

The attachment to a stadium as a possible driving vector

Looking at the role of De Kuip within the urban redevelopment of
Rotterdam-Zuid

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1. Abstract

This study aims to understand whether the attachment to a sports stadium as a place can be used in urban redevelopment. In this study, stadium *De Kuip* is used as a case study. Whereas the focus within contemporary research often lies on the impact of newly built post-modern stadiums, incorporating former modern stadiums is often neglected. *De Kuip* in Rotterdam can be seen as an exception: within the current plans, *De Kuip* is not completely demolished but rather altered and incorporated within the urban renewal plans for Rotterdam-Zuid. Multiple methods are used to research this topic. A questionnaire is distributed among Feyenoord-supporters to measure the attachment to *De Kuip* as a place, and an influential Feyenoord-supporter has been interviewed to take a closer look at the role of *De Kuip* within the urban redevelopment plans and its heritage values. Furthermore, online sources have been used to research this role. It is concluded that the attachment to *De Kuip* can be used within urban redevelopment plans. This is possible when taking into account the heritage values that are attributed to *De Kuip*, and incorporating the cognitive-emotional attachment to *De Kuip* and the instrumental bonds that people have with *De Kuip*. Still, this does not mean that these heritage values must be used in the urban redevelopment. Heritage values clearly change over time and the attachment to a stadium may fade away.

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2. Introduction

2.1 Scientific and societal relevance

In the literature, there is a vast amount of research that focuses on the link between a sports stadium and urban (economic) development. There is a lack of research that incorporates the role and the importance of the sense of place of, especially, older and already existing stadiums on urban redevelopment. Since the main focus often lies on the impact of newly built stadiums, research often neglects incorporating the role of the former stadiums. The heritage values and the sense of place of already existing stadiums are missing within contemporary research, even when they can possibly play a central role within local urban development. Possible economic effects and opportunities of new stadiums predominate within scientific literature, whereas possibilities for using the sense of place of older stadiums, place attachment to older stadiums and heritage value of older stadiums as a vector within urban redevelopment are often not looked after.

This research project tries to fill this gap by taking a deeper look into the project 'Feyenoord City'. Feyenoord City is an urban redevelopment project in which a new football stadium for local football club Feyenoord plays a key role. In contrast to most of the contemporary new stadium projects, the old stadium of Feyenoord (stadium *De Kuip*) will not be demolished but rather incorporated within the urban redevelopment project. *De Kuip* will be transformed into an open park and apartments will be built on the second tier of the stadium (Feyenoord City, 2020). This unique feature offers the possibility to research not only the role of a new stadium within urban redevelopment, but also the role of an old stadium, and how its heritage values and sense of place are incorporated within urban redevelopment.

Among Feyenoord-supporters, there has been an ongoing discussion whether to support the move from Feyenoord to a new stadium or to oppose it. Those who are in favour of the move argue that the move offers Feyenoord financial benefits, whereas those in opposition of the move are afraid that there will be too many risks connected to the move and that these financial benefits will turn out not to be there. Furthermore, those in opposition of the move feel attached to *De Kuip* and do not want to move to a new stadium to which they (as of yet) feel no connection. There have been ongoing protests for many years, aiming at saving *De Kuip* and conserving it for the future. There is even a foundation (*Red De Kuip*) that sees it as a goal to preserve *De Kuip*. However, as of yet, it seems inevitable that Feyenoord will move to a new stadium. Still, in the current plans *De Kuip* will not be demolished and will be given a new life, to the relief of many. This study tends to dive deeper into possible feelings of attachment to *De Kuip*, and how they play a role within its new function in the future.

2.2 Study objectives and research questions

The objective of this thesis is to find out whether the sense of place – and its components – of a sport stadium can be used in the process of urban redevelopment of a specific area, also by incorporating factors such as heritage and heritage planning. The main research question to be answered is:

Can the attachment to a sport stadium as a place be used in urban redevelopment?

To provide an answer to this main research question, there are multiple sub-questions that assist in finding an answer on the main research question.

Sub-question 1: what is the place attachment to *De Kuip*?

For many Feyenoord-fans, as well as inhabitants of Rotterdam and other football fans in the Netherlands, *De Kuip* possibly is an important place. Feyenoord-fans experienced many memorable moments with their football club within the stadium; it can be seen as a landmark of Rotterdam and also other football fans may have experienced successes in the stadium due to the fact that the yearly Dutch cup-final is held in the stadium. Therefore, it is important to take a deeper look within the sense of place of *De Kuip* and the attachment people connect to it. The sense of place of *De Kuip* may have implications upon the urban redevelopment project.

Sub-question 2: to what extent can we regard *De Kuip* as cultural heritage?

De Kuip is seen by many as an iconic football stadium which has played an important role in the development of Dutch football. Whereas nowadays many older stadiums get demolished and new stadiums are built at the outskirts of cities, *De Kuip* remains an old and romantic stadium. The question, however is, to what extent we can regard *De Kuip* as heritage, and what this implies for the redevelopment of the Rotterdam-Zuid area. Regarding a modern sport stadium as 'heritage' may have many implications upon project plans, as researched by Janssen et al. (2017). Seeing a modern sport stadium as heritage, and aiming at conservation, often means that the main goal is to conserve the contemporary state of the stadium. This is opposite to the current plans in which the stadium is regarded as a possible vector for development; making use of the value of the stadium and completely incorporating it within the project plans.

Sub-question 3: what will the role of *De Kuip* be in the process of urban redevelopment of Rotterdam-Zuid?

This question dives deeper into the role that *De Kuip* will play within the process of urban redevelopment and is of relevance due to the shifting role of *De Kuip*. Whereas it, at first glance, seemed that *De Kuip* would be demolished, it is now integrated within the project plans, possibly also due to protests from Feyenoord-fans who feel attached to *De Kuip*. The exact way in which *De Kuip* will be integrated within the projects (and, also, which specific groups and organizations have had an influence upon the specific role of *De Kuip* in the plans as of now) is of importance for the precise goals and directions of the urban redevelopment of Rotterdam-Zuid.

3. Theoretical framework

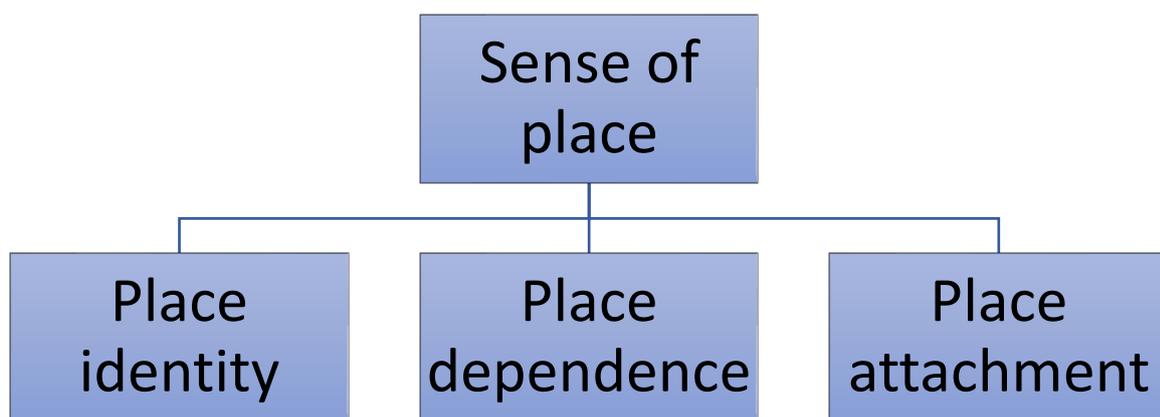
Within this thesis, two specific concepts are of great importance: sense of place and heritage. Both concepts will be discussed thoroughly, also in connection to sports stadiums.

3.1 Sense of place

When regarding the concept of sense of place, scholars have proposed multiple definitions and have used the concept of sense of place interchangeably with other comparable or related concepts. Lewicka (2011) even states that studies on the relationships between people and places are “stuck in definitional questions and attempts to fit together various place-related concepts”. According to Lewicka, these place-related concepts are seen by scholars as pieces of a puzzle that may (and possibly even should) be put together. Nevertheless, putting together these pieces turns out to be quite difficult or even impossible.

Diving deeper into these different definitions of sense of place, Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) regard it as “the meaning attached to a spatial setting by a person or a group”. They claim that sense of place consists of three specific sub-concepts: place identity, place dependence and place attachment. Figure 1 shows their definition of sense of place. Within this study, these three sub-concepts will be of great importance. Due to the large number of different definitions of these sub-concept, it is even more important to look at which definitions of these concepts will be used here. The goal is not to provide an overarching overview of sense of place-research, but rather to pick the concepts and their subsequent definitions that are suitable for this study.

Figure 1: Jorgensen & Stedman (2001) their definition of sense of place

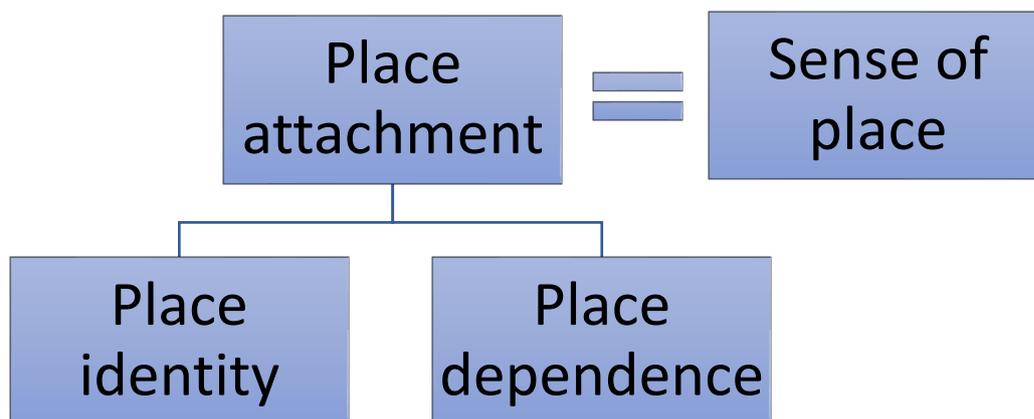


3.2.1 Sub-concepts of sense of place

Williams & Vaske (2003) compare the concept of place attachment to the concept of sense of place. They state that human geography has been researching the concept of sense of place, which shows similarities to the concept of place attachment as researched within, for example, environmental psychology. In contrary to Jorgensen & Stedman (2001), who regard

sense of place as a specific concept consisting of the sub-concepts place attachment, place dependence and place identity, Williams & Vaske do not make a clear distinction between sense of place and place attachment. They rather look at place attachment as consisting of place dependence and place identity (as can be seen in figure 2). Within this study, the view of Williams & Vaske will be utilized.

Figure 2: Williams & Vaske (2003) their definition of place attachment



Within the field of human geography, place identity is connected to concepts such as ‘rootedness’ and while “expressing emotional bonds to spaces and places” (Twigger-Ross et al., 2003). Furthermore, it is regarded by Proshansky (1978) as a connection of someone to a place in a cognitive-emotional way. Williams & Vaske (2003) also regard place identity as an emotional attachment to a place, and they refer to “the symbolic importance of a place as a repository for emotions and relationships that give meaning and purpose to life” (Williams & Vaske, 2003). In each of these definitions, an emotional connection to a certain place plays a central role.

Place dependence can be seen as a functional attachment (Williams & Vaske, 2003), as an instrumental bond (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981) or as an instrumental meaning (Lewicka, 2011) to a place. Stokols and Shumaker (1981) stress the importance of physical characteristics of a place within the attachment to a place due to the resources and amenities it offers in supporting the specific goals of a person.

Moving on to the concept of place attachment, Scannell & Gifford (2010) propose a framework that consists of three dimensions: person, process and place. The first dimension, ‘person’, focuses on the question ‘who is, in fact, attached?’ on both the individual level and the group level. On an individual level, it regards the connections someone has to a specific place in a personal way. Places that recall personal memories, as an example, often invoke a stronger sense of attachment to a place (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). On a group level, the place attachment stems from the shared meanings of a place among members of a group (Low, 1992). The second dimension, ‘process’, “concerns the way that individuals and groups

relate to a place, and the nature of the psychological interactions that occur in the environments that are important to them” (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). The third and last dimension, ‘place’, can be described by a question of Scannell & Gifford: “what is it about the place to which we connect?” (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

3.1.2 Attachment to stadiums

As Bauckham (2013) and Connell (2017) mention, football fans often search for more than only the game of football itself. They search for unique experiences, for example, visiting certain stadiums. The research of Robinson (2010) focuses on the role of the stadium in English football. Robinson (2010) focuses on the ‘where’ rather than the ‘why’, ‘what’ or ‘how’ of football. The stadium can be considered as the ‘where’; it is the place where the game is played out. In studying the importance of the ‘where’, place attachment comes into play.

Building further upon the notion of the ‘where’, Bale (1993) even states that football in general centres around the ‘where’. To further explain this, he uses the term topophilia, which he defines as ‘the expression of love or affection for a place’. However, due to clubs switching to newer stadiums, Davis (2015) stresses that oikophilia, the ‘love of home’, is a better concept to use, since this means that the feeling of home can be carried along to another place. When a club leaves their old stadium and moves into a new one, the supporters - as a collective - create ‘home’ at their new stadium.

Where Bale (1993) and Davis (2015) use the terms topophilia and oikophilia, Robinson (2010) makes use of the concept of utopia to “consider both the experiential and imagined sense of the stadium as a place where systems of relations emerge to reinforce a collective sense of society where football is central but fandom is optional.” In this sense it is important to, as she also states herself, evaluate on the term of utopia. Robinson regards the concept of utopia as a concept that has to do with a vision of how the world could possibly, or, should possibly be. In her eyes, a stadium can be both utopic and dystopic: utopic in the sense of, for example, possible victories that may occur in a stadium and as a place of celebration and solidarity, dystopic in the sense of, for example, the fear of hooliganism and violence.

In addition to that, Ioannou & Bakirtzoglou (2016) found that stadium security has a strong impact on spectator satisfaction, even more than other components such as stadium access, facility aesthetics, layout accessibility and cleanliness. Furthermore, Wakefield & Sloan (1995) find a strong link between perceived crowding and spectator satisfaction. They do not regard perceived crowding as purely having a large crowd at a stadium. Some spectators may even regard high numbers of spectators as a positive thing. Rather, they state that it has to do with “those features of interior layout and design that either facilitate or hinder freedom of movement by spectators” (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). These findings acknowledge the possibility of a stadium being a dystopic place when violence occurs and when the interior design of a stadium is poor, and being a utopic place when violence is absent and perceived security is high. Since older stadiums are often less suitable for a high number of spectators and often do have a lower stadium security, it could be possible that

newer stadiums (that are designed with keeping stadium security and other components in mind) score higher on spectator satisfaction.

Still, not everyone may appreciate the move by a football club to a new stadium. Robinson (2010) addresses that a move into all-seater stadiums is regarded as a nightmare by those who see the older football grounds as their space; a space of a (mostly) male, working-class society where a sense of community was felt, even though violence occurred. Even though this issue addresses the dystopia of a minority group, it still means that the statement of Davis (2015) is not indefinitely true and that the love of home does not always shift towards a new place for everyone.

Following the disaster at Hillsborough Stadium in 1989, when 96 people lost their lives and 400 others had to receive hospital treatment, a shift took place regarding the safety regulations for stadiums. The disaster happened partly due to the bad design of the Hillsborough stadium, as a government inquiry into the disaster revealed. Subsequently, most of the major football stadiums were redesigned and turned into all-seater stadiums (Robinson, 2010). The redesigns followed public response and, according to Robinson, turned football stadiums from a dystopian place into a place of utopia. The people that were associated with football diversified: it was no longer regarded as a game of solely working-class men. However, it is important to note that some fans may still regard the 'new-style' all-seater stadiums not as utopia, but rather as dystopia due to, for example, lost history or a loss of collective feeling (Robinson, 2010).

3.2 Heritage

Since the concept of heritage plays a pivotal role in explaining the importance of stadiums within urban renewal (and especially within this study), it is necessary here to clarify what is meant by heritage. The definition of heritage may vary among researchers and can be regarded as contested (Ashworth & Graham, 2005). Ashworth & Graham (2005) regard heritage as "that part of the past which we select in the present for contemporary purposes, whether they be economic or cultural (including political and social factors) and choose to bequeath to a future". Lowenthal (2005) stresses that heritage is not merely chosen in the present, but also "everything we suppose has been handed down to us from the past." He adds that heritage can be associated with what is handed from one generation to the next. Ashworth & Graham (2005) furthermore imply that meanings (cultural or financial) give a value to tangible artefacts. Therefore, it can be stated that these meanings define heritage, and not merely the tangible artefacts, mainly since these meanings describe why the tangible artefacts have been selected from the past in the first place.

If heritage values are defined in the present and focus on meanings, heritage is not solely about remembrance of the past, but potentially also about forgetting the past. The situation can occur that societies want to get rid of certain material artefacts due to a changing demand or reinvented pasts that demonstrate new present views. This has also been recognized by Park (2013), who claims that heritage is not consistent, but rather produced in a social way and changing over time.

Still, it is often assumed that certain places and spaces inherit specific intrinsic qualities and heritage identities. This, however, cannot be true: identities are assigned to places and spaces by people and “are therefore the products of the creative imagination of the individual and of society” (Ashworth & Graham, 2005). Heritage is, thus, a social construct which is based on relations of power; who chooses what is important to pass on to the future, and whose heritage will therefore be neglected?

3.2.1 Heritage and stadiums

In 2005, Gammon & Ramshaw stated that “little attention has been paid to heritage within the sport tourism literature, especially when considering the enormous cultural significance that sport represents to countries across the globe.” Some ten years later, Ramshaw (2014) concluded that an extensive amount of research has developed that dives deeper into the role of heritage within sports and the role that tangible heritage, such as stadiums or other football related monuments, plays.

Wood & Gabie (2011) researched the demolition of a former football stadium in Middlesbrough and the way in which the housing estate that was built on the same place as the former stadium, invokes a sense of place and cohesion within the community by creating an association with Middlesbrough Football Club (partly through an art project). They state that, without celebration of that association, “the housing estate is a pleasant but otherwise unremarkable development on an infill brownfield site” (Wood & Gabie, 2011). Wood & Gabie furthermore say “that the history and heritage of a football ground can be defined as much by the longevity and continuity of use as it is by any physical remains or buildings”. They claim that the football-tradition of a certain place is of importance when valuing that football-related place. This continues even after the stadium (or at least a certain part of a stadium) is demolished or when a stadium has undergone certain changes because of development. Besides that, according to Wood (2011), the locations of former stadiums can potentially recapture the meaning and memory of that place, therefore accounting for a new curiosity in its history and heritage.

When taking into account the statement of Ashworth & Graham (2005) that heritage is a social construct which is based on relations of power, it may be possible that these relations of power also come into play when clubs move to a new stadium. Church & Penny (2013) acknowledge these relations of power within their research of the move of London-based football club Arsenal from their former stadium Highbury to the new Emirates Stadium. They found that there is an urge to “develop a power perspective on the contemporary stadium that does more than view it as a panopticed space run by owners and managers intent on using authority and domination to manage either passive, consumer-supporters or resistive hooligans” (Church & Penny, 2013). Because of the comments of fans, they conclude that fans recognize a change in relations of power. For example, whereas Highbury, due to its physical features, was not suitable for the owners of Arsenal to stimulate the behaviour of consumption and type of support as they wished, the newly designed Emirates Stadium is more suitable for this purpose.

Still, the supporters can use multiple resources to potentially shape spaces of the stadium according to their wishes. For example, stadium institutions aim to reinforce “a collective

memory amongst supporters based on the traditions and histories” (Church & Penny, 2013) by incorporating objects from Highbury (such as artefacts and historical reminders) into new stadium spaces. In this way, the new spaces improve the sense of attachment to Arsenal and the (collective) memories connected to Highbury. It could indeed be possible that in this way new heritage is created. This is possible partly due to heritage not being consistent but rather changing over time and produced in a social way (for example, by supporters shaping their spaces just as in this case) (Park, 2013) and heritage being a social construct based on choices what is important to pass on to the future (Ashworth & Graham, 2005).

3.2.2 Heritage and urban renewal

Janssen et al. (2017) argue that over time there have been shifting understandings in the sense of heritage conservation within urban planning. They recognize three approaches to heritage conservation in the Netherlands that successively evolved from each other: from heritage as a sector, to heritage as a factor, to heritage as a vector. The traditional approach, which regards heritage as a sector, mainly focuses on possible threats to heritage and tends to aim at preserving and protecting heritage. Later on a different approach developed, aimed at flexibility; heritage should not merely be preserved since it also has a ‘use-value’ and “thus could be assimilated as distinctive elements of a larger contemporary urbanization” (Janssen et al., 2017). The third approach understands heritage as a spatial vector. It acknowledges that heritage can be fully incorporated within spatial development. In this case, heritage guides the path of urban development and spatial projects.

3.2.3 Modern & post-modern stadiums and urban renewal

Stadiums are often used as a catalysator within urban renewal projects and new stadium developments can be seen as a recent trend (Davies, 2010; Walters, 2011). These new stadium developments are, among other things, due to the increasing importance of commerce in football since the 90s and the expanding role of sport in contributing to the regeneration within urban economies. Regarding stadiums, Paramio et al. (2008) distinguish mainly two types of stadiums: modern stadiums and post-modern stadiums. On a rough timescale, modern stadiums are stadiums built until 1990 and post-modern stadiums are stadiums built after 1990. Just as Walters (2011) concluded, Paramio et al. state that new post-modern stadiums are defined by a holistic approach in which a stadium serves a greater purpose than just sports. Within this study, a stadium its contribution to urban regeneration (according to Walters) is of significance. However, both Walters and Paramio et al. focus on the role of post-modern stadiums in urban renewal projects. They neglect the possible role of modern stadiums within urban renewal, which is of great importance within this study. Since contemporary research largely focuses on the link between post-modern stadiums in urban renewal, this chapter is mainly about this link.

Davies (2010) stresses the significance of sport in general in urban renewal. She identifies three models in which sport plays a role within urban renewal processes. These three models and their features can be seen in figure 3. The first model stresses that development (of a new stadium, for example) and sport activities (such as events) can serve as a central catalyst within urban renewal. In this case, sport is the symbol of renewal and drives, for example, real estate developments. The second model sees sport as an integrated part of

renewal plans along other parts of the plans and policies. Finally, the third model, sport is not an integral part of renewal and often becomes a part of a plan in a later stage. Still, despite being integrated in a later stage, sport can still enhance the project.

Figure 3: the three models of Davies (2010) about the roles of sport in renewal

Model 1: sport-led renewal

- Catalyst of regeneration
- Unique and distinctive
- Symbolic
- High profile
- Flagship development(s)

Model 2: sports renewal

- Integrated regeneration
- Part of mainstream policy for an area
- Integrated at an early stage
- Key element of area based initiatives

Model 3: sport and renewal

- Renewal by default
- No planned provision
- Small scale projects
- Integrated at a late stage

4. Methodology

4.1 Study area

With regard to the aim of this research project, *De Kuip* seems a perfect study area. Whereas often old stadiums are completely demolished and new stadiums are built on the same ground or at a completely different location, *De Kuip* will not be completely demolished, but rather altered in a way that it has a functional use within the project of the new 'Feyenoord City'. The project of Feyenoord City offers a unique situation in which a new stadium will be built in the vicinity of the old stadium and the old stadium will not be torn down. Thus, *De Kuip* offers a way to research the role of the attachment to an already existing modern stadium within an urban redevelopment project.

Besides that, for decades *De Kuip* has been (and still is) an influential sport stadium within the Netherlands. That the majority of the inhabitants of the Netherlands know the stadium, and that many people may feel a kind of attachment to the stadium, makes it an important part of the redevelopment project.

4.2 Data collection

To explore what the role of *De Kuip* will be in the process of the redevelopment of Rotterdam-Zuid and, thus, in the Feyenoord City masterplan, a semi-structured interview has been conducted with an influential Feyenoord-supporter who has been monitoring the plans regarding *De Kuip*. Semi-structured interviews offer flexibility in addressing issues during the interview since they follow a predetermined order to a certain extent, but still offer possibilities to deviate from that order during the interview itself (Dunn, 2016). In this sense, the interview can open up specific information about the role of *De Kuip* in the process by gaining first-hand information from someone involved in the whole process. The interview has been transcribed, -coded and analysed in the software program Atlas.TI.

To measure the place attachment of Feyenoord-supporters to stadium *De Kuip*, this study uses the quantitative method proposed by Williams & Vaske (2003). They developed a questionnaire that measures place attachment by looking at two of its dimensions; place dependence (functional attachment to a place) and place identity (emotional attachment to a place). The questionnaire has been adapted to measure place attachment to *De Kuip*. A total of 12 questions on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5) were asked (six for each of the dimensions). Also following Williams & Vaske, questions were added whether the place was a special place for them (yes or no), how many times they visited the area, and whether they were familiar with the area (on a 9-point scale, ranging from not at all familiar to extremely familiar). Following the Williams & Vaske (2003) methodology as closely as possible has the advantage that the results can be compared to theirs and to other analyses that have used the same methodology.

The questionnaire also contained questions on control variables, namely age, gender, place of birth (municipality of Rotterdam, the surrounding area of Rotterdam or elsewhere) and current place of residence of the respondents. Also, respondents were asked whether they have visited many matches of Feyenoord football club in *De Kuip* (yes, no or neutral) and whether they are season ticket holders of Feyenoord.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the questionnaire could only be distributed in an online format, mainly through Twitter. The data collection through the survey continued up until the 25th of March 2021. In the end, a total of 198 surveys were collected.

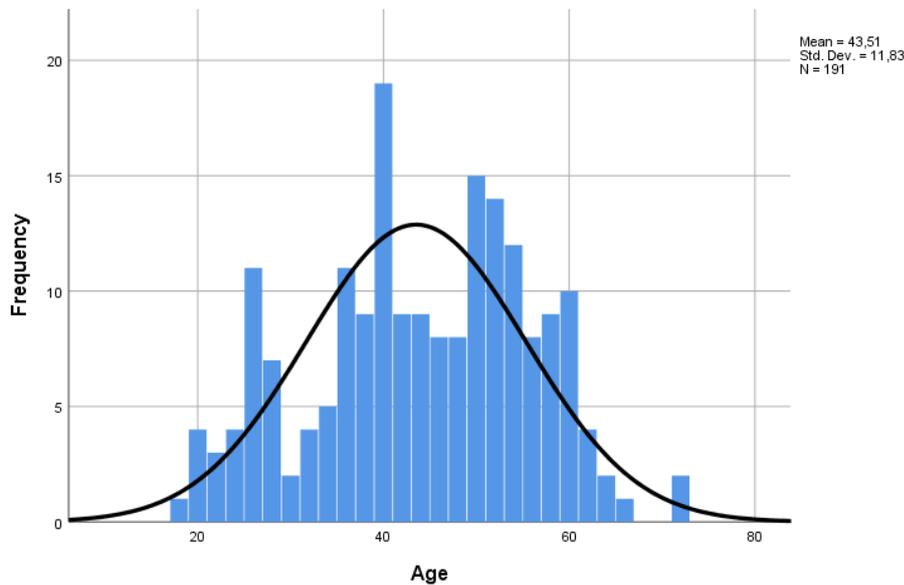
As no spectators were allowed in football stadiums at this moment, the idea of distributing the survey during a home match of Feyenoord was not possible. Influential Feyenoord-supporters with many followers were contacted and asked whether they could share the link of the survey on their social media pages. Consequently, the sampling method must be labelled convenience sampling. Because of the distribution of the survey through influential Feyenoord-fans, the majority of the respondents can be regarded as avid supporters. 142 respondents (n = 193) possess a Feyenoord season ticket.

4.3 Data analysis process

4.3.1 Descriptive statistics of the questionnaire

The mean age of the respondents of the questionnaire is roughly 44 years, with a standard deviation of 12 years (see figure 4). Age does not follow a completely normal distribution: there is a relatively large group of respondents who are in their mid-twenties, around their forties and between fifty and sixty years old. The mean age of 44 corresponds to the mean age of Feyenoord-supporters of 40, in the Eredivisie Fan research by the KNVB (2010).

Figure 4: histogram showing the distribution of age



The majority of respondents (90%) are male (figure 5). This, again, corresponds to the Eredivisie Fan research by the KNVB (2010), in which 87% of stadium visitors was male. It is also due to the distribution of the questionnaire through mostly influential male Feyenoord-fans.

Figure 5: diagram showing the distribution of gender

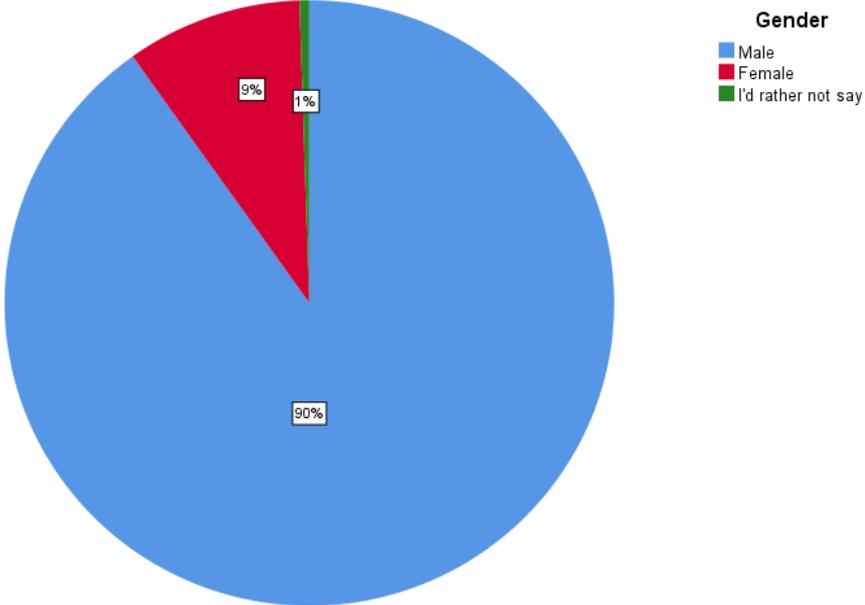
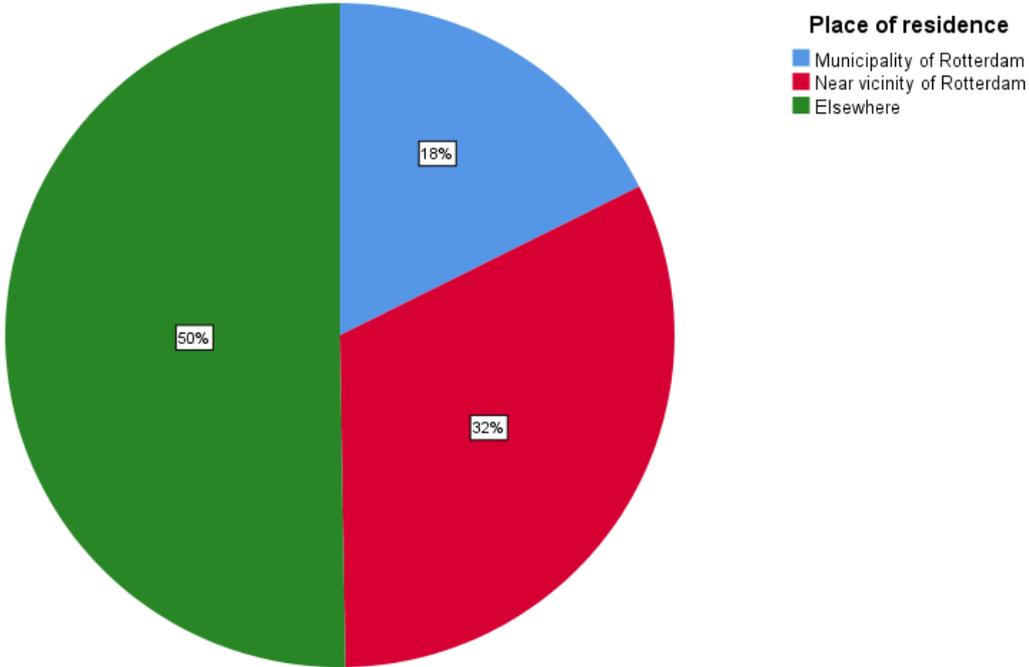


Figure 6 shows that half of the respondents does not live in Rotterdam or in its near vicinity. Eighteen percent of the respondents does live in the municipality of Rotterdam, while the remaining 32% would describe themselves as living in the near vicinity of Rotterdam.

Figure 6: diagram showing the distribution of the place of residence



4.3.2 Analysis of the questionnaire

SPSS Statistics 26 has been used to analyse the data from the questionnaire. Mean scores on the two main dimensions of place attachment, place identity and place dependence, were calculated by averaging the scores of the answers on the six questions for each dimension. Subsequently, the two scores for the place identity and place dependence were averaged to create an overall place attachment score.

Cronbach's Alphas were computed for the questions regarding both the place identity and the place dependence measure, to assess the internal consistency. Cronbach's Alphas for both the place identity (0.970) and place dependence scale (0.893) offered support for the questions used to measure both of the dimensions of place attachment.

A multiple regression has been performed to test possible predictors for the score for place attachment. In the regression, eight possible predictors have been taken into account: age, gender, living in Rotterdam, regarding *De Kuip* as a special place, amount of visits to *De Kuip* per year, possession of a season ticket, visiting many games of Feyenoord in *De Kuip* and familiarity with the surrounding area of *De Kuip*. To analyse the correlation between the place identity and place dependence scores, the Pearson correlation coefficient has been used.

4.3.3 Analysis of the interview

The interview has been analysed by coding the transcript using AtlasTI. Specific quotes regarding codes have been used within the results and discussion-section.

4.4 Research ethics and positionality

4.4.1 Informed consent

Conducting the semi-structured interview, consent forms have not been used. Due to the information that has been offered to the participant beforehand, he was aware of being interviewed in the interest of a thesis and was also aware of the topic that would be discussed. Also, the participant has been told why he has been selected to participate in the interview. During the initial contact the participant has been told digitally that the interview would be recorded and transcribed, and this has been repeated shortly before the interview itself. Also, the option has been offered to the participant to receive the transcript afterwards. The participant actively requested this, and agreed with the transcript as presented to him.

4.4.2 Positionality and reflexivity

Positionality is of importance within the research process. Positionality can be regarded as "a researcher's social, locational and ideological placement relative to the research project or to other participants in it" (Waite, 2016). A critically reflexive researcher should look at the reasons why a research topic has been chosen and the ideas one initially has about the specific topic (Waite, 2016). Waite uses the term positionality statement, which explains the 'location' of a researcher within the context of a certain project.

Since I experienced one of my most impactful memories in *De Kuip*, due to my favourite football club FC Groningen winning the Dutch Cup Final in 2015 in *De Kuip*, my positionality is of great importance within the research process. Besides that, out of personal interest I

have been following the decision-making process about Feyenoord abandoning *De Kuip* and moving to a new stadium for some years now. It can have a positive impact due to the information I already have and the understanding of the opinion of Feyenoord-fans whether to leave *De Kuip* or to maintain using it as their football stadium. At the same time, this foreknowledge can also constrain the research due to me having a certain attachment to *De Kuip* out of personal memories. During the research process I tried to periodically reflect upon my own position and filter out possible assumptions made out of personal experience and knowledge.

5. Results and discussion

This chapter describes the results of the three sub-questions to give an answer to the main research question, namely *can the sense of place of a sport stadium be used in urban redevelopment?* This chapter is divided in three parts, with each part discussing one of the three sub-questions.

5.1 What is the attachment of Feyenoord-supporters to stadium *De Kuip* as a place?

Figures 7, 8 and 9 show that the scores for the place attachment and its sub-concepts place identity and place dependence are high. All three concepts are measured on a 5-points Likert scale.

The place attachment variable is the average of the place identity and place dependence scores. In this way, the place attachment score forms the mean score for the place identity and place dependence combined. The scores for the place attachment are high: most respondents score between 4 and 5 on place attachment, with a mean score of 4.39 (SD = 0.94, n = 194).

Place identity scores high, with a mean score of 4.49 (SD = 0.97, n = 194) and 100 respondents allocating the maximum score of 5. This indicates that there is a strong connection to *De Kuip* in a cognitive-emotional way (Proshansky, 1978). The mean score of place dependence is lower, but still high with 4.28 (SD = 0.95, n = 194). Still, there is a strong instrumental bond to *De Kuip* (Stokols & Schumacher, 1981). This instrumental bond may also rely on the physical characteristics of *De Kuip*. The scores for place identity and place dependence are also high when compared to the findings of Williams & Vaske (2003). They created place identity and place dependence scores (on a scale of 1 to 5) for four different locations while distinguishing between the amount of visits to these locations in the past 12 months. Those who visited the locations two times or less have lower mean scores for both of the variables (place identity ranging between 2.14 and 3.26, place dependence ranging between 1.81 and 2.81) than those who visited seven times or more (place identity ranging between 3.48 and 4.13, place dependence ranging between 2.60 and 3.07).

Figure 7: the scores for the place attachment variable (on a scale of 1-5)

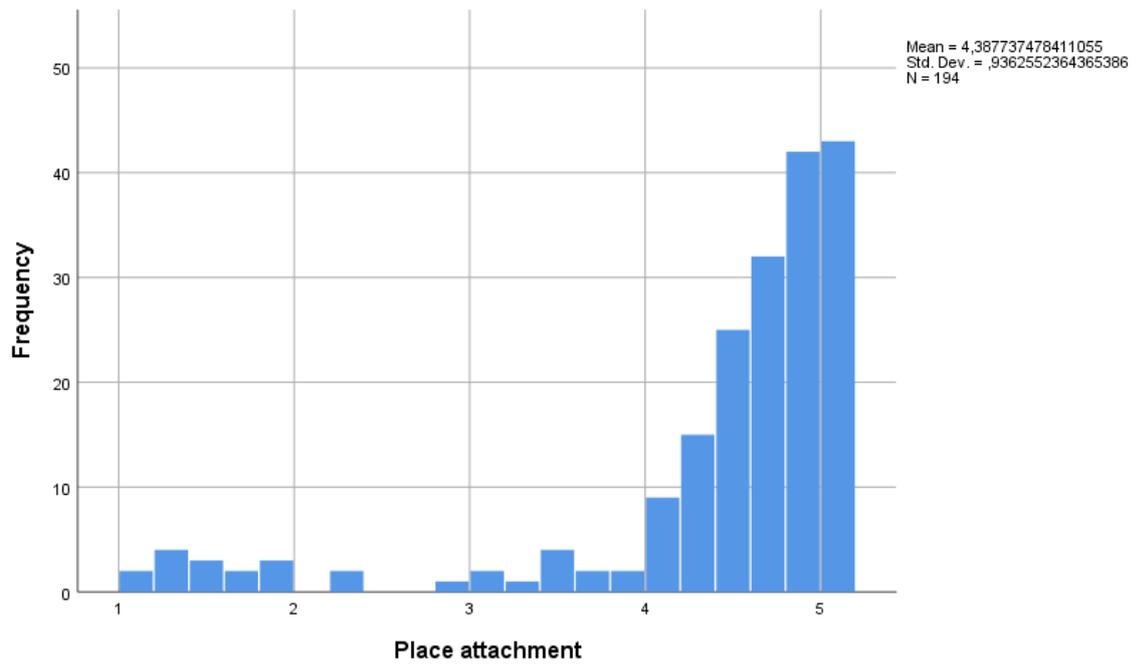


Figure 8: the scores for the place identity variable (on a scale of 1-5)

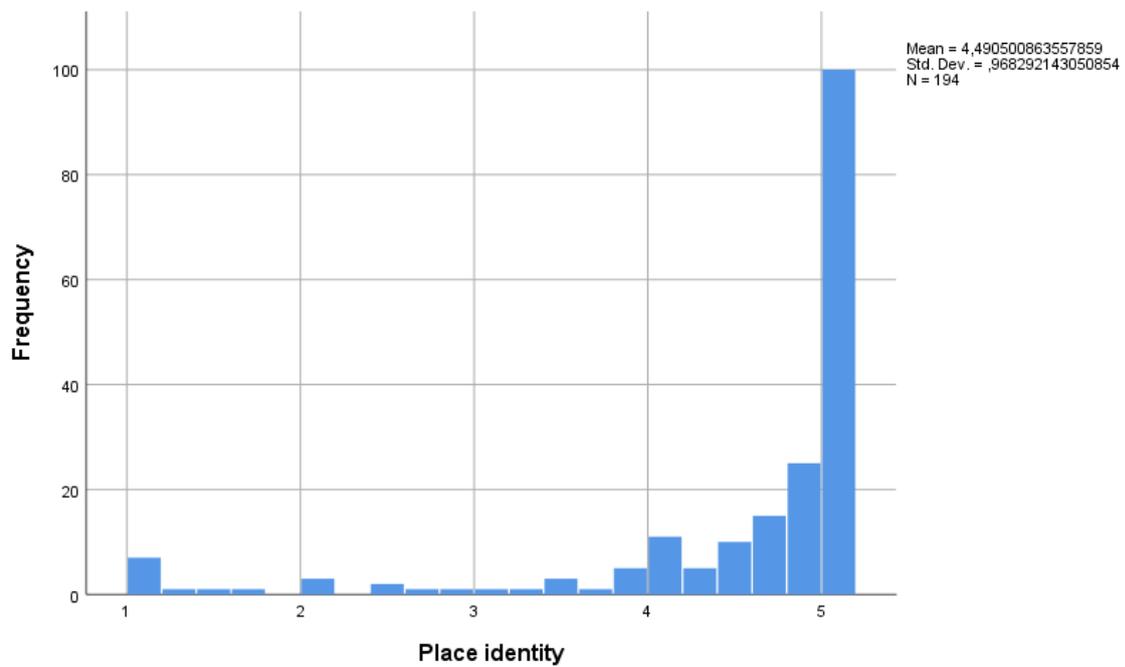
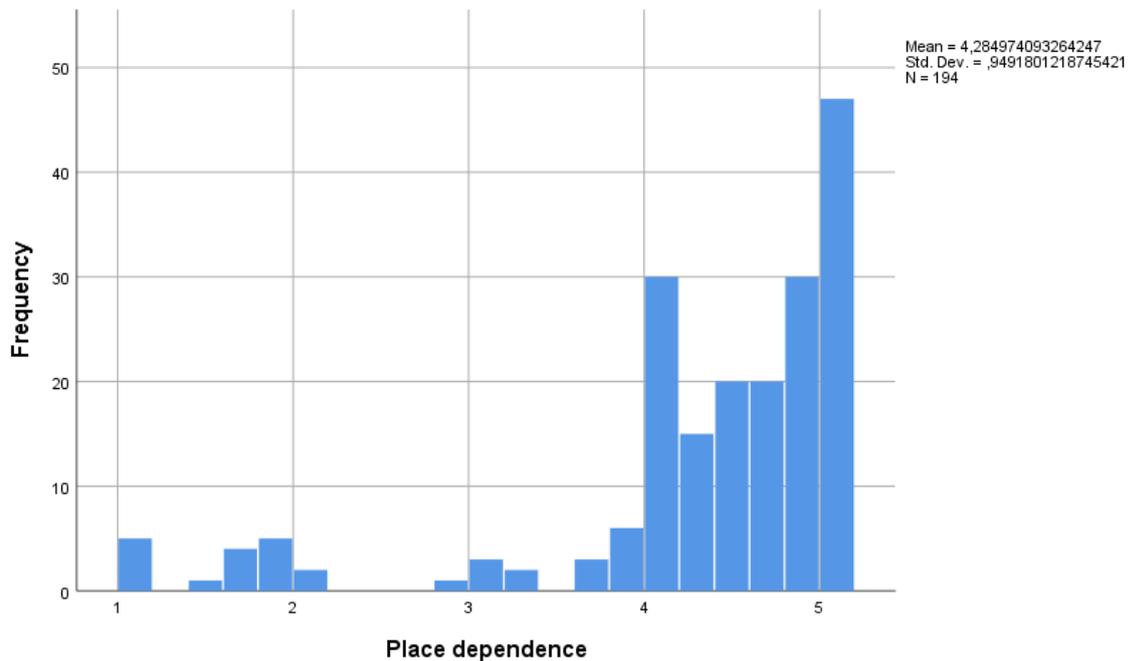


Figure 9: the scores for the place dependence variable (on a scale of 1-5)



Referring back to Robinson (2010), who utilizes the concepts of utopia and dystopia in describing a stadium, it is clear from the high place attachment scores that Feyenoord-supporters regard *De Kuip* as utopic rather than dystopic. When taking into account the notion of Wakefield & Sloan (1995) that older (modern) stadiums often score lower on spectator satisfaction due to lower stadium security, it may seem surprising that *De Kuip* scores quite high on place attachment. This illustrates the possibility that Feyenoord-supporters find the, for example, physical characteristics more important than the degree of stadium security. This is in contradiction with the statement made by Ioannou & Bakirtzoglou (2016), who found that stadium security has a stronger impact on the satisfaction of spectators than the aesthetics and layout of a stadium.

Robinson (2010) discusses an option that may serve as an explanation for this. According to Robinson, older football grounds are seen as a space of (mostly) male, working-class society where, even though violence occurred, a sense of community was felt. Building upon the diagrams in figure 4 and 5, which shows that the questionnaire has been filled in by mostly males with a mean age of 44, this may well be the case in *De Kuip* and serves as a possible explanation for the high place attachment scores, even though certain factors of *De Kuip* (such as security) are of a lesser degree. Another possible explanation is that the attachment to a place rises when a place is threatened. When pre-existing emotional attachments are disrupted by developments and the identity of a place is at risk, place-protective actions arise and the attachment to a place rises (Devine-Wright, 2009).

Figure 10 below shows the correlation between the place identity and the place dependence. The Pearson correlation coefficient shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the scores for the place identity and place dependence ($r = .907$; $p = .000$). This indicates that when someone scores high on either the place identity or the place dependence score, the score on the other variable will probably also be high.

Figure 10: the correlation between place identity and place dependence

Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	Significance (p)	N
.907	.000	194

Figure 11 shows the results of a regression analysis of the roles of possible predictors in explaining the score for place attachment. In the regression, eight possible predictors have been taken into account: age, gender, living in Rotterdam, regarding *De Kuip* as a special place, number of visits to *De Kuip* per year, possession of a season ticket, visiting many games of Feyenoord in *De Kuip* and familiarity with the surrounding area of *De Kuip*.

Figure 11: regression with place attachment as a dependent variable (* = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$)

	B (standard error)
Possessing a season ticket (1 = yes)	.203* (.87)
Visiting many games (1 = yes)	.118 (.103)
Amount of visits to <i>De Kuip</i> per year (ratio variable)	.001 (.001)
Familiarity with the surrounding area of <i>De Kuip</i> (on a scale of 1-9)	.085* (.033)
<i>De Kuip</i> as a special place (1 = yes)	2.679*** (.139)
Gender (1 = male)	-.085 (.103)
Living in Rotterdam (1 = yes)	-.062 (.066)
Age (ratio variable)	.003 (.003)
Constant	.945
R ²	.815
N	194

The R^2 of .815 shows that 81.5% of the variance in the score on place attachment can be explained by the eight predictors. Zooming in on each of the predictors, three predictors show a significant association with place attachment: regarding *De Kuip* as a special place, familiarity with the surrounding area of *De Kuip* and possessing a season ticket, This means that there is no relationship between the remaining five predictors and the score for place attachment.

Figure 11 shows there is a significant association between regarding *De Kuip* as a special place and the score for place attachment. Bale (1993) uses the term topophilia to explain the importance of ‘where’ within football, by stating that topophilia can be regarded as ‘the expression of love or affection for a place’. The question within the questionnaire whether *De Kuip* is seen by a respondent as a special place or not captures this concept of ‘topophilia’.

The significant association between the familiarity with the surrounding area of *De Kuip* and the score for place attachment is also interesting, especially since there is no significant association between the predictor ‘living in Rotterdam’ and the score for place attachment. One could argue that those who live in Rotterdam are also more probable to be familiar with the surrounding area of *De Kuip*, but the positive association with the score for place attachment is in fact missing. A possible explanation lies in the sense of security: those who are familiar with the surrounding area of *De Kuip* possibly feel safer in this area, and their access to the stadium may thus feel easier and safer, even though the component of stadium access has a lesser impact on satisfaction of spectators than the stadium security itself (Ioannou & Bakirtzoglou, 2016).

The predictors ‘possessing season ticket’, ‘visiting many games’ and ‘amount of visits to *De Kuip* per year’ are different predictors, but are all roughly centred around the frequency of visiting *De Kuip* (when we consider those possessing a season ticket to visit *De Kuip* frequently). Therefore, it is interesting to see that only the predictor ‘possessing season ticket’ shows a significant association with the score for place attachment.

Figure 12 shows the correlation between the variables ‘possessing a season ticket’, ‘visiting many games’ and ‘amount of visits to *De Kuip* per year’. The Pearson correlation coefficients show that there is a significant positive correlation between all three variables. This indicates that when someone scores high on one of the variables, the score on the other variables will probably also be high. Still, the Pearson correlation coefficients show that the correlations are moderate or low. Due to this, all three variables are incorporated within the regressions.

Figure 12: the correlation between the variables ‘possessing a season ticket’, ‘visiting many games’ and ‘amount of visits to *De Kuip* per year’

	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	Significance (p)	N
Possessing a season ticket (1 = yes) & visiting many games (1 = yes)	.523	.000	193

Possessing a season ticket (1 = yes) & amount of visits to <i>De Kuip</i> per year (ratio variable)	.311	.000	190
Visiting many games (1 = yes) & amount of visits to <i>De Kuip</i> per year (ratio variable)	.272	.000	190

Figure 13 shows the results of a regression with place identity as a dependent variable and the eight predictors as independent variables. Just as in the regression with place attachment, three predictors show a significant association with place identity: possessing a season ticket, familiarity with the surrounding area of *De Kuip* and *De Kuip* as a special place. The R^2 of .834 shows that 83.4% of the variance in the score on place attachment can be explained by the eight predictors.

Figure 13: regression with place identity as a dependent variable (* = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$)

	B (standard error)
Possessing a season ticket (1 = yes)	.209* (.215)
Visiting many games (1 = yes)	.076 (.101)
Amount of visits to <i>De Kuip</i> per year (ratio variable)	.001 (.001)
Familiarity with the surrounding area of <i>De Kuip</i> (on a scale of 1-9)	.136*** (.032)
<i>De Kuip</i> as a special place (1 = yes)	2.653*** (.139)
Gender (1 = male)	-.115 (.101)
Living in Rotterdam (1 = yes)	-.062 (.064)
Age (ratio variable)	.005 (.003)
Constant	.638
R^2	.834
N	190

Figure 14 shows the results of a regression with place dependence as a dependent variable and the eight predictors as independent variables. Place dependence has a significant association with only one predictor: *De Kuip* as a special place. The R² is lower than in the other regressions (.730), which indicates that 73.4% of the variance in the score on place identity can be explained by the eight predictors.

Figure 14: regression with place dependence as a dependent variable (* = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$)

	B (standard error)
Possessing a season ticket (1 = yes)	.196 (.107)
Visiting many games (1 = yes)	.161 (.126)
Amount of visits to <i>De Kuip</i> per year (ratio variable)	.001 (.001)
Familiarity with the surrounding area of <i>De Kuip</i> (on a scale of 1-9)	.035 (.040)
<i>De Kuip</i> as a special place (1 = yes)	2.706*** (.170)
Gender (1 = male)	-.055 (.126)
Living in Rotterdam (1 = yes)	-.061 (.080)
Age (ratio variable)	.001 (.003)
Constant	1.252
R ²	.730
N	190

5.2 To what extent can we regard *De Kuip* as cultural heritage?

The answer on this sub-question mainly lies in the literature. The interview with a well-informed Feyenoord supporter may enhance the conclusions, as may statements made by other stakeholders in the public media.

At the moment, *De Kuip* has the status of being a municipal monument. There have been long ongoing discussions whether *De Kuip* should gain the status of a national monument or not. In 2012, Crimson Architectural Historians conducted a cultural-historical analysis of *De Kuip*, in which they argue that “*De Kuip* is a world-class architectural-historical and cultural-historical monument and should be treated as such” (Crimson, 2012). Crimson researched two possible scenarios for *De Kuip*: a scenario in which a new stadium would be built on the exact same spot as the current *Kuip*, and a scenario in which a new stadium would be built in the vicinity of the current stadium *De Kuip*.

According to the Crimson report, it is unacceptable from a cultural-historical perspective to demolish *De Kuip*, due to its unique architectural-historical value. From a cultural-historical perspective, there are therefore no feasible arguments to demolish *De Kuip*. Furthermore, they discuss the option to conserve specific segments of *De Kuip*, and they conclude that this is also not a good strategy in order to maintain the cultural-historical values. Even transforming *De Kuip* in such a way that the outside of *De Kuip* is conserved, but the stadium as a whole gets another function, is no feasible option according to Crimson (2012).

Many Feyenoord-supporters agree with the statement that *De Kuip* has to be preserved. At the same time, supporters get the feeling that others, especially those in power, think different about this. The interviewee states:

"I live in a small village, and even regarding small houses near the water the general opinion is "yes, we should preserve those". In Rotterdam, you do not get that feeling. Even when keeping in mind what the role of De Kuip was in the Second World War. They want to go on, get bigger, without looking back." (Peter, 45)

This is in line with findings of Church & Penny (2013) who found that power plays a key role within the future of stadiums. Those in power often prefer 'moving on': demolishing older stadiums and building new ones. Thus, the heritage values attributed to a modern stadium may differ between supporters and those in power. Still, there does not seem to be consensus whether to regard *De Kuip* as a national monument, even among supporters, partly due to the consequences it has for the structure of *De Kuip*:

"I do not think it is smart to make it a national monument, because then you can not change anything to it. I also think that is the reason that they do not make it a national monument. Besides that, I regard it myself as a national monument."(Peter, 45)

In this sense, it gets clear that making it a national monument has possible negative implications for *De Kuip*, even for those who regard *De Kuip* as heritage. Giving *De Kuip* the status of a national monument does probably mean that it is difficult to make adjustments to the stadium in the future. Supporters do regard *De Kuip* as a national monument for themselves, but giving it an official status as a national monument may not benefit *De Kuip*, according to supporters.

Feyenoord-supporters attribute emotional values to *De Kuip*. According to Vers Beton (2019), there is a lot of emotion surrounding the current *Kuip*. As a football stadium, the building will not stand the test of time, but it will certainly not be lost. *De Kuip* therefore remains an attraction and fits in with the zeitgeist, in which old values are once again becoming more important. People are increasingly looking for rituals and references that seem familiar, and they long for meaningful experiences (Vers Beton, 2019). This acknowledges the possible change in values attributed to *De Kuip*. This is in line with Park's statement (2013) who acknowledges that heritage is not consistent, but rather produced in a social way and changing over time. This means that, even though certain values are attributed to *De Kuip* at the moment by Feyenoord-supporters, this may alter. Therefore, in the future, this can have implications for the roles that *De Kuip* fulfils.

According to Ashworth & Graham (2005) heritage can be regarded as “that part of the past which we select in the present for contemporary purposes, whether they be economic or cultural (including political and social factors) and choose to bequeath to a future” (Ashworth & Graham, 2005).

What is clear from this definition is that it matters who you ask whether we can regard *De Kuip* as heritage. Supporters do, in general, regard *De Kuip* as heritage, as already stated by quotes from the interviewee. Nevertheless, giving *De Kuip* the status of a national monument may have negative implications, even when *De Kuip* is regarded as heritage. Still, even these values that are attributed to *De Kuip* and the goals someone has with *De Kuip* may change over time. This is illustrated by the various plans for *De Kuip* that are constantly changing.

Therefore, the answer to what extent we can regard *De Kuip* as heritage is always in motion and is never finite. At the moment, the majority of Feyenoord-supporters (and even stakeholders in power of the process of possibly altering *De Kuip*) regard it as heritage, but opinions differ in how to deal with the heritage values of *De Kuip*.

5.3 What will the role of *De Kuip* be in the process of urban redevelopment of Rotterdam-Zuid?

A contradiction that is often mentioned within the discussion between proponents and opponents of a new stadium is the contradiction between emotional and rational arguments. There are (roughly) two sides in the discussions about *De Kuip*: those in favour of building a new stadium for Feyenoord and leaving *De Kuip*, and those in favour of remaining in *De Kuip* and keeping the situation as it is right now. *Red De Kuip*, an organisation run by various supporters and others who are in favour of conserving *De Kuip*, already stated this contradiction in 2013. They stated that the makers of the plans for the new stadium blame the opponents for being too nostalgic and emotional. All things considered, emotional arguments are in fact put forward by the proponents of the new stadium: a new icon for the city, and according to mayor Aboutaleb, Rotterdam gains a new dynamic through it (Red De Kuip, 2013).

This illustrates the situation according to supporters: proponents accuse supporters of being emotional and nostalgic, but the supporters themselves do not agree with this. They even state that the proponents make use of emotional arguments, and that they themselves use rational arguments to confirm their opinion:

“And that is my biggest objection: it seems so emotional, you hear that very often. But the arguments on which we base our opinion that a new stadium is not the best option for Feyenoord at this moment are very rational.” (Peter, 45)

It is interesting that both groups claim that rational arguments have more worth than emotional arguments and that they both accuse each other of using emotional arguments. Place attachment regards the connections someone has to a specific place. Personal memories, emotions and feelings do often invoke a stronger sense of attachment to a place (Tigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Still, this does not mean that emotions and feelings are

irrational. Incorporating emotions and feelings within a decision-making process can be important and therefore rational choice.

Over time, the emotional values that are attached to *De Kuip* by Feyenoord-supporters become of an increasing importance. In the last 12 years, multiple plans have been proposed for *De Kuip*, and in each plan the current stadium gains importance. The original plan was to build a completely new stadium on the exact spot of the current one, later there were plans to renovate the stadium (Vers Beton, 2019). As of yet, *De Kuip* is reintegrated within the plans by keeping a large part of the structure intact, building residential apartments within the stadium on the second tier and transforming the football pitch into a public park (Feyenoord City, 2020). These dynamics in the different plans fits within a shifting understanding of the role of heritage within urban planning (Janssen et al., 2017). The role of *De Kuip* within the subsequent plans has shifted towards being a factor (heritage does have use-value within urban projects), or even a vector (heritage can be a driving force in spatial development).

Consequently, the plans of *De Kuip* fall in between Davies' (2010) first model and second models: development of a new stadium serves as a central catalyst with urban renewal and respectively sport is an integrated part within urban renewal plans and part of plans and policies. The current stadium *De Kuip* will not fulfil the role of a central catalyst, but still it serves a role within the urban renewal plans, and it is certainly integrated within plans and policies.

The interviewee puts forward that supporters who are well informed about financial calculations are incorporated by stakeholders within the decision-making process:

"The only involvement I have had is that I was called in by a number of people around Feyenoord. But that is more directed by supporters' associations, also because of my financial background, who then say to me: please look how this and that works." (Peter, 45)

The interviewee also stresses that the involvement of supporters is not optimal, and that it is steered in a certain direction:

"But that involvement... I think that involvement has been there. But it has also been very much a controlled engagement. People who were invited came from the same groups." (Peter, 45)

Another example of the perceived lack of involvement of supporters is that 600 supporters signed up to come and speak in at the local town hall about the Feyenoord City-plans. Recently, the town hall clerk announced that only a selection of those 600 supporters will be allowed to speak in (Stadion op Zuid, 2021). This decision created a feeling among supporters of not being wanted and supported them in their opinion that the direct involvement of supporters is being strictly controlled in a negative sense.

6. Conclusion and discussion

The attachment to *De Kuip* is high with a mean score of 4,39 (on a 1 to 5 scale). Interesting is that older (modern) stadiums as *De Kuip* often score lower on spectator satisfaction due to lower stadium security (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995), but this is not the case for *De Kuip*. This indicates that Feyenoord-supporters value other aspects higher, such as the sense of community which is felt by (mostly) males (Robinson, 2010). Attachment to a place rises when it is threatened and place-protective actions arise, which may also explain the high place attachment to *De Kuip* (Devine-Wright, 2009).

The aspects of *De Kuip* that are valued connect to its heritage values. We can conclude that many do regard *De Kuip* as heritage to a certain extent, but the exact extent to which *De Kuip* is regarded as heritage differs a lot. Therefore, it matters who you ask this question. Among supporters, the consensus seems to be that *De Kuip* is regarded as heritage. Nevertheless, there is no consensus whether *De Kuip* should be acknowledged as a national monument instead of a municipal monument as it is right now. Acknowledging *De Kuip* as a national monument would sound logical due to the values that are attributed to *De Kuip*, but at the same time it does mean that a permit is needed to make adjustments to *De Kuip* in the future. Possible difficulties may arise when wanting to give *De Kuip* a new residential function while it is a national monument.

These difficulties influence the possible role of *De Kuip* within urban redevelopment. It is clear that the role of *De Kuip* in the current development plans is substantial. Over time, the plans regarding the role of *De Kuip* have shifted a lot, from completely demolishing *De Kuip*, to renovating *De Kuip*, to reintegration within the urban redevelopment plans. Those responsible for urban redevelopment often prefer 'moving on' and demolishing an old stadium (Church & Penny, 2013). This is not in line with the current plans for *De Kuip* due to its reintegration within the plans. Within the discussion about *De Kuip*, two sides are distinguished: the proponents of a new stadium and the opponents of a new stadium. Each of these sides think differently about the role of *De Kuip*, and each of these sides accuse the other side of unreasonable arguments. This resulted in disagreements, such as the differing opinions regarding the involvement of Feyenoord-supporters within the decision-making process. The role of *De Kuip* within the redevelopment plans is influential, but this can be interpreted differently. *De Kuip* can play a huge role in two ways: by demolishing *De Kuip* and creating space for new developments, or by integrating it within the project and keeping it intact for a large part.

Regarding the main research question whether the attachment to a sport stadium as a place can be used in urban redevelopment, this can be answered with a clear yes. When taking into account its heritage values and the values that are valued high by supporters, it can be used in urban redevelopment. Still, this does not mean that it indefinitely should be used in urban redevelopment, since heritage values clearly change over time and the attachment to a stadium may fade away. Therefore, it clearly can be used in development, but the extent to which *De Kuip* is used within the urban redevelopment plans remains a choice.

6.1 Reflection and recommendations

Since 90% of the respondents within this study are male, it proved not feasible to make a distinction between gender in the results. Future research can possibly solve this.

No questions regarding heritage were integrated within the questionnaire. The only data that has been collected regarding heritage is from the interview. This means that the part of the results section that discusses heritage is merely based on this interview. Questions regarding heritage should have been added to the questionnaire to strengthen the analysis of the research question regarding heritage.

Because of the distribution of the questionnaire through influential Feyenoord-supporters on Twitter it is possible that only avid supporters have been incorporated within the research. This may have led to 'regular' Feyenoord-supporters not being included within the research. A possible implication of this is that the scores for place attachment and its sub-concepts are higher: avid supporters might rate their attachment to *De Kuip* higher than regular Feyenoord-supporters.

It might be interesting for future research to measure the attachment to *De Kuip* after its possible involvement in the urban redevelopment plans. These results can be compared to the results of this study to improve the understanding of the role of sports stadiums within urban redevelopment.

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