

12/13/2021

The student's perception and use of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen

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Table of contents

Summary.....	3
1. Background	4
1.1 Research Problem	4
1.2 Structure of the thesis	5
2. Theoretical Framework.....	6
2.1. Existing Theories and Concepts	6
2.2 Conceptual Framework.....	7
2.3 Hypothesis.....	7
4. Methodology	8
4.1 Data collection process.....	8
5. Fieldwork identification of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen	10
6. Outdoor gyms and Dutch vs international students.....	18
6.1 Awareness	18
6.2 The use of outdoor gyms	21
6.3 Interview differences international and Dutch students	23
7. Increasing the use of outdoor gyms	24
7.1 Reasons for people to not go to outdoor gyms	24
7.2 Improvements	27
7.3 Personal contradicting needs.....	28
8. Conclusions and reflection	30
8.1 Findings.....	30
8.2 Reflection of the findings.....	30
8.3 Reflections on the research process.....	31
Bibliography.....	32
APPENDIX A. SURVEY	34
APPENDIX B. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TABLE B	45
APPENDIX C. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TABLE C	46
APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW GUIDE	47
APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW. L, DUTCH STUDENT, 21	48

APPENDIX F. INTERVIEW. J, DUTCH STUDENT, 20	51
APPENDIX G. INTERVIEW. M, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 20	54
APPENDIX H. INTERVIEW. J, CALICLUB TRAINER	57
APPENDIX I. INTERVIEW. C, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 21	59
APPENDIX J. INTERVIEW. R, DUTCH STUDENT, 20	62
APPENDIX K. INTERVIEW. V, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 23	65
APPENDIX L. S, DUTCH STUDENT	68

Summary

This study aims to look at the student's use of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. It focuses on the differences between international and Dutch students and on how outdoor gyms could be improved. The research included field work, a survey and several interviews. There were 92 survey respondents and eight interviews. The statistical analysis of the survey showed that there was no significant difference between the use and awareness of outdoor gyms between international and Dutch students in the population. Only a small percentage of the students in the survey used outdoor gyms. Reasons for students to not use outdoor gyms were that they were exercising enough already, feeling uncomfortable being watched while exercising and not knowing how to use the different exercise apparatus. Most students are missing guidance. Therefore, it is important that outdoor gyms are promoted more, and exercise classes are used to introduce outdoor gym use. Although the interviews showed a lot of contradicting needs, there are certainly things that outdoor gyms could improve upon when looking at the design. For example, bars from the right material that are not too thick or too slippery.

1. Background

The Netherlands is a popular destination for international students. Enrolments of foreign students in Dutch universities are still increasing. In the academic year of 2018-2019, the share of international students was 11,5% (Steehouder & Donselaar, 2019). In comparison to domestic students, international students might experience more difficulties, because they are adjusting to a different culture. Since they are living in a foreign country, they may experience a 'culture shock' (Zhou et al., 2008). This may make international students stressed and anxious. Next to the change from high school to university (Bethel et al., 2020), they do not know how to behave culturally appropriately, may not be confident in speaking English yet, are afraid to fail their studies, and are struggling with homesickness and loneliness (Brown & Holloway, 2008).

Physical activity is important as it can help to cope with stress. According to Herring et al. (2013) people experienced fewer or less intense feelings of anxiety after exercise. Since physical activity is promoted by the use of outdoor gyms in publicly accessible spaces (Jansson et al., 2020) it could be a way to improve the well-being of students (Rosa et al., 2021). All over the world there is an increase in the number of outdoor gyms (Jansson et al., 2019). Outdoor gyms are exercise apparatus or exercise equipment in public spaces that assist people with exercising (Lee et al., 2018). This includes calisthenics, which is the sport of exercises that uses primarily body weight and is mainly performed outside with high bars, parallel bars, and rings (Thomas et al., 2017). Because outdoor gyms are in a public space, they can promote exercising. This can increase the physical activity in an area (Jansson et al., 2019). To attract users, proximity and other facilities close to the outdoor gym are predictors for the utilisation of it (Jansson et al., 2019).

The Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) is a popular destination for international students. The municipality of Groningen is promoting physical activity, including outdoor fitness (Gemeente Groningen, 2016). Since international students are more prone to stress and exercise less than domestic students (Rosa et al., 2021), it is important that the outdoor gyms are also accessible for international students. International students might live in international student housing in different parts of the city (Living with the SSH in Groningen, 2020) and may not have an outdoor gym in the surrounding area of their residence. Especially during Covid-19 when all the indoor sport halls were closed, outdoor gyms have been a good alternative. However, Sibson et al. (2018) found that people might like the initiative of outdoor gyms but that they do not encourage them to exercise, especially for those people who do not work out regularly. The perception and use of students of outdoor gyms is therefore important but this group is lacking in the current literature (Lee et al., 2018; Jansson et al., 2019).

1.1 Research Problem

The aim of this research is to find out how the use of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen is different between international students and Dutch students. Therefore, the following research question is asked:

“How does the use of publicly accessible outdoor gyms differ between international and Dutch students in the city of Groningen?”

To be able to answer the main research question, the following sub questions are asked:

1. What types of outdoor gyms can be identified in the city of Groningen?
- 2a. How is the use of outdoor gyms by Dutch students in the city of Groningen?
- 2b. How is the use of outdoor gyms by international students in the city of Groningen?
- 2c. What differences in the use of outdoor gyms can be observed and what causes these differences?
3. What improvements to the outdoor gyms in Groningen could be made to increase usage of both international and Dutch students?

1.2 Structure of the thesis

In the theoretical framework the link to previous literature is discussed. Then in the methodology the chosen research methods can be found. The results are divided into three parts. First the fieldwork gives an overview of the different types of outdoor gyms, this is followed by the difference in the experience of outdoor gyms between international and Dutch student and ends with how outdoor gyms can be improved. In the discussion the results are compared to previous research. The conclusion gives the recommendations and limitations.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Existing Theories and Concepts

Studying abroad can be a rewarding experience, however adapting to living in a different culture can be stressful (Rosa et al., 2021). Likewise, studying in the Netherlands brings difficulties adapting to the Dutch culture. Jiang & Altinyelken (2021) studied the social integration of Chinese students in the Netherlands. They found that international students had difficulties in a group with multiple Dutch students as the latter shifted from speaking English to speaking Dutch easily. Furthermore, there were cultural differences regarding how to spend free time and the Dutch direct way of communication, which could make Chinese students feel embarrassed. Not only did Chinese students have difficulties interacting with Dutch students, but a survey also found that over three quarters of the international students preferred to have more contact with Dutch students than they currently have (DNSA et al., 2019). Furthermore, Fang & Liempt (2021) talk about the discrimination that international students face. There are many Dutch students who will add “no internationals” to their advertisements for available rooms, which shows the attitude of Dutch students towards international students. All these difficulties can lead to stress and a lower well-being.

The study by Johnson et al. (2019), where a small group of people used an outdoor gym for six weeks in Sweden, showed that the physical activity had positive psychological outcomes as it reduced stress symptoms. However, the study by Rosa et al. (2021) in Canada found that international students had less physical activity than domestic students. According to Conn et al. (2014) the different norms and values of the cultures of international students can act as a barrier for physical activity. For example, in the western society there is a culture of individualism. There is the individualistic view that individuals should improve their own physical health, while in other cultures family is important which makes less time for personal improvements like physical activity (Conn et al., 2014). Outdoor gyms can improve the physical activity in an area (Jansson et al., 2019), therefore, from a societal perspective, it is important to increase the usage of outdoor gyms. Next to physical activity outdoor gyms can act as a meeting place (Lee et al., 2018). When going to outdoor gyms regularly, people get to know each other and can become friends. This can reduce depressive symptoms and therefore improve the well-being of people (Fernández-Rodríguez et al., 2020). However, Copeland et al. (2017) mentions the underutilization of outdoor gyms. Additionally, Gibson et al. (2018) found that even though people think outdoor gyms add value, outdoor gyms do not encourage people to start exercising or to increase their physical activity. People who are already physically active were more aware of the fitness equipment than people who were not. Therefore, promotion is important to increase the awareness of all people (Copeland et al., 2017; Jansson et al., 2020).

There are different factors influencing the usage of outdoor gyms. According to the review of Jansson et al. (2019), proximity has an influence on the use of outdoor gyms. Users of outdoor gyms often live close to them. Mora et al. (2017) found that the majority of outdoor gym users lived within 500 meters from an outdoor gym. However, proximity does not always determine which outdoor gym is used. For example, factors like more exercise machines or a more favourable location in the city and a better feeling of safety also have an influence on which outdoor gym is used (Fernández-Rodríguez et al., 2020). According to Lee et al. (2018) and Copeland et al. (2017), people would like more support, such as an instructor, exercise classes, or more information about how to use the apparatus. Outdoor gyms are not always used correctly which can lead to injuries (Chow & Wu, 2019). Also, outdoor gyms near other facilities are used more easily than isolated outdoor gyms (Fernández-Rodríguez et al., 2020). Other outdoor gyms users can withhold people from using outdoor gyms. In the study of Szopa & Sas-Nowosielski (2016) people did not like the presence of children in the playground next to outdoor gyms.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) shows how international and Dutch students use outdoor gyms. Outdoor gyms can be a place for them to meet and to improve their physical activity and well-being. However, the quality, location, surroundings, and other users differ between outdoor gyms. This can influence the use and perception of outdoor gyms.

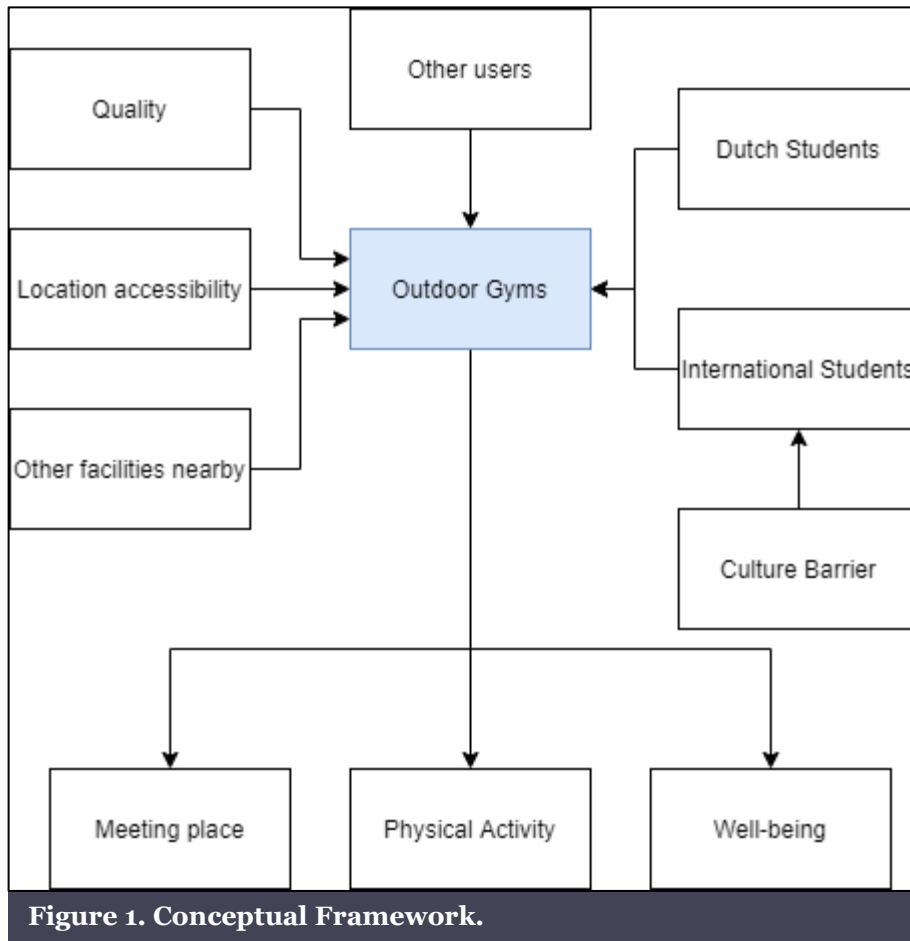


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

2.3 Hypothesis

As international students have less physical activity (Rosa et al., 2021) and have a different culture with different values and norms (Conn et al., 2014), the expectation is that international students make less use of outdoor gyms than Dutch students. Also, the location of the outdoor gyms might influence the use of the outdoor gyms (Jansson et al, 2019).

4. Methodology

Different research methods are used in this study. A combination of fieldwork, a survey and interviews were chosen because the fieldwork shows the differences and locations of outdoor gyms which can result in different opinions about using outdoor gyms. The survey shows if international and Dutch students think differently about using outdoor gyms, and the interviews explain why students use or do not use outdoor gyms. In this study, international students are defined as students who are not Dutch citizens and who are doing (a part of) their study at the RUG or the Hanze university.

4.1 Data collection process

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was used to analyse the outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. Photos were taken to look at the design, the maintenance, and the surrounding area of the outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

Survey

The survey (Appendix A) was shared in multiple WhatsApp groups. It was chosen to use WhatsApp groups to get responses fast. The WhatsApp groups were from the studies Spatial Planning and Design, Economics and Business Economics, Philosophy and in WhatsApp groups of the sport associations of volleyball and gymnastics. At the beginning there was a large amount of Dutch student responses, however, international student responses were lacking. Therefore, some international students were messaged privately to ask if they would fill in the survey and could send it to other international students in the city of Groningen. This resulted in a total of 92 responses of which 39 were international students and 53 were Dutch students. The survey was put out to see if there was a difference between the answers of Dutch and international students about outdoor gyms. To know if the differences in the survey were significantly different for the population the Chi-Square Test was used. However, because there was a branch in the survey with only 15 respondents in one branch of being an outdoor gym user, there was chosen to not use statistical tests on the questions this group received.

Interviews

On top of the fieldwork and survey, interviews were held (Appendix E-L). The interviewees were students who filled in their email address in the survey. The outdoor gym users and students who filled in yes or maybe on the question if they would think of using outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen while still studying, were emailed. Six people reacted, and three international and three Dutch students were interviewed. These interviews took about 20 to 30 minutes and were held partly online and partly in real life. Next to this, two students who were exercising together at the outdoor gym near Damsterdiep were interviewed while doing fieldwork. Also, the calisthenics association Caliclub was visited during the fieldwork where a student who had a gap year and worked at Caliclub was interviewed. These interviews took about 15 minutes. In the interviews students could explain their survey answers, tell what withholds them to go to outdoor gyms and what improvements could be made. Not all different outdoor gyms in Groningen were used by the interviewed students, which might not make the data fully representative for the city of Groningen. An interview guide was made to have structure in the interviews (Appendix D). The interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai, and Otranscribe and were then coded in ATLAS.TI. The codes were put into code groups (Figure 2). This way different quotes about the same subject could be analysed.

	Name ▲	Size
◇	Before studies in Groningen	3
◇	Important	40
◇	Improvements	25
◇	Instructor	4
◇	Internationals	6
◇	Personal	25
◇	Promotion	19
◇	Reasons to not use	31
◇	Things that not work	9

Figure 2. Code groups

Ethical considerations

It is important to keep the interviewees and survey respondents anonymous. For example, in the survey, respondents left their email addresses, this information cannot be shared.

5. Fieldwork identification of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen

In the city of Groningen there are fourteen outdoor gyms publicly accessible for students (Figure 3). There are two other outdoor gyms which are not located on the map. This is because one is an outdoor gym in the Stadspark specifically for older adults and one is an “exercise garden” in Vinkhuizen, which has a fence around it. This makes the use by students of these two outdoor gyms unlikely. During the fieldwork the design and location of outdoor gyms were observed. The first thing that was noticed was the lack of a clear map that showed all the different outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

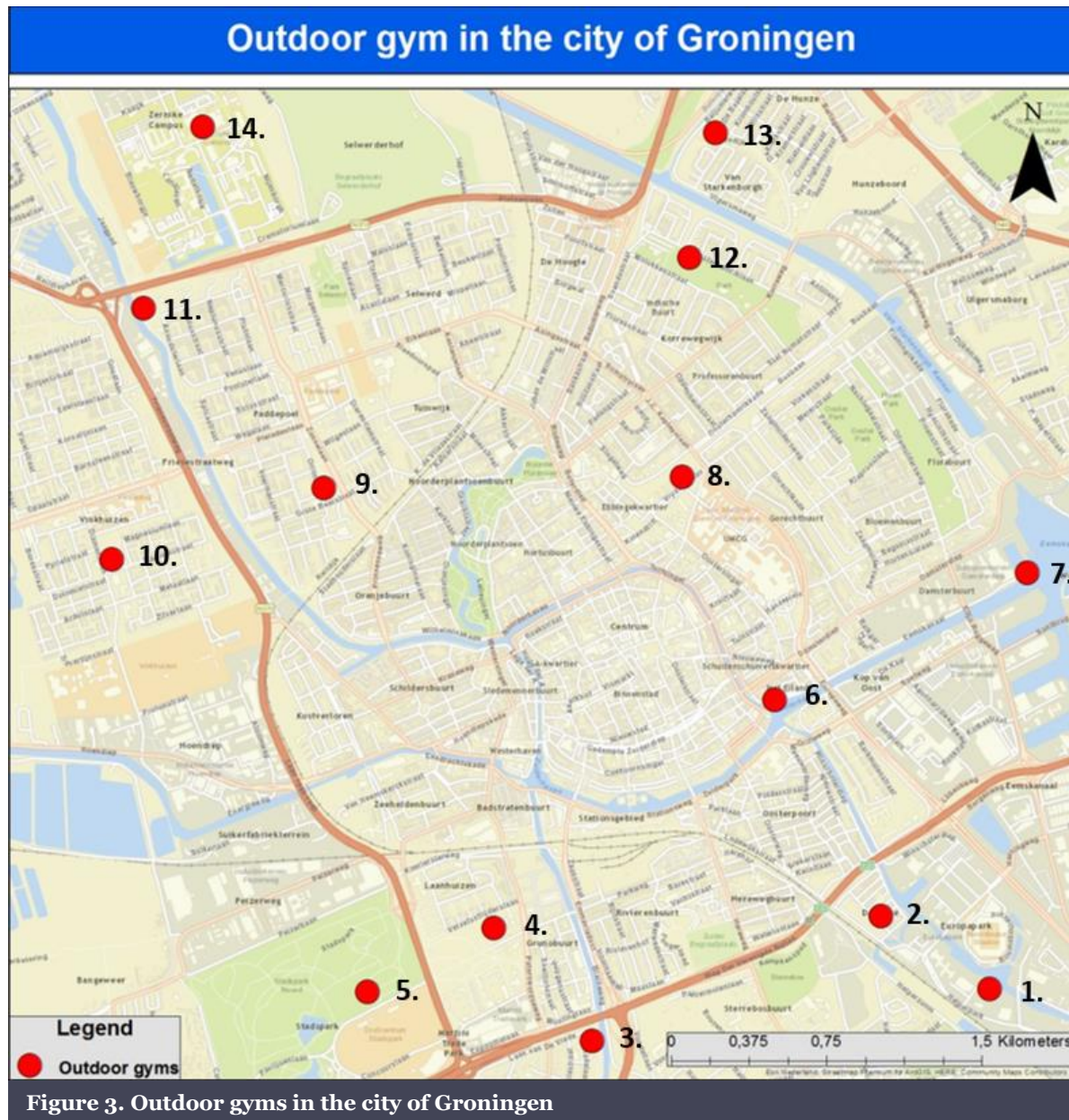


Figure 3. Outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen

Lack of a clear map

A few outdoor gyms were already known of because they are situated along cycling routes and are clearly visible. However, to know where the other outdoor gyms are located, the internet was searched. Google maps showed a very limited number of outdoor gyms. Then there is the website of Sporto50 which is

responsible for the sports policy of the municipality. Their website only showed a map of all the publicly accessible sport places. They showed over fifty places because all the small football and basketball fields are included. The website, Calisthenics parks Groningen (2021), was the most accurate and showed almost all outdoor gyms. For people interested in using outdoor gyms it should be easy to know where all the outdoor gyms are located. Therefore, a clear map of only the outdoor gyms should be uploaded on the website of Sport050 and google maps should show them all.

In Figure 4, 5, and 6, an overview of all the different characteristics of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen are given. The outdoor gyms have different characteristics. Firstly, some outdoor gyms only have exercise machines, some only have climbing frames and others have a combination of both. Then the colours, surface, and the types and materials used for the exercise machine and bars differed. It was not known which surface most outdoor gyms used exactly but it was a kind of rubber or softer asphalt. Lastly, most outdoor gyms had some kind of instruction which was either a bigger sign at the beginning or a smaller sign on the exercise machine or bars itself. The text of those signs was all in Dutch. Some outdoor gyms had an app to guide you with exercising.

NUMBER	TYPE	COLOUR	SURFACE	MAINTENANCE	LOCATION	EXPLANATION SIGNS
1.	Only climbing frames	Yellow	Artificial grass	Good	Next to sport hall and football field	No explanation signs
						
2.	Only climbing frames	Brown	Softer asphalt	Good	In middle of neighbourhood	No explanation signs
						
3.	Only climbing frames	Black	Artificial Grass	Good; some rust	Next to playground and football field	No explanation signs
						
4.	Only climbing frame	Blue	Softer Asphalt	One broken apparatus, some explanation signs ripped off	Next to basketball field and school	No explanation signs
						
5.	Only climbing frames	Orange	Artificial grass	Good	Next to football field in a park	One big explanation sign & app
						

Figure 4. Outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen

NUMBER	TYPE	COLOUR	SURFACE	MAINTENANCE	LOCATION	EXPLANATION SIGNS
6.	Only climbing frames	Orange	Softer asphalt	Good	Next to basketball field	Only signs on the climbing frame
						
7.	Only apparatus	Grey	Semi-paved Komex (halfverharding)	Flaking paint, graffiti	On its own, next to the water	One big sign and signs on some of the apparatus & app
						
8.	Only climbing frame	Grey	Artificial Grass	Graffiti	In between houses	No explanation signs
						
9.	Only climbing frames	Dark blue	Artificial Grass	Good	Next to stakepark	No explanation signs
						
10.	Both apparatus and climbing frames	Black and White & Blue	Sand for climbing frame and softer asphalt for appartus	Broken apparatus, garbage and graffiti	Next to football field and playground	Only signs on apparatus
						

Figure 5. Outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

NUMBER	TYPE	COLOUR	SURFACE	MAINTENANCE	LOCATION	EXPLANATION SIGNS
11.	Only apparatus	Grey	Semi-paved Komex (halfverharding)	Water puddles, flaking paint, rust	Near flat and bicycle path	One big sign and signs on some of the apparatus & app
						
12.	Both apparatus and climbing frames	Orange & Grey	Artificial Grass	One broken apparatus, some explanation signs ripped off	In park	Only explanation signs on apparatus
						
13.	Only apparatus	Grey	Semi-paved Komex (halfverharding)	Flaking paint, scratches in explanation sign	Next to playground with basketball field	One big sign and signs at some of the apparatus & app
						
14.	Both apparatus and climbing frames	Orange & Grey	Artificial Grass	Good	Next to university buildings	One big sign and signs on apparatus & app
						

Figure 6. Outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

Service area

Proximity is an important factor in the use of outdoor gyms. Mora et al. (2017) used a maximum distance of 500 meters to walk to outdoor gyms. This translates to a ten-minute walk, which is the common threshold used in urban studies. They found that indeed the majority of outdoor gym users lived within 500 meters of an outdoor gym. In figure 7, the service area of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen is visible. The 500-meter threshold shows that many citizens do not have an outdoor gym within a ten-minute walking distance from their house. However, cycling in the Netherlands is popular, therefore the service area of a five-minute bike ride was also created (Figure 8). This map shows that the neighbourhoods Selwerd and Schildersbuurt are lacking an outdoor gym that is within a five-minute bike ride.

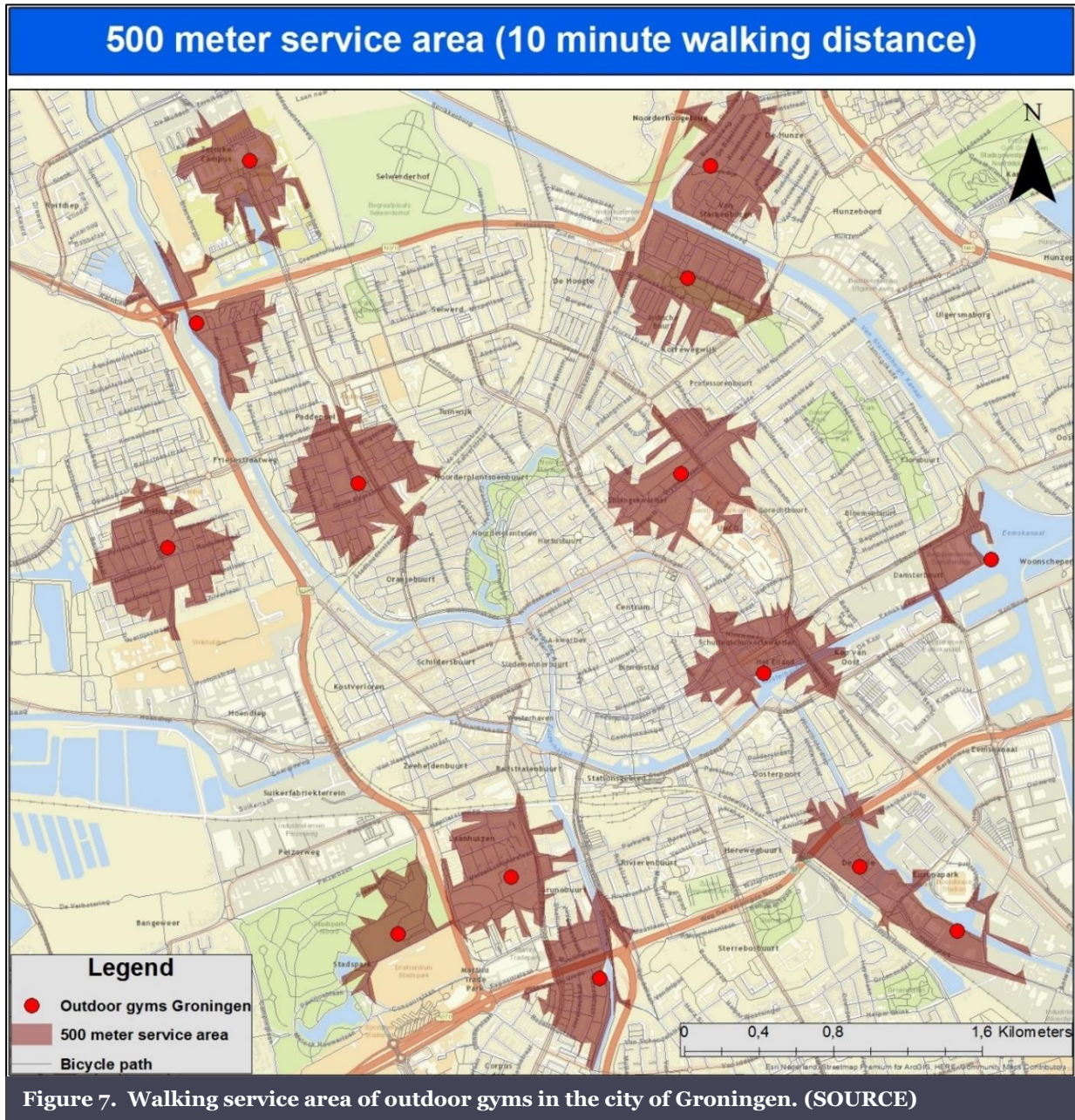
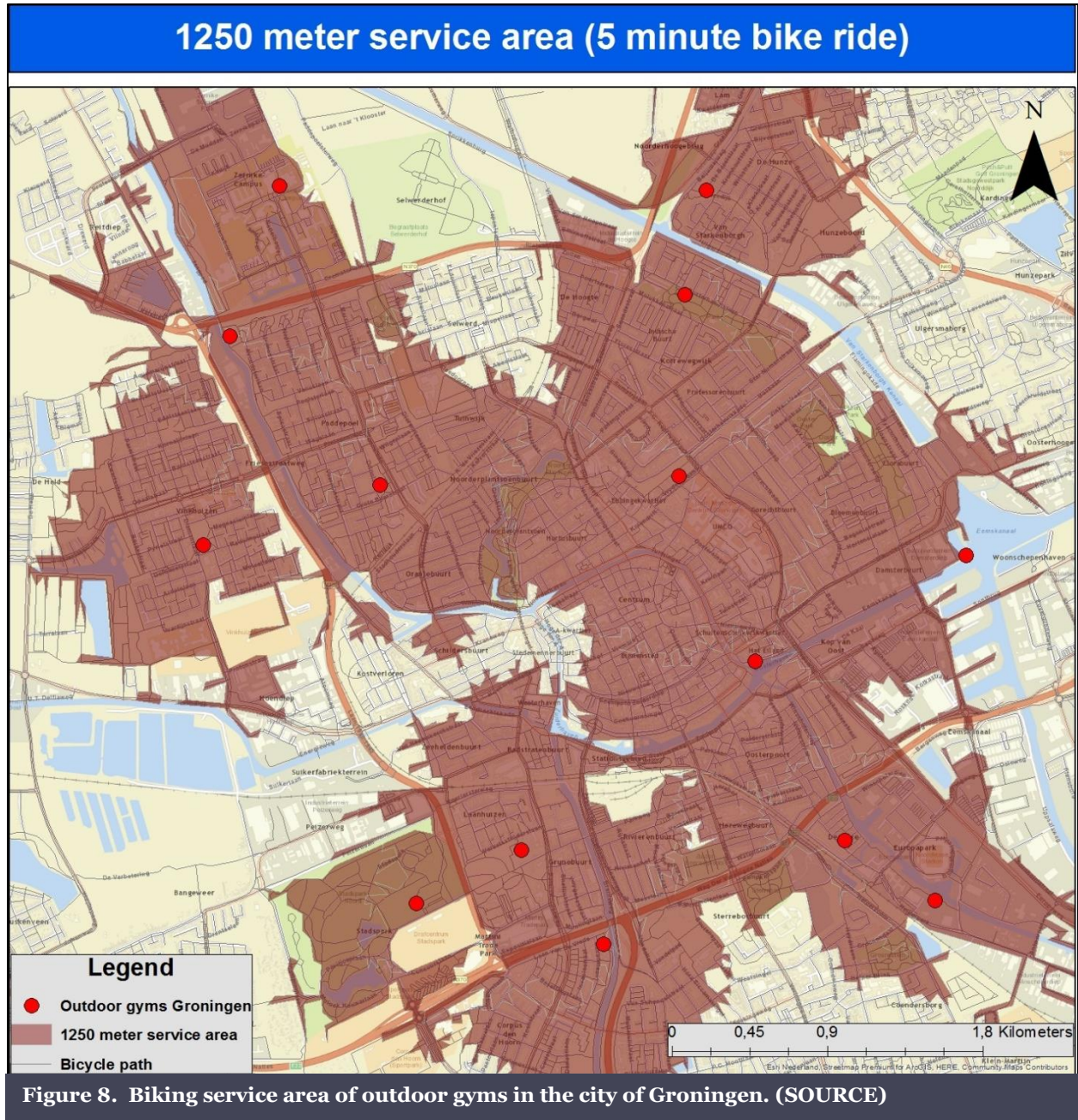


Figure 7. Walking service area of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. (SOURCE)



Surroundings

Most outdoor gyms are located next to other activities such as other sport facilities (basketball field, playground, & skate park). A lot of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen are very open, others are surrounded by bushes and trees. Some outdoor gyms are not visible enough. For example, outdoor gym number 5 (Figure 4) located in the Stadspark was hard to find. First you need to pass the fence of the soccer association (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Outdoor gym in the Stadspark is quite hidden.

Maintenance

Some outdoor gyms were better maintained than others. It varied from broken apparatus to some smaller issues such as scratches or tears in explanation signs, graffiti, rust or flaking paint and small water puddles (Figure 10).

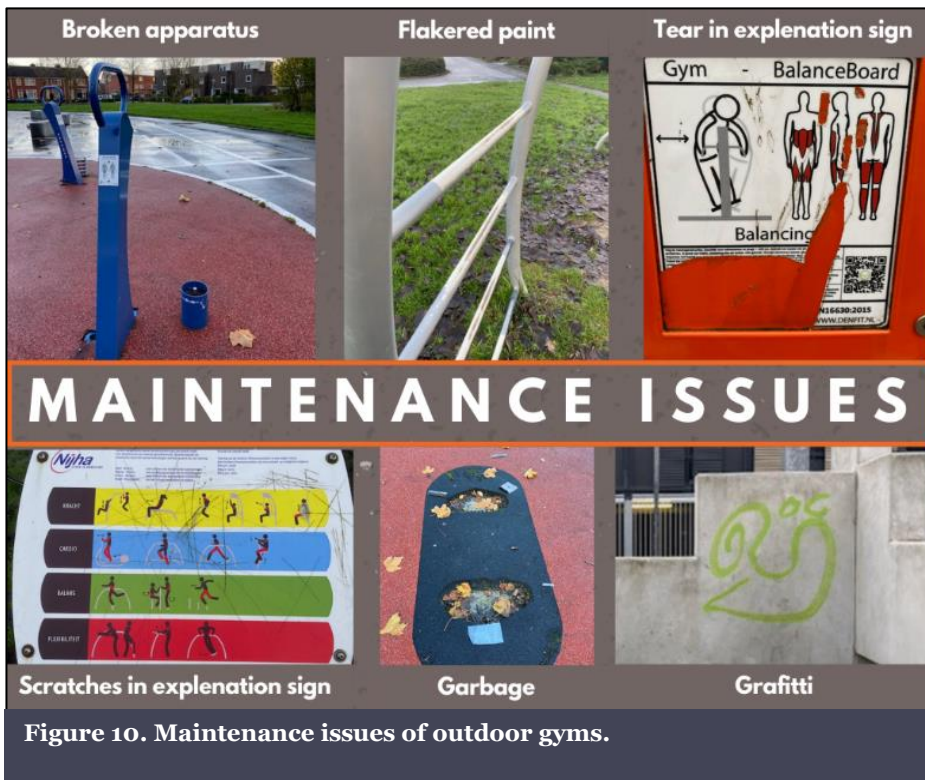


Figure 10. Maintenance issues of outdoor gyms.

6. Outdoor gyms and Dutch vs international students.

Rosa et al. (2021), states that international students are more prone to stress, but exercise less than Dutch students. Therefore, it is important to see if there is a difference in the use of outdoor gyms between Dutch and international students. In the survey (Appendix 1), some questions related to the awareness of outdoor gyms and some questions related to the use of outdoor gyms were asked to compare both groups.

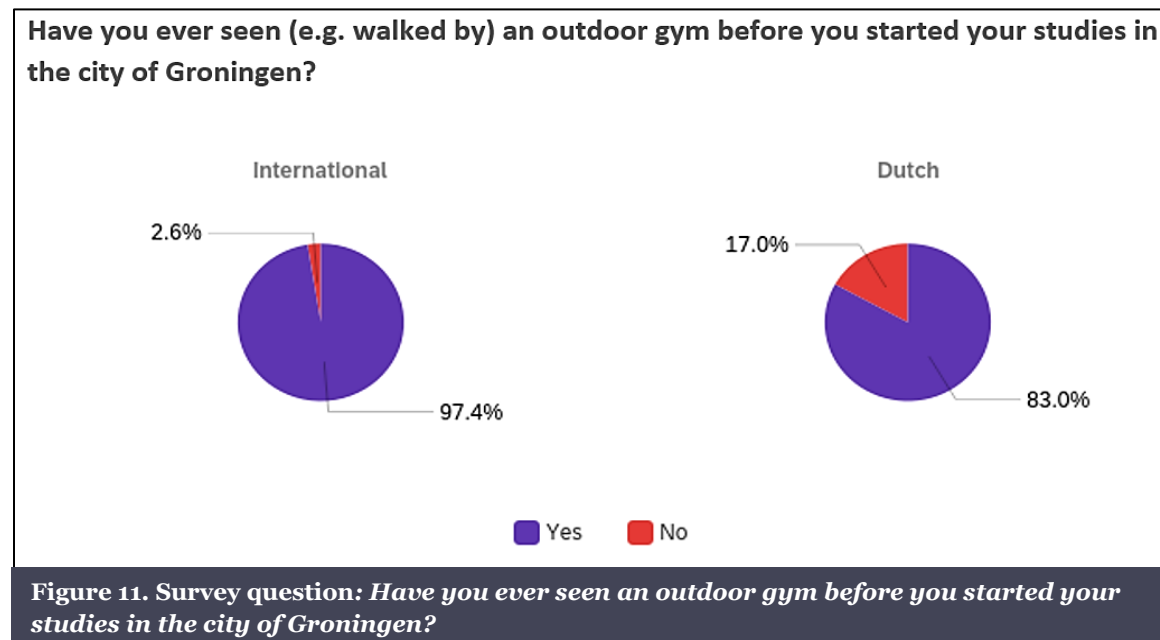
The survey used nominal and ordinal data. The Pearson Chi-Square test was used to see if there were relationships between being an international or Dutch student and the other variables (the questions). The null hypothesis of the Pearson Chi-Square test is: "In the population, nationality (Dutch or international student) does not make a difference." A 5% probability value was used. Meaning that if the p-value is lower than 5%, the null hypothesis can be rejected and there is a difference between international and Dutch students in the population.

6.1 Awareness

In figure 11, 12, 13, and 14, the questions regarding the awareness of outdoor gyms are shown. These were yes or no questions which give a 2x2 table. The rule of thumb is that the "expected cell count is less than 5" needs to be less than 20%. For the 2x2 tables there may not be any expected counts below ten. If that is the case, then the Fisher's Exact Test will be used. The only significant variable was from the question: Have you ever seen an outdoor gym before your studies in the city of Groningen? The variables are explained individually.

Awareness of outdoor gym before studies

To see how much awareness of outdoor gyms there is under students, four questions were asked. The first question was about seeing an outdoor gym before starting your studies in the city of Groningen. The majority of the respondents had seen an outdoor gym before they started their studies. There is also a difference between international and Dutch students. For international students 97% have seen outdoor gyms, compared to 83% of Dutch students (Figure 11). The difference is significant with a p-value of 0.040 (Appendix B). This means that as an international student you are more likely to have seen an outdoor gym before your studies in the city of Groningen.



Use of outdoor gym before studies

On top of that, figure 12 shows that more international students (56%) have used an outdoor gym before their studies in the city of Groningen compared to Dutch students (40%). However, this result was not significantly different for the population as the p-value was 0.111 (Appendix B).

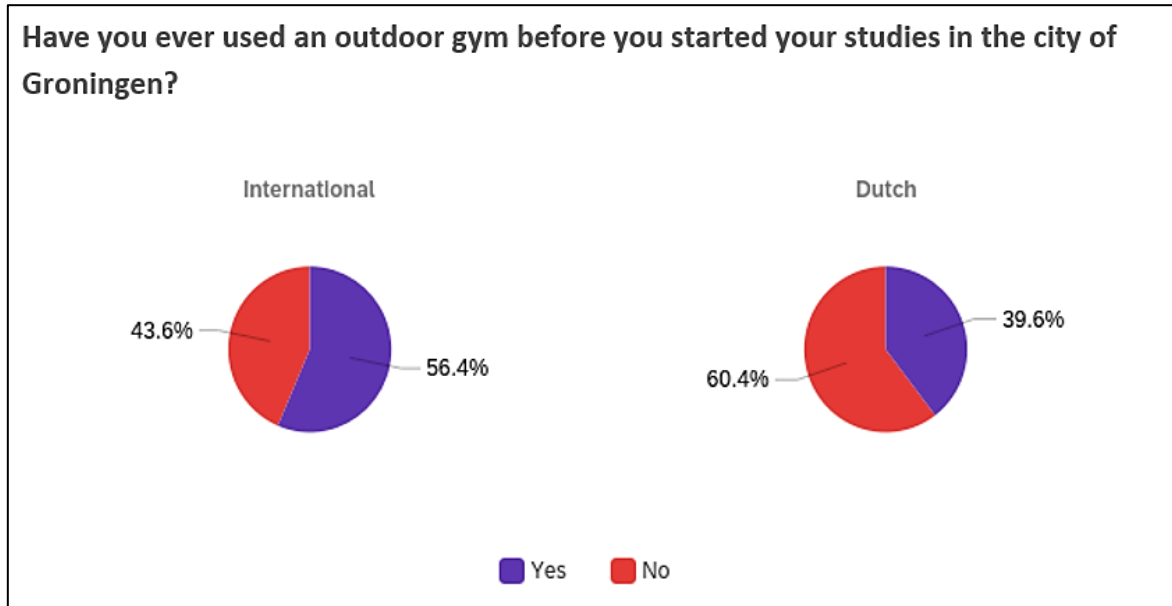


Figure 12. Survey question: *Have you ever used an outdoor gym before you started your studies in the city of Groningen?*

Awareness in the city of Groningen

Dutch students were more aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen with 91%, in comparison to 82% of international students (Figure 13). This was however not significant for the population. The p-value was 0.231 (Appendix B).

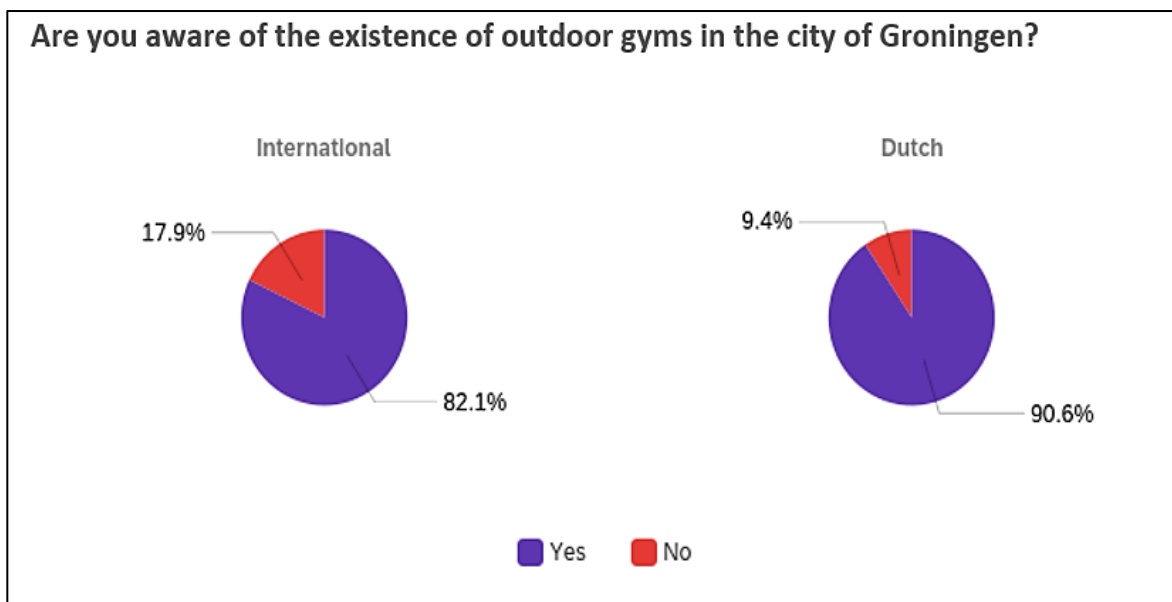
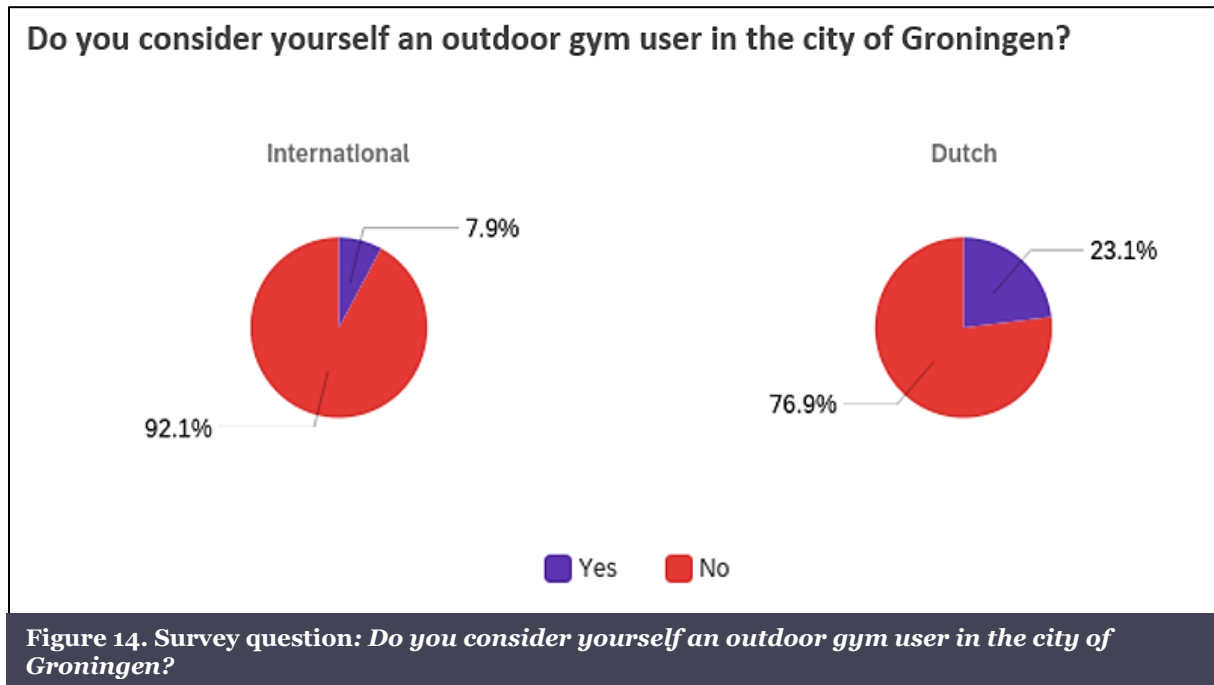


Figure 13. Survey question: *Are you aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen?*

Use of outdoor gyms in the city Groningen

In addition, there were also more Dutch students who considered themselves an outdoor gym user in the city of Groningen, 23% in comparison to 8% of international students (figure 14). This can be compared to the results of the survey of Copeland et al. (2017) where 74% of the 139 people that were interviewed had rarely or never used an outdoor gym in a one-kilometre radius from their house. In the study of Jansson et al. (2020) where out of the 2950 people that were observed walking past the outdoor gym, only 3.8% used the equipment for exercising. The difference between international and Dutch students was not significant for the population with a p-value of 0.085 (Appendix B).



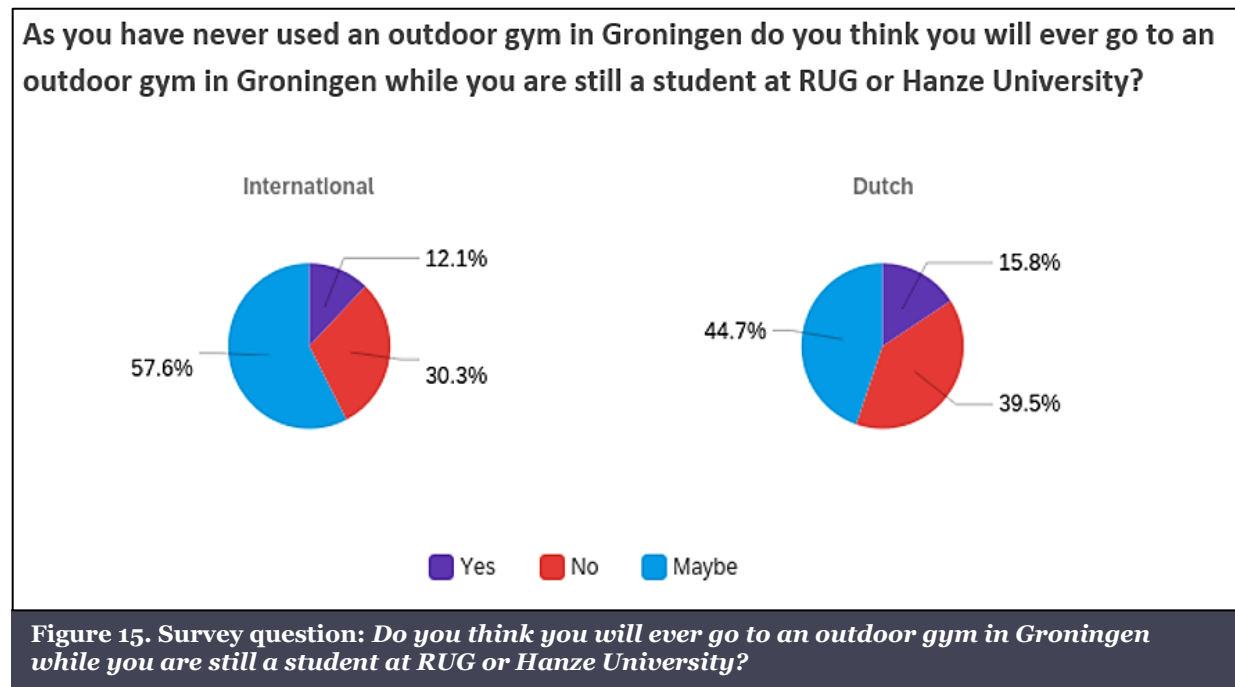
Thus, the statistical analysis suggests that although international students are more likely to have seen an outdoor gym before their studies in Groningen, there is, statistically speaking, no difference between international and Dutch students when it comes to the awareness and use of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

6.2 The use of outdoor gyms

For non-outdoor gym users in the city of Groningen, different questions were asked. Those were answered by 75 respondents. The questions were about the possible future use of outdoor gyms. These questions were answered on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree, with one additional yes-no-maybe question, resulting in tables bigger than 2x2. For the “expected cell count is less than 5”, that are bigger than 20%, the likelihood ratio is used. None of the variables were significantly different for the population

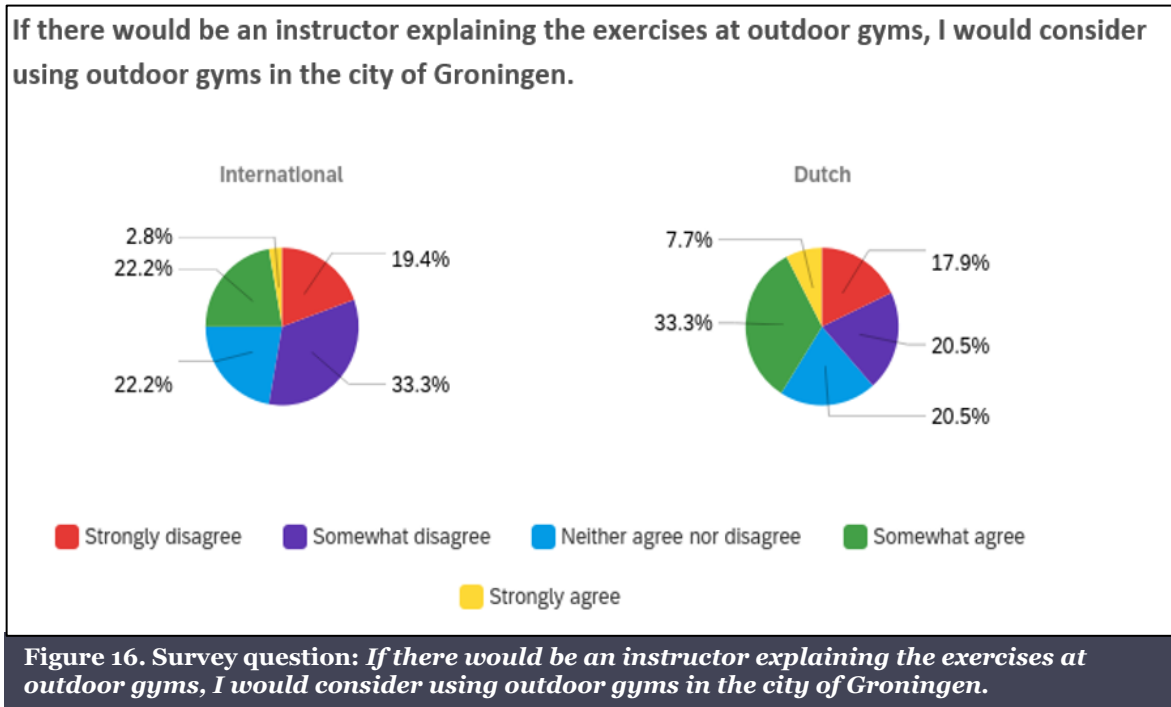
Possibility of future use of outdoor gyms

Of the 92 respondents 75 did not consider themselves an outdoor gym user in the city of Groningen. This group of non-outdoor gym users had 30% of the international students and 40% of the Dutch students that think they will never use an outdoor gym (Figure 15). This means that the majority (70% international and 60% Dutch students) is open to using outdoor gyms in the future. The p-value for this variable was 0.559 which means that in the population there is no difference between internationals and Dutch students. (Appendix C).



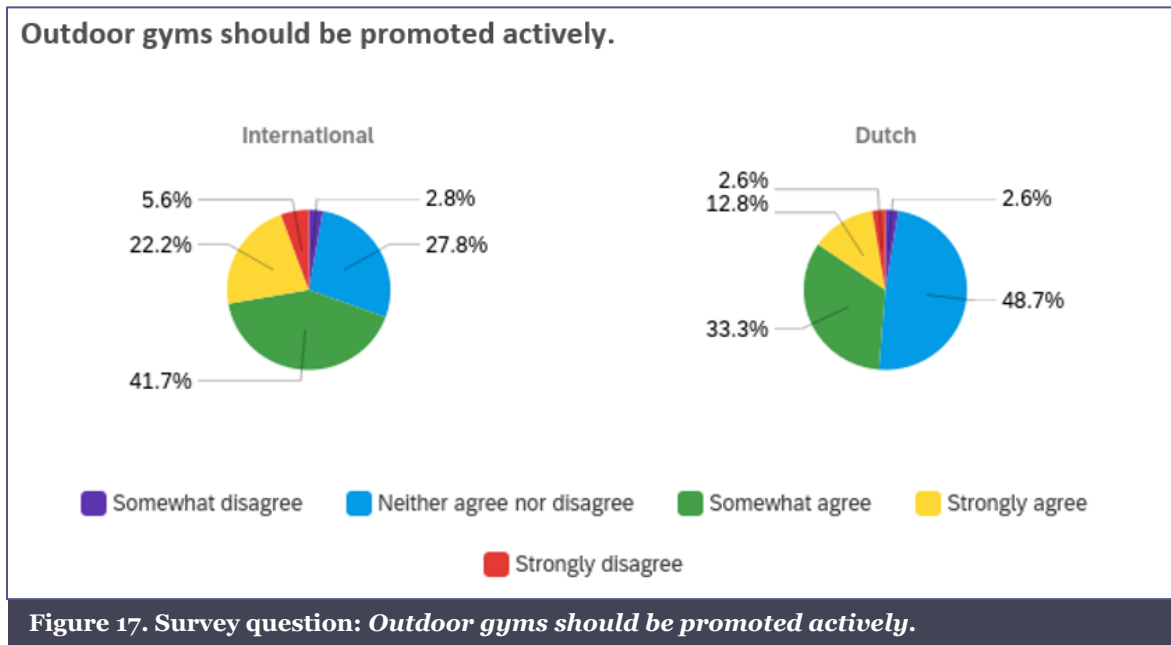
Instructor influence on future use

40% of the Dutch students and 25% of the international students agrees that an instructor at outdoor gyms would help to lower the bar of using outdoor gyms (Figure 16). Instructors could therefore be used as promotion to increase the outdoor gym use. The p-value was 0.579 meaning that there is no difference between international and Dutch students (Appendix C).



Attitude toward promotion of outdoor gyms

64% of international students in comparison to 46.1% Dutch students agrees that outdoor gyms should be promoted actively (Figure 17). In the population there is no difference between international and Dutch students because the p-value is insignificant with 0.420 (Appendix C).



Thus, the results suggest that in the population there is no difference between international and Dutch students regarding future use and the attitude towards promotion of outdoor gyms. The tests were significantly different for the population.

6.3 Interview differences international and Dutch students

In the interviews the question was asked if the interviewee thought that open gyms were as accessible for international students as they were for Dutch students. Even though outdoor gyms may not be on the top of the priority list for international students as they need to comprehend a lot of new information when they move to Groningen:

“Yeah, but again, like when you're in the first year and the new city, there's just so much information. And so to be honest, like, I didn't even think about some outdoor gyms because there was like, like exams, new professors, new city, roommates, there was so much going on.” – V, international student, 23.

It seems that international students might use outdoor gyms even more than Dutch students:

“And I even think, I feel like more international people use it than” – C, International student, 21.

“I think yeah because it is not dependent on where you come from a thing. Especially because they are just there.” – M, international student, 20.

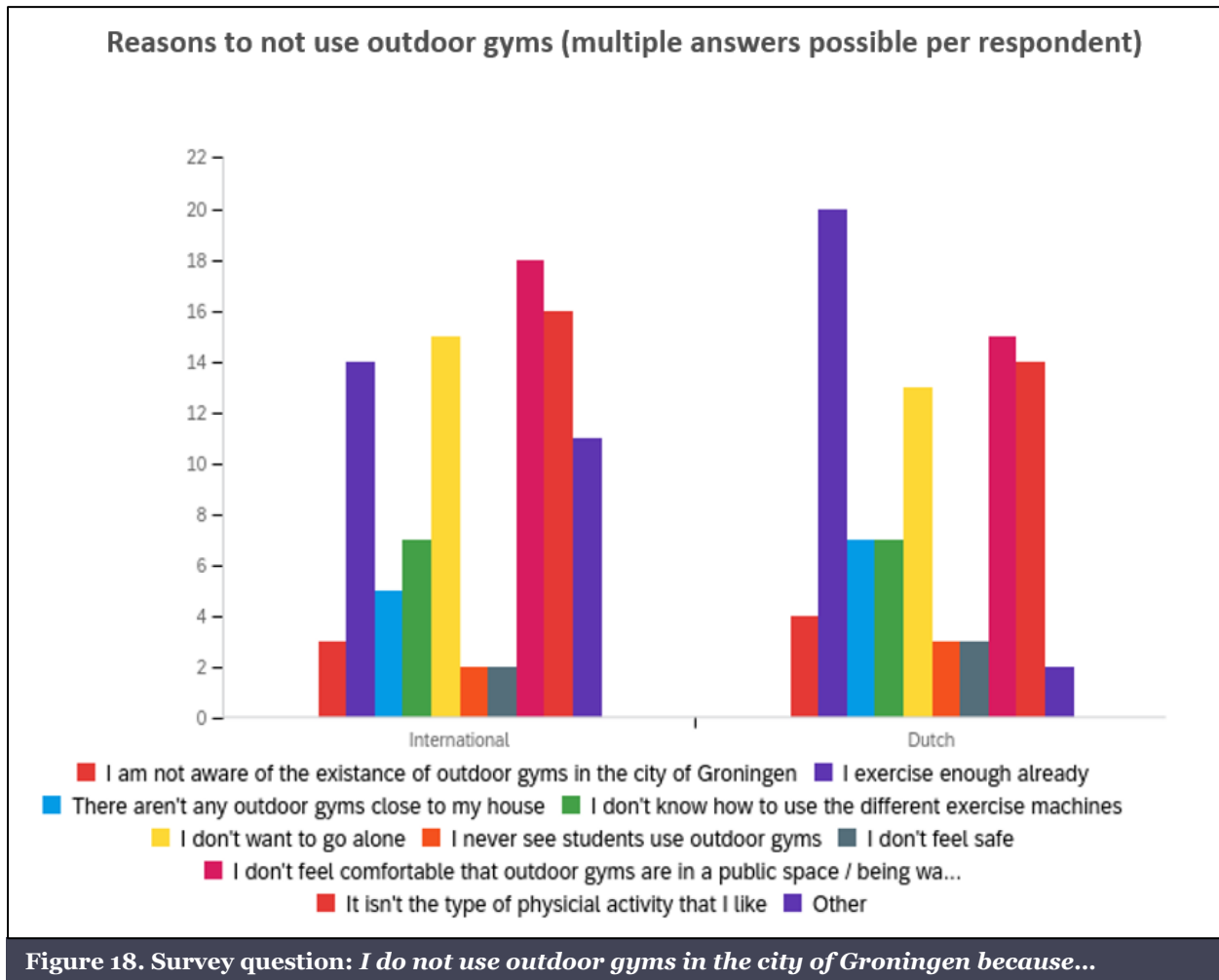
“Yes we see them (international students) a lot here, and I think especially at the DOT there are a lot international students. Relatively, there are more international students using outdoor gym, as there are a lot less international students of course, and maybe absolute also. – S, Dutch student

Even though in the survey the outdoor gyms were used less by international students, from the interviews it seems as if outdoor gyms are popular under international students. Reasons could be that international students do not want to join a Dutch sport association and rather go exercise for themselves.

7. Increasing the use of outdoor gyms

7.1 Reasons for people to not go to outdoor gyms

To improve the usage of outdoor gyms it is important to know why people are not using outdoor gyms now. In the survey the most chosen options to not use outdoor gyms were 'I exercise enough already', 'I don't want to go alone', 'I don't feel comfortable that outdoor gyms are in a public space / being watched while exercising' and 'It isn't the type of physical activity that I like'. Other reasons to not use outdoor gyms were mostly 'bad weather' and 'already using indoor gyms' (Figure 18). Especially international students thought 'bad weather' was a dealbreaker for them.



During the interviews the following themes were discussed: being watched while exercising, not knowing how to use outdoor gyms, feeling unsafe, elderly image, lack of promotion, and other.

Being watched while exercising

People explained in their interview that being watched while exercising is intimidating and withholds them from or makes them feel uncomfortable when using outdoor gyms:

“But I feel like embarrassed. In the beginning the bar was really high to go there because I was really anxious. And I was like, Oh God, I hate people watching me it is very intimidating.” - C, international student, 21.

“Like, there was this one outdoor gym that was like, in the middle of a suburban area, and there were a lot of blocks of flats. So I felt like anyone can watch me exercise. So I was like, I hate this. Yeah, so I would rather go to the other side of the city to the other public gym.” - V, international student, 23.

“There were other people and I only go when there is no one else.” - R, Dutch student, 20.

Not knowing how to use outdoor gyms

Some people did not know how to use all the exercise equipment. Similarly, while some exercises may be self-explanatory, executing the exercises using the right technique and knowing how much repetitions of each exercise you need to do to have an effective workout, is not. This lack of knowledge withholds people to have a proper workout at an outdoor gym. One person said she also did not want to provoke injuries.

Feeling unsafe

An unsafe feeling was mentioned by three of the four women interviewed.

“Because also, every time I pass there, there are mostly only guys. And i feel pretty much objectified as a woman going to the gym anyways.” - C, International student, 21.

“One time there was an old guy and he immediately started talking to me. I do not like that at all.” - R, Dutch student, 20.

“Yes and as a woman in sport clothes on your own.” - L, Dutch students, 21.

Elderly image

Two interviews talked about how outdoor gyms are still associated with old people using them. They still have the idea that exercise machines are just for moving your body and are not challenging enough. However, one of them said that this was only for the outdoor gyms that had exercise machines only. Outdoor gyms with climbing frames for calisthenics are much more popular under younger people. One person did not mention the elderly image, but did mention the doubt about the efficiency of those exercise machines:

“But I mean, it's good for like, just moving your body, but I don't think if you really know how to do it, I don't think it's that efficient if you go there, but I mean, depends on you.” - C, International student, 21.

“I find it (outdoor gyms) a good initiative but I couldn't enjoy myself there for two hours. Yes, than you need to make schemes.” R, Dutch student, 20.

Lack of promotion

The interviews showed the lack of awareness and promotion of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. Although there will always be some people who will never use outdoor gyms even if they are promoted:

“Not everyone has benefits from outdoor gyms” - R, Dutch student, 20.

“I have friends who are afraid to go outside because then they have to do pull ups, they rather stay in the gym, they feel safe or something when they have weights and machines. A lot of people cannot do a pull-up I think that is one of the biggest problems of calisthenics that people find it hard.” - J, CaliClub trainer.

Someone also thought it should not be forced upon people.

“I would not make municipality advertisements, I have the feeling that that will not be appreciated. Then it is forced upon me, you know? Then people feel it is forced upon them.” Or in Dutch: “Dan wordt het weer door m'n neus gedrukt.” R, Dutch student, 20.

Although the goal of promotion should not be to get every single person to use outdoor gyms, promotion would help to improve the awareness. From the interviews, the lack of promotion and the lack of awareness became clear with the following quotes:

“If it is the goal to promote those things, because I have never seen anything of it, that those things are being promoted”. – Jochem, Dutch student, 20

“Only talking about it already helps, now I think hmm maybe I should try it. I think it is not discussed enough and that there is too little attention for it.” - L, Dutch student, 21

The trainer of Caliclub said early on in the interview when a map with outdoor gyms was shown:

“Did I miss an outdoor gym? I think i have seen everything in Groningen.”

He was not aware about at least three outdoor gyms. Later on about the question if outdoor gyms should be promoted he was hesitant as he had friends who would never go. However than he said:

“I think promotion is not the biggest issue. Or maybe it is, I don’t know about a few, so if people don’t know that something is really close to their house. That could be. If you know that there is one really close to your house, than maybe you do go.”

Other

Other things mentioned were not having weights, and seeing very strong and experienced people use outdoor gyms.

In conclusion, it is important to examine how to create more awareness about outdoor gyms and to research how outdoor gyms could be promoted best. Methods mentioned in the interviews to promote outdoor gyms were posters, social media such as Intstagram (from the RUG), ACLO (Groninger student sport association) newsletter, RUG Covid-19 updates (especially during Covid-19 lockdown to tell people where they can exercise outdoors), ACLO giving leaflets to new students, group training promotions and connecting outdoor to indoor gyms to get a half years membership for only the winter. Another option mentioned was to put an information sign at outdoor gyms with information on where the other outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen are. This way people who already use outdoor gyms or maybe people who stop at one can see if there are other ones closer to their homes or on the way to school or work.

7.2 Improvements

The interviewees were asked about how they thought outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen could be improved. To following themes were mentioned: explanation signs, group classes, attractive colours, the materials, location, and the design in cooperation with neighbourhood residents.

Explanation signs

Some information signs are lacking or not clear:

“Some signs with explanation are also not clear. I once looked at what do you need to do here, and with some you think what am I doing here, than you need guidance.” – J, Dutch student, 20.

One interviewee suggested signs with workout proposals, for example to do a core workout. This could give inspiration.

Group classes

Most students were missing guidance at outdoor gyms. They do not know how to use the apparatus correctly or to have an effective workout. Therefore, they would like introduction or regular classes which they could sign up for.

Attractive colours

For the design, it was mentioned that the colours of outdoor gyms should not be grey or very neutral.

Materials used

It was also mentioned that the materials used are important. For example, outdoor gym number 4 (Figure 5) had bars that were too slippery and too thick. The students working out there also mentioned they missed more parallel bars, as that is a popular exercise.

Location

One person would like to have outdoor gyms next to other sport facilities. Even if it is next to a small basketball field, it is less random to work out there. The trainer mentioned that especially in the winter the outdoor gym should be in a corner to have as little wind as possible.

More closed off

As a lot of people do not like being watched while exercising, therefore they suggest that outdoor gyms are a bit closed off, by for example, bushes or trees.

“For example, if you are at the DOT, than the busses are driving next to it and everybody can look while you are working out. I find that less inviting. Because the one in the park has some trees around it while it is still open.” - R, Dutch student, 20.

“Probably a little closed off maybe not completely in the woods but like you know on the side of park or something and like where it is not right in the middle of the park where everybody walks past you know.” M, international student, 20.

Design of outdoor gyms in cooperation with outdoor gym users

Two outdoor gym users mentioned that they did not have the feeling that the process of designing outdoor gyms was in collaboration with outdoor gym users.

7.3 Personal contradicting needs

Besides the general improvements it was also evident from the interviews that different people have different needs. For example, two students are using the same outdoor gym in Korreweg. Both hated the feeling of being watched. While one thought the outdoor gym was not surrounded enough because she felt eyes from the building across. The other felt that the outdoor gym was enough surrounded as the outdoor gym was in a park and surrounded by some trees, which reduced the feeling of being watched. Then there are also people who do not mind people watching or like it:

“How more people can see it the more people will do it. As open as possible without having wind.” – J, Caliclub trainer.

Furthermore, one would not want to go with someone else because they like to be alone, while the other would only go with someone else to outdoor gyms. One is missing the option to adjust weights, the other stopped with going to the gym because weights led to injuries. He likes that calisthenics only uses body weight.

There are personal reasons to not use outdoor gyms. One person said he will probably only use outdoor gyms if he would have guidance for ice skating related exercises, and to have people to go with that work out there for the same goal and have the same level. As one interviewee said:

“It is the catering to different people and what they like.” – M, international student, 20.

The different and sometimes contradicting needs for people to increase or start their use of outdoor gyms means that there is not such a thing as the one perfect outdoor gym for everybody.

8. Conclusions and reflection

8.1 Findings

This study aims to look at the usage of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. Differences between international and Dutch students, on their usage of outdoor gyms are analysed, as well as what prevents students from using outdoor gyms and what improvements are needed. The most important findings were:

- There are outdoor gyms with only exercise apparatus, outdoor gyms with only climbing frames or outdoor gyms with a combination of both, all have different characteristics regarding colour, size, and surroundings (research question 1).
- There is a lack of a clear map that gives an overview of all the outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.
- The usage of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen by students is low in the sample.
- There is no statistically significant difference between international and Dutch students in the usage of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen (research question 2).
- There is a lack of promotion and awareness of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.
- Most students do not know how to use the exercise machines properly and do not know how to have a proper workout at an outdoor gym, which withholds them from using outdoor gyms.
- There is not just one perfect outdoor gym as people have different opinions on what is important in an outdoor gym.
- The most important improvement of outdoor gyms is more guidance, for example by introducing classes with an instructor at outdoor gyms or with more clear instructions. On top of that the design could be improved upon in cooperation with outdoor gym users (research question 3).

8.2 Reflection of the findings

Outdoor gyms can have a positive effect on well-being as physical activity reduces stress symptoms (Johnson et al., 2019). Gibson et al (2018) found that even though people think outdoor gyms add value they do not encourage them to start exercising or to increase their physical activity. People who are already physically active were more aware of the fitness equipment than people who were not. However, Mora et al. (2017) and Fernández-Rodríguez et al. (2020) found that outdoor gyms did attract users who had little physical activity before using the outdoor gyms. So how is the usage in the city of Groningen? In the interviews, students explained that they knew about the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen and that they thought outdoor gyms were a good initiative. However, the outdoor gyms did not encourage them to actually start exercising or to increase their physical activity. Also, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between international and Dutch students, regarding the awareness and usage of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen in the population. This corresponds with Fernández-Rodríguez et al. (2020), who found that outdoor gyms attract adults irrespective of sex or country.

There were multiple reasons for students to not use outdoor gyms. As mentioned in prior research (Lee et al., 2018; Copeland et al., 2017), most people do not know how to use the different apparatus and miss clear instructions or guidance. Improvements mentioned by students included an introduction or weekly classes that they could sign up for. This would lower the bar to go as students would then know how to have a proper workout at an outdoor gym. According to Copeland et al. (2017), the best way to attract more park users is to organise activities in the park. If this is translated to outdoor gyms, for example by having a weekly class with guidance, then it would be possible that the use of outdoor gym increases (Copeland et al., 2017). In the study of Scott et al. (2014), they also saw that classes with an instructor were successful in attracting new outdoor gym users for older adults. The older adults wanted to use the outdoor gym again as they felt more confident with the equipment, and they would recommend it to others.

On top of that, there was a lack of awareness and promotion of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. This corresponds with Copeland et al. (2017), where interviewees also mentioned the lack of awareness. Smit (2018) looked at two outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen, where the municipality did nothing for promotion besides an opening. Furthermore, Smit (2018) mentions that for the design of the outdoor gym next to Damsterkade (11 in figure 6), more input from neighbourhood residents could have been used. Now there were only two evenings where people could share their ideas. This corresponds with the interviews where people said that they did not have the feeling that the design of outdoor gyms were in collaboration with neighbourhood residents as for example bars were too thick, there were not enough parallel bars, and a water fountain was missing.

The municipality of Groningen should incorporate promotion into the plans and costs of outdoor gyms to increase the awareness of outdoor gyms. Jansson et al. (2019) already stated that municipalities should look at effective promotion strategies to increase outdoor gym usage. One strategy could be introduction classes. For students in Groningen, these classes could be organised via the student sport organisation ACLO. Next to this, awareness could be increased by a sign at every outdoor gym where the location of other outdoor gyms is presented, as mentioned in the interview. Also, a clear map of every outdoor gym should be available, ideally in google maps. Even though there are outdoor gyms placed in collaboration with the neighbourhood residents it could be improved upon (Smit, 2018). During the interviews, students mentioned that they did not have the feeling that the outdoor gyms were made in collaboration with its users. The municipality of Groningen could ask advice from a specialist who has knowledge about outdoor gyms and for example, make an outdoor gym with Caliclub the calisthenics association who uses outdoor gyms a lot. Lastly, proximity is an important factor (Jansson et al., 2019; Mora et al., 2017). In the service area map (figure 8), it was seen that the neighbourhoods Selwerd and Schilderbuurt are deprived of an outdoor gym within a five-minute bike ride. Therefore, new outdoor gyms could be placed in those neighbourhoods.

8.3 Reflections on the research process

The fieldwork was carried out during the month November with rainy and cold weather. Almost every outdoor gym visited, was therefore completely empty. In summer there would have been a better representation of the popularity of outdoor gyms and more outdoor gym users could have been interviewed. The result of only 8% of the international respondents being outdoor gym users compared to 23% of the Dutch students, may not be accurate as in the interviews especially the use of outdoor gyms by international students was mentioned. Hence, to get a better representation about the percentage of students that actually use outdoor gyms, a bigger survey should be taken. Also, not every outdoor gym is taken into account when talking about the improvements of outdoor gyms as only eight students were interviewed and they do not use all the different outdoor gyms in Groningen. The interviews therefore, only represent a couple of outdoor gyms and users. The results of this research should therefore be seen as an indication. Although the importance of outdoor gyms is stated, the influence of outdoor gyms on the well-being of students is not tested in this research. Further research should look into the influence of outdoor gyms on the well-being of students and take into account every outdoor gym in the city of Groningen. To look how much every outdoor gym is used instead of being empty outdoor gyms could be observed.

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APPENDIX A. SURVEY

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Are you a student at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) or at the Hanze University?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you a student at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) or at the Hanze University? = No

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 6

Q2 Are you an international student?

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Block 6

Start of Block: Block 1

Q46 Outdoor gyms are exercise machines or exercise equipment that are publicly accessible and that people can use to exercise (Lee et al, 2018). Sport courts for e.g. soccer do not count as outdoor gyms as they don't have apparatus in them. In the pictures there are examples of outdoor gyms.



Q3 Have you ever seen (e.g walked by) an outdoor gym before you started your studies in the city of Groningen?

- Yes
 - No
-

Q12 Have you ever used an outdoor gym before you started your studies in the city of Groningen?

- Yes
 - No
-

Q47 Are you aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen?

- Yes
 - No
-

Q6 Do you consider yourself an outdoor gym user in the city of Groningen?

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Group 1 Outdoor Gym users

Q7 What is your motivation to use outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen?

- Improve health
- Lose weight
- Socialize
- Relax
- Other _____

Q14 How often did you go to an outdoor gym in the city of Groningen when sport facilities were closed due to Covid-19 lockdowns?

- More than once a week
- once a week
- once a month
- once or twice
- Never

Q16 How often do you go to an outdoor gym in the city of Groningen? (Before lockdowns and now that lockdowns are over)

- More than once a week
- once a week
- once a month
- 4-8 times a year
- once a year
- never

Q17 How much time do you spend on each visit at an outdoor gym in the city of Groningen?

- Less than 10 minutes each visit
 - 10-30 minutes per visit
 - 30-60 minutes per visit
 - More than 60 minutes per visit
-

Q18 Did you regularly do a sport or other physical activities prior to using outdoor gym(s) in the city of Groningen?

- Yes
- No

Q19 How do you travel to outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen?

- By foot
 - By bike
 - By scooter
 - By car
 - Other
-

Q20 How do you consider your physical condition at the moment?

- Excellent
- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Very poor

Q21 How do you consider your mental health at the moment?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Moderate
 - Poor
 - Very poor
-

Page Break

Q24 In the following questions, please indicate the level of agreement with the statements.

Q25 There are enough outdoor gyms nearby my house in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q26 I usually use the outdoor gym closest to my house in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q28 Outdoor gyms in Groningen have enough and diverse enough exercise equipment.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q29 I prefer to go to outdoor gyms alone in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q31 The outdoor gym(s) in the city of Groningen that I use have a clear instruction on how to use the exercise equipment, like a sign with examples of exercises.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q32 I would like to have an instructor at outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q33 The design of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen could be improved upon.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q34 The outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen that I use are maintained well.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q35 I feel safe when I use outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Q36 Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Page Break



Q37 If I can contact you for a follow up interview, please fill in your E-mail address down below. The interview will be about how outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen could be improved upon and will take around 10-15 minutes.

End of Block: Group 1 Outdoor Gym user

Start of Block: Group 2 NOT USERS

Q9 I do not use outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen because... (click all the boxes that are relevant to you).

- I am not aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen
 - I exercise enough already
 - There aren't any outdoor gyms close to my house
 - I don't know how to use the different exercise machines
 - I don't want to go alone
 - I never see students use outdoor gyms
 - I don't feel safe
 - I don't feel comfortable that outdoor gyms are in a public space / being watched while exercising
 - It isn't the type of physical activity that I like
 - Other _____
-

Q10 As you have never used an outdoor gym in Groningen do you think you will ever go to an outdoor gym in Groningen while you are still a student at RUG or Hanze University?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- I don't know

Page Break

Q38 In the following questions, please indicate the level of agreement with the statements.

Q39 If there would be an instructor explaining the exercises at outdoor gyms, I would consider using outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen.

- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
-

Q40 Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively.

- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
-

Page Break


Q42 How do you consider your physical condition at the moment?

- Excellent
- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Very poor

Q43 How do you consider your mental health at the moment?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Moderate
 - Poor
 - Very poor
-

Page Break

 Q48 If I can contact you for a follow up interview, please fill in your E-mail address down below.
The interview will be about how outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen could be improved upon and will take around 10-15 minutes.

End of Block: Group 2 NON-USERS

APPENDIX B. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TABLE B

	Pearson Chi-Square			Expected cell count less than 5 (%)	N of Valid Cases	Fisher's Exact Test Exact Sig. (2-sided)
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)			
Have you ever seen (e.g walked by) an outdoor gym before you started your studies in the city of Groningen? * Are you an international student?	4,820 ^a	1	0,028	25	92	0,040
Have you ever used an outdoor gym before you started your studies in the city of Groningen? * Are you an international student?	2,544 ^a	1	0,111	0	92	
Are you aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen? * Are you an international student?	1,436 ^a	1	0,231	0	92	
Do you consider yourself an outdoor gym user in the city of Groningen * Are you an international student?	3,644 ^a	1	0,056	0	90	0,085

Table B. Statistical analysis.

APPENDIX C. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TABLE C

	Pearson Chi-Square			Expected cell count less than 5 (%)	N of Valid Cases	Likelihood Ratio
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)			Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
As you have never used an outdoor gym in Groningen do you think you will ever go to an outdoor gym in Groningen while you are still a student at RUG or Hanze University? * Are you an international student?	1,165 ^a	2	0,559	7	71	
If there would be an instructor explaining the exercises at outdoor gyms, I would consider using outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen. * Are you an international student?	2,875 ^a	4	0,579	20	75	
Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively. * Are you an international student?	3,848 ^a	4	0,427	40	75	0,420
How do you consider your physical condition at the moment? * Are you an international student?	3,058 ^a	3	0,383	50	74	0,360
How do you consider your mental health at the moment? * Are you an international student?	6,412 ^a	4	0,170	60	74	0,136

Table C. Statistical analysis.

APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

- First of all, thank you for doing this interview with me.
- The interview will take about 20-30 minutes.
- Is it alright if I make a recording of this interview.

Questions

- What do you study and how old are you?
- What is your background in physical activity?
- Where did you live before you started your studies in Groningen?
- How was your integration in the Netherlands? (For the international students)

Elaborating the answers given in the survey

- Do you think that outdoor gyms are as accessible for international students as for Dutch students?

End

- Do you have anything else to mention about outdoor gyms or in general?
- Thank you

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW. L, DUTCH STUDENT, 21

Jessica: Wat is je achtergrond met sporten?

Lisa : Turnen

J: En je had weleens een outdoor gym gebuikt voordat je aan je studie begon. Waar ging je dan heen?

L: Ja als ik dan met mijn ouders een dagje wegging ofzo dan gingen we wel vaak het bos in en je hebt vaak outdoor gyms bij een bos staan en dat is dan gewoon vet grappig gewoon even leuk, dus niet echt om te sporten, maar wel gewoon gebruik van gemaakt.

J: Je hebt het volgende ingevuld bij de vraag waarom je geen outdoor gyms gebruikt. Kan je dat wat meer uitleggen?

L: I don't know how to use the different exercise machines. Ja dat gewoon. Als ik echt zou weten wat ik moet voelen, hoe vaak, dat ik iets meer instructie heb dan zou ik het wel gewoon heel leuk vinden maar hetzelfde geld voor een gym binnen. Dat is hetzelfde waarom ik niet naar een indoor gym ga, ik vind het ongemakkelijk en weet niet wat ik moet doen. I don't want to go alone. Het lijkt me gewoon heel ongemakkelijk om in je eentje heel fanatiek aan het sporten te zijn terwijl iedereen naar je kijkt. Als je het samen doet zou het wel lachen zijn denk ik. I don't feel safe heeft ook een beetje te maken met het alleen zijn zeg maar als je dat in je eentje gaat doen dan voel ik me daar niet comfortabel bij.

J: Maar überhaupt omdat het dan in een park is ofzo? Of..

L: Ja en toch als vrouw in sportkleding in je eentje, een beetje booty exercizes, nee maar ik weet niet, ook omdat ik dan niet precies weet hoe dingen werken. Dus op die manier. En ik weet niet precies hoe die dingen niet werken dus misschien doe dan wel wat fout en dan krijg ik een blessure.

L: Ja precies. I don't feel comfortable that outdoor gyms are in a public space. Ja dat.

J: Want stel het zou meer in een park en het zou soort van meer omringt zijn door bomen etc zou het dan nog uitmaken of niet?

L: Ik denk een beetje de setting, als het gewoon, zoals dat ding bij de ACLO (Jaagpad) dat is gewoon naast het fietspad in een woonwijk, gewoon heel random, maar je hebt ook wel echt van die sportparkjes waar je ook een voetbalveldje hebt of basketbalveldje waar andere mensen ook aan het sporten zijn, dan is het minder raar. Minder out of the blue.

J: Je hebt nog nooit in Groningen een outdoor gym gebruikt, maar je hebt gezegd maybe bij zou je het gaan gebruiken.

L: Ja als ik er met vrienden langs kom en gewoon grappig doen, leuk.

J: Als er een instructeur zou zijn dus stel er zou één keer in de week een uurtje zijn zou je dan snel heen gaan of dat dan ook weer niet?

L: Ik weet niet, het is een beetje, je hebt wel vaak van die calisthenics parkjes, daar heb je vaak wel mensen die weten wat ze aan het doen zijn en als je daar dan gewoon mee wil doen kan je ook vragen wat kan ik doen of wil je me ergens bij helpen dus niet perse een georganiseerd is maar wel dat er mensen rondlopen aan wie je shit kan vragen.

J: Bij outdoor gyms should be actively promoted heb je strongly agree. Hoe denk je dat outdoor gyms het best promoted zouden kunnen worden?

L: Ik denk dat het gewoon best wel een goed middel is als je van je werk naar huis fietst of wandelt, dat je daar langskomt en dat je dan denkt oh zal ik even tien minuten wat doen, als bewegingswetenschapper sta ik daar gewoon heel erg achter dat je gewoon dingen in je omgeving hebt die uitlokken tot bewegen. En dit is wel zoiets wat uitlokt tot bewegen alleen de affordance is er, je zou kunnen bewegen, maar de aantrekking is er nog niet, dus als je dat zegmaar goed kan promoten dan denk ik dat de intentie om er ook echt gebruik van te maken.

J: Maar hoe krijg je die aantrekkingskracht?

L: Ja het heel praktisch maken misschien? Gewoon heel laagdrempelig, dus als je van werk naar huis loopt of je gaat naar de supermarkt, doe je ff, zoiets, geen idee, ik weet het ook niet. Ik weet niet wat mij aan zou spreken.

J: Denk je ook dat bewegen helpt bij mentale gezondheid?

L: Ja, 100%. Dat is mijn toekomst. Ik hoop het wel anders heb ik later geen baan.

J: Zou er nog iets gedaan kunnen worden waardoor jij specifiek outdoor gyms in Groningen meer zou kunnen gaan gebruiken?

L: Ja het heeft voor mij nu nog gewoon heel erg die associatie met oude mensen. Die dan lekker even heen en weer stappen op zo een cross trainer. Ja dat is dan niet uitdagend genoeg, misschien ook niet zwaar genoeg. Ik denk als dat stigma eraf gaat en als er wat uitdagendere en minder oud bollige toestellen tussen zitten dat bijvoorbeeld dat ding bij de ACLO (WAS) dat ziet er wel heel tof uit maar het zijn wel allemaal helemaal simpele dingen. Dus misschien een afwisseling in laagdrempelige en wat zwaardere oefeningen. Dat je als jong fit persoon ook wat te zoeken hebt daar.

J: En bij design als je kijkt naar omgeving

L: Ik denk bij omgeving dat het niet random midden in een woonwijk moet staan, misschien ook wel maar dan heb je een andere doelgroep dan heb je echt oude mensen en kleine kinderen die er lekker gaan spelen of weet ik veel. Maar een echt sport gelegenheid waar heb je dat. Je hebt dat bij het WAS dus wel.

J: Dus eigenlijk in combinatie met andere sporten. Want in stadspark zit er bijvoorbeeld eentje naast een voetbalveld, dus dan meer zo.

L: Ja, dat het niet gek is dat je opeens staat te sporten. Vooral als je een drukke weg hebt dan nodigt het niet uit om daar te gaan zweten als alle auto's en fietsers gewoon lekker langskomen.

J: Bij de dot heb je er ook eentje op een best wel gekke plek.

L: Ja je hebt daar ook alleen maar hele goeie calestenatics mensen. Dan denk ik nou.. Dat is dus ook alweer een rede dat ik denk nou daar ga ik niet heen want dat vind ik weer ongemakkelijk.

J: En stel je zou nu een outdoor gym gaan gebruiken in Groningen in combinatie met andere activiteiten dus dat je gaat hardlopen daarheen ofzo of wandelen, of zou je het ook wel soort van kunnen gebruiken dat je erheen fietst met het idee van ..

L: Ik denk beide wel. Als ik echt ga sporten, dan zou ik er hardlopend heen gaan, daar even mijn ding doen en dan weer hardlopend terug. Maar misschien dat ik met vrienden eerder ga fietsen en dan daar afspreken en dan even lekker sporten.

J: Volgens mij was dit het wel. Heb je nog andere opmerkingen?

L: Ja over de promotie misschien. Het er al over hebben, nu denk ik hm misschien moet ik het dan maar is gaan proberen ofzo. Ik denk dat het te weinig wordt besproken en te weinig echt aandacht voor is.

J: Is het even accessible voor internationals?

L: Ik denk dus dat internationals naar Nederland komen om te studeren en die komen dus niet in Groningen voor het studentenleven, gaan niet bij een sportvereniging. En als ze willen sporten gaan ze fietsen, hardlopen of naar een outdoor gym of een binnen gym. Ik denk dus dat het meer wordt gebruikt door internationals dan door Nederlanders omdat Nederlandse studenten in Groningen al bij een sportvereniging zitten en die hebben dus minder behoefte om buiten de sportvereniging nog meer te sporten.

APPENDIX F. INTERVIEW. J, DUTCH STUDENT, 20

J: En wat is je background in sporten?

Jo: Schaatsen

J: Had je al een outdoor gym gezien voordat je in Groningen ging studeren?

Jo: Nou ik heb ingevuld van wel, want ik ga ervan uit dat ik er weleens eentje heb gezien, ik kan het me niet actief herinneren maar ik wist wel dat ze bestonden zeg maar.

J: En op de vraag are you aware of the existence of outdoor gyms in Groningen. Heb je ja gezegd. Ja heb je daar wel eens langsgefietst of.

Jo: Ja ik loop en fiets daar regelmatig langs. Want als ik ga hardlopen in de stad loop ik zo een keer 10, 15 kilometer dus dan kom je er wel aardig wat tegen ja.

J: En je hebt ze nog nooit gebruikt of heb je er ook wel is..

Jo: Ik heb er alleen van die krachtpaters zien trainen. En toen gedacht nou ik ga wel hardlopen.

J: En dan voor de vraag: I do not use outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen because, heb je gezegd van I exercise enough already, is dat dan de enige reden of zijn er nog meer?

Jo: Het is meer dat als ik sport dan ga ik er vol voor en dan vaak bij, ik neem aan dat als ik niet zou schaatsen dat ik wel gewoon een andere sport bij een vereniging zou kiezen en dan alsnog niet die outdoor gyms zou gebruiken. Misschien in het geval bij een sport waar ik echt krachttraining moet doen dat ik dan stel met corona de sportscholen zijn dicht dat ik dan eentje zou gebruiken. Maar heel veel met de sport die ik nu doe train ik al genoeg. En doe ik niet echt aan krachttraining.

J: En dan voor de vraag van zou je nog wel een keer in Groningen een outdoor gym gebruiken heb je maybe gezegd.

Jo: Ja wie weet misschien gaat alles wel weer dicht en heb ik het idee dat krachttraining wel goed is. Ze organiseren vanuit onze schaatsvereniging nu ook krachttraining dus wie weet ga ik daar binnenkort een keer aan meedoen. En gaat dat niet meer door en denk ik van ja misschien kan ik wel een keer een outdoor gym gebruiken. Dus daarom heb ik maybe ingevuld. Het is niet dat ik nu denk oh dat moet ik echt een keer gaan doen maar ik zie wel dat er een kans in zit.

J: En bij de vraag van: If there would be an instructor explaining the exercises at outdoor gyms I would consider using outdoor gym in the city of groningen. Je hebt strongly disagree gezegd. Elaborate.

Jo: Ja dat vind ik eigenlijk maar niks, net zoals je van de ACLO courses ziet met allemaal van die mensen dan gaan kickboxen ofzo dat vind ik eigenlijk maar niks. Ik zoek dan mijn eigen schaats gerelateerde oefeningetjes wel uit en op mijn eigen niveau. Ik ben gewoon sportief, dus ik denk dat ik mijn eigen oefeningen wel kan bedenken.

J: Want nu doe je wel al krachtoefeningen, of alleen maar rennen, fietsen en schaatsen?

Jo: Ja krachtoefeningen maar wel niveau gerelateerd. Dus als er iemand vanuit de vereniging zou zijn die dat organiseert buiten, puur vanuit de vereniging, dan zou ik het wel opzich doen, maar puur als het op mijn niveau is met mijn trainingsgenoten. Met mensen die het ook voor hetzelfde doel doen zeg maar.

J: En outdoor gyms should be promoted actively. Je hebt strongly agree gezegd, waarom?

Jo: Ik zie geen problemen met een gezondere bevolking.

J: En hoe denk je dat outdoor gyms het best gepromoot kunnen worden.

Jo: Toch een soort van sportschool activiteit ervan maken, maar dan toegankelijker. Misschien nog een comfortabeler, het ziet er een beetje krakkemikkig uit bij sommige, en op een vreemde locatie. Dat je gewoon echt een veiliger gevoel erbij geeft en dat er ook echt een personal trainer erbij zetten als baan dat zou.. en ook gewoon misschien social media of in ieder geval de bekende promotie kanalen als het tenminste een doel is om die dingen echt te promoten, want ik heb er nog nooit iets van gezien zeg maar, dat die dingen echt gepromoot worden. Het is meer dat ik ze gewoon zie en dat mensen weten dat ze er zijn, maar het is niet echt aantrekkelijk als je niet sport zeg maar.

J: En in het algemeen wat denk je dat outdoor gym, hoe ze überhaupt verbeterd kunnen worden in Groningen?

Jo: Begeleiding, promotie.

J: En als je kijkt puur naar het design van outdoor gyms, dus bv de apparaten de kleuren, de ondergrond, de locatie, want je zei net ook dat je een paar locaties wel vreemd vond. Welke zijn dat dan?

Jo: Sommige zijn in van die parkjes op afgelegen locaties en dan denk ik van ja wie gaat hier nou sporten, naast een speeltuin of op zich wel logisch, maar het is niet dat je denkt naast die speeltuin met spelende kinderen ga ik mezelf helemaal afmatten. Dus meer een soort van sportschool feeling met rubberen matten eronder. Niet op gras en modder en natte regen. Misschien zelfs een plek om spullen in een kluisje te doen. Een soort gelijke sportschool omgeving maken. Want bij een sportschool komen natuurlijk wel veel mensen. En als je mensen dan buiten wat wil laten doen, dan een beetje die omgeving na bootsen.

J: Weet je hoe je de meeste apparaten moet gebruiken bij een outdoor gym, is dat meestal duidelijk voor jou?

Jo: Nee niet echt, en ook sommige bordjes met beschrijving zijn ook niet duidelijk. Ik heb wel eens gekeken wat moet je hier doen, en bij sommige denk je wat ben ik hier aan het doen, dan heb je gewoon begeleiding nodig.

J: Zou je ook nog zeggen dat er meer apparaten of meer diverse moeten komen of weet je dat niet echt?

Jo: Nou zolang je elk spiergebied kunt doen, ook weer toegankelijkheid voor iedereen, dan is het het beste in mijn mening. Het is niet dat je alleen maar dezelfde apparaten moet hebben, zo divers mogelijk, dat iedereen er terecht kan.

J: En qua surroundings, vind je dat een gebied vrij afgeschermd moet zijn, sommige mensen voelen zich bijvoorbeeld oncomfortabel als ze gezien worden terwijl ze aan het sporten zijn. Heb je dat dan ook? Of midden in een woonwijk zou ook kunnen?

Jo: Nou heel veel in een parkje en dan wel soort van afgescheiden dat je een beetje je eigen omgevingkje hebt, maar dan afgescheiden op een manier dat je niet uitgesloten bent van de samenleving. Dus er moet niet een hek omheen en helemaal afgedekte bomen, maar het moet niet midden in een speeltuin te zijn. Ik heb het idee dat je dan een beetje gedemotiveerd wordt. Omdat er dan ouders bij zijn met kinderen en die zien jou dan en stel je bent een beetje, je wil afvallen en je bent niet tevreden met je lichaam dan kan ik me voorstellen dat mensen daar niet zo graag heen gaan.

J: Ja precies, want denk je ook soort van dat het goed is voor je mentale gezondheid.

Jo: Ja mentaal en fysiek. Ik sport veel.

J: En dan nog, denk je dat outdoor gyms even accessible zijn voor international students en voor Nederlandse studenten?

Jo: Misschien juist wel meer, omdat nederlandse studenten in een nederlandse omgeving naar de sportschool met een trainer gaan en buitenlanders dan denken, die taalbarrière we kunnen ook met een groepje buitenlanders, beetje polarisatie ideetje, met zijn allen daar gaan sporten. Bijvoorbeeld naast een studentenflat als je daar een outdoor gym hebt, dan zul je daar heel veel groepjes met internationals zien, kan ik me voorstellen.

APPENDIX G. INTERVIEW. M, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 20.

J: What is your background in physical activity, so what sports did you play, how much did you train?

M: I first did the typical sports like tennis and football and at the age of twelve i got into volleyball.

J: Where did you live before your studies in Groningen?

M: In Bahn in Germany.

J: You did use outdoor gyms right before you studies in Groningen?

M: Yeah, when we would go to Poland there were quite a few of them when we would go on holiday. So it was more like a fun activity to do, so not anything serious. We would go walking and you find those things and you use them. It was not a way to do sport, but just for fun.

J: How was your integration in the Netherlands, like was it hard for you or did you experience a culture shock or was it quite smoothly?

M: I think it was quite good. I don't want to say that German and Dutch culture are the same, but it is not like a big difference. Generally the foods are the same. Also what helped was the volleyball team.

J: So you don't consider yourself an outdoor gym user in the city of Groningen, have you ever used one in Groningen or not?

M: No I haven't used one in the Netherlands. Are there actually a lot in Groningen?

J: Yes there are like at least 10 in the main city I think. Like you are aware of them?

M: Yeah I don't know. I know people who used some of them especially when gyms were closed. But it was like the winter and I am not going to hang on the bars. When you do like pullups your hand are going to freeze.

J: On the question I do not use outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen you said I exercise enough already, so you just don't need them?

M: Yes also I am very weak, so you have those pull up things, but I cannot do a pull up. There are the things for your legs. But I just prefer running instead. But to be fair probably if I tried it out and if I figure out what to do there you could be able to use it, I just don't know how to use it so.

J: Yes because you answered you will use it when you are still a student at the RUG, so yeah...

M: Yes I think it's hard for people to use it who don't know how to use it. And maybe I also didn't have given it a real try. I know some friends who go there so maybe I could go with them.

J: Then for the question if there would be an instructor I would consider using outdoor gyms in Groningen. You said somewhat agree. So if there would be an instructor you would be more up for it.

M: Yes I don't like working out in front of people, so it kind of contradicts, in a way it would be good to show you what to do and tell you if you are doing it wrong but I probably be shy at first but I would be more willing to give it a go.

J: Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively, you said somewhat agree.

M: I think it should be actually, if you are thinking about it they are there for a reason and whenever I walk past them at least for the one at Paddepoel, like close to Zernike there wasn't anyone there ever. I

think it is also about not knowing and people who are into sports know about it, but other people don't really. The only people I heard of using was one person during lockdown.

J: And what do you think is the best way to promote outdoor gyms?

M: Maybe like the ACLO newsletter, or posters. and the RUG sends updates, they might have done it during corona on possibilities where to work out but I don't think so. They could have done sth like that. Or the university of Groningen their Instagram page.

J: So what could be done to improve outdoor gym in the city of Groningen?

M: I think also what I have seen in a few outdoor gyms right here is you have the machine and next to the machine you have a thing explaining how to use it, that could also be introduced. Otherwise I don't know. They do have a good variety of stuff. Arms and legs and usually the bars. But you cannot really put weights on those things.

J: And you said sth about weights just before.

M: Yeah because there was like this one machine where you press like this with your arms and I don't know, like at the gym where you can change weights, I don't know if you could do that outside probably not, maybe I don't know. I think it would attract more people if you could have different kind of weights.

J: Could there be done sth so that you would use outdoor gyms in Groningen more? So what would be the thing that would really make you go there to actively work out.

M: I don't know. their individuals I don't think that the university or anyone could do specifically. The ACLO would.. That could be, if the ACLO had classes like that, you know? Like as you said with instructor.

J: Yes and when you look at the designs of outdoor gyms the space where they are located do you think there could be some improvements or not?

M: colours attract people you know, a lot of them are just grey. So maybe the handles in different colours to stand out. I think that would be attractive.

J: Do you know how to use all the apparatuses? I think you already said no? Because you do use indoor gyms? And do you use the machines there or do you use the other things?

M: I use the machines there. I don't like weights, it intimidates me.

J: But is there a big difference then between the apparatus in indoor gyms and outdoor gyms?

M: I don't think generally, I don't know, I think I just had one machine i was confused about and that is catching my other ideas of outdoor gyms. But the standard apparatus like the arm press is easy.

J: And for the design location wise, I think you said you were a little bit uncomfortable when people watched you like in a public space, so would it be good to have like a really surrounding with trees.

M: I think some of them could be like that yes, I think close it a bit of for everyone to see you, but then again some people like being watched while workout.

J: Do you think if outdoor gyms are closed of it would make you feel less safe because there are like no eyes at all?

M: Yes I think that could be an aspect because I think it is very dependent on the person as well like if you are uncomfortable with different situations like putting a gym into a closed off space make you feel unsafe,

it is up to you. And if you want outdoor gyms more used by people putting it into a forest is not smart. But some people go running into a forest. So they could use them. It is just catering to different people and what they like kind of thing.

J: And for you personally, you would prefer?

M: Probably a little closed off maybe not completely in the woods but like you know on the side of park or sth and like where it is not right in the middle of the park where everybody walks past you know.

J: And then why do you work out? What is the reason for you to play sports?

M: Volleyball was also for the social aspect. But when lockdown it was also for the mental part of getting out of the house at least.

J: Do you think that outdoor gyms are as accessible for international students as for Dutch students?

M: I think yeah because it is not dependent on where you come from a thing, especially because they are just there.

APPENDIX H. INTERVIEW. J, CALICLUB TRAINER

Ji: Ja, ik trainde eigenlijk wel gewoon in de sportschool. Dat is wel wat ik gedaan heb vanaf mijn achttiende en uiteindelijk merkte ik dat ik daar veel blessures bij krijg en gewoon dat dat niet echt mijn soort training was. Dus toen ben ik begonnen met een beetje soms thuis trainen. Vond ik ook erg leuk. Ja, toen is dat langzaam overgegaan in calisthenics. En nu doe ik alleen maar calisthenics. Zo min mogelijk met gewichten en machines enzo.

J: Oh want juist als je gewichten deed was het eigenlijk te zwaar of niet de goede techniek?

Ji: Ja, inderdaad. In de gym gaat het meer over maximaal duwen in plaats van nadenken wat je doet. Welke spieren je gebruikt, wat je aanspant enzo. Bij een handstand push-up moet je zoveel meer nadenken wat je doet dan alleen maar zou zo gewicht omhoog trekken? Ja dat, dat vind ik wel echt het mooie aan calisthenics en andere mensen daarmee helpen. En ik merk zelf ook heel veel kracht. Verbetering van een staat met alleen maar de brede uitzien gewichten dat zien. Dus ik vind het wel een hele mooie sport.

J: En als je er naar kijkt. En je bent dan bij die DOT geweest om bij het WAS. Als je kijkt naar het design zou je daar dan nog wat veranderen?

Ji: Nou zoals je zag die die Monkey Bars die we hebben, al die railingen naast elkaar. volgens mij heeft Hanze die wel. En tussen de containerwoningen volgens mij ook wel. Ik weet het niet zeker. Dat is al oh, misschien volgens mij wel. Dat vind ik sowieso altijd ideaal voor de rest. Euhm ja. Het grootste wat wij hier hebben wat ze daar niet hebben is gewoon een mat om op te landen bij Freestyle oefeningen. En dat het niet overdekt is. Het kan wel maar dan moet je wel echt een animal zijn, want om drie keer in de week in de regen te trainen is gewoon echt niet chill.

Verder vind ik het allebei mooie parkjes, alleen dat parkje bij die haven (vlak bij gedempt Zuiderdiep).

J: Laat kaart zien.

Ji: Heb ik een parkje gemist, volgens mij heb ik alles wel gezien in Groningen.

Ji: Deze vind ik niet heel chill (bij de haven). Deze bars zijn allemaal te dik. Het is wel binnen loopafstand van mijn huis dus ik ga er soms wel heen.

J: Dus ook een ding is dat de stangen niet te dik moeten zijn?

Ji: Ja elke stang is anders heel veel zijn ook weer te dun. In de winter zijn stangen ook weer te koud. Sommige mensen kunnen met handschoenen aan, sommige vinden dat niet heel chill. Een van de zwaarste dingen is echt blijven hangen aan die dingen. Wat een slecht parkje echt kan uitleggen is het materiaal wat ze gebruiken en de dikte en dat soort dingen.

J: Is het dan persoon verschillend welke dikte je wil?

Ji: Ja zeker, kleinere handen is dunnere stang.

J: Dus eigenlijk zou je dat misschien ook nog bij outdoor gyms willen zien, verschillende soorten dikte stangen.

Ji: Ja dat is zeker wel mooi. Ik weet niet of je een zachte mat kan doen bij een outdoor parkje misschien ook wel. Het meeste hebben ze bij parkjes wel, ringen kun je wel zelf meenemen. Het zijn zeker geen

slechte parkjes die je overal ziet. Sommige dingen hebben zij ook die wij nog niet hebben zoals een lage bar twee naast elkaar zoals je bij de Hanze hebt. Die hebben wij nog niet.

J: Want ben je ook naar diegene in stadspark geweest?

Ji: Oh die hele kleine naast de speeltuin. Mensen hadden wel een keer verteld dat hier een park was en ik heb het nog nooit gezien. Die step ups zijn wel mooi. Er is ook een parkje naast een speeltuin, maar die is heel klein en voor oudere mensen, dus ik dacht dat mensen het daar over hadden.

J: Er is ook nog een andere bij stadspark.

Ji: Oh die heb ik ook nog nooit gezien.

J: Maar denk je dat outdoor gyms ook meer promoot zouden moeten worden?

Ji: Jah, sommige mensen vinden het echt wel moeilijk, ik heb vooral vrienden die echt gewoon niet, ze durven niet, ze durven niet naar buiten te gaan want dan moeten ze pull ups enzo gaan doen. Terwijl ze liever in de gym staan. Ze voelen zich veilig ofzo kunnen ze gewichten en machines gebruiken enzo. En pull-up, heel veel mensen kunnen geen pull-up en dat is denk ik het grootste probleem nog steeds van calisthenics, dat sommige mensen het moeilijk vinden en ja ik wil geen pull-ups doen ik wil geen push ups doen enzo. Promoten is denk ik niet het grootste probleem. Misschien wel ik ken er een paar niet, dus dat mensen niet weten dat er echt iets dicht bij hun huis is. Dat zou wel kunnen. Als je weet dat er echt iets dicht bij huis is, misschien ga je dan wel.

J: Maar in principe denk je dat mensen niet echt over te halen zijn..

Ji: Nee, nee veel vrienden heb ik al vaak proberen mee te krijgen maar het lukt niet.

J: Die gaan dan gewoon niet ook al zijn ze wel van de fitness?

Ji: Ja ze durven alleen maar in de gym te staan. En bench press en dat soort dingen te doen.

J: En dan nog de surroundings van outdoor gyms? Maakt dat nog uit voor jou?

Ji: Overdekt is soms wel chill en gewoon wind stil dat kan heel chill zijn. Ook als het winter is ook al is het een beetje koud dat is niet heel erg als het maar windstil is, maar de wind die op je blaast terwijl je aan het zweten bent, is een van de koudste dingen die er bestaat. Dus dat is een groot verschil. Bij de hanze is het een klein beetje, met een muur ernaast dat is meestal al oke, maar als het echt in een hoek zou zitten dat zou heel mooi zijn. Dat zie ik eigenlijk niet heel erg veel bij outdoor gyms. Voor de rest waterfonteinje.

J: En dan qua mensen die je kunnen zien. Moet het nog afgelegen zijn of maakt dat voor jou niet uit?

Ji: Hoe meer mensen het kunnen zien hoe meer mensen het gaan doen. Sowieso. Zo open mogelijk zonder dat je wind hebt. Die bij Hanze is wel mooi daar zijn veel studenten. Ik wist ook niet dat het er was, ik was net begonnen met studeren, toen ging ik even in de pauze rondlopen toen zag ik dat in een keer. Gewoon dicht bij een plek waar mensen toch al zijn. Dat is wel heel mooi, dicht bij plekken waar je toch al bent.

J: Ik zag ook nog een outdoor gym met zand heb je daar nog een mening over.

Ji: Ja dat is niet chill, als het regent enzo. Wij hadden het zelf ook hier, maar dat is in de zomer, maar uiteindelijk was het niet heel erg chill.

APPENDIX I. INTERVIEW. C, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 21.

J: So what is your background in physical activity? Like what sports did you do?

C: So, I have started with trampoline when I was six.

J: Where did you live before you started your studies in Groningen?

C: I lived in Germany in Oldenburg, and I've lived there my whole life, so I never moved anywhere.

J: Because you have seen outdoor gyms before you moved to Groningen. Where did you see them in Oldenburg or Where?

C: In Oldenburg not. I have seen them in Switzerland, I think for the first time. It also was connected to trampoline. We were there for I some competition. And there I saw them. And I remember we made fun of it and really thought okay, what's that and every time I saw them, I thought I would never go there.

J: So you are aware of the existence of outer games in Groningen? Yeah, you have also used them during lockdown, so which outdoor gyms have you used?

C: The one at the Korreweg. With the small athletics court.

J: Okay. You said strongly agree with are there enough outdoor gyms nearby my house. Yeah. So you think like there are enough there?

C: Yeah. And it's never full, the one next to the dot is always full in summer so I wouldn't want to go there. And this one is never full.

J: How did you know there was an outdoor gym in Korreweg?

C: So a friend of mine told me he was doing outdoor gyms. Because he usually goes to a gym, but not that one. And then I thought, Oh, maybe I should try them. And then I found out that my roommate was also going there. So I went a few times with him as well. So that's how I kind of started.

J: Oh, and do you think that outdoor gyms in Groningen have enough and diverse enough exercise equipment? Like you said here did you said somewhat agree?

C: The one I go to has so many things. Also the rings and stuff. The other one, I mean, depends on what you prefer. But the one at the Dot has only like the steel things and it's like more parkour thing, so you really have to know what to do with those things.

J: Like do you know how to use all the different apparatus?

C: I mean, I think that's an advantage that I know how to use those. Because, for example, if I didn't know how to use gym stuff, I probably wouldn't go there because I had no idea what to do. I mean, these things where you sit down, they do sometimes have instructions. Yeah. But I mean, it's good for like, just moving your body, but I don't think if you really know how to do it, I don't think it's that efficient if you go there, but I mean, depends on you.

J: Would you like to have an instructor at our gyms?

C: I mean, for me, I don't think I need it. And I also go there sometimes, because I enjoy being alone. Because sometimes I don't like, especially in the gym. I don't like when people go around and watch me.

J: So like a group class, like, one hour a week, like every week, like, would that be inviting to you or would you say I would rather go alone, as I already know, like.

C: I probably would go alone. But I think I would also try one lesson, because I also sometimes see people, also people that had like a private lesson or something. And that's, that can be fun. Yeah.

J: Yeah. Okay. And do you think that design of outdoor gyms can be approved on?

C: I wouldn't really say so. Because they're quite different. Because the one at the DOT, it's also good in its way. And if you don't like it, you can also go to another one because it's very simple. And that's maybe for advanced people or like people who do other stuff.

J: And like, location wise, like, the surrounding? Does it matter to you like.

C: Yes. Because sometimes even because this is where I go. It's opposite. It's like on the streets. So there's a building opposite of it. And sometimes I feel like people are watching me. Which sometimes motivates me because like okay come on I can do this, but sometimes I also feel very embarrassed. Yeah. When I have my headphones, it doesn't matter because I feel like okay, because then it feels like no one can see me.

J: So you would like to like a bit more closed off?

C: Yeah, I think so. Just maybe trees or bushes around it would be good.

J: Yeah. Is there something that would make you go to outer gyms more? Like if that would change then?

C: For me, I don't think so because I don't like going to the gym isn't my favourite thing ever. Like there's also nothing that would make me go to an indoor gym more. Yeah, maybe if I, if I have a group and I have people to go with like if it's my daily thing with a friend, because then it is also a social activity but yeah, maybe if I had a group lesson and I signed up for it, I would go because there's a set time. But then again, I don't know if I would join.

J: Do you think that outdoor gyms in Groningen are maintained well

C: Yes. So far as I can see.

J: And I feel safe when I use outdoor gyms you said somewhat agree. Why not strongly and agree?

C: I don't know that's the right word. But I feel like embarrassed in the beginning the bar was really high to go there because I was really anxious. And I was like, Oh, God, I hate people watching me it is very intimidating, because also, every time I pass there, there are mostly only guys. And I feel pretty much objectified as a woman going to the gym anyways. But then also, I don't know and also I feel awkward when there's another girl and I feel like this is some kind of competition because I feel like I'm trying to show off what I can do which is what I would never do.

J: Oh, yeah. Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively you said strongly agree. Yeah, how do you think it should be promoted?

C: I guess they could be made a bit more attractive also. Maybe if you put like signs up that tell you what to do? I could imagine if you have signs at the gym where it proposes like different workouts schedules. Just a proposition like a set with three exercises that you can do so that you just get inspired and then maybe think about something else. Because, I think I would use it but sometimes I'm really lazy to think about something like to be creative. And also maybe make it a bit more closed. And I don't know I feel like it also depends on the indoor gyms because when they promote themselves or make really good use. People somehow tend to go there. I don't know because they don't think about outdoor gyms. Or maybe even like connect inner and outer gyms so that the gyms own the outer gyms and say oh, you can also go there. But that's also probably they are owned by the city, right?

J: Yeah, I think the municipality of Groningen put them there to like promote healthy.

C: Especially in a student city. I don't get why people would pay so much money for a gym. Yeah, they're really into fitness. I wouldn't pay money. When I can go there and just do basic stuff. I think for most people, it's really sufficient.

J: Yeah. Okay. And then, as an international student was it like hard to integrate, and like did you have a lot of stress with that.

C: Yes I was pretty stressed and yeah, sports helped me really much. But I think I was really lucky that I had a sport that I could do already. And that's where I know I feel safe. Even though, I'm really nervous in a new environment I have something that's like home so very, yeah, I feel more confident. And then for me, it's easier to also, like that was a really easy start to just be somewhere and still feel safe and not too much out of my comfort zone. I think I would be really anxious to join a new sport in a new city in another country.

J: Last question. Do you think outdoor gyms are as accessible for international students? As for Dutch students, like do you think there might be a difference there?

C: No I really agree. And I even think I feel like more international people use it than Dutch people. But I don't know maybe that's because it isn't so much in other countries. I don't know. I feel it's it doesn't really matter.

J: But you know a lot of other people that use outdoor gyms?

C: Yeah most people I know are international that do use them. But maybe because they don't want to necessarily join some Dutch club and then rather just go for themselves like, yeah.

APPENDIX J. INTERVIEW. R, DUTCH STUDENT, 20.

J: Oke, en wat is je achtergrond met sporten? Gewoon vroeger en nu?

R: Ik begonnen me zevende met sporten dat was atletiek en dat heb ik gedaan tot mijn negentiende. En dan nu niets, bijna echt meer. Maar ik ga weer beginnen bij een survival run ding.

J: En je hebt dan een jaar niet echt bij een vereniging gezeten. was je dan nog wel actief met sporten.

R: Ja, ik ging dan altijd gewoon zelf hardlopen. Of naar die buiten gyms gaan.

J: Op de vraag have you ever seen an outdoor gym before you started your studies in Groningen heb je ja gezegd, waar heb je die gezien?

R: In de Groningen heb ik ze wel voor t eerst gezien ja. Want bij ons in de buurt was het karig.

J: En dan wat is je motivatie vooral om te sporten in het algemeen? En denk je dan ook dat het linkt aan mentale gezondheid?

R: Nou meer omdat het gewoon beter ook voor je is. Ik kan niet te lang stilzitten. Dus ik moet energie even kwijt raken. Dan heb je daar relax gedaan. Ja dat is wel zo als je gewoon effe wat uhm. Als je even gaat hardlopen op zo'n dag, voel je wel effe dat je wat gedaan hebt.

J: How much time do you spent ja 10 tot 30 minuten en wil je daar nog wat over zeggen?

R: Nou ja, ik heb gewoon geen zin meer. En al gauw zeg maar. Ik vind het een goed initiatief alleen ik zou me daar niet zeg maar 2 uur kunnen vermaken. Ja, dan moet je echt zeg maar gewoon schema's gaan maken.

J: Als je naar een outdoor gym gaat is het dan in combinatie met een andere workout?

R: Ja het is wel gewoon toevoegend.

J: There are enough outdoor gyms nearby my house in Groningen je hebt somewhat agree gezegd, waarom niet strongly?

R: Ik heb echt best wel wat rondjes gemaakt door de buurt, maar die bij de DOT en hierachter zijn volgens mij wel de enige twee. Ik weet het niet, want dat zijn zeg maar op zich wel genoeg. Alleen op zich is het gewoon toevallig dat ie hier achter bij mij zeer dichtbij zit.

J: I usually use the outdoor gym closest to my house, je hebt strongly agree gezegd. Want stel de ene bij de dot was omgewisseld zou je er dan heen gaan?

R: Mijn hardloop route gaat bijvoorbeeld niet lang die bij de DOT. En ook gewoon de omgeving, want ik bedoel die gym zit bijna in de stad. Dus ik voel me daar ook niet echt, zeg maar minder op mijn gemak dan dat ik dat hier in het park doet. want die zit tussen huizen.

J: The outdoor gyms in Groningen that I use have a clear instruction on how to use them? Jij hebt gezegd neither agree nor disagree.

R: Ja, ik vind dat het meeste wel van zeg maar vanzelfsprekend is. Maar dat is meer uit mezelf alleen. Ik heb het idee dat daar niet echt instructies bij staan.

J: Want je bent ook deze tegengekomen doordat je ging hardlopen?

R: Ja ik wilde daar nog eens een keer naartoe zeg maar. Alleen toen waren er andere mensen. En toen was een groepje bezig en ik, ik zoek het wel uit wanneer er echt niemand is hoor. Vind ik al wel veel fijner. En ik heb één keer daar gestaan met een ouwe man en die begon meteen tegen me te praten. Daar heb ik het helemaal niet op.

J: I would like to have an instructor at outdoor gyms in Groningen heb je somewhat disagree gezegd.

R: Ja, omdat ik het ook gewoon meer vindt. Met zo'n outdoor gym ga je toch wel voor jezelf naartoe. Ja, en als je een instructor wilt ga je naar de sportschool. Als je al een beetje weet wat je doet, dan ga je naar een outdoor gym. Want als ik niet wist wat ik moest doen. Nou dan zou ik er überhaupt niet eens opkomen om zeg maar daarop te gaan trainen.

J: Want stel, je zou echt een cursus krijgen en dan met bijvoorbeeld echt je oefeningen en sets en van die instructeur krijgt, dat is gewoon echt een training is. Dan zou je het wel doen?

R: Dan is het op zich wel geinig. Om maar eens een keer mee te doen, net zoals zo'n cursus van ACLO.

J: En dan de design of outdoor gyms in Groningen could be improved upon. Somewhat agree.

R: Ja, dat is bijvoorbeeld die van de dot is maar beton. En is best wel grijs. Weet je, het past wel bij die huizen in de omgeving. Alleen ik zit zo van ja, t is gewoon. T Is een beetje te neutraal voor mijn ding.

J: En qua de surrounding qua omgeving.

R: Ja, dat is misschien niet heel veilig, maar wat misschien wat afgeslotener of zo. Bijvoorbeeld als je bij de DOT bent. Gewoon weet je dat de bus ernaast rijdt, dat iedereen naar je kan kijken terwijl je bezig bent. Ja, en dat nodigt minder uit vind ik dan. Want bij dat park zit gewoon wat bomen omheen en zo en het is nog steeds open. Ja, weet je dat het dus niet heel veiligheid technisch kut.

J: Je hebt genoeg ogen op je. Maar vind je dat dan genoeg surrounded daar?

R: Ja ja, ik heb daar gewoon minder moeite mee omdat ook die weg minder druk is. Ja en ik heb niet het gevoel dat mensen uit hun flatgebouw naar beneden kijken ofzo.

J: Outdoor gyms in the city of Groningen that I use are maintained well. Somewhat agree.

R: Ja, want ik bedoel het is daar altijd gewoon best wel netjes. Je hebt ook geen afval dat altijd op de grond ligt of zo als er mensen zijn geweest. Volgens mij zijn die apparaten ook gewoon, met die verf enzo het bladert er allemaal niet af dus. Ja, je houdt nog steeds dat het gewoon in een park zit. Dus je hebt altijd gewoon nog wel dingen dat vies wordt en zo. Dus t is niet dat er altijd iemand bij staat om me schoon te maken.

J: En dan I feel safe when I use outdoor gym in Groningen. Somewhat agree.

R: Ohja. dat had ik dus al gezegd met die uhm, als er echt naast een drukke weg zit ofzo. Dan voel je je een beetje aangekeken. En dat is dat je dan met van die ouwe mannen ofzo zit dan.

J: Outdoor gyms should be promoted actively. Somewhat agree.

R: Niet iedereen heeft er natuurlijk nogt naar. Niet iedereen heeft er baat bij. Misschien dat je bij iedere outdoor gym een kaart zet of zo van hier zijn andere. Dit is nummer één van de zoveel die we hier hebben dat je een beetje kunt kijken van waar de volgende zit, of dat je daar eens een keer gaat kijken.

J: Maar inderdaad wat zou je dan nog naast een kaart doen?

R: Een heel groot informatiebord met bijvoorbeeld hoe je van dat ene plekje dat je alle apparaten hebt omdat jij hem zo dus hebt van oh hoe ze gebruikt worden. En dan zo'n kaart in het midden van hier zijn de andere optie dat je gewoon zo'n en een informatiebord van hoe je het moet gebruiken en gewoon meteen weet waar die andere zijn.

J: Dan moet je wel al een soort van naar één om te weten, want stel je gebruikt nooit een outdoor gym om die mensen te bereiken die er eigenlijk wel een soort van baat bij hebben. Hoe zou je die het best denk je kunnen?

R: Ja, ik zit nu gewoon de enige manier om ze te bereiken is adverteren. Maar hoe adverteer je zoiets? Ja, ik weet niet. Ik heb zou er geen gemeente spotjes van maken, dat weet ik nu al. In mijn gevoel wordt dan niet echt gewaardeerd. Dan wordt het weer door m'n neus gedrukt. Weet je? Of je kan gewoon posters door de stad hangen. Je hebt van die plak borden ofzo.

J: Do you think that outdoor gyms are as accessible for international students as for Dutch students?

R: Denk het wel, zolang je maar niet met taal gaat uitleggen. Als t gewoon met plaatjes wordt uitgelegd, dus dan is prima vrij algemeen wel voor iedereen.

APPENDIX K. INTERVIEW. V, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, 23

J: And what is your background in physical activity? So what sports do you play?

V: So there's only one sport. I really do. It's, I don't know if you know it, it's floorball. It's like hockey, but with a plastic bowl with holes in it.

J: And where did you live before you started your study in Groningen?

V: I live in a Slovakia.

J: And in your survey, you said that you have seen an outdoor gym before you started your studies in Groningen so have you seen outdoor gyms in Slovakia?

V: Yes, And then during summer we had summer preparation where we used outdoor gyms with the team the team. Our, like team captain told us what to do.

J: How long have you lived in Groningen?

V: Yeah. I lived there for like, half a year, I think. I was there in my first year bachelor? And then COVID happened.

J: So, on the question: Are you aware of the existence of the existence of outdoor gyms in Groningen you said no? Yeah, you have never seen an outdoor gym in Groningen or?

V: No, I have never seen it. But I also think I have to say that I'm not like an urban explorer kind of guy. So if it's literally not next door, I'm not going to notice it. So it's just that I've never seen them in Groningen.

J: But because you have like, used outdoor gyms in Slovakia. But you never had the urge to look for them. Like,

V: No, as I said, like going there and using it by myself is not something that I'm fond of. So at first, like maybe I would suggest it to my team. If I was there long enough but it I was there only for half a year. So this topic didn't come up in conversation.

J: So, on the question, do you think you will ever go to an outdoor gym in Groningen while you are still a student, you said maybe, do you think you will come back to study in Groningen again instead of France or?

V: So yeah, first of all, I don't know if I will be coming back. And second of all, like, I'm not really in contact with my team that much. So if I were to come back, I would firstly have to find someone that would like accompany me.

J: Yeah, for the question, if there will be an instructor explained exercises and outdoor gym, I would consider using outdoor gyms, you said neither agree nor disagree.

V: I would love to go with someone who I already know. So first I want to find a friend and then take the friend to the outdoor gym.

J: And like to promote them? Yeah. What do you think would be a good way? To make more people in Groningen use them?

V: Well, I don't know. I mean, like, from the top of my head to New Year's Eve is coming. So New Year's resolution will be a thing. So maybe put up a poster about like, A, stop lying to yourself and start doing

something. Something like that. Maybe like, I think ACLO they have also some, like material sample, some small leaflets, or something that they give out to new coming students. So, so maybe like picture of it could be posted?

J: Yeah. And then do you also work out because it's like, good for your mental health. Do you think like those things are related?

V: I would say like working out not really. But running to me is something that's great.

J: Could there be done something so that you would use outdoor gyms more and then yeah, in Groningen but like also in general like what would really make you go there?

V: For me it's about people like I play this one particular sport floorball because I want to meet people and I want to like bond through doing something. Yeah. So I think maybe some kind of group training promotion, something like that. Like to have one person who knows a lot and can teach other people so that next time they can go by themselves.

J: Yeah, so like, maybe like an introduction course.

V: To show them how the machines work. What can you do? Because usually there's not only one kind of exercise you can do there's like more so...

J: should it be like then an organized training or just someone there and then you go there and then you can ask them like that or like one hour training for teaching you how to use them and then give some sets.

V: So I think that once a month, maybe two months there could be like one scheduled like evening, when people who are interested can go there, and someone will show them how to operate them. Because like in theory, you can put a poster and pictures and pictograms, and you know how to use them. But I feel like a person explaining to you feels like much safer, much more warm, when someone like tell you what to do.

J: Like it's like the location and like the surroundings. And like, maybe the design of outdoor gyms are those important to you?

V: Yeah. there was this like, one outdoor gym that was in the middle of a suburban area, and there were a lot of blocks of flats. So I felt like anyone can watch me exercise. So I was like, I hate this. So I would rather like to go to the other side of the city to the other public gym, which was like on the like, near a forest. There weren't that many people like there were some houses but not that many. There are no cars, no noise or like stuff like that. But to me, I felt like I just don't want to exercise under someone's window. You know, like someone's cooking and they look out the window and I'm there exercising.

J: And like, what yeah, what other things of the design are important, like how many exercise machines or how diverse enough is that important to you?

V: I think what is important is like not the number of machines but universality so that like you have one machine but you can make you can do like three different exercises. So that's what's important to me.

J: And I do think that outdoor gyms are as accessible For international students as for Dutch students, and maybe a Groningen, specifically, but also in general.

V: I can't say because I wasn't long in Groningen. So as I said, I didn't even know that they were there.

J: But do you think that because you were an international students. You had maybe less knowledge or that not, per se, I guess you knew about outdoor gyms but.

V: Yeah, but again, like when you're in the first year and the new city, there's just so much information. And so to be honest, like, I didn't even think about some outdoor gyms because there was like, like exams, new professors, new city, roommates, there was so much going on.

J: So it was on the bottom of your list of things to do? I think that was it. Do you have any questions or other things you want to say about outdoor gyms or?

V: I don't know. What I what I would say is that, i actually like that they are popping up because from what I've seen, like first of all, not everyone can afford to go to the gym. Yeah. So having these outdoor public gyms is nice. Kind of all. I think exercising, outdoors is in general, just better for you. Because like, I have been in some indoor gyms, and usually it's like, it's hot. It's like everything is just wax. Yeah.

APPENDIX L. S, DUTCH STUDENT

J: Zijn er nog dingen die jullie beter willen zien.

S: Een waterfontein. Dat zou wel echt veel toevoegen. Zeker als het warm is in de zomer.

J: Want jullie komen hier vaak of nu dat sport weer gesloten is?

S: Nee ik denk twee keer per week ongeacht het weer, met beter weer wel vaker, maar ik denk twee keer per week ofzo.

J: En gebruiken jullie allen deze of ook nog andere?

S: Vroeger ook andere, maar omdat wij hier dichtbij wonen is dit gewoon het makkelijkst.

J: En hoe vinden jullie het design van deze outdoor gym?

S: Ja de stangen zijn erg glad, bij de DOT is dat beter. Ook vind ik ze wat te dit. Ook zouden we graag wat meer van die dip bars naast elkaar zien. Aangezien dat een hele populaire oefening is en in de zomer als het druk is kan dan maar één iemand bezig. Die bij de DOT heeft dat wel en ook wat lagere met twee naast elkaar. Ik denk sowieso dat die van de DOT beter is ingedeeld, aangezien daar op minder ruimte eigenlijk meer staat om te doen.

J: En bijvoorbeeld qua uitleg.

S: Ja de voorbeeldoefeningen die op de plaatjes staan sommige daarvan zijn echt niet te doen. Bijvoorbeeld een human flag, dat is echt niet te doen.

J: Dus het zou handiger zijn om te onderscheiden tussen meer beginners oefeningen enzo.

S: Ja dat zou wel beter zijn.

J: Want geeft dit dan inspiratie om oefeningen te verzinnen?

S: Nee dit demotiveert alleen maar. Ik heb sowieso het idee dat de mensen die deze dingen maken, dat dat totaal niet in overleg gaat met mensen die ze gebruiken. Het lijkt wel of er gewoon YouTube filmpjes zijn bekeken, en dit soort lastige oefeningen zijn dan indrukwekkend, maar voor de normale mens is dat echt niet te doen.

J: Oh ja oke, en bijvoorbeeld verderop, helemaal aan het einde zit ook nog een outdoor gym zijn jullie daar weleens geweest?

S: Ohja die, daar ben ik nog nooit geweest. Maar dat zijn meer van die apparaten daar kan je niet heel veel mee, dat is niet heel effectief. Ja dit vind ik meer iets voor oude mensen.

J: Oh oke, dus voor jullie is het beeld van outdoor gyms met apparaten dat die meer voor oude mensen zijn en dan deze met klimrekken is meer voor calisthenics en populair.

S: ja precies ja.

J: En als je dan kijkt naar surrounding, mensen die je kunnen zien vind je dat dan nog erg?

S: In de zomer zitten er natuurlijk wel mensen op het balkon, maar ik vind dat niet erg ofzo.

Jessica Zieleman

J: En denken jullie dat outdoor gyms even accessible zijn voor internationale studenten?

S: Ja die zien we hier erg veel en volgens mij al helemaal bij de DOT zijn er veel internationale studenten.

J: Dus jullie denken dat outdoor gyms misschien wel meer gebruikt wordt door internationals?

S: Ja dat sowieso, in verhouding, er zijn natuurlijk veel minder internationals en absoluut misschien ook wel.