

Global citizenship education and youth participation in the globalised world – child sponsorships as informal learning resources in Europe

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Research context

Child sponsorships

- Child sponsorships are a popular means of contributing to development efforts by supporting a non-governmental developmental organization (NGO) in their work for a child and his/her environment in the global South
- Sponsors receive information about the sponsored child, the superordinate development project and also background information, e.g. concerning the child's country

Controversial debates about child sponsorships

Many NGOs emphasize the **exceptional value of child sponsorships for global learning**. However, child sponsorships are often accused of conveying simplified concepts of **"development as charity"** (Smith & Yanacopulus 2004) and **disguising the structural causes of poverty and inequalities** (Scheunpflug 2007, Smith & Yanacopulus 2004).

There have been many **controversial debates** about the role of child sponsorships concerning the development awareness of sponsors in industrialised countries (Scheunpflug 2007). So far there has been **no empirical research** regarding this question.

Objectives

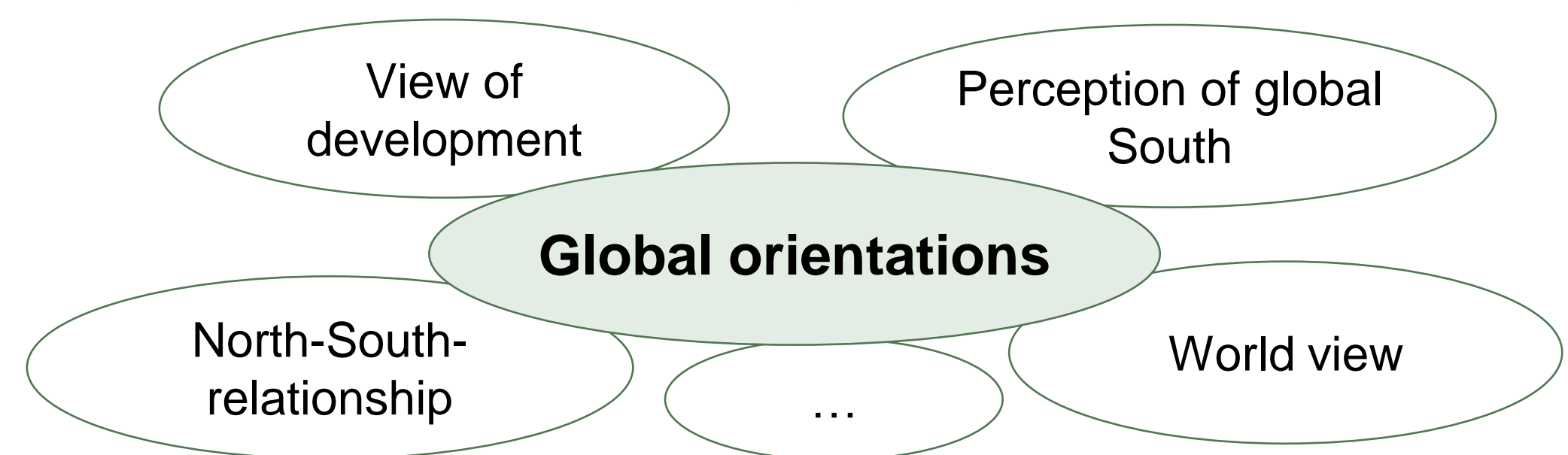
The project develops a **comprehensive picture of the sponsorship-related learning processes** with regard to **collective global orientations** in the context of the world society. With this thematic focus it is located in the discourse concerning global learning, global citizenship education and education for sustainable development (ESD). Due to the emphasis on young people in these areas **learning experiences of adolescents** involved in child sponsorship programmes are especially interesting.

Research focus

What are the global orientations of adolescents who, as a school class or youth group, sponsor a child in the global South?

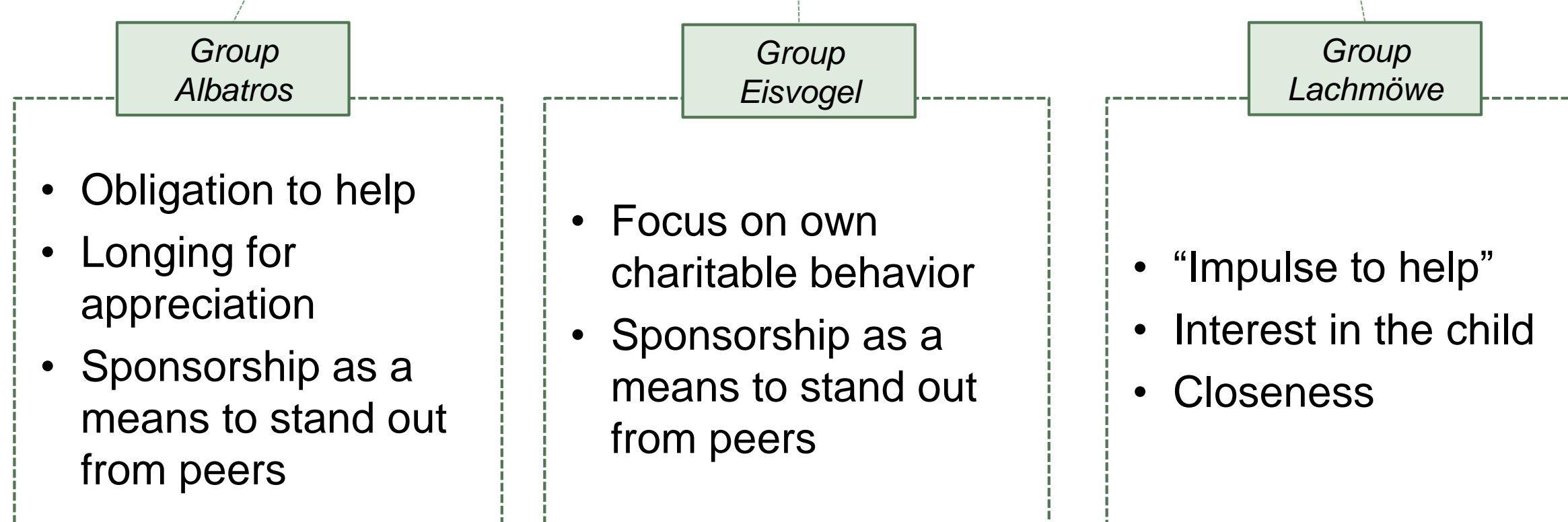
Research method

- Data collection: **Group discussions** with young people (Loos/Schäffer 2001).
- Data analysis: **Documentary Method** (Bohnsack 2010) based on Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge (1964, 1980).



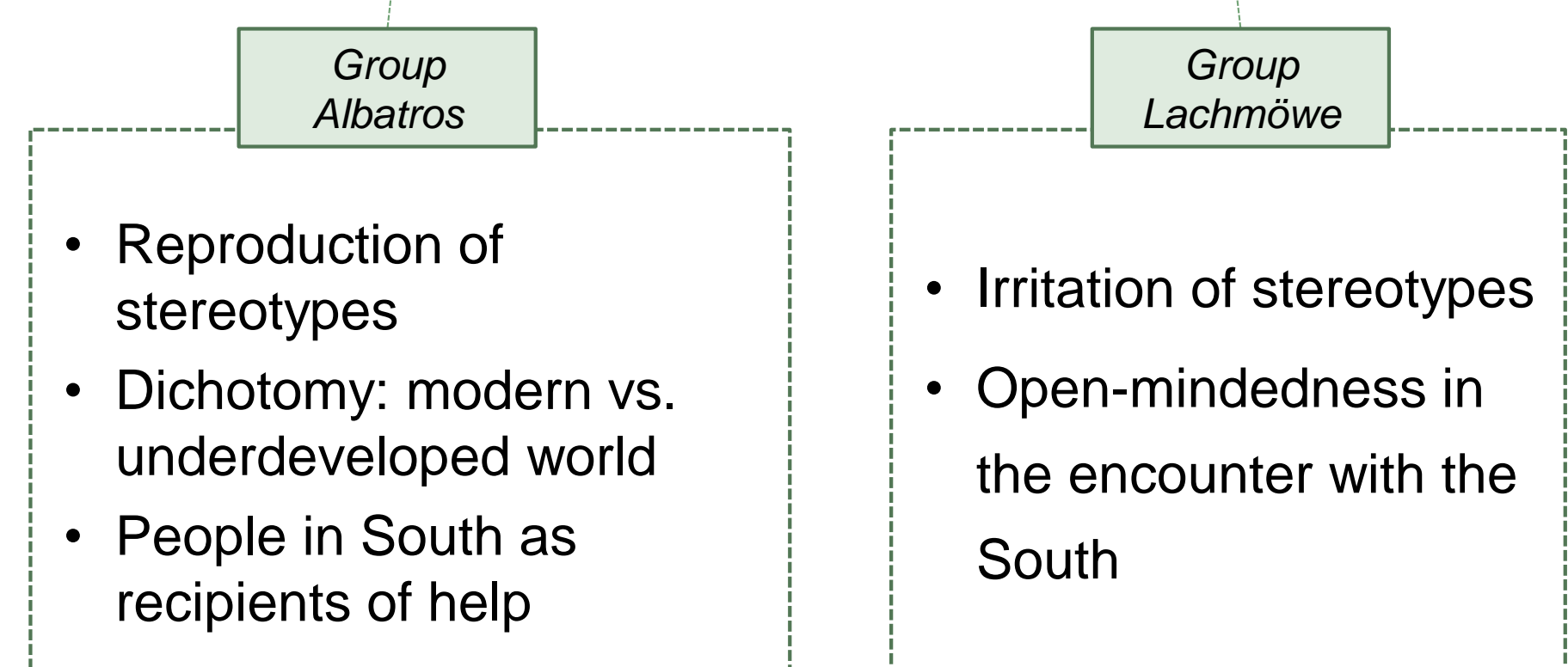
First findings

Relationship to global South: charity



Self-centredness

Perception of South: Distance vs. closeness

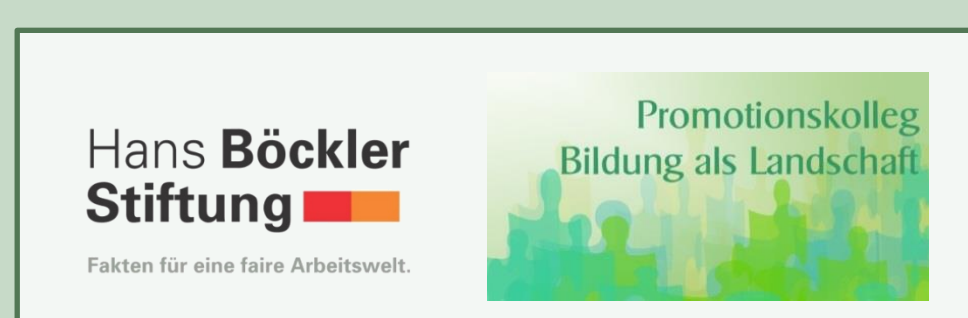


Distance

Closeness

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Literature

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