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Lifelong Learning and Web 2.0 Tools: Online Study Circles for Supporting Active Learning and Citizenship

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Abstract. Thanks to the spreading of technological devices, as well as Internet services (Web 2.0), the areas and possibilities of lifelong learning and education have broadened nowadays. This article concerns the practical implementation of lifelong learning.

Our assumption is that today there is also a possibility to inspire study circles in the online study environment with the involvement of community sites. The basis of this can also be given by a common topic of interest, and we analyze this as a study field of those people who cannot find the way to meet personally and who wish to study in their free time in a community (cf. lifelong learning, Longworth, 2001).We examine the opportunities of online study circles within the confines of a SWOT analysis.

In this connection, one of our empirical examinations was aimed at studying the personal experience and views of students engaged in online study circles. At the same time, we also examined the possibilities of participant-centered methods that can be used in study circles (for example, project work). In the present study, we are going to select from the results of our empirical work carried out among students who study adult education (n = 103).

Keywords: *active citizenship, lifelong learning, study sircles, Web 2.0, collaboration.*

Introduction

In respect to the support of learning in adulthood, the utilization of opportunities lying in new technologies, the assurance of access to learning, the importance of learning

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from each other or from other generations, the necessity of preparation to lifelong learning, and the validation of non-formal and informal learning results get into the focus of attention (cf. Németh, 2015; OECD, 2010; UNESCO, 2012; Wlodkowski, 2008). Similarly, the GRALE III report (UNESCO, 2016) identifies three key areas of lifelong learning in adulthood, for example, the support of active citizenship that includes free learning and social learning as well. The active citizenship urges the preparation to lifelong learning and its practical realization too (Miklósi & Oszlánczi, 2016).

In our earlier publication (author name, 2017), we drafted the methodological principles and projections of study circles along the features of adult learning: their basis was the study circle as a popular form of (adult) education and learning already present in the North-European countries for decades, the domestic study circles, and self-study groups (cf. Byström, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Holme-Barett, 2003; Kaplan & Carré, 2007; Kindström, 2000; Larsson & Nordvall, 2010; Maróti, 2010; Richmond, 2000etc.). The international interest in the mentioned study circles is well illustrated by Larsson and Nordwall's (2010) bibliography of the international literature on study circles: beside the English writings, Bengali, Danish, Finnish, French, Chinese, Korean, Norwegian, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Slovenian articles are also found in the catalogue.

The moving force of study circles is still the preoccupation with a specific topic, based on personal curiosity, in cooperation with people of similar fields of interest. The chosen topic may be connected to basic skills and knowledge, the person's way of life, hobbies, professional interest, situation, residence, or local community. Several communities are formed based on common interest and for the exploration of local values and local heritage. Moreover, interest can be generated by such specific topics that are relevant to certain professional communities. In our view, besides the study circles that build on physical presence, those study circles may also gain ground which encourage partial physical presence, or which are realized in an online environment completely.

Web 2.0 means such Internet services and applications, the most important feature of which is the continuous and mutual sharing of different contents, that is, interactivity. This circle contains the community sites as well. The content is created by the participants themselves and they can give opinions by the continuous and mutual shares (cf. Publish – Share-Discuss). Web 2.0 tools promote learning processes based on collaboration (cf. Siemens, 2005; Downes, 2006). Community sites make the common, knowledge-specific and trialogic learning activities possible (Kárpáti, Szálas, & Kuttner, 2012). The theory of trialogical learning can be connected to the Finnish researchers, Paavola & Hakkarainen (2005). Contrary to the monological and dialogical learning, trialogical learning puts the emphasis on such interactions between two or more people, where the third participant is the content itself that is created jointly by the participants. Such a product can be, for example, a jointly made project, a mind map or a discussion map etc. (Molnár & Kárpáti, 2009). In the center of the trialogical learning there is always the jointly created learning that stands, so basically, trialogical learning can be seen as a community learning.

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Papp-Danka (2011) describes the online learning environment, among others, along the following features:

- learning happens with the use of a device that can be connected to the Internet;
- distance is a defining element, that is, the learning process is connected neither to time nor to place, and not even to the mode of accessing the learning environment;
- it builds on self-defined and self-regulating learning;
- the facilitator is present in the creation of the learning environment and supports the learning process as well.

Ott (2011) finds it worth emphasizing that the participants in the online learning environment should be aware that they can meet challenges different from those they got used to in the traditional learning environment, that is, they have to be able to discover their own learning preferences, to consciously develop their learning methods. They have to learn how to direct and organize their own learning and how to how to direct, organize and schedule their own learning. In the absence of personal presence, self-directing acquires an important role, which is related to the individual responsibility and the self-regulating ability of the individual, too (Papp-Danka, 2011; Sederevičiūtė-Pačiauskienė, Miškinienė, & Norkienė, 2014).

During the processing and synthetization of the international and domestic literature, we were searching for the intersections of writings and researches on community learning (both in the form of physical presence and in the online environment), networked learning, and the learning-focused use of Facebook as a social media site (cf. Byström, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Gulbinskienė, Masoodi, & Šliogerienė, 2017; Holme-Barett, 2003; Kaplan & Carré, 2007; Kindström, 2000; Larsson & Nordvall, 2010; Maróti, 2010; Richmond, 2000; Virág, 2013 etc.).

Study circles on Facebook, online study circles

Our thesis is that nowadays, with the inclusion of social media sites, such as Facebook, it is possible to set up such study circles that support adult learning even on an online surface, whose proceeds may also become palpable in the everyday lives and/or work of the participants.

The personal and professional utilization of community sites can be realized in many different forms. The open and closed groups that can be created on the site offer different possibilities for common activities. The synchronous and asynchronous communication becomes possible among the members, or, for example, the accomplishment of project-like tasks and community content generation are possible, too (sharing, commenting documents in open or closed communities, sharing video and sound files etc.) Such sites can be the community sites (Facebook, Google+), photo sharing sites (Flickr), video sharing sites (YouTube) and the different blogs.

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The intensive activity of the participants stands in the center of online study circles. Content is generated by the participants, on the basis of their personal interests and the posts published in the group and their comments. It means that they can comment on what others wrote and on their shared content; they can participate in discussions and use different jointly editable documents. The interactions give possibility for the participants also to learn from each other, to comment on each others' thoughts (Kárpáti, Szálas, & Kuttner, 2012). An important part of the personal learning environment of the student is to what extent the learning partners are open for interaction, since for every participant the productivity of other members of the learning community can serve as a source.

According to our view, the work in online study circles can be efficient if there is an equal possibility for synchronous and asynchronous communication. Asynchronous communication in an online learning environment is when the presence and communication of participants are not simultaneous. The advantages of asynchronous communication can be that the schedule of the participants does not need to be accommodated, all participants can deal with the common topic when his or her schedule makes it possible. There is more time available to elaborate certain tasks and to think together. The disadvantage of asynchronous communication is that in this case communication is slower and can go along with a so-called "dead-end of thinking". Contrary to this, the simultaneous online presence can provide more exciting and inspiring learning experience for the participants.

In the case of the synchronous communication, the simultaneous presence is a must, even if the participants are far from each other in space. The devices of Internet communication offer a great possibility for closed simultaneous chatting, video conferences. These solutions are closer to the personal, attending communication. One of the disadvantages of synchronous communication is that a lot of information, stimuli can reach the individual, certain incoming information can be traced in a more difficult way (cf. multitasking), and some essential suggestions, ideas may escape the participants' attention. The fast speed can make the supporting evaluation and feedback difficult. The quality of cooperation is also defined by synchrony,; asynchronous communication and collaboration are mainly identified as cooperation, while the synchronous communication can be identified as collaborative cooperation. Asynchronous communication includes, for example, the email, blog, forum etc., while the means of synchronous communication and cooperation can be the chat, collaborative word processor, spreadsheet and presentation maker, as well as the shared, common surface graphical applications. In the case of the cooperative learning, the group members support each other to achieve individual learning goals, while in the case of the collaborative learning, the group members support each other to achieve common goals. During cooperation, the participants divide the tasks among themselves, and every group member is responsible for a particular task, while collaboration is "knowledge building" during which the work division is spontaneous, depending on who can contribute with what to the common work. (cf. Sullivan, Marshall, & Tangney, 2015; Downes, 2006; Siemens, 2005; Davis, Edmunds, & Kelly-Bateman, 2008).

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When introducing a topic, for example, a mind map can be used to collect and arrange the preliminary information. The utilization area of mind maps is extremely wide: they are suitable for brainstorming, processing text parts, creative thinking etc. For example, brainstorming can be applied well when there is a need for the individual knowledge, combinative ability and creativity of the students of a study circle. The essence of brainstorming is the free ideas, the method directing to draw up problems and search for solutions. It can also be used to discover general problem areas and to list the reasons for the discovered problems. The concept map helps to create a system in the existing information with the form of a graphic depiction. The concept map shows the certain concepts and the relation system among them, and it can be applied in the following areas: at the introduction of a topic to explore preliminary knowledge or to map the existing knowledge, since it develops text comprehension, text processing. During mind map making, we start from a central concept or topic, we build the system of connecting concepts and features based on this. However, during a concept map making, we explicate more concepts and connect them according to a thought thread, usually in a networked form. The mind maps are mainly tree structures built radiantly, while concept maps can be not only of this type, but they can also build up complicated, even many pointed networks (Molnár & Kárpáti, 2009).

The online learning environment supports, for example, the *project work* in many ways. A project is generally a draft defining the conditions, processes, and results of a complex task to be accomplished in a given time unit. A unique feature of the project method is the possibility of free decision-making that is provided to the participants from defining aims and planning through accomplishing the task to evaluating the finished product and activity. The learning is realized indirectly, it is rather a means of the activity directed to achieve a product. There are many possibilities in the online learning environment for sharing information and storing it in a systematic form. The different applications can support the activities of the certain sections well, for example, a shared Google document can be efficiently applied to common note-taking, brainstorming connected to the topic, to which we can add videos, pictures, links and files. A Google+ or a Facebook closed group can be used to discuss different questions and share different files, as well it can serve as an online forum, or it can be used to vote on the questions coming up.

Generally, the work in a study circle finishes with a product, like in the case of a project work, and the possibility to manufacture diverse digital products can be motivating for the participants. The digital products can be, for example:

- video, motion picture and sound applications (e.g. Movie Maker, PowToon)
- digital cartoon (e.g. Pixton)
- website (e.g. Webnode)
- animation (e.g. Moovly)
- presentation (Prezi, Google Slides, MS PowerPoint etc.)
- multimedia document, poster (e.g. Glogster)

When talking about the participant-centered methods, we also emphasize the *discussion method,* which makes the changing of thoughts planned and organized to be able to recognize, draw up, discuss, and solve problems. Discussion means the confrontation of opposite views, to ascertain and solve certain problems; its application develops the problem-solving and communication skills as well. During a discussion, the partners basically:

- represent different views;
- have information about the discussed question that they are eager to share and willing to modify if buttressed up by arguments;
- accept every opinion in an open way, without prejudice, and respect others' opinions;
- prepare for the discussion thinking over their arguments;
- accept the person of the discussion leader and keep the formal rules of the discussion (topic, arguments etc.).

The use of the cooperation-based Map It application offers an innovative possibility in editing and managing discussion maps (also) in the online study circle work. We can read about the user experience in the study written by Molnár and Kárpáti (2009). The basis of the device is trialogical learning that is an efficient help in cooperative learning: with Map It, there is a possibility to make common documents. The software is suitable for sharing texts, pictures, and sounds, their common editing, and these processes are made transparent by a mapping programme. The authors emphasize the supporting role of "discussion mapping" in collaborative learning, which, among others, makes it possible to structure the discussions, to emphasize supporting and opposing views, to visualize information graphically, to moderate the discussions efficiently, and to be aware of others' opinions and respect them: the "talking at the same time" can be deactivated and the "talking differently next to each other" can be corrected. The discussions can mobilize the preliminary knowledge in a very intensive way, the interpretation differences hiding in the preliminary knowledge can turn out among the students, participants.

Besides, joining a community site can even be done while travelling by bus, with the help of mobile devices, that is, with the spreading of mobile info-communicational devices, it becomes possible for the individual to access topics, independent of place or time, and this can affect the lifelong learning supportively too, since the participant can deal with learning when he really takes his time for it.

The registered participants can create closed groups on Facebook to establish online study circles or they can join already existing groups. The surface can be learnt easily, and it can also be controlled who can join a given community. Every participant takes part with his or her own profile, but the visible information about the particular members can be different. There are some people who have a public, complete profile, some others show only limited visible information, according to the given setting.

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Survey among students

In connection to this, one of our empirical researches was aimed at the mapping of the personal experience and views of students trying the online study circles. We also examined the possibilities of participant-centered methods that can be used in study circles (e.g. project work).

In the spring semester of school year 2016–2017, we made a survey among second- and third year university students who study adult education, to get to know the students' views and experience regarding online study circles. As a preparation for the survey, we studied the methodological principles of the study circles. The aim of our survey was to create the opportunity for our students to gain personal experience in online study circles, involving web-based applications (n = 103).We regard this survey as a pilot. The examined study circles lasted for 8 weeks.

The main research questions:

- What expectations do the participants formulate in connection with the online study circles? What can we conclude based on the satisfaction survey?
- What kind of learning motivation may be satisfied by online study circles?

Our survey made among the students served the purpose that our students have the possibility to try themselves in operating online study circles. We chose the Facebook community site as the surface for the survey. We wanted to create the possibility that our students get their own experience in online study circles, with the use of Internet applications, so that they can also contribute to the actual work of online study circles later on, and become active collaborators and facilitators of the open, social, and intergenerational forums. Moreover, we would like them to be able to address the youth socialized in today's digital environment as well. The importance of our survey lies in making a suggestion for inspiring such an opportunity in online study circles that has been more or less untapped so far in the field of the Hungarian education, namely the support of online study circles. In favor of this, we have developed a practical guidance material for the future professionals and facilitators.

We regard the online study circles as a regular, learning- and participant-centered, low headcount study format that is built on a horizontal social network whose members study in their spare time. These study circles are also built on the cooperation and division of labor, right from the choosing and planning of the topic, through the processing, until the evaluation of the gained results. Everyone has an equally important role in these study circles. It is the members' contribution that decides if the joint work will be effective or not, that is, whether the study circle gains some added value from each participant or not (cf. Byström, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Holme-Barett, 2003; Kaplan & Carré, 2007; Kindström, 2000; Larsson & Nordvall, 2010; Maróti, 2010; Richmond, 2000).

The participation was based on free will, the choice of the topic was also free, the students dealt with the recent questions of healthy lifestyle and environmental protection.

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The phases of the survey were the following:

1. Preliminary survey on learning in communities – exploration of views and preliminary experience.
2. The students joined study circles, they started participating in the work of study circles in an online environment as the members of a closed Facebook group. We followed and analyzed their activities: work, methods, applications etc.
3. After their participation in the study circle, we completed a satisfaction survey to receive feedback on their opinion, experience, and openness to set up such study circles later on.
4. We completed the results of the survey with a group interview and oral enquiries.

The number of study circles was 6 in full-time, and 4 in correspondent section. The number of participants per study circle varied between 9 and 12. Altogether there were 103 students. We took the Swedish practice as the basis, which shows that the number of members is ideal if a minimum of 5, and a maximum of 15 people take part in a circle. If the group has less than five members, the general discussion is difficult to maintain; if it is too big, the cooperation and responsibility inside the group get hurt (cf. Kindström, 2000; Larsson & Nordvall, 2010). During the semester mentioned before, we also dealt with participant-centered education methods in the framework of methodological lessons (discussion method, situational method group etc.) which the students were allowed to build in and vary during their joint work, if necessary. (cf. Rahimi, van den Berg, & Veen, 2015).

At the end of the initiative, we compared the expectations that were formulated before the tryout and after it. We asked the participants to indicate their expectations regarding each aspect on a four-grade scale (1: not expected, 4: expected to full extent). It was an expectation both at the beginning and in the end that the study circle provide experience-like opportunities for learning, offer opportunities for exchanging experience, and for broadening knowledge flexibly as regards place and time. However, we noticed that the role and strength of the community and the other participants have increased among the interviewed students by the end of the tryout (Table 1).

Table 1
Expectations of Participants (1: Not Expected, 4: Expected to Full Extent)

	Before Working in a Study Circle	**After Working in a Study Circle**
Broadening my knowledge in a specific area	3.8	3.8
Exchanging experience in a chosen topic	3.6	3.7
Offering experience-like opportunity for learning	3.8	3.9
Opportunities for making new friendships	2.4	2.8
Offering opportunities for talking with people of similar interest	2.5	3.2

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	Before Working in a Study Circle	After Working in a Study Circle
Getting confirmation	2.8	3.3
Receiving supportive feedback	2.8	3.0
Sharing my opinion with others	2.9	3.4
Preoccupation with a chosen topic	3.3	3.5
Physical presence should not be expected	3.7	3.8
Being flexible as regards time	3.8	3.8

In the examined study circles, the following participant-centered methods were popular: generating discussions, online voting, brain storming, making mind maps, project work etc. The work realized in the Facebook closed group was well-supplemented and supported by the following applications, among others, with the help of which participants could prepare and plan the common activities (Table 2).

Table 2
Services and Applications Used in the Study Circles

Common Activities	Service, Application etc.	Application Area
Organizing common work	Doodle Google Calendar	Agreeing on appointments Establishing online voting Creating different events
Online storage (common editing)	Google Drive, Google Docs	Storing files, editing common documents Taking notes of reflections, writing online MS Word documents that are also editable and shareable in a collaborative way Editable, shareable online
Systematization, supporting understanding	Mind Meister, X Mind, Free Mind	Different collaborative mind map making and concept map making applications
Voting	Facebook voting	Online brainstorming, voting
Synchronous communication	Skype chat Facebook chat	Conference call, video call, chat etc.

The advantage of jointly edited documents is seen, for example, in the fact that the participants can bring new, distinct dimensions with themselves, and can enrich the text to be created and each other's way of thinking. During the cooperative writing, the participants continuously add, coordinate their own views, they work for the joint aim.

The participants aimed at practicality, during the processing of topics the practical utilization was a defining viewpoint, on the whole, we can talk about present-oriented interest circles.

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At the end of the work, the particular study circles summarized everything they dealt with and they found useful in a jointly edited document (presentation, mind map, chart etc.), emphasizing those methods (discussion, vision work etc.) that they worked with.

The participants considered the initiative mainly as an experience-like knowledge-widening possibility (84 people) and in their view, they received useful knowledge from the other participants.

We also asked how the students see the strength of an (online) study circle, in the light of their experience. In their answers, the students marked, among others, the flexibility of time and space (84 people), the change of experience in a carefree environment (64 people), the variegation of opinions (62 people), and the belonging to a community (38 people) as well as the relationship building (29 people) as the strength of these circles.

"It helps the people who want to learn so that they are not connected to time and space."

"You can exchange experience, affect others' way of thinking, motivate others to do something good." (Note: environmental protection study circle)

"It helps those participants to open who do not like acting in front of the public."

"We had the chance to build relationships."

"We received extra information without spending time on travelling."

"You can reach it anywhere, anytime."

"In writing, people speak more ornate, it can only work in a topic which people are interested in; this group is only good if the people in it are active."

We also asked the students to write down their experience that they think can be practical or useful for others. Based on the answers, the possibility of exchanging experience and cooperation proved to be worth emphasizing for the people asked, and they also put an emphasis on the need of planning learning, and agreeing on expectations and needs (cf. Kindström, 2000).

"Choosing the right topic is determinative!"

"I do not use Facebook for learning so this function never came to my mind."

"The success varies per person".

"Sharing more personal topics and experience is important. It is not enough to share something, you have to present it. Group members tend to have imaginative solutions."

"We should be brave to tell each other our opinions!"

"Exchanging experience, group work, to see things from many viewpoints."

"Knowledge sharing, knowledge creating."

"Getting to know other people's experience, group cohesion."

"Interesting, instructive, easy access."

"Useful, good, successful."

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We were also curious about how the participants characterize the initiative with maximum 3 words: they emphasized mainly the novelty (74 people) and the carefree mood (64 people).

"Imaginative, modern, practical."
"Exchanging experience, sharing opinions, ability for compromise."
"Cooperation, communication ability, group of people."
"Novelty, pleasant atmosphere, friendly."
"Family-like company, rich in new information, rich in experience."
"Interesting, instructive, active."
"Insight, experience, idea."
"Virtual, familiar, simple."
"Idea, inspiration, humor."
"Fast, efficient, interesting."
"Exciting, entertaining, useful spending of time."

Like Hill's (2013) typology, who divided the open course participants into five types (not present, observer, incidental, passive participant, active participant) on the basis of their presence and activity on the course, as well as their characteristic activity types (or the lack of them), we met the last three types in our survey. Sixty percent of the participants joined the work actively, forty percent took a less active role (we can call them incidental, passive participants), 1–4 persons per study circle.

We can deduct the following results and conclusions based on the synthetizing of technical literature, the preparatory survey, and the examination and enquiry among the students:

- The participant students consider the examined initiative, study circles in an online environment, as an experience-like knowledge-widening possibility (cf. preparing for lifelong learning and active citizenship). We can conclude the efficiency of the study circle work and its successful functioning from the fact that almost eighty percent of the participants plan to continue with the topic they started in the future as well. (cf. Birzina et al., 2012)
- The survey confirms that the basis of the online study circle work is also the voluntary participation and the personal curiosity towards the topic. It is defined by the self-regulating learning ability of the individual: established interest, setting up inner aims, activating preliminary knowledge, endurance etc., which are worth emphasizing from the aspect of lifelong learning and the preparation for it as well.
- The strength of an online study circle lies in the flexibility of space and time, in the interactions of a carefree environment and in the community experience. At the same time, there is a need for providing the possibility of synchronous communication in the online study circles (partly simultaneous presence in the online sphere).

- The Facebook usage habits influenced the participation and activity in the study circle work: those who follow Facebook a priori from the background and it is not usual for them to comment or post something, showed a background behavior in the online study circle work too. According to our results, these people mainly joined, for example, for the online voting tasks or for sharing links, which required an impersonal comment. It was also vice versa: those who are very active on Facebook (comment others' posts, post their own thoughts, experience etc.), actively joined the study circle work. Compared to Hill's (2013) typology, the former ones were identified as passive participants, while the latter ones as active participants.

Based on the result we received, we also made a SWOT analysis where we tried to collect the strengths and weaknesses of online study circles, as well as the opportunities that can be exploited from the environment and the potential threat sources too (Table 3).

Table 3
SWOT Analysis of Online Study Circles

Strength	**Weakness**
Builds on personal interest, curiosity	For the successful work and cooperation, the following things are necessary:
Free topic choice: the topic can be connected to general knowledge, professional interest or hobbies	Self-regulating learning
	The activity of participants, their initiating communication
Open learning possibility	Making a learning plan, setting aims
Flexible in space and time	Cooperation of other participants
Free of device	Possible lack of personal attendance defined by digital competence
Education, learning by fun	Cultural capital defines: probably in demand for those having a higher qualification
Carefree, not formalized atmosphere	Does not finish with a certificate (see Kindström, 2000; Maróti, 2010)
Knowledge sharing, opinion sharing	The community site is not made for learning
Starts from the preliminary knowledge of the individual	Attention can ramble on the community sites
Builds on the need to belong to a community	The rate of early finishing is high in an online learning environment (see experience of open courses: Hill, 2013)
Can develop the cooperation skills, problem solving, creativity	
Voluntary participation	
Interactive	
Asynchronous and synchronous communication are also possible	
Many applications can be used, for example, jointly editable documents, mind maps	

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Opportunity	Threat
IT, spreading and development of technique	Ruining effect of screen activities on health
Increased amount of spent online	Numerous uncontrolled/doubtfully reliable content on the Internet
Spreading of smart phones	
Digital citizenship	
Certifying learning results gained in a non formal learning environment	
Meeting place for different generations: intergenerational learning	
The relationships formed in the online sphere can continue in the physical sphere as well	

It is among our plans to learn more about the joint features of networked learning and the online study circles, and to inspire the creation of online study circles on the website of our department.

Conclusions

The online study circle is such a free learning possibility that is built on a non-hierarchical, horizontal system of relationships, flexible in space and time, where the participants learn together by activating their preliminary knowledge, in a way planned by them selves, in a topic which everybody is interested in. In the online study circles, during the common activities, synchronous and asynchronous communication, the participants create common products built on the community applications, with the involvement of their different individual knowledge and practical experience and by the sharing of content, in a cooperative way (cf. see Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2005).

Thanks to the demographical changes, ensuring access to learning for all age groups, either close to the residence or utilizing the opportunities of new information and communication technologies, is regarded as an extraordinarily important task even on international level (cf. UNESCO, 2016). At the same time, the educational level of the elderly has risen in the past decades, as well as the rate of those having degrees or having completed secondary education. Simultaneously, the rate of those who have not completed their primary studies has decreased significantly. The ratio of the elderly and the increasing level of qualifications result in the transformation of needs regarding spare time activities (cf. active ageing). We regard the role of formal education vital, both from the aspect of lifelong learning, and the ability to prepare for collaboration. Our work also confirmed that the most common way of using the Internet and visiting community sites is through smart phones (communication and reaching the content irrespective of place and time), which, in our view, can have positive effects on adult learning and education too (see mobile learning, Mlearning) (cf. Weste, 2012).

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Mokymasis visą gyvenimą ir Web 2.0 priemonės: internetinės mokymosi grupės, skirtos aktyviam mokymuisi ir pilietiškumui skatinti

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Santrauka

Dėl internetinių technologijų (Web 2.0) paplitimo galimybės mokytis ir šviestis visą gyvenimą smarkiai padidėjo. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjamas praktinis mokymosi visą gyvenimą įgyvendinimas.

Autorė teigia, kad šiais laikais atsirado galimybė burti mokymosi grupes internetinėje aplinkoje, įtraukiant socialinio bendravimo svetaines. Tokios grupės galėtų burtis atsižvelgiant į dalyvių interesus atspindinčias bendravimo temas ir galėtų būti naudingos žmonėms, kurie negali rasti būdų susitikti asmeniškai ir norintiems laisvalaikiu mokytis kartu su bendruomene (plg. Mokymasis visą gyvenimą, Longworth, 2001). Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos internetinių mokymosi grupių galimybės taikant SSGG (angl. *SWOT*) analizę.

Vieno iš atliktų empirinių tyrimų tikslas buvo atskleisti studentų, dalyvaujančių internetinių mokymosi grupių veikloje, asmenines patirtis ir požiūrius. Taip pat buvo tiriami į dalyvius orientuoti mokymosi metodai, kurie gali būti taikomi tokiose grupėse. Straipsnis grindžiamas empirinio tyrimo, kuriame dalyvavo studentai (n = 103), studijuojantys suaugusiųjų švietimą, rezultatais.

Esminiai žodžiai: *aktyvus pilietiškumas, mokymasis visą gyvenimą, mokymosi grupės, Web 2.0 technologijos, bendradarbiavimas.*

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