

Study Circles Method

“Building The Orientation Towards the Idea of Bridging Home and School” as the study circle concept

The study circles method is a common method of adult, non-formal education. The purpose of this education corresponds very well with the idea of Intercultural Dialogue between migrant families (especially parents) and schools. It concentrates on dissemination of knowledge to disadvantaged groups, thereby increasing their level of education.

In the light of the idea of “Good ID” the study circles might be a method of migrant parents’ self-education empowering them and making them more certain in their everyday-life activities in new social milieu.

“Attending a study circle is a participatory and dynamic process based on the experience of the participants, the skills of the study circle leader and the quality of the study material. This process represents this unique pedagogical method of the study circle. As opposed to conventional education that is based on a hierarchical model, in which the teacher disseminates knowledge from the top down, a study circle involves interaction in which all participants contribute.

A study circle is:

- free and voluntary studies of conditions and opportunities for humanity, society, working life, nature and culture in the surroundings*
- to understand the strength, power and pleasure in creating something together*
- together with others, be able to acquire new knowledge and to scrutinize conditions with a view of developing their own society.*

In the study circles, work is built around the participants’ search for knowledge according to their own needs and interests. Work is characterized by democratic values where the individual’s exchange of experience and analysis are the guiding factor. The studies depend on active contribution from the participants in the planning and implementation of the work.

A study circle is a small group of people (normally between 7-12 participants) who during a certain time period repeatedly meet and carry out planned studies under the leadership of an accepted leader.

The main factors are: the participants experiences and skills, a study plan or specially produced study material, A well-informed and trained leader who is mainly responsible for the study circle work” [Kindström, 2002, p.6]. The orientation is meant here as a set of beliefs, estimations, knowledge, values, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies – the term is used after Marek Ziolkowski [Koralewicz J., Ziolkowski M., 1990].

The orientation towards the idea of bridging home and school
(set of the following components)

- Beliefs (about education, school, and mutual obligations)
- Estimation (results of comparing home-school reality to the ideal state)
- Knowledge (parents: about school; teachers: about home)
- Values and attitudes (to a child as a student, to his/her double-world milieu: home and school; parents to teachers, teachers to parents)
- Behavioural tendencies (to active or passive behaviour in relation to school / to home)

Each part of this set depends on individual’s experiences, conscious and non-conscious needs, etc. Then increase of a partnership orientation has to base on educational process concerning people, who play their partner roles in co-operation.

STUDENTS TASKS:

Make a study circle group working on the concept (issue): "Building the orientation towards the idea of bridging home and school" · think about how to educate yourself and other people (parents and teachers) in every component of the 'orientation set' (beliefs, estimations, knowledge, values, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies) to be oriented towards home-school-community partnerships. How to provide them with information about their rights, responsibilities, and possibilities of getting support on solving their problems with children, etc. use the notes in the above table

Prepare a state of the art. report informing of the study circle work on the topic: "Building the orientation towards the idea of bridging home and school"

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