

Identity formation in a recreational environment

The role of the natural, built
and social environment

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Abstract

Identity formation is a process which all young people struggle with. Forming a positive identity is even more difficult for persons with a disability. Participation in leisure activities for those people is important, because leisure can contribute to identity development. Recreational camps have been identified as suitable leisure environments for identity development, however, it is still unsure what role the environment plays in this. A qualitative research was conducted in order to study the influence of a recreational water-sport camp on the identity of its disabled participants. This research aimed at filling the gap in the literature by paying special attention to the role of the social, natural and built environment, as well as the role of water-sport, in identity development. While due to external factors it was really difficult to figure out whether the camp influenced identity, there were indications that the camp has an influence on identity on the short-term, but not on the long-term. By taking a closer look at the camp environment, this research mainly highlights the aspects of the environment that influence identity, as well as the ways in which those aspects could influence its participants identity.

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1. Introduction

“The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances that is how the dictionary describes *identity* (dictionary.com, 2017). Identity is a topic of interest in the scientific community, and it appears to be a more complicated social construct than it seems when reading definition in the dictionary (Fearon et al., 1999). The forming of an identity and finding individuality is a difficult process which all young people struggle with (Goodwin & Staples, 2005). Identity formation is thought to be one of the major developmental tasks of adolescence and plays an important role in achieving well-being (Erikson, 1963; Martinez & Dukes, 1997). Studies show that persons with a high level of identity development have less psychosocial problems, less anxiety and less depressions (Crocetti et al., 2008; Luyckx et al. 2007).

For minority groups forming a positive identity is even more difficult (Helms, 1990). Research has been conducted to the identity development of minority groups, there are studies that investigate, for example, ethnic minorities (Helms, 1990; Duany, 1998), cultural minorities (Carter, 2006) or sexual minorities (Whitney, 2006; Snyder & Hasbrouck, 1996). However, research that studies the identity development of disabled individuals, or more specifically disabled adolescents, is underrepresented

There are more than 250.000 children and adolescents (6 – 19 years old) with a disability in the Netherlands (wat is een handicap, 2017). For most of them, forming a positive identity is more difficult than for able-bodied peers (Shakespeare, 1996). Disability is, according to the World Health Organization, an umbrella term that includes three dimensions: body functions and structure, activities at the individual level, and participation in society (Shakespeare, 1996). Not working bodily functions make it difficult to perform individual activities, to participate in society and thus explore ones identity (Schalock, Luckasson & Shogren, 2007). Data from the Netherlands is missing, but national surveys in the USA reveal the prevalence of childhood disability and limitations to participation in daily activities to be 6.5% (Newacheck and Halfon, 1998). The rates of activity limitation of children with physical disabilities are two- to threefold those in children with other chronic conditions such as asthma (Newacheck and Halfon, 1998).

Children with a disability participate thus less in leisure activities, while those activities have been identified as important for identity development (Csikszentmihayli & Larson, 1984). Especially going on a recreational camp and participating in sport activities have been suggested as important leisure activities in which individuals, both able bodied and disabled, can explore, accept and try out their identities (Groff & Kleiber, 2001; Shaw, Kleiber, & Caldwell, 1995). While those activities are as important (if not more important) for disabled persons, they are less available for disabled individuals (Hua et al, 2013).

So here are indications that recreational camps and sport activities can influence identity and while those activities are less available for disabled persons on a daily basis, there are special camps organized where disabled individuals can participate in recreational activities. The impact of recreational camps on identity has been researched, but most research focuses on able-bodied persons (Henderson et al., 2007; Vincke & van Heeringen, 2004).

This research combines the recreational camp with sport, and focuses on a water-sport camp for disabled adolescents. This study aims at finding out whether such a camp, and its sport activities, influences the identity of the disabled participants. By using Gill's *four types of integration*, the focus lies on the integration of the disability identity, which is claimed to be one aspect of a disabled individuals identity (Gill, 1997). Furthermore, an effort is made to gain a deeper understanding of what aspects the camp environment actually influences identity. Previous research suggests that the social environment plays the most important role, in both sport and camp (Meltzer & Rourke, 2005; Bailey, 2005). While other research emphasizes the importance of the natural environment in which sport or camp takes place (Kearns & Collins, 2000). In this research special attention is paid to the role the water-sport and the natural, social and built environment of the recreational camp.

By means of a comparative case study, the influence on identity of both water-sport and the camp's environment is researched. With the use of creative methods, both adolescents who went to the camp one year ago and adolescents who went on the camp this year were interviewed. This is done in order to compare the long term and short term effects. Furthermore, parents and teachers are included in this research to give a more holistic view on the adolescents identity development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The concept of identity

While everybody seems to be able to use the word 'identity', it is difficult to give a short summary of its meaning. The most common view on identity is that identity consists of two components, namely the social and the personal (Fearon et al., 1999). Firstly, identity refers to viewing oneself in relation to others, the social identity. Individuals are subscribed to a *social category*, which consists of a group individuals marked by a label and have the same characteristics or attributes, examples are being a daughter, an athlete or a student (Fearon et al., 1999). Secondly, personal identity includes the core characteristics of the person, it is about the individual, for example seeing oneself as a good person (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998, Deaux, 1992). Those two parts of identity do not have to be linked necessarily. Nonetheless, scholars argue that an integration of those two identities is necessary in order to form a positive identity (Cheng, Sanchez-Burks & Lee, 2008; Gill, 1997).

Scholars use different terms for the change of, or movements in, identity (e.g. identity formation, integration, identity status development) and different models to measure identity are proposed (e.g. Erikson's identity development model; Marcia's (1966) moratorium-achievement model). However, the main assumptions where those models are based on is that, firstly, identity is a developmental process with an end stage, (e.g. being happy with oneself and fitting into society) and secondly that the stability or change in behavior lies in the interactional process that occurs between individuals and their environments (Cass, 1979). Those ideas also form the basis of researching identity in this study.

2.2. Disability identity

Problems can occur in the identity forming of disabled persons when they try to identify themselves with their able bodied peers (Hutzler et al. 2002; Cote & Levine, 2002). People with a disability who try to identify with able-bodied peers do so for different reasons. For example, in the research of Hutzler et al. (2002) a participant stated that she was ashamed to be seen with disabled peers because she did not want to be seen as a disabled person. Gill (1997) also pointed out that some disabled people are seeking contact with disabled peers, but others avoid such contact, especially in special activities and gatherings because they do not want to be 'one of them'. However, it is not always a choice to avoid disabled peers, some of those people just do not have many options to meet peers due to isolation caused by transportation or environmental boundaries. (Gill, 1997).

Parents also play a role in this, because often they would like their disabled kids to grow up in the able-bodied world (Schowe, 1997). Those parents assume that people with a disability get less accepted and that it is more difficult to start meaningful relationships and to get jobs, that is why they want their kids to fit in the able-bodied world (Weinberg & Sterritt, 1986). The ability or lack of ability of disabled kids to fit in the able-bodied world has a direct effect on the parents as well. According to Spradley & Spradley (1978) the parents' place in the able-bodied world gets less disturbed if their disabled kids succeed to fit in. However, if their kids are not accepted in the able-body society this has a negative impact on them because they inevitably share their children's negative social identity (Spradley & Spradley, 1978).

Another issue in identity forming for disabled persons lies in the social categories made by society (Tajfel, 1974). While there are various different conditions and very different degrees of impairment, all people with impairments are referred to as 'disabled'. Disabled persons are ascribed to a certain social category by society, not necessarily by themselves. In that way they are given extra identity concerning their disability. All those aspects, identifying with the able-bodied, parents culture, and society's negative label, can make it difficult for a person with a disability to integrate all aspects of the self in one's identity and to integrate one's social identity (being disabled) in their personal identity (Goodwin & Staples, 2005).

As noted before, the social and personal identity of an individual do not have to be connected necessarily. Identity can refer to individual characteristics that a social category can not express, or a category can be described as an 'identity' while one does not see it as part of their personal identity (Fearon et al, 1999). However, disabled persons with high identity integration perceive their two identities as largely compatible and complementary, and do not find it problematic to identify with both the mainstream culture and disability community at the same time. While disabled individuals with low identity integration feel caught between the two identities and prefer to keep them separate, believing they can identify with each group at particular times or in particular contexts, but cannot identify with both groups at the same time (Cheng, Sanchez-Burks & Lee, 2008). That is why scholars suggest that the integration of the disability identity is important in forming an overall positive identity (Gill, 1997; Cheng, Sanchez-Burks & Lee, 2008).

2.3 labeling

It is difficult for disabled people to leave their 'disability identity'. Differences are used to create boundaries between groups and the hardness of those boundaries between groups varies. The boundary for, for example, intellectual disabled is created based on IQ. This is a hard boundary and that makes it difficult to leave this 'intellectual disabled' group and explore one's own individuality (Banton, 1983). The same accounts for physical disabled individuals, a disease or a handicap can be seen as a hard boundary, and makes it difficult to leave the 'physical disabled' group. Scholars critique this label, and argue the power to name (Gillman, 2000; Beart, Hardy, & Buchan, 2005). Gillman et al. (2000) state that *'the disabled identities of people with a handicap remain largely "embodied" and with the definition control of professionals'*. This means that disabled people have less opportunities to explore their own social identity themselves. Professionals label the disabled persons as 'disabled', because they have a low IQ or an physical impairment. Even if that individual doesn't feel that way, this identity is given and is likely to stay with them the rest of their lives (Beart, Hardy, & Buchan, 2005).

This research focuses on adolescents with physical disabilities. This group has a disability that is often, not always, more apparent than intellectual disabilities. This has as a consequence that a person with a physical disability gets recognized or labeled as 'handicapped' by society easily as well. This has advantages and disadvantages. For people with a physical disability, in contrast to people with less apparent disabilities, it is more difficult to control their social identity and the perception of others. Nevertheless, that does not mean that recognizing a person as disabled has only negative consequences, people with these labels may benefit from special treatments and assistance. A visible disability can lower the barriers to ask for assistance, it may be considered more legitimate than for people with a hidden disability (Olney & Kim, 2001).

2.4 Identity and the social

Identity forming is a social process. A social setting and social communication is of big importance to discover oneself, because in those interactions we learn to assume the roles of others and reflect on our actions accordingly (Kivel, 2000). Social interactions are necessary to form a positive *social identity*, according to the social identity theory (Stets & Burke, 2000). In this theory, a social identity is the knowledge that the individual belongs to a social category. Through a social comparison process, persons who are similar to oneself are labelled the in-group, persons who differ are the out-group (Stets & Burke, 2000).

This labelling happens ideally by oneself, but in the case of disabled persons this is not always the case (Tajfel, 1974). As noted before, it is difficult, if not impossible, for disabled persons to leave this social group of 'disabled persons' (Banton 1983; Beart, Hardy, & Buchan, 2005). If one is unhappy with the social group they are in, but cannot leave it, there are two options according to Tajfel (1974). Firstly, one could try to change the interpretation of the attributes of the group so that its unwelcome features (e.g. low status) are either justified or made acceptable through a reinterpretation; secondly, one could try to accept the situation for what it is and engage in social action which would lead to desirable changes in the situation (Tajfel, 1974).

In the case of the social group 'disabled persons', research has shown that contact with disabled peers is important to make the social group they are in more acceptable for themselves (Cote & Levine, 2002). Cote &

Levine (2002) show in their research that avoidance of contact with disabled peers can later lead to anxiety and non-adaptive behavior at the moment disabled people realize that there is a difference between the socially constructed ideal image and the real self-image. This mainstream image pressures them to fit in and sustain a social role of the mainstream group, which they cannot fulfill because they are not mainstream (Cote & Levine, 2002). Gill (1997) describes this as a struggle in which one tries to resolve two opposing sides of conflict. Half of the individual is proud and accepts who the person is, while the other half promotes that the person is less and inferior. This causes that disabled persons often get divided against themselves. Social interaction with disabled peers is thus of great importance in forming a positive social identity, which in turn is needed in order to achieve a positive self-image (Tajfel, 1997).

2.5. leisure and identity

Not only is interaction with peers needed to develop a positive social identity, bringing people with disabilities together can help to explore ones individuality as well (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000). However, the context in which this interaction happens is really important. Pensgaard and Sorensen (2002) state that such a context, in order to be helpful in identity exploration, should be characterized by *'a high degree of participation of individuals in decision-making processes, identification with other group members, social support, and sharing of information, knowledge, and collective resources'*.

Researchers have suggested that leisure can provide such a context for identity exploration or formation (Kivel & Kleiber, 2002). Sport, as a form of leisure, has several benefits, both physical and psychological (French & Hainsworth, 2001). Hua et al (2013) stress that sport tourism could help physically-disabled persons in developing skills and experience success *'through practice of the skills within an environment where constructive feedback is provided'*. Also, disabled persons have stronger goals and insights, especially in outdoor sports (Hua et al, 2013). Furthermore, involvements in sports motivates persons with disabilities to *'regain their personality and to handle the stigma of a disabled body'* (Martin, Adams-Mushett, & Smith, 1995). This can improve the quality of life, self-confidence, self-esteem and social acceptance (Hua et al, 2013).

These are all benefits gained from the action of the sport itself. However, the symbolic benefits leisure activities offer may be just as important. The context of leisure activities provides opportunities to experiment with different roles and activity patterns (Hendry, 1983). This role-playing through participating in leisure activities is primarily liberating in allowing one to try out alternative roles (e.g. not the role of the 'handicapped' but musician, athlete, artist etc.) or just affirm one's leisure identity(Kivel & Kleiber 2000). The research of Kivel & kleiber (2000) studied gay and lesbian participants and confirmed that leisure contexts explicitly contributed to participants' sense of personal identity. This is also what Goodwin & Staples (2005) found in their research. They researched the impact of a recreational environment on disabled persons and found that the participants enjoyed the benefits typical summer recreation gives, such as friendships and enjoyment. But in addition, the camp also provided a setting for identity exploration and self-definition (Goodwin & Staples, 2005). Also, Larson (1994) indicated that participating in leisure could be an opportunity for healthy adolescent development. He names phycological and social integration as an example.

2.6. The meaning of environments

2.6.1. summer camp environment

Participation in sport has the same benefits for both a disabled and able bodied persons. (Martin, Adams-Mushett, & Smith, 1995). But the issue is that disabled persons live in a society designed for the able bodied, this means that disabled persons often do not have the chance to participate in leisure activities (Hua et al, 2013). Recreational summer camps for people with disabilities can provide an opportunity for disabled persons to get involved in such leisure activities together with their disabled peers, and create a setting for '*identity exploration and self-definition*' (Goodwin & Staples, 2005). Recreational summer camps are in the literature often described as (nontraditional) 'therapeutic landscapes', which Finley et al. (2015) define as a place with '*an enduring reputation for achieving physical, mental, and spiritual healing*'. This theory recognizes landscapes as a resource that can play a role in mental, physical and social well-being.

2.6.2. Blue spaces

Certain parts of the landscape have received special scientific attention regarding to well-being, aquatic elements for example. There are researchers who suggest that it is especially the blue space that have beneficial influences on the emotional state compared to other environments (William 2007, Foley 2011). For example the sound of water and going into the water are often seen as calming and restorative and appears to have a positive effect on mood (White et al. , 2010). With blue space is meant oceans, seas, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water (Foley, 2011). In the literature a healthy blue spaces is defined as: 'health-enabling places and spaces, where water is at the centre of a range of environments with identify able potential for the promotion of human wellbeing' (Foley, 2011).

There is something special about blue spaces. One example is the sea. The sea's chemical and physical composition makes our immersion within it possible, however, at the same time it exclude our extended presence with it (Anderson, 2012). This makes that the sea is seen as 'exotic' and 'other. Nevertheless, the sea may be really different, the land and the sea are never wholly separate from each other (Anderson, 2012). Anderson (2012) researched human interaction with this blue space, he explored the coming together of the surfer and the wave. Anderson argued that the combination of skill accomplishment and interaction with nature produces a 'relational sensibility', which is described as emotional reactions that are generated within humans as result of being part of a certain place (Anderson, 2012) This is emotional reaction, caused partly by the sea, is part of the surfing experience (Anderson, 2012).

There are a few more researchers who have studied the human interaction with the blue space, Foley (2011) states '*the images of leaping into and swimming in blue spaces tell a thousand stories and captures an affective, instinctive, non-representational act that has a world-wide resonance for human health and wellbeing*'. Foley relates blue spaces and the act of swimming to health and well-being, while Illich (1986) emphasis the water as a symbol of change. He found that water for people reflects spiritual rituals that mark the beginning and end of life. While scholars find different effects of water, it is clear that often a strong affective meaning is attached to blue spaces (Duff, 2011).

2.6.3. Built environment

The built environment is described as the part of the physical environment made by people for people. This part of the environment includes buildings, transportation systems, and open spaces. The remainder of the physical environment is the natural environment (Northridge, Sclar & Biswas, 2003). The interactions between people and the built environment are acknowledged as important for people's mental and physical health (Northridge, Sclar & Biswas, 2003). Also, Rapoport (1982) describes the importance of the meanings we give to objects. He argues that the image that one has of an object plays a major role in decisions. The global, affective responses are based on the meaning that aspects in the environment have for people. He notes that this meaning is partly a result of the interactions between a person and these environments. Rapoport (1982) also stresses the importance of the built environment, objects indicate to people how to act; *'social organization and culture supply a fixed set of cues, which are used to interpret situations and thus help people to act appropriately'*. The built environment provides such a set of clues, those cues trigger appropriate behaviour (Rapoport, 1982).

This notion has also been included in literature about planning 'healthy cities' (Renalds, Smith & Hale, 2010). The description of a healthy community underlines the importance of the built environment; *'a healthy community is one that continuously create and improves both its physical and social environments, helping people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop to their fullest potential'* (Renalds, Smith & Hale, 2010). The way communities are structured can thus impact physical and social health, certain objects can help to facilitate appropriate behaviour (Rapoport, 1982). A neighbourhood, for example, can be built to support a certain active lifestyle. By the building of sidewalks and accessible green spaces people are more inclined to be active outside (Renalds, Smith & Hale, 2010).

3. Research questions

Due to the social context, leisure activities and the natural environment, recreational settings have been identified as a context in which youth with disabilities have the opportunity to explore identity alternatives and develop their identity (Goodwin & Staples, 2005; Groff and Kleiber, 2001). The question is how those recreational camp spaces play a role in this. A lot of research has been conducted on people-environment relations and the impact of the environment on wellbeing (Sugiyama & Thompson, 2007; Carrus et al. 2015; Lee & Maheswaran, 2011). More specific research on recreational summer camps and its meaning for disabled people has also already received attention, for example by Groff and Kleiber (2001) and Goowin & Staples (2005). However, they focuses on the effect of summer camp on personal development and its broader meaning, whereas this research will focus on the elements in the camp environment that cause this effect. According to Groff and Kleiber (2001) the therapeutic significance of segregated summer recreational landscape in identity development has received very little consideration. Also, Goodwin & Staples (2005) state that *'The importance of camp experiences in disability community awareness, disability identity development, and the therapeutic benefits of the camp "landscape" have yet to be fully captured'*. They recommend future

research into the role of physical activity programs as psychologically therapeutic contexts for the discovery, development, and/or affirmation of disability identity (Goodwin & Staples, 2005).

This study takes a different approach than previous research. Besides researching if and how the water sports camp influences identity, it pays special attention to the role of the water-sport and the natural, built and social environment of the camp. All those aspects have been studied separately and appeared to be able to influence well-being, personal development or identity (Hua et al., 2013; Foley 2011; Rapoport, 1982; Kivel & Kleiber 2000). In this study they are combined to see if and how they influence identity. Also, this study aims at finding out whether there is a difference between the short-term and long-term effects. The objective of this paper is thus:

Research if, and in what way, the natural, built and social environment of the water sports camp influences its participant's identity

The leads to the following main research question:

RQ1: How do the natural, built and social environment of a water sports camp influences the identity of its physically handicapped participants on the short- and long-term?

Four sub research questions were formulated in order to find out *if* the camp influences the participants identity and what role the natural, built and social environment and water sports splayed.

SQ1: in what way did the natural environment influence the participants identity?

SQ2: In what way did the built environment influence participants identity?

SQ3: In what way did being with disabled peers, volunteers and teachers influence the participants identity?

SQ4: in what way did 'being away from home' influence the participants identity?

SQ5: In what way did the water sports influence the participants identity?

4. Theoretical framework and research design

4.1. Four types of integration

There are several theories about disability identity development and identity development in general that could be used as a framework for research. Most of them are based on Erikson's (1963) model of identity development and include, though the names may be different, some stage of desiring to fit in the mainstream culture, a period marked with conflict and separation and generally ends with the person finding personal integrity (Romero et al., 2014; Waterman, 1982; Bilodeau & Renn, 2005). Erikson's model, and related ones, provides a stage theory that assumes that identity involves pattern of distinct stages and that its development happens in a certain order. Also, a clear distinction is made between identity 'crisis' (referring to a period of struggle where aspects of identity are questioned) and 'commitment' (where those aspects of identity are confirmed) (Waterman, 1982). Although also other scholars describe this process in clear stages, many note that identity forming is generally more fluid, with stops, starts, and backtracking (Bilodeau, & Renn, 2005). Another well-known identity development model, focussing on minority identity, is the one from Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1993). However, in this model no distinction is made for a specific type of minority (e.g. Gender, race or disability) and it doesn't address how an individual may simultaneously develop and embrace multiple minority statuses (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005).

In order to discover the influence of the natural, built and social environment of the water sports camp on the participants identity, this study builds on the *Four types of integration model* from Gill (1997). This concerns a model whereby four types of integration underlie disability identity development. This model is used because it provides a component theory which recognizes the unsystematic ways in which identity development takes place (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005). Also, the focus of this multi-level and non-linear model lies specifically on people with a disability (Gill, 1997). The model builds upon the theory that developing a positive identity means striving for integration of the social and personal identity. The model highlights the importance of integrating the disability identity in personal identity and distinguishes integration within the individual and integration of the individual with respect to society (Gill, 1997). In this context, with the term *integration* is meant the formation of an identity that integrates all aspects of the self (Gill, 1997). When talking about a disabled individual, this model thus focuses on the integration of disability in one's identity. Gill explains integration as follows:

'the child or adult is plagued by psychological disorganization due to maturational changes or life crises; with support and time for exploration, the individual begins to make sense of jumbled feelings and perceptions; finally, disparate elements of the personality synthesize into a new, stronger, more differentiated level of personality organization allowing for improved relationships with the social environment'

The steps towards achieving a solid disability identity are discussed in *The four types of integration model*. The first type is *Coming to feel we belong*, this type concerns integration into society, which is seen as a first move to a positive identity. Disabled persons often feel like they are excluded from the 'normal life', because they cannot access certain places or do not feel accepted. Often children with a disability say that they want to go to a normal school, 'with everybody else'. Disabled adults talk about equal employment opportunities. With laws

backing them up, disabled persons now can expect to be able to access buildings, stores and recreation.

Coming to feel we belong is about that realization, that one has the right to be included in the mainstream culture, which includes education, employment, transportation etc. Also, when a disabled person feels more integrated in society, he/she often blame those issues of not fitting in, or not being able to access places, more on the environments and its creators, and less on themselves (Gill, 1997).

The second type of integration is *Coming home*, this type addresses the importance of integration within the disability community. While disabled people often feel left out in society, meeting other people with a disability can make individuals realize they are part of a community. Often there is a unique level of connection of relationships within the disability community. In those relations disabled individuals often feel accepted and gives them the idea that they are not alone. Those feelings of coming home to a community of similar people are common among minority identities, for example lesbians, transgenders or African-Americans(BRON). Just like within individuals in those communities, people with a disability may find personal and social acceptance when they are around similar people with the same struggles (Gill,1997).

The third type, *Coming together*, concerns the internally integration of sameness and differences. This includes the development of an identity that includes the disabled parts of the body, where one's disability is recognized and valued. This can be difficult, because a disabled person is often not meeting society standards of 'normality'. If a disabled person is not able to accept the disabled parts of the body, a self-conflict or an incomplete self-image arises. The identity that comes from this self-image is not adequately sound to support a stable, resilient self-esteem. Without a stable self-esteem it is difficult to experience sense of worth and to entitle a place in society. However, if a person is able to accept the physical impairments of the body, just as the rest of the self, one is able to relate to the mainstream culture and to the disability culture. An individual is then able to embrace the sameness 'as part of the human family' and embrace the differences 'as part of the disability family' (Gill,1997).

The fourth type *Coming out*, is about integrating how we feel with how we present ourselves. According to Gill '*Integration between our private knowledge of self and the ideal image we wish to present to others is one of the final thresholds to positive disability identity*'. To feel totally comfortable with oneself is an identity accomplish for anyone. This type of integration is an accomplishment for anyone, however, achieving this as extra special for marginalized and oppressed social groups. Many researchers that studied the path to positive identity note this end stage; a person finds personal integrity, is proud to identify with the group and has better relations with people outside this group. For disabled persons this means that one stops trying to pass in an able-bodied society, 'come out' to the whole world as disabled and identify themselves as disabled without hesitation, they are then free to explore their own authenticity (Gill, 1997).

Gill's model has been criticized, for example, Darling (2003) argues that 'coming out' (Gill's fourth type of integration) is not the only outcome that would produce high self-esteem and a positive identity. He states that achieving normalization and perceiving themselves as having overcome their handicap is also a way to maintain a high level of self-esteem.

However, Gill's model has been proven as useful as it is successfully used in previous research. Whitney (2006) used the model, in combination with Eliason's (1996) model of lesbian identity development, to research the multiple identity development of queer women with a disability. In-depth interviews were held with women who identified themselves as both queer and disabled and women's sexual orientation and disability development processes were analyzed with the use of both models. She found all types of integration, both mostly the first three. Less evidence was found for the fourth stage of integration; 'Coming out'. Also interesting was that both models are similar enough to be used for both disability identity development and lesbian identity development.

In a research of Hernandez (2005), Gill's model was used to explore the disability identity development of young men of color with violence-related disabilities. This is a new group within the disability community, and not much was known yet. Gill's model helped to explore the identity development of this new yet significant group. Hernandez found support for the first two types of integration, the last two types were less occurrent. This study gave the participants a voice, as they were given the opportunity to talk about their disability, identity and mentors. The researcher emphasized the importance of this and argues this sharing of information shouldn't be limited.

Ostrander (2008) also researched violence-related disability's, he focused on its impact on the identity of racial and ethnic minority men living in a major American metropolis. In this research Gill's types of integration were used to base the interview protocol on, it helped the researcher to understand the ways in which disability becomes incorporated in one's identity. The study thus didn't focus primarily on types of integration, but found that the participants struggled especially with their sense of masculinity.

In this research Gill's four types of integration provide a theoretical framework, which is used to construct interview questions and to analyze data. The interviews provided a way to gain the data needed to see if the water-sport camp influenced the types of identity integration of its participants, and with that participants identity development. Interview questions were formulated, using Gill's framework, to figure out if the participants after the camp: 1) feel different about fitting into society, 2) feel different about hanging out/identifying with disabled peers, 3) feel different about their disability, 4) feel more comfortable with themselves.

5. Methodology

This study researches the case of a water sports camp organized by SailWise. Studying a case facilitates a deep investigation of a phenomenon (Yin, 2012). For this study, *the four types of integration* model of Gill (1997) is used as a theoretical framework, which can be found in chapter 4. In-depth interviews were conducted with camp participants, where creative methods were used, in order to find out if and in what ways the camp had an effect on the participants identity. Those interview were Followed up by conversations with people in the environment of the camp participants to give a more holistic view of the case. The aim of this chapter is to present the research setting, the participants, the process of data collection, and data analysis, as well as the strategies, challenges, and positioning of this study.

5.1 Positioning of the research

Scholars emphasise the importance of initially question the research paradigm to be applied in a research, because it influences how one understands and frames a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). There are two main philosophical dimensions to distinguish research paradigms, namely epistemology and ontology. They relate to the nature of knowledge and the development of knowledge (wahyuni, 2012). The research aims at uncovering inside perspectives from the participants and studies the identity development from the perspective of the people themselves and their relatives. Therefore, given those objectives, the most suitable positioning of this study is within the interpretivism frame (wahyuni, 2012). Which also recognizes that the experiences and values form both the participants and researches influences the data collection and analysis (Wahyuni, 2012). Because of this interpretivism frame is which the study is positioned, a qualitative approach is taken. This corresponds to the research goal which is not to test a theory, but to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomena and to generate a new theory (Wahyuni,2012).

5.2 The case

SailWise offers water sports options in the Netherlands for people with a physical or sensory disability, chronic ill people and people with an intellectual disability. Options include group holidays with individual registration or the renting of boats with accommodation by schools, institutions and revalidation centers. The philosophy of SailWise is to contribute to the independence and autonomy of people with a disability or illness by the means of the various disciplines of water sports. Also, they promote their holidays as an opportunity for disabled individuals to integrate and to get out of social isolation. The organization aims at making the experience count in the daily life after the holiday as well, by providing an experience that makes the participant feel, physically and mentally, less restrained (water sports for everyone, 2017).

SailWise offers various trips on different locations, but in this research the focus lies on participants who went to the island Robinson Crusoe. This island is located in a nature reserve between Amsterdam and Utrecht, which is known for its beautiful nature and its water sports. A holiday with SailWise on Robinson Crusoe includes various activities, such as canoeing, waterskiing, surfing or sailing in a variety of boats. On the island, a lot of material is available to make doing water sports possible for disabled people (e.g. mobile hoist, pillows, adjusted steering wheels). Also, the accommodation on the island is totally adapted for people with physical disabilities, it has several bedrooms, various (adapted) bathrooms, a big kitchen and a common area. Around the accommodation is a sports field, a place to make a camp fire and a small harbor (water sports for everyone, 2017).

5.3. The participants

The data was gathered by the means of nine interviews, held over a month period. Selective sampling and snowball sampling was used to select the participants, which were not all selected by the researcher directly. For this research students were needed, between the age of 12 and 16, with a physical handicap, who had participated in a camp from SailWise this summer (short-term) or last summer (long term). Those requirements

were communicated to SailWise and SailWise contacted two different classes from two different schools (selective sampling). At the moment the school agreed to participate, the contact went via the researcher.

Consent forms were made in which respondents were informed about the study details and were given assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. For the long-term group the handing out of those forms went via the school, the school took the responsibility of printing the forms and giving them to the students. The students and parents signed the form and the students brought them back at the day of the interviews or handed them in before at their teacher. The researcher visited the short-term group while they were at the camp on the island, in order to hand-out consent forms and to get familiar. Those forms were signed by the students and parents and brought back at the day of the interviews as well. Also, in the forms of both groups parents were asked to participate in the research, if they were willing to cooperate, they filled in their phone number and were contacted for a short interview later (snowball sampling).

The group of short-term participants consisted of two students (13 and 14 years old) who have a physical disability and went on the camp three weeks before the interviews were conducted. This group also included one parent of one student and a teacher who went with both students on the camp. The second group, the long-term participants, also consisted of two students (14 and 16 years old) with physical disabilities. Here, one parent from both students (two in total) and a teacher who went with them on the camp were included. The physical disabilities in both groups varied from spasm, chronic tiredness and brain injuries. The two groups of participants are presented in table 1.

There was a low respondent rate of the students, while in total more than twenty students were asked to participate, only four did. Wayhuni (2012) recognizes this issue and states that gaining approval from a target group to join as participants is the most challenging task in a case study. While this study recognizes that the sample is really small, and sees that small sample sizes could have consequences for generalization, believed is that this study is still valid. The small sample size facilitated close association with the respondents and allowed a detail analysis of each participant. Dreher (1994) even holds that, because of this, a small sample size in qualitative research could enhance validity and reliability.

Table 1: overview participants

Participant	Group	disability	Methods
Student 1	Short-term	Chronical tiredness	Face-to-face interview + Photo elicitation and mental mapping
Student 2	Short-term	Spasm	Face-to-face interview + Photo elicitation and mental mapping
Student 3	Long-term	unknown	Face-to-face interview + Photo elicitation
Student 4	Long-term	Brain injury	Face-to-face interview + Photo elicitation and mental mapping
Parent 1	Short-term	-	Phone Interview
Parent 2	Long-term	-	Phone Interview
Parent 3	Long-term	-	Phone Interview
Teacher 1	Short-term	-	Face-to-face interview
Teacher 2	Long-term	-	Face-to-face interview

5.4. Data collection

Parker (2003) suggests that qualitative researchers should ‘get involved in a communication with the practitioners in the organisational coal-face in order to better understand the current state of real-world practices’. That is why a trip to the island was made to see the camp environment and the participating students during the camp. Furthermore, in order to get more familiar with the organization that organizes the camp that is researched in this study, a SailWise volunteer day was visited. During this day the organization gave presentations, originally to persons who were interested in volunteering at a camp, but this information was useful for the researcher as well. A better understanding was gained about the organisation and its goals, but also about the activities and the camp environment.

5.4.1 Interviews.

In this research semi-structured interviews were used to gain detailed insights from individual participants. The advantage of semi-structured interviews in a retro perspective study is that this free way of reporting, in contrast to more forced methods, minimizes the recall errors of the participants (Miller et al., 1997). The reason for this is that when an interview is more free, the participant is encouraged to indicate when they don't remember things whereas otherwise the participant is more likely to just provide any answer, even when they don't really remember (Miller et al., 1997).

The interview questions were designed with the use of Gill's *Four types of integration*, see chapter 4. The idea of Gill et al. (2008) regarding the order of interview questions was applied, first ‘easy’ questions were asked to

the participants. In this case that were the least personal questions, for example, *'what was your favorite activity at the camp?'* or *'did the teachers behave the same at the camp as at school?'*. According to Gill et al. (2008) this helps to put the respondent at ease and to build up confidence, which is necessary to explore more sensitive topics. Questions that were designed to be asked at a later stage during the interview were, for example, *'do people often ask questions about your disability? how does that make you feel?'*. The questions gave the participants guidance on what to talk about, but the flexibility of this approach allowed elaboration on certain topics that appear to be of interest but that not have been previously thought of by the researcher (Gill et al., 2008).

The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the school environment (in case of the students and teachers) or via telephone (in case of the parents). All interviews were conducted individually, because some topics were really personal and participants may not have been comfortable talking about those things in a group environment. The interviews varied in length between 7 and 33 minutes.

5.4.2. Mental mapping

During the interviews with the students the creative methods of photo-elicitation and mind mapping were used. Mental mapping has been used, for example, to indicate people's spatial preferences, the significance of and attachment to a place. This research will take the view that sees mental maps as an externalizing of the ideas, attitudes, information that people have about their surroundings. Also, mental maps have not only been used to research places at an individual level, but also places as constituting social relations (Soini, 2001).

According to Soini (2001) a mental map can either be analyzed by focusing on the elements people choose to put in the map or on spatial preferences. This research focused on spatial preferences, the significance of and attachment to a place, but also pays attention to what is put on the map. In this approach more attention is paid to the choice of elements and the order in which they are drawn, the location of those elements is less important. Using this approach, researchers are able to indicate what places are important for the participants, what meaning they give to them and if or how they helped them develop (Soini, 2001). Milgram (1984), among others, has used this approach. He studied cities as social representations, and participants (students in Paris) were asked to draw a map of Paris, with all the elements that came into mind. The places got numbers in the order that they were drawn. The students first drew the places related to studying, which indicated that the students' experience remained dominant on the map.

Mental mapping is a method that has been used for a lot of different age categories. For example on adults and students (Milgram 1984 ; Ramadier & Moser, 1998). But this method is not only useful when studying adults, Mundy and Gilmore (2009) found that mapping can also be used when researching children. They tested children's mapping ability and they found that children can map and that this ability develops between 6 and 8 years of age. This has also already been applied on children before, for example by Matthews (1980), who researched the influence of age on the perception of space. In this research of Matthews (1980), the participants, between 11 and 18 years old, were asked to draw a map of the city that they lived. Also, Risotto and Tonucci (2002) used this method when studying 8-11 year old and their environmental knowledge.

Just like all methods, mental mapping has been criticized in the literature. For example, it is difficult to bring a three-dimensional landscape into a two-dimensional drawing, analyzing the maps is difficult and subjective, and also, participants drawing-motivation can influence the results. Drawing is a physical and creative process (Soini, 2001).

Despite of this disadvantage, mental mapping was still useful in this research. The interview started by asking the participants if they wanted to draw a map from the camp. This was done to find out the most meaningful places in the camp environment, as they were likely to put those on the map and draw those elements first (Milgram, 1984). However, the maps mainly provided a way to keep the conversation going and to ask questions about the camp environment. This methods helped to figure out what aspects in the built environment were important. Also, the researcher was able to ask more specific questions about certain elements on the map in a less static and more free way.

5.4.3. Photo elicitation

Photo-elicitation has been used in previous research as well. For example, Aldridge (2007) asked the participants, which all had learning disabilities, to take photos for one month. Then they had to take their five favorites and they were asked about the significance or importance of those photographs. She found that using photographs that have been taken by respondents provides '*a direct entry into respondents point of view*'. Also, Loeffler (2004) used this method in his research to explore the meaning of outdoor experiences. The photographs taken by the participants during their outdoor experiences formed an important part of the interview process. According to Loeffler (2004), photo elicitation provided a model for collaborative research where participants interpreted their photographic images and meanings for the researcher.

The use of photo's mainly eliminates the difficulties that can arise in a retrospective perspective study. For example Snelgrove & Havitz (2010) mention that it can be difficult for the participants to remember certain events, and Berger (1972) proposed that the visual is important for the very reason that '*seeing comes before words*'. Stewart and Floyd (2004) state that "*through conversations evoked by photographs, lived experiences may be represented in the stories told about feelings, meanings, and making sense out of the depicted scenes*".

In this research photo-elicitation helped the participants to remember events and to provide answers more easy. While the participants were asked to bring their five favorite pictures they had made during the camp, no one did. This did not cause a problem, because instead of showing their favorite pictures they now could choose their three favorite pictures out of the ones the researcher had made and brought to the interview. Photo-elicitation provided a way for the participants to tell stories about the picture, and tell what happened at the place on the picture. Besides remembering events and the camp environment, the conversation about the photo's helped the participants to talk about the objects, places and situations that were important for them during the camp.

5.4 Data analysis

The data analysis builds upon Grounded Theory. According to Glaser and Straus (1967) the goal of grounded theory is *'to develop an explanatory theory of basic social processes, studied in the environments in which they take place'*. Grounded theory studies the causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, covariances and conditions of social processes in order to understand the patterns and relationships between those elements (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It seeks at developing a theory that is 'grounded' in the data where it has derived from (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009).

All the data (the interviews with the adolescents, teachers and parents) were analyzed through coding. The conversation about the mental maps and photos were included in the transcripts and thus in the coding, in that way data coming from those methods were analyzed in the same way. In grounded theory 'data collection and analysis are unrelated processes', this means the analysis begins as soon as data is collected (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). This research followed that principle and data was analyzed as soon as the interviews were described. This has as advantage that the second interview provided an opportunity to explore themes that were found in the first interview.

When analyzing the data, the researcher went through three stages of coding, following Strauss & Corbin (1998):

- 1) Open coding: the stage in which the data was examined, compared and categorized.
- 2) Axial coding: the stage relationships and patterns where found and categories were identified.
- 3) selective coding: the stage in which a core category in the data was identified and described

While Grounded Theory provides three clear coding stages, the stages were not gone through step by step, the coding process appeared to be more fluid. The analysing of the data was a process and different stages were revisited various times. During the open coding stage the transcribed interviews were reviewed line-by-line, after this process 24 codes emerged. In the second stage it became clear what frequently used terms were and the reassembling of the open codes caused the emerge of six different categories. In the third stage the data, the codes and the categories were looked over again, and relationships and patterns could be recognized. This caused the emerge of themes and sub-themes. The category 'attitude towards disability', which included the codes about the *four types of integration* was dismissed, because within every theme this category appeared to be present. The same counted for 'effects camp', this category was much interrelated with the other ones, and is presented within the four categories that became theme's.

6 . Findings

A line-by-line review of the transcribed interviews resulted in 24 codes, presented in table (?). The codes were grouped into six categories: attitude towards disability (n=5), other factors (n=2), overcome challenges (n=3), effects camp (n=6), social environment (n=4) and natural environment (n=4). This led to four themes: 1. Camp as a social experience, 2. Camp as a way to overcome challenges, 3. Camp’s atmosphere, and 4. Other factors. These themes reflect the ways in which the identity of the participants was influenced.

6.1. Camp as a social experience

Within this theme of camps as a social experience, different sub-themes were found. This social experience appears to be facilitated by certain aspects in the built environment and influenced by a change in teacher-student relations and class dynamics.

The use of photo’s made the participants remember, reflect and talk about the camp experience. After analysis of all transcripts, and especially the conversations during the photo elicitation, the social aspect of the camp appeared to of great importance. All students were asked to pick three photos, the ones that reflected their favourite places the best. While most of them chose one picture of a boat, all of them chose two pictures which are considered to be ‘social places’ (e.g. the campfire, the couches, the table). All the photos they picked, in order of picking, are presented in table 2. When answering the question why they chose those pictures; all of them stated that they liked that place because they could sit there with the whole group, because they played nice games there with friends, or because they always sat there and waited for their friends. It became clear that the camp is a social experience for the students.

Table 2 Overview of the chosen photos

	Student1-Shortterm	Student2-Shortterm	Student3-Longterm	Student4-Longterm
1	Campfire	Couch outside	Campfire	Campfire
2	Tables outside	Couch inside	Tables outside	Trimaran
2	Couch outside	Catamaran	Speedboat	Couch inside

6.1.1. The built environment

The photo elicitation not only showed that the camp was seen as a social experience, but also indicates what aspects of the built environment facilitated the social interactions. Mainly the campfire-place appeared to be a place that is found important for social interaction by most of the students. Also, other pictures of places ‘where you can sit with everyone’, are chosen by the participants. The couches inside and outside and the big tables outside seem to be facilitators for social interaction.

While photo elicitation showed the importance of social interaction in the camp experience and the importance of the places where 'you can sit with everyone', mental mapping highlighted the meaning of the accommodation.

What was interesting was that one participant (short-term) starting drawing and describing the accommodation on the island in detail. Again, also the fireplace was drawn. She said that the accommodation was a place in which they had spent a lot of time, it was just the thing she remembered best.



Figure 1 Mental map #Student1-shortterm

Also, for the other participants, the accommodation is the centre of the islands environment. They did not draw much (due to their disability they are not able to be detailed), but they did draw the accommodation. And they were; what do you remember? They began with:

'The house [accommodation] and there where we arrived with the boat. And before the house was a grass field and next to the house was a grass field' (#Student4-Longterm).

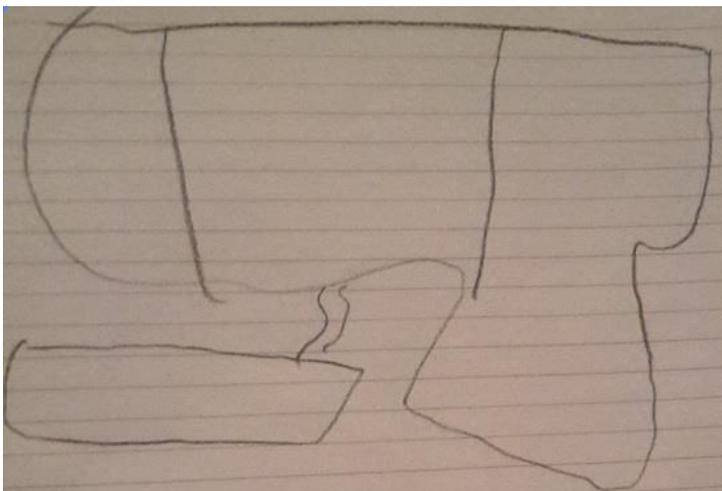


Figure 2 Mental map #Student4-longterm

'This was the island and then here was the house' (#student2-Shortterm).

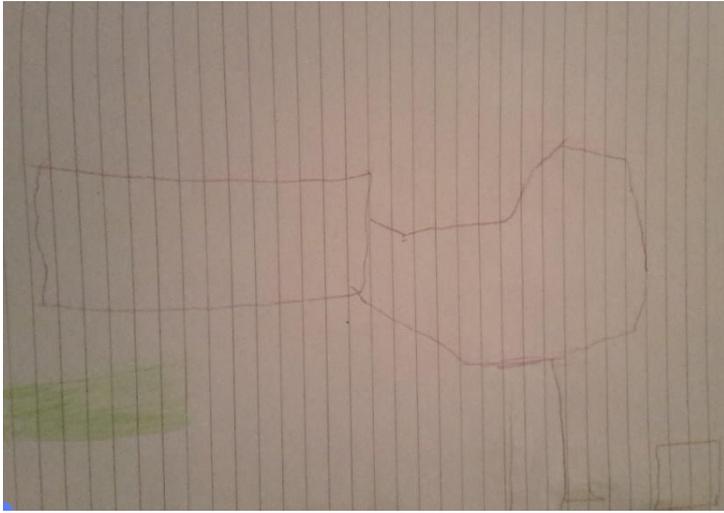


Figure 3 Mental map #Student2-shortterm

Overall, the accommodation is the main object on the island and that is also mentioned by the students. This is the place where they spend a lot of time. When looking in more detail, the built environment plays an important role in the overall camp experience. The main finding is that the objects that facilitate social interaction are the most important (e.g. the campfire, the couches) or where a lot of time was spent (the accommodation). There is no difference between short- and long term students regarding this aspect.

6.1.2. Teacher-student relation

It is already known that the social environment of a summer camp is one of its most important aspects (Meltzer & Rourke, 2005; Goodwin & Staples, 2005). In this research the changing relationship between the student and the teacher during such a camp was a social aspect in special that seemed to be important. This relation had an influence on the participants in different ways. When the kids go on the SailWise camp a few of their teachers and teacher assistants join them. Both the long-term and short-term participants stated that there was a difference in the way the students and the teachers interacted during the camp.

'It was very different because they were not teaching' (#Student3-Longtermterm).

'It was different because I learned that the teacher can't make a good bami!' (#Student2-Shortterm).

On the long-term this change in relation did not have consequences, students mentioned that things went back to normal soon when they got back in school. But in the short-term group some consequences were mentioned. The student mentions that the teacher of that group behaved very different at the camp and the teacher agreed with this.

'I always like the teachers more at such things. The relationship between teacher and student is really different then. It's the same when we have a fun day with activities at school then the teachers are also different than

when they are teaching. They are more human. I like it, you see more of the teacher as a person, I don't mind having them there' (#Student1-Shortterm).

'Of course I'm different at such a camp. Here [at school] I have to fulfil a certain role and that is different when I'm there. There I can be more free, be more me and show more of myself personally' (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

Not only did the teacher and student get to know each other in a different way, there was also physical contact in some cases, for example to help someone in the boat or in and out a wetsuit. This had a noticeable positive effects on one participant on the short term.

'Just now he [student] came to me and asked me to bind his foot to the chair, I did that a few times at the camp, he is spastic so it has to be really tight. And yes now he comes with that himself. He would never have done that before the camp, I'm convinced of that' (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

This asking for help can have occurred because the student feels more comfortable with his teacher now. He knows him better and knows that he is able to bind his feet tight to his chair. Also, the teacher has already done this at the camp, so that may have lowered the barrier to ask for help again. This is a great development in itself. However, this can also be an example of what Gill calls *coming together*, a development in his disability identity. This participant felt after the camp more comfortable to ask for help, this suggests that he feels more comfortable with his disability, and is this more accepting of his disabled parts.

There were more positive effects on the short-term, caused by the different relationship between teacher and student. A teacher told about a student with behavioural problems, the student hated mathematics so he hated his mathematics teacher as well. This relation got better after the camp.

'By going on this camp and we could do different things together, he had a chance to see a different part of me, I'm not only the person that tells him to do his work anymore' (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

6.1.3. Class Dynamics

In the short-term group the dynamic of the group changed during the camp, according to the teacher.

'This group was really working together, I didn't see that so often that they were doing things with the whole group. Because they do things with all of them and because there are different things to do, there are kids that discover each other and create new friendships' (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

While this is not confirmed by the participants, what the teacher saw could be a sign of Gill's second type of integration; *Coming home*. This means *Integration with the disability community*, the class can be seen as a small community. By becoming one group that is working together, the enjoyment felt by hanging out with disabled peers could have increased. Of course, the class does this every day at school, but the camp may have provided an environment where there was more room for the formation of new relationships marked by a level of acceptance. However, feelings of *Coming home* are not seen on the long term.

'You should do this more in the beginning of the school year, but we don't do that for different reasons. This year, in my group, there was already a certain dynamic and that didn't change' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

The class being together in a different environment had other advantages. A few participants mentioned how nice it was to share such a special experience with their friends.

'It is makes it more fun to share such an experience [the camp] with people that are close you' (#Student1-Shortterm).

They highlighted the fun they had thanks to them. Also, for one participant it was other people's happiness that contributed to his happiness.

'I remember him telling that seeing the joy of the other kids made him really happy' (#Parent3-Longterm).

The other effect of being in a group was that they stimulated each other to do things they wouldn't do normally. This could influence identity indirectly, see the next theme 'overcoming challenges'.

'you get this effect.. if one sheep does it the rest follows.. then they see Pietje on the surfboard, he dares to do that, and then you hear Jantje, who first said I won't do that, but then he is doing it! They stimulate each other to dare to do things, that's the effect of all of them being together' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

At the camp, being together with other kids with a disability can be of great value and could change things in the teacher- student relation, the peers and class dynamics, on the short-term. While this may have caused more connection with the disability community and feelings of 'coming home' for the short-term group, it did not seem to influence Gill's first type of integration, *Coming to feel we belong*, on the long-term.

'I live in a neighbourhood where I can't do anything.. the other kids in my neighbourhood are all normal. So I can't say "Come friend, let's have a nice talk". No I don't feel like that. I don't know the word, but then I feel sad again because I am handicapped and they can do anything' (#Student4-Longterm).

This participant feels left out, he is not included in all aspects of the mainstream culture and that did not change after the camp. He still feels a much stronger connection with the disability community than with society.

6.2. Camp as a way to overcome challenges

6.2.1. water sports

When the participants were asked questions about the water sports activities all the participants started smiling. It was clear that the water sports contributed to a unique experience for all of them. For some participants those water sports activities were not totally new and they emphasized that they finally got the freedom to do more themselves. There was no difference between the short-term and long-term participants regarding this aspect.

'Well I was on a sailing boat once, but never by myself. That was so much fun, also new as well' (#Student1-Shortterm)

'No, I wanted to stay the whole week then, I was sad that I had to go home. But I tried out as many boats as possible, that was fun!' (#Student2-Shortterm).

'You also get the responsibility to do more yourself, like steering, more than I have ever done' (#Student2-longterm) .

This enjoyment of the water sports and the novelty of it had positive effects, according to the teacher of the short-term group it is likely that those activities contributed to disability acceptance.

'Yes, I definitely think that it contributes because they do things that they thought they would never do and that gives the boost to go race on the surfboard while you're normally in a wheelchair, yes that's a great idea' (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

This is related to Gill's third type of integration, *Coming together*. Half of the students said they never thought they could sail themselves. By overcoming this challenge the participants knew they can do more than they thought, despite their disability. This can contribute to more acceptance of the disabled parts of the body, and because of that also to disability identity development. However, differences in disability acceptance were not noted by the students themselves. Also the students of the long term group referred to water sports as 'just fun', or 'a great new experience', however, just like with the short-term group, other people in the environment of the students did see an (potential) effect of the water sports on the long-term. This is not strange that the students do not link the water-sport activity to identity development. It may be different to see someone sailing than doing it yourself. The people who look at it see what happens with the student (at least they think they see it), the student itself is probably just busy with the activity itself.

'well, what you also see, and what I saw in previous weeks, is that students sometimes do things that I didn't expect. And maybe they didn't expect as well, so students that suddenly dare to ski, then I think Pietje? Skiing? And then he suddenly stands as well! Then they feel really competent, like that's a thing I just did' (#Teacher2-Longterm)

'The fact that he saw so many boats and with so many different people and kids went in to the boats that really contributes to his independence' (#Parent3-Longterm).

Both the teachers of the short- and long term group see the water sports as an opportunity for integration, specifically for *Coming together* as Gill calls it. But this could also be examples of Gills first type of integration, *coming to feel we belong*. Most participants did see sailing as something they could not do, because of their disability. Now they learned that they can do it, what else can they do now as well? This could make them feel more fitting into society. The boundaries that are present on normal sailing boats and in other water sports activities, which are normally there because of society's expectations, are now banned. Steering sticks are implemented and a lot of other adjustments can be done to make the participants sail (e.g. lifts, chairs in boat). This could contribute to making the participants feel more fitting into society, they are doing things just like everybody else. While water sports thus was mentioned a lot in a positive way, the emphasis seems to lie on sport instead of 'water'. Water appears to be nothing more than a facilitator for sport in this case, however, it could also be that the water did have an effect unconsciously, but the participants did not seem to notice any effect.

6.2.2. Going on camp

Water sports was not the only challenge for the participants. The teacher also mentioned that going on camp can be a challenge in itself, because it means being away from the home environment.

'Students who then are not home and have to remember and use their medication themselves or with help of a teacher' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

A teacher emphasized that the students learn the most by overcoming this challenge of being away from home.

'for some of the students it is a piece of cake and they already went three times on camp, for them it is really easy and love it. And for me, for those students, there is not so much a learning effect. But I think especially for the students that are a bit scared, for them, they overcome a challenge' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

The camp, and being away from home, can give an opportunity for its participants to handle their disability in their own way, without consulting their parents. A short-term student said the camp is also an environment to see how good you are in dealing with your disability, to practice with it. She is chronically tired and was akes if that was a problem during such a busy camp:

'I learned how to divide my energy and to set my priorities of what I would like to do, so sometimes I went to my room to rest for half an hour, that went totally fine!'(Student1-Shortterm).

Her parent also highlighted the speciality of her going on camp.

'Normally you know for sure if she goes on a thing like this that she is sick the next days. But not this time. She can go away for three days without getting sick, that is a really positive experience of course' (Parent1-Shortterm)

Also another (Long-term) parent knew that going on camp was a challenge for his son.

'He had already accepted his disability when he went on camp. But when he went on camp he had an extra disability. His feet was ready for a next surgery, the first surgery failed. Even though, has undergone it [the camp] and despite the extra disability he came back happy. He was so happy he had done it' (#Parent2-Longterm).

While there is no clear evidence of it, it is likely that overcoming the challenge of going on camp contributes to feelings of Gill's third type of integration, *Coming together*. This was seen both in the short-term and long-term group. However, not seen is whether this type of integration is likely to stay for the long-term. Going on camp showed some participants what they can do instead of what they cannot do. Being away for three days and not getting sick can be a great thing to realize and the same accounts for letting your extra impairment not get in the way of having a good time, Also, dealing yourself with your disability can make the students more independent, for example, Student1 knows now that she can deal with her tiredness herself, nobody has to tell her when she has to rest.

6.3 The camp's atmosphere:

Especially the atmosphere that is created and the fact that the location of the camp is on an island appeared to be important.

'This camp is certainly different than other camps, because they are on an island, that gives a big alone feeling and also that everything is possible' (#Parent2-Longterm).

These are the words of a participant's dad. This feeling of alone with the group could have contributed to a feeling of *coming home*, as Gill names it. Because away from the 'normal world' there could be feelings of higher acceptance, away from society's expectations. It may be uncomfortable to be helped with a big lift into a boat when there are non-disabled people watching. Also, *coming together* can happen more easily at an island. According to Gill, the main barrier which causes not fully accepting ones disability is the way in which important social figures (e.g. family, friends) frame the impact of disability for the disabled person. They tell the individual to seek value in parts of the body that are not impaired by the disability, implying that the disabled parts are bad and should be forgotten. So in order to fully accept the disabled parts of the body being on an island, away from society norms and values can help in the process of *Coming Together*, or as Gill says it: *'people with disabilities have had to separate and individuate from a parent culture that fears and devalues disability'*,

The atmosphere and the many possibilities are aspects that are mentioned a lot when asked about the experience on the island.

'It is a great location because everything is possible for the kids. With the boats and the sailing, you can think of anything crazy and it will happen' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

'The atmosphere that is created is amazing. It is an island, you can't go anywhere, you can't run away or go somewhere else. That is really nice' (#Student3-Longterm).

'The location serves its goal. The location is a great location for what they want to achieve. And the Loodsrechtse plassen is just a pretty place as well' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

A lot is possible at the camp that is clear. The feeling that everything is possible created for the participants a feeling of 'freedom', but also 'getting away' was mentioned often. This contributed to a relaxed holiday feeling, created by the natural and social environment.

'The boats make it so much more fun. You do something you normally don't, you are out of the house, it really felt like a holiday' (#Student1-Shortterm).

'There was so much freedom, it was really relaxing. I really needed that, a small holiday' (#Student2-Shortterm).

'I had to do less. At home, I have to do the dishes, do the table and other things at home. And sometimes I get punished when I do something not nice for example to my mum or dad. I am just happy when I can get out of the house' (#Student4-Longterm).

For one participant this environment really made a difference for her health:

'Actually after this camp.. from then on I went to school again for whole days. It really gave me a boost. Also because I was really outside and not sitting.. you know, you are really out of the house and then I came back and everything was going really well again. For me it did a lot of good' (#Student1-Shortterm).

The interaction with other students was of importance in the overall camp experience, but the attitude of the volunteers appeared to be especially a positive contribution to the overall experience and the atmosphere.

'What a great bunch of people, what sympathetic, patient, understanding people are they. They really have feeling with those kids' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

'So we were in the boat with us two, chilling in the sun, then a volunteer came, he told us before, to make waves and we were like nooo. But then he came and he brought the guitar so I was playing the guitar in the boat, it was awesome. Okay and then he made waves and we were all wet, so funny' (#Student1-Shortterm).

6.3. Other factors

The camp seemed to contribute to various types of integration. On the long term, certain changes in identity were noticed as well in the participants environment. Parents and teachers saw students getting more independent or saw their self-esteem grow. However, it is extremely difficult to see what the impact of the camp exactly was on the long term, as there are so many other aspects in the participants life that can contribute to those developments. The school is one example.

'It is a process. The camp is not the only thing that contributes to the growth of self-esteem. We have a lot of kids that come in here with a not so positive self-image. So there is a lot attention for that. Via a lot of activities

and subjects, because you can't learn personal development via books, you have to learn that in another way of course. There is a lot of attention for that. It is not like they come back from the camp and I see totally different students in the class, that's a bit too much. But I am convinced that they.. We try our best to make them feel autonomous and competent and that they can get certain meaningful relations, with a certain level of self-esteem and giving their disability a place, getting a diploma is not our only goal. We pay a lot of attention to those other aspects. Only that is difficult to measure. Camp is one in a range of activities that contributes to that. But it takes a different position because it is such a special place where they look back to with a lot of happiness. The camp can be a sort of catalysator' (#Teacher2-Longterm).

Also independence is an aspect that is highlighted during the education by another teacher:

Here we have the mentality, if you can do something yourself you should do it. And from class1 till 4/5 onwards you see really development in this (#Teacher1-Shortterm).

Not only the school pays attention to personal development, for some participants their revalidation place is a place where they also learn such things:

And in terms of independence and own initiative, you also see him getting more independent. He has had his operations and he was six weeks in the Hoogstaat [revalidation clinic?], there they also said 'we are not here to do everything for you, we teach you all you can do yourself'. That was amazing. (#Parent2-Longterm)

'It is really difficult to say how such a positive experience contributes to changes in self-esteem etc. I don't know, I didn't get a totally different kid back, that's not the case. But I don't rule out that it contributed' (#Parent2-Shortterm).

Tabel 1 Overview results

	Short-term	Long-term
Camp as a social experience	Social environment is important part of camp experience	Social environment is important part of camp experience
	Campfire, couches, accommodation important aspects of built environment	Campfire, couches, accommodation important aspects of built environment
	Change in teacher-student relation: lead to <i>Coming together</i>	No change in teacher-student relation
	Change in class-dynamics: Could lead to <i>Coming home</i>	No change in class-dynamics
Camp as a way to overcome challenges	Water sports is new and fun	Water sports is new and fun
	Water sports could contribute to: <i>Coming together & Feeling we belong</i>	Water sports could contribute to: <i>Coming together & Feeling we belong</i>
	Being away from home could contribute to: <i>Coming together</i>	Being away from home could contribute to: <i>Coming together</i>
The camp's atmosphere	The island could facilitate feelings of <i>Coming home & Coming together</i>	The island could facilitate feelings of <i>Coming home & Coming together</i>
	No effect camp environment on health	Effect camp environment on health
Other factors	Identity development is a process on which other factors (e.g. school, parents, revalidation) have an influence as well	Identity development is a process on which other factors (e.g. school, parents, revalidation) have an influence as well

7. Conclusion

There are some indications that the camp had a small influence on identity for some participants on the short-term, mainly via the teacher-student relation and the class-dynamics. It is still really difficult to say what the camp impact was on identity on the long-term, due to the presence of many external factors, but it is not ruled out that it did have an influence. Aspects of the camp that have the potential to contribute to identity integration are identified. Also, found are the ways in which the camp, its social, built and natural environment, and water sports, potentially influence identity.

The social environment of the camp appeared to be of great importance. On the short term, important was the change in relation between the student and the teacher. For some participants this contributed to a more open and personal relation where they felt more comfortable to ask for help, caused by the different role the teacher could take during the camp. Here, found were indications of *Coming Together*. Also, some participants in the short-term group experience a change in class dynamics, new friends were made and the whole group was working together for a change, which could have contributed to a feelings of *Coming home*, Gills second type of integration. Those aspects did not seem to have a long-term effect. The role of the built environment was found to be mainly social, the campfire place, the couches and tables facilitated places where social interaction could take place.

The main aspect of importance in the natural environment is its location on an island. This was mentioned by short-term and long-term participants as a great location because one cannot get away and because an island is totally remote and distant from society norms and values. The island was described as 'a holiday feeling' and 'being away'. Found was the potential influence of the island, it could have contributed to feelings of *Coming home*, for both the short-term and the long-term group. However, the overall atmosphere on the island appeared to be the most important. Found was that the social, natural and built environment, in special the attitude of the volunteers and being on an island, created a certain atmosphere at the camp that contributed to the feeling of 'everything is possible'. This again is important for the overcoming of challenges, it makes one more confident to actually participate in new activities such as water-sports.

The water sports played a big role in the positive experience that the camp was for the participants. Activities like sailing and canoeing were new for most of the students, they saw it as a challenge witch they overcame. This may have contributed to mainly *Coming together*, but also has the potential of contributing to Gill's second type *Feeling we belong*. This potential was the same for both the short-term and the long-term group. Another challenge was 'being away from home'. Again, the atmosphere of the camp helped the participants to overcome this challenge as well, this could have positive effects and could contribute to *Coming together*, because students noticed that they can do a lot themselves regarding handling their disability or because they notice they still can have a great time despite their disability.

There are many ways in which the camp experience could have influenced the students identity, however, this is difficult to verify. Most people in the environment of the students do not see big changes in them on the short- term, other than a really happy person when they get back. nevertheless, the teachers notices slightly

differences in the class dynamics and some participants are asking for help easier. On the long term, people in the environment of the students do see changes, during the year most students go through certain developments. In general, they get more independent and get better in accepting and handling their disability. However, what causes those changes is almost impossible to say. It is possible that the camp has contributed to those developments, but at school or revalidation centres they work really hard to reach those developments and a certain degree of integration. The students themselves do not see the sail experience as a reason for those developments. Parents and teachers do not know either whether the camp causes these changes, but they do not rule it out.

To conclude, found is that the social, built and natural environment could each have their own potential influence on identity, see figure 1. Whereas the social and natural environment are possibly able to influence identity directly and indirectly, the mainly happens indirectly. The social, built and natural environment together create the camp atmosphere ‘where everything is possible’. This atmosphere enables and motivates participants to overcome challenges, those challenges include water-sport activities and being away from home. However, there could be more personal challenges that could be overcome which are not identified in this study. The overcoming of these challenges could have positive effects regarding personal development and could influence disability identity integration. The ‘other factors’ could be seen as external influences (e.g. school), influencing identity directly, which makes long-term effects difficult to measure.

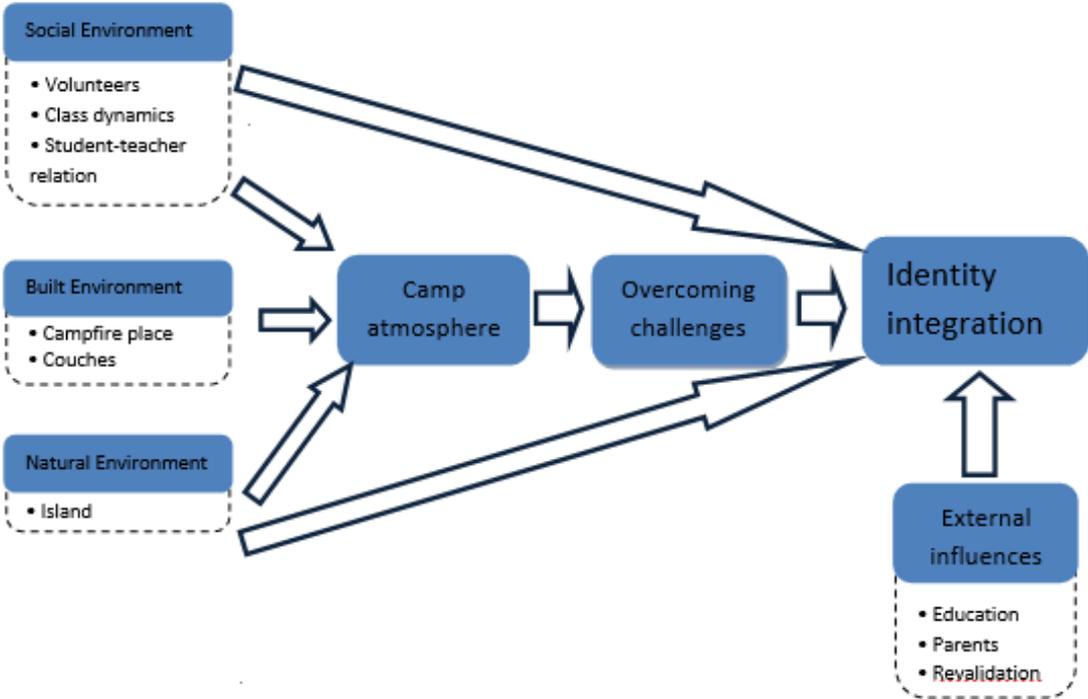


Figure 4 Overview of the ways identity is influenced

8. Discussion

In an effort to discover if and in what ways a water sports camp can influence its disabled participants identity on the short- and long term, a comparative case study was performed. Some influence was found on the short term, however, due to many other activities in the life of the participants it is still really difficult to say whether the camp influenced the participants identity on the long term. The camp experience seemed to influence the first three types of integration; *Coming to feel we belong*, *Coming together*, and *Coming home*. Support for the fourth stage, *Coming out*, was not apparent in participant's responses. This is not very remarkable, Gill acknowledges this fourth type is a late-stage accomplishment. The participants in this research were teenagers, in this phase everyone is struggling with the forming of an identity, it is the time of one's life to figure out who they are (Hernandez, 2005). Perhaps in a later stage of life the camp can contribute to this type of integration as well.

While Gill's model was useful to some extent to indicate what aspects of identity were influenced, this study took a more holistic view and also found important factors that could contribute to identity development, directly or indirectly. Even if it is unsure if the camp really influenced identity, this study found aspects of the camp that could influenced identity and may contribute to personal development. The identification of those factors contributes to the literature and could be of help by further research. By examining those factors, new research could get a step closer to understanding the relationship between water-sport (school)camps and disability identity.

The social environment was found to be really important for the camp experience and identity development. Previous research has already shown that field trips (e.g. to museums) contribute to more effective learning and social changes (DeWitt & Storksdieck 2008; Hofstein& Rosenfeld, 1996). This research highlights the influence of the camp on the class dynamics and student-teacher relation. The camp environment, (e.g. not being at school), made the teacher take a different role, a teacher expresses that he could be more himself. This change in role caused a different relation between student and teacher. A student described the teacher as 'more human'. This change in teacher-student relation is interesting because this relation proved to influence other factors, for example desired students outcomes and a healthy classroom climate (Jennings, & Greenberg, 2009). Marzano et al. (2003) found that teachers who had high-quality relationships with their students had 31 % fewer behaviour problems in their class over the course of a school year than teachers who did not. In the short-term group of this research behavioural problems were lessened as well. Found was that a teacher-student relation improved during the camp. Before the camp the student saw his teacher only as 'teacher mathematics', this student hated mathematics so he hated the teacher as well and behaved not the right way. During the camp the student saw the teacher separate from mathematics and behaved better in class.

Furthermore, this research confirmed the importance of the presence of peers. Other studies already suggested that the presence of peers during recreational activities and summer camp contribute to personal developments (Pensgaarden and Sorensen, 2002; Gill, 1997). This study showed how the group together

stimulated each other to do things they were scared of. Especially teachers and parents indicated that the water sports were new for the students, and some students didn't want to participate in the sport activities. Identity conflict is one of the most important reasons for people to not participate in sport, but also the most important thing to overcome (Allender, Cowburn, & Foster, 2006), this could be a reason for students not willing to participate. However, the social environment made them do. This complements findings from Allender, Cowburn, & Foster (2006), who found that along with older groups, children see enjoyment and social interaction with peers as reasons to be physically active.

While suggested is that attribution of aquatic elements has beneficial impacts (William 2007, Foley 2011) and that the human interaction with water has special symbolic meaning (Illich, 1996; Duff 2011), this is not found in this research. The effect that water sports potentially has on identity seems to be mainly due to the sport, not especially due to the water. However, participants did mention that the water sports were challenging, the fact that the sports were on the water could have contributed to this. In the study from Anderson (2012) was found that surfing was often seen as a brave thing to do due to the water, a participant in his research stated: "*[when surfing].. for me there was still the outlaw feeling of doing something graceful, as if dancing on the water was the best and bravest thing a man could do*". In this research the water thus could have contributed to a challenging sport experience. Puchan (2005) confirms the impact of such a challenging experience, she states that nowadays risks are largely removed through society. That is why people have to look for risky challenging experiences through sport, because those experiences offer the individual 'freedom and self-determination (Punchan, 2005).

Another finding of this study is that the action of going on camp and leaving the home environment could have an influence on identity. Firstly, the relocation in general played a role in the development of identity, able to be away from home for a few days was an important achievement for some of the participants in this study. Also, the change in natural environment was found to be important. The relocation to an island contributed to feelings of 'being away' and 'endless opportunities', which could have enhanced identity development. This corresponds to a study from Conradson (2005). Conradson showed that physiological and emotional effects of this temporary movement away from the domestic environment can cause that a person becomes enmeshed within a different set of place relations. This does not mean that the self totally changes suddenly by such a movement, one has strong connections with people and events in other places. However, some of the more present constraints will be likely to soften (Conradson, 2005). According to Péron (2004) the relocation to an island could enlarge to effect of being relocated. Péron (2004) stated that an island is perceived as a totally different environment than the mainland, due to the hard outlines the island appears to be a self-sufficient isolated world. Péron (2004): '*one might say that leaving terra firma is leaving human society, facing up to the dangers of sea and storm, transcending one's earthly condition and landing on the island coast suffused condition in sunlight, in other words, gaining access to 'the other world'*'. Because of this leaving of the mainland society and the discovering of a new community, he sees the island as a place where identity is inevitably created. Both Conradson (2005) and Péron (2004) confirm that the island is a purposeful place for Gill's third type of integration, *Coming together*. Gill suggests that people, in order to create an identity that is more positive towards their disability, have to get away

from a parents culture that fears and devalues disability. By relocating to another location, and going away from the mainland, norms and values from society are left behind and contains regarding their disability are likely to soften. This creates an environment where individuals can develop a more positive view on their disability.

Lastly, this research highlight the importance of the atmosphere that is present in the camp environment for identity development. This relates to research from Pensgaarden and Sorensen (2002), who state that an environment, in order to be useful for identity development, should be *“characterized by a high degree of participation of individuals in decision-making processes, identification with other group members, social support, and sharing of information, knowledge, and collective resources”*. That is exactly what the camp environment seems to be. The social, natural and built environment create an environment in which challenges are overcome and identity can be influenced. Due to the role of the landscape in this, one could see the camps landscape as ‘therapeutic’. A landscape emerges from the interaction between physical environmental factors (e.g. the island), biological life (e.g. disabled peers, volunteers) forms and created objects (e.g. campfire place)(Conradson, 2005). Being on an island together with disabled peers and enthusiastic volunteers in combination with a material environment that facilitates interaction (e.g. campfire, games, long tables) and challenges (e.g. water-sport) have caused positive outcomes. Although this aim of this study was not to discover whether the landscape of the camp was therapeutic or not, it did display the importance of the camps landscape in influencing identity.

8.1. Limitations and challenges

This research had to deal with several limitations that are common in qualitative research, those include; reflexivity, transferability and interpretation (Malterud, 2001). Other limitations of this study include parts of the study design. This section will elaborate on those limitations and explain how those are dealt with in this study.

First of all, reflexivity refers to the fact that a researchers background will effect what is investigated, what angle is chosen to take, which methods are appropriate and how to frame the conclusion (Malterud, 2001). Various scholars acknowledges the effect of a researchers position and refutes the belief of a neutral observer (Malterud, 2001; Chenail, 2011). Also, Brown (1996) states that people are more than objective, measurable facts. The researcher decides how details of an interaction are organise, adds meaning to them and decides what is important and what is irrelevant (Brown, 1996). Subjectivity in qualitative research is seen as inevitable (Malterud, 2001). However, by being aware of ones preconceptions this does not have to be a bias (Malterud, 2001). Disability was a whole new area that had to be explored and soon the researchers’ preconceptions came to light. Nevertheless, with help from supervisors, the researcher got aware from her own assumptions about disability before the data collection started. This still could have influenced the research design, but the impact was minimized.

Secondly, transferability. This limitation is about to what extent the study results can be transferred and applied beyond the study setting (Malterud, 2001). One aspect of this is the sample size, which is the main limitation of this study, as mentioned in chapter 5. By only talking to two long term and two short term students it is really difficult to generalize the findings. However, all information necessary is gained by also talking to people in the life of the participants. The small sample size is not the only limitations regarding the transferability. The students that were willing to participate in this research felt comfortable enough to talk about their disability with a stranger (the researcher). The students that are still struggling with their disability, on who the camp maybe have other impacts, are the ones less likely to participate in this research. Also, the ones that had a less than positive experience are underrepresented in this research, however, this is not problematic for the purpose of this study, because the aim was less to explore how the participants experienced the camp and more about discovering the aspects that influenced the participants identity. Conversation with teachers also indicated that the group of people who experienced the camp as unsatisfying was relatively small.

Thirdly, interpretation takes place in the process of data analysis. Knowledge never appears from data alone, it emerges from the relation between the data and theoretical models. Maltrud (2001) states that 'the theoretical framework can be equated with the reading glasses worn by the researcher when she or he asks questions about the material (data)'. This does not have to be an issue per se, important is to share the type and role of the framework. In this research Gill is used as a framework and in the data looked was for her *four types of integration*, however, the researcher also looked for other themes. By doing that there was less change to overlook important themes in the data.

There are some more limitations in this study. This study is a case study, that can lead to problems of generalization. This could be repaired by doing follow up studies, and make a series of case studies (Dalal & Priya, 2016). Also, this study included a retrospective aspect, in contrast to a longitudinal design, this made it more difficult to see how identity developed after the camp. Furthermore, not all participants were able to draw the mental map precisely due to their disability, this could have caused that they left things out. Lastly, the interviews were in Dutch while the report is in English, this could have caused inconsistencies in translating the quotes.

8.2. Ethical issues

Ethical issues are present in every kind of research (Orb et al., 2001). However, this research deals with a vulnerable group of participants, namely children with a disability, therefore extra attention is paid to minimize ethical issues. With ethical research is meant doing good for others while avoiding harm (Orb et al., 2001). Literature about research ethics is generally centred about three key subjects, namely; informed consent, power relations and the protection of research participants (Kirk, 2007). These issues can be problematic when doing research with children (Kirk, 2007; Morrow & Richards, 1996). This does not mean that those issues do not arise when researching adults, but scholars have argued that there are important differences in how those issues are addressed with children (Kirk, 2007). This is mainly because; children understand the world

differently than adults, the different way children communicate, and the more unequal power relation between researcher and child that is present when doing research with children (Kirk, 2007). This section addresses how this research dealt with those ethical issues regarding children.

Firstly, informed consent. For the students, who were under 18 years old, consent of the parents was required to be able to participate in this research. The students got a Consent Form with an attached information letter in which the study was explained and in which they were given assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. Parents had to sign the Consent Form because of parents rights to have a say in what happens to their children (Morrow & Richards, 1996). However, scholars argue that assent of the child is just as important (Kirk, 2007; Morrow & Richards, 1996). The issue of informed consent is that in many cases researchers obtain consent from various 'adult gatekeepers' (e.g. parents school, teachers) before getting the assent of the child and may be unwilling to endanger their research project by asking the children explicitly for their informed consent (Morrow & Richards, 1996). In this research attention was paid to this issue, there was a section in the Consent Form that the students had to sign as well. Furthermore, while first the school was asked to participate (not the children themselves), the consent forms were given to the children, not to their parents, this means that the children were asked to participate before consent was given by the parents. Still consent from the parents was needed to actually participate, but the children were more included in the decision making process. According to Weithorn & Scherer (1994) this involvement in the decision making process can be a useful experience in itself, it can give the children a feeling of controlling their own individuality, autonomy and privacy (Morrow & Richards, 1996).

Secondly, according to Kirk (2007) the power and status imbalance between adults and children is the biggest ethical challenge for researchers who are working with children. This has led to concerns about how free children feel to refuse to participate in the research, or to stop their participation at a certain point, even when it is explained clearly they are allowed to (McCrum and Bernal, 1994). This is even more the case for vulnerable children, e.g. children with a disability (Beresford, 1997). Also, the location of the research can have an influence on how free children feel to refuse participating (Kirk, 2007). In this research, the interviews with the students took place at their school, this could have placed the students in a position in which they did not feel able to dissent, simply because most tasks at school are compulsory. Tried was to eliminate this issue by visiting the students and explain them in person that nothing is obligatory, the teacher was asked to tell this to the students as well. The children's willingness to participate during the interview was checked, by interpreting body language and their answers. At the end of the interview the children were asked how they felt about the interview, and if there was something the researcher should change.

However, according to several scholars (e.g. Mayall, 1994; Alanen, 1992), this issue of difference in power and status of researcher and child is more present in the data analysis than in the data collection. The way we 'see children' influences the way in which we study children. The view that is taken on children is crucial for the interpretation of the collected data. James (1995) suggested that there are four models to look at children when doing research. In this research tried is to deal with issues of power during data collection and analysis by

looking at children through James fourth model 'the social child'. In short, here the child is seen as a research object that is comparable with adults, but understood is that children possess different competencies. In this study, the researcher was aware of the different competencies of child and adults, especially the different way of communicating. Creative methods were used, child participants were asked to make a drawing and to pick photos. Those methods offered them the maximum opportunity to put forward their views (Punch, 2002). Also, ethical guidelines suggest that those non-invasive, 'child-friendly' and participatory methods could lessen the power imbalance between researcher and child. (Morrow & Richards, 1996).

8.3. Further research

Even if it is not clear if the camp caused a change in identity, it is clear that all the participants had a great time at the camp. This could have been because the camp was a positive experience for all participants. Research has shown that positive experiences are really important and are related to physical health and well-being (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; Diener 2000). This research showed that the camp is generally a positive experience, this indicates that the camp can have many other positive effects. It would be interesting to study those effects in further research.

Further research needs to be carried out regarding this topic in order to find out how much the camp experience influences disability identity. This research showed several factors that potentially influenced the disability identity of the students. In order to really indicate the effect of the camp on identity, it would be an idea to think of ways to eliminate those external factors that influence identity. For example a comparative case study that compares the impact of the camp on the identity of participants that do go to revalidation centre and participants that do not. Or a comparison of kids that do go to a school for physical handicapped children, and children who go to a 'normal' school.

This research highlighted the impact of sports on identity once again, for further research it would be interesting to see whether the impact of water sports differs from non-water sports. Special attention needs to be paid the effect of water, as this research indicated that it could be that it is the water aspect that makes water-sport more challenging. Further research need to be conducted to verify this and to discover the other impacts that the water can have.

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