources of preschools; upbringing environments, territories, the appropriateness of buildings for children's activities, upbringing and safety; the factors influencing the choice of a preschool.

The research revealed that in the institution of pre-school education it is strived to implement the principle of complex help to a child and his/her family, i.e. the principle which guarantees the diversity of provided services, quality and helps to satisfy the consumers' (children's and parents') increasing needs: the most qualitative services of pre-school education are child's preparation for school, education of ethno-culture and wellness, children's with special needs education, the integration of social disjuncture, nourishment as well as a child's care and parents' opinion are the most important social services provided in a preschool. The parents consider the information about a child's education, achievements and the activities of institution as the most qualitative informative-communicative services; from cultural-recreational services the parents point out the organization of events, festivals, excursions as well as the organization of free-time; according to parents, the medical workers, speech therapist and psychologist provide the most qualitative special help in the institution of pre-school education.

The main sources of financing of pre-school education are the founder of institution and the parents whose children attend a pre-school. The latter are not satisfied with the services for which the parents pay themselves provided by the teachers of the pre-school education institutions, thus they would agree to pay for more expensive or additional services, but they should be more qualitative.

In the institution of pre-school education, the role of educational environment and the significance to the development of a child's personality are conceived. The educational environment of the group corresponds to children's age and needs, a good microclimate in a group is developed. The territory of a pre-school is safe for a child as it is away from traffic. The accommodation intended for children's occupation and education is located appropriately as the early age groups are equipped in the ground floor of a pre-school. The corridors of a preschool are adapted for children's activities, sports and music halls are spacious and correspond to children's number.

It is possible to state that parents' decision to choose a definite preschool is determined by its good image in a society as well as the qualitative services of education.

## CONCLUSIONS

*The analysis of scientific literature and documents regulating pre-school education of the Republic of Lithuania and the data of empirical research allows to formulate the conclusions which are scientifically and empirically significant and allows to research the modeling of service quality of pre-school education through parents-consumers' needs.*

1. Summarizing **various conceptions related to the service quality management of pre-school education** and the research of consumers' needs, functions of services, their assessments and the theories of orientation to consumers' behaviour, it is possible to state:

- The pre-school education is the initial stage of education system. It is also ascribed to the type of institution representing the public (welfare) interest and implements its inherent functions. So the services of pre-school education depend on the model of social welfare which is chosen by family and child, because the institution of pre-school education protects a child's early education and is the organization providing the services to a family and which is oriented to service consumer (parents and children). The main service consumers are parents, because a family is responsible for a child's education and the institution of pre-school education provides it with specialized and professional services in the sphere of child's education;
- In managerial, sociological and educational investigations there is no united scientific explication related to the conception of quality and service quality. A variety of opinions exists, however, many scientists think that namely such situation encourages the necessity of communication and agreement on the quality of senses as well as the situations of orientation to reality. The conception of service quality of pre-school education mostly is explained on the basis of general managerial theories which are applied to both general management and educational (applied) management;
- In the documents regulating pre-school education of the Republic of Lithuania, the quality of pre-school education, service quality and consumer's conceptions are not concretized. Thus while theoretically substantiating the process of modeling of service quality management of pre-school education it is purposeful to apply general, substantiating the quality conceptions, such as: management of public quality, management of quality of organizations' activities, management of service quality, etc. Both the principles of service quality management (generality, reliability, stability, etc.) and the general principles of quality management (team work, creation of quality standards, measurement of quality, development of



quality, etc.) are employed. Moreover, it is necessary to conceive the modeling of service quality management as a process and a system where all factors (external and internal) influencing the quality of pre-school education and its management are functioning;

- The service quality of pre-school education may be assessed with reference to the criteria of effectiveness and the levels of assessment of service quality as well as orienting to other qualitative features of service provision (competence, confidence, helpfulness, span of process, accuracy) and also according to the mission of institution, vision, aims, objectives and ways of financing;
- The institution of pre-school education while striving to provide qualitative services must identify different parents' (team and individual) needs, expectations, experience of participation, values and involve them into the educational activity and creation of institution of pre-school education, motivate collaboration with service providers. The basis of collaboration is made of agreement on the features of service quality of education and principles of management modeling as the service of pre-school education and its product (quality of education) are determined by many factors (external and internal) as well as by "hard"/material and "soft"/ human resources.

2. **The empirical research, which was conducted on the basis of qualitative and quantitative interrelationship**, allowed to formulate the conclusions related to the modeling of service quality of pre-school education:

2.1. While contextualizing the quality of service and the consumers' conceptions the qualitative **analysis of the documents regulating the pre-school education of the Republic of Lithuania** is significant:

- The quality is defined as a diversity of social and cultural conditions necessary for the modernization of (self-)education in modern institutions, though it is not contextualized as a value of pre-school education, the expression of which may become a condition for a child's successful (self-)education;
- The aim of pre-school education – acquisition of child's social and cognitive competences is especially emphasized. The latter process is substantiated by the conception of culture of new (self-) education conceiving a child as a participant of (self-)education and partner; however, there is a lack for interrelationship between the result of (self-)education and process, the importance of their interrelationship for the quality is not sufficiently emphasized as well as the

valuable context of pre-school education;

- The conception of child's competence is conceived as a result of (self-)education which is achieved through educational activity and the basis is made of child's world cognition as well as the formation of conditions necessary for the dispersion of his/her natural power;
- For the quality of services of pre-school education as a purpose of perfection of education process the unity of rights' security of child's care, care realization, natural as well as socio-cultural is getting significant;

**2.2. On the basis of the results of qualitative research,** the following conclusions related to service providers' (heads' and teachers') experience while assessing the quality of pre-school education oriented to parents' needs as well as the correspondence between service of education and Consumers' (parents') needs and expectations could be drawn:

**2.2.1. The contexts of expression of heads' experience:**

- *The efficiency of the system of service quality management* is substantiated by the quality of (self-)education which is oriented to a child: the result of education, a child's maturity for school, (self-)education of competences, the satisfaction of social and emotional child's needs, the quality of pedagogical collaboration with a child. A child is conceived as the main participant of education process; his *as consumer's* needs are emphasized. The parents are ascribed with the function of *participation* in the management of quality while identifying them as *partners*, but not as *consumers*. The features of service quality of pre-school education, first of all, are related to human resources, not especially emphasizing "hard"/ material.
- *The possibilities of development of service quality of pre-school education* are related to both internal and internal resources of service quality management. The internal resources are penetrated in the following spheres: the development of service network, the enlargement of service accessibility of artistic education and specialist's help (speech therapist and psychologist); the decrease of the number of children in groups, the development of heads' and teachers' qualification, the development of material facilities. The following resources of service quality management are emphasized: the enlargement of financing and the help by specialists from education department, decrease of the amount of documents, the development of the network of private educational institutions. It is oriented to the following features of service quality: stability, reliability of material and

human resources, accessibility, competence, and convenience.

- The responsibility is taken for the whole activity and quality of institution. The responsibility is conceived as an official function of managerial character. The necessity of service quality management is not emphasized. This function is not pointed out as especially important for the management of quality of institution.

#### 2.2.2. **The contexts of expression of teachers' experience:**

- *The efficiency of the system of service quality management of pre-school education* is related to both the quality of teachers' work and the quality of the whole community's work in the sphere of child's education that is realized through the effectiveness of the realization of education programmes. Both the necessity of the modeling of service quality and its management, while orienting to parents as consumers, is not emphasized. The attention is paid to the quality of service of preschool institution in general, but not to management and modeling of service quality.
- *The possibilities of development of service quality of education are related to the development of "hard"/ material resources: the supply with teaching aids, the enlargement of state financing, the increase of staff.* The possibilities of development of *human* resources, such as the development of pedagogical-managerial competences of the staff, the innovation of education process while applying new knowledge, etc. are not emphasized.
- It is indicated that *it is necessary to develop the following additional services of pre-school education: children's artistic and sport education, language teaching, the enlargement of specialists' help (speech therapist's and psychologist's)* It is emphasized that the heads, and establishers of institutions of pre-school education while developing the services should orient to parents' employment in the work market. In accordance to this, they should offer new services of children's care and education to parents and children. It is pointed out that it is necessary to establish *evening and weekend groups for children*. It is oriented to the accessibility and meaningfulness of service quality for parents as consumers as well as the necessity of dialogue with them that relates to the modeling of service quality management while orienting to parents' needs.

#### 2.2.3. **The correspondence between the service of pre-school education and consumers' (parents') needs and expectations:**

- *The parents relate the quality of pre-school education to the development of the*

*network of additional services.* It is suggested to pay attention to the following spheres of services: children's artistic and sport education, language teaching and the enlargement of accessibility of child specialists' help. A new sphere of services is indicated for the heads of preschool institutions and teachers: the development of programmes of children's occupation during summer holidays by means of establishing for them the groups of development of self-service skills. The parents' as service consumers' expectations are related to innovative, additional services in the sphere of children's education as well as the guides of quality development of institutions of pre-school education, such as the continuity of activity during summer while assuring the possibilities of interrelationship between parents' rest and work.

- *The expectations* are related to the quality of institution of pre-school education and the quality of its employees' work. The quality of management of institution as well as the quality of staff's work are emphasized that is related not only to formal criteria of work, heads' and teachers' qualification, but also to valuable-cultural features of service quality: interrelationship, children's care, a more intensive care of child health, esthetic and hygienic environment of institution.

2.3. **On the basis of the results of quantitative research,** the following conclusions related to the service providers' (heads' and teachers') and consumers' (parents') knowledge and experience while assessing the quality of service of pre-school education could be drawn:

2.3.1. **The knowledge of service providers' (heads' and teachers') of pre-school education** about the system of service quality management and consumers:

- The heads relate the *quality* to the economical usefulness of services, oneness as well as correspondence to the aim, the teachers conceive it as services' correspondence to requirements, their oneness and changes of services, thus heads and teachers should agree on the conception which is applied in the institution of pre-school education as well as to project the possibilities of modeling of quality management perceiving this process as a system;
- The heads emphasize *a successful development of quality management* as a continuous system of interrelated activities and emphasize the planning and motivation as the main functions determining a successful management. The teachers relate a successful development of quality with the structural elements of organization, such as the unity of activity processes and the analysis of

problems. They consider that the planning of aims, taking a decision and communication proceed while performing the functions of planning and organizing. Thus the service providers (heads and teachers), while modeling the management of quality, should agree on what educational principles as management of socio-cultural service they will guide;

- Service providers (heads and teachers) state that *parents are not only the consumers of service of pre-school education, but also the members of community*, so their proposed suggestions and decisions related to the development and management of activity of institution are especially significant for the modeling of quality management. Both teachers and parents assess the parents as service consumers , whose the most important needs are quality and price of services (informational-communicative and children's health).

2.3.2. **The service consumers' (parents') knowledge of pre-school education** about the system of quality management and the experience of participation:

- The parents relate *quality* to the economical usefulness of services, oneness as well as the correspondence to the aim. Thus both heads and parents equally conceive the conception of quality in this way it is possible to model the quality of services in a more successful way and implement the model of social welfare of society;
- The parents envisage a close interrelationship of functions determining a *successful management of quality*, such as: planning, organization, motivation, and coordination. So it is possible to state that the consumers similar to providers have knowledge in the sphere of the processes of quality management, so their reciprocal agreement on the modeling of service quality as a product of public welfare is managerially significant from the point of view of management;
- The parents relate the *system of quality management* with the establishment of expediency of their as service consumers' needs of pre-school education, the efficiency of teachers' work and emphasize the following features inherent to quality: the qualitative realization of purpose and mission of institution of pre-school education, the consumers' need satisfaction.

2.3.3. **Heads' teachers' and parents' experience** while assessing the quality of education service:

- *The heads and teachers indicate the most important aims and objectives of pre-*

*school education* such as a child's communication and self-control of emotions, the teachers emphasize a child's communication and collaboration, psychophysical health and his/her successful further leaning. Thus, it is possible to state, that a success of child's (self-) education, the realization of aims and objectives depend on heads', teachers' and parents' reciprocal agreement and active parents' participation in the processes of child's (self-)education;

- The heads describe *the quality of teachers' work of pre-school education* by the following features: the education of children's communication skills and the activity in nature; the parents indicate teachers' care of child's health as well as the assessment of his/her achievements.
- In accordance to teachers and parents, the features describing *the quality of heads' work of pre-school education institutions* in the qualitative informing of parents. For parents, the introduction with institution's aims, programmes, projects as well as the purpose of institution's effectiveness and productivity are also important;
- *The most significant factor determining the quality of collaboration between teachers and parents* both for service providers and consumers is benevolent parents' communication and participation in institution's activity as well as the information provided by teachers and suggestions for parents. The most effective ways of parents' involvement into the process of collaboration is specialists' and heads' kelp and the possibilities to take part in group's work;

**2.3.4. Service consumers'(parents') view** to the quality of services of pre-school education:

- *The most qualitative educational services* which are provided in the institution of pre-school education are a child's preparation for school, the upbringing of children's ethno-culture and wellness; *social services* – the education of children with special needs, the integration of social disjuncture, child's nourishment and care; the *informative-communicative* services is the supply of information to parents about child's education, achievements, and institution's work; *cultural-recreational services* is the organization of events, festivals, and excursions for children; *the services of specialized help for children* are the services provided by a medical worker, a speech therapist, and a psychologist;
- *The parents conceive the role and meaning of educational environment for the process of child personality*, in accordance to them, in the institution of pre-

school education ,the educational environment of a group corresponds to children's age and needs as well as a good microclimate is created in a group. The parents are satisfied with the institution's campus of pre-school education; the accommodation are located appropriately, the corridors are adapted for children's activities, sport and music halls are spacious and correspond to the number of children;

- *The main financing sources of pre-school education* are the establisher of educational institution and the parents whose children attend this institution. The latter would be able to pay for the additional or more expensive services provided by the teachers of pre-school education if they were more qualitative; the parents' decision to choose a definite institution of pre-school education is determined by its good image in a society as well as qualitative services of education.

### **Approbation of the research results**

*The publications on the dissertation topic in reviewed periodical editions:*

1. Juodaitytė A., Martišauskienė D. (2008). Ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės valdymo prasiūmų kontekstualizavimas Lietuvos respublikos švietimo dokumentuose. Mokytojo ugdymas / Teacher Education, 11 (2), p. 116-135.
2. Martišauskienė D. (2008). Pedagogų ir tėvų nuostatos į ikimokyklinio ugdymo tikslus, formas, metodus (atvejo analizė). Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai / Journal of Young Scientists, 4 (20), p. 186-191.
3. Martišauskienė D. (2008). Tėvų ir pedagogų požiūris į ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybę Kretingos lopšelyje –darželyje „Ažuoliukas“. Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai / Journal of Young Scientists, 1 (17), p. 89-92.
4. Juodaitytė A., Martišauskienė D. (2007). Darželio-mokyklos bendruomenės dalyvavimas kuriant organizacijos kultūrą: sąlygos ir galimybės. Pedagogika / Pedagogica 88, p. 19-24.

*The papers on the dissertation topic read in scientific conferences:*

1. Martišauskienė D. (2006). Bendruomenės narių požiūris į vaiko elgesio kultūrą mokykloje. Respublikinė mokslinė-praktinė konferencija. Pradinė mokykla ir darnus vystymasis: nuo teorijos iki praktikos. Mokslo darbų tezės. Klaipėda, p. 38-41.
2. Martišauskienė D. (2007). Mokyklų vidaus auditas - kokybės valdymo įrankis. Tarpdisciplininis diskursas socialiniuose moksluose: patirtis, galimybės ir ribos. Pranešimų santraukos. Kauno technologijos universitetas. p. 199-202

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# IKIMOKYKLINIO UGDYMO PASLAUGŲ KOKYBĖS VALDYMO MODELIAVIMAS TIRIANT TĖVŲ – VARTOTOJŲ POREIKIUS

## Reziumė

**Mokslinės problemos aktualumas.** Demokratinėje visuomenėje, įgyvendinančioje galimybių lygybę, švietimo tikslas leidžia plėtoti, žmonių pareigas ir gebėjimus, reikalingus šių individų asmeninių funkcijų visuomenėje realizavimui. Šia prasme didelė reikšmė skiriama ir ikimokykliniam ugdymui (Blackledge, Hunt, 1997). Ikimokykliniame amžiuje vyksta vaiko socializacija, kuri pasireiškia socialine branda ir brandinimo procesų kokybe. Mokslinių tyrimų duomenys (Bokhvin, 1996; Berchmann, 1995; Cooley, 1989) ir geriausių vaikų ugdymo įstaigų patirtis rodo, kad „vaikiškos“ veiklos ir „vaikiškų“ pasaulio pažinimo formų raidos logika (ypač jei yra suaugusiųjų išmintingai toleruojama) veda prie vaikų psichosocialinių savybių atsiradimo, ypač tokių, kaip mokėjimas bendrauti ir bendradarbiauti (Ivoškaitė, 2007). Tačiau ikimokyklinis ugdymas reikšmingas ne tik vaikams, jų sėkmingai socializacijai, bet ir tėvams, nes, vaikui pradėjus lankyti ikimokyklinę įstaigą, jo gyvenimas įgyja naujų prasmų. Savo gyvenimą jis turi dalinti į dvi iš esmės skirtingas socialines aplinkas – šeimą ir vaikų darželį (Dencik, 2005, p.81), nes socializacijos situacija, vaikui reiškia, jog šeima yra privataus, o ikimokyklinė įstaiga – viešojo socialinio gyvenimo aplinka. Vaikui, lankančiam ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigą, tenka taikytis prie šios situacijos ir prisiderinti prie kiekvienos iš jų atskirai bei siekti, kad jos taptų joms socialinio-kultūrinio gyvenimo erdve.

Ikimokyklinis ugdymas Lietuvoje įteisintas (Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo įstatymas, 2003; Lietuvos Respublikos Ikimokyklinio ugdymo koncepcija, 1989) kaip specifinė, savarankiška švietimo sistemos posistemė, integruojanti vaikų ugdymą šeimoje bei ikimokyklinėje įstaigoje humanistine kryptimi, skatinanti socialinį-kultūrinį įvairovės diegimą, demokratiškos gyvensenos principus. Ikimokyklinis ugdymas padeda vaikui kryptingai ugdytis, o šeimai sėkmingai derinti pareigas, leidžiančias dalyvauti darbo rinkoje ir veikų ugdyme. Labai svarbu, kad šeima žinotų kokios galimybės, kokios paslaugos ir kokios kokybės yra teikiamos ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigose (Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė, Kazlauskienė, 2009). Ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybė ir prieinamumas ypač svarbūs tolesniam vaikų mokymui(si), tačiau tėvų dalyvavimas vaiko ugdymo procesuose yra neatsiejama vaikų sėkmingo ugdymo(si) ir socializavimosi sąlyga. Todėl pagrindinis vaidmuo vaiko ugdyme tenka šeimai, o ikimokyklinis ugdymas yra kaip specializuotos pagalbos šeimai rūšis. Todėl Lietuvos ir užsienio mokslininkai visuomet ypatingą dėmesį skyrė šeimai ir jos vaidmeniui vaikų ikimokykliniame ugdyme, apimdami ir šeimos bendradarbiavimo (Monkevičienė, 1999, 2008; Kontautienė, 2000;

Dahlberg, Taguchi, 1994; Faberis, Mazlinskas, 1995) bei dalyvavimo vaikų ugdyme problemas (Gražienė, Rimkienė, 1993; Kaufman, Saifer, 1997; Juodaitytė, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003; Monkevičienė, 1999, 2008; Kontautienė, 2000; Ušeckienė, 2000; Andriekienė, Ruzgienė, 2001). Kiti mokslininkai gilinosi į vaiko socialinės-kultūrinės gerovės problemas šeimoje ir ikimokyklinėje įstaigoje (Fendler, Dahlberg, Hultqvist, 2001; Karash, 2002; Kabašinskaitė, 2007), nagrinėjo šeimos funkcijas, vaikų ir tėvų tarpusavio santykius, šeimos vaidmenį vaiko ugdyme, šeimos ir ikimokyklinio ugdymo institucijų sąveiką. Šios krypties tyrimuose vis labiau aktualizuojamas šeimos vaidmuo rengiant vaiką gyventi šiuolaikinės rinkos ekonomikos sąlygotų reiškinų įvairovėje, kurioje ne tik tėvai, bet ir vaikas tampa įvairių paslaugų (tiek materialųjų, tiek idealiųjų) vartotoju (Glinskienė, Skrudupaitė, 2005; Statt, 2003). Kiti autoriai (Statt, 2003; McLainghlin, 1997) analizuodami vaiko rengimo šiuolaikiniam ekonominiam, socialiniam, kultūriniam gyvenimui problemas ypač aktualizuoja ne tik šeimos bei ugdymo institucijų ryšį, bet ir sprendžia klausimą dėl tėvų (o ne tik vaikų) teisių raiškos ugdyme. Tėvų teisės ugdyme aiškinamos kaip fundamentalios, dominuojančios, nes tėvai gali apsispręsti dėl ugdymo turinio, tikslų, krypties, formos ar rezultatų. McLainghlin (1997) dar labiau konkretizuoja tėvų teises, nurodydamas, jog tėvai atlieka trejopo pobūdžio vaidmenis vaikų ugdymo įstaigose ir pagal tai tėvus suskirsto į tris grupes, teigdamas, jog tėvai yra ne tik sprendėjai, bet ir dalyviai bei advokatai, kurie yra suinteresuoti vaikų ugdymo kokybe ir prieinamumu.

Lietuvoje ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigos apibūdinamos kaip viešąsias paslaugas šeimai ir vaikui teikiančios institucijos (LR Švietimo įstatymas, 2003; LR Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003-2012 metų nuostatos, 2003; LR Ikimokyklinio ugdymo koncepcija, 1989). Tačiau nepakankamai orientuojamasi į tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikius bei juos atitinkančią kokybę. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybė taip pat nėra apibrėžiama kaip į vartotojus orientuota paslauga proceso ir rezultato prasme. Švietimo vadyboje tiriant vyresniųjų klasių mokinių poreikius ugdymo kokybei jau pradeda taikyti vartotojų elgesio tyrimų metodologiją (Barkauskaitė, Bruzgelevičienė, 2004). Mokslininkės nurodo, jog kokybė - „tai požymių visuma, leidžianti spręsti, kaip švietimo įstaiga, švietimo sistema ar atskiri jos posistemiai vykdo savo paskirčiai būdingus nacionalinius ir regioninius tikslus, atitinka ugdytinių vartotojų poreikius“ (Barkauskaitė, Bruzgelevičienė, 2004, p.13). Tačiau ikimokyklinėje įstaigoje vaikas yra itin priklausomas nuo šeimos ir todėl tėvai tampa pagrindiniais paslaugos vartotojais, kurios kokybė yra grindžiama „vartotojų poreikiais ir lūkesčiais“ (Garvin, 1988). Lietuvos mokslininkai (Monkevičienė, 2001, Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė, Kazlauskienė, 2009) teigia, jog tėvai itin domisi ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslauga, kuri tampa paklausi ir apima vis jaunesnio ikimokyklinio

amžiaus vaikus (net nuo vienerių metų).

Šiuolaikinės modernios ikimokyklinės įstaigos, kaip organizacijos, siekia teikti kokybiško ugdymo paslaugas ir tenkinti vaikų, tėvų poreikius, kurie yra kaip „konkretūs vartotojų norai, suvokimas, jog kažko trūksta arba yra gerai“ (Pociūtė, 2007), o lūkesčiai siejami su troškimais, nukreiptais į perspektyvą. Todėl bet kuri organizacija kokybės vadybos teoretikų (Harvey, Green, 1993) nuomone, turi būti visuomet suinteresuota vartotojo poreikiais, lūkesčiais, nes tuomet įgauna jų pasitikėjimą ir lojalumą. Švietimo organizacija apibūdinama kaip paslaugų organizacija (Sallis, Van Damme, 2002), tačiau kiekvienos švietimo įstaigos, tarp jų ir ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės suvokimas gali būti skirtingas, nes kiekviena joje vykstančius ugdymo procesus vertina savaip (Valiuškevičiūtė ir kt., 2008). Praktiniu, vadybos požiūriu (Ališauskas, 2004) konkretus kokybės turinys yra *susitarimas*. Susitarimo subjektai (paslaugos teikėjai, vartotojai, politikai ir kt.) atstovauja skirtingiems interesams ir jų susitarimai dėl paslaugų kokybės yra taip pat skirtingai suvokiami. Tačiau šio susitarimo pasiekimui trukdo šeimos vaidmens ir dalyvavimo ikimokykliniame ugdyme apibrėžtumo stoka. Tiek tėvai, tiek ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigos vadovai ir pedagogai iki šiol orientavosi į *tradicinį šeimos ir ikimokyklinės įstaigos sąveikos modelį*. Todėl tėvai pedagogų kvietimą dalyvauti vaikų ugdymo procese dažnai suprasdavo kaip pedagogams privalomos veiklos delegavimą jiems (Juodaitytė, 2001). Todėl iki šiol lieka neapibrėžtas ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų bendradarbiavimo su šeima modelis. Taip pat neišsiaiškinta, kokią vietą ikimokyklinio ugdymo sistemoje užima šeima. Tėvų poreikiai ikimokyklinio ugdymo srityje kinta tiek turiniu, tiek forma, nes keičiasi tėvų užimtumo rinka ir pats šeimos modelis. Vaikų ugdymu pradeda domėtis abu tėvai, papildydami šeimos poreikių turinį ikimokyklinio amžiaus vaikų ugdyme.

Paslaugų kokybę valdo ir ją modeliuoja teikėjas (Pociūtė, 2007; Barkauskaitė, Bruzgelevičienė, 2004; Ališauskas, 2004). Todėl yra labai svarbi ikimokyklinės įstaigos vadovų, pedagogų, kitų darbuotojų darbo etika bei kompetencijos vartotojų poreikių pažinime. Tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikiai ir norai paslaugai yra gan individualūs ir todėl iš anksto ne visada yra numatomi. Jie priklauso nuo įstaigos strategijos, ugdymo programų, finansinių paslaugos įkainių ir kitų veiksnių, svarbių paslaugos kokybei. Švietimo institucijos veiklos kokybės būklė, jos analizė efektyvina grįžtamąjį ryšį tarp ugdymo proceso dalyvių, didina jų asmeninę atsakomybę už teikiamų paslaugų kokybę, padeda jiems suvokti ikimokyklinio ugdymo instituciją kaip lanksčią ir atvirą kaitai organizaciją (Gumuliauskienė, Gedminienė, 2008). Paslaugos kokybės vertinimas yra jos požymių lyginimas su vartotojo išsakytais norais ir lūkesčiais (Pociūtė, 2007). Tik tuo atveju, jos nuomone, bet kuri organizacija gali konkuruoti su kitomis, į ją panašiomis.

Užsienio šalyse egzistuoja kitokia nei Lietuvoje ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės valdymo praktika. Todėl kitaip suprantama ir šios įstaigos veiklos kokybės esmė. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslauga vertinama kaip *visuomenės socialinės gerovės rodiklis*. Keliami įvairūs vaiko ugdymo ir socialinių paslaugų finansavimo klausimai, siūlomi įvairūs finansavimo modeliai (visų pirma, konsumerinis), nuolat didinamas ir valstybinis finansavimas ankstyvajam ikimokykliniam vaikų ugdymui, o valstybinės ir privačios įstaigos funkcionuoja lygiaverčiais, tačiau konkurencingumą skatinančiais pagrindais (Žalimienė 2003). Kuriami vaikų kasdieninę priežiūrą, globą ir ugdymą garantuojantys modeliai (pavyzdžiui, vaikų priežiūrėtojai, auklės, atvykstantys į namus, poįstaiginės žaidimų, globos, mokymosi grupės ir kt.). Ryškėja valstybės finansuojamų ugdymo institucijų darbo kokybės sistemingo inspektavimo tendencija. Akcentuojama sąveika tarp šeimų, ugdymo bei socialines paslaugas teikiančių institucijų ir bendruomenių. Todėl tradicinė ankstyvojo institucinio vaikų ugdymo kokybės samprata keičiasi iš esmės, nes kokybė yra siejama su vartotojo (tėvų, vaiko, visuomenės) poreikių ir lūkesčių įvairove bei jų tenkinimu.

Lietuvoje vaikų ugdymo paslaugos ir jos kokybės, valdymo bei atitikimo vartotojų poreikiams klausimai ištirti nepakankamai. Šioje srityje yra tik pavienių mokslininkų darbai, kuriuose dažniausiai nagrinėjami ikimokyklinės įstaigos kokybės funkcionavimo klausimai (Monkevičienė, 2001, 2009; Gražienė, 1993). Tačiau šios problemos buvo išsamiai išnagrinėtos ŠMM užsakomuosiuose tyrimuose 2004-2009 metais. Juose buvo ištirtos ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos pasirinkimo galimybės Lietuvoje (Jonutytė, Braslauskienė, Grinevičienė ir kt., 2004), nurodyti pasirinkimą ribojantys veiksniai, priežastys. Tyrėjų nuomone, vienas iš svarbiausių trukdžių paslaugos pasirinkimui yra neatitikimas tėvų poreikius jau net ankstyvajame amžiuje ugdyti vaikus ikimokyklinėse įstaigose. Išnagrinėta švietimo pagalbos rūšys šeimoms, auginančioms ikimokyklinio ir priešmokyklinio amžiaus vaikus (Bužinskas, Filipavičienė, Mataikaitė ir kt., 2006). Nustatyta, kokios šeimos pagal socialines grupes turi galimybes gauti vaikų ugdymo paslaugas ir švietimo pagalbą ir kokios pagalbos rūšys yra labiausiai jiems priimtinos. Kitu tyrimu „Švietimo pagalba šeimoms, turinčioms 1-6 metų vaikus“ (2008) nustatyta ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos (kaip švietimo pagalbos) teikimo situacija Lietuvoje. Ištirtos tėvų, globėjų nuostatos dėl šios paslaugos *aktualumo, prieinamumo ir reikalingumo*. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų įvairovės problemą bei paslaugų atitikimą visuomenės lūkesčiams tyrė bei išanalizavo O. Monkevičienė, V. S. Glebuviene, M. Jonilienė ir kt. (2008). Mokslininkės nustatė ikimokyklinio ugdymo programų įvairovę, jų atitikimą ugdymo kokybės reikalavimus bei nurodė teikiamų ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų spektrą, finansavimo šaltinius. Ikimokyklinio priešmokyklinio ugdymo kokybės būklė ištirta siejant ją su gyventojų

informavimo turiniu bei formomis (Juodaitytė, Gaučaitė, Kazlauskienė ir kt., 2008). Šiame tyrime buvo nustatyti tėvų, kurių vaikai lanko ikimokyklinės ugdymo įstaigas *poreikiai informacijos turiniui, kokybei bei švietimo pagalbai*. Tačiau Lietuvoje iki šiol pasigendama ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės bei jos valdymo sisteminių tyrimų, atsakančių į klausimą, kaip besikeičiančiomis sąlygomis galima modeliuoti paslaugų kokybės valdymo procedūras tiriant tėvų, kaip paslaugų vartotojų, poreikius?

Taip pat nėra teorinės ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų ir vartotojo sampratos, todėl sunku apibrėžti ir paslaugos kokybės valdymo modeliavimo ypatybes, orientuojantis į tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikius. LR švietimo veiklą reglamentuojančių dokumentų (LR Švietimo įstatymas, 2003; LR Valstybinės strategijos 2003-2012 metų nuostatos, 2003, LR Ikimokyklinio ugdymo koncepcija, 1989; LR Vaikų teisių pagrindų įstatymas, 1996; LR Specialiojo ugdymo įstatymas, 1989; LR Neformaliojo vaikų švietimo įstatymas, 2005) analizė A. Juodaitytės, D. Martišauskienės (2009) teigimu, yra orientuota į galutinį rezultatą, kuris suprantamas kaip vaiko kompetencijų (socialinės, sveikatos saugojimo ir stiprinimo, pažinimo, komunikavimo ir kt.) ugdymas. Nenurodomas paslaugų turinys bei neatsakoma į klausimą, kaip paslaugų kokybė gali būti tiriama taikant vartotojų elgsenos, poreikių bei lūkesčių metodologinių prieigų įvairovę. Dėl nepakankamo teorinio bei empirinio ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos, jos teikėjų ir vartotojų santykių pagrindimo nėra analizuojamos ir kokybės valdymo modeliavimo galimybės tiriant tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikius. **Todėl kyla probleminis klausimas: Kaip galima modeliuoti ikimokyklinių ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymą, tiriant tėvų - vartotojų poreikius?**

**Tyrimo objektas:** tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikių tyrimas ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės modeliavimo kontekste.

**Tyrimo tikslas:** ištirti tėvų, kaip paslaugų vartotojų, poreikius ir nustatyti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimo ypatybes.

**Tyrimo uždaviniai:**

4. Analizuojant mokslinę literatūrą (edukologinę, sociologinę, politologinę, vadybinę, psichologinę) teoriškai pagrįsti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimą tiriant tėvų - vartotojų poreikius.

5. Parengti ir pagrįsti empirinio tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikio ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugoms tyrimo metodologiją bei ją atitinkantį instrumentarijų, leidžiantį nustatyti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimo ypatybes.

6. Remiantis teorinio ir empirinio disertacinio tyrimo rezultatais, parengti rekomendacijas ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimui, tiriant tėvų-vartotojų poreikius.

**Tyrimo hipotezė:** tikėtina, kad parengus tėvų -vartotojų poreikių tyrimui tinkamą kiekybinio ir kokybinio tyrimo dermės dizainą bei jo instrumentus galima iširti tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikius bei jų pagrindu modeliuoti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės valdymą.

**Disertacinis tyrimas grindžiamas filosofinėmis, vadybinėmis teorijomis ir koncepcijomis:**

*Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimas* tiriant tėvų – vartotojų poreikius *grindžiamas filosofijos ir vadybos koncepcijomis, paradigminiu požiūriu* į paslaugos kokybės valdymo modeliavimą kaip procesą nuolat apeliuojant į tėvų / vartotojų poreikių tenkinimą bei jį *atitinkančiomis teorinėmis nuostatomis*:

*Socialinis interakcionalizmas* leidžia suprasti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjų (pedagogų, vadovų) bei paslaugų vartotojų (vaikų, tėvų) tarpusavio santykius kaip nuolatinę sąveiką, į kurią jie įsijungia per bendrą tikslą ir komunikacijos siekius. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo pedagogai verbalinės ir neverbalinės komunikacijos metu perduoda informaciją ugdytiniams ir jų tėvams. Taip pat vyksta ir grįžtamasis ryšys, nes socialinės komunikacijos pagrindu kuriamas ir keičiamas produktas (ugdymas), jo vertybės bei kuriamas socialinis naujumas, kuris yra reikšmingas komunikacijos dalyviams (vadovams, pedagogams, tėvams).

*Socialinio dalyvavimo* teorijos teiginių pagrindu galima teigti, jog tiek paslaugų teikėjai, tiek ir vartotojai (kaip ir kiekvienas žmogus) gali dalyvauti kasdienėje visuomenei svarbioje veikloje, kuriai priklauso ir ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslauga, bei plėtoti individualiai reikšmingus *jausmus, jų reiškimo būdus ar elgesį*. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos tyrimui yra svarbi Kar, Colman ir kt. (1988) teorinė samprata, jog bet kurio asmens dalyvavimas veikloje, kaip socialinėje reiškiasi aktyvumu, kuris yra svarbus ne tik kiekvienam asmeniškai, bet ir socialiniam veiksmui bei visuomenei, kuri šį veiksma patiki atskiriems individams, jų grupėms, kuriems priklauso tiek vartotojas (vartotojai), tiek ir tiekėjas (teikėjai). Asmens ar grupės socialinio dalyvavimo paslaugos teikimo ir gavimo procesuose aktyvumas kuria ir bendruomeniškumą, nes bendruomenė yra atvira tiek individo, tiek visuomenės poreikiams. Todėl tiek vartotojų, tiek ir paslaugos teikėjų socialinis suinteresuotumas paslaugos kokybe, valdymu turi būti jiems lygiavertės reikšmės veiklos, nes yra deleguotos visuomenės, todėl ir socialiai reikšmingas.

*Socialinio konstruktivizmo* teorija leidžia ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės valdymą grįsti teikėjų ir vartotojų požiūriu į jiems svarbių žinių procesą, akcentuojant ankstesnio patyrimo reikšmę ir žinias pritaikant naujose situacijoje. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės valdymas gali būti suvokiamas per socialinio mokymosi procesus (Durkheim, 1974;

Vygotsky, 1987), kurie leidžia išryškinti individo adaptacijos galimybes visuomenėje, išmokstant jam (jiems) atlikti tam tikrus socialinius vaidmenis (paslaugos tiekėjų, vartotojų) bei konstruojant jiems bendrą supratimą, kuris reiškia, *jog tik turėdami aiškų tikslą bei atsižvelgdami į ikimokyklinio ugdymo situaciją bei ją sąlygojančius išorinius, vidinius veiksnius jie gali ieškoti bendro susitarimo dėl ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės modeliavimo.*

*Visuotinės kokybės vadybos teorija* yra viena iš svarbiausių, leidžiančių pagrįsti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės vadybos modeliavimo proceso sistemingumą organizacijų veikloje (Vanagas, 2004; Ewaus, 2003; Zairi, Kaziliūnas, 2007; Zink, 2007; Mackay, Bitit ci, Maquize, Ates, 2008). Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės modeliavimo ypatybių pagrindime vadovautasi teorine samprata (Zairi ir Idris 2006), jog vienas iš svarbiausių šiuolaikinės organizacijos tikslų yra veiklos harmonizavimas, leidžiantis ieškoti tarpusavio dermės tarp produkto ir proceso kokybės, nes kokybė gali būti modeliuojama ir valdoma. Valdymo paradigma taikoma ir paslaugų (taip pat ir ikimokyklinio ugdymo) modeliavime, nes šiam procesui yra būdingos tokios prasmės, kaip suprantamumas, atsiskaitomybė ir atsakomybė (Garvare, Isaksson, Johansson, 2004, 2007; Bagdonienė, Galbuogienė, Paulavičienė, 2009).

*Organizacijos vadybos sistemų teorinė samprata sudaro galimybes* modeliuoti organizacijos politikos ir tikslų dermės procesą, nes kuriant kokybės valdymo sistemą vienas iš svarbiausių jos elementų yra *misijos kaip organizacijos egzistavimo prasmės išskyrimas, sisteminis ir procesinis* požiūris į valdymą, veiklos veiksmingumo procesų apibrėžtumas bei sąveikos su vartotoju nuolatinis užtikrinimas (Vilkas, 2005; Bagdonienė, Galbuogienė, Paulavičienė, 2009).

*Paslaugų kokybės valdymo teorija leidžia pagrįsti* ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugas kaip procesą, kurio turinį bei vyksmą įtakojo vartotojo poreikiai, lūkesčiai bei susitarimo tarp tiekėjo bei vartotojo galimybės dėl paslaugos kokybės (Albrecht, Zemke, 1987; Lehtinen, 1983; Wollet, Haywood – Famer, 1992). Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslauga šiuo pagrindu gali būti pagrindžiama ir kaip *pagalba vartotojui*, kai paslaugos teikėjas sąmoningai siekia ją transformuoti kaip vartotojui priklausantį produktą-gėrybę (Gadrey. 1996).

*Vartotojų poreikių tyrimas yra grindžiamas vartotojų elgsenos* metodologija (Virvilaitė, Banytė, 2000), kuri leidžia tyrime išsiaiškinti, kaip individai veikia tam tikromis su vartojimu susijusiomis sąlygomis bei kokie vidiniai, išoriniai veiksniai lemia vienokią ar kitokią jų elgseną.

*Ikimokyklinių ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimas* tiriant tėvų, kaip vartotojų, poreikius grindžiamas dviem filosofinėmis socialinių reiškinių aiškinimo *paradigmomis* – *normatyvine (pozityvistine) ir interpretacine (fenomenologine)*. Tai leidžia derinti tarpusavyje



dvi prieigas, pirmumą teikiant kiekybinių tyrimų metodams, kai informacija renkama apklausos būdu, nustačius statistiškai reprezentatyvią imtį. Interpretacinė vartotojų elgsenos tyrimų metodologija problemas leidžia nagrinėti platesniame kontekste, nes ji apibrėžia vartotojo individualizuoto apsisprendimo dėl paslaugos kokybės būtinumą.

*Sistemų teorija* sudaro pagrindą ikimokyklinės ugdymo paslaugos kokybės modeliavimo kaip sistemos apibūdinimui, nes jis iš tarpusavyje susijusių elementų, kai paslaugos teikėjas ir vartotojas orientuojasi į organizacijos misiją, tikslus, veiklos strategiją, kokybės, paslaugos valdymo sistemą, savybes, patikimumą garantuojančius požymius. Tuomet prieinamumas, pasikliovimas, patogumas, paslaugos išbaigtumas tampa svarbiais ir reikšmingais ne tik tam tikrose situacijose, bet ir nuolatiniame paslaugos gerinimo procese. Visa tai funkcionuoja kaip vieninga sistema, kurioje vieno segmento veikla veikia visos sistemos veiklą, nes šiai sąveikai būdingas abipusis poveikis ir priklausomybė (Bertalanffy, 1969; Klir, 1991).

#### **Disertacijoje taikomi metodai:**

1. *Mokslinės literatūros analizė ir metaanalizė*, leidžianti kontekstualizuoti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo esmę, identifikuoti tėvų, kaip paslaugų vartotojų, poreikius bei nustatyti paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimo galimybes.

2. *Kiekybinis ir kokybinis tyrimai* yra grindžiami sisteminiu požiūriu į mokslinį tyrimą, atskleidžiant kiekybinio ir kokybinio tyrimų sąsajas, pirmenybę teikiant kiekybiniam tyrimui, nes jis leidžia gauti plataus spektro rezultatus, būdingus platesnei paslaugos vartotojų ir teikėjų populiacijai, o kokybinis pateikia paslaugų kokybės valdymo individualių prasmų kontekstą.

3. *Kiekybinio tyrimo metodai*. Ikimokyklinių įstaigų teikėjams (pedagogams, vadovams) ir vartotojams (tėvams, kurių vaikai lanko ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigas) taikyta anketa su uždaro tipo klausimais. Jos pagalba siekta išsiaiškinti teikiamų ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo patirtį teikėjų bei vartotojų populiacijoje bei paslaugos vartotojų poreikių tipologiją. Kiekybiniame tyrime buvo taikyti aprašomieji ir daugiamačiai statistikos metodai, faktorinė koreliacinė analizės.

4. *Kokybinio tyrimo metodai*. Siekiant ištirti tėvų, kaip paslaugų vartotojų, poreikius buvo taikytas atviro tipo klausimynas, interpretaciniai, semantiniai klausimyno analizės metodai bei atlikta Lietuvos Respublikos ikimokyklinį ugdymą bei jo kokybę reglamentuojančių dokumentų *content* analizė, kurios pagrindu išsiaiškinti ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės valdymą kontekstualizuojantys švietimo politikos teiginiai.

**Disertacinis empirinis tyrimas atliktas:** Vakarų Lietuvos regione: Klaipėdos, Telšių, Tauragės apskrityse (2007m.-2009m.).

Kiekybiniame tyrime (*anketinėje apklausoje*) dalyvavo ikimokyklinių paslaugų teikėjų

*grupė, kurią sudarė:* įstaigų vadovai (130) bei pedagogai (340); paslaugos vartotojų grupė – tėvai (400), kurių vaikai lanko ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigas. Iš viso atsitiktiniu atrankos būdu apklausta 870 tiriamųjų.

Atviros anketos pagalba (kokybiniu metodu) išanalizuoti *content* analizės metodu ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos teikėjų (50 įstaigų vadovų ir 50 pedagogų) bei paslaugos vartotojų atsakymai (70 tėvų). Iš viso kokybiniame tyrime dalyvavo 170 tiriamųjų.

**Disertacijos tyrimas atliktas trimis etapais:**

*Disertacinio tyrimo proceso logikos schema* pateikta „*Tyrimo metodologija ir metodai*“ dalyje.

*I etapas* (2006 m. sausio- gruodžio mėn.). Tyrimo strategijos kūrimas. Sudarytas tyrimo dizainas. Analizuota mokslinė (edukologinė, sociologinė, politologinė, vadybinė, psichologinė) literatūra. Išskirti tyrimui aktualūs ikimokyklinio ugdymo požymiai; parinkti tyrimo metodai; nustatyti respondentų atrankos būdai ir imtis; numatyti duomenų bazės sudarymo principai. Kokybiškai išanalizuoti ikimokyklinį ugdymą reglamentuojantys dokumentai (2007 m. sausio – gegužės mėn.).

*II etapas* (2007 m. birželio – gruodžio mėn.). Tyrimo metodikos ir instrumentarijaus sudarymas. Parengtos anketos. Rengiant jas, buvo numatyti ugdymo ir socialinės realybės įvairovę bei problemas leidžiantys atskleisti klausimai. Kiekybinis tyrimas atliktas 2008 m. sausio – birželio mėn. Atlikta kiekybinio tyrimo duomenų analizė (2008 m. liepos – gruodžio mėn.).

*III etapas* (2009 m. sausio – gruodžio mėn.). Atliktas kokybinis tyrimas. Sumodeliuotas teikiamų ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo hipotetinis modelis, suformuluotos išvados ir rekomendacijos.

**Disertacijos tyrimo mokslinis-teorinis naujumas:** (1) Taikant bendrąsias kokybės vadybos ir švietimo kokybės vadybos koncepcijas (visuotinės kokybės vadybos, organizacijų veiklos kokybės vadybos) teoriškai pagrįsta ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybės valdymo samprata bei numatytos kokybės valdymo modeliavimo galimybės, suvokiant šį procesą kaip sistemą, kurioje funkcionuoja visi organizacijos veiklos kokybę bei jos valdymą įtakojuojantys veiksniai (išoriniai ir vidiniai). Jie įprasmina kokybės valdymo procesą ne tik per materialiuosius, bet ir žmogiškuosius išteklius; (2) Remiantis bendrosiomis paslaugos kokybės valdymo filosofinėmis teorijomis (ypač socialinio interakcionizmo, socialinio dalyvavimo) pagrįsta ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės teorinė samprata, aiškinant, jog kai vartotojas ir teikėjas yra nuolatinėje tarpusavio sąveikoje, tuomet paslaugų kokybės sampratos kiekybinis ir kokybinis (prasmų kontekstą) leidžia jiems tarpusavyje susitarti dėl paslaugos/produkto vartojimo,

patvarumo galimybių. Jas apsprendžia „kietieji“ ir „minkštieji“ organizacijos išteklių bei paslaugų tinklo savybės (prieinamumas, patogumas, pasikliovimas, paslaugumas, pasitikėjimas, patikimumas, kompetencija); (3) Teoriškai pagrįsta vartotojų poreikio tyrimo metodologija, taikant normatyvinės ir interpretacinės filosofijos prieigas, kai tarpusavio dermėje tiriami kiekybiniai bei kokybiniai paslaugos valdymo parametrai bei kontekstai; (4) Taikant sisteminių požiūrį į organizacijos socialinės gerovės (viešąjį) interesą atstovaujančią ikimokyklinio ugdymo institucijos teikiamą paslaugą pirmą kartą Lietuvoje jos kokybė yra grindžiama nuolat funkcionuojančių kokybiškų interakcinių sąveikų sistema tarp paslaugos teikėjo ir vartotojo, kurių tarpusavio susitarimas dėl paslaugos kokybės, kaip viešosios gerovės produkto, yra socialiai reikšmingas tiek bendruomenine, grupine tiek ir individualiaja (vartotojo) prasmėmis; (5) Taikant socialinio konstruktyvizmo prieigas žvelgiama į ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugą / produktą ir jį teikiančių- kuriančių asmenų vertybines intencijas į šią paslaugą, iš kurių viena svarbiausių yra nuolatinis mokymasis, siekiant inovatyvių žinių, ne tik apie produkto gamybos, jos teikimo procesus, bet ir vartotojui būdingą paslaugos kokybės sampratą filosofiją, atskleidžiančią ir kokybės valdymo modeliavimo galimybes.

**Praktinis disertacinio darbo reikšmingumas:** (1) Pirmą kartą Lietuvoje parengta ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės tyrimo strategija, sukurta kiekybinio ir kokybinio tyrimo dermės dizaino pagrindus bei ją atitinkančio tyrimo instrumentarius (anketa su atviro ir uždaro tipo klausimais), sudaro galimybes ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjams sistemiskai tirti kokybinius ir kiekybinius pokyčius tėvų, kaip paslaugos vartotojų populiacijoje (tiek masinėje, tiek grupinėje tiek ir individualioje); (2) Tyrimo rezultatų pagrindu atskleidžiamos ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės modeliavimo praktinės galimybės, sistemiskai tiriant tėvų-vartotojų besikeičiančius poreikius, tipologizuojant jų grupes pagal dalyvavimą kokybės valdymo procesuose (pasyvų, aktyvų), bei jiems būdingą normatyvinį ar interpretacinį požiūrį į paslaugos kokybę nusakančius požymius (patvarumas, „kietųjų“ ir „minkštųjų“ / žmoniškųjų išteklių patikimumas, proceso trukmė, išbaigtumas, prieinamumas, pasikliovimas, patogumas, aplinkos estetika); (3) LR Švietimą reglamentuojančių dokumentų atlikta kokybinė analizė, ištiriant paslaugos kokybės teikėjo bei vartotojo tarpusavio sąveikos kontekstualizuojančius tekstus leis Lietuvos švietimo politikos strategams orientuotis į ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės valdymo modeliavimą, kaip politinės, socialinės, kultūrinės, vertybinės reikšmės sferą; (4) Ištirtas paslaugos teikėjų (vadovų, pedagogų) kompetentingumas kokybės valdymo procesų modeliavimo srityje bei naujų žinių turinio ir reikšmių identifikavimas kokybės valdymo procesuose leis parengti tikslines, vadybines ir tyrimines kompetencijas įtakojančias švietimo programas tęstinių studijų institucijoms, organizuojančioms kvalifikacijos ar perkvalifikavimo

kursus ar seminarus ikimokyklinių įstaigų vadovams, pedagogams, tėvams; (5) Ištirtas ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjų kompetentingumas paslaugų valdymo bei vartotojų poreikių identifikavimo srityje leis parengti į praktinę veiklą orientuotas ikimokyklinių įstaigų vadybos specialistams studijų programas Lietuvos aukštosiose mokyklose ir orientuotas į naujas jų vadybinės veiklos sferas- ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybės modeliavimas tiriant tėvų – vartotojų poreikius.

**Disertacijos ginamieji teiginiai:**

1. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės modeliavimui galima taikyti bendrąsias kokybės vadybos koncepcijas, principus, kokybės valdymo sampratas bei į vartotojų poreikius orientuotą vartotojų elgsenos tyrimo metodologiją.
2. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybė gali būti tiriama vadovaujantis socialinių paslaugų rezultatyvumo ir efektyvumo sąvokomis bei švietimo paslaugų kokybės vertinimo lygmenimis. Be to, gali būti taikomos paslaugos, kaip produkto vartojimo patvarumo bei paslaugos savybę *nusakančios kategorijos* (paslaugos teikimo priemonės, jos teikimo ir vartojimo galimybės, proceso trukmė, tikslumas, patikimumas, pasitikėjimas vartotojais, jų kompetentingumu, pasikliovimas paslaugos prieinamumu bei jos patogumu vartotojui).
3. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimui gali būti taikomi bendrieji švietimo kaip socialinės -kultūrinės paslaugos valdymo principai, kurie orientuoti į išorinius ir vidinius išteklius, apimančius tiek paslaugos reikšmingumą išorinei, tiek ir vidinei aplinkai, kurią sudaro „kietieji“ / materialieji ir „minkštieji“ / žmogiškieji ištekliai, leidžiantys tiekėjui apsispręsti dėl paslaugų tinklo ar vartotojų apimties, jų poreikių ar lūkesčių tenkinimo galimybių.
4. Tėvų-vartotojų poreikiai gali būti tiriami, taikant kokybinio ir kiekybinio tyrimo dermės metodologiją, atitinkančią normatyvinę ir interpretacinę prieigas poreikių turinio, krypties identifikavimui. Vienu iš pagrindinių tyrimo instrumentų yra anketa raštu su uždaro ir atviro tipo klausimais, padedanti diagnozuoti tiek tėvų-vartotojų tipologiją, tiek ir teikiamų paslaugų kokybės prasmingumą teikėjams bei vartotojams, kurio pagrindu jie gali tarpusavyje susitarti dėl paslaugų kokybės valdymo modelio

## IŠVADOS

*Disertacijoje atliktų mokslinės literatūros, Lietuvos Respublikos ikimokyklinį ugdymą reglamentuojančių dokumentų analizė ir empirinio tyrimo duomenys leidžia suformuluoti išvadas, kurios yra reikšmingos mokslinė, empirinė prasme ir leidžia tirti ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės modeliavimą per tėvų – vartotojų poreikius.*

1. Apibendrinant įvairias **ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo ir vartotojų poreikių tyrimo koncepcijas**, paslaugų funkcijas, jų vertinimus bei orientavimo į vartotojų elgseną teorijas, galima teigti :

- Ikimokyklinis ugdymas yra pradinė švietimo sistemos grandis. Ji taip pat yra priskiriama socialinės gerovės (viešąjį) interesą atstovaujančiam institucijos tipui ir vykdo jai būdingas funkcijas. Todėl ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos priklauso nuo pasirinkto šeimos ir vaiko socialinės gerovės modelio, nes ikimokyklinio ugdymo institucija proteguoja vaiko asmenybės ankstyvąjį ugdymą ir yra kaip paslaugas šeimai teikianti organizacija, kuriai būdinga orientacija į paslaugų vartotoją (tėvus ir vaiką). Pagrindinis paslaugos vartotojas yra tėvai, nes šeima yra atsakinga už vaiko ugdymą, o ikimokyklinė įstaiga jai teikia specializuotas ir profesionalias paslaugas vaiko ugdymo srityje.
- Vadybiniuose, sociologiniuose, edukaciniuose tyrimuose nėra vieningo mokslinio aiškinimo kokybės, paslaugos kokybės esmės supratimo atžvilgiu. Egzistuoja nuomonių įvairovė, tačiau daugelis mokslininkų mano, jog būtent tokia situacija skatina komunikacijos ir susitarimo būtinumą dėl kokybės prasmų bei orientavimosi į realybės situacijas. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės samprata dažniausiai aiškinama, remiantis bendromis vadybinėmis teorijomis, taikomomis tiek bendrojoje vadyboje, tiek ir švietimo (taikomojoje) vadyboje.
- LR ikimokyklinį ugdymą reglamentuojančiuose dokumentuose ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybė, paslaugų kokybė bei vartotojo sampratos nėra konkretizuotos. Todėl teoriškai pagrindžiant ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimo procesą tikslinga taikyti bendrąsias, kokybę grindžiančias koncepcijas, tokias, kaip: visuotinės kokybės valdymo, organizacijų veiklos kokybės valdymo, paslaugų kokybės valdymo ir kt. Taikytini tiek paslaugų kokybės vadybos principai (visuotinumas, patikimumas, patvarumas ir kt.), tiek ir bendrieji visuotinės kokybės vadybos principai (grupinis darbas, kokybės standartų kūrimas, kokybės matavimas, kokybės gerinimas). Be to, būtina paslaugų kokybės valdymo modeliavimą suvokti kaip procesą ir kaip sistemą, kurioje funkcionuoja visi ikimokyklinės įstaigos veiklos kokybę bei jos valdymą

įtakojantys veiksniai (išoriniai ir vidiniai).

- Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugos kokybė gali būti vertinama vadovaujantis socialinių paslaugų rezultatyvumo ir efektyvumo kriterijais, švietimo paslaugų kokybės vertinimo lygmenimis bei orientuojantis į kitus paslaugų teikimo kokybinius požymius (kompetenciją, pasitikėjimą, paslaugumą, proceso trukmę, tikslumą), o taip pat pagal įstaigos misiją, viziją, tikslus, uždavinius bei finansavimo būdus.
- Ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaiga, siekdama teikti kokybiškas paslaugas, privalo identifikuoti skirtingus tėvų (grupinius ir individualius) poreikius, lūkesčius, dalyvavimo patirtį, vertybes bei įtraukti juos į ugdomosios veiklos ir ikimokyklinės įstaigos kūrimą, motyvuoti bendradarbiavimą su ugdymo paslaugų teikėjais. Bendradarbiavimo pagrindą sudaro susitarimas dėl ugdymo paslaugos kokybės požymių ir valdymo modeliavimo principų, todėl kad ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslauga ir jos produktas (ugdymo kokybė) yra apsprendžiamas daugelio veiksmų (išorinių, vidinių), o taip pat „kietųjų“/ materialiuųjų ir „minkštųjų“/ žmogiškųjų išteklių.

**2. Empirinis tyrimas, kuris atliktas kokybinio ir kiekybinio dermės dizaino pagrindu,** leido suformuluoti išvadas dėl teikiamų ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės modeliavimo.

**2.1. Kontekstualizuojant paslaugų kokybės ir vartotojų sampratą svarbi LR ikimokyklinį ugdymą reglamentuojančių dokumentų kokybinė analizė:**

- Kokybė apibrėžiama kaip socialinių, kultūrinių sąlygų įvairovė, būtina ugdymo(si) modernizavimui šiuolaikinėse įstaigose, nors nėra kontekstualizuojama kaip ikimokyklinio ugdymo vertybė, kurios raiška gali tapti sąlyga vaiko sėkmingam ugdymui(si);
- Ypač akcentuojamas ikimokyklinio ugdymo tikslas – vaiko socialinių, kognityvinių kompetencijų įgijimas. Pastarasis procesas grindžiamas naujos ugdymo(si) kultūros samprata, suvokiant vaiką kaip ugdymo(si) dalyvį, partnerį, tačiau stokojama sąsajų tarp ugdymo(si) rezultato ir proceso, nepakankamai išryškinama jų tarpusavio sąveikos svarba kokybei bei vertybinis ikimokyklinio ugdymo kontekstas.
- Vaiko kompetencijos suvokiamos kaip ugdymo(si) rezultatas, pasiekiamas per pedagoginę veiklą, o pagrindą sudaro vaiko pasaulio pažinimas bei jo prigimtinių galių sklaidai būtinų sąlygų sudarymas ugdyme(si).

- Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybei kaip ugdymo proceso tobulumo siekiamybei reikšminga tampa vaiko priežiūros, rūpybos realizavimo, prigimtinių bei socialinio – kultūrinio pobūdžio teisių užtikrinimo visuma.

2.2. **Kokybinio tyrimo rezultatų pagrindu** galima formuluoti išvadas apie ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjų (vadovų ir pedagogų) patirtį, vertinant ugdymo paslaugų kokybę, orientuotą į tėvų poreikius, bei ugdymo paslaugų atitikimą vartotojų (tėvų) poreikius ir lūkesčius:

### 2.2.1. **Vadovų patirties raiškos kontekstai:**

- Ikimokyklinio *ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo sistemos veiksmingumas* grindžiamas į vaiką orientuota ugdymo(si) kokybe: ugdymo rezultatu, vaiko branda mokyklai, kompetencijų ugdymu(si), socialinių ir emocinių vaiko poreikių tenkinimu, pedagogo bendravimo su vaiku kokybe. Vaikas yra suvokiamas, kaip pagrindinis ugdymo proceso dalyvis, pabrėžiami jo, *kaip vartotojo, poreikiai*. Tėvams priskiriama *dalyvavimo* kokybės valdyme funkcija, identifikuojant juos *kaip partnerius*, o ne tik *kaip vartotojus*. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybės požymiai, visų pirma, yra siejami su žmogiškaisiais ištekliais, ne itin akcentuojant „kietuosius“ / materialiuosius.
- Ikimokyklinio *ugdymo paslaugų kokybės tobulinimo galimybės* siejamos tiek su vidiniais, tiek ir su išoriniais paslaugų kokybės valdymo resursais. Vidiniai resursai išvelgiami tokiose srityse, kaip: paslaugų tinklo plėtojimas, meninio ugdymo ir specialistų pagalbos (logopedo, psichologo) paslaugų prieinamumo didinimas, vaikų skaičiaus mažinimas grupėse, vadovų, pedagogų kvalifikacijos tobulinimas, materialinės bazės gerinimas. Akcentuojami tokie išoriniai paslaugų kokybės valdymo resursai: finansavimo bei švietimo skyriaus specialistų pagalbos didinimas, dokumentavimo apimties mažinimas, privačių ugdymo paslaugų tinklo plėtojimas. Orientuojami į paslaugos kokybės požymius: patvarumas, materialiujų ir žmogiškųjų išteklių patikimumas, prieinamumas, kompetentingumas, patogumas.
- Prisiimama atsakomybė už visą įstaigos veiklą, jos kokybę. Atsakomybė suvokiama kaip vadybinio pobūdžio pareigybinė funkcija. Neakcentuojamas paslaugų kokybės valdymo būtinumas. Ši funkcija neišskiriama kaip itin reikšminga įstaigos veiklos kokybės valdymui.

### 2.2.2. **Pedagogų patirties raiškos kontekstai:**

- Ikimokyklinio *ugdymo paslaugų kokybės valdymo sistemos veiksmingumas*

siejamas tiek su pedagogų, tiek ir su visos įstaigos bendruomenės veiklos kokybe vaiko ugdymo srityje, kuri vyksta efektyviai realizuojant ugdymo programą. Tiek paslaugų kokybės, tiek ir jos valdymo modeliavimo būtinumas (orientuojantis į tėvus, kaip vartotojus) nėra akcentuojamas. Dėmesys skiriamas ikimokyklinės įstaigos veiklos kokybei apskritai, o ne paslaugų kokybės valdymui ar modeliavimui.

- *Ugdymo paslaugų kokybės tobulinimo galimybės siejamos su „kietųjų“/materialiųjų resursų gerinimu: vaikų aprūpinimas mokymo priemonėmis, valstybinio finansavimo didinimas, papildomų pedagoginių etatų steigimas. Neakcentuojamos žmogiškųjų išteklių gerinimo galimybės, tokios, kaip: personalo pedagoginių-vadybinių kompetencijų plėtojimas, ugdymo proceso inovatyvumas, taikant naujas žinias ir kt.*
- Nurodoma, jog *būtina plėtoti tokias papildomas ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugas: vaikų meninis bei sportinis ugdymas, kalbų mokymas, pagalbos vaikui specialistų (logopedo, psichologo) paslaugų prieinamumo didinimas. Akcentuojama, jog ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų vadovai, steigėjai, plėtodami paslaugas, turėtų orientotis į tėvų užimtumą darbo rinkoje. Atsižvelgiant į tai, jie turėtų siūlyti naujas vaikų priežiūros ir ugdymo paslaugas tėvams bei vaikams. Nurodoma, jog būtina steigti vakarines, savaitgalines vaikų veiklos grupes. Orientuojasi į teikiamų paslaugų kokybės prieinamumą ir prasingumą tėvams, kaip vartotojams, bei dialogo su jais būtinumą dėl paslaugos kokybės valdymo modeliavimo priimtimumo, orientuojantis į tėvų poreikius.*

### **2.2.3. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų atitikimas vartotojų (tėvų) poreikius ir lūkesčius:**

- *Ikimokyklinio ugdymo kokybę tėvai sieja su papildomų paslaugų tinklo plėtojimu. Siūloma atkreipti dėmesį į tokias paslaugų sritis: vaikų meninis bei sportinis ugdymas, kalbų mokymas bei pagalbos vaikui specialistų veiklos prieinamumo didinimas. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų vadovams ir pedagogams nurodoma nauja paslaugų sritis – vaikų užimtumo programų plėtojimas vasaros atostogų metu, steigiant jiems vasaros metu savitarnos įgūdžių lavinimo grupes. Tėvų kaip vartotojų, lūkesčiai yra susiję su inovatyviomis, papildomomis paslaugomis vaikų ugdymo srityje bei ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų veiklos valdymo kokybės gerinimo orientyrais, tokiais kaip veiklos nepertraukiamumas vasaros sezono metu, užtikrinant tėvų poilsio ir darbo dermės galimybes.*



- *Lūkesčiai* siejami su ikimokyklinės įstaigos ir jos darbuotojų veiklos kokybe, nuo kurios priklauso ir vaiko ugdymo kokybė, jo poreikių tenkinimas. Akcentuojama ir vadovavimo įstaigai bei personalo veiklos kokybė, kuri siejama ne tik su formaliaisiais veiklos kriterijais, vadovų, pedagogų kvalifikacija, bet ir su vertybiniais-kultūriniais paslaugos kokybės požymiais: tarpusavio santykiais, atsakinga vaikų priežiūra, intensyvesniu rūpinimosi vaikų sveikatinimu, estetiška, higieniška įstaigos aplinka.

**2.3. Kiekybinio tyrimo rezultatų pagrindu** galima formuluoti išvadas apie ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjų (vadovų ir pedagogų) ir vartotojų (tėvų) žinias bei patirtį vertinant paslaugų kokybę:

**2.3.1. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų teikėjų (vadovų ir pedagogų) žinios** apie paslaugų kokybės valdymo sistemą ir vartotojus:

- *Vadovai kokybę* sieja su teikiamų paslaugų ekonominiu naudingumu, išskirtinumu bei tikslo atitikimu, *pedagogai* ją suvokia kaip teikiamų paslaugų atitikimą reikalavimams, jų išskirtinumą bei paslaugų pokyčius, todėl vadovai ir pedagogai turėtų susitarti dėl ikimokyklinėje įstaigoje taikomos kokybės sampratos bei numatyti kokybės valdymo modeliavimo galimybes, suvokiant šį procesą kaip sistemą.
- *Sėkmingo kokybės valdymo vyksmą vadovai* akcentuoja kaip nenutrūkstamą tarpusavyje susijusių veiksmų sistemą bei akcentuoja planavimą ir motyvavimą kaip pagrindines funkcijas, sąlygojančias sėkmingą valdymą. *Pedagogai* sėkmingą kokybės vyksmą sieja su organizacijos struktūriniais elementais, tokiais kaip veiklos procesų visuma, problemų analizė. Jie mano, kad tikslų planavimas, sprendimų priėmimas ir komunikavimas vyksta atliekant planavimo bei organizavimo funkcijas. Taigi paslaugos teikėjai (vadovai ir pedagogai) modeliuodami kokybės valdymą, turėtų susitarti kokiais švietimo, kaip socialinės – kultūrinės paslaugos valdymo principais jie vadovausis.
- Paslaugų teikėjai (vadovai ir pedagogai) teigia, jog *tėvai yra ne tik ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų vartotojai, bet ir bendruomenės nariai*, todėl jų teikiami siūlymai ir sprendimais dėl įstaigos veiklos tobulinimo ir valdymo yra itin reikšmingi kokybės valdymo modeliavimui. Tiek pedagogai, tiek vadovai vertina tėvus, kaip paslaugų vartotojus, kurių svarbiausi poreikiai yra teikiamų paslaugų (informacinių – komunikacinių ir vaikų sveikatinimo) kokybė ir kaina.

**2.3.2. Ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų vartotojų (tėvų) žinios** apie kokybės valdymo sistemą ir dalyvavimo patirtis:

- Tėvai *kokybę* sieja su teikiamų paslaugų ekonominiu naudingumu, išskirtinumu bei tikslo atitikimu. Taigi, tiek vadovai, tiek tėvai vienodai suvokia kokybės sampratą, todėl sėkmingiau galima modeliuoti teikiamų ugdymo paslaugų kokybę ir įgyvendinti visuomenės socialinės geros modelį.
- Tėvai išvelgia glaudžią *sėkmingą kokybės valdymą* sąlygojančių funkcijų (planavimas, organizavimas, motyvavimas, koordinavimas, planavimas) sąveiką. Todėl galima teigti, jog vartotojai kaip ir teikėjai, turi žinių kokybės valdymo procesų srityse, todėl jų tarpusavio susitarimas dėl paslaugos kokybės modeliavimo, kaip viešosios gerovės produkto, yra vadybiškai reikšmingas.
- Tėvai *kokybės vadybos sistemą* sieja su savo kaip ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų vartotojų poreikių tikslingumo nustatymu, pedagogų darbo efektyvinimu ir akcentuoja tokius kokybei būdingus požymius: kokybišką ugdymo įstaigos paskirties ir misijos realizavimą, vartotojų poreikių tenkinimą.

**2.3.3. Vadovų, pedagogų ir tėvų patirtis** vertinant ugdymo paslaugų kokybę:

- *Svarbiausius ikimokyklinio ugdymo tikslus bei uždavinius vadovai ir tėvai* nurodo tokius, kaip vaiko komunikacija bei emocijų savikontrolė, *pedagogai* akcentuoja vaiko bendravimą ir bendradarbiavimą, psichofizinę sveikatą bei sėkmingą tolimesnį jo mokymąsi. Taigi galima teigti, jog vaiko ugdymo(si) sėkmingumas, ugdymo tikslų bei uždavinių realizavimas priklauso nuo vadovų, pedagogų ir tėvų tarpusavio sutarimo ir aktyvaus tėvų dalyvavimo vaiko ugdymo(si) procesuose.
- *Ikimokyklinio ugdymo pedagogų veiklos kokybę vadovai* apibūdina tokiais bruožais: vaikų bendravimo įgūdžių ugdymas bei veikla gamtoje, *tėvai* išskiria pedagogų rūpinimąsi vaiko sveikata bei jo pasiekimų vertinimą. Taigi pedagogo veiklos kokybę priklauso nuo jo kompetencijų edukacinėje, socialinėje, komunikacinėje, vaiko sveikatinimo srityse bei vertybinių nuostatų į jas.
- *Ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų vadovų veiklos kokybę* apibūdinantys bruožai *pedagogų, tėvų* požiūriu yra kokybiškas tėvų informavimas. Tėvams taip pat reikšmingas yra jų supažindinimas su įstaigos veiklos tikslais, programomis, projektais bei ikimokyklinės įstaigos efektyvumo ir produktyvumo siekis.
- *Reikšmingiausias faktorius, lemiantis pedagogų ir tėvų bendradarbiavimo kokybę*, tiek paslaugos *teikėjams*, tiek *vartotojams* yra geranoriškas tėvų

bendravimas ir dalyvavimas institucijos veikloje bei pedagogų teikiama informacija ir patarimai tėvams. Tėvų įtraukimo į bendradarbiavimo procesą efektyviausi būdai yra darželio specialistų ir vadovų pagalba jiems bei galimybės dalyvauti grupės veikloje.

#### 2.3.4. Paslaugų vartotojų (tėvų) požiūris į ikimokyklinio ugdymo paslaugų kokybę:

- *Kokybiškiausios edukacinės paslaugos*, teikiamos ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigoje, yra vaiko rengimas mokyklai, vaikų etnokultūros ir sveikatingumo ugdymas; *socialinės paslaugos* - specialiųjų poreikių vaikų ugdymas, socialinės atskirties integracija, vaiko maitinimas, priežiūra ir globa; *informacinės – komunikacinės paslaugos* yra tėvams informacijos teikimas apie vaiko ugdymą, pasiekimus ir įstaigos veiklą; *kultūrinės – rekreacinės paslaugos* - renginių, švenčių, išvykų, ekskursijų organizavimas vaikams; *specializuotos pagalbos vaikams teikimo paslaugos* yra medicinos darbuotojo, logopedo ir psichologo paslaugos.
- *Tėvai suvokia ugdomosios aplinkos vaidmenį bei reikšmę vaikų asmenybės raidai*, jų teigimu, ikimokyklinėje ugdymo įstaigoje ugdomoji grupės aplinka atitinka vaikų amžių ir poreikius, yra kuriamas geras mikroklimatas grupėje. Tėvus tenkina ikimokyklinės įstaigos teritorija, vaikų užimtumui ir ugdymui skirtos patalpos yra išdėstytos tinkamai, ikimokyklinės įstaigos koridoriai yra pritaikyti vaikų veiklai ir judėjimui, sporto ir muzikos salės yra erdvios, atitinka vaikų skaičių.
- *Pagrindiniai ikimokyklinio ugdymo finansavimo šaltiniai* yra ugdymo institucijos steigėjas ir vaikų, lankančių ikimokyklinę įstaigą, tėvai. Pastarieji galėtų apmokėti brangesnes ar papildomai teikiamas ikimokyklinio ugdymo institucijos pedagogų paslaugas, jei jos būtų kokybiškesnės.
- *Tėvų apsisprendimą pasirinkti konkrečią ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigą* sąlygoja geras jos įvaizdis visuomenėje bei kokybiškai teikiamos ugdymo paslaugos.

### **Disertacinio tyrimo rezultatų apibavimas**

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**THE MODELING OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION  
BASED ON PARENTS-CONSUMERS' NEEDS**

*Summary of Doctoral Dissertation*

*Social Sciences, Educology (07 S)*

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**IKIMOKYKLINIO UGDYMO PASLAUGŲ KOKYBĖS VALDYMO MODELIAVIMAS  
TIRIANT TĖVŲ - VARTOTOJŲ POREIKIUS**

*Daktaro disertacijos santrauka*

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