

“IT REMINDS ME OF LIKE A BATHROOM STALL”

Analysing higher education students’ preferences and the willingness to study at different study locations.

Abstract

The research evaluates the preferences of higher education students of the physical environment and social interaction at their study locations. Therefore, the report investigates the research question: “*How does physical environment and social interaction influence the willingness to study at the study location of higher education students?*” The qualitative data analysis consists of eight participants, who responded to interviews and filled out surveys. In addition, the study environment was investigated by an observation checklist. The findings match with the expectations. The physical environment of the study location and the social interaction have an impact on the choice of study location. Therefore, it was discovered that social interaction does have a positive effect on higher education students based on a specific type of social interaction. This study shows the complexity of the preferences of higher education students in relation to the components of the study environment.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	1
Introduction	3
Theoretical Framework	4
Methodology	7
Results	9
Discussion	16
Conclusion.....	17
References	18
Appendices	21

Introduction

Every day an individual makes 35,000 personal preferences (Hoomans, 2015). For students, one of these is their choice of study location. With the Netherlands seeing an 8% increase in enrolment and willingness to study in Dutch universities, students are faced with a choice from a variety of locations that will enhance their willingness to study (Association of Universities, 2021).

The focal point of this study is to find out if higher education students have preferences and if willingness to study differs on location. Studies prior have taken a quantitative approach by analysing the productivity of students in a location. However, this study aims to consider personal preferences of students and why they chose specific locations to study. The analysis is based on a variety of components of the physical environment and the occurrence of social interaction at the study locations. It is also relevant to consider that students no longer just study at traditional study locations such as at home or in the library, but also choose a variety of locations (Middleton, 2018). For instance, in Korea, cafés have overtaken libraries as the main study location (Na-Han & Jae-Young, 2017).

Traditional study environments have been studied through quantitative research. However, a research gap exists within the preferences and willingness of higher education students based on their location. Therefore, this research will follow a qualitative approach instead of quantitative. Each student should select a learning environment where their willingness to study was the highest (Pérez et al., 2011). Consequently, it offers an opportunity for this research to investigate not only the University Library of the University of Groningen (RUG), and the home of participants, but also cafés and the Forum, a modern building open since 2019, which was built to 'spark curiosity' for visitors (Visit Groningen, 2022). Matching the personal preferences of students at their learning environment could lead to an increase of academic performances. Subsequently, it is socially relevant to investigate if preferences of higher education student's influence their choice of location.

For this academic research, all participants attend the RUG. The focus will only rely on Bachelor third year students, who have occupied at least 150 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), and Master students. According to Moyer (2003), students with more ECTS have different preferences for their learning environment than students with less ECTS. Therefore, this study only investigates higher education students who have been in Groningen for a minimum of 2 years.

In order to distinguish if the physical environment and social interactions are relevant components to identify the preferences of higher education students, this paper will investigate the below research question through qualitative data.

How does the physical environment and social interaction influence the willingness to study at the study location of higher education students?

In order to examine the research question in detail, two follow up sub-questions have been formulated. These are:

For what reasons do the higher education students choose their study location?

What factors, within physical environment and social interaction, result in a better study location according to higher education students?

The structure of this paper substantiates of six divisions. The following section is the theoretical framework (2), which sets an underlying foundation for the research, explains all relevant concepts such as aspects of the physical environment and social interaction. Furthermore, the methodology (3) describes the procedure of the conduction of data collection and the outcome leading to the qualitative data analysis. The results (4) will reflect on the expected and deviating findings including a discussion (5) which will contribute by involving the

theoretical foundation in order to relate to the primary data. The conclusion (6) will reflect on the overall research such as discussing the limitations of the research and opposing ideas for future research.

Theoretical Framework

The choice of study location from higher education students is based on relevant attributes. These include the quality of amenities offered by the location (Li, 2016), distance to the potential study environment and the preferences of students. Personal preferences and the characteristics of study locations are analysed by looking at the preferences for and experiences with the physical environment and social interaction. However, the dependent variable is the willingness to study of students in their study location. The willingness to study is referred to as the desire to acquire and evolve new knowledge (Hotifah et al., 2020). Higher education students with high levels of willingness to study perceive positive beliefs and strategies to generate self-regulation for their studying. The process has a causal effect onto the success of students, since it increases focus on development instead of failure caused by external elements (Sáez et al., 2018). Additionally, the willingness to study could potentially develop motivation and emotional attitude to find resolutions (Pérez et al., 2011).

The learning environment of students establishes study spaces, where students' study at. In this study, the environment is evaluated through social interaction and physical aspects, such as lighting, open or enclosed spaces, food/drinks availability, comfortability and accessibility to electricity and internet. The physical environment has been discovered to be related to academic achievements of students and their behaviour. A well-maintained physical environment encourages positive motivation and attitudes in correlation to the student's ability to learn, willingness to study, prosocial behaviour and academic performances (NCSSLE, 2022). In addition, by assembling physical changes according to the preferences of students in their learning environment may lead to an improvement of academic results.

However, not only do the physical aspects of the environment matter, but cognitive space is also important. The cognitive space considers the students' efforts to develop their knowledge through efficacy and motivation (Banyard & Underwood, 2008). Therefore, the learning environment can not only substantiate basic needs such as chairs and tables, but to also increase their willingness to study through personal preferences.

The Physical Environment of the Study Location

The traditional conceptions of higher education learning spaces consisted of enclosed spaces. Enclosed spaces refer to independent, small sized rooms that allows students to study with limited distractions. For instance, the home of participants and the University library of RUG offers enclosed spaces. However, students have interrupted traditional dependencies through the attraction of open space and disadvantages of enclosed space such as claustrophobia and negative mental health impacts (Middleton, 2018). Therefore, the interest of studying in open spaces gained popularity. Open spaces consist of large areas with many windows that offer natural lighting and people interacting in the surrounding. Open spaces also refer to spaces which are flexible, non-hierarchical and collaborative (Bury & Masuzawa, 2018). The collaborative environments create space for groups such as at cafés and the Forum.

One of the key features is the connection between students at their particular location. Additionally, open learning spaces attract a variety of people, including different cultures and knowledge. Students are eager to study at exciting environments, where their educational value is appreciated. Another factor which is indirectly caused by flexible open spaces is creativity leading to collaborative practices, visibility and team orientation

(Ramezaniapour & Askarinejad, 2018). According to Moyer (2003), women prefer collaborate surroundings more than men. However, both prefer independent work ethics instead of collaborative.

Open spaces can also be evaluated as distractions, since several activities occur nearby whilst studying. Therefore, a number of students still prefer to study in enclosed spaces. Even though students have justified their mental health to improve in open spaces, it results to a trade-off of lower productivity, since multitasking lowers academic performance according to May and Elder (2018).

Each study location is unique and attracts diverse individuals (Weisser, 2019). Further mobility to the environment links to the dependency of personal preferences of students. For instance, Young Hee Min and Soyeon Lee (2020) have discovered an absolute increase in the interest for higher education students to study in academic libraries. However, according to Erin Thomas (n.d.) cafés are the best places to study in due to ambient noise, caffeine and aesthetics. Diverse scholars have found an influx of students at all kinds of locations influenced by their personal preferences and the beneficence of the environments.

One of the aspects related to physical environment considers lighting. It has been discovered that natural light improves students' behaviour. For instance, classrooms lit by natural lighting led to a 25% improvement in performance. Moreover, full spectrum light creates less anxiety, lowers stress and improves the overall health of students (Order Out of Chaos, 2020).

A subsequent influence on students' health is the availability of food and beverages. Due to recent research, it shows that students are able to learn better when they are well nourished. Regulated meals connect to higher academic performances, quicker information processing and improved memory (Bautista et al., 2018; Stuber, 2014). Additionally, researchers discovered that students who lack in access to adequate food leads to higher stress levels, disordered eating behaviours and lower sleep quality (Elzein et al., 2017).

Another aspect is the comfort of students, being comfortable at a learning space can have similar results to daily regulated meals. Students seem at ease, more relaxed and eliminate negative thoughts, which leads to higher willingness to study (Weinschreider, 2020; Santangelo, 2019).

At last, it is necessary for students to have accessibility to electricity, in order to charge their electronics and have access to the internet to complete their digital assignments. However, it also resulted in negative consequences since a large number of students are not able to control their usage of the internet which affects academic performance negatively. Therefore, the internet needs to be used in a reasonable configuration instead of creating additional distractions (Zhou et al., 2016).

Social Interaction at the Study Location

Social interaction plays a relevant role in choice of study locations and impacts willingness to study. The direct influence of higher education students onto the environment is equivalent to the quality and frequency of interactions (Patterson, 2015). An interaction between people is evaluated as such when it has a causal effect on the students to organise their thoughts, reflect their understanding of information and to discover loopholes within reasoning. However, social interaction is not only based on direct communication with others, but also perceives aspects which encourages students to study through the self-other monitoring effect.

The self-monitoring theory of Snyder (1974) developed into the self-other monitoring effect by expanding to monitor people around the participant instead of just oneself. This appears not only through direct communication, but also passive interaction and body language (Westfall, 2020). The theory relates to historic experiments evaluated as the Hawthorne effect. The effect indicates the tendency of individuals changing their behaviour due to their awareness of being watched (Perera, 2021). In relation to students, it may occur within

the study environment by seeing other students studying and feel pressured to do the same. This results in higher productivity by the indirect monitoring effect through others.

Another consequence of social interaction is the production of sounds, through verbal communication and background noises. Students are impacted immensely by acoustics within their learning environments. The exposure of noise pollution in the learning environment can impact the cognitive performance of students, leading to poor study outcomes (Diacio, 2014).

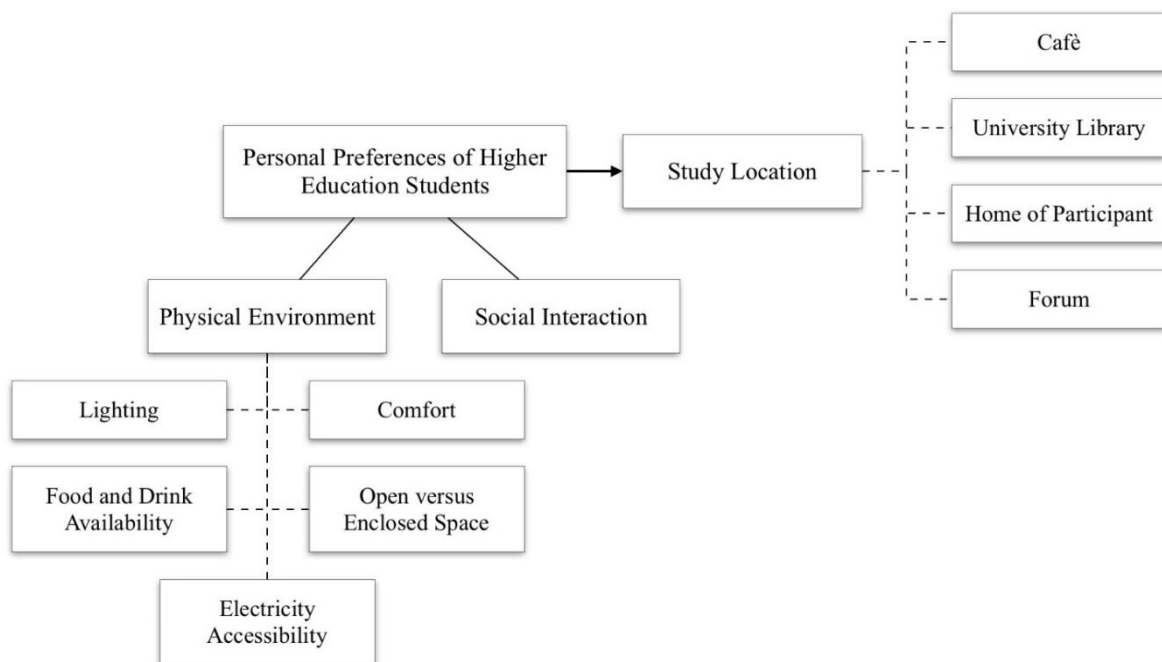
However, sounds categorized as ambient noises instead of pollution induces abstract cognition and enhances creativity (Mehta et al., 2012). Therefore, it depends on individuals to distinguish between noise pollution and ambient noises. Between men and women, the identification of 'noisy' varies, however, women tend to be more sensitive to noise exposure (Tsuruta-Hamamura et al., 2019).

Overall, social interaction is viewed as vital for learning according to Hurst et al. (2013). Social interaction improves problem-solving and critical-thinking skills of higher education students (Hurst et al., 2013).

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model in figure 1 considers the preferences of higher education students to decide on one of the four study locations.

Figure 1. The Conceptual Model



Personal preferences influence the choice of learning environment based on the physical mediating variables of the learning environment, such as lighting, open or enclosed spaces, food/drinks availability, comfortability and the accessibility to electricity and internet. Furthermore, the preference of students also influences the level of social interaction in the choice of learning environment. The social interaction of a learning space is configured through the interaction between people including and excluding the higher education student and acoustics. The selection of study locations is modified for this particular research.

Methodology

Data Collection and Sampling Strategy

The focal point of this research is based on qualitative data collection. Responses for the sub-questions were utilized through in person interviews of higher education students living in Groningen. The in-depth interviews were assisted by the Interview Guide, which included core structured open-ended questions (Appendix A.2) and complementary questions. These were not guided and have mostly been a result from the survey, which was given to each participant before the interview (Appendix A.4).

The selected sampling method constitutes of snow ball sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique where individuals help to recruit respondents by knowing their study environment. The prospective interview participants were gathered through acquaintances who were willing to voluntarily conduct an interview in their learning environment. Therefore, the data led to potential biased results, since the sampled students can have similarities to the requested acquaintances. The candidates were gathered under a pre selection process, by asking potential interviewees:

In which study location are you willing to study?

Due to limitations within the research, the following study only focuses on specific study locations (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptions of Study Locations

Home of Participants	The first study location evaluates the home environment of students in higher education. The option for students to individually study at home provides the possibility to personalize and optimize their learning space.
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Other locations have been designed for the customer. Therefore, students have to find their ideal study environment within established boundaries.

Café	The next two study locations will evaluate the learning aspects within public environments such as cafés and the Forum. By studying in a Café, it is a set physical environment including social interaction between customers in the facility for verbal communication and having a good time.
Forum	The Forum is a modern designed building in Groningen, the Netherlands, constructed to facilitate a new meeting point for locals and visitors. The Forum offers diverse activities such as exhibitions, movies, a library, and cultural programs (Visit Groningen, 2022). Therefore, the location is also attractive for students to study at.
University Library	At last, this research considered a study location offered by the Institution of the University of Groningen, namely constitutes of the University Library stationed in the city centre. This environment provides silent study spaces, only accessible for higher education students.

The aim was fulfilled to conduct two interviews per location; therefore, the results consist of a total of eight interviews in at least four different physical environments within Groningen. Each interview lasted between 20 to 40 minutes.

The in-depth interviews were conducted at the study location, where participants preferably feel the most willing to study for their academic outcomes. Additionally, this allowed the researcher to observe the location and to obtain an independent observation from the environment. Therefore, at each study location an observation checklist (Appendix A.5) was filled out by the researcher.

Before the conduction of interviews, each participant was made aware of the research topic, procedure and their input as part of the data collection. The interviews were conducted voluntarily and could potentially be ended at any given point based on the interviewee's choice. Additionally, participants were requested to give consent for the interviews, since the data was recorded. The consensus was documented through the consent form (Appendix A.3).

The data quality is an integral part of the research, but there were struggles during the audio recordings at the Forum and the cafés. Due to the open spaces and the people in the area led to noises impacting the construction of transcripts. Additionally, it would have been beneficial for the analysis if the researcher would have provided a scale for the importance of the physical environment aspects and the social interaction for the interview and the observation checklist.

Data Analysis Scheme

After the data collection, the data was analysed with the software Atlas.Ti. The data of the individuals were chosen to be expressive, representing the majority and identified deviations. The transcripts (Appendix A.6), surveys and the results of the observation checklist were interpreted with a coding scheme. The codes magnified the identification procedure to simulate similarities and differences between the participants in the primary data collection. The most relevant codes developed a code tree within the established code book (Appendix A.7). The most valuable code groups within the interviews were identified as: study location; willingness to study; physical environment: open space, enclosed space, lightning, comfort, food/drinks availability, electricity/internet accessibility; social interaction: to be around people, group or individual work, and acoustics. Additional codes were identified during the occurrence of the analysis in Atlas.Ti.

Ethical Consideration

This research revolves around the topic of personal preferences and the willingness to study of students at their study location, it is relevant to consider the potential of invading the respondents private study environment. Therefore, the Privacy, Anonymity, and Confidentiality (PAC) of the participants will be ensured. Each student is verbally informed in detail on the topic and aim of the research, how the data collection procedure or findings will be utilized, and how the information will be presented within the research. In addition, it was assured safe keeping of the information received and recordings captured. The raw data is only accessibly by the researcher. Any identifying personal information collected during the interviews or surveys will be made anonymous. It is crucial that the consent form confirms the participation to be voluntary. Thus, if in any circumstances the respondent liked to withdraw, no explanation is required. These confidentiality were justified through the signed consent forms of all respondents and the researcher.

Results

The Study Locations

Due to the observation checklist conducted at each location, content of table 2 has been made by the researcher. Table 2 presents a schematic overview of the four study locations including the studied characteristics of the physical environment and the traits of social interaction.

Table 2. Observations of Study Locations regarding Physical Environment and Social Interaction

		Study Locations			
		Forum	University Library	Café	Home of Participant
Physical Environment Aspects	Open space	Yes	Both	Yes	No
	Dominating light	Natural light	Artificial light	Natural light	Natural light
	Comfort	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Food and drinks availability	Yes	Drinks only	Yes	Yes
	Electricity accessibility	Unreliable	Yes	Unreliable	Yes
Social Interaction	Social interaction	Yes	No	Yes	No
	People around	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Silence	No	Yes	No	Yes

Physical Environment Aspects

Table 2 identifies the preferences of participants in the research, including an assigned number and study location. A clear observation, which was discovered after the completion of data collection, is the gender division at the locations. In total, there are four female and four male participants. The female participants either study at the Forum or at a Café. In comparison, the male respondents either study at the University library or in their bedroom. Each study location is also once visually represented in Appendix A.1.

Table 3. The Participants per Study Location including the Preferences of the Respondent regarding their Study Environment

		Study Locations							
		Forum		University Library		Café		Home of Participant	
	Participant #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Gender	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male
Personal Preferences of Higher Education Students	Open/encl osed space	Open space	Open space	Open space	Enclosed space	Open space	Open space	Enclosed space	Enclosed space
	Acoustics scalar level	Noisy	Noisy	Silence	Silence	Noisy	Noisy	Silence	Noisy
	Food/ drinks availability	Food/ drinks required	Not required	Drinks required with low cost	Drinks required	Food/ drinks required	Drinks required	Food/ drinks required	Food/ drinks required with low cost
	Social interaction	Passive social interaction	Passive social interaction	Passive social interaction	No social interaction	Passive social interaction	Passive social interaction	No social interaction	No social interaction

Open versus Enclosed Space

As shown in table 3, the majority prefer open space. This preference is strongly linked with large windows, natural sunlight and having a view. All female respondents preferred open space. Respondent 1 stated:

“I wouldn't go there if it was not like an open space.” – Participant 1

However, the respondents who preferred enclosed space were in need of the space due to distractions in an open environment. Participant 7 evaluate themselves as highly self-controlled and focused on their task unless the characteristics of their study location are not met.

“I really need this closed space, nothing is changing, like no distraction, no social interaction, nothing, just me and the task.” – Participant 7

There is a strong distinction between the participants studying in open and enclosed environments.

“I realized that I'm very inefficient, or very unproductive, in enclosed spaces. [...] And that's when I decided to quickly move to open spaces.” – Participant 3

In reference to traditional study spaces, this generation was still raised by studying in enclosed spaces. However, not everyone appreciated that kind of studying and therefore, decided to switch to other study environments.

“my teachers when I was younger, they always tried to put me in this like, small space. So, I will make my homework without any distractions, but I have like a really loud mind. So, if you put me in a place where there's no like, white noise, [...] my thoughts will be too loud.” – Participant 1

It has been noticeable that the students disliking enclosed space are linked to discomfort such as feeling anxious or claustrophobic.

“I think what's great about closed spaces is you have time you have a whole space yourself. It's peaceful, it's quiet. But personally, for me, it's very claustrophobic.” – Participant 3

Or as participant 6 mentioned it reminds them of a 'bathroom stall'.

Lighting

Even though each participant prefers sunlight in comparison to artificial light while studying, there has also been decisions made against locations based on sunlight. For example, participant 4 chose to not keep studying at home due to their large windows reflecting direct sunlight and 'blinding' them. The disturbance affected the concentration and productivity of the respondent, and therefore they 'escaped' to go to the University Library.

Natural lighting determines the daily routine of students. During daytime, the students receive the feeling of "I'm meant to be working" (participant 6). The sense of time can be ultimately lost by artificial light and the data has discovered a negative relation with artificial lights.

"I get more annoyed when there's like office lights, [...] for me its not humane. [...] It reminds me of a hospital or like the exam hall which are places which make me nervous or just make me have anxiety."
– Participant 5

Comfort

Feeling comfortable at a study location is a psychological need, and correlates to the willingness to study of students.

The higher education student's choice of study location is interlinked with feeling comfortable. The statement "as long as I don't feel comfortable, I'm not productive" (participant 7) enhanced the importance of comfort. However, only participant 8 had comfort written within the top three reasons for studying at their study location.

"I can just be wearing sweatpants and a big oversized hoodie in my room and just be super comfortable the whole day. [...] it's huge thing for me to be comfortable when I'm studying." – Participant 8

Overall, the comfort of basic needs such as chairs and tables are less influential on location preference. Therefore, the preferences of students tend to only require simple structures of chairs and tables. Then the participants do not 'feel lazy' as, for example, on the couches available at cafés or their bed.

Another reason, why, students decided against particular locations was because of feeling uncomfortable. Based on the Master Degree students, participants 6 and 8, both do not like studying at the University library due to the awareness of feeling self-conscious about making noise in a silent environment.

"I remember, first year of Uni, I think I had like mad anxiety going into the library just because of feeling watched. So, I would actively, like, avoid the library." – Participant 6

"Probably why I don't like to study in the library because I feel not comfortable there. I feel like I'm being watched." – Participant 8

Food and Drinks

The component of food and drinks availability resulted in the most deviating responses between the participants. Only participant 7 clearly stated the necessity of food and drinks at the study location due to health reasons.

"if I study a lot, and I don't eat or drink regularly, [...] then I get migraine attacks. [...] if we would take a study location where it is not existing, then I wouldn't go there." – Participant 7

Few participants set drinks availability as a requirement or they would not pursue the study environment. In particular, coffee was a highly ranked necessity for some students.

“I always end up going to places that have a coffee machine. [...] That's why I always go to university building because they have cheap coffee.” – Participant 3

However, the low cost of coffee at the University Library has also led to unhealthy conditions of the respondent by drinking up to seven cups of coffee during a study session. Another factor which was correlated to food and drinks were the costs of the purchases. Some made a cost benefit analysis and mentioned that if the place led to higher productivity, then it was worth the cost and rather an investment for academic performances. However, the majority stated the limitations through the cost of food or beverages.

“Because I know if I study in a cafe, I would just spend so much more money. [...] sometimes I don't even know how much money I spend on coffee, because I think it would just tear me apart knowing how much money I spend on it.” – Participant 3

The majority mentioned food availability to not be a requirement, but instead it was either convenient to have nearby. Others also brought their own prepared meals, in order to save money or eat something of their liking.

“I don't eat here often, unless I really really crave like toast or a brownie because I think it's quite pricey here.” – Participant 5

Electricity

The need for electricity has increased in the last decade, since “nowadays in this very modern society, or modern way of learning and teaching. I don't know if anyone could do without” (Participant 3). Overall, the accessibility of electricity has been evaluated as a necessity at the location for each student.

However, not every study space on site offers accessibility to power sockets. Locations such as cafés and the Forum provide a limited number of seating spaces offering power sockets. This results in a non-reliable study time, limited by the battery of devices being used.

“[It's] sometimes a bit difficult here because theres also a lot of study spots [...] without power plugs, but then [...] I can only stay there for a couple of hours.” – Participant 2

Even though higher education students are confronted with the use of internet daily, there are also negative relations to having access to the internet during study sessions. The internet can cause distractions, as participants mentioned social media, stream sites or advertisements.

“Anything can be a gift or a curse. And Wi Fi is [...] because it's all about training yourself to stay focused. It's the same thing with coffee. It's okay, in moderation. And I think with Wi Fi it's also okay, so as long I use it for studying. But it's often the case that everything is only a click away, everything is only a tab away. That if you really [...] don't have a grip, you don't have a strong will to study.” – Participant 3

The findings have investigated a clear impact of the preferences of respondents, including observations and availability of physical aspects onto the selected study location. Therefore, the study places were chosen by the students based on several components covered within this study.

Social Interaction

Each respondent had a straight forward response regarding their preference of social interaction at the study environment. The personal preferences of the respondents meet the characteristics marked per study location.

It has been discovered that none of the respondent prefer being directly involved in social interaction at their study location. However, the majority agreed on preferring passive social interaction over not having any social interaction at all. Passive social interaction means to be able to watch others interact without personal engagement (Trifiro & Gerson, 2019).

“[I] sometimes just enjoy observing other people, maybe see them having a good time.” – Participant 2

The majority of participants share the thoughts of participant 8:

“as little social interaction as possible is better for me because I get so distracted by people, especially by people who I know. [...] If I have active interaction with people, I'm really not willing to study.” – Participant 8

The participants studying at home have a preference of having no social interaction. These findings can be related to participants, who do not want any uncontrolled distractions to occur in near proximity of the study space. This new factor was brought up by participant 7, who wants study locations with no changing environment.

An interesting deviation was the positive effect of social interaction during break time. Even the respondents preferring complete silence during their study sessions, suggest having social interaction during their study breaks enriching their mental health.

“So social interaction, at least in the breaks is really important.” – Participant 7

Not only the social interaction at the study location of the students was considered, however, also the acoustics at the site is definite per respondent. The respondents were requested to rank their acoustic preference at their study location from 1 to 3. Where 1. relates to silence, 2. for noisy meaning there is verbal communication in the environment, however it is not understandable. While 3. is referred to as loud with understandable verbal communication in the learning environment. No participant preferred loud acoustic levels at their study environment.

The most common response was having noisy acoustics with the exception of the participants at the University Library, who only wish to have silence. One participant at home also prefers complete silence, while all the participants who study at cafés or the Forum prefer noisy scalar levels instead of silence.

“For me, I cannot have complete silence, so I need a little bit of background noises. So, I think a cafe is just having the perfect balance of noises.” – Participant 5

An additional factor is the gender of the respondents, which was discovered as an unforeseen deviation. Through the survey, it has been discovered the resilience between female respondents preferring noisy acoustics in comparison to male participants, who majorly selected silence. In addition, female students relate silent study environments as a distraction through their ‘own thoughts magnifying’ (participant 5).

Another aspect was that half of the candidates listen to music occasionally while studying, but only without any lyrics. One candidate mentioned that listening to music is linked to their social life instead of studying and therefore, would not associate listening to music during studying.

The majority of students experienced negative effects on the willingness to study caused by social interaction. However, everyone wishes for social interaction during breaks and for the participants who choose open spaces are linked with the preference of passive social interaction while studying.

Other Observations

As from the survey, each respondent who left their room to study mentioned that the travel distance from their home to the study location does matter. However, large variations were discovered between the responses. For instance, participants 3 and 4 were willing to travel further distances in comparison to participant 5, who would not consider the location if it varied by more than five minutes. As of respondent 8, he is not willing to travel further than his home due to his priorities linked to feeling comfortable.

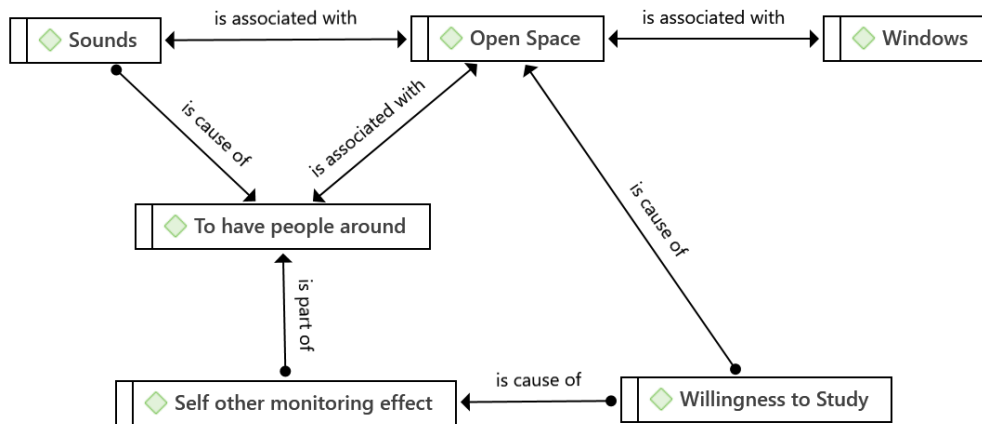
Another, interesting finding discovered via coding, were the high numbers of uninformed participants about other study locations. Therefore, it cannot be foreclosed that the respondents react in convenience instead of balancing their willingness to study at another particular location. Furthermore, not stepping outside one's comfort zone could also result in going to the same study location, possibly even the same spot. Having that continuous routine of going to the same seat, and ending up to be in the most productive mindset at the same spot consistently.

Network Analysis

Some unexpected findings were discovered through the network analysis, particularly the gender differences between the students were remarkable. There is a unity of responses from the female students, while the male responses had a bit more variety based on different preferences. This diversity of student preferences resulted to a choice of study location.

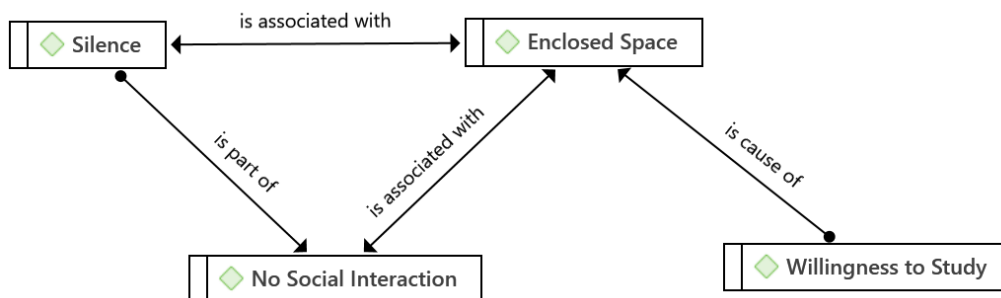
The majority of male participants prefer open space in their spare time, however, for studying, there is a tendency for enclosed space. The male students experience open space as a disturbance through components leading to distractions by people, acoustics and through the open space itself (Appendix A.8; figure 8). The female students recognise open space as the most willing area to study at. Figure 2 shows, the open space can be interlinked with the self-other monitoring effect and the willingness to study. The female participants enjoy having people around including white noise while studying. White noise consists of background noises of multiple frequencies, but equal intensities which have been researched to be calming and can increase concentration since it covers disruptive sounds with a constant hum (Aubry, 2001). However, the desirable scale of white noise varies per individual (Söderlund et al., 2010). Therefore, the candidates use acoustics and activities around them to not be distracted by their individual thoughts.

Figure 2. Open space perceived by female higher education students



For the male students, the study location majorly over-arched as an enclosed space with silence. Figure 3 identifies a correlation between male higher education students with no social interaction and linking to no distractions by people nor acoustics. By following these characteristics then the male students associate the space with the willingness to study on site.

Figure 3. Enclosed space perceived by male higher education students



The female student’s perception on studying in an enclosed space can be viewed in Appendix A.8, figure 9. To sum up, the figures show a relation between the preferences of the female respondents, but contradicting with the preferences of the male participants.

Discussion

The findings led to some unforeseen discoveries such as the clear gender differences between the preferences of study environment. However, there are also significant correlations of similarities and differences between participants' personal preferences. For the secondary question, *For what reasons do the higher education students choose their study location?*, each participant has diverse reasons for their selection of study space. Particularly, each student in higher education ranked the importance and preference on components of the physical environment and social interaction differently in comparison to others.

Students who visit cafés or the Forum for studying, are attracted to these spots due to the provided open space, large windows resulting in natural sunlight and the passive social interaction in near proximity causing white noise. The participants from cafés and the Forum are all female, which substantiates Moyer's (2003) results, that women tend to seek for more collaborative study surroundings than men. In addition, this study evaluated a difference to the theoretical framework. According to Tsuruta-Hamamura et al. (2019), women have more sensitive hearing than men. Therefore, it was rather astonishing that within this study, female respondents prefer to have noisy acoustics while studying, unlike the male participants, who prefer silence.

The respondents studying in the University Library value calm, silent environments in order to concentrate efficiently for studying. The decision for the participants to stay at home to study is due to comfort, and the availability of enclosed space, to be least confronted with distractions. However, the participants, who visit open spaces agree with Middleton (2018), that enclosed spaces have drawbacks leading to anxiety or claustrophobia.

The other sub-question consisted of *What factors, within physical environment and social interaction, result in a better study location according to higher education students?* The analysis justifies that all of the participants are satisfied with their current study location. This also supports the major weakness of this study, since the data is gathered from participants who are enthusiastic about their study location and study there consistently. Therefore, the study environments were optimistically described to support the willingness to study at the locations. However, the disadvantages of the locations with the exception of the library were not obtained, which evaluates biases for the study outcome.

Nevertheless, common suggestions for cafés and the Forum, were to provide more power plugs. In addition, there should be more emphasis on providing opportunities merging the social interaction activities for the participants during break time. The findings support the results from Ono et al. (2011), that there is a connection between social interaction and mental health. Not only does social interaction improve mental health, but also enhances the academic outcomes of the participants. This relates to Hurst et al. (2013), who supports social interaction to be a relevant procedure for the study process and balance of social and academic time.

Conclusion

This study focused on answering the research question: *How does the physical environment and social interaction influence the willingness to study at the study location of higher education students?*

Throughout the gathering of qualitative data and in-depth analysis, a clear influence of the preferences of higher education students of the RUG based on their choice of study location was developed. The ranked preferences were dispersed across all components within the physical environment and social interaction among the participants.

The willingness to study dominates the study process, however, it decreases rapidly when the study location is not adjusted to the preferences of the students. Participants seek for indirect natural lighting, which solutes the daytime rhythm and does not blind nor leads to unexpected heat bashes. The feeling of comfort is also a relevant factor for the candidates' choice of location. However, seating equipment only needs to fulfil its purpose, in order to be seated including a table. Food and drinks are not a requirement for it to be on site, however, there is a preference to have access to food and drinks nearby. Moreover, the access to electricity is a necessity for all students.

There is a clear separation between participants preferring open or enclosed spaces. Overall, acoustics are viewed to be relevant for the choice of open versus enclosed space. The majority do prefer passive social interaction, however the participants who prefer silence are easily distracted otherwise.

This study enlarged its emphasis on gender differences on personal preferences on study environments which figured to be a research gap. Therefore, gender differences should be more considered within the selection of a location. However, within this research, the participants were representative. The study can be generalized in Groningen as the four locations are the most prominent locations for studying. For accomplishing higher generalization, further research options could investigate a larger sample size of higher education students.

The strength of this study is recognizing the current trend of traditional study places being replaced. This trend shows the benefit of acknowledging students' preferences through qualitative data which is more precise and offers a less niche methodology, whilst it may be discarded in quantitative data. This study allowed to consider specific preferences or aspects that effected student's willingness to study such as preferring natural lighting, but do not tolerate being blinded or having heat bashes while studying. However, a limitation is the lack of comparability between participants since no quantifiable scale was applied to identify the importance per physical environment aspects nor social interaction traits. Therefore, a recommendation for further research is to apply a mixed method approach, by considering the scale of importance for different components.

An additional strength of the study is that the researcher chose to interview the participants at the preferred study location. The interview allowed the researcher to be more involved and took an ethnographic approach to the study instead of conducting it online or through a survey. The observations gathered at the study location provided a thorough overview of the physical study environment.

To conclude, higher education students indeed study at locations of their preference regarding studied components of the physical environment and social interaction.

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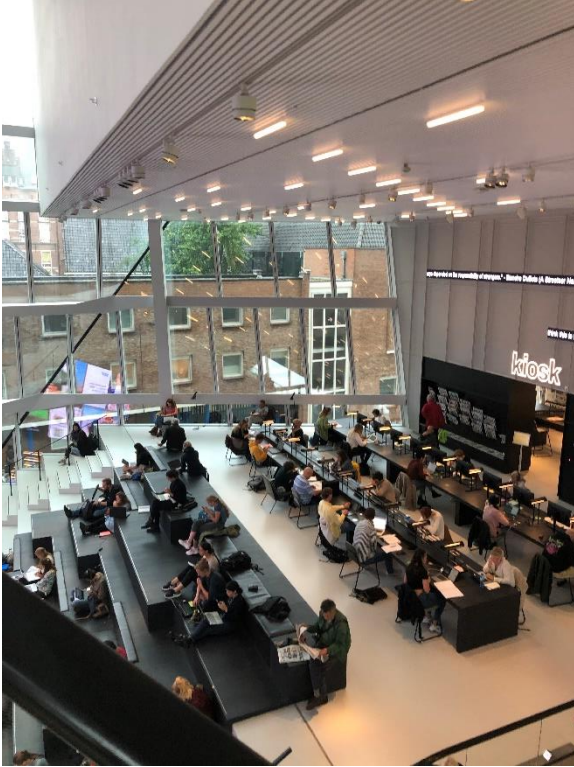
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Appendices

Appendix A.1: Pictures of the Study Locations

Figure 4. Study Location – Forum



The figure 4 visualizes the study location of participant 1 and 2.

Figure 5. Study Location – University Library



Figure 5 shows the study location of participant 3 and 4.

Figure 6. Study Location – Café



The study location of participant 5 and 6 is seen in figure 6.

Figure 7. Study Location – Home of Participant 7



The figure 7 shows the study location of participant 7.

Appendix A.2: Interview Guide

This interview guide aims to support the following study to analyse the student's willingness to study at a chosen location. Note that the students will conduct the interview in their study environment.

Research Question: *“How does physical environment and social interaction influence the willingness to study at the study location of higher education students?”*

Qualitative Sub-Questions:

- *For what reasons do the higher education students choose their study location?*
- *What factors, within physical environment and social interaction, result in a better study location according to higher education students?*

Interview Questions:

Pre-selection of participants for the categories of physical environment:

1. In which study location are you willing to study?

In the learning environment:

2. Could you maybe introduce yourself and explain where we are at?
3. Why did you choose to study in this environment?
4. What are the necessities at a location for you to reach your willingness to study there?
 - a. Are they all represented here at the location?
5. How does the physical environment and social interaction at the location inspire you to study? Ex. to stay an extra 30 min.
6. What changes could be conducted within the current learning environment to reach better motivational outcomes or better academic performances?

Questions about the study location directly:

Physical Environment:

7. How important is lighting for you in this learning environment?
 - a. Does the lighting of the area affect your choice of study location?
 - b. Preference between artificial versus natural light?
 - c. Does it affect your willingness to study?
8. Open space (looking outside with a view or people around) or enclosed space (walls surrounding, individually in a room)
 - a. Preference open space or enclosed space?
 - b. Does the preference effect your choice of study location?
 - c. Would the opposite choice effect your willingness to study?
9. How important is it for you to feel comfortable at a study location?
 - a. Would it improve your willingness to study by personalising your study space?
10. How important is availability of food or drinks?
 - a. Does the availability decide your choice of study location?
 - b. Does it affect your willingness to study?
11. How important is the accessibility of electricity at the study environment?

- a. Do you require internet to study?
- b. Does it also have negative effects of having internet available on your academic performances? E.g. Distractions such as social media
- c. Does it affect your willingness to study at this location?

Social Interaction:

12. How important is active social interaction for you in your surrounding study environment?
 - a. Preference to have people around or not?
13. Does active interaction with people around you effect your willingness to study? If yes, how?
14. How does acoustics such as verbal communication effect your willingness to study?
 - a. What is your acoustic scale of preference?
 - i. Acoustic scale:
 1. Silent
 2. Noisy → Verbal communication = NOT understandable
 3. Loud → Verbal communication = Understandable
15. How do you impact by listening to music while studying?
 - a. If yes, for what reason and what kind of music?
16. Does the location of studying change if you work in a group versus individually? Why?
17. How do you impact through self-other monitoring?
 - a. Do you feel pressured to study when there are people studying around you?

18. Is there any additional information, you would like to add?

Appendix A.3: Consent Form



university of
 groningen

faculty of spatial sciences

Consent form for the research project with the research question:

“How does physical environment and social interaction influence the willingness to study at the study location of higher education students?”

I fully understand the research project. I was able to ask questions and my questions were clearly answered. I had enough time to decide to participate in the research.

My participation is completely voluntary. I can withdraw from the research at any time, without having to give a reason.

I give my permission for using the obtained data for educational purposes.

I agree to participate in this interview and to fill out the provided survey.

Yes No

I agree that the interview is being audio recorded.

Yes No

Name and signature of the research participant, Date

I declare that I have informed the research participant about the research. I will notify the participant about matters that could influence his/her participation.

Name and signature of the researcher, Date

Appendix A.4: Survey before Interview

This survey aims to support the following study to analyse the student's willingness to study at a chosen location. Note that the students will conduct the survey before the interview. The table will provide more quantitative detail about the participants and their chosen study environment.

The following details will be used for the research; however, the given information will be made anonymous for the published research paper.

Name	
Age	
Gender	
Study program and degree	
In which study location are you willing to study?	
How far is this study location from your home? E.g. in km and travel time including the travel mode	
Did the distance impact your decision to study here and not somewhere else?	
How often do you study at this location?	
Maximum hours spend at learning environment for a study session?	
Do you listen to music while studying?	
Provide three reasons, why you decided to study at this location?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3.

Appendix A.5: Observation Checklist

Respond to each statement through observations of the learning environment of research participant:

Add comments at the end of the statements.

<i>Content</i>	<i>Observed</i>
<i>Physical Environment</i>	
1. Lighting (etc. artificial light – natural sunlight)	
2. Open space (looking outside with a view or people around) or closed off space (walls surrounding) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Size of learning environment. b. Other potential seating places. 	
3. Comfort → Personalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Decoration within room. (etc. number of posters, plants) 	
4. Food/drink accessibility.	
5. Electricity/internet availability.	
<i>Social Interaction</i>	
6. Active interaction between people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Having people around or not. b. Self-other monitoring 	
7. Work individually or in a group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work with friends or other students. 	
8. Verbal and non-verbal communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acoustics: silent, noisy, loud b. Are surrounding voices audible or not? c. Listening to music or not? 	
9. Other observations	

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Summary Comments:

Name of researcher, Date

Appendix A.6: Transcripts from Interviews

Transcript of Participant #1

Interviewer (00:00)

Good afternoon. Yeah, we're here currently at the Forum in Groningen, and I would just wanted to ask you to maybe introduce yourself and mention why you chose to study in the Forum?

Participant #1 (00:16)

Well, I'm Participant #1. I'm a third-year bachelor's student, human Geography and Planning, and I've been living in Groningen for a while now. And I choose the Forum to study because I like to get out of my house because it's hard for me to study at home recently. So, I just like the white noise in the back, like the people talking. Also, I like the open space that it's a public space. You can just leave whenever you want. You don't have to reserve a spot. You can just go and sit there and do your thing and nobody really looks at you, but you're just doing your thing. So, I like that. And I think it's just a nice place. It's a nice building.

Interviewer (01:08)

Okay. So, in general, what are your necessities to have at a location to study there?

Participant #1 (01:18)

Enough possibilities to sit and I guess maybe like a charger, a place to charge your laptop or your phone, like good spots to sit, as in like a nice table where you have enough space that it's somewhat quiet. But as I said, I also like white noise and like a bit of not too much silence.

Interviewer (01:52)

Okay. Yeah. So, are all these necessities you just mentioned kind of all represented in the Forum?

Participant #1 (02:02)

I think almost all of them except for at some place in the Forum you cannot sit with your laptop, for example. And when I first started studying there, I found out by sitting in a space where there was a cafe and I thought I could sit there, but then the girl was like, oh, no, you cannot sit there. Then I had to find another space. I think at the Forum you really have to go at the right time. Otherwise, it's full. When you go there, you never really know if you're going to find a spot. So that's the only thing that sometimes it's not really nice, but like, so far I've always been able to find a spot, but sometimes it's just not like a very good spot. But yeah, I think everything else is there.

Interviewer (02:48)

Okay, so when do you usually go there then to study since its difficult to find a convenient spot?

Speaker 2 (02:54)

Yeah, not at the right times, I think. I go there like at 2 or 3. And obviously everyone else goes there, like maybe 10, 11, 12, I guess if you want to study there for like a whole day, I think people will think like, okay, let's go early. But I like to start studying a bit later in the afternoon, so, yeah, maybe that's not my smartest move.

Interviewer (03:20)

Yeah, but that's everyone's preference. And I was just wondering as well, which floor do you usually study at?

Participant #1 (03:31)

It's at the floor where the library is, and then you have these tables and you can look over the city, I guess. But it's not like the top floor but it's like, yeah, I think the library floor or the floor where there's very big tables and you can sit there with a lot of people. I don't know which floor I don't know you if you know which floor I mean, but like collaborative tables sometimes I just go also go there with people from that I study with.

Interviewer (04:05)

Okay. So in general, how does the physical environment and the social interaction at the Forum inspire you to study?

Participant #1 (04:21)

I think I just like that everyone's doing their own thing and like you're not really in contact with anyone but you can just go sit next to someone. It's not weird and it's mostly all students. Yeah, I think that's nice and I also like to do little people watching when everyone's on the stairs. When I'm procrastinating, I'm just looking at them and I'm like, oh, nice people. Then I study again so I kind of like that. That there are lot of people, I guess.

Interviewer (04:55)

Yeah, but what about the physical environment?

Participant #1 (05:02)

I like the openness, I think, and that you can go to different spaces and there's also a lot of toilets, which you can just go to. I just like to look over the city, I guess.

Interviewer (05:18)

To have a view, some distractions as well. Like maybe some break times in between, just constantly studying.

Participant #1 (05:27)

Yeah, and you can also just get a coffee or walk around a bit. I think that's nice.

Interviewer (05:35)

So, what changes could actually be done at the Forum for your academic performances to improve or your motivational outcomes to increase?

Participant #1 (05:50)

I don't know. Maybe I would say more sitting space because that's like the only problem I sometimes have. Or at some tables there's not really place to charge your laptop, but some places are maybe not made for that made for studying. I don't know, because I'm tempted to say like private study space, but then I personally like more open study spaces where there are more people.

Interviewer (06:30)

Yeah. Actually, that makes sense, though. I feel like the many people I've talked to currently, it always, they don't really think about the changes because they go there for a reason. Right. To the location. So, it's usually almost ideal, I guess I just wanted to ask if there are any changes which could be conducted. But yeah, if it's good, then yeah.

Participant #1 (06:54)

I think for me now it's ideal. And then sometimes when I want to study at home, I just stay at home. But for when I'm craving that study environment, I just go there and then it's like ideal for me, I think.

Interviewer (07:08)

Okay, so now we're going into the physical aspect of the forum and I was just wanting to ask how important is lighting for you?

Participant #1 (07:24)

I don't know. I think it's quite important. But yeah, I wouldn't necessarily go to study at the Forum at night. I think when you go to the Forum to study, I think the lightness of the space is really a big part of why it is so

nice. I think the planners also like really like that was their focus point. I think that it's just a light, open building. So, I think it's quite important for me. Yeah. For me it's quite important. I think.

Interviewer (07:55)

Okay. Do you think that lighting itself also made an effect for you to choose for your choice of study location?

Participant #1 (08:09)

I don't really think so. I think it's more this open space, the feeling I get from it, like with all the people. It's not necessarily that I wouldn't go there if it was not like an open space, I think.

Interviewer (08:27)

Yeah, no worries. With the difference of artificial light and natural light, which one would you prefer, though?

Participant #1 (08:37)

I think I would prefer natural light. I think for some reason it keeps me more awake, I guess.

Interviewer (08:47)

Yeah. I guess Daytime, yeah.

Participant #1 (08:49)

Sometimes when it's like artificial light and when you're in a classroom, maybe you have that as well. When it's like dim light, just artificial and you're just staring at the screen or whatever, I'm just always really tempted to fall asleep, so yeah.

Interviewer (09:02)

Yeah, I get that.

Participant #1 (09:04)

Yeah.

Interviewer (09:07)

So, do you think that if there's a difference between open spaces in the Forum if there's artificial light offered and natural light offered, do you think that the differences would affect your willingness to study?

Participant #1 (09:30)

You mean if there's no natural light that I would not go there?

Interviewer (09:34)

Yeah

Participant #1 (09:36)

I don't think I would not go there. But I would prefer natural light. I think, but I don't think it would change my ability to study, or my willingness to study. I don't think anymore, no.

Interviewer 0:33

Okay, so, yeah, actually now the second aspect is actually considering open space versus enclosed space seeing yeah, like open space is like, able to look at outside or like, have a view or in general having a huge room versus enclosed space where, yep, just have like, walls around you where you're individually in a room. And technically, the question is, like, what is your preference? But I kind of already know, but yeah, if you could just mention, which, one?

Participant #1 1:06

Yeah, then open space. But, yeah, also, my teachers when I was younger, they always tried to put me in this like, small space. So, I will make my homework without any distractions, but I have like a really loud mind. So, if you put me in a place where there's no like, white noise, I'm just like, my, my thoughts will be too loud. I think. So, I like the more open, like, so I have a little, like some things look at and then I could just go on with my work, I guess. Yeah.

Interviewer 1:38

Um, so, then does the preference of having open space affect your choice of study location?

Participant #1 1:50

Yeah, maybe it does, because I never really go to the UB. So, I don't really know how, what it is like but I, I kind of see it as like, like, very quiet very, like, on your own. I guess I don't know if that's true. Yeah, correct me if I'm wrong, okay. Or can you also be with a lot of people in one room?

Interviewer 2:12

Um, well, you can be with a lot of people in one room, but it's very silent, like, and everyone is like sitting individually. And so I can see. And like, what I also noticed, the difference is that the ceiling is much lower. So, it gives you a feeling that it's actually a smaller space, instead of the Forum, those ceilings are quite high, it gives you more of an open area instead, I think, personally, yeah. But yeah, there are also areas where you can sit with several people just you don't talk to each other. Yeah. Um, so do you think that the opposite choice in the sense that you would study in an enclosed space? Do you think that would affect your willingness to study?

Participant #1 3:04

I think it would be harder for me, but I think I would still do it. I would still be able to because like, before Uni, I used to always study in my room, and that would really work for me. So, I know how to do it. But I would prefer the other option. But I I would still be able to study I think it would not really change my ability to but yeah.

Interviewer 3:32

So the next question would be like, how important is it actually, for you to feel comfortable at your study area?

Participant #1 3:40

Yeah, it's pretty. That's pretty important. I think. Yeah.

Interviewer 3:49

So since like, yeah, as you mentioned before, the Forum is a very public space, like everyone can go and leave whenever you want to. However, do you think adding something personal to your study area like personalizing or individualizing the area? Do you think it would improve your will to study there?

Participant #1 4:15

I don't know, I'm not sure. I don't know. Because I like studying at my desk as well. Yeah, I don't know, honestly. But, like, maybe if I, for example, if I study with a friend or something. Like that's maybe more personal, but for some reason, I really cannot study when when I have someone around me that I know. So, I think for me, it's really about just going somewhere. And like nobody knows you and that you are like, forced to do something because you're there for a reason. I don't know. I know if you get what I mean. But yeah.

Interviewer 4:54

Yeah, I feel like having adding more things of yourself like personalizing its space could also lead to more distractions. I think, yeah, feeling maybe too comfortable and not feeling pressured to study.

Participant #1 5:07

Yeah, I need some pressure, otherwise I will not, I will just not do it.

Interviewer 5:14

All right, um, you said already before, as well, that there's a cafe there right at the Forum and so I was just wanting to ask, like, how important is availability of food or drinks for you at the study location?

Participant #1 5:32

It's not very important to me. But I like if there's a coffee machine or something where that you can just take a little break and go there and drink something. But most of the time, I just take my own drink, and I take my own food. And then I'm also fine. So, I like it as a little distraction or a little break. But it's not that important to me, that I that I wouldn't go if it was not there or something.

Interviewer 6:03

So, you wouldn't, since you said it's not as important for you, and I think you're able to eat and drink in the Forum, wherever you are. Okay. But do you think, since it's not as important, but do you think it still affects your choice of study location, if it was there or not? Since like you mentioned, you also study at the cafe sometimes, then. And there you have access to food or drinks in general, but does it an overall affect you at all, or no?

Participant #1 6:40

I think I also choose cafes more as, as, like a public space to be if, if, for example, the Forum is full, I just go there. So, I am also surrounded by people. But yeah, it's I think it's, it adds to, yeah, it's nice to have it but I wouldn't say I go there because of the drinks and the food. I don't, no.

Interviewer 7:04

So yeah, you don't do you think it affects your willingness to study though having food or drinks around you?

Participant #1 7:12

Yeah, I think it's always like a boost, I think. Yeah. Yeah. Stay hydrated.

Interviewer 7:22

So how important is the accessibility of electricity at the study area?

Participant #1 7:28

That's very important, I think. Yeah, because I'm the person that's always like, my phone is always almost dead. And my laptop as well. So, I need I need the Yeah, the plug.

Interviewer 7:41

Yeah. So is that actually difficult then at the Forum, sometimes do find a plug?

Participant #1 7:50

Yeah sometimes, but not always, more at the cafes, I think.

Interviewer 7:58

So since we are currently like, yeah, when we ever whenever we study, we need to have somehow the connection to Wi Fi. And however, just having that constant connection. Do you think there are any negative effects of having the internet available on to your academic performances?

Participant #1 8:21

Yeah, of course, when, like, when you are distracted by messages, or like, other stuff you can do? I think it's always it's always affects it. And I think everyone of our age has to do with that. I think. Yeah, that's a problem everywhere. But at the same time, you cannot do without Wi Fi so yeah, I don't know. But it does affect me,

obviously. But I think when I go to the Forum, I, the only thing I really use the Wi Fi for is the like, studying and maybe putting on some music, but I'm pretty strict with not looking at messages and Instagram or whatever.

Interviewer 9:03

Yeah, that's good. Um, so you just mentioned do you actually listen to music while studying?

Participant #1 9:09

Yeah, I think most of the time I do. And sometimes like to, as I said, I just like other noise, so sometimes I just listened to like podcasts or like something. I don't know. I like that to have something else on my ears, yeah.

Interviewer 9:27

Yeah. Do you think that, however, listening to music while studying does it affect you, negatively?

Participant #1 9:33

Maybe sometimes, but yeah. But for the most part, I think it helps me because I have because it makes me more concentrated. Like, I listened to like, like beats and or like classical music and then it's just, it just keeps me going. But yeah, it depends on the music I listen to, I think

Interviewer 9:59

Okay, so it pushes you and yeah, gives you more an advantage instead of. Yeah. Okay. Um, so now actually going into the social interaction part. How important is it for you to have active social interaction around you, at the study area?

Participant #1 10:24

Not very, like, I don't really want to be with a friend as I said or like, I feel like I can only really work, like study with someone if it's like an essay or an assignment. But if I really have to, like, study for an exam, I noticed that I cannot be around anyone like then I just have to do it in my own way. So that I just like to have no one around. So I think it's been important for me to have like, no social contacts. Maybe, like, in a break that I just text someone but like, during studying, I like meet no one around me. Except for people, I don't know. I don't care about that.

Interviewer 11:07

okay, yeah, so you, so what are your preferences in having people around you you don't know at all or do you prefer to have no one around you?

Participant #1 11:19

That just I think that depends on my moods. Sometimes. I'm Yeah, I think it just depends.

Interviewer 11:26

Yeah. Okay. But for your studying. Why in a sense that like, do you see any differences? Of like benefiting from it if you have people around you or not?

Participant #1 11:49

Maybe, Yeah, I don't know. It's also been it's been a long time since I like really studied hard for an exam, I have to admit, so but I used to be always like, I needed to be in my room for a week, and then nobody can talk to me. And then I really needed to be alone. And then only then I could focus. But now I just, I just switched from being alone. And then with some people, like, people I don't know around me. I think the combination is nice for me.

Interviewer 12:18

Like the switch in between?

Participant #1 12:20

Yeah.

Interviewer 12:22

So how does acoustics actually affect your willingness to study like noise around you?

Participant #1 12:32

Yeah, I think quite a bit because I said, I like the music on my ears. I like mild noise. I like bit of talking in the back. Yeah. And if it's just totally quiet, like sometimes I can do that. But yeah, not all the time. Yeah.

Interviewer 12:49

All right. Um, so now there's like, this acoustic scale kind of set up being one where it's completely silent. Second where it's noisy. So, there's verbal communication around you, but it's not understandable for you. So, couldn't interact with them? Or the third one is loud, where there is verbal communication as well. But it's understandable. So, which one would be your preference of those three?

Participant #1 13:19

Then it would be two.

Interviewer 13:20

Okay. Yep. Um, but just since you already mentioned that you do listen to music. Sometimes. Do you actually hear the people still around you? Or just noises surrounding you if you do listen to music?

Participant #1 13:40

Yeah, maybe a little bit. But yeah, I think a little bit, I think it's the combination. But it just really depends on my mood, I guess. Sometimes I'm like, oh, yeah, I want to listen to music. And then after 10 minutes, I'm like, no, let's not do it. And then yeah.

Interviewer 13:58

Yeah, I get that. So, um, does location for you to study at actually change if you work in a group versus individually?

Participant #1 14:12

Location as in?

Interviewer 14:14

Yeah, like you when you're individually, like when you're studying alone, technically, you usually come here and go to the Forum, right. But like if you were studying or not studying, but like, you have to do a group assignment, and you have to work within a group or with a group. Where would you tend to go then? Or do you still go to the Forum?

Participant #1 14:32

I think I still go to the Forum. But I also like to go to a cafe then. I think when I do assignments, I just meet at a cafe with a group for example, and first we have a drink or we have maybe some lunch and then we start just talking and working on the assignment. I think that's what I mostly do. Yeah, so I think that does change a bit. Yeah.

Interviewer 14:57

Um, so I was just wondering like how far do you actually live from the Forum?

Participant #1 15:05

By bike its like, five minutes, I think.

Interviewer 15:09

Yeah, thats not much. So do you think, would you still go to the Forum, if it would have been like further away, for example?

Participant #1 15:20

Maybe less quickly than I maybe would find another place? Because? Yeah, I think if Zernike, for example, was closer by I would also go there more often. So, I think I think I just go to where it's most convenient and where it's kind of nice.

Interviewer 15:36

Yeah. Yeah, it is quite far. Two more questions. Yeah, actually is the Forum open seven days a week, or is it?

Participant #1 16:04

I don't know. Actually. I think so.

Interviewer 16:08

I will check later. Um, so um, yeah. Would would the distance as well, since you said five minutes? Would that change as well? If it would have been closer or nearby to you? Would you go more frequently? Or?

Participant #1 16:27

Yeah, probably, maybe. Yeah. If it would be like, right around the corner. Then I would just, I think I will go more often. Yeah.

Interviewer 16:35

Um, so as you said, also, in the forum, there are a lot of people studying there. And how do you actually impact through the self other monitoring in a sense that there are people studying around you, and seeing you study, but you also see others studying?

Participant #1 16:53

I think, as I said, I think that kind of maybe motivates me to also do something. But everyone is just doing their stuff, I think, yeah, I need that push to see that. That people around me are doing stuff. Maybe I should also be doing stuff. I don't know.

Interviewer 17:11

So, do you feel like you're being pressured to study as well?

Participant #1 17:16

No, I think, yeah, maybe a little bit, but I need that. I need the pressure. As I said, I, and I need to pressure myself a bit.

Interviewer 17:25

Okay, and then I'm just a question like, also, like, sorry, I'm like thinking about these questions now at the end. But where do you actually sit in the Forum? In a sense, of the seating, do you like to sit near the window? Do you like to sit more? Unlike other like, closed off areas in the sense that you face inside of it? Like inside of the building? Or which seating area do you prefer?

Participant #1 18:01

I mostly like the like the ones next to the library. You can kind of look into the building, but on the on the right side, on your right side or your left side. There's like the windows. Yeah, like, I think I like to sit next to the

windows. But I know that on the upper floor, I've not really been there because it's always full. But there's also like these tables, and they look over the city and you're like really high. I think that's also really nice. So, I yeah, I like the nice view, I think, the place where the nice view is yeah.

Interviewer 18:33

That's good. Um, so yeah, that's actually kind of it. Just wanting to ask one more thing, in a sense, if you have anything to add any additional information you would like to mention about the Forum? Like, benefits or anything?

Participant #1 18:51

No, no I think, I think I told everything.

Interviewer 18:54

Perfect then, thank you very much.

Participant #1 18:57

Thank you.

Transcript of Participant #2

Interviewer 0:00

So, before I asked you where you like to study or where you chose, or you're willing to study, and we're just at the Forum right now. So just to begin off, could you please introduce yourself, and explain where exactly we are?

Participant #2 0:15

Okay. Yeah. So, I'm Participant #2 and I'm a third year Human Geography student in Groningen. And I started studying here, like, half a year, like this semester kind of. I'm sorry, and why I chose to study here?

Interviewer 0:32

No just explain where we are?

Participant #2 0:35

We are at the Forum, it's like pretty new library in the middle of the Groningen city center, which opened I think, like two and a half years ago or something. So yeah, I guess it's quite an experimental building or concept in a way.

Interviewer 0:50

Okay, so yeah, the next question is, actually, why did you choose to study here?

Participant #2 0:53

Yeah, I actually, because I really like that it's always pretty. I get easily distracted when it's like very silent. And when there's like only a couple of people making sounds and noises. So, I actually quite like it here that it's like always something going on. So, there's always something that you can also get distracted by, maybe, but actually kind of like that, because then it's a bit of a balance, because otherwise, there's nothing happening. And I can only focus on my studies. I'm just distracting myself, which then takes even longer. So, I think it's quite nice that there's like a every study spots, but there's also stuff happening around you. I like it, but it's very airy, big, huge windows. There's like a lot of daylight and you see what's going on outside as well. Like weather wise, at least because you can't even see on the streets, I think. No, but you always see what the weather's like. So actually, kind of like that.

Interviewer 1:45

Okay, um, so what are your necessities actually at a location where you study?

Participant #2 1:51

My necessities are a power socket. Which is sometimes a bit difficult here because there's also a lot of spots without one. Yeah, so also from necessities I bring?

Interviewer 2:07

Yeah.

Participant #2 2:07

Yeah, my laptop, my some water, some snacks. That's also quite good, here you're allowed to eat at the study spot and I like that as well. And, yeah, but then I think that's pretty much it.

Interviewer 2:23

Okay, so are all these necessities available here?

Participant #2 2:26

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. I mean, not at all spots, but so that sometimes also that it's sometimes quite hard to find a study spot because there's like a few without power plugs, but then I mean, I can only stay there for a couple of hours. So yeah, so that's sometimes difficult but in general, yeah.

Interviewer 2:46

Okay. So how does the physical environment and the social interaction around you at the location inspire you to study?

Participant #2 2:54

So, for the physical environment um yeah, as I said the big windows also that you can for example, for a break you could just go onto the rooftop which is quite nice to get like I don't know come down a bit get some fresh air but also not be in the middle of the city center as if you would just go outside on the streets. So, it's like less busy up there. Yeah, so I feel like it's calming in a way and the social environment I think I don't really meet a lot of people here that I know I think most of the people that I know study somewhere else. But that's also quite nice because then I sometimes see like other people meeting up so I know that they're having a good time but I'm also not getting distracted too much by people that I know.

Interviewer 3:52

Okay, um, so what are the changes you think could be conducted here or done in order for you to achieve higher motivational outcomes or better academic performances?

Participant #2 4:08

Good question, what could they change? I think that it's sometimes like today I'm sitting down here because everything so like close to the entrance because everything upstairs was completely full. I know realize that here it's a lot louder than upstairs because so I think I mean, I do like the like background noise that there's always something happening. But down here you also because it's right next to the kids, paradise. Actually, hear kids screaming and like here it's very loud. So I think it would have would be quite good if there would be a bit more locations where you can study where you still hear the background noise, but you are not in the middle of everything that's happening. And also, if you want more group spots would be good as well. Because there are not many actually, so I think like, they're not that many group spots. So, I think that would be quite useful as well too. Because then you could also maybe study by yourself and meet up with a friend to discuss what you studied. And then yeah, discuss that. But that's sometimes a bit difficult. Like we're always searching for spots where we can actually discuss and talk about what we're doing. So, I think that would be quite useful to have a bit more of that.

Interviewer 5:33

Yeah, I get that. So, like, here, it's more independent work for you individually here and then actually to catch up and like having like break times as well, I guess it's difficult to actually unite, then we're actually going to the physical environment now. And just kind of focusing on that. You already mentioned that you do prefer natural sunlight, or at least to have big windows. But however, how important is lighting for you, in this learning environment?

Participant #2 6:02

I would say really important, also I did the survey before. I had to like write down the three ones and I was like is lighting really the number two and the big windows. I was like yes, it is. Also, I said that, like when I study at the UB, for example, I always tried to go somewhere to the Windows or at Heymans as well. Where I also study quite often, that I also really like that there are like quite big windows, you can see, like, look into the park, or like the backyard kind of. Yeah, because I feel like when you're only, like when you're in a dark room, you don't see anything what's going on outside and you're only concentrated on your own study things. It makes it even worse. It's way more boring. And so, I think having like natural light, and even if it's like raining outside, but that's I just really like to be close to, you know, what's happening outside makes me help to concentrate.

Interviewer 6:55

So, would you say that lighting does affect your choice of study location?

Participant #2 7:00

Yeah, definitely.

Interviewer 7:05

So, what about here? Now I see that the lamps are like, yeah, they give artificial light. But are you still affected like, you still think it's a negative impact or do you think it's still necessary, since it helps you to read your notes or direct?

Participant #2 7:24

I just, I didn't even realize those lamps before. I didn't notice them. But I mean, also today, it's quite sunny, and light, and just realize those huge windows, during the day, I mean, they don't distract me. But I sometimes I feel like when you're like in the evening, and it's been quite dark, and the windows are not that big, and then you've only got the artificial lighting, then it's getting a bit and they're like, depending if it's like indirect, it's fine. But sometimes you have those annoying lamps, which are just shining into your eyes. And then that also plays well with my will like to study. So, I think indirect light is good or natural.

Interviewer 8:09

So yeah, so it does affect your willingness to study. Okay, um, then, as already kind of defined, talked about it before. But I would like to see your preference of open spaces and enclosed space, just saying that open space is that you're able to look outside to have a view or just having people around you, or like in comparison to enclosed space or walls or like just kind of Yeah, directly surrounding you. And there's you're just alone in the room itself. So which one do you? I mean, I kind of technically already know, but just that you can restate what your preference is?

Participant #2 8:42

I definitely prefer open spaces. I'm just thinking that. Yeah, because also I know that like upstairs, there's also this like silence area. I've never been in there. But there are also these tiny boxes where you can sit in you have like walls on three sides of you. And I'm always wondering why people sit there. I mean, I never tried it. So maybe it will be good, because then you also don't have any distraction at all. Yeah. Yeah, no, but I would prefer open spaces.

Interviewer 9:03

However, then the opposite choice? So, as you said, maybe if you would try out the enclosed spaces, would that affect your willingness to study, do you think?

Participant #2 9:26

I could imagine that sitting in like an enclosed space would just I don't know maybe create the feeling of just not missing out but then I think when I'm studying, I'm obviously kind of want to do other things. And so, I think then, if I'm in this enclosed space by maybe my creativity, how do you say, I don't know my head goes somewhere completely different because I've only in this backspace, this dark, enclosed space so then everything just happens in my head and I'm like, oh, I can Do this and this outside and it will be so much nicer. So, I think in an open space, you don't have that because you work with what you have. Yeah, so I think I would be way more distracted. And I'm gonna, I'm gonna have a little phone break because there's nothing else to do. And in an open space, I just have my break is maybe just looking outside of the window for a few seconds. And that's already. Yeah, I think I would be way more distracted. Even though it's like by myself. Yeah.

Interviewer 10:29

Interesting. Um, so how important is it actually, for you to feel comfortable at your study location right here in the Forum?

Participant #2 10:35

What do you mean comfortable, like seating wise or people?

Interviewer 10:36

Both whatever makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable?

Participant #2 10:42

I mean, I think I think like all those factors contribute to the overall comfortness, or comfortability. But then, I think like for the chairs, for example, I guess I only notice when they're really bad. So, I remember that in Helsinki, where I did my exchange there was one library where the chairs were like insanely uncomfortable. So, I never went there to study, even though I liked the rest, because I couldn't really sit properly on it. But I think usually, as long as it's like an okay, chair, it's fine. Yeah. And the overall thing, I think it's quite hard to say, because it's influenced by so many different factors.

Interviewer 11:23

Yeah. But you do feel comfortable, like you personally, you're like, not uncomfortable when you're seated seated here. Okay. Um, and the next thing is, would actually would it improve your willingness to study if you could personalize your space here. Or like add something contribute something of yourself to your space?

Participant #2 11:52

I don't think so. Because I actually do like, that you can just pick on whichever day you're coming here, you can pick a certain spot, which feels right on that particular day, or which is available that particular day as well. But also, if you have like a couple of spaces that you can pick from sometimes it feels nice to be right at the window, sometimes there's already someone sitting there. And then why would I sit right next to that other person? If the rest is free. So, I think it's quite good to not have it personalized, because then you can also bringing No, I think it wouldn't make a difference.

Interviewer 12:27

Yes, I guess like variety, since they're so different spots and stuff. It's nice to have that option. All right. Um, so you also mentioned before already that you like to bring snacks and everything. However, how important is actually the availability of food or drinks here at the location?

Participant #2 12:45

I think it's a nice plus. It's not a necessity, because I feel like I think there's always some supermarket somewhere nearby. So, it doesn't need to be like right at the location. But I do like it that there's like a cafe here. So sometimes when, I don't know I was here at the last exam phase, so that like we had really long days, and then we treated ourselves like a good coffee. And I think it's, yeah, it's a nice bonus. But if I also know beforehand, because I think I usually decide the day before maybe where I go study the next day, because I might tell a friend because we want to go together. So, then I already know if there's like something available or not. So, I guess it's not making a big difference. I think it's not a decisive factor. But it's just nice.

Interviewer 13:38

So just adding to it. But like so it doesn't. So, the availability of food or drinks does not technically decide your choice of study location?

Participant #2 13:48

I don't think so. But maybe it's also hard to say because I all the libraries that I usually do go to, there's always a cafe or like a small shop or kiosk or something nearby. So, I think I've barely ever had I think actually have, but then yeah, that was almost a supermarket nearby. So no, it doesn't.

Interviewer 14:13

Okay, then actually I just became you mentioned earlier on that you're able to eat here as well. Would that actually be a factor though, but if you're not allowed to eat at the location?

Participant #2 14:25

I think it's again, a nice bonus factor because for example, at the UB you're not allowed to eat inside. I mean there's always the break rooms of course but so I noticed that sometimes if I just wanna go with someone a bit more in the evening, but I also know that I will be hungry then I would definitely prefer the location where I can eat while studying because if I don't want to spend that much time I also don't want to have a 20 minute break in the break room. So, I don't have time for that. So yeah, it's again, a bonus point, I'd say.

Interviewer 15:04

Okay, so it doesn't does it then however affect your willingness to study?

Participant #2 15:20

I don't think so.

Interviewer 15:25

So, you technically you wouldn't have to have food around you or access to food?

Participant #2 15:29

No, I don't know.

Interviewer 15:31

I mean with water, you know, you can go to the bathroom, you can refill it, it's not an issue, but like the food. It's not always available directly.

Participant #2 15:46

Yeah, true but I think that would be fine. I think I wouldn't necessarily need it because there are always break rooms where you can go. So, I don't need it at the study location itself, necessarily.

Interviewer 15:57

And then how important is the accessibility of electricity at the study environment?

Participant #2 16:04

Just one more thing with the last question, I realized it's good if it's like the break room was nearby, because I think sometimes when you have to walk through the entire building to find your break room, that's again, taking more time, but then, I mean, here, you can hit anywhere or in Heymans, you have to break rooms right in front of the study rooms, then that's also I think, quite, quite nice. Yeah. Yeah. But then about electricity to be pretty important. I mean, on some days when I'm very well prepared, I charge my laptop at home. And if I know I only have like a shorter study session, then it's fine to not have the socket. But yeah, I usually am always looking for a spot that has that doesn't have one, em that has one. Yeah, I remember that I had here once that I already knew that I was going to arrive like a bit later, and it would already be quite full. So then I just charged my laptop and everything before. And then I could sit somewhere for like two hours. But yeah, it's always a bit annoying, because we are so dependent on electricity.

Interviewer 17:10

Then, since we always have internet, wherever we go, and where we study and want to, are there any negative effects of actually having access to internet or availability for your academic performances?

Participant #2 17:30

I don't think there's necessarily very negative influence or impact. I mean, I'm sometimes think about aw would be nice now to study in the park, but then I wouldn't have internet. But if I only have to do some reading, for example, maybe that would actually be quite useful to go somewhere where I don't have internet because then I would only read and only Yeah, not get distracted by social media or whatever. But I feel like even because we always have like mobile data as well. I feel like you always have it. So even then you maybe get you spend your time on your phone. Yeah, but I don't think it negatively effects my study performance because there's internet.

Interviewer 18:17

Yeah, so I guess it does doesn't affect your willingness to study at your location?

Participant #2 18:23

Yeah, I would say so. Because then you're also a bit more flexible in what in how you study, because maybe even though you said, oh, I'm gonna read this and that, but then, in the article that you're reading, this may be a concept. And I do like to watch YouTube videos for explanations sometimes. And I couldn't do that if I don't have internet because my mobile data, is not enough for that. So, I think it's good to be flexible. And that is given if you're if you have internet.

Interviewer 18:50

All right, now we're going to the second aspect actually, like the social interaction questions. So how important is active social action, active social interaction for you in your surrounding study environment, here?

Participant #2 19:07

So, social interaction, so direct social interaction or indirect?

Interviewer 19:12

Both.

Participant #2 19:11

I am, I think, because direct social interaction is actually not that important, especially here because there's so much else going on. And then as I said earlier, then sometimes just enjoy observing other people maybe see them having a good time. And I don't think that's fine, if I'm just studying right now. Yeah, so I think indirect then is quite important to me that I also see what's going on around me. And also, here I like it that it's very diverse. It's also other students, but it's also tourists. It's just families coming here its kids hanging out so it's everything. Yeah, and my direct, I mean, I sometimes plan on coming or going somewhere to study with friends of mine. And I also recently realize that it's sometimes good for me to come somewhere with a friend, but then sit somewhere else, and just only meet up for the breaks, because I think it is nice to every now and then talk

about what you're studying, or just in general, having a bit of a chat. But yeah, it depends on the day and how productive I need to be.

Interviewer 20:21

So, I would say, since it's very active here, a lot of people around so you do prefer having people around, however, is it better for you? If you don't know people at all, then in comparison to knowing them?

Participant #2 20:34

I actually think so.

Interviewer 20:38

Okay. So then does the active interaction with people around you affect your willingness to study? You can also get distracted then more when you know the people.

Participant #2 20:52

Yeah, that's why I think sometimes when I sit like right next to you, or in front of my friend, then every time I look at them, I'm like, a break would be nice now. But then I feel like you're also more easily come, like, get the idea of going home be like, we could also just go home and cook right now. So, I think it is not always the best thing for me to have be around people who I like because of who I know. So, I think direct. How did you phrase it? direct interaction?

Interviewer 20:53

Yeah.

Participant #2 21:11

I think it distracts me a bit from studying, yeah.

Interviewer 21:31

All right. Um, then how does acoustics like such as noises in general affect your willingness to study? And you touched upon it earlier?

Participant #2 21:40

Yeah, um, I think so. Yeah, as I said earlier, that I get sometimes really get distracted by people being really loud or breathing super loud or whatever or like just whispering with their friends. So yeah, I think then having a general soundscape I would, yeah, it's quite good for me. I realized that here. Because downstairs, right at the entrance, its quite a lot. And it's very, I've been here for like only a couple of hours now. But I have realized its a lot. And yeah, usually I sit upstairs and there's carpet. So that's already taking a lot away. And it's on the seventh or eighth floor. So that's already like people maybe come up there to just like walk past but it's yeah, a lot less busy. And also, people are not staying there unless they're studying because on that floor people are really only passing by. And that's kind of everything you can do. Yeah, so I think I think in general, noise or general soundscape is good. But it's good. If it's like a bit, what do you say, a bit reduced or softened? Yeah, by like carpets yeah.

Interviewer 22:55

Okay, then actually going into detail what noise level? What is the acoustic scale of preference in person, like there's three. Now first is like silent, like you don't hear anything dead silence. And like the silent rooms, I guess would be an example of that. Then the second level would be kind of like noisy. So, you do hear noises around you, however, you don't understand what's being talked about? Or in general, just like the Yeah, just like hearing some noises or sound but not able to interact with them. And the third one would have been just yeah, having conversations around you, which you would understand? And which, yeah. interact more with? I guess. So, which of those three levels would you prefer?

Participant #2 23:39

I think number two? Yeah, because I feel like sometimes you have that. Because you are allowed to talk upstairs where I usually sit, but I think most people don't really, they talk more quietly. Sometimes there's some people being on the phone talking really loud. And that's even I would say like, to maybe more leaning. Leaning towards three. I don't know, maybe not, okay, no, I'm just gonna say two. Yeah, I would just say two because then you can. Sometimes when you really concentrate on something you can hear hear it. But I think because there's so much happening then it's quite hard to focus only on one. So, then it's all blending in. Yeah, so I would say two.

Interviewer 24:24

Okay, in the survey you filled out before you mentioned that you sometimes listen to music, or just sometimes. How does that affect your willingness to study if you do listen to music or rather not?

Participant #2 24:39

I think it's more that the music is. Yeah, sometimes if it's going more towards the three that I really are, like involuntary in one or three, that if I then like, just notice like small things that I it's yeah, that I tried to reduce that or if you hear someone talk really loud then I will listen to some music to kind of make them a bit more quiet around me and I don't hear as much of it. So, I think that if I use music, then it increases my willingness to study because I'm just more productive, then I can more focus on my own stuff then.

Interviewer 25:19

Okay, um, so, as you said, it kind of reduces the noise around you. However, what kind of music do you listen to then?

Participant #2 25:29

I'm mostly listen to some acoustic music or like LowFi beats something that is just else and I also tried to listen to like mild noise? That didn't really work too well. And no, but I think just things without lyrics so that I and yeah, that you can, because I feel like then sometimes you can concentrate on it. But if you're really concentrated on your studies, you also just don't listen to it that much anymore. And so it's not too exciting music, because then I wouldn't like it too much. Yeah.

Interviewer 26:05

Okay, um, then does your location studying actually change if you study in a group versus if you study individually?

Participant #2 26:13

Yeah, because yeah, as I said, here, it's sometimes a bit harder with the group to find spots also, because it's, there's not that many study spots, and it's hard to find that many. And there's no like big tables where you could sit. So, I think with a group, I go, Yeah, either meet at someone's place or meet at Heymans, where there's like more group space as well. And a bigger canteen space, where you can then just sit? Yeah, and also, I think if you meet with more people, I think everyone has like some preferences then. So, because if I'm just by myself, I could pick from that daily. Yeah, from the perspective of that day, see what I like. Yeah, so I guess it does matters then.

Interviewer 27:07

Okay. Then, second to last question, actually. So, do you actually impact through self other monitoring? Since you're here, and there's several people around you? And they're all also probably most likely to study? Do you be are you being affected by it? That you see other people actually studying as well would you feel like pressured to also study?

Participant #2 27:29

I don't think I feel pressured. I do know that many people say that, for example, that it helps them to see other people studying and that they feel pressured, but I don't think I have that, that much. I mean, I think it puts you a bit in like a similar setting. So that, you are like, I'm not alone in this. The sun is shining outside, but I'm still not the only one who's studying right now. So, I think that helps. But also, don't feel pressured to just chill for

a while. Or sometimes if I take too many breaks, and I just walk in your way every time and every time I'm coming back, I was like, I had that the last exam phase that I was walking away, like every hour and the other person is sitting there the entire day just working so that I felt a bit pressured. A bit judge maybe, but I think she didn't even notice. Yeah, no, but I don't I think it's if it makes a difference that it's helping.

Interviewer 28:29

All right. And then you also mentioned in the survey that it's 10 minutes away from your home? How do you think it impacts your choice of location to study at since it's seven minutes away? Would you still do it if it's 15? Or 20 minutes away? Or would you come here more often if it's closer to your home?

Participant #2 28:49

Yeah, I think I think I would come more often if it's closer. Because I also find the way I mean, 10 minutes is still very much doable. But as we all know in Groningen for Groningen standards, that's already a lot especially because like the closest library to my place, that I also really, really like, it's like, two or three minutes away. So, I think if I wouldn't have that one, and if I would always have to decide to go like to the UB or here, which is both then maybe similar already. I think I would come here more often. I think I wouldn't come here if it was like further away. Yeah, I don't really think so. No, I would have maybe like one or two minutes more, but I feel like then it's already just taking up quite some time and like some motivation to actually cycle somewhere to study. Yeah, so I think it'd be closer. I think I would come more often for like short study sessions, because that's what I actually really like it. To come for a bit and just do some reading and then leave again, but I don't really do that because for that it's too far in a way. So, I only come here for like proper study sessions occasionally. So yeah.

Interviewer 30:07

So overall, that was actually it but I would just wanted to ask if there are any additional information you would like to add about your study environment, the social interaction or the place itself?

Participant #2

I don't, I think, one thing I would just like to emphasis maybe that I also really like it here I mean I said it before that it is such a mix of people, also the reason why people come here it's so so different, there are always different things coming up, going on different exhibitions, it's very lively and very like active. That's what I really like and that it's just a place, it's also very interesting to see, also the building, I really like that. It's also such a nice concept to have a place which is so open for every kind of person and just combine that all so I think that is also something what I really like, I don't know, support by studying here, maybe. I don't know. Yeah, I think that's it.

Interviewer 31:21

Then thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Participant #2 31:23

Of course, thank you.

Transcript of Participant #3

Interviewer 0:00

Okay, so, um, so we're currently at the UB at the library of the University of Groningen. So, this is the location you chose to study at usually, and just overall just for the beginning. Could you please introduce yourself and explain where we are at exactly?

Participant #3 0:28

All right. So hi, my name is Participant #3. I'm a third-year student for Human Geography and Planning, but also a second-year student for spatial planning and design. We are currently in the UB on the second floor. I explain what like what I would do I, why we're here. Like?

Interviewer 0:50

That's the next question. Like, why did you choose to study in this environment?

Participant #3 0:53

Okay. Yeah, well, I think just in general, I really can't work at home, I think home is just completely not an option for me. Not only is it just in terms of size, but also in terms of how like what I what the values are attachments that are put into my home, it's usually time to relax, time to sleep, time to do nothing. And that's even though that's only at night, because I'm I'm never at home. Really. It's the reason why I usually study outside of home. And specifically chose the UB because I think it's such a great environment, when you want to walk into the study hall. It's really quiet and I think for some, it's quite intimidating. But firstly, for me, once I'm in that environment, I understand, okay, it's time to study. And you see, everyone's studying, you see everyone's stress, you see everyone, you know, motivate or stress, I think you just see everyone's different mood. But then once you see everyone's mood, you come to this understanding. Everyone's going through this. Everyone's a student, everyone's stressed. And it's okay. Just got to do what you got to do. So that's mainly why I study there.

Interviewer 1:57

Okay, so what are actually the necessities for you to have at a specific location where you study?

Participant #3 2:04

I need to have, well, it depends sometimes I'm most of the time I prefer really quiet space. So I can really think, and not really get distracted by everything, because even in the UB right now, I already get distracted of people passing by, back and forth, because I'm just a very visual person. So solid and study with my eyes closed, like that doesn't work. So, but already, I'm very visual, but also, I'm a very audio learner as well. So, like watching lectures, really do help. And of course, if it's really loud or noisy outside, like that does not help, so the peace and quiet but also it really helps is proximity to be somewhere social afterwards. So, for example, in the UB where we are now, we it also offers the coffee room. You know, coffee breaks, I just love going there, because that's also separate room and space where I can just take a break, and I put a timer on and I can get coffee and actually what's great is that I almost never plan to go to UB with a friend. But every time I'm there, I always see someone I always see like a lot of friends. And I think that this really helps me personally because, okay, I don't get distracted by studying with a friend. But once I go there, and I want to take a break. I have someone to talk to in that space.

Interviewer 3:24

Yeah, sounds good. So, in general are like all these necessities you just mentioned, are they all represented at location? Or do you think? Are there some necessities you wish to be at location, which are not?

Participant #3 3:38

Actually, the thing with the UB? I think what really drives me insane is that during exam season, it's not like that. It's not quiet. It's not like, you know? Yeah, it's, it's actually very distracting during exam season. Because I can give examples. For example, during exam seasons, if you sit near the doors, people constantly go in and out. That is so annoying. People are constantly walking around. But I have so many cases where I'm sitting, for example, next to a group of people. And I don't mean to generalize, but it's often these group of like, girls or group of sorority girls or fraternity guys, and they oftentimes don't even study I see I just see them and they are probably shopping online. Or they're grouping up together and they keep talking or they laugh super loud, like unnecessary loud, annoys people around them. And they don't even study like they take five minutes to just read something. And then they talk and then its like coffee break? Coffee break! and they just had coffee but and I remember one time I usually stay in the UB until 12. But very often in these situations, I just get so done and I

don't have energy to tell them off. So, I just leave and that's just very annoying because I do really, do you know, I really do like studying in the UB but not in these cases.

Interviewer 5:04

Yeah, like you definitely need private and silence space.

Participant #3 5:07

Yes, yeah.

Interviewer 5:08

Yeah, I get that. So how does the physical environment actually and the social interaction at the location inspire you to study there?

Participant #3 5:17

Well, I think what's nice, even though it's quiet, even though it's outside of exam seasons, I think the physical environment is that it's very quite spacious. I think the problem is a lot of people told me oh you should just get a room, you know, like the studio, like, if you want peace and quiet. I think the problem with me is that I feel so claustrophobic, like already already in the spacious rooms, I feel like I'm very trapped in my mind already. Because it's because everyone's stressed, and I'm quite sensitive to, you know, the atmosphere around me. But especially in these studios, I feel like I've even more cooped up, and I feel like I'm imprisoned. And I just, like in the past, I could really do that. But now that I am doing more courses, and I have more things in my head. So, the physical environment is that it is spacious. I feel like sunlight is so important. Another reason why I hate studios, there is no windows, and I'm like, oh, God, this is insane. So spacious, there is sunlight like from the windows. And just generally, I think, a clean like, clean design. So, I think if you I think you have obviously been to the UB and I feel like just the simple white wall, with the minimal surroundings is really nice and not like very. I don't know maximalist overcrowded designs, because I often do get distracted by those. Yeah. So, but you also asked about the social interaction?

Interviewer 6:56

Yeah. Social interaction as well.

Participant #3 6:58

In the UB?

Interviewer 6:59

Yeah.

Participant #3 7:00

Well, I mean, during studying, I don't usually. But for the during break times, as I mentioned, I do like going to the coffee room to kind of give a 10-20 minutes pause of studying and just talking to my friends or on my phone.

Interviewer 7:18

So overall, what changes could actually be conducted at the UB, currently to actually improve your motivational outcomes, or to just improve your academic performances?

Participant #3 7:31

Well, actually, that's the thing, I really really liked it when we had to book like the our spots, I think not only is not only do we have more space in-between chairs during COVID, because they had to implement the social social distance. But also, because people who really wanted to go there really got the spots, I would wake up at 7:30. To book a spot that just shows you know, but then now I feel like everyone could just go in and out. And it's just quite distracting. And it's unnecessarily crowded. I mean, I don't think there's really anything that the university can do, because I feel like the UB is meant to be an open space, really, for all the students. And

everyone loves the UB because it's in the center of the city. But I think that's also why in the past few weeks, in the last few blocks, I've also been experimenting and kind of studying in other places as well.

Interviewer 8:27

So now to touch upon the physical environment, actually, just about the UB already mentioned that, Yeah, natural lighting does have an impact on you for studying, but how important is actually the lighting for you in this environment?

Participant #3 8:42

Oh, actually, I would say that lighting is yes, important. But Windows is what really is important. For me. I feel like just the smallest thing of being able to see outside really changes everything. Because, right? The world is so much bigger. I don't need to stress out too much. There're so many other things that are more important in life. So just the ability or the capability of seeing outside the window just so much nicer, which is why I often sit in places where I can look out the window. But so, I would say the natural sunlight isn't that important. I think of course it's really nice to have sunlight. Sometimes it's actually distracting and it's like over your screen and you can't see anything, but natural sunlight is definitely helpful when getting breaks. When during studying, it doesn't usually I wouldn't say it usually affects me that much. It's really nice. But yeah, it's unless it's rainy, rainy is really clumps the study mood.

Interviewer 9:53

So, does the lighting actually affect your choice of study location, also within the UB for example?

Participant #3 10:00

Yeah, yeah, for sure. Because I think like, getting sunlight is really nice sometimes. So, as I said, as I mentioned sitting next to the window, not only with a view but also for the light is the reason why I sit there? So, I would say it does really affect where I sit in the UB.

Interviewer 10:20

And it would technically then also affect your willingness to study, right? Like improve as well.

Participant #3 10:28

Yeah, I would say so I think natural natural light or sunlight. For me, it does motivate me, because I think seeing today does improve my mood. And it's, it's okay, it's really nice outside, I'm going to study as much as I can. So maybe I can enjoy the rest of the day. But I think when it's raining is just like, oh man its just a rainy day, like I really just want to go home. And just sleep, you know, it's just, sometimes this doesn't help, of course, its dependent on how, how alarming I am at that moment in time, of course, when I have my exams the next day, I don't really care about these other stuff. But the normal days, I usually like to see the light looking out.

Interviewer 11:12

But then if you said if it's like, yeah, rainy day and everything, then the natural light doesn't have that huge of an impact on your study behaviour, but what about artificial light? Would that help then if it's just like a bright room?

Participant #3 11:25

Yeah, for sure, I think bright rooms are extremely important for me. Because not only does it keep you awake, but it just, it just somewhat energizes you as well, I feel. Yeah, I think the lights in the UB are usually like bright, white or bright yellow. And I think that really helps because I don't know if it's really dim. I know. It just makes me sleepy kind of. And I think I realized that some study areas that I go to like the cafeteria and Heymans, the psychology building, sometimes they are quite dim, I think. Not the study room but the cafeteria. So lighting is quite important.

Interviewer 12:06

You already mentioned it a bit like open space and enclosed space, but just trying to define it a bit like open spaces like yeah, being able to look outside, to have a view, you actually also have people around and then enclosed space its more like having like, exactly four walls around you kind of like enclosed and be more individually in a room. So, which one do you you already kind of mentioned it, but which one do you actually prefer between those two?

Participant #3 12:37

But I think by far, definitely open space. I think what I recently have realized about closed space is it's so easy for me to trick myself. Oh yeah, I'm tired, you know, I just want to take take a nap. And then I would take a nap. And it's like 30 minutes hour to an hour passes by. And I just really end up hating myself for taking a nap. Yeah, I think I think what's great about closed spaces is you have time you have a whole space yourself. It's peaceful, it's quiet. But personally, for me, it's very claustrophobic. I feel like I'm stuck in my own thoughts. Like, I can't look out anywhere. And if I do feel tired, or if I do feel demotivated. It's so much easier for me knowing that. I'm by myself and I was looking to procrastinate or nap.

Interviewer 13:36

Yeah. So yeah, would the opposite choice. then in this scenario, having an enclosed space affect your willingness to study negatively?

Participant #3 13:46

Yeah, for sure. I realized that I'm very inefficient, or very unproductive, in enclosed spaces. Yeah, I really, I didn't really know that until I kept going to studios. And I found this common trend of me randomly falling asleep and not really doing stuff. And that's when I decided to quickly move to open spaces.

Interviewer 14:15

So, another question is, how important is it for you to feel comfortable at the UB or at any study location?

Participant #3 14:21

In comforting as?

Interviewer 14:24

Like seating itself, but also for yourself? Like, do I feel like this environment is comforting?

Participant #3 14:32

Yeah, I think that's what's really important. I think that's really interesting is that because I'm doing research on therapeutic landscapes, and I slowly came to realize that these study landscapes like the UB or the Bernoulli board or Heymans, I feel like the reason why I do like studying there is the comfort. I like the windows. I really, I like I like the fact that I can see people around me, whether they're doing group work or they're studying quietly in their study space. But generally, comfort is very important. I feel like I mean less about the comfort of the chairs, of course, that's very nice. But more than general comfort of having people having and seeing people around me seeing that they're motivated, makes me be motivated, but also comfort in the sense that they're not distracting. So not so for example, because the examples I gave you during exam seasons, all these people just going in and out. It's like, you know, talking and laughing very loudly, or, like, you know, unnecessarily loud. So, I think those are the discomforts. But everything that is in contrast to that is what composes my comfort in study areas.

Interviewer 15:52

Then, in general, would your willingness to study actually be improved if you could personalize your space to study at?

Participant #3 16:02

Like a personalized space?

Interviewer 16:04

Technically, before you mentioned that you kind of liked it minimalistic, and very simple but do you think they're only like, just small edits of yourself, you could personalize, would that improve your willingness to study or actually not?

Participant #3 16:22

That's very difficult. I'm a very indecisive person. And I think the reason why I say minimalistic is because I like spaces that I can just focus on my work. I think the essentials, as I said, was the window. And actually, the cause of something I do prefer and what customize big tables, like I often spread a lot of my stuff. It's a really bad habit. So big tables is quite necessary. I even though I do like being surrounded by motivating people, I feel like having space between them is essential as well. So big tables having space in between, but I feel like everything else should be minimal, just so I'm not distracted. From that I can focus in hours. So as long as minimal walls, minimal, everything, and just basic lights. Yeah, I think that's what I would customize.

Interviewer 17:24

In general, like, when you go to the UB, I mean, right now, it's quite difficult to always go to the same space. But if you could choose, would you be would you prefer to go actually, always to the same spot to study at?

Participant #3 17:38

Yeah, I think what's funny is I used to do that, like, for the first two years, I went to the same floor, same spot it was the third floor, always near the same window. But I, I came to realize that I really, I couldn't I can't be picky. I would say that I was really liked that before. Because I liked the comfort, of right that's my area. That's where I usually sit that's where I go. But I think coming this this coming year COVID. And with having to reserve and all the different complexity, complex schedule we have now. I care less about it. So, it's more of okay, as long as I have space as long as I have the essentials like having space around me.

Interviewer 18:26

Yeah, then how important is actually the availability of food or drinks for you at the study location?

Participant #3 18:32

Oh. Oh. Yeah, that is, that's, that's, that's really funny. Because before I came here, I promised myself Okay, when I study, I'm only gonna drink tea. Because I felt like I was so over dependent. I was so over reliant on the coffee machines. I think it was to the point that it was very unhealthy to me. And I would always joke to my friends. It's like, God, sometimes I don't even know how much money I spend on coffee, because I think it would just tear me apart knowing how much money I spend on it. But so, I guess it is really important, because it's just so I became so over reliant on it. But I think that's also the reason why. It's also about self control as well. I feel like these coffee rooms are so designed for you to really buy stuff like all these easy, easy and accessible vending machines that sell like Red Bull for like, four, four euros. Yeah, maybe four to five euros for four to five.

Interviewer 18:41

That's quite expensive.

Participant #3 19:41

Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, exactly. But then people still buy them. Like that's the thing. And I feel like I yeah, I don't know. I just feel so betrayed. And also, because the coffee is just it's so accessible, you know, and it's like, its only 40-50 cents, or like now it's 60. But I feel like the more you know, the more you buy, of course, it adds up and I could I could drink like six or seven coffees a day and it's not; it wasn't healthy for me either.

Interviewer 20:17

How, then do you think the availability of food or drinks did decide your choice of location to study at?

Participant #3 20:24

Yeah, I always end up going to places that have a coffee machine. Yeah, so I would say it is, it was definitely important to me. That's why I always go to university building because they have cheap coffee. Because I know if I study in a cafe, I would just spend so much more money and honestly, you know, so yeah, so coffee machines.

Interviewer 20:42

So, for you, it's more of a drinks instead of food. So how important is for you the accessibility of electricity actually?

Participant #3 20:55

Oh, very. I don't know if I don't know if anyone can really do anything, without electricity. I feel like everything from presentation and everything from thesis, everything from assignments, watching lectures, everything needs electricity. I think nowadays in this very modern society, or modern way of learning and teaching. I don't know if anyone could do it without electricity. Like without Wi Fi. Its still possible. If you download everything first. Without electricity is definitely not possible.

Interviewer 21:20

Yeah. Because like, it's not like an option. So, like, yeah, sockets, like, in general, it's quite sometimes not available everywhere. So, I was just wondering, so since UB does provide it usually but.

Participant #3 21:33

Yeah, it's definitely important for me. Yeah. Really, really important factor.

Interviewer 21:40

Then looking at having internet in general, do you think that having access to the internet also has negative effects on your study behaviour or academic performances?

Participant #3 21:53

I think I always say that. Anything can be a gift or a curse. And Wi Fi is always that one thing because it's all about training yourself to stay focused. So, it's the same thing with coffee. It's okay, in moderation. And I think with Wi Fi is it's also okay, so as long I'm use it for studying. But it's often the case is that everything is only a click away, everything is only a tap away. That if you really, if you don't have a grip, you don't have a strong will to study. Which is why the environment is so important. You can easily procrastinate and I don't know end up watching YouTube videos or being distracted by social media, but that's completely out of it. Or, for example, the girls, whoever, girl or guy beside me, they end up shopping online, you know? So sometimes that's very distracting for us, because it's like, oh, that shirt was nice, or like you see what they're looking at? And then you end up like, uhh I kind of want to do the same? I mean, it's very not the case for me. I often get distracted by, like movie reviews. But that's not Yeah, so yeah. It's a double-edged sword for sure. Yeah.

Interviewer 23:09

So, would you say then yeah, it does affect your willingness to study at that location, right?

Participant #3 23:13

Yeah.

Interviewer 23:15

Going into the social interaction part actually how important is activite social interaction for you in your surrounding environment?

Participant #3 23:24

I think, from what I mentioned, I would prefer minimal social interaction around me around me when I'm studying. Because I really, as I said, I'm really like, audio and visual wise, very easily distracted. Like, I'm very like, Ooh, what's this? What's that? Sometimes I feel like I have ADHD, but I don't. But it's just that I'm really intrigued by the smallest things, but that's why I would really. (Disturbance) Okay. But the question was about social interaction. But that's why I would avoid Oh, that's why I also avoid going to the UB with friends going to any study space with friends. Because I know that if I went with friends, I would always like, hey, let's have a break or hey let's do this, do that. So, I go in by myself, and if my friends are there, or if I meet them, in the UB, only then do I like ask are you in the coffee room or something?

Interviewer 24:37

So, your preference is then to have people around you. However, not necessarily direct interaction.

Participant #3 24:45

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 24:51

So, then I would say, does active interaction with people around affect your willingness to study?

Participant #3 24:56

Yeah, so I think it If I have friends who are direct, like really close to me, it decreases my willingness to study because I get really distracted. And I would really, really not study in the end, because I just want to, you know, talk to them or catch up with them. Or, or, or what we all usually love to do is rant about our course or rant about something. So, again, that is why I think having my own space, and sometimes I will even feel bad, like, I would purposefully sit far from my friends, you know, completely different floor, just because I know I will be distracted. So, I think really knowing yourself is really important and finding these kind of factors.

Interviewer 25:37

Yeah, for sure. How does the acoustics actually affect your willingness to study, like noise levels in general?

Participant #3 25:44

Oh, yeah, low. Really, again, really easily distracted. I, I really hate if I'm watching my lectures, and I can still see I can still hear things like I'm like, why? Like, I'm trying to listen to the freaking lectures, like, stop talking, right? Yeah. Especially because my mood is already very often very bad when studying that. Maybe for a lot of people, the slightest things really gets annoying. So maybe, maybe that's a personal thing. Maybe I need to figure that out. But I think generally when people are studying the, you know, most quiet peaceful locations will help.

Interviewer 26:27

There is this acoustic scale of preference in general. So, from between first is like silent to like second is noisy, however, having verbal communication around you, but you can't understand them. So, it's just some noises. And then the third option was loud. Or you have Yeah, verbal communication, which is also understandable for you. Yeah. So, what would you prefer?

Participant #3 26:51

I think most case scenario one. Sometimes I'm okay with two depends on how, how stressed out I am. Because I think often the case, if I'm very stressed, and if there are some talking around me, I just I procrastinate. And sometimes I ears drop. And I just I'm like ohh what like who is this? What's their story? What's going on? So, it's just generally, I just generally I think, what's best for me, personally, I think will be one. Yeah.

Interviewer 27:26

So, when you just said, that you're listening to lectures, for example, you can't listen to music, but overall, when you do study do you listen to music or do you not at all?

Participant #3 27:37

I listen to, I quite often I do but it's with music without lyrics. Okay, so I often I often mention people to jazz. Because something about jazz is that it's, it's, it's not too fast pace. It's swingy, it's like a classical music with spice. That's what I would say. Because I think that with classical music, it's sometimes very, either too slow, or it's not necessarily but very dynamic. So, it goes like, like dedededooo and it goes, crescendo. But jazz is like very swingy, light hearted, and I think it's just, it motivates you. And sometimes it kind of reminds you like life is so beautiful, like continue studying.

Interviewer 28:25

Yeah, having a continuous cycle is actually nice in the environment, as well. I get that. And does the location of studying actually change for you when you study with a group or individual?

Participant #3 28:36

Yes, if it's with a group. I often like studying more in other faculty buildings. So, I mentioned the Heymans and I also mentioned the Bernoulli board. I think it's because my mind is more set to group work in those environments. Meanwhile, the UB I am just so used to it being me and me alone studying alone. Yeah, so it changes.

Interviewer 23:55

Um, so yeah, actually almost the last question on how do you impact through self other monitoring? So, like, yeah, in the UB you have other people around you, right. How do you feel? Do you feel pressured by it, but they're around you. And just like also like, watching you, well not directly?

Participant #3 24:18

What did you call it, self monitor?

Interviewer 24:19

Self other monitoring.

Participant #3 24:20

Self other monitor? Oh, okay. That's really interesting. I like that concept. I think most most of the time, I really need it most of the time. I think it's really necessary. Because not only is it motivating to see other people work really hard, especially when you see those medicine and Law students, are like studying and it's like well, that's a whole textbook and I'm like, I should appreciate that I do not have to do that. And I see them like studying so hard memorizing all these things. Organs on their laptops, like all these like pages, and I look at myself like, I'm privileged. I like what am I even studying and this is easy. I need to get an eight or nine like this is so like, it's So what is it? Like? Yeah, it's just so incomparable. So, I think that's what really motivates me another reason why I like studying with my Stem friends and Bernoulli board, they show me like the system and signals like all these math, and I'm just like, my studies is nothing compared to this. So that really motivates me. But also, sometimes it can be distracting in the sense that I'm I've experienced a lot of people around me the UB getting, like complete breakdowns. So, I think I can I can say, like, three, four times I was studying in the UB. And then there will be someone just like, they're like sobbing. Yeah. And I hear like snippets, or like, complete, like bawling, like at 12, when almost no one else is there. And I've just, it's just me, this other girl and another person in this whole hall. And she's just sobbing. And she's just there, like, breathing and everything. And, of course, like, it's not to say that it's a bad thing, because it's so natural. But when often, often, when these things happen. It's kind of like, amen, I feel really bad for her, but also puts me in the mood. And I'm like, damn, like, i feel like that sometimes, it is hard. It is frustrating. And I think now looking back, I really should have asked if they were okay, but I think I was just not in the situation. So, I think self other monitoring can definitely be cool. In the case where it's very symbiotic, when they're motivated and motivated. But sometimes when the mood is the other way around, where they're very either depressed or very down, it does spread quite quickly, because you're just like, oh, man, like this. I already like, especially if you're already in a low mood, it brings you down even more. So yeah.

Interviewer 25:02

Yeah, I can totally see, how that effects you as well. So yeah, overall, that was kind of all of the guided questions. Yeah, the only this is do you have any additional information you'd like to add about yourself about your willingness to study or the location itself, like the UB?

Participant #3 27:05

Yeah, I think I did mention that the fact that the UB is in the city center is so so important to me, because I recently found myself very stressed. Sometimes in the UB and even though it's in a spacious, quiet hall, I get super stressed or very overwhelmed. But what I love about the UB is, if you're stressed, just walk out, just walk out, just especially if it's sunny. That's why I said it was important. Just walk take a walk around the city, I would take like two, three laps sometimes. And just and just like appreciate the outside world and remind yourself like why why you're doing what you're doing. I think just the fact that its in the city center, it's in proximity to such a beautiful environment, gives you room to reflect. And that in itself energizes you again to study. Meanwhile, what I kind of hate about Zernike is like, where are you going to walk to like, you step out. And it's like, so depressing. It's like, all these buildings separated. And oftentimes after four, no one is there, you know, but for the UB in the city center, you walk out, and there are people there their families, you know, or they're like couples walking. And it just kind of brings, it just grounds you. And then it builds you up, and it gets ready for you to study again.

Interviewer 28:26

I get that and that makes sense. This is actually also asked in the survey, but how long do you actually take from your home to the UB while biking?

Participant #3 28:36

Five to ten minutes

Interviewer 28:38

Then the question would have been? How, like, if it would have been further away? Would you still be willing to travel that long? Or further? Like 10 minutes, 15 minutes? You think you would look for something rather in your surrounding?

Participant #3 28:52

Yeah, actually, if I feel less motivated, I go to the Heymans instead because it's even. I would say to the UB, it's more 10 minutes. But Heymans is for me even like, five, like three to five minutes, super fast. But actually, before I move to this closer neighbourhood, it used to take me 15 minutes to cycle to the UB and I still I don't know how I still would wake up at 7:30 or 8:00 to wait in line. I'm sure you remember when those days. Yeah, those crazy days. So even even even during then, I still did that. So, I think for me, distance was less of a factor if I really do like the environment. And I really sounds really sad, but I love the UB environment. So yeah.

Interviewer 29:40

All right, that was it. Thank you very much.

Participant #3 29:43

Thank you!

Transcript of Participant #4

Interviewer 0:00

Hello, so to just start off with we're at the UB currently. And that's where we're at with our fourth participant. So, I'm just to begin off with, could you maybe introduce yourself and explain where we are actually directly?

Participant #4 0:20

So, my name is Participant #4, and we are currently at the UB.

Interviewer 0:32

Why did you choose to stay in this environment?

Participant #4 0:35

I prefer to study in the library because I like the calmness, I like that everyone around me seems to be studying and focusing on studying. And that provides me with the like, personally with a good study environment to also study a lot.

Interviewer 0:55

What are your personal necessities to have at the location where you study at?

Participant #4 1:02

Well, personally, I need a comfortable seat, a good table in the right height, internet access, electricity access for my laptop, because it dies too quickly. And then I need a toilet, most likely some access to water and coffee.

Interviewer 1:24

So overall, are they all like these necessities? Are we all represented at the UB?

Participant #4 1:30

Yes!

Interviewer 1:32

How does the physical environment and social interaction application inspire you to study?

Participant #4 1:37

I think it goes in line with what I said before that I just generally like this atmosphere. I feel like there is this indirect well, it felt communicated, but indirect perceived spill over of motivation from other students. So that I think that my motivation is inspired also by others motivation to focus on the study. And I think the UB provides this because you sit on a long table and a row of a lot of tables with a lot of students focusing on their studies. And I think that inspires me to study.

Interviewer 2:15

So what change is actually conducted at the site at the UB in order to reach higher motivational outcomes or better academic performances?

Participant #4 2:26

In comparison to my other?

Interviewer 2:29

Oh, no, just like at the site. What could? Yeah, I guess for me personally, just to reach better performances, what could what changes could be done at the UB?

Participant #4 2:37

Well, it's personal preference, but I think sometimes the heating changes not changes a lot. But it's not like to personal preferences. So sometimes it's just cold. And sometimes it's very warm. So that just fluctuates sometimes. And well, in general. I think that's it.

Interviewer 2:49

Okay so, what, since you said to temperature, what level would you prefer? At the UB?

Participant #4 3:11

In general, I'm always like, relatively warm. So, I would like just like moderate low temperature. Because I think that's the nicest to study in but I also know other people have other preferences and then the public room, it's the public space, it's a bit well, cannot be to my preferences.

Interviewer 3:28

Yeah, that can be quite difficult, then I can tell that. Then therefore we're going to enter the part of physical environment. So how important is lighting for you for in this learning environment?

Participant #4 3:42

I would say it's relatively important. So not extremely, but more than, like, let's say medium important, because it does help me focus. Like if there's good lightning, and I can read my notes, and I can see everything clearly puts me in like a more awake and focused state. Yep.

Interviewer 4:02

Okay, then. So would you prefer artificial light or natural sunlight?

Participant #4 4:10

Well, I would prefer indirect natural light. So, in the sense that it doesn't blind me. Because that's also one of the actually most disadvantageous for me to study at home, because I have a lot of direct sunlight in the afternoon. And I just can't study then, because it's like blinding me. So, in that case, I would prefer artificial light, but in general, indirect sunlight.

Interviewer 4:32

Then do you think that lighting itself affects your choice of study location?

Participant #4 4:37

Yeah, actually, just as I said previously, I do have some problems personally in my room. So, I kind of escape the direct sunlight by going to the library.

Interviewer 4:47

Does it also affect your willingness to study depending on lighting?

Participant #4 4:52

I would not say in general; I think I have a lot of good alternatives to not use it as an excuse.

Interviewer 5:03

Now I'm gonna compare or see the differences between open space and a closed space and seen as open space is kind of being able to look outside to have a view, maybe also have people around you, versus enclosed space, having more like the walls surrounding you like being in an independent room, or like just being individually on your own in a room. And I would just wanted to ask what your preference is between an open space and an enclosed space.

Participant #4 5:31

I would say I generally prefer open space, given that it's calm. So given that I'm able to focus, so I'm not the degrade, like it depends also on what I'm studying, but I'm not the greatest person to focus in a noisy environment. So, then I would prefer closed space over noisy open space, but in general, a calm open space over calm, closed space.

Interviewer 5:58

Makes sense. So then, yeah, also that would the preference effect your choice of study location?

Participant #4 6:07

Yeah, it does. I think it does effect my general choice to study. Yeah.

Interviewer 6:12

Then the opposite choice of being able to having to study maybe in a close enclosed space having also, yeah, no natural sunlight. Would that effect be influencing your willingness to study?

Participant #4 6:30

Can you repeat that one more time?

Interviewer 6:33

The opposite... Now, you said that you prefer open calm spaces? However, the opposite of that would have been yeah, like kind of enclosed space, maybe not with natural sunlight, also a bit noisy, possibly. Would that affect you?

Participant #4 6:47

Oh yeah, definitely. I mean, if there was no alternative to that would definitely it would definitely decrease my motivation to study because I would also think like, yeah, my output is just not as great. So why should I study if I can't focus? And if I can't write, like, effectively?

Interviewer 7:03

How important is it for you to actually feel comfortable at the study location?

Participant #4 7:09

A lot, I would actually say, like, it's really important for me to feel comfortable. I think I'm a person who is rather comfortable in public spaces anyway. So, it's like, not a problem for me. So, I do feel comfortable. But I also need to feel comfortable.

Interviewer 7:24

Yeah. So, at the UB it's very, like, it's definitely not personal at all. But do you think it would improve your willingness to study if you could personalize your study space at the UB?

Participant #4 7:45

To be honest, I never thought about it, because it's like in the UB, as you said, it's like not really possible to individualize anything. Because well, again, it's a public space. I have no idea what I could personalized. So, I would say in this case, no, because it has all the, as I said before, also has all the requirements I need already. So, there would not be a lot that I can individualize to make it better.

Interviewer 8:13

Yeah, make sense! And then also, like, when you go to the UB, do you always go to the same space? Same seat? Same area? Or do you also try to mix it up a bit?

Participant #4 8:22

No. Most of the time, I do tend to go to the same spot. Yeah, I just actually choose what I said before, there's like, a spot, which like, has kind of a view outside. So it has like a bit of indirect sunlight. It's for lightning, it's nice. Sometimes it's rather quiet, like it's not the busiest area. And then yeah, I tend to go to the same spot.

Interviewer 8:46

Then how important is the availability of food or drinks for you? At the study location?

Participant #4 8:51

So, I think, for me, these are two separate things. Availability of drinks is rather important. I would say, normally, I do bring my own water and buy coffee there. But just to refill water is extremely important for me. And food, I would say it's not important to me, because yeah, I live very close by and I just go home for foods. And yeah, I don't have the necessity to eat there or buy food that I needed.

Interviewer 9:19

So, you would say that the availability would not decide your choice of study location, at least not for food.

Participant #4 9:25

Yeah, for food. Definitely not.

Interviewer 9:27

But I mean, for water, you always have availability for like going to the bathroom. But if they wouldn't have coffee, would you still go?

Participant #4 9:40

That's a good question. If there wasn't an alternative, where I would have coffee, I would like prefer that. Um, I guess it will definitely sometimes make me choose not to go. So, I would go less often, but I wouldn't go I wouldn't decide not to go at all.

Interviewer 9:57

So, it would affect your willingness to study.

Participant #4 9:59

Yes.

Interviewer 10:00

And then also you just touched upon it that you don't live too far away from a UB, how far is it approximately for you to get there?

Participant #4 10:11

Well, it's about two and a half minutes walking.

Interviewer 10:14

Okay. Would you even go? Would you go or consider if it's further away?

Participant #4 10:19

Oh, yeah, I lived in a different place before and I tend to go as well. But if that's a follow up already, I definitely tended to go less often.

Interviewer 10:31

How important like you already mentioned at the beginning as well about like, having electricity is quite important. However, just to mention it again, how important is accessibility for electricity at the study environment?

Participant #4 10:43

Very important.

Interviewer 10:45

Okay. Since nowadays, we have internet accessibility anywhere where we usually want to study, because it's also just needed. But do you experience negative effects of having internet available and having negative effects on your academic performances?

Participant #4 11:03

Of having internet available or not having?

Interviewer 11:05

Of having internet available.

Participant #4 11:08

No, I think I have. Well, if I understood your question correctly, let me reiterate a bit more that I think Internet has a positive effect on my study behaviour or study outcome.

Interviewer 11:19

Yeah, just because like some people would have said that having access to internet could lead to distractions, such as, like being on social media, or just watching YouTube videos instead of actually focusing?

Participant #4 11:32

Oh, I see no.

Interviewer 11:33

Okay.

Participant #4 11:34

No, because I also need it most of the time for my study. So, it's like, well, I could also like to in general, that it enhances my study.

Interviewer 11:44

So, would you say that the availability of electricity, then does it affect your willingness to study at this location?

Participant #4 11:52

Yes, it positively influences it.

Interviewer 11:56

So now we're going to the second part, the social interaction part, and that kind of just emphasizes the second area. So, the next question is, how important is active social interaction for you in your surrounding study environment?

Participant #4 12:13

Relatively unimportant, I would say, I'm most of a well, I start, I tend to study better alone. So I'm not distracted. Like, in that sense, by people close by, which I would, yeah, maybe would talk to or have a conversation with. On the other hand, I think it's really nice. If I have a break, and there are people around me, that have a break with me, and we just talk. So, I think, during my actually, during my actual study time, it would distract me. So, I would say it's not important, but during my break time, it is important.

Interviewer 12:48

Okay then, overall, would your preference be having people around you or instead of they're not while studying?

Participant #4 12:56

Rather not.

Interviewer 12:59

Does interact as active interaction with people around you affect your willingness to study?

Participant #4 13:05

Can you say one more time?

Interviewer 13:06

I mean, you technically already mentioned it before in previous question, but does active interaction with people around you affect your willingness to study

Participant #4 13:15

During my study?

Interviewer 13:16

Yeah.

Participant #4 13:16

No, I would say it decreases it.

Interviewer 13:19

And however, would emphasize it and increase your willingness to study if you have people around you for your break time?

Participant #4 13:26

Definitely, yes.

Interviewer 13:28

So coming out to the acoustics of your environment, how does acoustics affect your willingness to study? Like noises

Participant #4 13:41

I would say, it affects me quite a bit. So, it's not like on a scale to 10, maybe like a seven and a half. Because like, I really like it calm. So, I would say if it's too loud, my mind tends to like seek what's, what the noise is, and what the source of the noise is, and not what my study is about.

Interviewer 14:06

Then, yeah, just having like my own acoustic scale, kind of, then there's like three, three steps, in a sense versus like, complete silent, like, as you would have said, for your own scale would have been 10. However, the second one would have been noisy in a sense that there is verbal communication around you, however, you cannot understand it. And the third one would be loud, saying that there is verbal communication and you could understand it and interact as well. So, which one of these three would you choose?

Participant #4 14:39

The first so complete silence, calmness.

Interviewer 14:45

How do you think that it's very difficult that the UB will be having complete silence or do you think that's

Participant #4 14:52

No, I think, like, out of my personal experience, it is the most silence I experienced.

Interviewer 15:03

Since we haven't done a survey yet, however, we wanted to ask, do you listen to music while studying?

Participant #4 15:10

Sometimes. But most of the times, I would listen to music without lyrics. And then yeah, but it's 50:50, I would say.

Interviewer 15:20

But do you think it improves your academic performances? Or you just do it out of enjoyment?

Participant #4 15:31

I think if I had a very long study session and improves it, because it keeps my motivation up. So, in that sense, yes, I normally if I have a short one, I wouldn't listen to it. So, I would say in the end does enhance it. But only if I need, like additional motivation.

Interviewer 15:49

Does location of studying actually change if you work with a group or in a group versus individually?

Participant #4 15:56

Yeah. If I work in a group, when I work in a group, I would rather meet at home have someone's bed at someone's home? So, because the library you would have to be lucky to book a studio? And most of the times they're not available? And then yeah, we're just going to someone.

Interviewer 16:18

So, this actually, is already the second to last question, how do you impact through self other monitoring in the sense that you have other people around you watching you study, and you also see other people studying?

Participant #4 16:30

Well, I think it goes along with what I said before in the UB it's like a more like a perceived effect than actually being monitored. So, I don't think anyone is actually monitoring what I'm doing. But I have kind of the perception that people around me are being busy and they are being productive. So that has kind of a spill over effect. But I would say it's more indirect and like that I'm monitoring someone directly and the other way around. So yeah.

Interviewer 17:02

So, do you think you feel this tendency also feel pressure to study when there are people around you studying?

Participant #4 17:10

I would say not pressure, necessarily. So, I could also be on my phone, like, I don't feel like, oh, no, everyone is doing so much. I have to keep up. I actually would say it's more positive that I actually feel motivated.

Interviewer 17:25

So actually, we're already last question. Now. Is there any additional information you would like to add about why you study here? Or why it's such an amazing place to study at or what enhances your study environment in general versus other places?

Participant #4 17:41

I think, actually, because, as you also asked, before, I do always go to my same spot. So, and I always drink the same coffee there, I have my water with me and have my notes and my laptop with me. So, it's kind of like, study tradition. So, I feel like my brain just knows when I'm sitting there, that it's study time. So, I feel like this

kind of repetition of doing the same task in the same place in the same environment increases my study motivation, also effectiveness.

Interviewer 18:16

So yeah, having a routine?

Participant #4 18:20

Yeah, exactly. A routine, in that sense, definitely helps me. And also having to actually that's also the case having to book a place at a UB not being able to just go and say, I can go and just hope there's a spot free, but I have to book it nowadays online before. So, I know that if I don't go at 10 that my spot will be taken. That also gives like an additional motivation to be there on time.

Interviewer 18:45

That's true. All right, that's technically all of it.

Participant #4 18:50

Perfect.

Interviewer 18:51

Thank you very much.

Participant #4 18:52

No problem.

Transcript of Participant #5

Interviewer (00:00)

Hello. We're currently at the coffee company in Groningen its a cafe. And so, I just wanted to ask you to introduce yourself and maybe just say where we are at?

Participant #5 (00:15)

Like what's my name and everything?

Interviewer (00:16)

Yeah.

Participant #5 (00:17)

My name is Participant #5 and I am a third-year student of my bachelor program. We're at the coffee company at the Oude Ebbingestraat right now and we're doing an interview together.

Interviewer (00:37)

Yes, so why did you choose to study in this environment?

Participant #5 (00:41)

First of all, I live like literally three minutes away from this cafe. And I personally find it really hard to focus at home because my bed is right next to my table. So, I prefer studying in a cafe with a lot of people who are also studying around me and it's not too silent like the library.

Interviewer (01:04)

All right, so for you, what are the necessities to be at a location to study at?

Participant #5 (01:11)

For me, I cannot have complete silence, so I need a little bit of background noises. So, I think a cafe is just having the perfect balance of noises. Like there are some people talking, but it's not too loud. And there're also people who are studying around me and I can drink some coffee and maybe have like a toast or cake whenever I feel like it. So, I think that's really important. I love eating when I'm studying. And also, I think in the library, especially the library here in Groningen, the UB, is very like dull, there is not that much sun. And in the coffee company, where we are at in the moment there are a lot of windows and I can look around a bit if I want to take a rest. I don't have to go out to see other things, so I think that's important for me.

Interviewer (02:12)

You just mentioned some necessities, but are they all represented here or are some missing or you wish they would offer them here?

Participant #5 (02:21)

No, I think it's quite good. Also, if it's more like an intense tests coming on they also have like a study room at the back where I could study there, which is relatively more quiet, but usually I'll just study in the front where there are other people who are not studying also studying. I think it's really nice they offer sockets and stuff that I could charge my laptop or iPad, because I might stay here from one to six. So, its a long time, Also, it's really nice that they don't limit your time in the cafe. I don't think there are anything really missing.

Interviewer (03:01)

Okay, so how does the physical environment and social interaction at the location here inspire you to study?

Participant #5 (03:10)

I think the setting here is quite cosy. I think it faces the big windows. I can look around when the weather is nice, there is sun shining on my face. Its quite cosy. It's close to my place. So, the physical location is definitely also very important for me because I hate biking. Social interactions, I do think the people here who are working are also really nice and they are understanding as well that knowing a lot of people are studying here. And if you already start working and you order a coffee, usually they'll take it to you and people are just, just have like sort of a consensus in a way that we know that we won't disturb each other. If you ask for maybe to borrow a socket, you need to charge a laptop or anything. They usually would do it as well. So, I think its quite harmonized here so I quite like it.

Interviewer (04:11)

Interesting, I actually already mentioned it previously, but what changes do you think could be done in more like the physical environment or the social interaction at the location to improve your academic performances or motivational outcomes?

Participant #5 (04:30)

You mean in the Cafe?

Interviewer (04:31)

Yeah here.

Participant #5 (04:33)

Not really. To be honest, I quite like studying here. I think everything is quite ideal. It's just annoying. Like during study exam seasons it might get quite crowded. So, some tables don't have a socket. That's also a bit annoying that I might want to maybe have some focus there. But other than that, not really bad. They also offer WiFi as well. So, it's quite nice. Yeah.

Interviewer (05:04)

Okay. So now touching upon only the physical environment aspect. So how important, like you already mentioned it previously. Also, offering these large windows here, but how important is lighting for you actually in the learning environment?

Participant #5 (05:18)

Lighting definitely very important because I don't like very office white light. For me it's not humane and I like it when it's more casual. I think I have studied in the UB before, but it's just very robotic cold and I think here with the natural sunlight, people walking around, not really like interactions but just can see like nodding and everyone is just working and you can actually take a friend here and study together and talk, which I think is quite nice and you wouldn't be able to do that in the UB. You really have to just focus and study and the dead silence really is just not my favourite.

Interviewer (06:15)

Yeah, seems like there is more action going on around you here than at the UB. Do you think in general the lighting affected your choice of the cafe?

Participant #5 (06:36)

Yes, definitely. I think so. Also, I just get more annoyed when there's like office lights, it reminds me of a hospital or like the exam hall which is places which makes me nervous or just make me have anxiety, so I don't like that. Natural lighting is better, especially now in summer. Usually, the sun sets at like nine. They close at six so after that I can still go out and chill and it wouldn't be like a closed white light environment.

Interviewer (07:25)

That makes sense. So do you think like in bad days, of course there isn't really the natural light. However, do you think it is still influencing you negatively if you have artificial light instead of natural light then? Since, technically on rainy days its not an option to have natural light.

Participant #5 (07:44)

But rainy day is also kind of nice because it's cold and like rainy outside and it's warming and you can smell the coffee and there are always a couple of people sitting inside. So natural lighting is definitely nice when its good weather. Everyone loves a good weather, but I think on rainy day I would still choose to study in the cafe or this cafe specifically as well. Its warm here, its cosy, quite warm to be honest. I just like hearing people making coffee at the back as well. Some white noises in general.

Interviewer (08:28)

Yeah. So do you think the lighting itself, as you said, that maybe sunny days or rainy days, but in general, like also artificial light. Do you think that does affect your willingness to study?

Participant #5 (08:41)

Yeah, I just don't like the white light.

Interviewer (08:49)

All right, so the next question, I just would like to see your preference in comparison of open space to enclosed space. Open space in a sense as looking outside, having a view, having people around you interacting or not interacting, but at least having the social aspects there or versus enclosed space where it's just like kind of individually in your own room having 4 walls surrounding you and yeah which one would you prefer?

Participant #5 0:17

I think well open space, but like indoor, so I could see more. Because when I even if I was sometimes really don't feel like going out there, and I'm staying at home, I still call my friends. And I will still study so much. So, for me setting, like having someone at the side doesn't matter if someone I know or familiar or not to like, work together is an important thing. Or aspect for me. Because it motivates me and when I'm alone, usually I

just get distracted really easily. And yeah. And then in a closed space is yeah, just makes me and especially when it's very silent, I just start to have like, really, the thoughts in my head just magnify. So, I think it's nicer when it's like open space and if there are people around as well.

Interviewer 1:15

Yeah. Then you would say that the preference of yours having open space does decide your study location?

Participant #5 1:25

Yeah, definitely.

Interviewer 1:29

Okay and then the opposite choice. I mean, yes. You've just mentioned that you do study at home sometimes. But do you think that affects your willingness to study negatively?

Participant #5 1:41

Just you mean, like, if I study at home?

Interviewer 1:42

Yeah because it is enclosed space.

Participant #5 1:45

It does because my bed is really next to me. It's really easy to just slide to my bed, and I felt like okay, maybe I'll just study in the bed. Sleep instead? Yeah, that's actually not that great, but I think it depends, as well. So, it depends on my mood. And sometimes there are some certain things that may work better in my room as well but rarely. Mostly I would prefer to study here.

Interviewer 2:22

Alright, um, then how important is it for you to actually feel comfortable at your study area?

Participant #5 2:28

Yeah, I mean, how important it is to feel comfortable? Yeah, I mean, if I'm not comfortable, I wouldn't study here right.

Interviewer 2:41

Yeah that's true, but like, I mean, some people mentioned like, different kinds of chairs, like we are here currently sitting for example on the couches, but over there there are chairs? So just your preference?

Participant #5 2:54

I like chairs. I would usually like to sit next to the window, preferably, half the size and the chairs are straight up so you have to sit straight and I was quite comfortable. I I sometimes sit on the couch, if there's no space. The couch makes me a bit more lazy. Usually, I only sit on the couch when maybe my boyfriend is here or maybe like then I would study on the couch. But there are also some like nice you know, like those proper chairs. Like with the posture thing. Postured chair. Yeah, inside of the study room at the back. Those are quite nice too. But to be honest, doesn't really make a big difference for me, I prefer a hard, normal chair where I could sit straight and facing the window. And that makes me the most comfortable. Or, like, most productive in a way for me. I prefer that if I can obviously sometimes just during peak studying area during exams period or something like that. It's harder to find a good spot you have to be here early.

Interviewer 4:15

Do you think if you have the option to personalize your study area in here like adding or contributing somehow, or adding something of yourself to individualize your area, you think that would improve your willingness to study?

Participant #5 4:33

Yeah, but I feel really there aren't much that I would like to add here. Maybe I'll remove they're still high tables. At the one side of the thing, I would put them smaller, never sat there but it seems quite uncomfortable, to be honest. So, I think then also give more space for other students. And think that maybe they can enlarge their tables, even here at the couch it doesn't really fit the laptop to be honest. In the backroom, like the study room it actually is quite big. And I think it can fit at least like one more chair, table inside. So, they could do that, using that definitely offer more space for students. Especially during the exam period. But I can understand it maybe because of COVID boring stuff. But other than that there is not much, cause I pretty much like it, I like it a lot here because I feel very comfortable here.

Interviewer 5:43

So is there anything which happens here or when you don't feel comfortable?

Participant #5 5:57

Not really, it's not necessarily about the place. It's just more like, because I wasn't feeling well. So nothing in the physical environment triggers me to feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Yeah, it's more like maybe if I order a wrong drink, and it ruins my day. I just wasn't feeling like studying so much. But I'm forcing myself to study and maybe this also just makes me feel like unsettled in a way, but in general, not really, nothing really happened here to make me feel uncomfortable, to be honest.

Interviewer 6:36

That's good, so how, like you already mentioned previously that you can also get like, some sandwiches here and like, toasties, that sort of food and like several options of coffee. But how important is it actually for you to have food and drinks available at your study location in general?

Participant #5 7:00

I think, well, I really liked eating when I'm studying. It really gives me I like doing something else when I'm studying like chewing or drinking and having able to drink coffee because I make really good coffee myself. That's quite nice. The third year I don't eat here often, unless I really really crave like toast or a brownie because I think it's quite pricey here. But I think it's nice, at least they offer the options. So, I think the food to be honest, sometimes I just bring like small snacks in my bag, like gummy bears would just eat one or two while I am studying. I don't think its allowed but I think coffee is definitely more important. So, its also nice. If you just if you could stay at a place and just get your coffee, my coffee cost, like I think four euros or something, I can stay there one to six or five depending on my mood. I think that's not bad.

Interviewer 8:18

But has it ever happened that you were like, okay, I would actually come here more often but because of the money its quite too much then for like exam season for example, when we have to study every day?

Participant #5 8:31

Not really, because I do come here every day. When I have to study or just in general for me, I prefer even sometimes prefer sitting here and watch recordings of lectures than actually going to lecture and study there. Just because it's first of all, it's close by to my place. And also, it's more comfortable here because I feel like in the UB the people are more judgey probably just in my head but but I think

Interviewer 9:06

Like at the university itself, like when we go to lectures or the UB?

Participant #5 9:11

Yeah, I feel more self conscious in the university than here.

Interviewer 9:14

Okay, so you said it was very close by to your home how far of walking distance does it usually take?

Participant #5 9:24

Two minutes. It's very close.

Interviewer 9:28

Um, would you consider of coming here if it would be further away?

Participant #5 9:33

Depends how far. So the Forum is also not far from here. And I sometimes study there too but I prefer for here more because it's closer. The Forum is like, seven minutes walking so that's like further south from me walking.

Interviewer 9:52

Since you said you prefer walking over biking. Do you think if they did, keeping the availability of food and drinks does affect your choice of study location?

Participant #5 10:12

For example, I definitely will not go to the UB, not only because of the lighting or like this, very complete silence environment. Also, I can't eat there. So, you are drinking, like liquids except like water that do affect my decision making of where I am going to study.

Interviewer 10:36

And since you also mentioned that, like you kind of like to eat or like drink something while studying does it also effect you if you wouldn't have that option to do that. Do you think it would also decrease your willingness to study?

Participant #5 10:49

Yes, definitely, I would say so. Yeah, it's just good, I like talking. So, if I can't talk, I need to eat.

Interviewer 11:01

So how important is it for you to have accessibility of electricity at the study location?

Participant #5 11:08

Very important, because I never charge my shit. I do need to, most of the time have like maybe a socket next to me to charge my laptop also. Because mostly if I stay at one place, I tend to stay I think more than three hours. So, my iPad could do fine but my laptop's does, the electricity goes away really quickly. So, I do need a socket nearby to charge it. Yeah, to make sure everything functions properly. Because I rely on my electronics to study. I use them all at the same time.

Interviewer 11:49

So has it ever happened that you got into an issue of not being able to study because there are not enough seats available with a socket?

Participant #5 12:00

No, because it is quite nice. You could just ask: Hey yeah, my laptop is dying, I really need to charge it now. Usually, people would offer you. And also, just quite understanding. Unless like there is really no space. But when I'm sitting at a place there's no socket. But usually if I see a place where I'll just sneak in or just leave my Laptop charging there. People are quite friendly. And they're, like willings saying usually willing to like that you charge it because they're all understanding and they understand like how annoying it is when one of your devices is empty or just unable to study especially during exams. So now that technology so good to charge really quick, maybe like half an hour it will be full. Or maybe just for 15 minutes so it lasts another one or two hours. So I don't think that really annoys me. Or if it ever occurred that it made me couldn't study. It's good.

Interviewer 13:04

So, in general, like, whenever you go to study, we need to have access to internet. But do you experience any negative effects of having the option to always be online such as, like impacting your academic performances through like some sort of distractions that Wi Fi offers?

Participant #5 13:28

You mean like that I would go on social media? Definitely. Also, like the thing is with Nestor it's really annoying with logging in, the verification. And that's really annoys me sometimes. But yeah, I think, even though I am sometimes I get distracted and get on my phone, because of the environment that I'm in right now, most people studying next to me and you kind of just sort of when I may look at what other people are doing and be like I should study now. Like I'm on my phone a bit too long. Or yeah, in general, actually studying here with like, music and stuff motivates me to focus back in studying, so it does affect me. But I think the environment helps me to focus again. Also, I just usually put my phone away. And then you can't really use Instagram on your laptop or WhatsApp. Yeah, there's like the web version, but I just put them in another tab. So, you can't see it. So only maybe if I really, really want to check it out. I check it a bit. Then I can refocus back mainly when I put my phone away its not too bad. Yeah,

Interviewer 15:02

I agree. Um, so to the second part, now we're coming to the social interaction section.

Participant #5 15:11

So it's just the second part.

Interviewer 15:13

Yeah. But it's not too long, it has less less questions.

Participant #5 15:16

Okay!

Interviewer 15:16

Um, so for this one, so how important I mean, you already mentioned that there are a lot of people around here, but it's more that you're privately studying. However, just to mention, again, like how important is active social interaction for you, in your surrounding area here to study at?

Participant #5 15:36

I don't, I wouldn't say active, maybe passive. Like that I'm hearing social interactions in the background. While I'm focusing its so-called passive. Yeah, I like that. Its also nice to be in a cafe that I could take friends here and I can study and then chit chat as well. I wouldn't say that made me focus more, but definitely makes studying more enjoyable. I probably wouldn't do that during the exam seasons. But normally, when it's just maybe the beginning of the semester or nothing major is coming up yet. I would like that as well, makes me look for study more. Yeah. Also resist, like, in a way that you need to ask someone something, that counts as interaction, right? Or just Yeah, or maybe we sat near the window and you look at people who appreciate you as like what a hard-working university student. Yeah, it's also kind of nice. Yeah, and sometimes, because it's such an open cafe, you sometimes you may see people, you know on the streets and you can say hi, that also makes like study more fun as well. So yeah, no, so it said about the barista. Yeah, they are also really nice that you were intense studying that the order you sat down, it would just bring it to you. Instead of you have to go up. So yeah, the thing, is, it's part of it. That's why I like studying here because I feel like in the UB, you will totally be cut off the social environment. Yeah, and I think in the UB you can only go to the coffee room to socialize or talk or chill. That feels quite intense and that I think it's too much effort. And also, I wouldn't feel as comfortable as here.

Interviewer 17:51

I'm so has it ever happened, actually when you came here, but it was too noisy, or anything like too much interaction with people around you? Which includes you.

Participant #5 18:09

Maybe sometimes, if I'm listening lectures didn't really listen, I will have my headphones in, and I will only hear the lecturers voice and now just be during my day. But yeah, like maybe sometimes I'm doing assignments, which mostly I'm just reading. It cannot be too loud, but mostly only during weekends. Then it can be too loud for me. Yes, yeah, during weekend, people would also just like to chill at the cafe and maybe talk with friends and stuff. That will matter. But it's also very understandable because it's the weekend, in such a cafe people come here to enjoy their life. So, I was also in during the weekend also study in a shorter period of time, so it didn't bother me as much. But there were really not a point that was so loud that I have to leave, no, not really.

Interviewer 19:05

So, do you think in general though, not saying just that it's too loud or anything but do acoustics and noises in general affect you, your willingness to study?

Participant #5 19:16

As long as it's like white noise level. So, it's not like people screaming next to your ear and you can hear everything clearly then that definitely is gonna distract me because I'm nosy as well so I wanna know what they are talking about, but in general like a good amount of white noise at the back is good for me. As I said, people making coffee, ordering or like laptop typing, like cups and stuff. Just makes it really enjoyable white noises for me.

Interviewer 19:58

So, I'm just going to mention an acoustic preference scale that so the first one is silent. The second one is noisy with verbal communication, but no understanding of what's being said. And the third one is loud; it assumes that there is verbal communication around you and can understand it. So, what would be your preference between these three?

Participant #5 20:24

Some sort of, like, if I focus, I can understand?

Interviewer 20:32

Like, sorry, so the second one is noisy like verbal communication. So, it's just like people talking

Participant #5 20:38

No, not understanding is this one.

Interviewer 20:39

The noisy one, right? Not understanding.

Participant #5 20:42

Yes, like, if I want to hear I can hear it, but if I just focus on my stuff, then I will just blend in.

Interviewer 20:50

Okay that's good, so, right now we can listen to music. And I was just wondering, do you also personally listen to the music when you study?

Participant #5 21:02

Yeah, I do. But depends on it. But mostly, it's something non lyrical. And mostly music that I've never heard of. So, my brain wouldn't sing with it. Yeah. Yeah. So, I don't mind listening to music. To be honest, I like it. If I'm at home on my own, I would play it as sort of like a mild noises for me.

Interviewer 21:31

That makes sense. But do you think you get you could get negatively impacted by hearing music? Or do you think it decreases your academic performances? Or maybe

Participant #5 21:44

I think it depends, again, mostly, not really. Unless there's a cafe that plays like pop songs all the time, that probably that would affect me. But this cafe is you can hear mostly they're really soft, and almost couldn't hear the lyrics. And its mostly songs I've never heard before. So that does not affect me too much.

Interviewer 22:12

So, does the location with the need to study at change actually if you work in a group assignment with other people or individually?

Participant #5 22:22

Individual assignments or to study lectures, definitely I will stay in a cafe. Group assignment, if for discussion part for sure, I'm going to do it at home to talk and then discuss about the parts and I don't want to bother other people. But mostly, if I can work, I would stay in a cafe, indoor.

Interviewer 22:46

If you would have to meet up with a group of people, where would you usually go to?

Participant #5 22:56

Maybe the forum, because it's also quite nice. And it's louder and it's more space for like group settings. I think then a cafe. Because here mostly the tables are very small and it's more like individualistic. Also not really, but how do I say it, like the tables allow you to sit alone but with other people, but not in a group setting that you can just discuss things so you don't feel alone when you're alone? If that makes sense.

Interviewer 23:32

I get it. Yeah. It makes sense. No, it's like small chair, chairs, small tables. So since it's more pragmatic to study alone but you can technically, also, sit with more people.

Participant #5 23:45

It feels like you are working on, like studying individually together and its for more small discussions and stuff in a cafe. So, if its like a group setting kinda thing, maybe go to someone's place to the park, or to the forum, which I think is more ideal.

Interviewer 24:03

Um, I almost Yeah, second to last question actually. How do you impact through self other monitoring, so that you see other people studying around you? Also. Yeah,

Participant #5 24:19

That really helps me, I think, seeing other people studying working that makes me realize that I should work too so. I really like that. That motivates me. Also. Also, yes, show other people that I'm actually working, doing something for Uni and stuff. I think that really helps me to focus. Cafe is just perfect, because the UB will be very intense. And the Forum is quite nice too. But I think I would prefer the cafe with like, It's just more like a tiny performance very big. Yeah, here it is just more personal in a way and yeah.

Interviewer 25:13

I feel like also it has like an overview like you have everything technically and see everything.

Participant #5 25:19

Yeah see everything nicely and the Forum there are also other people who are not studying there. I mean like walking around with their kids sometimes, especially during the weekends, it can be quite loud. Yeah. And here you can smell the coffee, which also makes the experience more sensual. I like it!

Interviewer 25:46

Okay, so do you ever feel pressured to study through the stuff as referred to as monitoring? In a bad way?

Participant #5 25:55

No, no, no, no. I know, like, sometimes people do go on their phones. So, I wouldn't be like oh I have to study, but it positively effects me I guess.

Interviewer 26:10

Okay, so yeah, just last question. In general line, do you have anything to add or want to mention about this learning environment, the cafe or like from you?

Participant #5 26:24

No, in general, I think the whole experience studying here is very nice. Yeah, you have Wi Fi, nice coffee. Very good crowd. I would say sometimes I see the same people come here, its close to my place it is just actually quite perfect here. And some of my friends just come here too to study and I can invite my friends to come here as well. So generally, it's a very good location. But I can understand for some other people it can be harder to study with the noises in the background or just seeing people walking around which distracts them crazy, but that's not my case. So, I like it here. I recommend!

Interviewer 27:13

That was kind of it. Thank you very much!

Transcript of Participant #6

Interviewer 0:00

Hello, we're doing the, you are my sixth participant for the interviews for the study and I would just like to ask you to maybe introduce yourself and explain where we're at right now?

Participant #6 0:15

Okay, so my name is Participant #6. I'm 22. I'm from Hong Kong. And I'm studying in Groningen, at the University of Groningen. I'm doing my masters. And right now, we are in Coffee Company, a cafe that I study, mainly use to study in.

Interviewer 0:35

So why did you choose to study here in this environment actually or exactly why this cafe?

Participant #6 0:42

So, in comparison to other cafes that I've been to, in the city, they're a lot smaller. I don't feel as comfortable taking out my laptop. And I don't know why I feel like they also don't have Wi Fi. I know that they do. But I feel like it's not the place where I would go up and ask the cashier, oh, can I have the Wi Fi password, it's been more cozy. So, this one's like, so much space. Lights, like areas where you can actually put your laptop on the desk, the other ones just kind of like smaller tables. That's just for food and drink, you know? So, it that those aren't very inviting when I think Oh, where do I want to study? And I would say also, when I look into the coffee company, people are studying, they look young, they look like students or at least young professionals or something. And I really like to be around people. So, motivates me to continue studying. I think in other cafes it is much more chatty, and people are taking a break in those types of cafes. Yeah.

Interviewer 1:52

How come that you actually chose to study in a cafe instead of like a UB?

Participant #6 1:56

So, I do, I do like, fluctuate. I think I do I go study, I study in a library when I think I have like a very, very hard deadline, and I cannot have any distractions. But when it comes to like a bit more research, or trying to be a bit more creative, come up with more ideas, I definitely come to cafes, and that's what a lot of my projects are about. So, I've been doing those kinds of projects more so than I come study here. And the UB, I think, I don't know, I think I just don't, sometimes I also don't like the study environment too much. Because it's like when you're there, and you know, everyone's studying, and then you just can't concentrate. And then I just, like end up wasting a day in the UB, but here, it's like, I do an hour. I feel good. And then I just leave and then I feel like I did something. I don't know if that makes sense. But yeah.

Interviewer 2:55

So, what are actually overall your necessities of a place to have, when you go somewhere to study?

Participant #6 3:02

Charging ports for my laptop. For sure my battery runs off like in an hour. I would say I would say like weirdly, like, I don't like to I like there to be a lot of spaces where you can sit where you're not alone. But you're also not like on a giant I don't know like in a booth or something where you're surrounded by other seats. Like there's kind of like two people tables single people tables just so it doesn't feel like I'm sitting at a table that's meant for like six people. So, like little tiny study corners and stuff like that I really like where you can just do anything in your own space. And I would say probably most of the aesthetics of the place. Like I chose Coffee Coffee Company as well because I genuinely like the kind of hipster cafe you know, posters on the wall but then also like some plants like that kind of vibe. Also is just like super calming and chill doesn't make me really feel like I'm studying makes me feel like I'm a bit I don't know, like a working adult like professional that kind of stuff so yeah.

Interviewer 4:17

Yeah, you're actually also enjoying what you're doing instead of trying to cram everything in for a deadline.

Participant #6 4:22

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, for sure.

Interviewer 4:24

Um, so do you think in general like all these necessities you just mentioned are they all represented here or are you missing something?

Participant #6 4:38

I would say they are all represented here. I will say though there have been times where I've like sat down in certain spots, and like, regretted it just based on like how much sun I get for like, maybe I ended up sitting next to like people who are just here to drink and eat You know, so it's just not a dedicated study place. I don't always get lucky. But then sometimes I do have days where everything matches what I wanted. And there's some days, they don't. So, and that's just kind of like, just depends.

Interviewer 5:14

Is there like a specific hour you come here or like, when it's better to study here, then others?

Participant #6 5:19

I definitely do try and do morning like 11, would probably be like, my prime time. Or right before, like an hour or two before they close. So, I think they close at seven.

Interviewer 5:33

Oh, that's quite late for a cafe.

Participant #6 5:36

Yeah, so like, I kind of like there's also like, later afternoon sessions, because then I really feel like I spent the day productive, because then I just go home, I don't have to do any other work. But yeah, so like, morning or late afternoon.

Interviewer 5:50

Alright, um, you already mentioned like, aesthetics, and also like lighting a bit. And also like the posters, but how does the physical environment in general and social interaction have the location inspire you to study?

Participant #6 6:07

Okay, so I'll start with the social interaction, I used to come here with another person. So that really helped because then we're kind of like motivating each other. And then the second, we need a break, we can just take out our headphones. And we're in the space of talking and being like communal, not like in the library where you have to actively stand up, get out, find a spot, you know. So that kind of motivated me to study and then I just started also coming by myself. Also, getting like, bumping into people is also quite nice. I also enjoy that getting to just like, also see familiar faces, but then also kind of like it, because there's also no pressure to like, I don't know, I feel like a lot more watched in the library. But here, even if I see somebody that I've seen, like six different times, I don't know, it feels way different than if I see somebody in the library in the same floor in the same area. You know, it feels a bit awkward there. But here's just kind of like, no, we're all meant to be here. I don't know. And in terms of physical space, I think it really has to just be like the the light, how much natural light and windows you get of being able to just like watch the people cycling or that kind of stuff is really nice. The locations like right in the city. So, if I did want to go somewhere else like the UB I could, like I've definitely done UB and then come after Come on. Come here after. But I think that's kind of it. I do like the design of the place. So, as I said, like to kind of like aesthetically pleasing. That hipstery Pinterest vibe is nice and just Yeah, cool. feels cool. Yeah.

Interviewer 8:09

So, in general, what changes could actually what do you think what change could be conducted here at the coffee company for your for yourself to reach better motivational outcomes or a better academic performances?

Participant #6 8:23

The question I would say, I think they honestly need to figure out a way or I guess it's hard, but like, again, like with the heat thing, like there's particular tables, like the ones that I'm looking at right now, where they're perfect when they is shade. But the second that the sun hits the windows, and then your laptops on there, you're burning and you didn't you get really distracted, like you're trying to focus but then you just focus on being hot and uncomfortable. Then I come sit on the couches, and then there was no like plugs. So, then that doesn't accommodate it. So, it's kind of like I have to keep I always have to have a trade off. And that always like I'm thinking about something else not think about studying. So, I'm just either like steaming in the heat. Or like I'm freaking out about my charging port. But I will say they do have the area in the back, which is dedicated to just studying there's no music in there. And I think that's really helpful. And honestly, I know this doesn't make any sense because its a company but if they could have free coffee then I would be here and studying all the time. Because that's the one thing that's also stopping me from coming constantly is I can't drop like six euros on a coffee when I can just still get 40 cents coffee in the library, you know.

Interviewer 9:57

That's true. Yeah, I guess it also makes A lot of people would rather not go to a cafe because it's just expensive going here regularly.

Participant #6 10:05

Exactly. It's the regular part. It's like, by the end of the week, you've realized that you've spent 30 euros on coffee, and you're like, I didn't need to spend 30 euros on coffee just to sit in a nice cafe. But it does make me feel good so.

Interviewer 10:21

It's worth it. And then yeah, going, actually to only the physical aspect of the environment. So, we already mentioned it before, but like, how important is lighting for you particular here, or in general at other study locations?

Participant #6 10:38

I would say it's probably should I give you like a scale of like one to 10?

Interviewer 10:48

Just anything is fine.

Participant #6 10:50

I would say it's pretty up there. I don't want to say, I don't I don't know if I can say it's the most important. But um, now that I've been thinking about it, it might be because like, even, like I really struggled to study at home in my room. But the second that I have a lot of light. And it's super sunny outside and like, then it kind of changes I still can't study as well, but I can still get a bit more work done. Same with my house. Like if I'm in the living room, and there's light, I can study way better. So, I when I now think about it's probably like, yeah, pretty up there for me. Because even when I'm in the library, I always try and find a spot that has as much light as possible. Where we are looking out into the light. Yeah, I don't know. I guess it just keeps me awake makes me feel like it's the daytime and then I'm meant to be working. Yeah.

Interviewer 11:47

So, I would say then it does affect your choice of study location. In however, is there a difference for you to have direct sunlight or also like like natural sunlight or also artificial light?

Participant #6 12:02

I think it makes a big difference. I think I very much like natural light and like I was complaining about the sun but I love the feeling of also feeling like the light. I am trying to think of times where I have been in a place where it's been poorly lit. Yeah, I think I prefer the natural. That one is definitely more energizing, I guess. But I think most of the places are like the UB is quite okay lit. I'm sure they've put a lot of effort into thinking about that as well. But like, yeah, if I'm at home, and I just have like one little lamp on. I don't really like that. I just work in the dark. And then having a little lamp. I can't concentrate. Really.

Interviewer 12:55

Yeah. Yeah, it also personally just makes me feel tired or so. Yeah. When there's like not natural sunlight, the heat as well. Of course, today is a sunny day. It's nice to sit here. Yeah, if its a cloudy day when there's no sun, then you do of course need artificial light.

Participant #6 13:12

Yeah, for sure.

Interviewer 13:15

Yeah, um, but then do you think that it does affect your willingness to study, the lighting?

Participant #6 13:22

Like the natural light or just lighting in general?

Interviewer 13:24

Lighting in general.

Participant #6 13:26

My willingness to study, yes. For sure, I think like the second, for example, it starts to get darker outside and we don't have any artificial lighting on at home. I'm already like, if I need to continue this essay, I have to turn on all the lights, all of them Max like otherwise, I'm just not going to. I'm going to think it's time to watch a movie or something like that and then I'll, I'll do that so.

Interviewer 13:53

Yeah, I was just wondering as well, like, do you think since you just said that it also like brings it in the break time? You also just take off your headphones and maybe like if you're coming with friends or socialize? But do you think it's difficult to see the balance between actually having a cafe as a social area or for working?

Participant #6 14:10

Oh yeah for sure, I mean, like, we're talking about the willingness to study, and like there is the willingness, but I definitely wouldn't say it's the most effective way of study. Because I do come here and I do study but maybe me reading three articles is going to take a bit longer than it would if I was in the UB but then I am enjoying it a bit more, I think. Yeah, I feel like I've spent a day doing something a bit more than just studying I feel a bit more productive. Because yeah, maybe I go to the UB finish studying my three articles and then I'm just gonna be like now what you know, the day is not even over but I do Yeah, the balance is difficult. So, like coming here, I do want to study, I feel like I need to study. But I will say like, yeah, sometimes it's not always effective. And I said, like, it depends, sometimes I will have a very effective study session. And then sometimes I'm like, I cannot concentrate. There's too many people. This was a waste of time. So, yeah.

Interviewer 15:19

All right. Now we're coming to like, I am going to define two terms. In a sense like open space, and enclosed space, seeing like, open space as like, you're able to look outside to have a view. And also having people around you. So technically, it would kind of be like a cafe as well with like, the windows outside, being able to look outside is an open space, versus like an enclosed space where you have like four walls around you, you know, you're individually in a room, you don't get distracted very easily. So, since we're here at the cafe, I can kind of guess what your preference would be. But just for letting you know, like asking, what would your preference be open space versus enclosed space?

Participant #6 15:59

It would definitely be open space. Yeah, yeah. But then not outside. Like, like, this is kind of like, as you said, like a bit mix. But like, if I were to sit on the chairs, outside of the cafe, I don't think I could study.

Interviewer 16:12

Okay yeah. But like, at the window where you can look outside and see people?

Participant #6 16:17

Yeah, for sure.

Interviewer 16:18

Okay. So, would you think that, yeah, I mean, does the preference affect your choice of study location then?

Participant #6 16:27

Yes. It does. Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 16:32

So, I am going through the questions, um, would the opposite choice effect, your willingness to study?

Participant #6 16:41

No, because I do study in the library. And I do also realize, like, I know, that sometimes this isn't the most effective place to study. And it's been more definitely me just putting my wants, and how I feel that day ahead of like, the fact that I need to study. But like, if we're talking about, you know, those rooms in the library that are private study rooms that you have to book yourself, like those I would never go to that extent like that, for me is too closed a bit, feeling a bit claustrophobic in a sense. And I honestly feel like I just, I don't know, it reminds me of like a bathroom stall, or something. But like you just study in it like, it's too small. And it's just like, you just kind of come out. And like everyone else is there and then you just go back in. I don't know. So, like, in that sense, it does affect me, I would never study something like that enclosed. But I will still study in a room with four walls.

Interviewer 17:56

So how important is it for you to feel comfortable actually at the study location?

Participant #6 18:02

Also, very important. I remember, first year of Uni, I think I had like mad anxiety going into the library just because of feeling watched. So, I would actively, like, avoid the library just because like walking down the aisle to get out. And just having everyone like, no one's looking at you. But like, if you had like squeaky shoes or something.

Interviewer 18:28

Oh yeah, then definitely people would look.

Participant #6 18:30

Yeah, and then you are just like omg shut up, so embarrassing. Or like you forget something stand up and you'd go outside again, it's like, oh, I need to go to the bathroom for the fifth time. And I need to walk all the way like that I don't feel comfortable doing that. But here like I can get up walk around and I can even go to like, I feel safe enough to like leave my stuff here and like, go to the supermarket grab a bite to eat come back, you know.

Interviewer 18:52

So, you could bring food here?

Participant #6 18:54

You can't bring food in here. But like as in like if I wanted to have a little walk, I would feel comfortable leaving my bag. Maybe I take of course my phone, wallet and maybe my laptop, but then I would get like a little snack just having a walk and then come back and you know, go back to work. But then yeah.

Interviewer 19:12

Um, do you think actually, if you could add something personal, towards like in here to your study space, do you think that would improve your willingness to study here?

Participant #6 19:24

Something personal?

Interviewer 19:25

Yeah, just like adding something here, something personally to this area.

Participant #6 19:30

Um, if I were to personalize this place, um, I don't think it would really change much for me. Yeah, I mean, I'm trying to think what I would add, but there's nothing really that I would like even if I were to change, like, the food options to stuff that I really really enjoy. Like I honestly wouldn't. Like I also like to try new things. Yeah.

Maybe like it would be cool to have more like, if anything more artwork. I don't know if that would actually make it more distracting. Now that I'm looking around, there's only one full wall, everything else is quite sleek and clean. So, I don't know if that would change too much. But it would be cool to have maybe more art or yeah.

Interviewer 20:24

Then generally, do you actually always come to the same seating area? Or like you mentioned that you would move if the sun is too much? Yeah, or just in general, but like, would you kind of often move to a specific location, where you always go to like preferred space kind of?

Participant #6 20:41

For sure. I have two, one here where we're sitting right now so I get to see everything? And like my back's not to people. But if I, but also along there, I have like another seating preference that I like.

Interviewer 20:55

Um, is it like sometimes an issue like coming here? Like, is it very packed? Or like, to find a space? Like, could that be an issue?

Participant #6 21:03

There has there's I don't think there's ever been a time where I've been here. And I couldn't find a seat. There had definitely been times where I've had to like maybe wait a bit, until people move. And then I'm kind of like okay I am definitely more comfortable. But most of the time I always get a seat. And most of the time, it's which one like I usually sit at.

Interviewer 21:03

Since yeah, I mean, you're at the cafe you have food and drinks. But actually, how important is it for you to have availability of food and drinks at a study place?

Participant #6 21:39

Food I think, Oh. I was gonna say not important at all, but I think it is. Because like, even when I ended up, like, studying, like five hours, and I don't want to leave, I'm like, I just got like a little snack bar or something. And I'm like, Thank God, we have vending machines or something. So, I would say like, yeah, not not too important, like to the point of like, not going because they don't have food or that they do. But I've definitely benefited from it. Without me knowing but drink 100% Yes, I think coffee. Yeah, yes.

Interviewer 22:21

But as you said you would go also to the UB to have like, small little coffee. But is that enough as well?

Participant #6 22:30

Yes, it is. Because I know it's like, way nicer on my wallet. And yeah, that's pretty much it.

Interviewer 22:42

Then does it also decide your choice of study location?

Participant #6 22:49

Yeah, I think it does. When if I'm really think about it. Yeah. I definitely do go to places where I think I will get a nice coffee or I can have a nice muffin or something.

Interviewer 23:01

Yeah, and just having the option there I guess

Participant #6 23:03

Yes. Yeah.

Interviewer 23:05

So yeah, would you then say that it would affect your willingness to study? If they wouldn't offer food or drinks?

Participant #6 23:12

Yeah, I'd say so. Because even now when I think about it, I also have gone to the harmony. Over the UB because I know that there's like more food more drink. It's more of like a cafe.

Interviewer 23:24

So yeah, like they have a cafeteria, right?

Participant #6 23:27

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 23:29

So yeah. I don't know. I feel like you've mentioned every single bit every time before I even get to the question but how important is actually the accessibility of electricity for you?

Participant #6 23:41

Very important as 100% I think lighting and the electricity is very important. Just because my battery is so low. I think if I had like a really good laptop, where, wait does electricity involve Wi Fi?

Interviewer 23:54

Um, yes. So, that as well.

Participant #6 23:56

Then, yeah, that's most important the WIFI.

Interviewer 23:59

Yeah, I mean, in general, I feel Yeah, like internet is like, we just need it. It's as before, like it is a necessity for everyone to study. It is available mostly in most locations we study at as students, but as I said, like some Cafes, maybe don't offer it or it's impossible to even get access to it. Yeah, so I guess, at like larger cafes, or chains, then I guess it is easier to just to know to get Wi Fi and know like how quick it is.

Participant #6 24:32

Yeah, how quick it is, how easy it is to ask for. Like I would hate to go into a maybe a more independent local cafe that like, of course has Wi Fi. But then, like, they want you to be there for their coffee specifically. And, you know, yeah, for the culture of having coffee and stuff like that not to take up a space just so you can use their Wi Fi. And that's how I would feel even though I'm buying a drink and stuff I would still like I wouldn't feel comfortable spending like five hours, but here, maybe not five hours, but I definitely spent like three or something.

Interviewer 25:04

Then do you think having this internet available, do you think there are any negative effects on you on like your academic performances?

Participant #6 25:16

Yes. Because actually I would say, no. I think it's only positive like, the effects on my study. Because like, even though I have like internet access here, I would never be streaming Netflix or watching a YouTube video, like, I don't think I'd even really watch. I think I would watch a lecture. But like, for example, yeah, so the place

gives me the impression that like, I shouldn't be doing those kinds of things. But if I was studying at home, that does have Wi Fi, I would be more likely to click on Netflix.

Interviewer 26:03

Like, how about social media?

Participant #6 26:07

Social media? Oh, I think that would I think my my habits with social media will are like not that it doesn't matter where I am. I think I'm so used to using it that like, there's never going to be a place that doesn't stop me from checking my phone or notifications, which is really stressful. But yeah, yeah. So actually, yeah, I guess that's a little bit of a negative thing. But I think it's something that I genuinely can't escape. Yeah.

Interviewer 26:43

Yeah. It's also like what was mentioned previously, as well, is that everyone has mobile data nowadays. So, it's like even if you wouldn't have internet, I feel like social media is still out there, so it is really difficult to kind of escape if you want to study.

Participant #6 27:00

Yeah, true. True, true true.

Interviewer 27:03

And for, for now we are coming to the second part of like, the social interaction part. And I just wanted to ask how important it is for you to have active social interaction around you in the cafe or like, at your usual study locations?

Participant #6 27:18

So around me and not including me?

Interviewer 27:21

Both like you can touch upon both.

Participant #6 27:25

I think around me, it's it's nice to see people interacting with each other. Of course, if they're like having, like, laughing so much and like not, they're just to study, it would be kind of annoying. But I think is maybe don't really like it too much. If there's too much going on, like very, very close proximity to me. And what was the question how important is?

Interviewer 27:59

Yeah.

Participant #6 28:02

I think should maybe not that important. If there's social interactions happening around me or not. I think its nice seeing people do their own thing. Like if it was empty in the cafe, I think I would still feel the same way. Actually, actually no, if it was No, I take that back if it was, I like it, like everyone's doing their own thing, but if everyone was like, not here, I'm trying to think actually how I would feel. I think it would also still kind of be nice, because then I have like a place to myself. But if that was the norm, then maybe I actually wouldn't come here. I think I do enjoy just seeing people doing their own thing. Seeing social interactions. Also with me, me, I also like bumping into people, or like seeing someone that I haven't seen a long time and you're like, oh, crazy, blabla. So, I think it is quite important too.

Interviewer 28:55

Then, like, do a lot of friends of yours come here as well?

Participant #6 29:01

Maybe not a lot, but a hand, like a couple I would say. I've definitely met a couple of people here that I am acquainted with, acquaintances. Not friends. Yeah. Um, a couple of friends of course, but yeah, I think it's quite nice. It's also in the other location. But what's interesting is I don't like the other location. I only like this one. Yeah.

Interviewer 29:23

I haven't checked the other place out either, but what is the difference between these places?

Participant #6 29:30

I think it's, that one is way smaller and less light.

Interviewer 18:59

There you go, then how about your, your direct social interaction with people? Like if you're here with a friend Yeah, um, do you guys, wait let me think about this question, um, like, if you come here together. Do you like to sit apart or do you actually sit together?

Participant #6 19:18

Okay. Yeah. So, if I come to a study place with someone, I like to spend that day with that person, so study session with that person. I like to have the ability to like, just look at them and be like, is it time for a break? And then they're like, yes, it's time for a break. Yeah. It is. It can be distracting. But I think if you kind of set ground rules with each other of like, okay, 45 minutes, let's go study. It does also, I think it motivates me more than it distracts me.

Interviewer 19:51

Yeah, that's interesting. Um, so yeah. Do you think that the social interaction around you with people are also your personal interaction with people. Does it affect your willingness to study?

Participant #6 20:06

Yes, it affects my willingness to study. I think it Yeah, it makes me more willing to study I would say.

Interviewer 20:16

Now about more about the acoustics about here, or in general study locations, what is actually your preference? From a scale of 1 to 3. one being complete silence. Second is like, noisy, like verbal communication around you, but it's not understandable. And then the third one is like loud verb communication. And you can understand it so which one would you choose?

Participant #6 20:42

Definitely two. Yeah, two, I think when I first start hearing people's conversations, and I just can't concentrate, and the silence, I do appreciate silence, especially like, that's the only reason I would go to the UB is when I need to finish a deadline, and I have to do it. And I can't have any distractions. But I think for the most part, when I think about like, my normal patterns, it's definitely I like being around. Yeah, around more noise. Same with the harmony building. Like, you can hear a bit more people doing stuff talking, its nicer.

Interviewer 20:42

So, you would, so how do the acoustics actually affect your willingness to study? Like would it be affecting you also, negatively or positively if its a different scale?

Participant #6 21:33

Yeah, so three would negatively affect me for sure. I think two is probably the sweet spot for me. One is, I guess both? I think it really depends. I think silence would positively affect me, because it's like the best concentration so one and two. But I prefer two.

Interviewer 21:35

Has it ever happened that it got to a point, but you had to do something, and you came here to study? And you were just you arrived? And it was way too loud? Have you ever chosen to stay here for like, I don't know, 15 minutes? 20 minutes, max like 30? And you're like, okay, I'm done with this I'm going somewhere else?

Participant #6 22:21

Yeah, I would say yes. But I don't know if it would be noise, I think it would be maybe the music as well. Like maybe too many songs that I know. Or like, maybe the music was too loud that day, and then you're everyone else's voice has also kind of rise up that then that was super distracting. Even if I had my headphones on, because then yeah, then I take them out and I try to have a break. But then it would just be like, the same thing. Well not the same thing but just like in another form of like, noise. And I definitely have like maybe not have left, like in 15 minutes, but I've definitely been like 45 minutes when I never usually, if I come here and I pay for coffee, like I'm going to stay for at least two hours, two and a half. But then I have like just given up and being like okay, 45 minutes. Sorry, I can't I'm out.

Interviewer 23:17

Um, so yeah, at the cafe here, you can listen to music. But you also just mentioned that you're wearing headphones, and do you listen to personal music, or do you just use it as like a silent sensor?

Participant #6 23:29

I think both sometimes I do just put them in for the sake of like, it's like kind of comfort thing. And also, it does kind of like mute things. And also gives me the ability to just like, instantly if I need to watch a lecture or a clip or something. It'd be really easy to do that. But I also do like to listen to maybe not, yeah, personal music, but like, a lot of the time I will put on a playlist or something that's new, and very, very chill. Just otherwise I won't be able to study.

Interviewer 24:03

Do you how do you impact actually by listening to music on your academic results?

Participant #6 24:11

Listening to music?

Interviewer 24:11

Yeah.

Participant #6 24:12

Um, I don't know. I'm, I think I've been doing it habitually for so long, but like, I don't really know how to study without music. I get pretty decent results. So, I mean, there's that, so I'm pretty satisfied with it. Honestly though, it would be kind of cool to experiment to see like if no music helps as well because I'm sure it does. But just the act of studying I feel like it's made a lot easier when I have like the ability to listen to music and stuff in the background.

Interviewer 24:52

Then does the location studying actually change if you're like here by yourself, or actually having to do a group assignment or actually in general, if you're in the group, do you change locations? Or do you also come here?

Participant #6 25:07

If it's a group assignment, I would definitely, if it's a group assignment feel, I don't know. Yeah, I would go somewhere else, I wouldn't kind of recommend this place just because of the prices a little bit. Because I don't know them. I don't want to make them come to a coffee company and just be like, Hey, we're gonna spend time here. But I would, yeah, yeah. So, it does. For some groups, I wouldn't study here, I don't think.

Interviewer 25:39

How do you actually impact through self other monitoring in a sense that other people are studying around you? And maybe you feel being watched? Or like pressured by them studying around you while you're studying as well?

Participant #6 25:54

Like, how does that affect my studying?

Interviewer 25:56

Yeah.

Participant #6 25:57

It affects it positively. Because then I have to really study. Because here, I don't feel as watched. But the second I look up, and I'm like, okay, I just want to do something else. I'm like, no, everyone's studying, like, come on, like, just finish, whatever you have to do. Like, you can do it. But I guess it's the same in the library. But I just feel more comfortable here. And I like the ability to take breaks kind of whenever I want, and not to move around so much. And like, make noise. Like I know myself like I don't just sit here make noise. But like, if I wanted to talk like send a voice message or something, or it's just so much easier to do here. Yeah.

Interviewer 26:41

Yeah, then actually, that was kind of it, to be honest. Oh, wait, I just remembered. Since, you just mentioned it earlier, I think before we started recording it. But you're quite. I mean, yeah, it's quite far for Groningen, technically, from your boat to come here.

Participant #6 27:01

Oh, yes.

Interviewer 27:01

Where you live to here, yeah. Um, does it anyhow, like effect your time visiting here, like, how often you come here? Or actually, like, you have like a minimum hours like, hey, it's, it's took so much time to travel here. Now I need to make the best out of it.

Participant #6 27:22

Oh, yes, I think so. Especially if it's like, like, the weather's really bad or something. And I'm like, I like pushing myself to scout the house. And I yeah, I know that I cycled and I left the house for a reason. It definitely does increase my motivation, to study and also to stay like where I am at studying.

Interviewer 27:51

Would you actually come more often here if it was closer by?

Participant #6 27:58

I don't think so. And I have the same thing with the gym. I think if my gym was really close, I don't think I'd go as often. I think I've like the pain of having to go and I feel really good afterwards. So, like I did that! Good on you! So, kind of the same.

Interviewer 28:20

Alright, that was technically all the questions. But do you have any additional information you would like to add about your personal? Like, not personal but like to share your study space with me or like, in general?

Participant #6 28:32

Um, no, not really. I think. I think I kind of covered most of it. I hope I answered your questions good enough.

Interviewer 28:41

Yes, was very well done. Well, that was kind of it. Thank you very much.

Participant #6 28:45

Yeah, no problem.

Transcript of Participant #7

Interviewer 0:00

Hello, good morning. Um, just to overall, explain where we're at. We're currently at one of participant's home. And so just to begin off, could you maybe introduce yourself and specify where we're at?

Participant #7 0:17

Yes, my name is Participant #7. I'm 22 years old. And I'm currently in my third year of my Bachelor's studies International Business at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands.

Interviewer 0:27

Okay, um, so yeah, we're, as I mentioned before, we're at your current house, or like apartment, just to clarify, are you usually studying here in the kitchen? Or do you study in your room,

Participant #7 0:39

I always study in my room with a closed door, because I really am really sensitive to environment sounds. So, it really needs to be quiet, and nothing can be moved.

Interviewer 0:48

Okay, um, so yeah, why did you choose to study in this environment?

Participant #7 0:53

I chose for this environment, because it's quiet, it doesn't change. And I really need an environment which does not have any changes, or occurrences. Because I noticed when I sat in the library, like I was always looking at somebody coming in looking at somebody, just eating lunch, or just doing something else is really distracting me. So, I need a calm environment for my studies.

Interviewer 1:19

Okay, so what are actually your necessities for you to have at location you study at?

Participant #7 1:25

Well, I just need basics simple, like, just just the table, the desk and yeah, some some some comfortable chair, that's really important for me, because I like to study quite a lot like then on one location and on one time, and don't cut it in many, like, the parts in the day. So, I really need like, yeah, just so simple environment, but it's really, really important that it is just the face, the desk needs to be faced against the wall. Because if it's faced against a window, I always try to look out the window. And then I said, yeah, just observe the entire environment. And then I'm not focused at all.

Interviewer 2:05

Okay, so as you said, like, just minimal necessities as like a table or like general furniture, however, are I mean, those are technically all represented in your room, we should be at least, but are there any other necessities? In general you would like to have in your room, which are not?

Participant #7 2:28

Actually, like not really, like I really also need good air quality actually. So, like, I need to have a window open most of the times or open the door regularly. Also, in the winter, if it gets like, if it gets too warm in the room, then I also tend to not be focused anymore. So, ventilation, I would also say is a necessity. But besides like, yeah, and some some water on the desk is also nice so that I can drink something. But like, I just need basic necessities for studying.

Interviewer 2:59

Okay, so overall, how does the physical environment and social interaction at the location inspire you to study?

Participant #7 3:07

For me, it inspires me because it's calm. And nothing really like happens in this environment. Because if I am in my room, and like the doors closed, like there is not many times, okay maybe a roommate comes in and ask a question, or comes in for five minutes and talk but it doesn't change. And it's like not, there is no social interaction in this environment. And that is really important for me for myself to study.

Interviewer 3:37

So just mentioning the physical aspects of your room. Its mass, how many square meters do you have?

Participant #7 3:44

It is 13 square meters.

Interviewer 3:46

Okay, and just also to touch upon it's like you also have a balcony. Do you use that for studying or not at all?

Participant #7 3:54

No, I don't! Like sometimes in summer, I use it for basic reading. But as soon as I really need to gather all the information and really get it in my mind. I can't study there because it's the balcony is directly located at the street. Then I just observe the entire street but I don't study.

Interviewer 4:13

Okay. So what changes in your room can be conducted or in general in your apartment could be conducted within the current environment to reach better motivational outcomes or better academic performances?

Participant #7 4:26

Better like there it is quite optimal already. But the only thing which could be improved is like the thickness of my door because it's very thin. You can hear everything which happens still in the house. And it still distracts me. If I'm really distracted if my roommates are talking or playing music. Then I'll just put on my noise reduction, cancelling airphones, earphones, sorry. And then I don't hear anything but like this like noise in the background also distracts me because I tend to listen to their conversations and just not focus on not focus 100% percent on my studies, definitely not.

Interviewer 5:10

Yeah, in like about in general about noise and acoustics. We will talk about that later as well. So, yeah, just keep that in mind. So now we will actually get in touch upon the physical environment, that part. So how important is lighting for you actually, in your learning environment?

Participant #7 5:29

It is actually important, I would say because, like, if there's not a lot of light, and I tend to be like, more exhausted more quickly, I would say, because it's just studying in the dark, and you can't see or you can't read or especially also, if the room is just dark, and you just have the light from your laptop. That really, I noticed that I really get exhausted if I don't put on like the light of the room. So lighting is an important aspect for studying for me, definitely.

Interviewer 5:59

Okay, then, would you actually prefer artificial light or natural light?

Participant #7 6:04

I definitely prefer natural light, because I'm, I don't know, I like to sit in the day actually. And just like, yeah, again, I'm an early morning person. So, I like to get stuff done in the in the morning when there's natural light, and then sleep when there is no natural light. So, I'm really following this day rhythm. And so for me, it's important, but it's not like, of course, I also study in the evening, but my preferences are to study in the morning with natural light. Yes.

Interviewer 6:33

Okay, um, what would you say about the lighting itself of area affect your did it affect your choice of study location?

Participant #7 6:42

I wouldn't say directly, because it is just, it is light is an important factor. But like quietness and other factors just like calmness and no changing environment, are superior factors for choosing my study location. But it definitely affects my choice of study location, because for example, if I would sit in a room where I have a window, which just goes directly against another wall, I would also get a bit crazy, I think just staying out of the window, and just against another wall and sitting there really long, like a long time on my day, because it's my main study location, like, especially in third year you study a lot. Because I also need to write my thesis. So, I sit there multiple hours. And if there would not be like nice, like, not anything to see, or sometimes during the break or something I would get crazy. Yes.

Interviewer 7:42

Then do you think it affects your willingness to study there? The lighting itself? Or?

Participant #7 7:46

I wouldn't say it, effects my willingness because I'm too like, I'm too motivated myself. So if I know I need to get shit done, then I do it. And then it doesn't really matter where I sit, like, as long as it's quiet, and like nobody's talking to me or no music is playing or something in the background. So that's really important. But I wouldn't say like it affects my motivation to study. No.

Interviewer 8:13

You also mentioned that technically, in your own room, it's 13 square meters? Correct? Is it difficult for you to separate like the, like your life outside of Uni? Because it's like you study in your room as well. So do you think you can kind of separate that? Or is that if you go into your room? Do you also just study or do you also take some alone time and socialize? I guess.

Participant #7 8:39

That's a good point. Because I also recently thought about it because when I just worked at a company, it was really nice to have this separation of being like on at the other place when you and being off in your room. So, I noticed that I'm as long as I'm in my room. I definitely see my desk and I'm like, oh, yeah, I should go back to studying. So, I, I always leave my room for having social interaction, for doing stuff for cooking. Because I don't study in the common room. I just my room is basically my sleeping place. And yeah, my study place. And

that's how I treat it so it's not my chilling area, not my calming down area. I really get this like calming down and like the other activities, I get it out, outside of my room, do sports, meet people and just chill somewhere else but not in my room, no.

Interviewer 9:30

Then the next aspect is actually trying to identify the difference, but also your own preference. So seeing open space as that you're able to look outside maybe possibly also having people around you versus enclosed space where it's just like yeah, having your four walls around you technically and having yourself alone in that room. So, I was just wondering which one you prefer, like the open space or the enclosed space?

Participant #7 9:56

Like what do you mean like, prefer for studying or prefer for being?

Interviewer 10:01

No for studying

Participant #7 10:02

Okay, because for for studying, definitely I prefer the closed space. Because as long as I need to do tasks on my own, because if I need to study for myself for an exam, or if I need to do some parts of group work or for an essay or something, then I really need this closed space, nothing is changing, like no distraction, no social interaction, nothing, just me and the task. So that's really important. But as soon as it turns to group work, then I prefer an open space, because then I can also really focus then focus on the task with the group but alone, always a closed space.

Interviewer 10:37

Then yeah, would you say that about the opposite choice? Like, if you would have been an open space studying by yourself like, for yourself individually for something? Would that affect your willingness to study?

Participant #7 10:48

It wouldn't affect my willingness, because I will always put in the hours because it's just like, yeah, I tried to make the most out of it. But I just know that my productivity like goes, is sharp decrease when I sit in an open space, because I'm taking all these distractions from room, and you have them in my head, even though even if it's unconscious, like I don't even really notice. But if I look back then on the, say, two hours, what I've what I've achieved, and what I could have achieved, if I would have sit in the close space then I really notice, like the difference in productivity.

Interviewer 11:23

Yeah, I get that. Then the next question is actually how important is it for you to feel comfortable to study there?

Participant #7 11:32

Sorry, can you repeat that?

Interviewer 11:35

No worries. How important is it for you to feel comfortable at the study location?

Participant #7 11:42

I would say it's really important for me to feel comfortable, because I'm a person like, as long as I don't feel comfortable, I'm not productive. Because normally, like, everything is figured out, I have planned what I do what I like I have a good planning over the week, I need to what I need to accomplish, and as soon as I'm too far behind, or if I have external stress factors, which I can't control, then I just really noticed that I, yeah, I'm less productive. And I can't really just switch on the head anymore, and just be productive if I'm not comfortable.

Interviewer 12:16

Okay, um, also, however, since now, it's your own room, you did personalize your own space. Alright, if you would go somewhere else, where they have the same aspects, same as like, it's an enclosed space, you have some natural sunlight. However, in the UB, for example, it would be very minimalistic, what the option would be like it's very continuously the same thing? Or would if you could personalize your study area in the UB, for example, would that make an influence on your willingness to go there and study? Or would that not have an effect at all?

Participant #7 12:52

Like definitely like, if, if I would see that, I have the same like factors there. Like, closed environment, just me and me and my task, then it doesn't really matter where I am, because I don't prefer my own room. It's just the like, my room has my ideal study, study, like characteristics. So as soon as the UB could provide this for me, I could also study there wouldn't really matter because I don't, I don't, I don't mind, to study. It's not it's not that my room like, my personal, like, my personal environment, which I created in my room is like affecting my motivation or something. It's more just the characteristics which provide me with what I need for studying. And that's it. And if you provide me that with somewhere else, anywhere else, I can study there.

Interviewer 13:41

Okay, yeah, that's interesting. Um, then the next question would be, how important is availability of food or drinks for you at study location?

Participant #7 13:50

It's really, I would say, it's really important, especially like, because I have strong migraines. So, if I don't, if I study a lot, and I don't eat or drink regularly, especially drinking water, then I get migraine attacks. And then I am like my head is screwed for a couple of hours, up til a day and then I just lose time. So eating regularly, three times a day, at least. And yeah, drinking a lot of water is really important for me. Yes.

Interviewer 14:20

So do you think that the availability of food or drinks decide your choice of study location?

Participant #7 14:28

Yeah, like if we would take a study location where it is not existing, then I wouldn't go there. But it's not that I think, oh, yeah, I want to study at home because there's a toilet, there is food. I could also get that somewhere else or plan differently and then get it somewhere else. But as soon as there's no providing of like, the bathroom or some food or drinks during the day, then it would definitely affect my choice and I wouldn't study at that place.

Interviewer 14:54

Yeah, also like some others mention that. Because if they would go out to study somewhere else, they would have to also Yeah, maybe spend more money on food. And I was just wondering if that also would have an impact on you? Or an aspect to consider that if you do leave your house, that you would technically spend more money since you can't just go to the fridge?

Participant #7 15:17

Yes and no. So yes, I would spend probably a bit more money, definitely, because it's just cheaper if you I don't know, if you buy a couple of breads, and then you eat it every day. And if you don't buy everything every day of new bread at the store. Definitely. But it's not that it is, has a big influence on my on my choice, because if I would see that I'm more productive. At that location, I would definitely, definitely say, okay, these costs are worth it. And I'll just invest them, because they would give me more like I'm more productive with having them. So, it wouldn't affect the choice of my study location now.

Interviewer 15:54

But however, then would it affect your willingness to study if they would be available or not available?

Participant #7 16:01

So yes, and no, no? So let's say yes, because if I, if I, if I can't eat, or if I can't drink during the day, and that is simply not possible, then I will be less productive, because I will get migraine or I will feel less. Like I will feel hungry, I will feel thirsty. And then I really like this, it also affects my concentration, and then I just would change the study location. Yes.

Interviewer 16:30

Yeah, that definitely makes sense. Then how important is actually the accessibility of electricity at this study environment?

Participant #7 16:38

Oh, it's really important. Because I have an old, I have an old laptop, and it runs out every two hours, I would say. So yes, it's really important, because otherwise, they couldn't see, like, longer than two hours, I guess. Yeah. And also, like, I need electricity, because I have a second screen, especially at my home, where I study. Yeah, where I study most of the time, and it really helps me conducting research. And this second screen also like this, it doesn't have a battery. So, it needs always to be plugged in, in the like, yeah. to the to the electricity. And if it's not, yeah, and my productivity goes down if I don't have a second screen.

Interviewer 17:20

Okay, that's also I guess an aspect because like, if do you don't always have that if you study somewhere else? So, do you think that's also a major aspect as well?

Participant #7 17:30

Yes, no, yeah, it came up came up during me more thinking about the freshness and stuff, but especially for like for some more simple tasks, where I just have to like look at one screen and just do some exercises, I don't need a second screen, yes, then that my productivity is the same in other locations. But as soon as I'm more into the research part of my studies, then a second screen definitely helps because I'm just quicker, I can write on one screen and research on the other. So that's definitely a point I missed earlier. Sorry.

Interviewer 18:00

No worries I am glad that it came up now. Um, so, nowadays, internet is definitely required everywhere where you go to study in general as well. But do you think there are negative effects of having internet available on your academic performances?

Participant #7 18:17

Definitely, especially like, if I have a topic, which is like, outside of my studies and I just need to do some research for that. I don't know like planning a trip, or just looking up some facts about the location I might want to visit in the evening or something that it can be really distracting that I'm like, okay, let's take five minutes and research something else, which is not study related. And that can definitely happen if I'm not if I'm not 100% focused. And then I really noticed that the internet can be a big distractions, because if I say five minutes, and will never be the five minute rule, we at least at 50 minutes, and then I'll just lose time and I'm like, Okay, thanks to the internet, I was distracted again. But also, sometimes because some ads pop up. Even if I do research. For something I Googled before and I'm like, oh, that's, that's a nice offer. So, let's quickly take a look. So, it's definitely a distraction. Yes.

Interviewer 19:11

Okay. Um, then yeah. So, in general, does the accessibility of electricity have an effect on your willingness to study at the location?

Participant #7 19:21

Yes, definitely.

Interviewer 19:23

So, we're now going into the second part.

Participant #7 19:27

Alright, oh I am talking a lot, I am sorry.

Interviewer 19:30

No, that's fine. So now the second part about social interaction. So how long like since you're at home, you're actually technically studying by yourself in your own room. However, how important is active social interaction for you in your surrounding study environment, so it could also just be in your entire apartment instead of just your room?

Participant #7 19:51

Yep. Like it's it's really important because I know I for studying I don't need social interaction, but I noticed that I'm a very social person. That's my myself. So, it's really nice to get a quick lunch, have a quick chat at some point in some study breaks with somebody definitely. And, for example, if my both roommates are not at home, and then I just sit here the whole day alone, then I really get frustrated about that, because it's just boring. So social interaction, at least in the breaks is really important as well.

Interviewer 20:20

So, you would say, what would directly be your preference to have people around you or not?

Participant #7 20:27

My preference would be to have people around me which are dealing with the same stuff. So also studying need to get shit done. Because as soon as they are doing partying or drinking something, which is really not stimulated in the environment, I tried to study in it distracts. But as soon as they follow, like, more or less the same schedule, and then we get lunch, for example, in Corona, we like I had a roommate, who also just study major parts of his time at home. So that was really nice, because then we said, okay, let's meet at 12 have a quick lunch together, quickly, chat and then go back to work, and then have dinner together. So that was really nice.

Interviewer 21:02

Yeah, that's good. And then so does active interaction with people around you affect your willingness to study? Like if you have these breaks now in between?

Participant #7 21:12

No, not really, because I'm too much self focused, self motivated to do my studies. So if I see I have an exam upcoming, I've a task to do, an assignment to make, I just do it. It doesn't matter if somebody is there or not. I'll just make it.

Interviewer 21:26

Okay. So how does like now coming to the sound aspect actually, or to the noise in general? How does acoustics actually affect your willingness to study?

Participant #7 21:37

They really affect it because like, I notice everything I always scan my surroundings, I always listen to other people's conversations. It's just like unconsciously, but I do it. And I really like to, I am a too curious person and to be honest, and this definitely affects like my study outcome. Because even if the cars or a big truck is driving on the street, and I hear it for the window, like the Yeah, just taking a quick look. Is really like a thing, and then I'm quickly out for a second, but still, it's it's a little distracting. So the best, I'm the most concentrated when like, um, yeah, just having no no noise in the background.

Interviewer 22:23

Yeah. Okay. Like, the next actually thing is about like having the acoustic scale. So just try and figure out your preference. So having there's three different kinds, so one is complete silent. The second one is noisy. There's like verbal communication around you, but you can't understand it. So, they're just noise in general. And third is it's loud. There's verbal communication, and you can understand it. So I think from the previous talk we have already had, but which one I kind of know, but like, which one would you choose of those three?

Participant #7 22:56

I would definitely choose complete silence because it's really important for me to have no distraction.

Interviewer 23:02

Okay. So, how do you... Actually, do you listen to music while you study?

Participant #7 23:08

No, I don't listen to music because it's major part of my free time. And as soon as I switch on music, I get the vibes and I'm like, okay, let's, that's fun. That's, that's a good vibe. And then I don't focus anymore.

Interviewer 23:19

Okay, so you would say that if you would listen to music, or hear music around you, that it would affect your study?

Participant #7 23:25

Yes. Yeah, my outcome, definitely my productivity because I'm less productive and less motivated.

Interviewer 23:32

So, um, you already mentioned earlier, but like, do you think the location changes actually, if you study within a group or do group work, or if you work individually,

Participant #7 23:44

Definitely like, because I study at home and all my group works, I do. Okay, with COVID It was different because it was all on laptop. So it was still in my room, the group works. But now since everything is open up again, I never study in my room, because my room is too small. So as soon as I have a group task, I either meet meet them at Uni, or at or sometimes in the common area of my house, but mostly at the uni.

Interviewer 24:08

Like at the Uni, which building or which campus?

Participant #7 24:11

At Zernike campus like in probably Duisenberg building is most often the chosen building in the common areas.

Interviewer 24:19

So, almost last question, actually. How do you impact through self other monitoring? Like, I know that at home here, like you're alone, however, if you would go somewhere else, and you would study there and have this self other monitoring effect in a sense that you see other people studying around you? And also, they see that you're studying? How do you think you would be impacted by that?

Participant #7 24:45

That's a good question. I would say, it doesn't really affect me because I'm too self driven to like, get distracted by others. If I see others studying, I'm like, okay, they are hardworking too. But in the end, I just need to do the stuff for myself. And I know that it is my responsibility and my problem in the end. So, I'm like, okay, I need to put my phone away. And now just study because otherwise, I won't get to my goal. And my goal is to finish

my studies as early as possible. So that's just my motivation summed up in one sentence. Okay, so it doesn't really affect me. No.

Interviewer 25:23

That's good. However, in general, do you feel pressured to study if there are people around you?

Participant #7 25:32

Definitely, I feel like if we are in a group work, and for example, even of my like, notifications pop pop up on my phone. I tend to like feel pressured, because I'm like, okay, we're now we all took time to meet, we all want to achieve something, but so I'm not going to be like, there is social pressure for me, definitely to also work then and not be distracted by any other things.

Interviewer 25:59

So actually, just one last thing, since you're at home, if you had all the characteristics, you have here available somewhere else, would you consider still traveling a specific distance with your bike to that location? Or do you think it's too much of a hassle, since you actually already have all your aspects here?

Participant #7 26:19

I will definitely choose to travel to another location because I like this separation of working and being off. And as soon as any other study location would fulfill my needs, I would directly choose to to have this short bike ride because it's amazing, you just Yes. And you just cycled for a couple of minutes. But your head is completely in a different position. For example, when you like meet your roommates again, at home, because if I, my my my way from my work is like 15 Steps to the kitchen. And that's not a lot and not enough time to really switch off from my Uni stuff. And then be really free and active. So as soon as I could separate studying and work, like I was studying and being off, I would directly do it.

Interviewer 27:09

Okay, and then just an overall question, but like, be UB like the University library of Groningen. It does offer studios. What, since it's also an enclosed space it is, it's silent. Would that be an aspect or like, option for you to go there or not?

Participant #7 27:32

Definitely would be an aspect to go there. But first of all, I didn't know that they had studios. So, because I didn't inform myself because this was too convenient. And second of all, I like to Yeah, since Corona, you always have to make a reservation, and really then plan to go there. And this like, they I still like in the like in this offer of the UB I still like my flexibility I have it on. If I say okay, now I really urgently need to call somebody, and then start 15 minutes later with my work. That will be already 15 minutes later, 15 minutes deducted from my study time, which I have reserved in the UB. So, this flexibility is not in that study location, because it's not my study location. So, I would say this is the biggest difference between home and the UB the so that's why I would not choose to study in the UB

Interviewer 28:28

Okay, um, then if before COVID, for example, you also experienced studying before COVID as well, back then you didn't have to reserve. So, would that still be an option? If you didn't have to reserve since it would also be flexible? Or would that not be?

Participant #7 28:45

Yes, it would definitely be an option because it has nearly the same characteristics. But still, I would say it's still this, I think that I will still see people, even in the studio, even behind walking and I will just turn around. So, I still think that I don't have a room where nothing like no influences are. And this having no influences is super important for me. So, I still would say it's probably like it depends, of course on the room because I don't know them there. But as soon as there is one characteristic, which is different from my environment at home, and which is more distracting to me, I wouldn't choose that location.

Interviewer 29:33

Yeah, just because mentioning it, just overall, it does have a glass door. So, I think that would be very distracting for you. And maybe not ideal. But yeah, overall, actually, that was the interview. But I just at the end I just would like to ask you if there's any additional information you would like to add about your own study environment or your own behaviour to study at this location or at other locations or preferences you can't achieve here or something?

Participant #7 30:04

A point which is definitely relevant is like working in groups because I love group works and I prefer them over individual tasks, and that is just and also the social interaction of having of just meeting somebody in the day because this aspect as I mentioned earlier that I am let's say 12 hours alone here, here I have the luck that I have 2 roommates which at least come back in the evening but when I was studying in Spain. I had 2 roommates which were never there. So, I was just really there, and in the exam periods I was studying 10 hours a day and then had no social interaction at all and a lot of stress and I just noticed that this had really bad influences on my mind and mental health, definitely.

Interviewer 31:00

Well, thank you very much, that was the end of the interview.

Participant #7 31:03

Nice!

Transcript of Participant #8

Interviewer 0:00

Good morning, so you decided to at the question in which study location do you achieve your willingness to study to choose at home. So, we're technically now at your home right now. So, would you be able to introduce yourself for a second and explain where we're at?

Participant #8 0:19

Yes. So, my name is Participant #8. I'm a Journalism master's student, and I'm in my room currently, we're in my room.

Interviewer 0:29

Why did you choose to study in this environment?

Participant #8 0:32

Um, I guess I've always studied in my room. I've always liked to just have my own space and not feel like I have to be conscious of the other people around me. So, I've always chosen to study at home, even when I was younger, I was never really much of a I'm going to the library or I'm going to somewhere to study type of person.

Interviewer 0:51

What are like the necessities at a location for you to have in order for you to be able to study there?

Participant #8 0:59

Um, that's a good question. I don't, I guess like, yes, silence is always good, like a good one. But at the same time, I'm not really a person that gets distracted a lot. I think for me, it's just comfort, like how comfortable I am to study in a place, which is probably why I don't like to study in the library because I feel not comfortable there. I feel like I'm being watched. Like, I have to be extremely quiet. Like, I can't even like, like I if I want, I'm at quite a twitchy person. And if I can't even like twitch my leg in the library, because I feel so self conscious

about it. And I also feel like, oh, I have to like, dress up like I cannot just wear like sweatpants as in my room and just study comfortably. Like, I think comfort is the one thing like a big thing, because then I feel like if I'm comfortable everywhere else then I can really focus on stuff.

Interviewer 1:48

So, are these necessities for you all representative for you here at your home?

Participant #8 1:54

Yes, I would say so. Like, I've already been living in this house for three years now. So, I am quite comfortable being here. And also, thankfully, I have a good enough relationship with my roommates where I can say like, I'm going to study don't bother me. And there's no problem there. And yeah, yeah, I've always I've always been comfortable in studying in my room. I mean, I used to do the same when I was in high school when I was living with my parents and stuff. I also used to study at home always because I just always found I was, yeah, when I'm alone in studying, I'm just way more comfortable.

Interviewer 2:28

So how does the actual physical environment impact your willingness to study? Social interaction as well?

Participant #8 2:36

Yeah, I actually think that's also a good thing about why I like to study in my room is because I get very distracted, not by things but by people. And I think in the library, I don't really have that because like, you know, if you go study in the library, there's a bunch of random people, but within my my degree, now we have our own special room. And then a lot of people go to study there every day. And I choose not to go there. Because like, I know these classmates, and I know and we've become friends. And I know if I go like even if I pretend to be productive, I'm not going to be productive.

Interviewer 3:08

Yeah, makes sense. What changes could be conducted within your home to reach, like better motivational outcomes, or better academic performances?

Participant #8 3:19

I think I think that's more of a personal thing more than like, my room thing. But I think I just have to stop studying in my bed. I would definitely help because I tend to, like, you know, once you start getting into like the revision part of the study that you're like, okay, I've already looked at this so many times, at this point. It's just like muscle memory, trying to remember everything, I'll do it in bed, and then I feel like that definitely doesn't improve it. And then I'm all I'm pretending like, oh, yeah, I'm super comfortable, like I'm studying but really, I shouldn't be studying in bed so I think if I were able to remove my bed from this equation, it would be great but but I think that's more just like a personal thing that I have to make sure I don't end up in my bed with my notes, you know, instead of my desk.

Interviewer 4:03

That makes sense. So, nothing in the room itself can actually be changed, just the personal behaviour?

Participant #8 4:09

Yeah, just I don't think. Yeah, I think my room the way that I have it set up right now like, I think it's okay for study like my desk is quite far from my bed in a way like so I have sort of that separation between what you can call like study and like, I don't know, like, leisure time, I guess. But sometimes like you know, if you're tired and if you're still studying at like six or seven and you're like done with it because you have been studying all morning and all day you kind of like go to the bed and just study there but it doesn't really help because I can I notice that I'm not really like revising that much when I am in bed.

Interviewer 4:43

Yeah, makes sense. Um, then now we're getting into the actually just the physical environment of your study location. So how important is lighting for you in this learning environment?

Participant #8 4:58

Actually, not that important like there is time especially yeah, there's times where like, if I wake up in the morning, and I didn't sleep well or I slept late last night, and I know I have to wake up at eight to study that I'll just like, even if it's a super sunny, bright day outside, I just keep my curtains closed and study my bed until like 11 or 12. With like, so lighting isn't really that important to me. As long as I can read the notes. It's okay.

Interviewer 5:22

Um, so, yeah, does just does a lighting effect your choice of study location?

Participant #8 5:30

Um, I guess not. But now that you asked me that question, it's not something I ever thought about like the library lighting does really bother me like, how bright it is? And how white like how like, yeah, like ne, I don't know neon but like translucent white that light is it really gets to me, like I really dislike it.

Interviewer 5:48

So do you think it would make a difference between artificial and natural light?

Participant #8 5:52

Yes, definitely. Because I usually study during the day, I'm not really like a night study person at all. And I other than those times that I said, like, I wake up late or whatever, and I stay in bed, like for the most part, I will get up open my curtains and study like with natural light, because I don't really like the artificial light. And I think it's also a reason why I don't like to go to the newsroom. The area where the journalism students' study because of the same thing that artificial light, bright yellow white light, they really dislike.

Interviewer 6:22

Yeah. Does it affect your willingness to study?

Participant #8 6:28

The lighting?

Interviewer 6:29

Yeah.

Participant #8 6:31

I mean, like, not really. But at the same time, I don't study at night. So, I guess it does in some way or not? Like, I haven't really put much thought into it. But like, considering that I refuse to study once it gets dark. Yeah, I guess I guess it does affect my willingness to study.

Interviewer 6:50

Okay, then now defining like open space in general. Because I just want to see your preference, which one you prefer more open or enclosed space. Defining like open space as that you can look outside to have a view or also like having people around you, in a sense. And then enclosed space is more like that you have your four walls around you. And but you're usually like, independent and you're like the only one in the room, so seeing those two differences which one do you actually prefer?

Participant #8 7:22

Closed space. I mean, I see the benefits to both. But I think if I'm just aiming, if we're just looking at like my willingness and my productivity in studying, I would prefer a closed space. I do like an open space. But that's

more like, I don't know, I have a little assignment to do or something like that. And you just want to be around people. But if it comes down to like exams, big assignments, so on closed space, for sure. I like to be alone.

Interviewer 7:48

Yeah, so as you already kind of asked about that, like said, would the opposite choice in saying studying an open space affect your willingness to study?

Participant #8 8:00

I don't think it would affect my willingness to study because I'm generally quite a self-motivated person. And when I have to do it, I'll do it. It doesn't matter if I have to do it in my room or in the library or whatever. But I do think like, maybe not my willingness, but definitely my productivity would lower and what my issue, my biggest issue with studying in an open space, like a library is that I feel productive about going to the library and being in the library. But then when I actually compare how much work I did in eight hours of the library to eight hours in my room, I definitely do a lot more eight hours in my room like in the library and realistically, maybe I am in there for eight hours realistically I'm working five because I take a long lunch break with people, I go outside to smoke, I talk to people I go have coffee and take a longer break while at home. Like my smoke break is maybe 10 minutes long. My lunch break is 30 minutes long, you know? So, I definitely think I'm yeah, like maybe not my willingness but because I know I'm less productive I am less willing to go to a space like that to study.

Interviewer 9:07

Also, in the survey you already mentioned and in the beginning of the interview, you mentioned that comfort or feeling comfortable is a huge factor. And I was just yeah just kind of asking upon it again, how important is it for you to be comfortable at your own study location?

Participant #8 9:22

Yeah, very very important. Very important. I Yeah, especially with with exam period when you know you're very stressed and it's difficult to like I guess for some people it does do something like the idea of like getting up having breakfast getting ready, go to the library spend all day there come back home and then that's it like your work was at the library. But for me, I just kind of like you know, waking up slowly like no rush like okay, am I hungry? No, I'm not going to eat breakfast this morning. Like, gee, I'm not gonna eat breakfast just because I have to go to the library. Like, I don't want to wear jeans all day like be like wearing jeans and actually something like, that's kind of nice in the library where I can just be wearing sweatpants and a big oversized hoodie in my room and just be super comfortable the whole day. So, I think, yeah, comfort is like a big thing for me in terms of study. And also, I think, for me, it's more noise and stuff. Like, I'm very self aware of how much noise I might produce when I'm yeah, when I'm studying, like, you know, sometimes I just become self aware of like, oh, am I writing too hard? Or is my pen clicking too much? Or is my leg moving the table too much? Or are like, am I breathing too loud, like, and these little things which are really, really like insignificant, really, but for some reason, they really play something in my head. And I know that if I'm in my room, I can breathe as loud as I want, like, do whatever I want, basically. So yeah, it's huge thing for me to be comfortable when I'm studying.

Interviewer 10:49

Okay, that makes extra overall sense. But as you might be aware that in the UB or in the library. There are also these studios, which have enclosed walls, it gives you a feeling of just having your own area. And I guess it's similar to having your own room, however, you do have to move you do have to change and be sort of representative and don't wear sweatpants. But do you think that would be an option if you could personalize that space at a different location?

Participant #8 11:22

Um, that's a good question. Um, yes, maybe? Um, maybe yes. But at the same time, I don't know if like, I would if it came down to it if I would actually use it in the end. Because I say yes, that's cool. But at the same time, like with the with my own master's degree, like, I basically have my own personalized study place like the

newsroom is going to be only journalism students, like there's not going to be anybody in there that is not a journalism student. And at first, like when I first started my degree, I thought I'd be there way more often studying doing work. But then I realized that I just can't focus when I'm around people. So, if this personalized study space or to be just me, then yes, maybe. But if it's already like, okay, it's a personalized study space, but you're going to be in, there with four or five people, then I'm already I'm thinking I wouldn't use it because I like it. It's, it's like, it's just a personal thing of like, I want to be as productive as I can in eight hours. And the most productivity I get is when I'm home, with nobody around me because I cannot concentrate when there's people around me.

Interviewer 12:40

So how, how important is the available availability of food or drinks for you at the study area, like here at home?

Participant #8 12:48

Yeah, that's also quite, that's goes also to my comfort thing that like, you know, at the library, like I feel uncomfortable, even taking a sip of water sometimes I like, I'm going to spill it am I swallowing too hard, like really small, like insignificant insecurities that just like pop into my head, or am I chewing too loud? You know, does my food smell and the whole library stinks or something like that, you know, which is really insignificant, but like, for some reason, really play in my mind. So, the idea that I can just be like, okay, well, I'm gonna eat like, I don't know, whatever I want to eat, and I can eat and drink however many coffees I want. And like, I Yeah, but I just Yeah, it is important to me like this idea of food and drink.

Interviewer 13:33

So, would you say that it does decide your choices of study location, having food available, since if you're at home usually just have to go to the fridge? Yeah, food. But at the library, or in general, it's more difficult to access food.

Participant #8 13:49

I don't think I ever think about like food and drink in general as a factor to see where I would go study but it definitely, that's another actual perk now that now that we're talking about it, I just thought about it that the fact that I'm home means I'm also saving money, because I know if I go to the library, like yes, I could bring my pack lunch and stuff. But most likely, I'm gonna go end up eating, not maybe not eating out, but like going to the Albert Heijn or the Jumbo. And spending an unnecessary four or five euros that I could have saved if I stayed at home and just had the lunch I already had. Which is also another reason why I like to stay home I guess, because I don't really like to spend this this money.

Interviewer 14:28

So, would you also say that it does affect your willingness to study or not really?

Participant #8 14:33

Yeah, let's say yeah, but I guess not in the sense of like, oh, there's food and drink there. That's good. I'm going but more in the sense of like, well, I have food and drink here in my home where I like to study so let's just stay here so I don't spend unnecessary money and so on.

Interviewer 14:51

Yeah. So how important is the accessibility of electricity at the study location here?

Participant #8 14:58

Yeah, very important because that's also kind of a thing that I dislike about going to the library again, like the fact that like there aren't, there are sockets everywhere. But there's also people everywhere. And every person that goes to library goes in with a laptop. So, like, sometimes you need to charge your laptop and you've been sitting in the same spot for four hours, and you look forward, all the sockets are taken, like, what are you going to do like, and especially when it's like middle of exam season, where every single seat is taken from like, seven in the morning, I don't even know what time the library opens. But open, whenever it opens, that seat is already

taken. It kind of makes it difficult to want to stay because it kind of kind of put you in a mood like oh, well, I kind of have to stop studying now because I can charge my laptop. And thankfully, at my home since I have like, you know, all the socket I want like I have, I know if I want to charge my phone, I can charge my phone, I can charge my laptop, I can charge anything I want. And so, I think it does influence also my willingness to study. Anything that like, to me is like an extra step to think of like, where am I going to charge my laptop? Where am I going to get food seems to kind of hamper my my willingness to leave my room because I know I can have everything in here.

Interviewer 16:08

Definitely makes sense. Since nowadays, we have to have access to internet as well all the time for studying in general. And do you experience negative effects of having the internet access for your academic performances, such as yeah, distractions of social media?

Participant #8 16:26

Um you know, I actually wouldn't say that I get distracted very easily by the internet in general. Because since I don't know, I guess I'm quite disciplined in that way that I know like, okay, 8am to 6pm is study. That doesn't mean that I'm just like, like an animal like every single hour not taking a single break. Of course, I take breaks sometimes like my lunch break, I usually take around an hour, or maybe I'll take a nap as well like. But for the most part, no, I don't really get distracted by the Internet. Like I actually just get more distracted by people. Like I said, like, my my issue with studying at home, like my productivity doesn't dip when I start looking at Twitter or Instagram, but it dips when I go upstairs and talk to my roommates. And then it's difficult for me to get back down to study because like, I'm in my room basically, like just caged up in there like studying, studying, studying. And then when I see someone else who isn't studying, we can talk about anything like, it hampers my productivity, but then I wouldn't say that the internet does that, per se. No.

Interviewer 17:33

Well, that's interesting, because now we're going to the second aspect of the social interaction with people. And as you already said, what makes kind of a big part of it, if you do would like to study somewhere where there are people or not. So, the question towards your social interaction, would how important is active social interaction for you in your surrounding study environment?

Participant #8 17:56

Not very important. Like, actually, as little social interaction as possible is better for me because I get so distracted by people, especially by people who I know. And that's kind of one of the issues with the classroom. No, the newsroom, sorry. The journalism area to study is that like, since I know everyone in my course, because we're not a big group. And we've all become friends. Like if I go there, like, especially now that I haven't been in like that, I haven't seen those people in like two, three weeks. If I go, like, I'm not going to do anything. Like I'm literally going to sit there open my laptop do two minutes of work. And I'm going to be talking to somebody on my right talk to somebody on my left, I'm going to be like, okay, it's been an hour where I did absolutely nothing. And I'll get up and like, go to the bathroom and get a coffee, come back and be I'm gonna do work, keep talking like, I just won't do anything. So actually, like, social interaction to me is like from those hours of eight to 6pm. I want as little social interaction as possible.

Interviewer 18:52

All right, yeah. So, your preference is for sure. Not having people around.

Participant #8 18:57

No.

Interviewer 19:00

So yeah, I guess active interaction with people does affect your willingness to study?

Participant #8 19:06

Yeah, so if I have active interaction with people, I'm really not willing to study. Yeah.

Interviewer 19:11

How does acoustics such as verbal communication, effect willingness to study?

Participant #8 19:18

Like other people talking around me?

Interviewer 19:19

Yes. Or having music around? Or just traffic noises?

Participant #8 19:26

Actually, doesn't bother me too much. I have to say. Yeah, I think I'm able to quite like, not zoned it out. But like, just kind of have it as background noise because excuse me, like you can see like in my room, like I have my window right next to the street. I'm quite used to hearing cars and people walking past every single day, at all times of the day at all times during the day and sometimes even during the night. So, it's not something that like, if I hear like if I'm studying on my desk right here and a car or tractor goes past, it doesn't really take me away. It's not like oh, a tractor, like I'm able to just focus on it. Same with like people having a conversation and I can also kind of shunt it out and like I live in a house with, we are seven guys. So sometimes people play music here, like when I'm studying and stuff, so I just I learned to be able to kind of shut that part off. To not bother me.

Interviewer 20:23

So yeah, if you don't have the actual, your personal interaction with people, then it's actually fine.

Participant #8 20:29

Yes, yeah.

Interviewer 20:30

Okay. Um, then yeah, I'd also like, like you to scale your preference of acoustics, such as, like, silent of having like, no noise at all, then, like noisy having verbal communication around you, but you can't understand it, or you kind of blind it off, or just loud where you hear verbal communication. And it's definitely understandable. Like, you know, there's a conversation going on, and you hear word for word, what would you prefer, like Silent to noisy to loud?

Participant #8 20:58

I would say noisy, because I also don't, I think that that is something that like, now that we're talking about it, I'm realizing I do quite enjoy the fact that I live right on the street. So, I don't feel so alone when I'm so alone, while I'm studying, if that makes any sense that I can hear stuff, and I can like hear the cars and I can hear people and like, especially when I'm studying around five or six that I can hear people like at the restaurant near my place, and I can't really hear them, but I can tell that they're eating and that they're having a good time. Like, that's quite nice to hear. I think yeah, that I would pick that because silent, I think like, I would get a bit too like, a little bit too much. Like if it was just completely quiet. And loud, I wouldn't be able to focus if someone's talking and I can hear that they're talking, I'm going to listen to what they're talking about. So

Interviewer 21:46

Yeah. So, you mentioned before that you don't listen to music while studying or at least in the survey. So, if you would, however, listen to music during while studying, do you think that would impact your willingness to study or also your performances?

Participant #8 22:04

I don't think it like my willingness like since I don't listen to music, I can't say that, like, oh boy, there's music playing. I'm not gonna study because that's not true. But I see it more as just like, from my own experiences, because I did used to study with music, like at one point when I was doing my bachelor's degree. And I saw that my performances were lowering a lot because even though I was doing exactly the same way of studying of like taking notes and memorizing them, because I'm listening to music, it's not really like going in as much as like when I'm not listening to music. So that was more like just the personal choice I took when I saw that, like, yes, music enhances my productivity, in a sense, because I was getting a lot more done in less time because I'm not so like, because I'm basically just like music and you can kind of zone into the music and zone into the books rather than like just have a bunch of noises come in and out. But it didn't improve my, it actually worsened my academic performance. So, I decided to stop studying with music because it doesn't, it helped me focus but not really in the right way.

Interviewer 23:13

So, does the location of studying change if you work in a group versus individually?

Participant #8 23:19

Yes, so if I'm in a group, I do like to be like, maybe in the newsroom or in the library, if I'm doing a project, I wouldn't really invite people to my house to do a project. Just because it doesn't really feel like so social, I guess. And that's kind of like one of the nice things about doing group projects. So, there's a social element to it. So, ya no, if I'm doing a group project, I wouldn't do it at home.

Interviewer 23:45

So since you're studying at home, usually, you don't really experience the self other monitoring effect. So however, if you would study somewhere else, as you mentioned, maybe in the newsroom, would you feel pressured to study or while having people around you also studying or would you not feel pressured to study?

Participant #8 24:05

Um, you know, I think like yes, I do feel pressured to study if I'm at the library, but at the same time I also think I used to feel it more like when I first started, excuse me, when I first started my bachelor's degree here in Groningen. I would go to the library definitely like when I was a first year maybe second year, I was maybe not not like socially anxious to be in the library, but there was like a little bit of anxiety of like, okay, like, you know, like I said, like, don't make too much noise like make sure your food doesn't stink and all this all these things that I didn't have at home, but then I ... What's the question again? Sorry, I got lost a little bit while answering your question.

Interviewer 24:54

No worries, if you just feel pressured studying at the library?

Participant #8 24:57

oh, yes, yeah, so I did and then like and then I think Once I started being like, once COVID hit and everything and then when I would go back like now, I know that I don't care, like, I don't feel pressured like I will, I will be at the library taking like before, I would be like, okay, I studied an hour, I'm gonna take a 15-minute break. And I will look at my phone or something like, you know, very discreet break. And now if I take a break, I'll just like put on like, I don't know, I'm a huge sports fan. So, I'll put on a boxing fight on my computer. And if there's two people standing next to me, like, okay, don't get distracted, but I'm gonna watch my fight like I'm on my break. So, I definitely think that I used to feel it. But as I kept growing up, I realized that actually, it's kind of just so self made this pressure that everybody cares so much about what they're doing, that they're not going to care about what you're doing, you know, like, so there was a pressure, but I think it's faded out slowly as time has passed.

Interviewer 25:52

So, your since you're not having that at home, you don't feel like you're missing out on anything?

Participant #8 25:58

No, not at all. No, I actually have more pressure almost to study at home because like, yeah, since I can wake up and start like, it's not like, okay, I wake up shower, get ready, have breakfast, cycle to the university, find a seat, settle down. That's like, I can literally be like, oh, 9 am okay, I'm up I study. So, I have more pressure to do that of like, study, study study at home, rather than in the library.

Interviewer 26:25

Yeah, since you just mentioned it as well, since you don't have to travel anymore. Does that also affect your choice of location that you don't have to go anywhere and you don't have that travel time in order to go there or get ready time to study somewhere else?

Participant #8 26:39

Um, yeah, I think that affects it the fact that I'm willing to stay at home, right, like a quite. Yeah, I think that I don't think it's like the getting Yeah, actually, it is the getting ready that gets to me. I'm just not bothered, especially like, during exam season and stuff. Like I don't see the point of me going to the library at eight in the morning to line up for 30 minutes when I could already be studying at eight in the morning in my house and just finish earlier.

Interviewer 27:05

All right, that was actually overall kind of it. Just yeah, if there's any additional information you want to add or anything about why you chose to study here at your home, or how it improves your willingness to study here instead of somewhere else?

Participant #8 27:20

I don't know. I think yeah, I think we covered everything. But yeah, I just, ya I think we got everything. So

Interviewer 27:27

Well then. Thank you very much.

Participant #8 27:28

Thank you.

Appendix A.7: Code Book

The code book was established to provide an explanation of each code used within the software Atlas.Ti. Additionally, the codes are subdivided into code groups which result to a code tree.

<i>Code Groups</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Physical Environment Aspects	The study environment consists of physical aspects which contribute to the physical environment.	Comfort	Students seem at ease, more relaxed and eliminate negative thoughts, which leads to higher willingness to study (Weinschreider, 2020).
		Electricity Accessibility	Accessibility to electricity, results to either able to charge electronic devices and to have access to internet or not.
		Enclosed Space	Enclosed space means to have four walls surrounding and to be individually in a room, study space.
		Food and Drink Availability	Availability of food and drinks at the study location is relevant for being well nourished.
		Lighting	The lighting consists of artificial sources such as lamps or natural sunlight, offered at the study environment.
		Open Space	Open space means to be capable to look outside with a view and to have people around.
		Size of Study Space	The measurement of the study space.
		Space to Sit	The study location offers seats where the participant sits at.
		Windows	A glass opening in the study place that grants people to see out and admits air or light.
Social Interaction	It is seen as an interaction between people, social interaction is not only based on direct communication with others but also considers passive social interaction and body language. Passive social interaction means to be able to watch others interact without personal engagement (Trifiro & Gerson, 2019).	In a Group	If the participants were studying collaboratively or in a group at the study location.
		Individual	Considers if the participant studied alone/individually at the study environment.
		No Social Interaction	There is no social interaction at site if there is no interaction between people.
		Social Interaction	It is seen as an interaction between people, social interaction is not only based on direct communication with others but also considers passive social interaction and body language. Passive social interaction means to be able to watch others interact without personal engagement (Trifiro & Gerson, 2019).
		To have people around	Having people around at the study environment and not being alone at the study space.
Acoustics	Another sequence of social interaction is the production of sounds, through verbal communication and background noises.	Calm	An environment which is quiet, peaceful and causes no worry.
		Music	Listening to instrumental and vocal sounds, music, while studying.
		Silence	At the location, there is no noise, a complete quiet environment.

		Sounds	Production of sounds, through verbal communication and background noises.
Positive External Factors	The external factors are non-influential by the individual but the exterior, the surrounding environment by the commons. These are positive external factors.	Atmosphere of Place	Describes the feelings or the aesthetics of a place.
		Convenience	The convenience is to do something because it's not difficult with only little amount of effort.
		Self-Other Monitoring Effect	To simulate the feeling of being monitored by each other such as other people.
		Social Interaction	It is seen as an interaction between people, social interaction is not only based on direct communication with others but also considers passive social interaction and body language. Passive social interaction means to be able to watch others interact without personal engagement (Trifiro & Gerson, 2019).
Positive Internal Factors	The internal factors consist of individual personal traits that influences behaviour and performances of a person. These consist of the positive internal factors.	Flexibility	The flexibility of some study locations offers to come and go at any particular time. Also, either being allowed to be noisy or silent.
		Focus	The concentration of the participants offers focus.
		Motivation	Reasons to behave or act in a particular way for a desired goal.
		Pressure to Study	Academic pressure to keep studying through either other students, limited time or goal oriented.
		Productive	The higher education students are being productive by working a lot and providing sufficient outcomes while studying.
		Routine	A repetition of actions which are regularly followed.
		Self-Control	To restrain one owns desires and to control oneself. In context of studying, the individual needs self-control to not distract oneself and to keep studying.
		Together in this	For everyone to be connected by studying at the University of Groningen and being a student.
		Willingness to Study	The willingness to study is referred to as the desire to acquire and evolve new knowledge (Hotifah et al., 2020).
Negative External Factors	The external factors are non-influential by the individual but the exterior, the surrounding environment by the commons. These are negative external factors.	Cannot study there because ...	Reasons listed why the participant could not study at the specific location.
		Costs	The expenditure on products such as food and drinks.
		Distraction through Acoustics	Distraction caused by sounds, either by white noises, people talking or music played.
		Distraction through Internet	Distraction caused by the electricity accessibility while studying, eg. Social media, advertisements or streaming platforms.
		Distraction through Open Space	Distraction caused by open space establishing the study space, by either windows or other people.

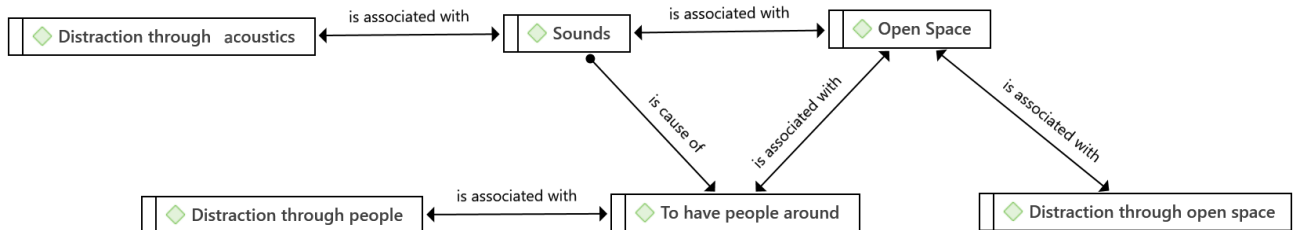
		Distraction through People	Distraction caused by the people at the study location, either passing by the study spot or talking/laughing leading to distraction.
		Social Interaction	It is seen as an interaction between people, social interaction is not only based on direct communication with others but also considers passive social interaction and body language. Passive social interaction means to be able to watch others interact without personal engagement (Trifiro & Gerson, 2019).
		Sounds	Another sequence of social interaction is the production of sounds, through verbal communication and background noises.
		Temperature	The degrees of heat at a particular location.
		Travel Distance to Study Location	The distance from the home of participants to the study location.
		Ventilation/Air Quality	The ventilation offers fresh air circulation and the air quality shows how clean the air is.
Negative Internal Factors	The internal factors consist of individual personal traits that influences behaviour and performances of a person. These consist of the negative internal factors.	Anxiety	Feeling anxious is related to emotions which are caused by fear, worry, tensions, or uncomfortable.
		Distraction through Oneself	Distraction caused by the participants own internal thoughts.
		Effect on Mental Health	An effect of the participants wellbeing either negatively or positively.
		Less Productive	The higher education students are being less productive by only working a small amount and providing non-sufficient outcomes while studying.
		Not Informed Enough	Not having enough knowledge about particular things.
		Self-Conscious	Being aware of your appearance and how it impacts the surrounding.
		Stress	“Stress is the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with mental or emotional pressure” (Mental Health Foundation, 2021).
Study Locations	A diversity of locations provided for higher education students to study at.	Café	The café is a public environment and it is a set physical environment including social interaction between customers in the facility for verbal communication and having a good time.
		Forum	The Forum is a modern designed building in Groningen, the Netherlands, constructed to facilitate a new meeting point for locals and visitors. The Forum offers diverse activities such as exhibitions, movies, a library, study locations and cultural programs (Visit Groningen, 2022).
		Home of Participant	The home environment of students in higher education. The option for students to study at home provides the possibility to personalize and optimize their learning space.

		Study Location	A location where higher education students are willing to study at.
		University Library	The University Library is from the Institution, University of Groningen. This environment is only offered for higher education students.
Other...	This code group is used for all other codes used for the data analysis within the software Atlas.Ti, which do not have a previous code group.	Break Time	Time spent during the study session used to take a break from studying.
		Free Time	Time spent for leisure activities.
		Necessities	The essential requirements for the higher education students to study.
		No Changing Environment	No disturbance in the surrounding environment, so there is no social interaction, no movement within the environment nor in near proximity of the study location.
		Observations	Observations are gathered through the senses of hearing or seeing, anything inspected at the location can be valued as data.
		Personal Preferences	Consists of individual opinions or thoughts toward a topic.
		Possible Changes	Recommendations for potential improvements at the study location suggested by participant.
		Separation between Study and Personal Time	There are boundaries made between study sessions and personal leisure activities.
		Study Time	The hours/minutes spend on studying at the study location.

Appendix A.8: Additional Network Analysis

This appendix is a continuation of the network analysis within the result section. The figure 8 shows the male higher education students' perception of studying in an open space. The majority of male students consider open space as a distraction as in connection to distraction through people and acoustics.

Figure 8. Open Space perceived by male higher education students



The figure 9, on the other hand, shows the enclosed space perceived by the female higher education students. As enclosed space is associated with silence, female participants linked both components as an immense distraction for themselves and leads to being lost in their own thoughts. Therefore, it has been figured that for female students, it has a negative effect on mental health if they have decided to study in enclosed space or in a silence study environment.

Figure 9. Enclosed Space perceived by female higher education students

