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Studentification: The Effects on the Perceived Identity of the Neighbourhood Korrewegwijk, Groningen

Marit ten Have

s4415191

BSc Spatial Planning and Design

University of Groningen



Colophon

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Author: Marit ten Have

Student number: s4415191

Contact: m.ten.have.3@student.rug.nl

Supervisor: Charné Theron, PhD

Program: Spatial Planning and Design

Faculty: Faculty of Spatial Sciences

University: University of Groningen

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Summary

In the urban development of many university cities worldwide, the term studentification has emerged, including Groningen. It is the process where student residential occupations are becoming dominant in specific neighbourhoods. The main aim of this study is to determine whether studentification has a significant effect on the perceived identity of the neighbourhood Korrewegwijk in Groningen. It investigates the changes in Korrewegwijk that come with studentification and the associated effects it has on the identity of the neighbourhood. The main research question is: To what extent has studentification in Korrewegwijk changed the perceived identity and associated characteristics of the neighbourhood? The results were collected through a survey and the findings were analysed in Atlas.ti. These were supported by the findings found in similar studies of the neighbourhoods in the UK and South Africa.

Similarities were observed between the case study of Korrewegwijk and the neighbourhoods in the UK and South Africa, particularly in the negative physical impacts such as vehicle clutter, noise nuisance and building maintenance issues. In terms of social impact, a significant proportion of respondents expressed a perception of community decay attributed to studentification. This was reinforced by observations of a changing neighbourhood composition within Korrewegwijk as permanent residents moved out and students replaced them. Opinions on the overall effect of studentification in Korrewegwijk were divided, with a significant number of respondents experiencing negative impacts on their living enjoyment due to the presence of students. However, the majority viewed the presence of students as a positive influence, attributing vibrancy to the neighbourhood.

It would be of interest to gain a more detailed understanding of various focus groups' opinions on how studentification affects the neighbourhood. Furthermore, future research might explore how studentification impacts local businesses and jobs.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Groningen is known as a student city and therefore has to deal with a growing number of student residents. As a result, studentification is changing the composition of residents in neighbourhoods (Rauws & Meelker, 2019). Studentification is the process where student residential occupations are becoming dominant in specific neighbourhoods. This happens due to an increased enrolment at a nearby institution, such as a university (Moos et al., 2019). In Groningen this is the case for the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Hanze HogeSchool and NHL Stenden Hogeschool.

Previous research by CBS showed that Groningen has the second largest proportion of student households in the Netherlands. In 2015, student households made up 22.1% of the municipality. Wageningen topped the list with 25.1% (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, 2018). As a result of this high student population, many neighbourhoods have a significant amount of students living there. Looking at other studies, non-student residents often experience studentification in a neighbourhood as something that mainly involves negative effects. It often results in changes in household structures, local age profiles, local lifestyles and differences in social class positions (Sage et al., 2012a). This research focuses on analysing the changed perceived identity and the associated characteristics in the Korrewegwijk neighbourhood in Groningen due to studentification. Korrewegwijk is a neighbourhood in Groningen located in the North Eastern part of the city. It consists of the two smaller neighbourhoods Indische buurt and Professorenbuurt. Korrewegwijk deals with a high student population. In 2023, 24,2% of the population were students (Gronometer, 2023).

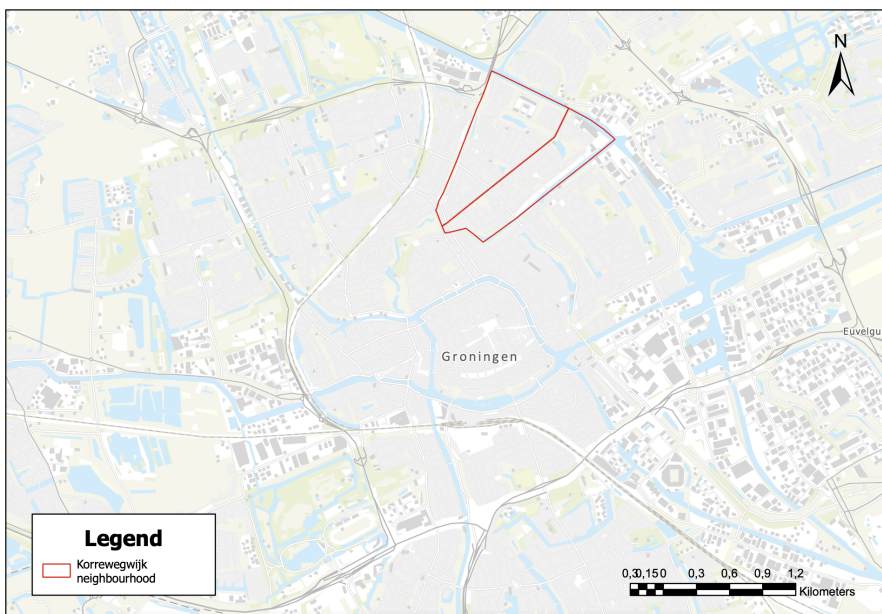


Figure 1: Korrewegwijk (Ten Have made in ArcGIS Pro, 2023)

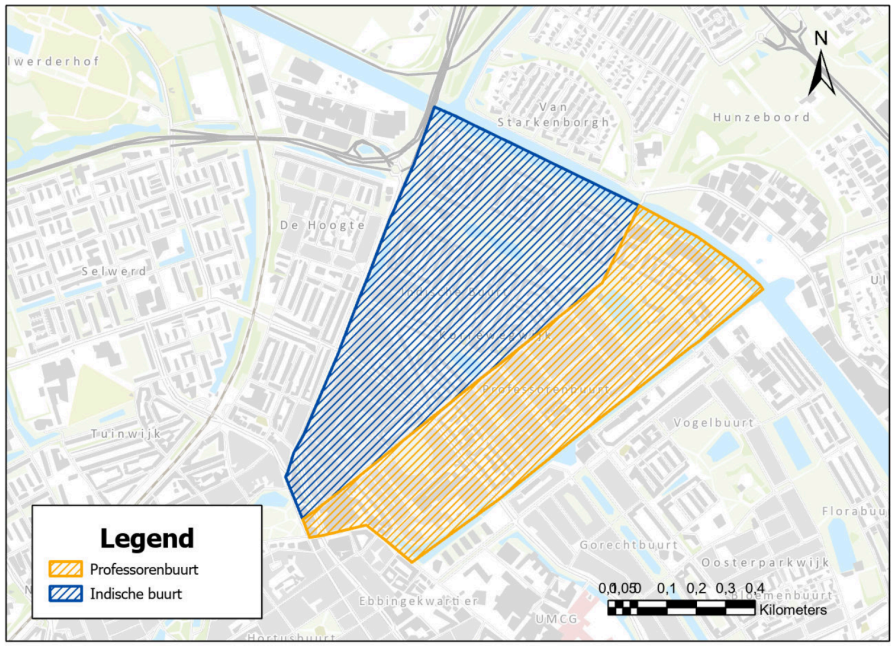


Figure 2: Indische buurt and Professorenbuurt within Korrewegwijk (Ten Have made in ArcGIS Pro, 2023)

This graph below in figure 3 shows the percentage of students from Rijksuniversiteit Groningen and Hanze Hogeschool living in Korrewegwijk from the years 2009 to 2023. The percentage of students was already high in 2009. The percentage of students in Korrewegwijk has been fluctuating around 23% since 2009.

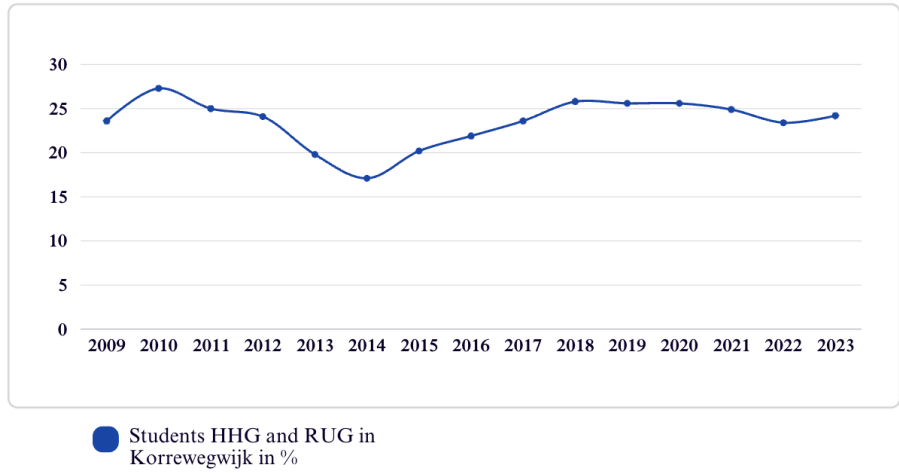


Figure 3: Number of students in Korrewegwijk in % (ten Have based on Gemeente Groningen, 2023)

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the different kinds of households located in Korrewegwijk. The graph shows that one-person households and singles in shared households account for the largest part of the households within Korrewegwijk. The amount of ‘one-person households’ has increased over the last few years. The amount of singles in shared housing has decreased.

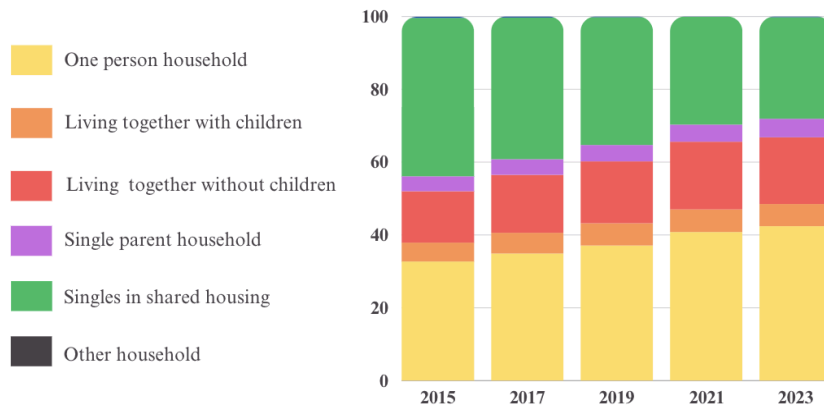


Figure 4: Households Korrewegwijk in % (ten Have based on Gemeente Groningen, 2023)

Previous research shows that Korrewegwijk has long experienced problems with the amount of student housing. This was already mentioned in a 2007 report investigating areas of concern for the neighbourhood. The norm of a maximum of 9% student houses was set in the 2003 paper 'Evaluatie Kamerverhuurbeleid' in Groningen'. This norm has been abandoned in Korrewegwijk. It differs per street how badly this distribution between students and other residents is skewed (Kolstein and van Teems, 2007). Since 2008, the standard of 15% student houses per street has been applied in Groningen. However, many streets were already above this norm when this was deployed. The newer norm in the city is that a maximum of 25% of the houses in a street may be occupied by students (Kolstein and van Teems, 2007).

Understanding the process of studentification is important to capture population and household changes. The influence of students has often been disregarded in these changes. This has been noted multiple times in previous studies commenting on the segregation of student populations (Sage et al., 2012b). Knowledge on this can help the municipality and city planners make informed decisions about zoning, housing development and even infrastructure investments. Planning can play a role in shaping student housing markets across a city instead of clustering in certain areas or neighbourhoods (Revington et al., 2020). This can be of great importance when residents experience negative effects from studentification.

Knowledge on the effects of studentification can also provide insights into gentrification processes. It is suggested that there may be a significant relationship between studentification and gentrification. A neighbourhood with a high student population might attract investment in infrastructure and amenities. This can attract a higher-income population and eventually lead to gentrification (Sage et al., 2012a).

Research has already been done within the RUG on the effects of studentification within Groningen. The study by Rauws and Meelker (2019) chose eight streets within Groningen with a high number of student residents and examined the effects of studentification here. It examined social cohesion, safety and nuisance. There is little research on the impact studentification has on Korrewegwijk and most of this research is outdated.

1.2 Research problem

The main aim of this research study is to determine whether studentification has a significant effect on the perceived identity of Korrewegwijk. This research will investigate the changes in the neighbourhood that come with studentification and the associated effects it has on the identity of the neighbourhood. It focuses specifically on the effects that non-student residents experience.

The main research question is: *To what extent has studentification in Korrewegwijk changed the perceived identity and associated characteristics of the neighbourhood?*

Sub questions:

1. *How do residents view the age distribution of Korrewegwijk over time due to studentification?*
2. *How do residents view the presence and proliferation of student houses in Korrewegwijk regarding the local property market?*
3. *How do long-time residents of Korrewegwijk perceive and experience the effects brought about by studentification in the neighbourhood?*
4. *How does studentification impact the sense of community and social cohesion among its residents in Korrewegwijk?*

1.3 Research structure

Chapter 1 provides an introduction providing background information on the study. The research problem is also mentioned here and the aim of the research. Chapter 2 comprises an exposition of the theoretical framework in which various concepts are explained. It also discusses the case studies. Chapter 3 contains a description and rationale of the research methods used. It names the types of data employed in the study. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study. The results will be compared with the literature on the case studies discussed in chapter 2. Chapter 5 delves into a comprehensive discussion of the findings compared to the case studies. Finally, the research questions will be answered in the conclusion in chapter 6 and recommendations will be given for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

This section will elaborate on the term studentification and on the findings of studies that focussed on the effects of studentification in multiple student towns. It will also elaborate on various concepts and theories related to studentification.

2.1 Studentification

Many research has already been done on studentification over the past two decades. It is a relatively new process as the concept was first defined in 2002 (Hubbard, 2008). Studentification is the influx of post-secondary students into a neighbourhood, including the effects that this process entails. It is often related to increased enrollment at a nearby institution. The processes of studentification connote urban changes which are tied to the repackaging of existing private rented houses (Smith, 2005). Single-family houses are replaced by student houses which are called houses in multiple occupation (HMO). These are houses consisting of more than two unrelated people. Landlords are typically able to extract more rent from student houses than from family houses, as the rent gets subdivided by multiple students in this case. Therefore, the production of these HMO's seems an investment which fuels the search for conversion of family houses to HMO's (Hubbard, 2008). This transformation results in a restructuring of the housing stock where private rented housing is dominant and owner-occupied housing is decreasing (Smith, 2005).

2.2 Physical impacts of studentification

The process of studentification has shown to have a great impact on a neighbourhood on many levels. The effects of studentification are often perceived as detrimental as it results in a physical downgrading of the urban environment (Smith and Holt, 2007). Studentification often causes a decline in the proportion of owner-occupied residences resulting in an increase in unkempt properties, squalor and dereliction. This is the case due to the absence of legislation requiring property owners to register HMO's and the lack of a universal code on how the HMO's should be managed by the landlords. Landlords fail to upgrade or maintain these houses and this results in a physical downgrading (Smith, 2005). Students can also contribute to physical clutter and noise. This increases pressure on public services which need to be maintained more frequently (Anderson, 2013). The research of Sage et al. (2012a) in Bevendean, Brighton, also showed that unkempt gardens and outside spaces around the student areas contribute to a declining visual appearance of this area. These issues have an impact on the quality of life in the neighbourhood of Bevendean.

2.3 Social impacts of studentification

Looking at the social dimension, studentification can cause a loss of a social network in a neighbourhood. According to Smith (2008), studentification reduces the possibilities for positive interactions between groups and it leads to further segregation of groups based on their lifestyles and their differences in economic capital.

Studentification led to the decay of a community in Bevendean (Sage et al. 2012a) as a result of the shifting demographic balance in the area. Families with children are replaced by students in the neighbourhood and residents saw this as particularly critical in the decay of the community. Students are short term residents and therefore their houses will never actually be a home to students. Therefore, it is difficult to build a neighbourhood spirit in studentified areas, as they are not bothered when they do not know their neighbours that well. They also tend to go back to their hometowns during the summer. This poses a threat to the social cohesion within the neighbourhood. It can engender feelings of estrangement among the original residents. They no longer recognize their community and lose their connection to the area (Sage et al. 2012a). Nonetheless, there are examples of what are considered 'genuine student neighbourhoods' where residents still maintain their strong sense of belonging despite an influx of students (Stad Gent, 2012).

The growing studentification in the UK has led to a lot of opposition from other residents in these cities. Much of this focuses on the antisocial behaviour that many students have. The study of Gijsbert et al. (2012) included the homogeneity theory in their research. This claims that people tend to prefer to interact with people who are similar to them. Therefore, it is assumed that people who live in heterogeneous settings, whether it be in terms of ethnicity or other factors are expected to have less contact with those who are different to them. Students tend to have these traits towards non-students. Residents see students as an 'other' population whose lifestyle and values are different from the 'majority'. Mainly impoverished and elderly people view the influx of students as a threat, as they have the most to gain from neighbourhood revitalisation. Students are often disregarded in processes of making new policies. This creates a lack of consideration as to how students might be better integrated into local communities (Hubbard, 2009).

2.4 Economic impacts of studentification

Studentification can result in the inflation of property prices. Research conducted by Chrisafis (2000) mentioned the replacements of families by students in Leeds. This caused a rise of the house prices which resulted in first-time buyers disappearing from the housing market here. Two separate case studies in the student towns of Bloemfontein and Stellenbosch in South Africa showed that the increase in student houses increased the price of non-student properties as well. This can be seen as a positive influence to the property market, but this is detrimental to the long-term residents of these neighbourhoods.

The study of Sage et al. (2012a) stated that there is a connection between studentification and gentrification in their study. Gentrification is the process where lower income neighbourhoods transition to higher income ones. Gentrifiers are often characterised as young professionals, so with a higher educational level. Students share more characteristics with non-student gentrifiers such as culture, background and their earning potential (Moos et al., 2019). The research of Smith (2005) showed that there are economic-related similarities between studentifiers and early phase pioneer gentrifiers. They both had a constrained

position in the housing market and a low level of economic capital. Smith identified a distinctive geographical pattern to how studentified areas are distributed. Many of these areas were adjacent to existing inner-city gentrified neighbourhoods. This can involve middle-class students moving into gentrified middle-class areas. The study of Loughborough (Hubbard, 2008) showed that the new student housing developments here can be conceived as examples of gentrification. The studentification here caused a physical transformation of the area, indirectly displaced lower-income groups and it recapitalized the town centre. These transformations characterise new-build gentrification processes. There is however a lack of understanding of the negative impacts that gentrification can bring, such as socio-cultural dispossession and displacement and the insecurity and stresses that are linked to this (Smith, 2008). Gentrification can lead to a certain income class not being able to afford buying property in these areas (Donaldson et al., 2014).

The transition towards a knowledge economy causes social transformations. It causes a socio-economic restructuring of cities and student housing plays a role in this (Revington et al., 2020). The study of Moos et al. (2019) looks at the concept of youthification. This refers to the increasing concentration of young adults in the densest parts of urban areas as a result of studentification. This concept of youthification may also be related to gentrification, as young adults are often found in gentrifying areas. The young adults who are working can co-inhabit an area with students. This is then linked to studentification as well. That is when the three concepts of gentrification, studentification and youthification all overlap.

2.5 Conceptual model

It focuses on the physical, socio-cultural and economic impact and these impacts are also interlinked. The physical impacts are the conversion from family houses to student houses. The presence of students in the neighbourhood often brings physical clutter and noise with it. The effect is a physical downgrading of the area. The economic impacts are caused by gentrification of the area. This causes an increase in property values and the arrival of younger people creates a changing demographic equilibrium. The socio-cultural impacts cause further social segregation between students and other residents. The presence of students has a major impact on the social cohesion in the neighbourhood.

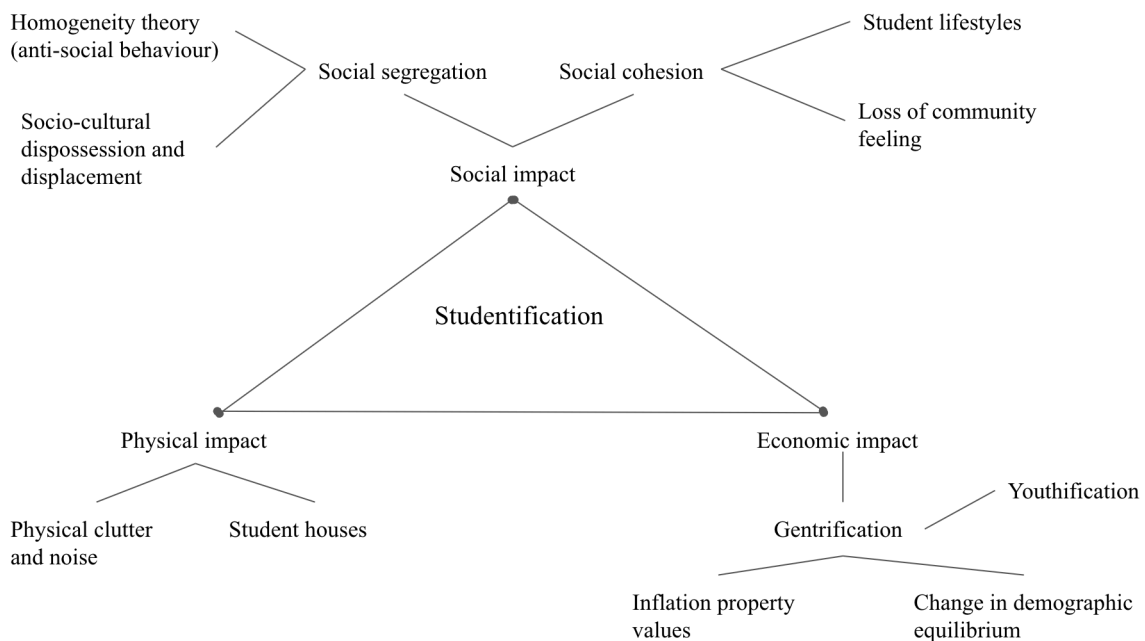


Figure 5: Conceptual model of the impacts of studentification on a neighbourhood (ten Have (2023))

2.6 Hypotheses/Expectations

Considering the literature, studentification is expected to have caused a changing identity in Korrewegwijk. The impacts will be on a social, physical and economic level. It is also likely that gentrification will occur as students often belong to the higher educated middle class. This leads to higher property values and rental prices. The negative impacts of this are that the group of lower-income residents might become displaced and cannot afford to live in the neighbourhood anymore. Since long-time residents may experience a sense of loss of community due to the studentification, it is expected that they may also experience a loss of their connection to the area.

3. Methodology

Both primary and secondary data will be used during this study. The primary data collection will be in the form of surveys for residents of Korrewegwijk. The perception of non-student residents on how the neighbourhood's identity has changed due to studentification has to be analysed. Long-time residents will be asked about their view on whether studentification has had a positive or a negative impact on the identity of the neighbourhood.

3.1 Secondary data

This research will mainly collect primary data and support this with secondary data. The secondary data will be retrieved from various scientific case studies. These include the studies in the theoretical framework of Bevendean, Loughborough, Bloemfontein and Stellenbosch. This research will investigate and consider these studies to find similarities within the results compared to Korrewegwijk.

This study will also look at previous research that has been done on exploring the effects of student housing in Korrewegwijk. It will also explore quantitative data about the age distribution in the neighbourhood.

3.2 Primary data

The data collection instrument for the primary data is a survey which will be sent to the residents in Korrewegwijk. The survey will target residents in Korrewegwijk that are not students. The purpose of the survey is to measure residents' perceived changing identity of the neighbourhood. For the first sub-question of the research, the survey will ask whether residents perceive that the age distribution is changing in the neighbourhood. This relates to the concept of youthification. For the second sub-question about the local property market, residents will be asked whether they noticed any changes in property values over the years. For the third question, residents will answer statements and questions on whether they think studentification in the neighbourhood has brought significant effects with it. The goal is to investigate whether the experience of residents in the study area is similar to that of residents in university towns like Bevendean (Sage et al., 2012a). Therefore, residents of Korrewegwijk will be questioned about the same characteristics of studentification residents experienced in Bevendean. This will be done in the form of statements. For the fourth question, residents will answer questions on their sense of community in Korrewegwijk.

The survey will be shared through personal connections on Whatsapp in the first place. It will also be shared on the website of the community team. Finally, flyers will be distributed with a QR-code leading to the survey. These flyers will be distributed throughout the neighbourhood. Sharing it on Whatsapp makes sure that residents are not limited to a certain date or time that they need to participate in the research. The aim is to gather at least 30 residents in Korrewegwijk that will participate in the survey. The author has done statistical analyses before in the course of Statistics and a minimum of 30 cases was enough to trust the confidence interval (Ganti, 2023).

Participation in the survey is voluntary and will remain anonymous. It will be explained what the survey entails and what it means to participate in the survey. Participants are not required to answer every question. The researcher's contact information will be shared so participants can reach the researcher at any time if they want to withdraw their submission. The surveys will be kept by the researcher during the study and the information will be destroyed at the end of the study. The results of the survey will be analysed in the program Atlas.ti, which is very useful when you have to interpret qualitative data. In the course Methods for Academic Research in the bachelor program Spatial Planning and Design, the author used this program to analyse interviews using codes. As the survey for this case study contains multiple open answer questions, the application of codes will be used to provide a categorization of these answers (THUAS, 2023).

4. Results

The sample of the survey comprised 36 respondents (N=36). Most respondents were in the age group of 45 to 64 years old, accounting for 47,3% of the respondents. Table 2 below shows that Korrewegwijk has a young population compared to the municipality of Groningen as a whole. The proportion of 65+ residents in Korrewegwijk is much smaller than in the municipality. However, the sample consists of 36,1% 65+ residents. The goal of the survey was to mainly target long-time residents to get their perceptions of urban change in Korrewegwijk over time. This has been achieved as 69,4% of the respondents have been living in Korrewegwijk for more than 10 years, as table 3 shows. Most respondents were single adults (30.6%). This was followed by elderly (22.2%), cohabiting without children (16.7%) and cohabiting with children (13.9%).

Table 1: Age distribution residents in %

	% 0 to 24 years	% 25 to 44 years	% 45 to 64 years	% 65 + years
Gemeente Groningen	33,3	30,4	20,9	15,4
Korrewegwijk	38,2	37,9	15,6	8
Respondents	0	16,7	47,3	36,1

(ten Have based on Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, 2023)

Table 2: Years lived in Korrewegwijk of respondents

	How many years have you lived in the Korreweg neighbourhood? % of respondents
Less than 1 year	2,8%
1-5 years	22,2%
5-10 years	5,6%
More than 10 years	69,4%

4.1 Age distribution in Korrewegwijk and studentification

In the survey, the respondents were asked to give their opinion on a few statements regarding the age distribution and number of students in Korrewegwijk. Two-thirds of the respondents notice that the number of students in Korrewegwijk has increased in recent years, as figure 6 shows. The responses show that many people do not know this (25%). This may be because they do not concern themselves with this or they do not notice it. About 70% of the respondents notice that the population in the Korreweg neighbourhood has become younger, as is visible in figure 7.

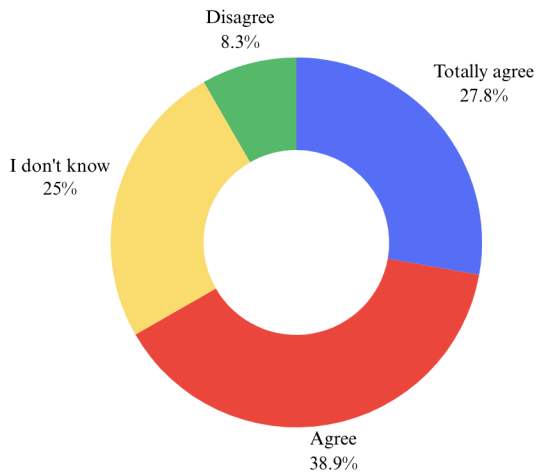


Figure 6: Division of residents' opinions on whether the number of students in Korrewegwijk has increased in recent years (ten Have, 2023)

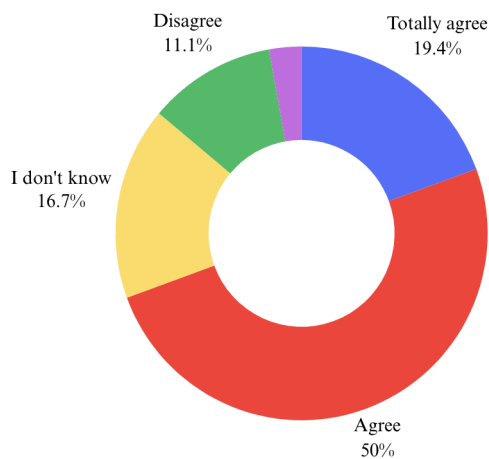


Figure 7: Division of residents' opinions on whether they noticed that the population in the Korreweg neighbourhood has become younger (ten Have, 2023)

4.2 Local property market in Korrewegwijk

From the responses to statements about the local property market it was revealed that many residents do not have a lot of knowledge about this. Therefore, it will be difficult to draw conclusions based on the responses from these statements. A significant majority noticed significant changes in property values or house prices in the Korreweg neighbourhood in recent years, about 77,8%. It can be concluded that house prices have increased, but this cannot yet be linked to studentification. Half of the respondents indicated a lack of knowledge about whether the presence of students caused an increase in property values in the neighbourhood, as figure 9 shows.

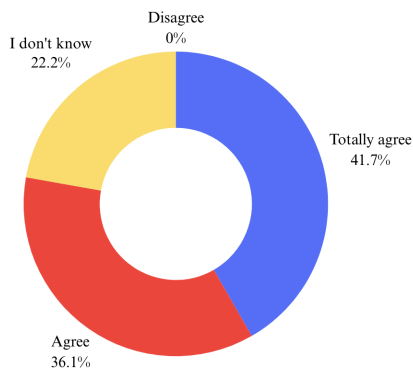


Figure 8: Division of residents' opinions on whether they have noticed significant changes in property values or house prices in the Korreweg neighbourhood in recent years (ten Have, 2023)

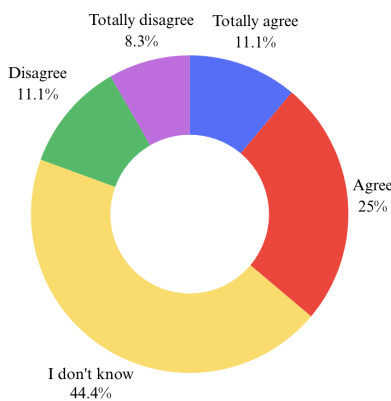


Figure 9: Division of residents' opinions on whether they notice that the presence of student residences causes an increase in property values of houses in the neighbourhood (ten Have, 2023)

4.3 Effects brought about by studentification in Korrewegwijk

The sample shows that the opinions on the effects of studentification are divided within Korrewegwijk. More than half of the respondents indicated that they often suffer from nuisances created by students while 72,3% respondents were of the opinion that the presence of students contributes to a deteriorating visual appearance of the neighbourhood.

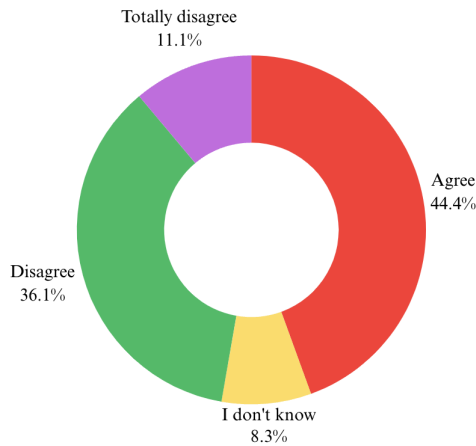


Figure 10: Division of residents' opinions on whether they often suffer from nuisance from students (ten Have, 2023)

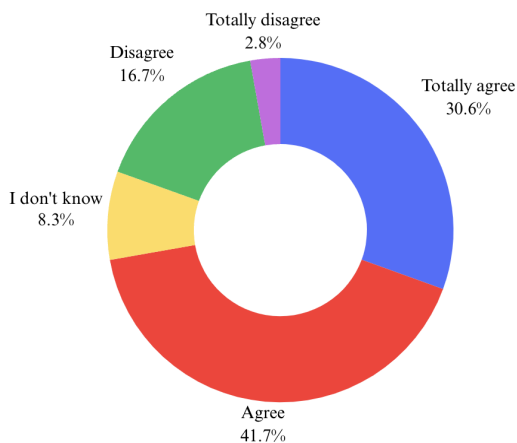


Figure 11: Division of residents' opinions on whether they notice that the visual appearance of the neighbourhood is deteriorating because of the presence of students (ten Have, 2023)

In the survey, respondents were asked their opinions on how students influenced their living experiences. They were also asked whether they ever think of moving out of the neighbourhood due to the presence of students. Although opinions on this were divided, some respondents indicated that the presence of students creates vibrancy in the neighbourhood and that a mix of different types of residents brings life to the area.

'It brings liveliness and also a knock-on effect of their specific world, partly with being busy with study and with the social world around it. Furthermore, the dynamism and creativity and originality of their stage of development.' (Respondent 10)

On the contrary, many respondents experience nuisance due to the presence of students in the neighbourhood and some wish to move out of the neighbourhood. Figure 6 shows the main negative effects that the respondents experience because of students. Bicycle nuisance on pavements and streets is the most common form of nuisance among respondents. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that they are regularly bothered by this phenomenon. Students park their bicycles on the pavement, making it difficult for other residents to pass. Residents indicated that bicycle sheds are available but are not used by students, creating a surplus of bicycles on the pavement. This problem was also mentioned in the study by Kolstein and van Teems (2007) about Korrewegwijk at that time. It has been going on for a long time and has not yet improved according to residents.

'Orphan bikes, many bikes on the street blocking the pavement while there are easily accessible sheds. Junk on the outside steps, shopping trolleys being taken and not returned. I need to educate them. They don't clean anything or bring sociability.' (Respondent 11)



Figure 12: Effects of studentification on Korrewegwijk: nuisance (ten Have through Atlas.ti, 2023)

The noise nuisance is the second most mentioned form of nuisance. Residents indicate that because of the 1930s terraced houses that are poorly insulated, it is very noisy. As a result, many residents experience noise pollution. The lifestyle of students including parties cause annoyance to other residents. Respondents mention that students often do not announce it when a party is held. The different lifestyles can clash a lot here.

'I work full time and generally have different living rhythms. Which sometimes clashes with the students who still like to make noise in the evening and walk back and forth on the stairs with a lot of noise. My alarm clock often goes off at half past five so it's annoyance all round.' (Respondent 5)

The other negative effects of studentification mentioned were litter on the streets, building and garden maintenance and drug nuisance. Some respondents mentioned that slumlords are a problem within the neighbourhood. These are landlords that want to maximise their profits by spending as little as possible on the properties (Vasquez, 2020). This results in the deterioration of the student houses as slumlords do not want to invest in the maintenance of these properties. Residents name neglected gardens, leaky roofs and rotten window frames as a consequence of the little involvement of landlords.

'The municipality needs to be much stricter against slumlords: if the property looks bad, nasty or the greenery is really neglected, then crack down and refurbish it compulsorily.'

(Respondent 14)

4.4 Sense of community and social cohesion

The last part of the survey was about a sense of community and social cohesion within Korrewegwijk and how this might have changed due to studentification. Three quarters of the respondents mention that they have built a social network in the neighbourhood. However, the survey shows that it is not very clear to residents whether there is a sense of community within Korrewegwijk. Although 44.4% of respondents think there is a sense of community, there is also a large proportion of respondents who do not know this (36.1%).

About 55% of the respondents mentioned having made connections with students. These connections are mainly with immediate neighbours and the contact is often about nuisance or how to prevent it. While casual small talk among residents on the streets is acknowledged by some respondents, the narrative does not extend to the formation of real connections. A significant proportion of residents finds it difficult to connect with students as they are less open to neighbours in public spaces. Notably, students are identified as less inclined to offer greetings to other residents while in public. Furthermore, a subset of residents holds the perspective that students may not feel the need to forge connections with other neighbours due to their transient nature of their residency in the neighbourhood. In addition, 72,2% of the respondents do not feel like students are making connections with other residents.

'Yes, with new students who move in above me I often have a chat. I tell them they can ring my doorbell if there is anything wrong. Preferably not at night. In the 20 years I've lived here, I haven't had any complaints about students. It is not the students, but the owner of the property that is the problem.' (Respondent 20)

Respondents were asked whether they felt more socially connected to the neighbourhood in the past and 33.4% of respondents agreed. Residents were then asked why they perceived this decreasing social cohesion. Some mention the changing composition of the neighbourhood as permanent residents move out of the area and students replace them. The students often have a transient stay in the neighbourhood so they do not feel the need to make connections with neighbours. Some respondents also mention that this decreasing social cohesion is not the result of studentification but of individualisation of society. People are less likely to greet each other in public. The main reasons for a decreasing social cohesion are mentioned below in a tree map. The tree map shows how often these reasons were mentioned in the responses of the survey.

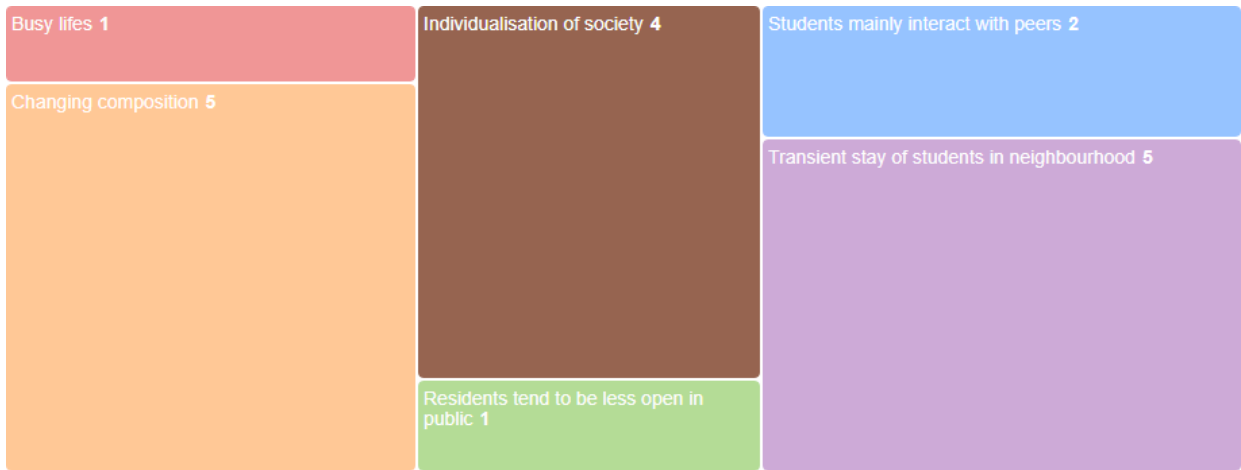


Figure 13: Tree map for main reasons of a decreasing social cohesion in Korrewegwijk (Ten Have through Atlas.ti, 2023)

Although a fair proportion of respondents experienced a decrease in social cohesion, there is still a sense of community within Korrewegwijk. About 53% of the respondents feel a strong social connection with the neighbourhood despite the presence of students. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked whether they perceived the presence of students as positive or negative. Opinions were divided on this, but below in the treemap are the most frequently mentioned positive effects that students bring with them to the Korreweg neighbourhood. The most frequently mentioned positive effect was that students bring vibrancy to Korrewegwijk.

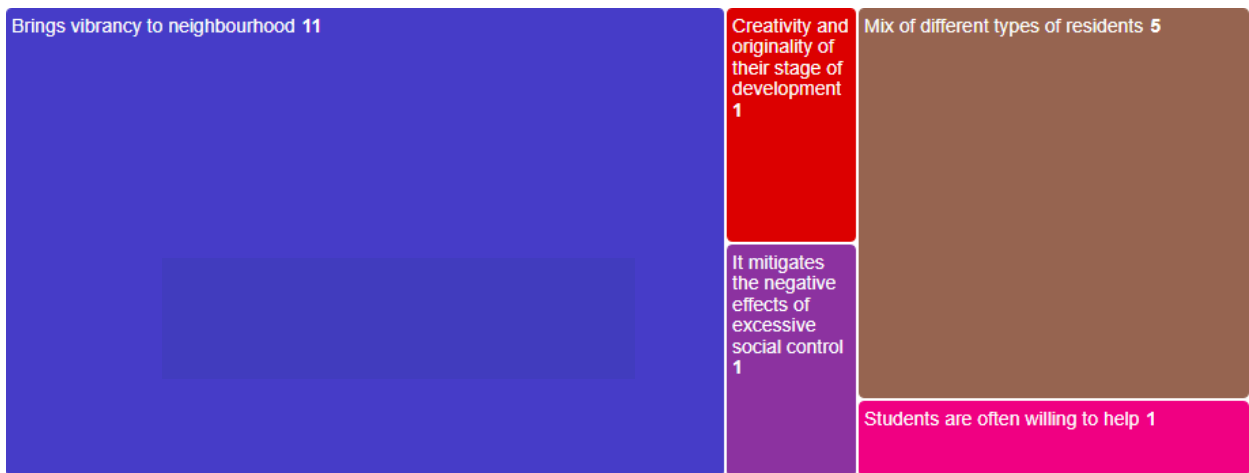


Figure 14: Tree map for positive effects of studentification in Korrewegwijk (Ten Have through Atlas.ti, 2023)

5. Discussion

When considering other studies on studentification, many findings in the case study of Korrewegwijk correspond to the findings in these studies. Firstly, the study on studentification in Bevendean in Brighton (Sage et al. 2012a) showed that the presence of students led to a declining visual appearance in the area which impacted the quality of life there. It also led to a decay of the community as it became difficult to build a neighbourhood spirit due to the students. In Bloemfontein and Stellenbosch, first-time buyers started disappearing in the area as the house prices became too high. The study of Smith (2008) discovered that there is a lack of understanding of the negative impacts that gentrification processes can bring. As the influx of middle-class students can be seen as a gentrification process, this can lead to socio-cultural dispossession and displacement of other non-student residents.

Regarding the physical impact, there are many similarities between Korrewegwijk and similar studies on studentification. The most frequently mentioned negative impact of studentification in Korrewegwijk was the cluttering of bikes which blocked the pavements and streets. The study of Loughborough (Hubbard, 2008) deals with student cars clogging up the street as there is a shortage of parking space. In Bevendean, Brighton, pedestrians could not pass the pavement due to overgrown hedges and gardens of the student houses (Sage et al., 2012a).

Respondents in Korrewegwijk mention the lack of building and garden maintenance. Unkempt gardens and outside spaces were also attributing to a declining visual appearance in Bevendean (Sage et al., 2012a). Student houses and gardens in Stellenbosch started deteriorating as well due to studentification (Donaldson et al., 2014). Many residents in Loughborough (Hubbard, 2008) mentioned the deterioration of houses as a fault of the landlords who are supposed to improve the appearance of their houses. This is in line with what respondents have said about slumlords in Korrewegwijk and their care for maintenance on properties. These landlords are solely motivated about the potential profit derived from the property, and property maintenance is just an additional cost for them.

It was expected that noise nuisance would be one of the primary negative effects of studentification, as this was the case in multiple other studies including Bevendean in Brighton (Sage et al., 2012a). In Stellenbosch, 97% of the respondents perceived the noise of students as a negative impact (Donaldson et al., 2014). Moreover, unruly behaviour and noise is the biggest issue perceived by permanent residents in Bloemfontein. Noise also turned out to be one of the main negative impacts of studentification in Korrewegwijk.

In Bevendean, respondents identified the student population as a marginal group within the neighbourhood. They saw them as a group whose lifestyles do not accord with the moral codes of the majority. The expressions of dissimilarity between students and other residents became a dominant theme within the narratives of residents in Bevendean (Sage et al., 2012a).

The same scenario goes for Loughborough (Hubbard, 2008) . Much of the opposition against students focuses on their antisocial behaviour which differs from the permanent residents. This also makes students out as an ‘other’ population here (Hubbard, 2008). The respondents in Korrewegwijk mention the clashing lifestyles of permanent residents and students. Respondents mention that students have different daily rhythms than them, causing noise nuisance, especially in the evening and at night.

Respondents in Bevendean perceived the decay of community in the area to be a result of the shifting demographic balance. Here, the decreasing number of families with children in the neighbourhood was particularly critical (Sage et al.,2012a). Stellenbosch also dealt with a decreasing number of permanent residents in the neighbourhood due to studentification (Donaldson et al., 2014). Respondents from the Korreweg neighbourhood also mentioned a shifting demographic of residents in the neighbourhood. Here, they mainly mentioned that the number of permanent residents was decreasing and that students were replacing them. According to respondents, students do not feel the need to form connections with other neighbours. This is in line with the homogeneity theory (Gijsbert et al., 2012). The transience of student populations within Bevendean was felt by residents there to have encouraged the decay of a community within the neighbourhood as well.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Main results

In conclusion, this thesis investigated whether studentification changed the perceived identity of Korrewegwijk and what the associated characteristics of studentification are. Residents in Korrewegwijk perceive that the number of students has increased in the last few years. However, a significant proportion of respondents does not have knowledge about this. The same goes for increasing house prices. The majority of the respondents agree that there has been a significant change in property values and house prices, but many do not have the knowledge to tell whether this can be linked to studentification.

The findings in Korrewegwijk revealed that there are many similarities compared to the findings of other studies where studentification has had a significant impact on the neighbourhoods, mainly including negative effects. The physical impacts, such as cluttering of vehicles, noise nuisance, building maintenance in Korrewegwijk correspond to those found in the findings in these studies. Regarding the social impact on Korrewegwijk, a significant number of respondents perceive a decay of community due to studentification. Some mention a changing composition of the neighbourhood as permanent residents move out of the area and students replace them. A subset of residents holds the perspective that students may not feel the need to forge connections with other neighbours due to their transient nature of their residency in the neighbourhood.

The opinions on whether studentification has a positive or negative effect on Korrewegwijk are divided. Many respondents experience negative effects due to the presence of students in the neighbourhood and this has an influence on their living enjoyment. However, the majority perceives the presence of students as a positive effect on the neighbourhood. The most frequently mentioned effect is that it brings vibrancy to the neighbourhood. To conclude, studentification changed the perceived identity of Korrewegwijk with associated negative as well as positive effects.

Limitations of the study are that the sample size of 36 respondents is rather small. As the target group of the survey was very specific, it was difficult to get many participants for this study. However, the answers of respondents do correlate strongly with the effects found in the case studies.

6.2 Recommendations

This research shows that studentification is an important issue within the neighbourhood. Opinions on the presence of students here are divided. It would be of interest to get a more detailed insight from the different focus groups regarding their views on the impact of studentification on the neighbourhood. Thus, new decisions can be made according to their specific concerns about students within Korrewegwijk. Furthermore, future research could discover the economic impact of studentification on local businesses and employment.

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Appendix 1: survey

Studentificatie: de effecten op de identiteit van de Korrewegwijk, Groningen

Mijn naam is Marit ten Have en ik studeer Spatial Planning and Design aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Ik woon zelf in de Korrewegwijk en ervaar dit als een fijne woonomgeving. Uit nieuwsgierigheid hoe overige bewoners de aanwezigheid van studenten ervaren in deze wijk heb ik dit als onderwerp gekozen voor mijn scriptie. Dit onderzoek richt zich op het analyseren van de veranderde identiteit en de bijbehorende kenmerken van de Korrewegwijk als gevolg van studentificatie. Studentificatie is het proces waarin het aantal studentenwoningen in een wijk toeneemt. Deze enquête bevat vragen en stellingen over hoe de bewoners in de wijk deze effecten van studentificatie waarnemen. De doelgroep voor deze enquête zijn inwoners van de Korrewegwijk die zelf geen student zijn.

Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel anoniem en de gegevens zullen zorgvuldig worden verwerkt. U kunt er altijd voor kiezen om u terug te trekken uit het onderzoek.

De enquête zal ongeveer 5-10 minuten duren. Hartelijk bedankt voor uw tijd en medewerking!

1. Geeft u toestemming dat uw gegevens anoniem gebruikt zullen worden voor het onderzoek?
 - Ja
 - Nee

Algemene vragen

2. Wat is uw leeftijd?
 - Onder de 18
 - Tussen de 18-24 jaar
 - Tussen 25-34 jaar
 - Tussen 35-44 jaar
 - Tussen 45-54 jaar
 - Tussen 55-64 jaar
 - 65 jaar of ouder
3. Hoeveel jaar woont u al in de Korrewegwijk?
 - Minder dan 1 jaar
 - 1-5 jaar
 - 5-10 jaar
 - Meer dan 10 jaar
4. Selecteer de categorie die uw status in de buurt het beste beschrijft
 - Voormalig student (nog geen vaste baan)
 - Young professional (hoog opgeleid en aan begin van carrière)
 - Alleenstaande volwassene
 - Gehuwd/samenwonend met kinderen

- Gehuwd/samenwonen zonder kinderen
- Alleenstaande ouder
- Oudere (65+)

Perceptie over studentenpopulatie

Geef aan in hoeverre u het met onderstaande stellingen eens of oneens bent.

5. 'Ik vind dat er te veel studenten in de Korrewegwijk wonen.'
 - Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
6. 'Ik merk dat het aantal studenten in de Korrewegwijk is toegenomen de afgelopen jaren.'
 - Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
7. 'Ik merk dat de leeftjidsverdeling in de wijk is veranderd in de afgelopen jaren.'
 - Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
8. 'Ik merk dat de populatie in de Korrewegwijk jonger is geworden.'
 - Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
9. 'Mijn perceptie over de studenten in de wijk is positief en gastvrij.'
 - Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens

Woningmarkt in de Korrewegwijk

Hier krijgt u een aantal stellingen over veranderingen op de woningmarkt door de aanwezigheid van studenten.

10. 'Ik heb in de afgelopen jaren significante veranderingen in vastgoedwaarden of huizenprijzen in de Korrewegwijk opgemerkt.'
- Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
11. 'Ik merk dat de aanwezigheid van studentenwoningen zorgt voor een stijging van de vastgoedwaarden van huizen in de wijk.'
- Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
12. 'Ik merk dat de vraag naar huizen in de wijk is gedaald door de aanwezigheid van studenten.'
- Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
13. 'Ik word op de hoogte gebracht wanneer projectontwikkelaars een nieuw studentenhuus in de buurt willen vestigen.'
- Helemaal mee eens
 - Eens
 - Ik weet het niet
 - Oneens
 - Helemaal mee oneens
14. Zijn uw eigen woonkeuzes of ervaringen beïnvloed door de aanwezigheid van studentenhuizen in de Korrewegwijk?
- Ja, de aanwezigheid van studenten heeft hier invloed op gehad
 - Nee, de aanwezigheid van studenten heeft hier geen invloed op gehad
15. Zo ja, hoe hebben studenten invloed gehad op uw woonkeuzes of ervaringen?
-
-
-

16. Denkt u er weleens aan om uit de buurt te verhuizen door de aanwezigheid van studenten? Wat zijn de specifieke redenen hiervoor?

Perceptie van de veranderingen in de wijk als gevolg van studentificatie

Hierin krijgt u een aantal stellingen die te maken hebben met uw perceptie over de veranderingen in de wijk die studentificatie met zich meebrengt.

17. 'Ik heb een sociaal netwerk opgebouwd in de wijk in de tijd dat ik hier woon.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

18. 'Ik merk dat er een gemeenschapsgevoel is binnen de Korrewegwijk.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

19. 'Ik merk dat het gemeenschapsgevoel minder wordt door de aanwezigheid van studenten.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

20. Heeft u connecties gemaakt met studenten die in de wijk wonen?

21. 'Ik merk dat de visuele uitstraling van de wijk erop achteruit gaat door de aanwezigheid van studenten.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

22. 'Ik heb vaak last van overlast van studenten.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

23. Heeft u actief deelgenomen aan buurtinitiatieven of discussies met betrekking tot studentificatie in de Korrewegwijk?

Zo ja, beschrijf uw betrokkenheid en eventuele resultaten.

24. Welke veranderingen of oplossingen zou u graag zien in de Korrewegwijk om het samenleven van langdurige bewoners en studenten beter te accommoderen?

Gemeenschapsgevoel en sociale cohesie in de wijk

Hierin krijgt u een aantal stellingen en vragen over uw perceptie over het gemeenschapsgevoel en de sociale cohesie in de wijk.

25. 'Ik voel me sterk sociaal verbonden met de buurt ondanks de aanwezigheid van studenten.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens

- Helemaal mee oneens

26. 'Ik voelde me sterker sociaal verbonden met de buurt in het verleden.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

27. Als u een mindere sociale verbondenheid met de buurt ervaart (of als dit minder is geworden), waar denkt u dat dit aan ligt?

28. 'Ik heb het gevoel dat studenten connecties maken met andere bewoners.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

29. 'Ik merk dat het moeilijk is om een gemeenschap op te bouwen door de aanwezigheid van studenten.'

- Helemaal mee eens
- Eens
- Ik weet het niet
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

30. 'Heeft u het gevoel dat de dynamiek van de buurt verandert tijdens de vakantie als gevolg van studenten die tijdelijk teruggaan naar hun woonplaats?'

- Ja, de buurt voelt leger en minder levendig aan
- Nee, ik merk hierin geen verschil
- Ik weet het niet

31. Ziet u de aanwezigheid van studenten in het algemeen als een positieve of negatieve invloed op de buurt? Kunt u uitleggen waarom?

Afsluiting

Dit is het einde van de enquête. Hartelijk bedankt voor uw tijd en deelname aan het onderzoek!

Voor vragen en/of opmerkingen kunt u mailen naar: m.ten.have.3@student.rug.nl