

ABSTRACT

The doctoral thesis focuses on the development of preschool education in Germany. It was composed using the tools of comparative education research especially the qualitative research paradigm. It aims to analyze the contemporary reforms of the pre-primary education in Germany. The research design stands on a case study, which is based on the document content analysis method, semi-structured interviews with experts, and participating observation. The research has focused on the system settings in preschool education, as well as on ongoing reforms itself. The study outlines the development of pre-school institutions, external conditions and the possibility of managing preschool education in Germany. It provides an analysis of curricula documents as well as the insight into current alternative models and innovative approaches in preschool education. Also it elaborates the topic of contemporary situation in teaching staff and the trends in his training, and finally identifies the current reforms, trends and challenges in preschool education in Germany.

Germany has implemented in the last 15 years a series of reforms relating to the settings of conditions in preschool education both at the national and state level. These reforms reflect specific regional features of individual federal states, but at the crucial points strive for a national harmonization. The most important reforms include a quantitative and qualitative development in formal and informal early childhood education and care, settings and support of the transition process, supporting children with special educational needs within the mainstream education system, equalizing the educational opportunities (diagnostics, support and intervention) and teacher training.