

Preschool Teachers' Attitudes towards the Self-Evaluation of Preschool Institutions

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Abstract

Systematic self-evaluation of preschool institutions in Croatia started in 2012 and has since been conducted in the form of one-year cycles of collecting data about preschool activities, present-state analyses and designing plans for development. Self-evaluation is a process that systematically assesses, analyses and evaluates work effectiveness in order to assure quality improvement and create a stimulating work climate (Vranković & Reberšak, 2008). Previous research in the area of self-evaluation in Croatia examined school self-evaluation (Bezinović, 2010; Reberšak, 2009), whereas this paper focuses on the preschool self-evaluation process. The questionnaire Attitudes towards self-evaluation was distributed among 170 preschool teachers employed in preschool institutions in Croatia. The main aim of this research is to determine the differences in preschool teachers' attitudes towards active involvement in the self-evaluation process with respect to the type of preschool teacher training in the area of self-evaluation. The respondents were classified into three groups: 1) preschool teachers who had not had any type of self-evaluation training; 2) preschool teachers who had completed the course during their graduate study; and 3) preschool teachers who had participated in short-term teacher professional development programs. An additional goal was to determine if preschool teachers' willingness to actively engage in the self-evaluation process could be predicted based on their attitudes and years of preschool work experience. The results show that preschool teachers who attended the self-evaluation course during their graduate study consider themselves more empowered for the process than the other two groups of respondents. They express greatest willingness to actively participate in quality assurance teams that conduct the self-evaluation process in preschools. It has been established that the most significant predictors

of motivation for active involvement in the self-evaluation process are attitudes towards the process of self-evaluation and knowledge about the process.

Key words: *attitudes towards self-evaluation; preschool teacher training; self-evaluation of preschool institutions.*

Introduction

The self-evaluation of educational institutions is one of the procedures that contribute to the development of overall institutional quality (Bezinović, 2010; Tot, 2013a). The self-evaluation process can be defined as a process initiated and conducted by educational institution staff in order to describe and evaluate its own functioning (Vanhoof, De Maeyer, & Van Petegem, 2011). The steps in the self-evaluation process include systematic data gathering, analysis and assessment of the overall quality of an educational institution in order to permanently enhance quality and create a stimulating work environment (Vranković & Reberšak, 2008; Tot 2013b). The quality indicators or criteria for educational institution self-evaluation can be common institutional beliefs, attitudes and values, leadership style, quality of relationships, physical environment and infrastructure, curriculum, involvement and satisfaction of the various stakeholders, learning outcomes and the institutional climate (Ljubetić, 2007; Tot, 2013a).

The main characteristic of the self-evaluation process, or internal evaluation, which differentiates this process from external evaluation, is the involvement of all staff members: teachers, students, management, advisors and other employees (Nevo, 1995; Mauret & Moralaix, 2003). The other main characteristic of the self-evaluation process is its occurrence in clearly defined cycles involving a number of steps – setting clear goals, planning, evaluation of achieved activities and goals and (re)defining improvement areas (Janssens & Amelsvoort, 2008). Permanent quality assurance of an educational institution cannot exist without a systematically conducted process of self-evaluation. If all the self-evaluation steps are not conducted in clearly defined cycles, then we can only speak of sporadic attempts at quality assurance.

The self-evaluation of educational institutions in Croatia started in 2003 with the project *School self-evaluation as a mechanism for school improvement*¹. Since 2003, the self-evaluation of educational institutions was supported by a series of projects that developed self-evaluation methodology and attempted to engage a large number of interested institutions. The year 2006 marked the point of systematic implementation of self-evaluation in the program of general education secondary schools (grammar schools) in Croatia. One year later, the self-evaluation process was implemented in

¹ *School self-evaluation as a mechanism for school improvement (Samovrednovanje škola u funkciji unapređivanja kvalitete obrazovanja)* was a pilot-project of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb which included three primary and three secondary schools. The project started in September 2003 and was concluded in October 2004. The head researcher was Prof. Petar Bezinović, PhD. <http://www.idi.hr/vrednovanje/pilot%20projekt/opcenito.htm>

vocational secondary schools, and in 2008 it started in all primary schools in Croatia (Muraja, 2009; Muraja & Vranković, 2014).

Besides by the schools themselves, the importance of the process of self-evaluation has been recognized by other institutions which have provided active support to schools – the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, the Education and Teacher Training Agency and the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education. School self-evaluation became mandatory in 2008² when *The Primary and Secondary Education Act* was passed. In its Article 88, Paragraph IV the Act states that “schools are obliged to use national exam and all other exam results for analysis and self-evaluation, with the purpose of school quality improvement“. Following the successful introduction of self-evaluation in primary and secondary schools the project *Self-Evaluation of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Institutions*³ was started in the school year 2011/2012. This project of the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education enabled continuous professional and advisory support for all the early childhood and preschool education institutions involved in the self-evaluation process (Antulić, 2012). On the other hand, self-evaluation is not regarded mandatory in preschool education according to *The Preschool Education Act* (1997), although the Act does open the possibility for such activity within preschool teachers’ councils, particularly when referring to making decisions about professional issues and encouraging and promoting professional activity (Article 39 of the Act).

Systematic self-evaluation has a longer tradition in the world than in the Republic of Croatia. It started in the 1990s (Simons, 2002; Sheerens, 2002), but it has become an omnipresent phenomenon in a vast number of educational systems in the last fifteen years (Vanhoof, Van Petegem, Verhoeven, & Buvens, 2009), which also initiated the development of research in this area. Results obtained from investigations carried out so far in the area of self-evaluation have not unambiguously answered the question about the extent and influence of self-evaluation on the development of educational institutions, or how educational institutions react to the demand to carry out self-evaluation, and whether they can recognize the need for self-evaluation without external intervention. However, research indicates that the process of self-evaluation is directly influenced by school efficiency and by the attitudes of the participants towards the process of self-evaluation (MacBeath, 1999; Vanhoof, Van Petegem, & De Maeyer, 2009). Research which focused on the investigation of the attitudes of teachers, principals and other employees who implemented self-evaluation in schools

² The Act has undergone several changes since 2008. These modifications can be seen in the References, in the final section of this paper.

³ *Self-Evaluation of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Institutions (Samovrednovanje ustanova ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja)* is a project of the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education. In its first cycle, during 2012/2013 it included 53 preschool education institutions. Since then, the project has been carried out in one-year cycles. <http://www.ncvvo.hr/drzavnatura/web/public/samovrjednovanje>

found out that it can be successfully implemented only if the attitudes towards self-evaluation of the participants involved in the process are positive. Its authors, Vanhoof et al. (2009), conducted an analysis of literature on self-evaluation and concluded that expectations regarding the results of self-evaluation are very positive, but, at the same time, we lack objective proof which would support these expectations. The same authors conducted an investigation confirming that the basic prerequisite for quality self-evaluation is the knowledge of the involved persons about the process of self-evaluation or the inclusion of an external person who has been trained to implement the process of self-evaluation.

Since the self-evaluation of educational institutions, kindergartens in particular, is a relatively new process in the Croatian system of education, systematic research in this area is required. Thus investigations have been conducted analyzing the attitudes of preschool teachers towards the process of self-evaluation and their estimate of their own competences for active inclusion and contribution to the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions. The starting hypothesis is that preschool teachers who are better trained in the area of self-evaluation and have longer work experience will express a more positive attitude towards the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions.

Research Aims and Methodology

Research Aim

The aim of the research is to examine preschool teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation and their motivation for active participation in the self-evaluation process. Also, differences between students who had self-evaluation training during their initial preschool teacher education and those who have not had any training in the area of self-evaluation have been studied. Additionally, we have examined whether preschool teachers' willingness to actively participate in the self-evaluation process can be predicted based on their attitude towards self-evaluation and the length of their work experience.

The research was conducted in January 2015.

Sample

The research was conducted on a convenience sample of 170 preschool teachers employed in kindergartens in Croatia who were at the time of the research part-time students at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb. One part of the respondents (N=72) were students in the preparatory year of study, which is a precondition for the enrolment in the part-time graduate study. That group of preschool teachers did not have any education in the area of self-evaluation during their initial preschool teacher education.

The rest of the respondents (N=98) were preschool teachers who were enrolled in the part-time graduate study at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb. This group

had attended a one-semester graduate course entitled *Self-evaluation and development of preschool institutions*.

Instruments

A questionnaire was designed for the purpose of the investigation. It was used to collect data about the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (workplace, work experience, promotions in the workplace), and the respondents' motivation to participate in the process of self-evaluation, which was tested by means of one statement (*I am willing to be a member of a quality assurance team.*) assessed on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire also comprised an Opinion Scale, testing preschool teachers' opinions regarding self-evaluation. This scale was especially developed for the purpose of this research study and it consisted of 19 items. Every item contained a Likert-type scale with 5 verbalized scale points, from 1 to 5, 1 meaning complete disagreement and 5 meaning complete agreement with the relevant item. In order to test the validity of the instrument, factor analysis of the main components was used with Varimax rotation on the 19 items. Bartlett's test and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin appropriateness test were used to establish if the data were appropriate for factorization (KMO=0.824; Bartlett sphericity test=1642.032; df=171; p=.000). According to the Guttman-Kaiser criterion, the factors whose characteristic root was higher than 1 were kept. The explanatory factor analysis results have shown that the three established factors (Table 1) explain 57.3% of the variance.

The first factor is highly correlated with the items that refer to the attitudes of preschool teachers towards the process of self-evaluation, or, more precisely, to the importance of self-evaluation for the organizational development of preschool institutions, hence its heading *Attitude*. Factor loadings range from .558 to .854, whereas the reliability of this factor is $\alpha=0.880$. The six items which correlate with the second factor refer to preschool teachers' self-assessment of their knowledge and awareness about the process of self-evaluation, and they appear under the heading *Knowledge*. The items highly saturated with this factor refer to the extent to which preschool teachers are aware of and understand the process of self-evaluation, and whether they feel competent for active involvement in the self-evaluation of their preschool education institution. Factor loadings range from .638 to .881, and the reliability of this factor is $\alpha = 0.910$. The third factor is correlated with the items testing the importance and need for organizational support in the process of self-evaluation. Preschool teachers assessed the importance of the prerequisites that have to be met within an institution in which self-evaluation is carried out and how demanding the process is. In accordance with the content of the items, this factor appears under the heading *Support*. As the reliability of the third factor is somewhat lower, $\alpha=.620$, and it has a lower percentage of explained variance, it should be noted that this factor does not comprise the whole complexity of the systems of support which represent the prerequisites for the successful implementation of self-evaluation in preschool institutions.

Table 1

Exploratory factorial structure of the Opinion Scale on self-evaluation (factorial structure matrix) and Cronbach's α coefficients of the relevant subscales

	COMPONENTS		
	ATTITUDE	KNOWLEDGE	SUPPORT
Self-evaluation of preschool institutions is important for its development.	.854		
Self-evaluation of preschool institutions has a positive effect on overall institutional quality.	.838		
Self-evaluation of preschool institutions will result in positive changes in preschool functioning.	.767		
Self-evaluation should be mandatory in every preschool institution.	.734		
The self-evaluation of my preschool institution has a significant impact on the quality of my work in my preschool group.	.733		
Self-evaluation of preschool institutions should be conducted every year.	.718		
Self-evaluation of preschool institutions should involve a large number of preschool teachers.	.640		
Self-evaluation helps to portray a realistic picture of the preschool institution.	.558		
I know every step in the process of the self-evaluation of a preschool institution.		.881	
I have enough knowledge about the self-evaluation process to be a member of a quality assurance team.		.858	
I have enough knowledge about the preschool self-evaluation process to take over the role of a quality assurance team leader in my preschool institution.		.848	
I think I know more about the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions than other colleagues in my preschool institution.		.847	
I completely understand the process of self-evaluation of a preschool institution.		.844	
My knowledge about the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions could help my preschool institution to improve its quality.		.638	
Successful self-evaluation of a preschool institution requires a positive work environment.			.742
Successful self-evaluation of a preschool institution requires teamwork.			.731
Successful self-evaluation of a preschool institution requires a lot of time.			.595
Successful self-evaluation of a preschool institution requires support from the principal.			.558
The process of self-evaluation of a preschool institution is very demanding.			.468
Characteristic root	5.661	3.359	1.868
% of explained variance	29.793	17.679	9.833
Cronbach's α coefficients	0.880	0.910	0.620

Results

Descriptive statistics (arithmetic means and standard deviations) and the intercorrelations of all the measured variables are shown in Table 2. There is a low but significant correlation between the factors of *knowledge* and *attitude* ($r=.282$ with $p<.01$), whereas no significant correlation could be established between the factor *support* and either the factor *attitude* ($r=.131$; $p>0.05$) or the factor *knowledge* ($r=-.081$; $p>0.05$). These results show that the respondents' assessment of knowledge and awareness about the process of self-evaluation has a low influence on their attitudes towards the process of self-evaluation, whereas the importance of support in the implementation of the process of self-evaluation is recognized by the respondents regardless of their own attitudes and knowledge. The mean values of the factors in the whole sample clearly show that the attitude of preschool teachers towards the self-evaluation of preschool institutions is generally positive (4.35), but their willingness to participate in the process of self-evaluation is modest (3.58).

Table 2

Descriptive statistics and the correlation matrix for the examined variables

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. ATTITUDE	-	.282**	.131	.409**	.114	.154*
2. KNOWLEDGE		-	-.081	.498**	.175	.647**
3. SUPPORT			-	.008	.031	-.011
4. WILLINGNESS TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE				-	.065	-.230**
5. WORK EXPERIENCE					-	-.196*
6. TRAINING						-
M (arithmetic means)	4.35	3.24	4.23	3.58		
SD (standard deviations)	0.62	0.99	0.54	1.28		

With the aim of the investigation in view, the differences in preschool teachers' attitudes were analysed depending on the type of training in self-evaluation they had received. The participants were divided into three groups according to the type of training they had completed:

1. Preschool teachers attending the preparatory year of study who did not have any type of self-evaluation training.
 - This group of respondents (N=56) had not had any kind of training in self-evaluation of preschool education institutions within their initial education or during their in-service training.
2. Preschool teachers who had completed the course on self-evaluation within their graduate study *Early Childhood and Preschool Education* at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb.
 - The preschool teachers in this group attended the part-time graduate study and a one-semester graduate course entitled *Self-evaluation and development of preschool institutions* as part of that study. The course, awarding 5 ECTS credits, provided an

introduction to the theoretical basis of the evaluation of educational systems and institutions (external evaluation and self-evaluation), and developed students' basic competences to carry out self-evaluation in preschool institutions through simulations of work in quality assurance teams.

3. Preschool teachers attending the preparatory year of study who had participated in one-day professional development programs on self-evaluation organized by the quality assurance teams of their preschool institutions, and preschool teachers who had received brief training in their own preschool institutions (dissemination of knowledge by members of quality assurance teams).
 - A total of 8 preschool teachers had participated in one-day workshops organized by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education for the members of quality assurance teams involved in the project *Self-Evaluation of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Institutions*. As part of their training the preschool teachers learned about the activities of the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, the basic prerequisites for the successful work of quality assurance teams and the self-evaluation processes of preschool institutions. The training was carried out as practical work in the form of workshops.
 - The remaining 8 preschool teachers had participated in brief training sessions offered by other employees of their own preschool institutions.

Due to large differences in the size of the groups, the significance in the difference between the factors was tested by means of the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test used as a *post hoc* test among the three groups (Table 3).

Table 3

Results of the Kruskal-Wallis test identifying the significance of the differences in the factors of preschool teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation and their motivation to participate in quality assurance teams for the three groups of respondents

	EDUCATION	N	M rank	$\chi^2_{df=2}$	p
ATTITUDE	1	56	78.58	2.201	.333
	2	98	88.53		
	3	16	74.22		
KNOWLEDGE	1	56	41.56 _{2,3}	70.559	.000
	2	98	110.42 _{1,3}		
	3	16	82.94 _{1,2}		
SUPPORT	1	56	83.89	0.179	.915
	2	98	84.05		
	3	16	89.34		
WILLINGNESSTO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE	1	56	72.61 ₂	7.371	.025
	2	98	93.85 ₁		
	3	16	79.50		

Note: The indexes next to the values of average ranks mark between which groups a significant difference was established by means of the Mann-Whitney U test (1 –did not have any training, 2 –attended the course *Self-evaluation and development of preschool institutions*, 3 –completed the self-evaluation training as part of their professional development).

The results show a significant difference in the respondents' estimates of knowledge depending on the type of training about the process of self-evaluation they had received (1 –did not have any training, 2 –attended the course *Self-evaluation and development of preschool institutions*, 3 –completed the self-evaluation training as part of their professional development). The results have confirmed the expectation that the respondents who had not completed any kind of training in self-evaluation would be less successful in assessing their knowledge and awareness than those who had completed their training as part of their professional development ($U=235, Z=-2.892, p=.004$), and those who had attended the course on self-evaluation as part of their graduate study ($U=496.5, Z=-8.420; p=.000$). The respondents who completed the training as part of their professional development organized by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education ($N=8$) or by the experts from their own preschool institution ($N=8$) estimate to be significantly more competent than those respondents who had not completed any form of training, but at the same time consider themselves to be significantly less competent than the respondents who had attended the whole course on the self-evaluation of preschool institutions ($U=530, Z=-2.032, p=.042$).

A significant difference was also observed regarding the willingness to actively participate in the quality assurance team⁴ which carries out self-evaluation in the preschool institution. The respondents from the second group who had attended the course expressed greater eagerness for active participation in the process of self-evaluation in comparison to those who had not had any training ($U=2056.5, Z=-2.670, p=.008$). The respondents from the third group, who had completed their training as part of their professional development, did not differ significantly in their willingness to actively participate in the self-evaluation process in comparison to the respondents with no training and to those who had attended the course during their graduate study.

There are no significant differences between the observed groups of respondents with regard to *support*.

A hierarchical regression analysis was performed in order to establish the percentage of variance of the willingness to actively participate in the self-evaluation process that can be predicted by the factors *attitude, knowledge, support, years of work experience and training*, and to discover which of the mentioned independent variables best predicts the respondents' motivation to actively participate in self-evaluation.

In the first step of the research, *work experience* and *training* were included in the analysis. Results show that those two variables explain 8% of the variance of the willingness to actively participate in quality assurance teams, *training* being the sole significant predictor. Those respondents who had received training in the self-

⁴ Employees of a preschool institution who want to participate actively in the process of self-evaluation can become part of the quality assurance team, an informal organizational structure within the institution whose primary task is to ensure the quality of work in the institution, i.e. to conduct self-evaluation and monitoring, and it encompasses the representatives of all structures within the educational institution (Muraja, 2012).

evaluation of preschool institutions expressed greater readiness to actively participate in the self-evaluation process. In the second step of the analysis, the factors *attitude*, *knowledge* and *support* were included. By introducing those variables the percentage of explained variance has risen by almost 29%. The final model ($F_{(5/158)} = 18.285, p = .000$) predicts a total 36.7% of variance of the respondents' willingness to actively participate in the self-evaluation of preschool institutions. From the whole set of predictors, the attitude towards self-evaluation and knowledge about the process of self-evaluation have proved to be significant predictors. *Knowledge* has the strongest predictive force ($\beta = .567, p = .000$) in this regression equation. In other words, students with higher values of self-evaluation of knowledge have a more positive attitude towards kindergarten self-evaluation and express greater willingness to be actively involved in quality assurance teams as well as to assume an active role in the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions.

Table 4

Regression analysis results with the willingness to actively participate in the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions as a criterion variable

Steps	Prom. R ²	β	t	p
1.	.080**			
Work experience		.098	1.274	.205
Training		.286	3.710	.000
	R=.284; R ² =.080; ΔR^2 =.069; $F_{(2/161)} = 7.039; p < .01$			
2.	.286***			
Work experience		-.128	-1.793	.075
Training		-.174	-1.883	.062
Attitude		.295	4.384	.000
Knowledge		.567	5.969	.000
Support		.003	.041	.967
	R=.605 R ² =.367; ΔR^2 =. 346; $F_{(5/158)} = 18.285; p < .001$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Conclusions

The investigation of attitudes of preschool teachers towards the self-evaluation of preschool institutions is one of the research problems whose final aim is to answer the question: "Does the training and experience of preschool teachers influence their attitude towards self-evaluation and their understanding of the importance of self-evaluation for the organizational efficiency of preschool educational institutions? If so, to what extent?". Self-evaluation, just like numerous other processes in education, largely depends on the competences and motivation of those who participate in it. Thus, it can be expected that preschool teachers who are acquainted with the process

of self-evaluation and who want to participate in it and understand the way in which it can contribute to the development of quality and quality culture in preschool institutions, will be the driving force raising the total organizational efficiency, which will eventually result in increasing the quality of educational outcomes.

The results obtained in this investigation do not confirm the expectations that preschool teachers who have had training in the area of self-evaluation have significantly more positive attitudes towards the relevance of self-evaluation for the development of quality in kindergartens. At the same time, the results show that the participating preschool teachers' estimates of their own knowledge, understanding and competence in this area depend on the type and duration of training they have received. In other words, those preschool teachers who had training during their graduate study, which means that it was carried out in a more systematic way and that it lasted longer, feel more empowered than those who completed a form of short-term professional development or have not had any kind of training.

What is encouraging in the findings is that preschool teachers who have become acquainted with self-assessment in the course of their graduate education express greater readiness to actively participate in quality assurance teams and to assume responsibility for the development of quality and the implementation of self-evaluation in early childhood and preschool education institutions in which they are employed. Thus, the level of competence affects the feeling of readiness to participate in this process, which represents a novelty in our educational system; in other words, the awareness and knowledge reduce resistance to changes. Further on, in predicting the motivation for active participation in the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions the most significant predictors were attitudes and knowledge, i.e. those preschool teachers who had more positive attitudes and higher awareness and knowledge were also more willing to participate in the work of quality assurance teams. Interestingly, the years of work experience have not proved to be a significant predictor of active participation in the self-evaluation process. These findings refute the frequently heard non-professional opinion that younger employees accept changes more willingly. Thus, the part of the hypothesis which assumed that preschool teachers who were better trained in the area of self-evaluation would express a more positive attitude towards the process of self-evaluation of preschool institutions has been confirmed. On the other hand, the second part of the hypothesis, which assumed that there would be a correlation between the length of work experience and the attitude towards self-evaluation, has not been confirmed.

Based on the results presented, it can be concluded that curricula for the initial education of preschool teachers should include courses which introduce students to the theoretical concepts underlying the process of self-evaluation of educational institutions, develop the practical skills necessary in the process of self-evaluation, but also develop a positive attitude towards self-evaluation. Moreover, providing continuous support to preschool teachers through programs of continuous

professional development is crucial in order to develop their competences in the area of internal evaluation of preschool institutions and to increase their motivation to actively participate and assume responsibility for the development of quality culture in all institutions providing early and preschool education and care.

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Odnos odgojitelja prema samovrednovanju dječjih vrtića

Sažetak

Sustavno samovrednovanje ustanova ranog i predškolskog odgoja u Hrvatskoj započelo je 2012. godine i od tada se kontinuirano provodi u obliku jednogodišnjih ciklusa prikupljanja podataka o funkcioniranju ustanove, analize situacije i definiranja jednogodišnjih razvojnih planova (Muraja, 2012). Samovrednovanje je proces kojim se sustavno prati, analizira i procjenjuje uspješnost sveukupnog rada odgojno-obrazovne ustanove kako bi se trajno unaprijedila kvaliteta njezina rada i stvorilo poticajno radno ozračje (Vranković i Reberšak, 2008). Dosadašnja istraživanja iz područja samovrednovanja u Republici Hrvatskoj uglavnom se odnose na samovrednovanje škola (Bezinović, 2010, Reberšak, 2009), a u ovome radu fokus je na procesu samovrednovanja ustanova ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja. Na uzorku od 170 odgajatelja zaposlenih u dječjim vrtićima u RH ispitana su mišljenja o procesu samovrednovanja dječjih vrtića. Cilj rada bio je analizirati postoje li razlike u odnosu odgojitelja na aktivno sudjelovanje u tom procesu s obzirom na vrstu završene edukacije iz područja samovrednovanja. Ispitanici su podijeljeni u tri skupine. U prvoj su skupini bili odgojitelji koji nisu prošli nikakvu edukaciju, u drugoj odgajatelji koji su završili kolegij o samovrednovanju na diplomskom studiju, a u trećoj odgojitelji koji su sudjelovali u kraćem stručnom usavršavanju. Dodatni je cilj bio utvrditi može li se, i u kojoj mjeri, na osnovi odnosa odgojitelja prema samovrednovanju i duljini radnog staža predvidjeti njihova spremnost na aktivno uključivanje u proces samovrednovanja vrtića.

Rezultati pokazuju da se odgojitelji koji su tijekom diplomskog studija pohađali kolegij o samovrednovanju smatraju bolje osposobljenima od onih koji su završili neki oblik kratkotrajnog stručnog usavršavanja ili nisu ni na koji način bili usavršavani. Oni iskazuju i najveću spremnost za aktivno sudjelovanje u Timu za kvalitetu koji je odgovoran za provedbu samovrednovanja u njihovim vrtićima. Pri predviđanju motiviranosti za aktivno sudjelovanje u procesu samovrednovanja predškolske ustanove najznačajnijim prediktorima pokazali su se stavovi i znanje, odnosno odgojitelji koji su imali pozitivniji stav i veće znanje ujedno su i spremniji sudjelovati u timovima za kvalitetu.

Ključne riječi: obrazovanje odgojitelja; odnos odgojitelja prema samovrednovanju; samovrednovanje predškolskih ustanova.