

Disability sports - The ability to inclusion?

*A case study on the organisational integration and inclusion of
athletes with disabilities in local, mainstream sport associations in
the Netherlands*



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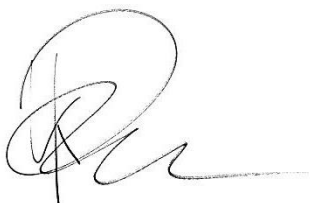
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Preface

As a real 'sport-freak' I have always dedicated all my spare time to playing and watching sports. However, only in 2010 I became acquainted with disability sports. My volleyball trainer and coach, John Bestebroer, was also coach of the Dutch sitting volleyball team. He introduced me to sitting volleyball and other adjusted sports by taking the team to events and organizing clinics for us. Even though he left the team one year later to become head coach of the Ugandan national sitting volleyball team, which I found very inspiring, my interest in disability sports only grow. I found it remarkable how underdeveloped my and the general knowledge was about disability sports, and how often it was still seen as not a 'real' sport. Therefore, when deciding on a topic for my thesis I was not hesitating for a moment; I wanted to research the integration of disability sports.

Before I will move on to the actual content of this thesis, I want to thank some people. I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Lucas Meijs. Thank you for your insightful feedback, support, and encouragement. Also Prof. Dr. Alexander Maas, who is willing to be the co-reader of my master thesis. In addition, I would like to thank Robert Haasjes and John Bestebroer for being willing to share their extensive knowledge on this topic and helping me clarify my research topic. Furthermore I am grateful to all people that I interviewed. Although it was summer holiday, every approached association was more than willing to cooperate and share all their experience and knowledge. I honestly believe that their enthusiasm and passion have resulted in the fact that the associations are considered highly suitable to research best practices. My sincere appreciations go to Geert Eyck, Bram Vermeer, Anja van Dijk, Hans Huijs, Judith Giesberts, Loek Hendrix, Mirella ter Horst and Hans Floor.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my family for their support during the thesis process, and for sponsoring my train tickets to travel to places in the Netherlands I have never visited before. Furthermore, the 36th STAR Board, my yearclub Bambi and the 'no leisure study buddies' for joining the thesis bubble and joining my summer holiday on campus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Parren', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kirsten Parren

Rotterdam, 15 August 2016

Executive summary

The mission of the government' and other national sport bodies' sport strategy has been increasingly marked by the inclusive 'sport for all' thought. The Dutch government sees sport as a strategic tool for the inclusion of marginalised groups, such as athletes with disabilities. The societal role of sport is increasingly emphasised, aiming to provide equal chances to everyone to participate in sport activities. The Dutch government has aimed to create this inclusion by integrating disability sports within local, mainstream sport associations.

Researchers have suggested that inclusion only exists when the athletes with disabilities actively participate in the association, not only as passive athletes. However, research has shown that athletes with disabilities feel often hindered to actively participate in volunteering and in sport associations. Hence, in order to foster inclusion it is of utmost importance to explore how participation in local, voluntary sport associations can be encouraged.

An exploratory, multiple case study is conducted, allowing an in-depth analysis within and across cases, studied in the real-world context. Local sport associations, which are identified as successful examples of the integration of disability sports, serve as the cases. The unit of analysis is 'policy sport associations' implementing to encourage active participation of athletes with disabilities. An extensive theoretical background, desk research and interviews with representatives of six sport associations serve as the primary data collection methods in exploring what board can do to encourage participation and hence foster inclusion.

The results demonstrate that sport associations, who have a clearly stated policy regarding the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities and take a personal approach to their members, tend to encourage participation well. Furthermore, disability sports are not seen as part of the shift towards a service delivery approach. In order to reach inclusion, disability sports and its athletes need to be integrated in all parts of the mutual support organisation.

Actively approaching members, organising shared training sessions and tournaments and aiming for a representative of every discipline in the board, are some of the effective approaches and methods adopted and implemented to encourage participation. The final part of this research considers the limitations, which are specifically focused on the role of the researcher, and suggests interesting avenues for further research.

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1. Introduction

Source: Wielervereniging Het Stadion

- Sport is de belangrijkste bijzaak in het leven -

- Sport is the most important side issue in life -

Kees Jansma (1992)

Sport is not just the most important side issue in life, it is also an emotion, a party, and can be very intriguing. People play sports to become fitter, for the energy it gives them, for joy and satisfaction, because it is challenging, for the social contacts and friends, and many more. Besides these individual benefits, sport also has a number of societal meanings. Van Bottenburg and Schuyt (1996) grouped these societal meanings into four different categories, character building and influencing behaviour, social binding and recognition, health, and economic benefits. Given these individual and societal meanings of sport, sport is often used as strategic tool for the inclusion of marginalized groups in the Dutch society.

Sport is no longer only seen as goal, but also as a means. Emphasis is placed on the societal role of sport. Sport associations become more and more part of government strategies (Stokvis, 2010). According to the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (HWS), sport contributes to the inclusion of specific groups, such as people with disabilities (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2005). Also the United Nations underlines the importance of sport in fostering inclusion and well-being of people with disabilities, and sees it as a contributing factor to its Development Goals (Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, 2008). The idea is not a new one. For example, Gordon Allport's (1954) contact theory supports the idea that participation in sport and the production of sport can prevent exclusion and promote inclusion. This inclusive 'sports for all' thought is in the Netherlands and most other Western-European countries one of the most important missions of the governments' and other national sport bodies' sport strategy (Elling & De Knop, 1998; Hylton & Totten, 2001; Knop

& Oja, 1996). The aim is to provide equal chances to everyone to participate in sport activities adjusted to their own preferences and possibilities: Exclusion based on age, gender, ethnicity, sexual preferences or physical disabilities should be eliminated (Elling & Claringbould, 2004). Practically, this means increasing the accessibility to sport activities, sport organisations, and volunteering and decision-making in sport associations for people with disabilities.

The Dutch government has aimed to create this inclusion by integrating disability sports within local, mainstream sports. However, research has shown that athletes with disabilities feel often hindered to actively participate in volunteering and sport associations. Hence, in order to foster inclusion, it is of utmost importance to research how participation in local sport associations can be encouraged. The following parts of this introduction provide a brief explanation of how sports have been redesigned to contribute to inclusion.

1.1 The Dutch strategy of organisational integration

The shift towards the 'sports for all' thought is marked by the signing of a declaration of intent by the former NEBAS and NSG and NOC*NSF¹. During the 2000 Olympics in Sidney, they signed this declaration on the initiative of the former State Secretary of HWS, to encourage sport participation among people with disabilities by integrating disability sports in mainstream sports (Notté, et al., 2011).

The declaration of intent led to the project 'Integration Sport and Disabilities' (in Dutch: *Integratie Sport en Beperking*), focusing on shifting the responsibility for the organisation and provision of disability sports from Dutch Disability Sports (In Dutch: *Gehandicaptensport Nederland*), to sport-specific national federations and eventually local associations (Janssens & Van den Heuvel, 2006). This process is referred to as organisational integration. It would lead to improvements because the disability sports could use existing sport infrastructures such as federations, associations, accommodations and supporters. The national sport federations were asked to take over the role of *Gehandicaptensport Nederland* (Duijf, et al., 2003). Organisational integration was based on a principle of equality which implicated that people with disabilities should not just have the same accommodations and materials at disposal within the federations, but also have the same rights and obligations as other athletes (Janssens & Van den Heuvel, 2006). Besides encouraging sport participation by providing more possibilities to play sports close to home, organisational integration also aimed to benefit people with disabilities on a personal level. In interviews conducted by the NOC*NSF (2003) the majority of the people with a disability mentioned that they enjoyed sports in a

¹ The NEBAS was the umbrella sport organization for disability sports focused on athletes with physical disabilities, similarly the NSG focused on disability sports for athletes with mental disabilities. In 2001, they merged into *NebasNsg*, and changed their name to *Gehandicaptensport Nederland* in 2008. NOC*NSF is the umbrella association for all mainstream sports in the Netherlands.

mainstream association more, since more emphasis is placed on sports instead of the disability. Previous research also showed that people with disabilities preferred to play sports in an integrated association (Manders, 1985). Furthermore, the organisational integration increased the level of public awareness and acceptance of people with disabilities (Duijf, et al., 2003; Riordan, 1999).

At the end of 2010, the project organisational integration ended. Currently, forty-four mainstream federations bear the responsibility for the disability sports in their branch. However, the majority of attention within the project was paid to elite sport and the national, federation level. Recreational disability sport came off badly (Boor, 2016). Therefore, the process of organisational integration continued under the name “boundlessly active” (In Dutch: *grenzeloos actief*), with an emphasis on moving disability sports from rehabilitation centres to local mainstream sport associations (Rijksoverheid, 2014). Slowly, this strategy seemed to pay off. Within several local sport associations, disability sports has been integrated (Notté, et al., 2011). However, several athletes with disabilities on the other hand were afraid that their voices would get lost, that they would not be accepted, and that they would lose out to the mainstream mass (Janssens & Van den Heuvel, 2006).

1.2 Implications for inclusion in local sport associations

The Dutch national strategy of organisational integration has also implications for the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities in local sport associations, where the majority of the Dutch population plays sports. Therefore, a closer examination of the implications of organisational integration on the participation and inclusion of athletes with disabilities in mainstream association is needed. The goal of organisational integration is provide equal chances for everyone to participate in sport activities.

Elling and Claringbould (2004, p. 59) argue that equal chances imply that people from diverse social status positions are participating in democratic decision-making bodies and in the production of sport', not just as passive athletes. Hence, intended inclusion is related to actively involving athletes with disabilities in the production of sport. Other scholars have likewise underlined that inclusion requires active participation, instead of only participation as passive athletes. Fay and Wollff (2009, p. 45) state that inclusion 'exists when sport associations embrace sport for people from minority or marginalised groups as an integral part of the fabric of the sporting environment including sport leadership'. Also Saari (2011) mentions that involving athletes with disabilities in the organisational process of sports is a requirement for the inclusion process. Concluding, this means that in an inclusive sport organisation, as is the aim of the Dutch government, athletes with disabilities not just participate passively as athletes or participants, but are encouraged to participate in all levels of the organisation (Misener & Darcy, 2014).

The European Union (European Union, 2016) has acknowledged the fact that the full potential of societal contribution of sport has not been reached yet. They support this statement with the fact that many marginalised and underprivileged groups are underrepresented amongst sporting professionals and volunteers or members of committees and governing bodies, at local, national, and international level. Most participation encouraging measures for athletes with disabilities, have only focused on encouraging participation as passive athletes (Storm & Post, 2012). Actively participating in sport associations and in volunteering are the two activities where people with disabilities feel most hindered (de Klerk & Schellingerhout, 2006). These two activities are highly correlated in the Netherlands. Sport associations are voluntarily run, and are seen as the largest volunteering sector (de Hart & Dekker, 2009). The number of people with disabilities that volunteer is significantly lower than that of their non-disabled counterparts, respectively twenty-seven versus forty-nine percent (Arends & Flöthe, 2015). Actively participating in voluntarily run sport associations is therefore not just a matter of course. A small-scale research conducted in the Dutch city Capelle aan de IJssel revealed that athletes with disability felt hindering effects to become active from the lack of acceptance from non-disabled athletes (Lubbe, 2006). Consequently, the complete inclusion of athletes with disabilities requires a proactive stand of sport associations in taking steps to encourage active participation.

1.3 Research relevance

1.3.1 Societal relevance: The challenge to inclusion

Within the broader context of overcoming societal segregation, creating equal opportunities and societal inclusion of marginalised group in society, integration and participation of people with disabilities has received more attention lately. The thought that everyone should be able to participate in the society has led to large investments of the Dutch government to foster societal participation (Notté, et al., 2011). The Dutch government, the ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports (here abbreviated as HWS) in particular, has often underlined the importance of integrated disability sports for societal inclusion, sport as ‘The Great Equalizer’. As stated in their policy plan, the challenge is to increase participation in the recreational sports, where the majority of the society plays sports (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2005, p. 55). In a speech of former State Secretary of HWS Jet Bussemaker, was mentioned that within the ‘sport as glue for society’ thinking, people with disabilities are an important target group. The added value of sport for people with disabilities is very large, since sport can foster their participation and inclusion in society, especially given the large amount of people with psychical disabilities in the Netherlands (Rijksoverheid, 2008). Also worldwide, people with disabilities are considered the largest minority group (United Nations, 2006).

Guffens (1985) and Kröber and van Dongen (2011) note in their research that three strategies exist to reach societal inclusion. A strategy which is mainly aimed at politics, laws and legislation (top-down), a strategy that acknowledges an active role for people with a disability (bottom-up), and a strategy whereby the “middle area” plays an important role in realising the preconditions for social inclusion. The top-down strategies of the Dutch government are superficially covered in the introduction. Bottom-up it is mentioned that even though athletes with disabilities want to participate, they still often feel hindered to actively participate. In order to realise inclusion in the Dutch society, the middle area thus needs to be covered as well. This middle area includes mainstream sport organisations among others. Those associations have to become accessible for people with disabilities in all their layers. All three strategies to inclusion are depicted in figure 1.

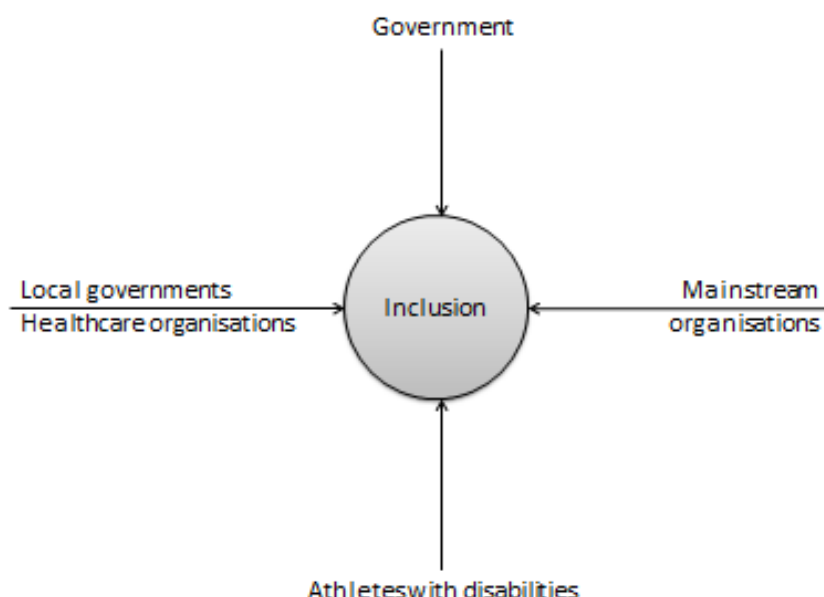


Figure 1: Strategies for inclusion

Source: (Guffens, 1985; Kröber & van Dongen, 2011)

Along this line, mainstream sport associations play an important role in fostering participation of athletes with disabilities. Hence, researching how mainstream sport associations can encourage the active participation of people with disabilities on the local level, is an important part of the larger aim of creating societal inclusion.

1.3.2 Theoretical relevance

The process of organisational integration that took place in various countries, has been discussed and researched and includes both national (Janssens & Van den Heuvel, 2006; Notté, et al., 2011; von Heijden, et al., 2013) and international research (Fay, et al., 2000; Kaipainen, 2013; Legg & Steadward, 2002; Nixon & Howard, 1989; Sorensen & Kahrs, 2006). However, these scholarly works

focused on the formal process of organisational integration. Legg et al. (2009) and Misener and Darcy (2014) address the lack of studies that have examined the participation of athletes with disabilities within the integrated sport associations. It has been argued that the inclusion of athletes with disabilities in sport associations needs to be evaluated and researched (Fay, et al., 2007).

The exceptions within the literature have focused on the participation of people with disabilities in international representation bodies (Pensgaard & Sorensen, 2002; Sherrill, 1998; Sorensen & Kahrs, 2006). However, those international representation bodies cannot simply be compared to local associations. Volunteers instead of paid employees manage through a non-hierarchical structure and contrary to international representation bodies and regular workplaces, local sport associations. Therefore, research that used business inclusion frameworks that require strong leadership and managers, and a good working recruitment process for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the works force (Bruyère, et al., 2000; Kennedy & Harris, 2005; Schur, et al., 2005), cannot simply be applied to sport associations. Saari (2011), who researched the inclusion of children with physical disabilities in after-school sport activities in Finland, suggests that the processes of integration and inclusion have not been studied in the civic, voluntary sector of sport and physical activity. All the more research is conducted considering the inclusion of women (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007; 2008; 2012; Knoppers & Bouman, 1998; Witteveen, 2002) and ethnic minorities (Elling & Claringbould, 2004; de Hart, 2005) in voluntary sport associations.

The fact that inclusion is an important strategy for the Dutch government while it has not been researched yet in the large voluntary sport sector, suggests a pressing need for research in this field. This research aims to fill this gap by focusing on athletes with disabilities, in local, voluntary run, non-hierarchical associations.

1.4 Research question

The present work builds on the sport strategy of the government, to continue the inclusion of athletes with disabilities within mainstream organisations. As the Ministry of HWS stated, sport plays an important role in the inclusion of people with disabilities and the larger goal of inclusion in society (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2005). However, as described before, inclusion implies that athletes with disabilities participate at all levels of the organisational structure of a sport association, not only as passive athletes. Nonetheless, the number of athletes with disabilities that are actively participating in the association falls behind. Therefore, the inclusion of athletes with disabilities requires a proactive stand of sport associations in taking steps to encourage active participation. Hence, this research aims to explore good practises how boards of sport associations can actively encourage participation and inclusion of athletes with disabilities in all layers of the association. The importance attributed by the Dutch government to participation and inclusion, and the non-existing

research on the inclusion of athletes with disabilities in local, mainstream association, further validates the need for this research.

This research is conducted from a 'management' perspective, looking at the inclusion of athletes with disabilities from a board's perspective. Hence, the level of analysis is the "Boards of local sport associations". Purposely is chosen not to include the voice of athletes with disabilities. This choice is made to have a clear focus on the "management" perspective and preventing this research from getting too broad (Yin, 2009). The unit of analysis is the strategies of sport associations to encourage the active participation of athletes with disabilities. Interviews were held with boards of sport associations where the organisational integration of disability sports has taken place. This should result in a set of good practises that have allowed these associations to fully include athletes with disabilities. The main research question has been formulated as follows:

How can boards of local sport associations in the Netherlands where integration has taken place increase active participation and eventually foster inclusion of athletes with disabilities?

Because of the lack of research on this topic and the non-existence of a conceptual framework regarding fostering inclusion in voluntary associations, this research first provides an extensive theoretical background of the concepts at play. In this theoretical background three assumptions are identified. First, the historical, medical way of looking to athletes with disabilities as dependent, is embedded in the concept of integration. Second, the more recent, social way acknowledges the importance of equal participation and is related to inclusion. Third, inclusion is an ongoing process that does not happen overnight. Next, the research landscape is portrayed. A shift among voluntary sport associations in the Netherlands is suggested from being a complete mutual support organisation, which are known for creating sports together, to a service delivery organisation, where the association provides sport as a service to members who are seen as consumers. Some scholars have argued that providing disability sports can be seen as part of this shift towards a service delivery organisation. This shift may influence participation and the underlying reasons for integrating disability sport.

These theoretical assumptions and Rappaport's (1987) guidelines to research inclusion provide the basis for this research. He argues that because inclusion takes place within the divergent nature of social issues, several "solutions" are in place instead of just "one answer", validating the research to good practises. Furthermore, he states that the policy needs to be examined within its (historical) **context**. Besides providing the context in which disability sport has been integrated, this research examines the continuous process of inclusion, which is threefold. This research looks at the **intention** of boards to integrate and include athletes with the disabilities, what has been **realised** so far, and good practises of how to **further encourage participation and inclusion**.

A multiple case study is conducted among different sport associations of different sport disciplines in different parts of the countries. The case study consists of desk research and in-depth semi-structured data. These data set the stage for the actual analysis that is discussed in chapter 4. Last, the actual research question is answered in chapter 5, followed by some limitations and directions for future research. An overview of the research process is provided in figure 2.

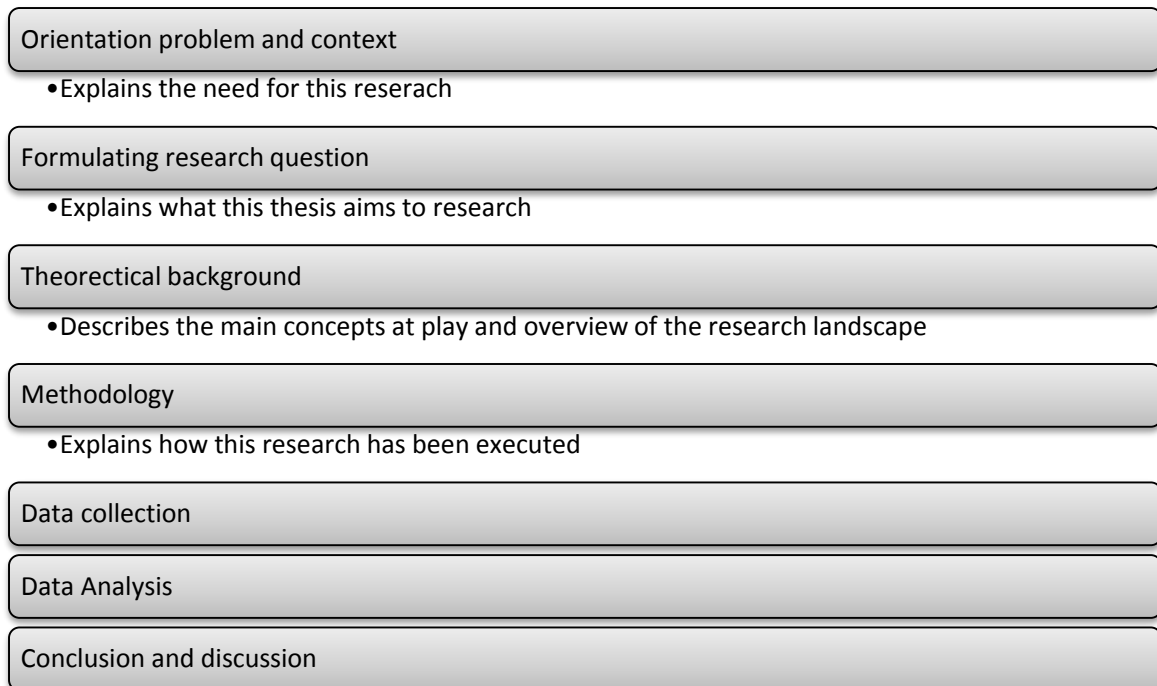


Figure 2: Research process



Source: BVC Holyoke

2. Theoretical background

This chapter provides an in-depth theoretical background regarding the main concepts of this research: disability, disability sport, and a demarcation of integration and inclusion. These concepts need to be clearly defined, since as Kröber (2008) states it, research has an interest in clarity of concepts. An overview of these concepts, as well as how they changed throughout the years provides the basis for the three assumptions underlying this research: Integration relates to the medical model of disability while inclusion relates to the social model of disability, and that inclusion is an ongoing process. After this chapter has explained the links between all concepts, measurement tools to measure participation are explained. Last, an overview of the research landscape, voluntary sport associations in the Netherlands, is provided.

2.1 Theoretical concepts underpinning this research

2.1.1 Disability

Disability is a complicated concept. The meaning given to the concept may vary considerably within a particular location and historic period (Buntinx, 2003). Since disability is often perceived as a socially sensitive subject (Jackson, et al., 2012), it is of utmost importance to clearly define the concept and provide some background.

2.1.1.1 Models of disability

Within the disability discourse, two models predominate: the medical and the social model. Until the eighties of the previous century, the predominant way of looking to people with disabilities was through a so-called medical lens (von Heijden, et al., 2013). The medical model explains disability

as a problem of the individual person. Under this model of disability, disabled people's inability to integrate in society is seen as a direct result of having an impairment and not as the result of features of society which can be changed. For example, if a wheelchair using person is unable to get into a building because of some steps, the medical model would suggest that this is because of the wheelchair, rather than the steps. The individual with a physical problem was seen as a victim, who deserves medical treatment or care (Silvers, 1998). Society played an important role in the way that it provided resources or institutions to treat or care people with disabilities (Brittain, 2004). This role was mostly embedded in charity and care. The Dutch government has taken the lead in building various institutions to cure or treat the people with disabilities, which actually placed them outside the society (van Haaften, 2010).

Throughout the years, the public perception started to shift towards the social model of disability. People started to believe in integration and participation of people with disabilities in "regular" society. The idea that disability is a problem of the individual person got rejected, the whole society is responsible for the integration of that person. People with disabilities were no longer seen as defective or inferior, but rather as valued, normal members of society (von Heijden, et al., 2013). A new, social model of disability emerged in the 1980's (Oliver, 1983). This model developed as a critique of the medical approaches to disability. Contrary to the medical view that social restrictions for disabled people are a consequence of a person's impairment, the social model argued that people with impairments were disabled by a social system, which placed barriers to their participation (Hughes & Paterson, 1997). Disability is seen as not an outcome of impairment, but as a social construct. As Shakespeare (1992, p. 40) argues, 'the achievement of the disability movement has been to break the link between our bodies and our social situation and to focus on the real cause of disability, discrimination and prejudice'. The social model makes a clear distinction between impairment and disability, they are seen as binary oppositions. The former refers to a physical dysfunction, whereas the latter refers to processes of social exclusion. The UPIAS (1976, pp. 3-4) has defined this distinction as follows:

Impairment: Lacking part or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body.

Disability: The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation that takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from the mainstream of social activities.

In the social model of disability, the body is interpreted synonymous with its impairment; it is defined in a purely biological term. It has no history; it is a 'timeless, ontological foundation' (Hughes & Paterson, 1997, p. 329). Impairment is therefore the opposite of disability; it is not a social construct.

The social model of disability has enabled the identification of a political strategy; barrier removal. If people with impairments are disabled by society, then these disabling barriers need to be dismantled, in order to promote the inclusion of people with impairments (Shakespeare & Watson, 2002). Public perception changed along the same line. All respondents in a research of Leegwater and Lubbinge (2005), agreed on the fact that people with a disability should be incorporated in society without any barriers.

Lately, the social model has also received criticism (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002; Davis, 2002; Mitchell & Snyder, 1997; Shakespeare & Watson, 2002). Corker and Shakespeare (2002) suggest that a post-modern view of disability is needed, that recognises and embraces the disability of all bodies. They argue that there is no qualitative difference between people with and without a disability, because we are all impaired. Shakespeare and Watson (2002) mention that this claim is not an empirical fact. They are not arguing that 'short-sightedness is equivalent to blindness, or that being unfit is similar to being paralysed' (2002, p. 27). Impairments vary extensively and so do the limitations people feel because of this impairment. Hence, impairment and disability cannot be seen as binary oppositions. Everyone has its limitations and everyone is vulnerable to more limitations, and will experience throughout the years a change in limitations, through the ageing process. Attempts to minimise or eliminate these limitations should be supported. Corker and Shakespeare furthermore suggest that the goal of disability studies should be 'the development of inclusive societies' (2002, p. 15). This relatively new view is often criticised for having left too many vacancies when looking to theory about equal opportunities (DePoy & Gilson, 2010). Furthermore, since this the application of post-modern theory to disability is relatively new, this had had little impact on research yet. Since this view has still too many vacancies left and lacks practical relevance yet, it will not be included in the rest of this research.

Concluding, within the literature a pattern can be discovered wherein the focus shifts from the individual person, towards the environment and society. Therefore, encouraging environmental factors gains a prominent place in this research towards inclusion.

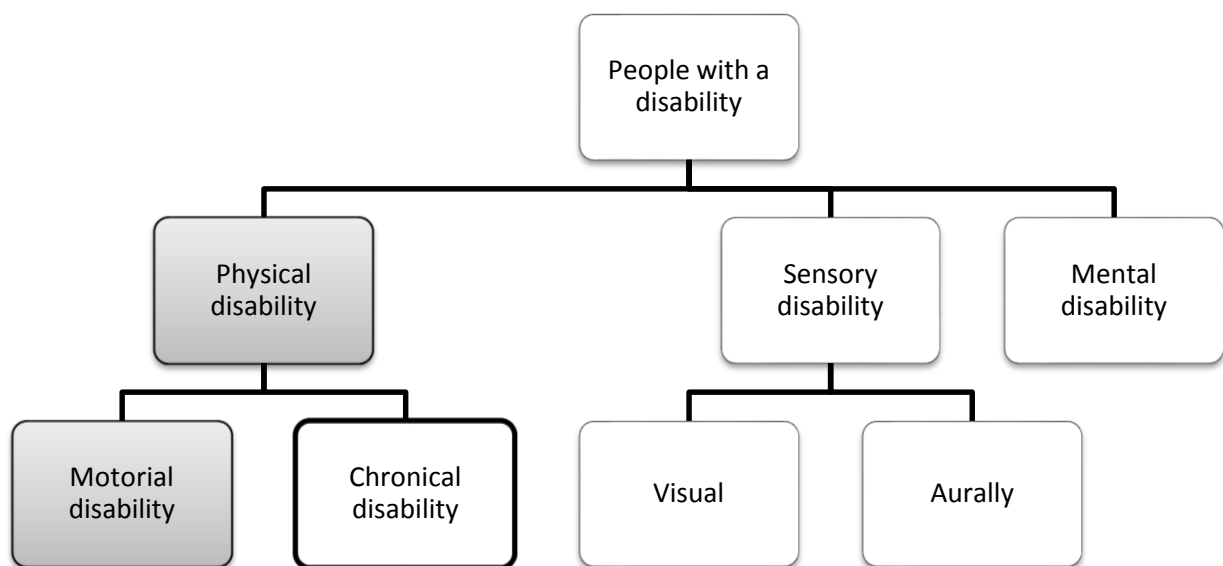
2.1.1.2 Disability in the Netherlands

In the previous paragraph it has become clear that various explanations of the concept disability exist. When the word disability is used in this research it is not meant to provide any normative judgement about the social construction of this concept. Disability refers to what is called impairment under the social model, a given fact of a lacking part or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body. However, this research uses the term disability to describe what is often called impairment. This because this research is focused on the Dutch landscape and disability is closest to the term (In Dutch: *gehandicapt*) that is most often used to describe this concept.

Especially because sport for people with impairment is called disability sport, it seems more suitable to use the concept disability.

However, the concept disability includes various categories. An often used-categorisation model of disabilities in the Netherlands is the categorisation model designed by Heslinga et al. (1972). This model is presented in figure 3.

Figure 3: Categorisation of disabilities



Source: (Heslinga, et al., 1972), adjusted by author

This research will be limited to people with a physical disability, because it is important that research becomes not too extensive (Kröber, 2008). The complete group of people with a disability is too large and differentiated to analyse as one homogenous entity. Placing boundaries prevents the research from going too broad (Yin, 2009). In reports from the Mulier Institute, people with a chronic illness are not defined as a specific category within people with physical disabilities (von Heijden, et al., 2013). When people face a physical disability due to a chronic illness, they will be labelled as person with physical disability. In line with this thought, this research defines a *disability as a physical, motorial disability*. In line with Depauw and Gavron (1995) and Zola (1993) the “people-first approach” is taken to refer to people with disabilities, instead of referring to the disabled people. They argue that through this approach, people with disabilities are above all seen as individual, instead of focusing on their disability. Besides the fact that the researcher believes that the people first approach does more justice to people with disabilities, this concept is also more in line with the concept of societal inclusion the Dutch government hopes to create.

The total number of people with a disability cannot easily be defined, because a disability is not centrally registered in the Netherlands (von Heijden, et al., 2013). Research from the Netherlands Institute for Social Research conducted in 2007 (de Klerk, 2007) came to the estimates presented in table 1. As can be seen, people with disabilities are as significant group in the Dutch society. Therefore, people with a disability are often called the largest minority group.

	Total (x1000)	6-19 year old	20-64 year old	65 + years
Motorial disability				
Light	1.871	98	1.239	533
Moderate + Severe	1.506	74	685	746

Table 1: Number of people with disabilities in the Netherlands

Source: (de Klerk, 2007)

2.1.2 Disability sport

The field of sports for individuals with various disabilities is commonly referred as disability sport and as such this is the term used in this research. Disability sport refers to the construct used by DePauw and Gavron (1995). They define disability sport as *sport uniquely designed for people with disabilities* (p. 6). This unique design may consist of the use of a specific technology by all participants, for example wheelchairs or ice sledges, or rule adjustments and requirements of certain equipment, such as blindfolds.

Reid (2003) considers four distinct phases in the evolution of disability sports: facility-based, service-based, supports-based, and empowerment and self-determination. The facility-based phase dominated in the beginning of the 20th century, when people with disabilities were placed in institutions outside society where physical activity was solely used as corrective physical therapy (Reid, 2003). Correction was the key concept of the philosophy of these institutions (Stiker, 1999). Reid's (2003) service-based paradigm gained ground after the Second World War, when "actual" disability sports developed. These sports developed in revalidation centres in England, as a response to the large amount of wounded ex-soldiers (Harvey, et al., 2015). The focus shifted from correction to rehabilitation. Disability sport gained increased attention and in 1948 the first International Stoke Mandeville Games were organised for athletes with disabilities in England. These Games are also recognised as the origin of the modern Paralympic Games (Bailey, 2008; Brittain, 2004; DePauw & Gavron, 1995; Howe, 2008; Nixon & Howard, 1989). In the following years, disability sports spread around, and also Dutch war veterans started to participate (Stokvis, 2010).

After the spread of disability sports to the Netherlands, a number of specific sport organisations (federation for deaf athletes, federation for blind athletes, etc.) for athletes with disabilities were created. Throughout the years, these federations merged into one umbrella organisation for disability sports focused on a physical disability, the NEBAS. Disability sports were organised according to a segregated “disabled-only” basis. The 1980 Paralympic games held in Arnhem and the World Championships and Games for the Disabled in Assen in 1990 are considered tipping points in societies’ mind-set (de Vries, 2016). National and international sport events for athletes with disabilities began to be less part of a specific program and more about “regular” competition (DePauw & Gavron, 1995). This led to the signing of the declaration of intent as described in the introduction. Instead of placing disability sports in specific sport federations, disability sports became integrated within the mainstream federations. These developments established the foundation for Reid’s (2003) support-based phase, since athletes with disabilities now had access to the same facilities (Howe, 2008, p. 28). The last phase Reid (2003) describes, empowerment, is related to the potential of organisational integration, fostering inclusion.

Concluding, the birth and development of disability sport is deeply rooted in the medical model of disability. However, disability sport has shifted towards the social model of disability, aiming the sport to become more inclusive. Figure 4 clearly depicts the various stages explained in this part. The upper left corner shows the exclusion of athletes with disabilities when they were placed out of society in institutions. The upper right corner depicts segregation, the stage when disability sports were organised in special distinct federations. The integration of disability sports within mainstream associations is depicted in the bottom left corner. Finally, the bottom right corner represents the complete inclusion of athletes with disabilities.

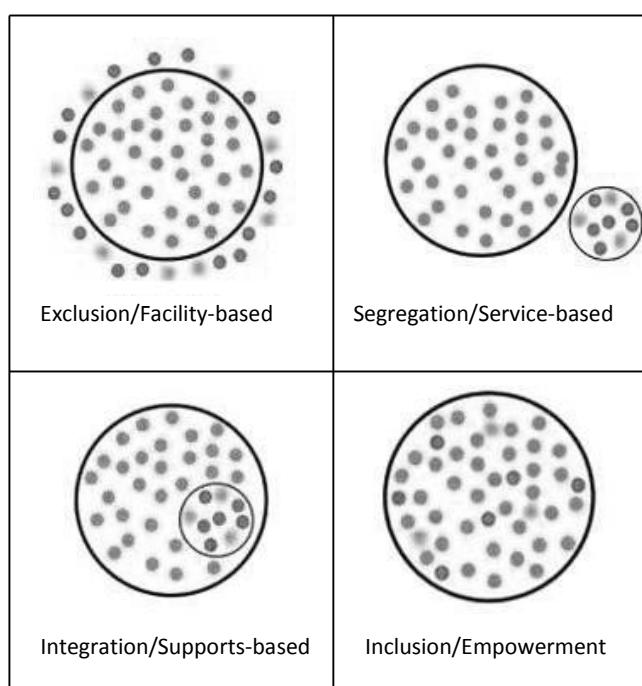


Figure 4: Development of disability sport

Source: Author

2.1.3 Demarcation integration and inclusion

Lots of words are used to describe athletes with disabilities being “in”, or “part of” ordinary environments, such as a sport associations. These words, mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion among others, are often used interchangeably. However, they have different meanings.

The principle of integration is related to the organisational integration of disability sport within mainstream associations. An integrated sport association not only provides mainstream sport activities, but also disability sports. Inclusion is seen as a final goal of the broader integration processes (Nixon, 2007; Schleien, et al., 1997) Elling and Knoppers (2005) distinguish between three different dimensions of inclusion: structural inclusion referring to (non) participation, cultural or symbolic inclusion through normative images, and affective inclusion through friendship networks. This research focuses on structural inclusion, the participation of athletes with disabilities in the mainstream association. This means that in an inclusive sport organisation, athletes with disabilities not just participate as athletes or participants, but are encouraged to participate in all levels of the organisation (Misener & Darcy, 2014).

Moreover, inclusion has a political nature, as has become clear in the introduction. Marginalisation and social exclusion are themes that take a prominent role in the decreasing welfare state. The inclusive potential of sport has become a policy buzz-word (Elling & Claringbould, 2004; Henry, et al., 2007). It has become more popular to use sports as a vehicle or tool with which to promote social integration of socially excluded groups or disadvantaged populations, such as ethnic

minorities and people with disabilities. Inclusion in sport can be linked to the broader concepts of Putnam's (1995) social capital. In his famous essay *Bowling Alone* (1995), Robert Putnam differentiates between bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital is used to refer to social networks between homogenous groups. Bonding capital can be valuable for oppressed and marginalised groups in society. However, various authors have emphasised the limitations of bonding capital for contributing to the wider inclusion agenda (Performance and Innovation Unit, 2002). Bridging capital on the other hand is what organisational inclusion aims to develop. Bridging social capital creates social networks between socially heterogeneous groups, such as athletes with and without disabilities. This form of social capital creates a common inclusive identity and cohesion. According to Putnam, participation in volunteering roles and other societal activities, such as participating in sport associations, creates a "social glue".

2.1.4 Theoretical foundations for using sport to foster inclusion

Two theories that are the basis for the understanding of the concepts of integration and inclusion are Henri Tajfel's (1978) social identity theory and Allport's (1954) contact theory. The social identity theory explains how people categorise themselves and others based on the group they belong to (e.g. social class, race, ability etc.). This categorisation led to the fact that people started to divide the world into "them" (out-group) and "us" (in-group). Social identity theory acknowledges the tendencies of the in-group to marginalise the out-group (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Individuals without disabilities tend to categorise or stereotype individuals with disabilities as one group (Williams, 1994). Groups depend on a shared sense of identity; it is not unusual that individuals identify primarily with people who are similar (Turner, 1987). The integration of disability sports within mainstream associations may change this tendency. The contact theory argues that under appropriate conditions, contacts between different groups will reduce prejudice and marginalisation. This theory supports the idea that participation in sport and the production of sport can provide important arenas for contacts and promotes inclusion, providing that contacts are positive (Saari, 2011). Consequently, inclusion only arises when an atmosphere is created wherein athletes with disabilities are encouraged to participate in all layers of the sport association, creating a group identity instead of the "us" versus "them" divide.

2.1.5 Connecting the dots

In this chapter, various concepts and theories have been introduced. In this part the connections between all concepts will be explained. Oliver (1996) argues that the concept of integration can be connected to the medical model, where disability is seen as an individual limitation or problem. Integration of disability sports is based on a feeling that athletes with disabilities need to be taken care of. Seeing organisational integration as just adding a new piece to the existing

association, without including them in all layers and demanding the same from them as from other athletes, could easily turn into assimilation (Downs, 2003). This model sustains the image of disabled people as dependent, socially dysfunctional, pathetic cuddly-athletes, relying on service providers. Being a distinct group within the association only creates bonding social capital. This will not create an atmosphere based on one group identity, but reinforce the “us” versus “them” divide. Therefore, using the medical paradigm does not lead to inclusion of athletes with disabilities.

Under the social model of disability, the disadvantages to participate faced by people with disabilities is seen as a consequence of poor attitudes or environmental difficulties in mainstream sport associations (Downs, 2003). An inclusive association is designed so that playing sports is just one component; athletes with disabilities are encouraged to actively participate in the whole association. Instead of being based on a feeling of care, inclusion is based on participation and equality. Athletes with disabilities have the same rights, but also obligations as other athletes. Being active in all layers of the sport association creates equal contacts between athletes with and without disabilities, thus creating binding capital. Active participation will eventually lead to inclusion.

Rappaport (1987) designed a set of assumptions that should guide research within an inclusion perspective. He argues that because inclusion takes place in the divergent nature of social issues, several ‘solutions’ are in place instead of just “one answer”. Moreover, he argues that the historical context in which a program or policy operates has an important influence on the outcomes. It is important to understand the dynamics before and after. Also the cultural context is important. This is in line with Saari (2011), who concludes that inclusion is an ongoing process. The process of integration has developed over the years, just as the process of inclusion. Inclusion is thus an unending process of increasing participation and supporting diversity. Concluding, this means an inclusive sport organisation, where athletes with disabilities not just participate as athletes or participants, but are encouraged to participate in all levels of the organisation, requires the creation of a supportive environment, this is linked to the research aim of examining the the **intention** of boards.

Concluding, this theoretical background results in the following three assumptions:

- The concept integration relates to the medical model, based on care and cure.
- The concept inclusion relates to the social model, based on participation and equality.
- Inclusion is an unending process of increasing participation and supporting diversity.

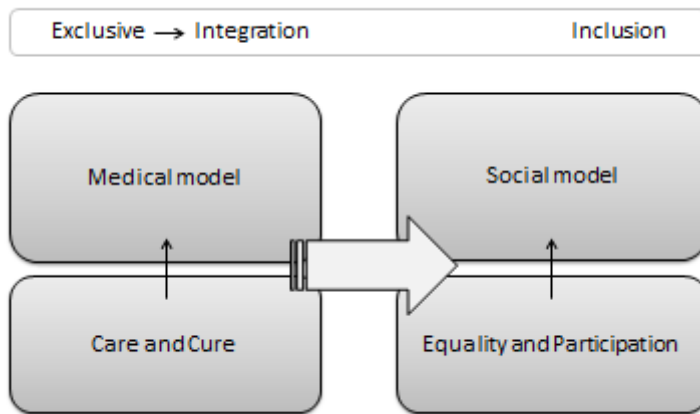


Figure 5: The process of inclusion

Source: author

2.2 Examining participation and inclusion

Participation has captured the imagination and hopes of many policy makers and might be seen as a new buzzword (Cornwall, 2008; Jochum, et al., 2005; White, 1996). As defined in the previous part, participation is a prerequisite for inclusion. However, participation can take place in a wide range of activities and through diverse forms, identified in different bodies of literature. Therefore, it is important to define what exactly is meant with participation in this research and the different forms of participation in Dutch sport associations.

2.2.1 Benefits of participation

Coster and Khetani (2008) differentiate between activity and participation. According to them, activity is simply the execution of a task, within the individual domain. Participation on the other hand is seen as part of the societal domain, engagement is a central concept in participation. Similarly, Pattie et al. (2003) mention that within associational activities, one can differentiate between (passive) membership in the association and (active) participation in the running of an organisation and volunteering. This research focuses on encouraging active participation, as this is seen as a prerequisite for inclusion.

Research on the participation of athletes with disabilities has mainly focused on health benefits, embedded in passive participation (Cooper, et al., 1999; Motl, 2010; Rimmer, et al., 2004); However, Albrecht (1992) captures one of the main problems of this overemphasis on health benefits in his concept “disability businesses”. He argues that this “disability business” is interested in reinforcing the dependency of athletes with disabilities to keep them in need of the services, instead

of including them. Therefore, it is important to look at participation in multiple dimensions. In line with Albrecht's argument, focusing only on health benefits can be seen as a form of integration, providing a service to athletes with disabilities. Looking at participation in multiple dimensions on the other hand, relates to mutual support and inclusion.

There are four reasons why active participation in general is often encouraged. First, by involving individuals in decisions that actually affect them, participation is seen as a way of strengthening the legitimacy of the organisation, and may attract new members (Beetham, et al., 2008; Cornwall, 2008; Creasy, 2007). Second, participation is considered a tool for providing services that are better suited to people's needs and interests (Duffy, 2007; Leadbeater, 2004; Parker, 2007). Furthermore, participation is associated with personal benefits for the people who are active. Those benefits range from increased satisfaction to personal development and growth in self-esteem (Barnes & Shardlow, 1997; Popay, et al., 2007). Lastly and most important to this research, it is assumed that involving people in local decision-making processes can build social cohesion and social capital, and foster inclusion (Blake, et al., 2008; Foot, 2009). A research specifically focused on Dutch sport associations, also found that association that include all social groups are in democratic decision making and the production of sport, depict higher scores regarding quality and social cohesion among members (Elling, et al., 2011).

2.2.2 Depth of participation

Other scholars have not solely divided between active and passive membership, but developed typologies that explore the "depth" of participation. Arnstein (1969) was among the first to recognise that the word "participation" has a broad spectrum of meanings. She designed a spectrum of participation and involvement to illustrate how citizens could be included in political processes, where one extreme is no participation at all, whereas the other extreme refers to extensive democratic power sharing. Her spectrum of participation is depicted in figure 6.

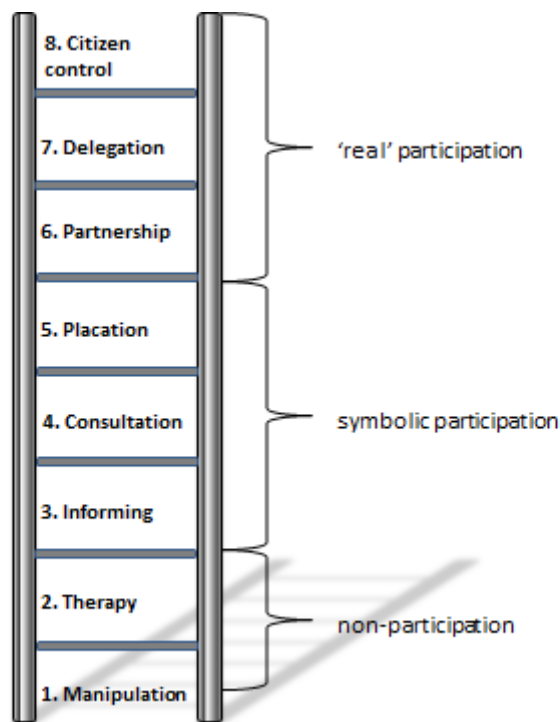


Figure 6: Arnstein's spectrum of participation

Source: (Arnstein, 1969)

The first two steps, non-participation, describe a status where members are not able to participate in planning or conducting programs, this step enables power holders to 'educate' or 'cure' the members (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217). The next level, symbolic participation or tokenism describes a status wherein the members can express their opinions, to a certain extent, but no assurance is guaranteed that their concerns and ideas will actually be taken into account (Arnstein, 1969, p. 219). The last category is real participation. In this category, the responsibilities of members and power holders are shared, or depict a situation in which members achieve dominance in decision-making authority.

Arnstein's model was further developed by Roger Hart (1992) and adapted to measure how a minority group, in his case children, are enabled to participate in an organisation (figure 7). Throughout the years, many other participation ladders and models have been designed, and each of these has been adapted many times as people alter the wording, add or remove steps, or combine the best of several models together². Hart's ladder of participation illustrates slightly different degrees of participation than Arnstein's levels. Still, the lowest three steps can be considered non-participation, whereas the upper two steps can be considered complete participation, where everyone can initiate

² Providing an overview of these different models is beyond the scope of this research, but for an overview of all models of participation: sees Creative Commons (2012).

decisions. In Hart's model, the highest step is referred to as mainstreaming. In this step there is a focus of recognizing the value of young people and working to achieve equity. Similarly, both ladders define three broader categories of participation: non-participation, symbolic participation (tokenism), and real participation.

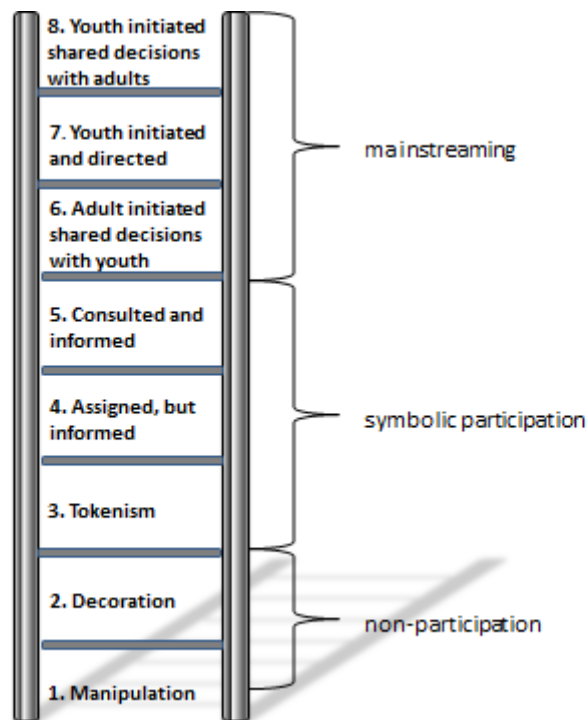


Figure 7: Participation ladder Roger Hart

Source: (Hart, 1992)

These ladders are also considered a useful tool to research how athletes with disabilities are integrated and included in mainstream sport associations. The lowest step, non-participation, is related to the concept of integration. This step describes a status where athletes with disabilities are not participating (passive athletes). The mainstream association provides a service to the athletes with disabilities. Attendance of athletes with disabilities might be used as a form of decoration, demonstrating to the outside world that the association is considered with the engagement of athletes with disabilities, without actually involving them (decoration). On the other hand the highest step, real participation, is related to inclusion. In this step the athletes with disabilities are completely part of the mainstream association and initiate and execute decisions just as much as the other athletes. This can be in the form of shared decision making or in the form of decision completely initiated and directed by the athletes with disabilities. Between those steps, there is a step of symbolic participation. This step refers to a situation wherein the athletes with disabilities can express their opinions, for example

in the GAM, but there is no assurance that their ideas are taken into consideration (athlete informed), or a situation where athletes with disabilities are only consulted for specific issues (athlete consulted). Furthermore, these ladders show that successful participation is an ongoing process that contributes to building a culture of inclusion. Hence, the participation ladders represent the three underlying assumptions of this research. A participation ladder adjusted to the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities is found in figure 8.

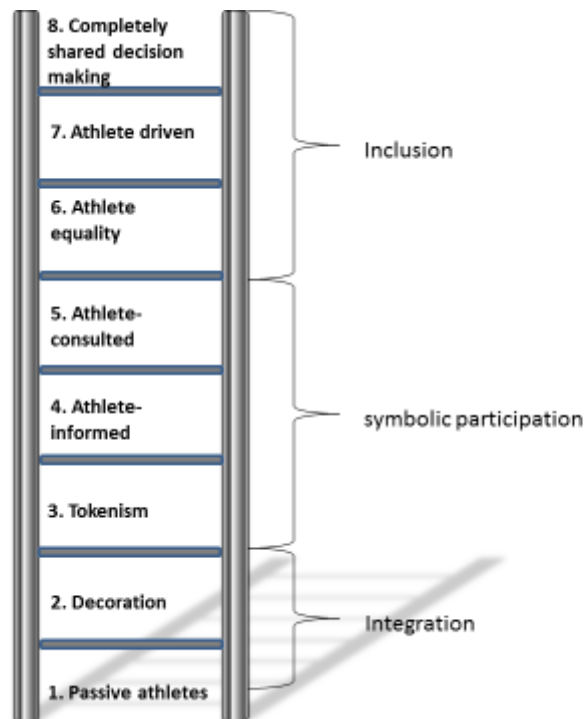


Figure 8: Participation in mainstream associations

Adjusted from Hart (1992) by author.

Again other researchers have designed stratification designs to measure the depth of participation (Dornhoff, 1990; McDermott, 1991). Sage (1998), was the first one to link a stratification design to sport. He has stratified participation into a working, middle, and executive class. In a sport association, working class is represented by the passive members (athletes), whereas the middle class correlates to coaches, trainers and committee members. The executive class can then be seen as the board of the sport association. Koen Breedveld, managing director of the Mulier Institute, divides participation in sport associations according to a relatively similar onion skin model. The outer layer depicts playing sports in general, not in a sport association. The next layer consists of passive members in a sport association. The third layer is being a volunteer in the sport association, whereas the core consists of being a board member of the sport association. Additionally, Stebbins (1982) differentiates

between hobbyism (playing sports), volunteerism (being a volunteer) and amateurism (being a board member).

Fay (1999) argues that in order to create accuracy and depth in the analysis of a sport association with respect to inclusion, one should examine integration of athletes with disabilities along the participation ladder as well as in the different stratification levels. Therefore, the adjusted ladder and Fay's stratification ladders serve as a guidance to examine the **realised** participation and inclusion.

2.3 Portraying the research landscape - Sport associations

To increase the participation of athletes with disabilities and foster inclusion, sport suppliers play a crucial role. Sport suppliers are all organisations that provide sport possibilities. Not only sport associations, but also riding schools, swimming pools, fitness centres and other organisations that are not part of a federation are a sport supplier. Nonetheless, in the Dutch landscape sport associations have been the dominant form in which sport activities have been organised (van Bottenburg, 2001). Therefore, van Bottenburg (2007) has typified the Netherlands as an "association country". In line with an article of van der Roest, van Kalmthout and Meijs (2016), this research uses the word association to describe what also could have been called organisation or club. This because this research is focused on the Dutch landscape and association is closest to the term (In Dutch: *vereniging*) that is used in Netherlands to describe these organisations.

2.3.1 Voluntary run sport associations

Sport associations in the Netherlands are run as voluntary organisations (Meijs, 1997). For research purposes it has been suggested that a sound definition of the term association is needed (van Ingen, 2009). As mentioned before, this research focuses on sport organisations on the local level, instead of national sport bodies. Another characteristic of these voluntary organisations is that the goal cannot be to make profit (Carver, 1990; Enjolras, 2002; van Ingen, 2009). Voluntary organisations can make profit, but profits have to be reinvested in the organisation to benefit the members. Furthermore, one of the most important characteristics of voluntary organisations is that they are, to a large extent, independent from state or market forces. Power within these associations is based on a member democracy (Enjolras, 2002; Heinemann, 1999; Ibsen & Seippel, 2010; van Bottenburg, 2007; Wicker & Breuer, 2011). According to Cafferata (1982) and Merton (1976), this democracy results in a decision-making process where every member holds equal opportunity in participation. Finally, as the name already reveals, these associations rely on the voluntary participation of their members (van der Roest, et al., 2016). Participation in the association is a matter of course and quite simply part of being a member of the sport association (Schlesinger, et al., 2013, p. 36). Garner and Garner (2011) suggest that the relationship between the non-profit organisation and the volunteer is not just mutually beneficial but also highly volatile. Pearce (1993) stated that volunteers have weaker commitment to

their organisation than employees. A volunteer exercises a greater degree of choice, such as whether to attend a meeting, than one would as employee. Volunteers do not have to sacrifice pay if they decide to leave their position. Therefore, sport associations lack the mechanism to control volunteers and members as their for-profit counterparts have. Based on the previous four characteristics, Smith's (2000) definition captures the whole essence of sport associations:

locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal non-profit (i.e., voluntary) groups that manifest substantial voluntary altruism as groups and use the associational form of organization and, thus, have official memberships of volunteers who perform most, and often all, of the work/activity done in and by these non-profits. (p. 7)

2.3.2 Managing voluntary participation

The management of volunteers, in the case of sport associations the board's encouragement of members to participate, should be contingent on a variety of factors. The first factor to consider is the organisational goal dimension. Meijs (1997) has described three types of volunteer organisations based on their organisational goal dimension as follows:

1) Mutual support organisations: these organisations exist because a group of people who are connected through a certain issue, for example sport, unites. Mutual support organisations are focused on mutual support and creating shared value. "For members, by members" (In Dutch: *voor de leden, door de leden*), is a typical phrase for mutual support organisations (van Bottenburg, 2007). **2) Service delivery organisations:** Clients of these organisations are not actively part of the organisation. Service delivery organisations are often highly professional and run by professionals, and have a strong customer orientation. In these organisations, sport participants are seen as consumers **3) Campaigning organisations:** these organisations aim to convince the world of a certain belief, where it recruits volunteers who support its cause. The actual organisation of these types of organisations is most of the time not an issue.

The characteristics ascribed to sport associations, creating something together, supporting fellow members including you, are common for mutual support organisations (Meijs, 2008). To sustain these organisations, it is important that they have well-working recruitment and socialisation processes among their members (Netting, et al., 2005; van der Roest, et al., 2016). For these organisations, active participation of the members is very important. It should be noted though, that a non-profit organisation is not necessarily bound to one specific type and often shows a combination. Nonetheless, Handy (1988) mentioned that one should be aware of the contradictions between the organizational types.

Rochester (1999) categorised volunteer associations based on the relationship between paid staff and volunteers. He describes the Dutch sport associations as a member/activist model. In this model, volunteers hold all positions in the organisation, contrary to the other models he defined where both volunteers and paid staff fill the positions. This model prevails among groups of individuals banding together to support a common goal, as is the case in Dutch sport associations (Meijs & Karr, 2004; Rochester, 1999). Within the member/activist model, “peer management” must manage volunteers, because of the non-existing hierarchy (Borkman, 1999). Moreover, in this model a clear distinction between passive and active members in the association can be made. However, while volunteers are very important to Dutch sport associations, a research of the NOC*NSF shows that the second most pressing bottleneck for associations is a shortage of staff and volunteers (Hulsebos, et al., 2015).

Elaborating on the previous two categorisations, based on organisational goal and relationship between paid staff and volunteers, two different management models are proposed, (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001; Meijs & ten Hoorn, 2008). Sport associations, as being mutual support organisations completely run by volunteers, necessitate a membership management style, contrary to the programme management style. In this management style, it is the responsibility of the volunteer manager to work collaboratively with volunteers to develop tasks that meet the social needs of the individual and the group (ibid). Membership management is characterised by a strong organisational culture, a high level of homogeneity among members and high volunteer involvement (Meijs & ten Hoorn, 2008). The inclusion of a new, “different” category, athletes with disabilities, thus seems to require extra attention from the board, since this group has not been part of the organisational culture before, decreases the homogeneity of the members, and ask for high volunteer involvement while athletes with disabilities often feel hindered to participate. This leads to the next paragraph, the changes in sport associations.

2.3.3 Changes and trends

Few would dispute that voluntary sport associations have not changed over the last couple of decades. Various researchers have suggested a shift among members of sport associations towards a more consumerist attitude (Bodet, 2009; Enjolras, 2002; Ibsen & Seippel, 2010). Ibsen and Seippel (2010, p. 605) describe how people are changing from collectively organising sport (mutual support organisation) towards being a member that solely pays a fee in return for a service (service delivery). This trend causes consumerism, professionalism and individualism of members. In Dutch sport, the idea that members are becoming consumers is widely spread (Meijs & ten Hoorn, 2008, p. 39). According to Meijs and ten Hoorn (2008), this has resulted in a pressure on voluntary sport associations to change their organisation from a mutual support model towards a model of service delivery. Van

Bottenburg (2007) also mentions the growing involvement of the Dutch government and national and local institutions as a factor that pushes associations to a service delivery organisation. Van der Roest et al. (2015) acknowledge this issue as well; they argue that national sport organisations urge local associations to become more flexible and service oriented. This is part of the broader change that sport associations are expected to take on a larger societal role (Boessenkool, et al., 2011). In general, this has led to the fact that sport associations have become more open. Sport associations are encouraged to develop more flexible sport possibilities and sport possibilities for specific target groups, people with disabilities and the elderly for example (Stokvis, 2010).

The integration of disability sport in regular associations can also be seen as part of this push towards a service delivery organisation. The push of the Dutch government and institutions, to become more flexible and develop new activities, has led various sport associations to develop possibilities to participate in disability sport within the mainstream association (NOC*NSF, 2013). More and more municipalities, local governments and institutions have coupled their subsidies to the provision of societal activities that go beyond mainstream sport activities. Associations that do not increase their societal role encounter negative financial effects (van Kalmthout, et al., 2015). The fact that decreasing subsidies are one of the most pressing financial bottlenecks defined by sport associations (Hulsebos, et al., 2015), might be an extra pressure to increase the societal role of an association. Van der Roest, van Kalmthout and Meijs have defined 'the introduction of new sports and play activities' as an indicator for the shift towards consumerism. This because the pressure on voluntary sport associations to widen their activities is 'one of the most important pressures that are part of the consumerist discourse' (2016, p. 9).

The consumerist focus towards activities that are best for individual members could be contrary to the "collective action" that is needed to run voluntary sport associations (Enjolras, 2009). Van Bottenburg (2007) suggests that switching towards the service delivery model strengthens passive membership, and decreases active participation. Van der Roest, Kalmthout and Meijs (2016) also suggest that it might be harder to socialise new members in the association and inspire them to become involved and participate in a flexible, service delivery organisation. Schlesinger et al. (Schlesinger, et al., 2013) conclude that this possibly means that members in a service delivery organisation might be less inclined to participate in democratic decision-making processes and volunteering in the association.

Although incorporating disability sports within a regular association may be seen as an indicator of an association moving towards the service delivery model, there is little evidence that sport associations in the Netherlands are indeed adapting to a consumerist attitude (van der Roest, 2015; van der Roest, et al., 2016). However, the consumerist logic of service delivery organisations has gained some ground. Elling explains as expert in the research of ter Meer (2013), that this is most often

the case in large associations. In associations that have incorporated new or flexible activities, service delivery often exists side by side with the mutual support organisation (van der Roest, 2015). Associations that incorporated new or flexible activities, saw no decrease in level of participation among its members (van der Roest, et al., 2016). Hence, improved flexibility and providing new services does not imply that members in general are becoming passive consumers. Nonetheless, these researches only proved that the number of volunteers is not decreasing. No insights in the character of volunteerism in these associations are offered. The association could simply attract more volunteers to provide the new services.

Concluding, disability sports and its athletes that are integrated within a mainstream sport association, are integrated in a predominant mutual support organisation. For these organisations, active participation of the members is very important. Integration in all layers of the sport association can bring advantages for both the sport associations (more staff and volunteers) and for society at large (social inclusion). However, the literature provides no knowledge about the inclusion of athletes with disabilities. It could be that disability sport exists as a form of service delivery, existing side by side with the mutual support organisation (van der Roest, 2015). If the sport association uses a medical lens to look at disability sports, seeing athletes with disabilities as pathetic, dependent athletes, incorporating disability sports will probably be limited to providing a service, only leading to integration. On the other hand, if a social paradigm is applied, passive participation in sports will only be a part of the integration. The athletes with disabilities have the same rights and obligations than other athletes and will probably be encouraged to participate in the association. Therefore, the reasons to integrate disability sports are deemed important in this research. The challenge to increase participation is mainly the responsibility of the board, which will be explained in the next paragraph.

2.3.4 The role of the board

As voluntary sport associations are coping with different trends and changes, the main actor responsible for dealing with these challenges is the board. The board is elected by the members as the leaders of the association for a certain time period and should serve the common interest of the members. Andrews et al. (2010) argue that civic associations, such as sport associations, see it as their goal to improve society by encouraging active participation and volunteering. Decision-making in these associations is decentralised and done by voluntary elected leaders. As stated before, one of the most important characteristics of voluntary sport associations is the process of democracy through a general assembly of members (GAM). In this GAM, every member holds equal opportunity in participation and influence, because decisions are based on equal representation: one man, one vote. Every member can visit the GAM and influence decision-making and initiate ideas.

The formal structure of democracy in voluntary sport associations is not so self-evident in practise (van Bottenburg, 2007). Expert van der Roest describes the structure of voluntary sport associations in the research of ter Meer (2013) as 'rather odd', a group of people is often very influential in the association. In general, the active participants are also the ones interested and influential in the policy of the association (van Bottenburg, 2007). This form of democracy often faces the problem of underrepresentation of members (Kreutzer, 2009). Boards should be aware that sports have the ability to include people, but can also easily make distinction between categories based on gender, race and ability among others. When active members are largely from the same background, it is assumed that they only focus on a few motives for people to become a member, performance sports over recreational sports or mainstream sports over disability sports for example (Anthonissen & Boessenkool, 1998). This can result in a large distance between the board and certain groups.

Warren (2001, p. 104) argues that those groups of active members tend to become a self-selective, homogenous group. This is mainly due to the fact that new volunteers are often recruited within the networks of active members, the so-called old boys' network (Anthonissen & Boessenkool, 1998; Knoppers & Bouman, 1998; Janssens, 1999). This old boys' network depicts the overrepresentation of white, heterosexual, older men (Janssen, et al. 2003; van der Meulen 2003). Their power is maintained through intentional stratification of individuals and groups within an association. Such a self-selective, homogenous group does not foster inclusion, since inclusion has been defined as participating throughout all levels of the association. If this is the case, the newly incorporated disability sports can easily become a form of service delivery within a mutual support organisation, being limited to integration rather than inclusion.

Although, the GAM is formally the highest identity in the association, the board has still a lot power in deciding on the direction the association follows, the GAM has more a verifying role, according to van der Roest in ter Meer (2013). Board are hierarchical in the way that they can delegate responsibilities to committees, standing between the board and the members. The board is also seen as a critical factor to be able to facilitate an inclusive organisation (Carr-Ruffino, 1996; Esty, et al., 1995). Hence, inclusion in the sport association requires active and committed involvement of the board. Therefore, this research considers how boards can create a culture in which everyone is valued, and athletes with disabilities are encouraged to take on active, voluntary roles within the association, paving the way towards inclusion. Nonetheless, boards lack the autonomy to control and manage people as is common in for-profit organizations.

This part has provided a context and explains the developments and changes that take place within voluntary sport associations. Because providing disability sport is seen a part of these developments, the **context** of the sport associations needs to be examined in this research.



3. Methodology

Source: TTC Asterix

The research methodology that is used for this study will be discussed extensively in this chapter. This chapter explains why the research methodology is appropriate for the research questions of this study. The structure of this methodology section is as follows. The next section identifies the work's research objectives, followed the research challenges and eventually the main research question and four relevant sub-questions. In the research design, qualitative research and the use of an explorative study are explained. Consequently, this work uses the multiple case study method, allowing for more than one sport association to be studied. The extensive theoretical background and portrayal of the research landscape, desk research, and actual interviews with club representatives serve as the primary data collection methods in researching the phenomenon.

3.1 Research objectives

This work so far discussed the theoretical background of the concepts used in this research and provided an overview of the research landscape. It has become clear that the Dutch government assumes that the process of organisational integration will eventually lead to societal inclusion. In an inclusive sport association, athletes with disabilities not just participate as athletes or participants, but are encouraged to participate in all levels of the organisation. Sport associations in the Netherlands are mainly governed as a mutual support organisation, where active participation of the members is very important. However, voluntary sport associations are changing due to pressures to take on a larger societal role and to become more flexible. Integrating disability sport can be seen as a form of service delivery, where members merely take the form of passive consumers. A proactive stand of the board towards inclusion is deemed necessary, to create inclusion in the sport association.

This work aims to research the inclusion of athletes with disabilities. The research is threefold. First, as has been described in the theoretical background, the **intention** of the association is important. As stated in part 2.1.5, in order to be able to progress from integration to inclusion, a supportive environment is required. Therefore, the first aim is to explore the intention of the associations. Do they see athletes with disabilities merely as passive athletes to whom they have to provide a service (medical model), for example due to increasing societal pressures, or do they think active participation is the goal (social model)? As stated before, a shift is suggested from being a complete mutual support organisation, towards a service delivery organisation. This **contextual** factor cannot be ignored. Hence, integrating disability sport in the mainstream association can take form of a service within a mutual support organisation (figure 9A), or as completely integrated in a mutual support organisation (figure 9B). Figure 9A relates to the first assumption of this research; that the concept of integration is embedded in the medical model of service and care. Figure 9B on the other hand represents the second assumption; that the concept of inclusion is embedded in the social model of participation and equality. Figure 9 depicts both possibilities and the relationships that are in place. This aims to partly cover the absence of a theoretical framework, due to the non-sufficient information on this topic.

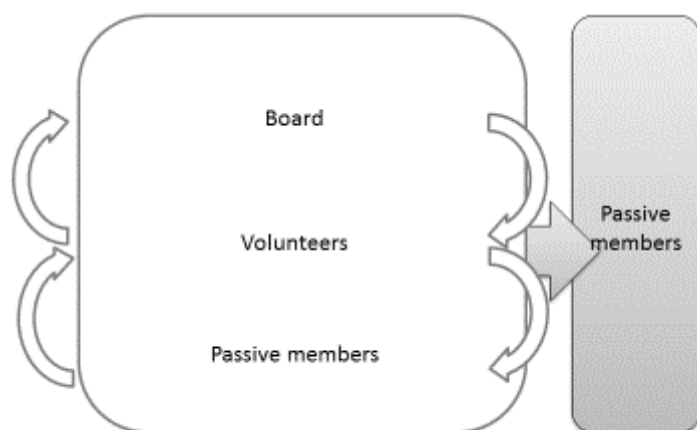


Figure 9A: Assumption 1

Integration: Athletes with disabilities are only seen as passive members. The mainstream organisation is organised as a mutual support organisation that provides disability sport as a service. The arrows in the mutual support organisation represent both the power of the GAM (bottom-up) as the power of the board (top-down). The arrow directing to the different group represent the service provided. The athletes with disabilities are only considered as passive members.

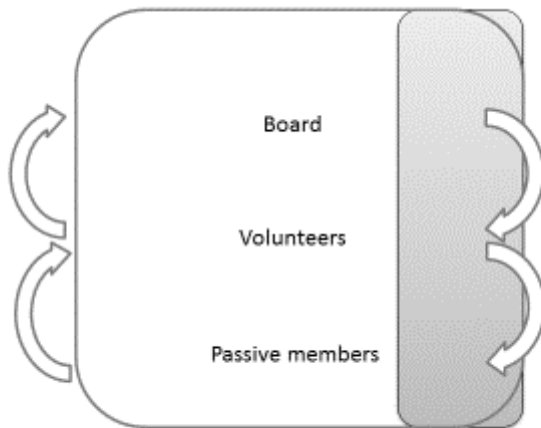


Figure 9B: Assumption 2

Inclusion: Disability sport is completely included in the mainstream association. Athletes with disabilities are participating in all levels of the organisation. The arrows still represent the power of the GAM as well of the board. However, the arrow representing the service is not present anymore, because disability sport is not seen as providing a service, but as part of the association.

Second, this research addresses the question: what have the associations **realised** so far? How are athletes with disabilities included regarding the participation ladders and the stratification levels? Do they think it is possible to encourage further participation or is that not deemed necessary? This leads to the last part: what strategies are boards pursuing to **further increase participation**? The major research objective of this research is to generate good practises how boards of voluntary sport associations in the Netherlands can foster inclusion of athletes with disabilities in their sport associations. These practises are called good practises instead of the more common term “best practises”. As Meijs and Ten Hoorn (2008, p. 29) state is: ‘there is simply no best way of organising volunteers in volunteer run organizations. Volunteering, volunteers and the way they are organised and managed differs from context to context. Especially in such a divergent concept of inclusion, there is no one best practise (Rappaport, 1987). Most of all, inclusion is seen as a continuous process, the third assumption of this research.

3.2 Research questions

Based on the research objectives, it is possible to narrow down the main research objective to more specific sub-questions. This facilitates answering the main question more clearly. To restate the main research question:

How can boards of local sport associations in the Netherlands where integration has taken place, increase active participation and eventually foster inclusion of athletes with disabilities?

In part 1.4 was already explained that the research question is threefold; intention, realisation, and further increase. While the latter, further increase, is incorporated in the main question. The other two parts are answered through sub questions. Dividing the main research into different sub-questions allows for a more structured approach, allowing answering the main research question with the right perspective and within its context. Furthermore, the sub questions provide the possibility to research the main question in its (historical) context.

The three sub-questions have been defined as follows:

1. How have voluntary sport associations changed in the last years, which influenced participation and the role of the association? (**context**)
2. How has the process of organisational integration been initiated and executed in the voluntary sport associations? (**intention**)
3. How are athletes with disabilities participating in the association and is that considered sufficient? (**realisation**)

These three questions will provide the foundation to develop good practises to **encourage further participation and inclusion**.

3.3 Research design

The objective of this research to gain more insight in the inclusion of athletes with disabilities in mainstream associations, and how boards can encourage participation, and inclusion. In order to answer this question, an exploratory study is conducted. A qualitative research approach fits this research question best, since, as Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 402) state, 'qualitative research investigates the why and how, not just what, where, when'. Qualitative research allows for a more explorative character rather than a conclusive one, it provides a holistic understanding, rather than testing a hypothesis in a standardized way. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth interpretative analysis of a single phenomenon, highly suitable for the research on the inclusion of athletes with disabilities in

mainstream, voluntary associations in the Netherlands. Furthermore, qualitative research also takes the unique character of phenomena that occur in the social world into account (Bluhm, et al., 2011), which is highly applicable to the inclusion of athletes with disabilities. Since there is a lack of previous studies and theories researching this topic, a qualitative method is further necessitated (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

A drawback often mentioned of qualitative research is that it is hard to draw conclusions, as it is not based on statistical analysis or large data sets. Moreover, Snape and Spencer (2003) argue that qualitative research methods are less straight-forward than its counterpart, quantitative research. There is no single way of doing qualitative research, since it depends on the purposes of the researches, nature of the research methods used, characteristics of the participants, and the environment in which the research originates. In-depth interviews for example, are expected to generate different results than focus groups and discourse analysis. This research however does not aim to generalise finding but is an attempt to find general good practises. A qualitative study is therefore appropriate as it provides ample opportunity to create an in-depth understanding of the practises at hand.

3.4 Research method

To answer the research question, a multiple case study method will be used, allowing for an in-depth analysis of multiple cases regarding the issue. A case study entails the intensive and detailed analysis of a single case (Stake, 1995). The intention of case study research is proposed as to gain an in-depth understanding of the concerned phenomenon in a real-life setting (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Furthermore, Darke et al. (1998) suggest that the use of a case study is useful in newer, less well-developed research areas, particularly where examination of the context and dynamics of the phenomenon are important, as is this case in this research. Furthermore, Yin (2003) came up with a rule of thumb for the question whether a case study method should be considered. It should be considered when 1) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions; 2) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of the study objects; and 3) you want to cover the context because it is relevant to the phenomenon. As already described, this research aims to explore the question how athletes with disabilities participate in local, mainstream associations and how boards can increase this participation. Neither the behaviour of the athletes with disabilities, nor the behaviour of the board members can be manipulated. Last, the context is highly important in this study. The associations and actions taken by the association cannot be decoupled from the developments and trends described earlier. All these factors further validate the use of a case study method.

It is important to keep in mind that even though case studies allow for complex causal mechanisms, their conclusions are narrower and only tentative, being weak in proving external validity. Concrete conclusion are only possible in case studies where there is a controlled before and

after comparison in which only one variable changes, or when the cases are similar except for one variable (George & Bennett, 2005). Furthermore, case study methods can also involve a trade-off between the goal of attaining theoretical parsimony, richness, and keeping the number of cases manageable. Parsimonious theories are stated in general terms and do rarely provide rich in-depth analysis of particular cases (King, et al., 1994). Richness of particular cases leads on the other hand often to less general claims. In-depth research of a phenomenon cannot be done for a large amount of cases, resulting in a trade-off. Given the fact that this study has an exploratory character and aims to find good practises instead of testing general theories, a case study method still is a highly appropriate research method.

A multiple case study, the variant that will be used in this research, includes two or more observations of the same phenomenon (Yin, 2009). A multiple case study method enables replication, whereby multiple cases are used to confirm constructs and propositions (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2007). Multiple cases offer a robust framework for data collection (Remenyi, et al., 1998), and are a source of explanatory data to feed subsequent generalisations about the how and why of the cases explored. Multiple case studies increase the explanatory power of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Additionally, using findings from a variety of sources in a case study context can significantly contribute to (further) development of theory and concepts (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2003).

In line with the epistemological assumption of the research design, the case study follows an interpretive approach, facilitated by the explorative character that this research adopts through a multiple case study. Regarding the cases themselves, this research considers local, mainstream sport associations as a case. Within each case, main unit of analysis is the inclusion of athletes with disabilities and the approaches taken by the board to foster this inclusion. The board of the association serves as the actor and initiator.

3.4.1 Case selection

The study population clarifies who is eligible to participate in this study and can often be determined based on the research question or the research purpose (Hennink, et al., 2010). As such, this research will be focused on local, mainstream sport associations that have integrated disability sport in their association in the Netherlands, as already stated in the research question. Particularly the board's strategies to increase the participation of athletes with disabilities in these organisations are of interest. The NOC*NSF (2015) annually publishes a list called "everyone can play sports" (In Dutch: *iedereen kan sporten*). However, not all disability sports are suitable for this research.

First of all, sports are identified in the list of NOC*NSF as being suitable for athletes with a motorial, visual, audial, and/or mental disability. As explained in the theoretical background, this research has limited disability to motorial disability. Sports that are not marked as suitable to a

motorial disability are thus not taken into consideration. Second, sports that are still part of Gehandicapsport Nederland, that are not integrated in mainstream federations, are not applicable to this research. This category comprises for example of wheelchair rugby and sledge hockey. Third, in the theoretical framework, disability sport has been defined as sport uniquely designed for people with disabilities. Therefore, sports that can be played without any adjustments and have always been completely integrated are excluded as well, for example archery. Last, for some sports the organisational integration has mainly taken place on the national, federation level. For some sports that is because the sport is rarely played in local, mainstream sport associations, such as skiing. For other sports, the recreational participation is still organised in categorical sports associations or in separate foundations. This is mostly the case with swimming activities, equestrian sport and dancing (Notté, et al., 2011). For those four reasons, six sport disciplines have been selected for this research. Hence, the study population comprises the local, mainstream sport associations that have integrated disability sports of those six sport disciplines:

Sport	Type	Indoor/Outdoor	Size
Basketball	Team	Indoor	Small
Cycle racing	Individual	Outdoor	Large
Fencing	Semi-individual	Indoor	Small
Table tennis	Semi-individual	Indoor	Small
Tennis	Semi-individual	Mainly outdoor	Large
Volleyball	Team	Indoor	Large

Table 2: Selected sport disciplines

These six sport disciplines furthermore represent all different association types, as defined by von Heijden et al. (2013). Individual (1), semi-individual (3) and team sports (3), indoor (4) and outdoor (2) sports, and different sizes of the sports and the majority of its associations (3 large and 3 small) are represented.

Furthermore, it is important that the actual case selection is made on a theoretical rather than random sampling (Eisenhardt, 1989). Merriam (1998) indicates that a non-probability sample is effective when, as in this study, the research is exploring what is occurring. Patton (1990, p. 169) notes that specifically purposive sampling as form of non-probability sampling, has ‘a logic and power, and provides rich information. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling’. The purpose of this research is to increase the knowledge about the inclusion of athletes within regular

mainstream organisations and to discover good practises. Since the inclusion of athletes with disabilities within mainstream organisations has not been researched yet, cases cannot be selected based on previous research. Therefore, the national federations of the sport disabilities were consulted for advice about the question which associations would be most suitable to this research. Some federations clearly defined one case as the best example of the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities. If a federation named a couple of associations, the author decided to choose sport associations in different parts of the Netherlands. This choice is made to enhance the generalizability of this research. The whole case selection process can be found in appendix A. An overview of the selected associations is provided in table 3. An interview invitation was sent to the associations, and all six of them indicated that they wanted to participate. Concluding, the case selection in this research is conducted to provide a structural representation that matches the purpose of the study (Remenyi, et al., 1998; Stake, 1994).

Name association:	Sport discipline:	Location:
Be quick '28	Basketball	Zwolle
BVC Holyoke	Volleyball	Belfeld
HollandSchermen	Fencing	Alkmaar
T.V. Rapiditas	Tennis	Nijmegen
TTV Asterix	Table tennis	Blerick
Wielervereniging Het Stadion	Cycle racing	Utrecht

Table 3: Selected sport associations

3.5 Data collection

Various researchers, Creswell (2003) among others, argued that data collection in case studies should not be based on just one source, but on multiple. Altrichter et al. (2008) contend that using multiple sources 'gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation'. Searching for multiple sources to get data, named triangulation, is applicable to this research. Denzin (2006) identified four basic types of triangulation: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation. This research uses data and methodological triangulation. Data triangulation in the form of conducting interviews at different times, spaces and with different people, as introduced in part 4.4.1. This chapter covers the different methods to gather data. By using multiple methods and collecting data from different people across different places, this work builds on the essence of triangulation by balancing strengths and weaknesses of each method (van Tulder, 2007), for example the unobtrusiveness of documentation and the direct focus and insights from interviews.

To start with, the first method used to create a better understanding of the research issue and to be able to provide some assumptions to partly cover the absence of a theoretical framework, is the extensive theoretical background and portrayal of the research landscape. Furthermore the databases and information provided by the sport federations have helped to select the cases. The actual data gathering starts with desk research on the selected sport associations. This research was also used to be better prepared for the interviews. Part 3.6.1. explains the use of desk research. The other method, interviews, is described in part 3.6.2. The interviews should result in the eventual deployment of good practises, while also providing answers to the sub-question in this research. The desk research provides this research with both primary and secondary data, while the interviews provide primary data. Both the primary and secondary data provide the basis for analysing the research question. An overview of the data used for this research can be found in table 4.

Type of data	Units
Interviews	6 interviews = 305 minutes
Internal documents	3 policy documents + documentation on the integration of disability sports (digital)
External documents	6 websites sport associations
(Social) media posts	5

Table 4: Overview of data

3.5.1 Desk research

Before conducting the semi-structured interviews, desk research was conducted to gain general knowledge about the sport associations and the integration of disability sports in those associations. This desk research has a purely descriptive character. In some cases, the author also received internal documents during the interview. Hence, the desk research is based on available internal as well as external documentation, including websites and (social) media channels. For this desk research, Internet is a principle source (van Tulder, 2007). The major disadvantage of desk research, in particular the use of websites to gain information, is the reliability of the information (ibid). However, the major source is the website of the sport associations themselves. It can be assumed that this information is valid. The desk research is conducted for every selected case. If some aspects of the desk research were not available in public sources, this was incorporated in the interviews.

3.5.2 Interviews

According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), the use of interviews is one of the main strategies to collect data for qualitative research. Especially if the research question is exploratory in nature, extensive interviews provide an appropriate tool to get a better grasp of the situation and to thoroughly understand the phenomenon (Sekaran, 2003). Furthermore, interviews are highly suitable to discover motivations and opinions. Therefore, using interviews to research the inclusion of athletes with disabilities and the strategies to encourage participation is a highly appropriate approach. Longhurst (2003) suggests that there are three types of interviews, unstructured, semi-structured and structured. Unstructured interviews are conversations without being based on a previously made set of questions. On the other extreme, structured interviews are interviews based on a predetermined and standardised set of questions, which are asked in the exact same way and order. A semi-structured interview combines a pre-determined set of open question with the opportunity for the interviewer to further explore particular themes or responses.

Because of the exploratory character of the research question, semi-structured (general interview guide approach) seems the most appropriate interview tool because of the following primary considerations. First, this interview type is well suited to explore the perception and opinion of respondents regarding a complex and sensitive issue such as the inclusion of athletes with disabilities (Barriball & While, 1994). Also, semi-structured interviews enable probing for more information and clarification of answers when needed (ibid). Last, the openness of the interview will not exclude any other influences on the participation of athletes with disabilities. The semi-structured interviews of this research are structured in a way that allows the representatives of the sport association to describe their policy to include athletes with disabilities.

Semi-structured interviews have several strengths and limitations. One of the strengths is that a semi-structured interview does not limit respondents to a set of pre-determined answers. Semi-structured interviews can have a high validity, because respondents are able to talk about the topic in detail and depth. The meanings and motives behind actions may be revealed, overcoming poor responses (Richardson, et al., 1965). Furthermore, it provides the opportunity to evaluate the validity of the given respondents by observing non-verbal indicators, which is particularly useful when discussing sensitive issues (Gordon, 1975). It also allows respondents to discuss and raise issues that the interviewer may not have considered. At the same time, it still provides a level of uniformity as a result of the used pre-determined questions (Pritchard, 2014). Last, it ensures that each respondent answers all questions (Bailey, 1987).

The limitations are that collecting and analysing data can be very time consuming (Pritchard, 2014). Furthermore, the author has to be aware of the fact that an interviewer as well as an interviewee bias can occur, which is described in part 6.1. Furthermore, ethical issues may arise.

Therefore the researcher has to carefully prepare the interviews and state the terms of confidentiality and anonymity (Abdelnour & Laasonen, 2015). Last, after conducting the interviews it may be difficult to analyse the qualitative information and the personal nature of the interview may make it difficult to generalise the findings.

To overcome these issues, the author has carefully designed and prepared the interviews. Since exploratory case studies, such as this research, typically do not start with clearly formulated propositions, the approach of developing a descriptive framework for organising the case study is a useful tool (Yin, 2003). Therefore this work started with an extensive theoretical background and portrayal of the research landscape. Although an actual conceptual framework is lacking, some assumptions and contextual factors were discovered, which serve as input for the sub-questions and the interviews. Following the guidelines of Blumberg et al. (2011) the interview starts with general question about the interviewee, their role in the association and the association itself. Subsequently, investigative questions are asked regarding the contextual factors, the intention of the associations, what has been realised so far, and how to board aims to encourage further participation. The preparation of the interview is highly important, since this process can either make or break the effectiveness of the interview (Gall, et al., 2003). McNamara (2009) underlines the importance of the preparation stage in order to make sure the interviews provide maximum benefit to the proposed research study. Along these lines, Chenail (2009) listed a number of pre-interview exercises that can be used to improve the instrumentality of the research and address potential biases. This author decided to not conduct a pilot study, because of practical issues. The author did not want to lose the limited research participants and their valuable information to a pilot study not used in the actual study. Furthermore the author did not want to take up participant's valuable time with under-developed questions. Therefore, the "interviewing the investigator" approach was taken. In this approach, the researcher assumes the role of a study participant and enlists a colleague to conduct the interview. This has enabled the author to fine-tune the research questions and gain experience in interviewing.

The interview protocol is designed in a way to provide maximum benefit to the research and can be found in Appendix B. The probes of this set of questions were adapted based on the background of the interviewee and association, based on the conducted desk research. During the interviews, particular attention was paid toward probing and specifying questions to enable the interviewee to elaborate on the details found important for the research, for example *'Could you further explain why training all together at the same evening leads to integration?'* (Interview Vermeer). Given the complexity of the case, interpreting questions were often used in order to confirm that the information was correctly understood and interpreted, for example *'With passive members you mean members that do not come to practises?'* (Interview Eyck).

The following people mentioned in table 5 have been interviewed and agreed on the fact that their name and the name of their association were used in this research. It should be noted that not always a board member has been put forward as spokesperson on this specific topic. Some boards of sport associations designated specific persons responsible for the integration and inclusion of disability sports. As these individuals have in-depth information regarding the inclusion of disability sports within the association, these interviews do justice to the unit of analysis in this research, namely the strategies to foster inclusion of athletes with disabilities in the association. The interviewee provided the location, so that it was quiet, private, and comfortable for the interviewee (Creswell, 1998). Furthermore, all interviewees were asked permission to record the interview, which was given in each case. The interviews lasted between 40 and 90 minutes, with an average of 50 minutes. Furthermore, because of the belief that the representatives of the associations were better able to explain their thoughts and strategies in Dutch than English, the author decided to hold the interviews in Dutch. The author expected that the various concepts underlying this research would be covered in more detail in Dutch. The fact that the interviews were eventually transferred to English for the use of this work makes it a limitation that is covered in more detail in chapter 6. On completion of the interview, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. These transcripts were stored in a case study database, using the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software program Atlas.ti. From these transcripts, further analysis can be performed, as is explained in the next part. Afterwards, the participants were sent a thank you note, and to the ones that indicated that they wanted to receive the outcomes of this research will be provided with these documents, after completion of this study.

Association:	Name representative:	Position:	Duration:	Date:	Location:
Be Quick '28	Bram Vermeer	Board member and coordinator wheelchair basketball	40 min.	04-08-2016	Own house (Zwolle)
BVC Holyoke	Loek Hendrix	Board member and sitting volleyball athlete	40 min.	03-08-2016	Own house (Belfeld)
HollandSchermen	Anja van Dijk	Board member and initiator wheelchair fencing	90 min.	01-08-2016	Own house (Alkmaar)
TTV Asterix	Hans Huijs ³	Board member	90 min.	03-08-2016	Sport centre 'Muspelheim' (Blerick)
TV Rapiditas	Mirella ter Horst ⁴	Initiator integration and trainer wheelchair tennis	45 min.	08-08-2016	Location TV Rapiditas (Nijmegen)
Wielervereniging Het Stadion	Geert Eyck	Board member adjusted sports and hand biker	40 min	02-08-2016	'de Nedereindse Berg' (Utrecht)

Table 5: Overview of interviewed sport association representatives

After the interview with Hendrix, board member of BVC Holyoke, his wife joined the conversation and started talking to the author about a wheelchair hockey team of 'Hockeyclub Blerick' in the neighbouring city of Blerick. She was actively involved in the association until last year. In this association, the adjusted sports are not fully integrated in the association, but organised in a different foundation with its own board. Still, the team is affiliated with the mainstream hockey club.

³ Also present during the interview was Judith Giesberts, coordinator adjusted sports. Giesberts has been involved in the adjusted sports for 18 years now, and Huijs thought it would be beneficial for the research that she joined the interview. For the sake of convenience, the answers to the interview questions will refer to Huijs, nonetheless acknowledging the contribution of Giesberts.

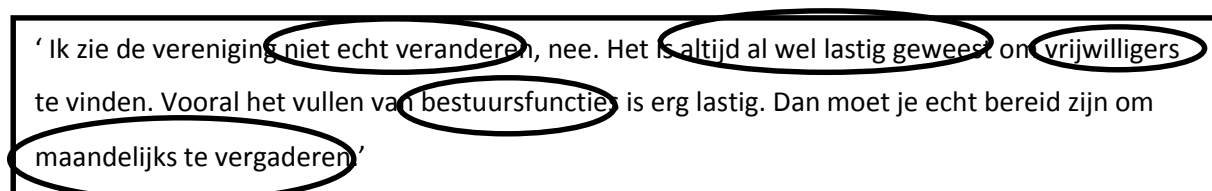
⁴ Also present during the second part of the interview was Hans Floor, chairman of the association and responsible for volunteer management. For the sake of convenience, the answers to the interview question will refer to ter Horst, nonetheless acknowledging Floor.

Since this research is focused on mainstream associations that have integrated disability sports, the author did not include this conversation in the research. However, it serves as a direction for future research, which is elaborated on in part 6.2.

3.6 Data analysis

The analysis of case study evidence is in general one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies (Tellis, 1997). Yin (2003) suggests that every research should have a general analytical strategy, so as to guide the decision regarding what will be analysed and for what reason. Furthermore, it is crucial that the researcher reports and documents his or her analytical and the findings.

Yin (2009) argues that research that does not test clearly pre-formulated theoretical propositions, but is based on the development of a case description, does not need to be based on a formal coding procedure. Direct interpretation of the research material can be equally beneficial (Stake, 1995). In this more inductive approach towards case study analysis, the researcher is interested in the themes, categories and activities that can be extracted from a natural variation of empirical data. In order to not get flooded by the data obtained during the in-depth interviews, the author conducted several rounds of coding, with the help of atlati.ti. First, open coding was performed. An example of this open coding is provided below.



‘Ik zie de vereniging niet echt veranderen, nee. Het is altijd al wel lastig geweest om vrijwilligers te vinden. Vooral het vullen van bestuursfunctie is erg lastig. Dan moet je echt bereid zijn om maandelijks te vergaderen’

Not a real change || has always been hard || volunteers || position in the board || monthly meetings (Interview Vermeer, 2016)

The next round consisted of code-reduction after and simultaneously with data analyses. This includes merging concepts considered similar (e.g. training + practise = training). Furthermore, first level codes were included into more abstract codes. The associations addressed for example various tournaments (In Dutch: *integratietoernooi*, *clubkampioenschappen*, etc.), these were grouped into the category ‘tournaments’. Next, the various categories were placed among the themes of this research. To recall, those different parts are **context, intention, realisation and encouraging further participation**. A check-coding round, whereby all data and existing codes and categories were reviewed and adjusted where needed, followed these steps. The next and last step is the presentation of the data. This research presents the data in what Creswell (1998) calls a typical multiple case study presentation. When using multiple cases, ‘a typical format is to first provide a detailed overview of each case and

themes within the case, called a within-case analysis (Creswell, 1998, p. 63). A preliminary overview of the cases is provided in part 4.1. The cases are then presented per theme, the general changes is the association (4.2.1), the integration of disability sports (4.2.2), the participation of athletes with disabilities (4.2.3), and eventually the strategies to encourage participation (4.2.4). After all the cases are described, called a within-case analysis (Creswell, 1998), an analysis across the cases is provided, referred to as cross-case analysis or cross-case synthesis (Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2003). Last, a synthesis is provided in chapter 6. This approach is summarized in figure 10.

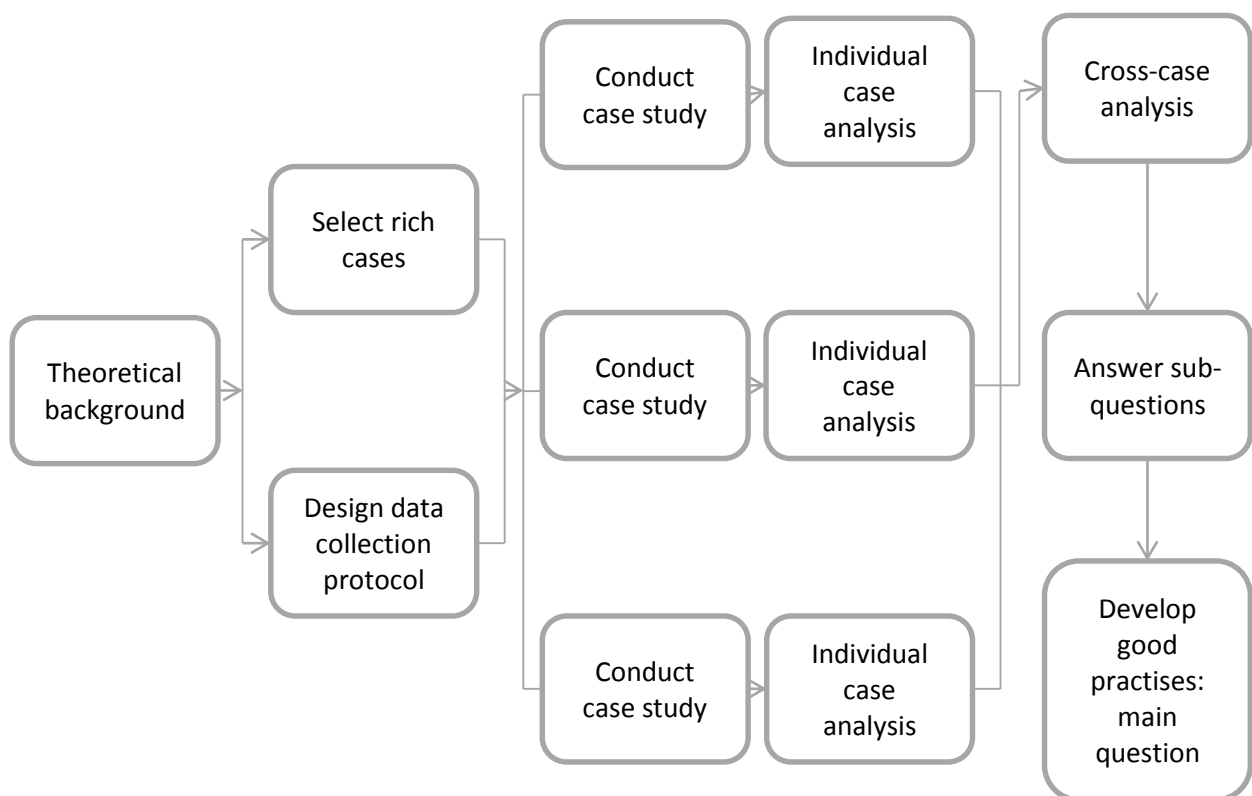


Figure 10: Multiple case study (Adapted from (Yin, 2009))



Consisting of desk research and actual interviews with the representatives of the sport associations, this chapter presents the results and is build up as follows. Part 4.1 comprises of the desk search on the six sport associations selected for the case study and includes some association statistics. Part 4.2 covers the actual results from the interviews with the representatives of the sport associations. This part discusses the implemented strategies and plans in detail, as this is the core of this research.

4.1 Desk research

The six local sport associations where disability sport have been integrated are introduced in this part. The six associations are introduced, partly on available information, and partly on introductory questions proposed to the representative of the sport association.

4.1.1 Be Quick '28

Be Quick '28 is a basketball association situated in Zwolle, in the North-East of the Netherlands. Within the Omni sport association Be Quick '28, the basketball discipline was established in 1970. In 1984 all different sports within the Omni sport association became independent sport associations. The basketball discipline established their own basketball association under the same name: Be Quick' 28 (Be Quick'28, 2016). The Dutch word *gezelligheid*, which deems hard to translate but can be compared to sociability/cosiness, is central in this association. Everyone should have the possibilities to participate at his or her own level (ibid). In 2013, the association reintegrated wheelchair basketball, and now has one of the largest number wheelchair basketball athletes from the region.

Association statistics	
Members	120
Percentage members actively involved in the association	20%
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	6 mainstream teams (4 men, 1 woman and 1 youth team) 2 wheelchair basketball teams of which one senior team and one youth team
Year of integration	2013

4.1.2 BVC Holyoke

Volleyball association BVC Holyoke is situated in Belfeld, in the South-East of the Netherlands. The “Belfeldse Volleybalclub” (BVC) Holyoke was founded in 1975. The name relates to a city in Massachusetts (USA) which is seen as the birthplace of volleyball (BVC Holyoke, 2015). The association received a large number of new members in 2001 when the volleyball association of the neighbouring village Steyl, named J.S.S., quitted. Holyoke underlines that playing sports should be fun. Holyoke was one of the first volleyball associations in the Netherlands where sitting volleyball was integrated in the mainstream association. Integration of disability sport is completely “normal instead of being a challenge” (In Duth: *de gewoonste zaak van de wereld*) (ibid). With two sitting volleyball teams within the association, Holyoke is among the associations with the largest number of sitting volleyball athletes of the Netherlands. Furthermore, Holyoke was the first volleyball association that integrated sitting volleyball in the association.

Association statistics	
Members	220
Percentage members actively involved in the association	24%
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	17 mainstream teams (1 men, 3 woman, 7 youth, 3 woman recreational, and 3 men veterans) 2 sitting volleyball teams (both senior temas)
Year of integration	1984

4.1.3 HollandSchermen

“HollandSchermen” is a fencing association situated in Alkmaar, in the North-West of the Netherlands. HollandSchermen is the result of the merger between the two associations De Haarlemse Schermvereniging and Alkmaarse Schermvereniging in 2010 (HollandSchermen, 2015). The name refers to the region in which the fencing association is situated. After the foundation of the new association HollandSchermen, the association started with the integration of fencing for athletes with disabilities. HollandSchermen mentions that wheelchair fencing is completely integrated within the mainstream association (ibid).

Association statistics	
Members	119
Percentage members actively involved in the association	About 20 people, around 17%
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	Only 3%, only senior wheelchair athletes
Year of integration	2010

4.1.4 TTC Asterix

Table tennis association “TTC Asterix” was founded in 1973 and is ever since situated in Blerick. Since 2003, TTC Asterix not only provides mainstream table tennis, but also Dynamic Tennis and Para table tennis. The growth of the association led to the fact that they received their own “home” in 2012 (TTC Asterix, 2014). Their efforts to foster integration and inclusion have paid off. They received the Fair Play award of the municipality of Venlo for everything they have done for society.

Association statistics	
Members	110
Percentage members actively involved in the association	About 15 people structural (15%), another large part actively helps when needed
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	30 players (around 1/3 of the active players), both physical and mental disabilities
Year of integration	1976

4.1.5 TV Rapiditas

Tennis association “TV Rapiditas” was founded in 1935 and is situated in Nijmegen, in the mid-east of the Netherlands. With 1036 members, it is one of the largest tennis associations of the Netherlands. Besides a group for senior wheelchair athletes, TV Rapiditas has since 2015 also a special training group for youth wheelchair athletes. Together with the Esther Vergeer foundation they aim to actively promote wheelchair tennis among the youth. Furthermore, TV Rapiditas aims to carry out that they are a social association. They provide all sorts of tennis, from professional to recreational, from youth to wheelchair tennis. In such a social association, everyone is expected to actively participate in the association (TV Rapiditas, 2015).

Associational statistics	
Members	1036
Percentage members actively involved in the association	+/- 100, 10%
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	30 players, only 3%, both a youth and senior group
Year of integration	2013

4.1.6 Wielervereniging Het Stadion

Cycle racing association “Wielervereniging Het Stadion” is situated in Utrecht, in the middle of the Netherlands. ‘Road cycling, cyclo cross, mountain biking, hand biking, everything is possible in a safe and friendly environment’ (Wielervereniging Het Stadion, 2016). The association was founded in 1936. The economic progress in the previous century resulted in an explosive member growth. Since 2006 has the association the possibility to use their own cycling circuit, together with cycle race association De Volharding. The association grows extensively (In Dutch: *als kool*). The number of participants in all disciplines grows. Wielervereniging Het Stadion is the association with the largest number of hand bikers in the Netherlands.

Association statistics	
Members	+/- 400
Percentage members actively involved in the association	5%, around 20 are active
Balance disability sport/mainstream sport	40 hand bikers (10%) The other 90% is spread across youth, senior and female members, and mountain biking and cyclo cross
Year of integration	2003

4.2 Sport associations' approaches to foster inclusion

After having introduced the six sport associations, this part start by addressing the changes and developments the six sport associations experienced in recent history, in order to provide some context. The integration of disability sports can be seen in line with this demand to take on a larger societal role. The integration of disability sports is assumed to be part of a shift towards more professionalism and flexibility. Furthermore, the chapter looks into the intentions and realisations of the sport associations. These are necessary elements before coming to the actual strategies and approaches to foster inclusion.

It is important to note that the sport associations might have more in common than solely what is described here. Furthermore, what is described below is the author's interpretation of the interviews and might not be a perfect match with the actual situation. Time factors also have to be taken into account when reading. Sport associations change rapidly and can adopt different methods and approaches in a relatively short time. All interviews were held in August 2016.

4.2.1 Development and changes of the sport associations

In part 2.3.3 has been described that sport associations in the Netherlands face growing consumerism and individualism among their members and a pressure to become more professional and grow. This part first describes how every association has been influenced by these trends.

4.2.1.1 Be Quick '28

The amount of members has been relatively stable throughout the years. Vermeer does not really see changes within the association. *'It has always been hard to find volunteers, especially for the role of board member, but that is not a recent trend'*. Vermeer mentions that there has always been a small group that only comes to practise, but he does not see an increase in this. An important factor is the team. *'When someone does not show up for a referee or count turn, he is suspended for the next match. Letting your team down is way worse than paying a fee, so everyone does its turns'*.

Furthermore, Vermeer underlines that *gezelligheid*, just explained as sociability/cosiness, is an integral part of the association. Increasing professionalism does not seem in line with this aim, and is also not deemed necessary in a relatively small association.

4.2.1.2 BVC Holyoke

BVC Holyoke has depicted a stable amount of members. Only when the members of volleyball association J.S.S. joined, the association faced a significant increase of members. Ever since, the number has remained stable. Hendrix has not seen any real shift toward consumerism in the association. *'When people become a member of an association, they know that certain things are asked, such as counting or refereeing'*. Hendrix mentions that various tasks are also a team responsibility. The board assigns teams to various tasks, such as refereeing and counting, but also the organisation of social drinks and tournaments. *'It is up to every team how they divide the tasks and roles, but in the end every team has to make sure that everything is taken care of'*. Hendrix does also not see a general change towards professionalism in the association. Even though BVC Holyoke is with 200+ members considered a large association, Hendrix mentioned that the social cohesion and informality is key to the association's success.

4.2.1.3 HollandSchermen

Both the associations that existed before the establishment of HollandSchermen were really small. Therefore, a significant increase in members is depicted in 2010. Since 2010 the amount of members has been stable. HollandSchermen relies on a small amount of structural volunteers, only the board and a few committee members. However, that has always been the case. When the board eventually tried to assign people to tasks, they faced resistance. Van Dijk does see the members becoming increasingly individualistic. Even though fencing is labelled a semi-individual sport, van Dijk sees fencing as a highly individual sport. *'People prefer to drive to a match themselves instead of driving together. Fencing is still a highly individual sport, people play their own match and want to drive home afterwards instead of waiting for others'*. Van Dijk also sees a clear shift toward professionalism. *'We as the board were suggested to take out an insurance, in order to avoid personal liability'*. Furthermore, van Dijk mentions that members are expecting more and more from the voluntary board members. *'They expect that the association is ran as a professional business. I sometimes have to remember them that I am doing this in my spare time as volunteer'*.

4.2.1.4 TTC Asterix

TTC Asterix faced a decreasing number of members in the late 1990's. To tackle this issue, the association started to also provide dynamic tennis since 2003. This sport attracts a number of seniors what stabilised the amount of members. Huijs does not see any changes toward

consumerism and individualism within TTC Asterix. *'TTC Asterix symbolises personal attention and social cohesion, which is especially characteristic for our association'*. It is hard to find structural volunteers, but that has always been the case. However, members are coming earlier or staying longer after practise to help in other practises. That does not need any guidance. Also does Huijs not see increasing professionalism in TTC Asterix. *'Since we think that personal attention is very important, a very professional way of managing the association does not suit TTC Asterix. We have deliberately choses to not manage the association in a professional way and keep the lines between the board and the members short'*. However, Huijs does recognise that some members are becoming more demanding. Especially in that case, he thinks personal and transparent communication is highly important.

4.2.1.5 TV Rapiditas

Throughout the years, TV Rapiditas has grown extensively and has become one of the largest tennis associations of the Netherlands. Lately however, the amount of members has stabilised and even depicts a slight decrease. The changes towards consumerism and individualism are clearly visible within the association. According to ter Horst, the amount of members that does not participate in practises, but only comes to play when they want to is ever increasing. *'The fact that we can provide tennis practises to an association of over 1000 members with only three trainers says it all'*. It is also harder to find volunteers, therefore everyone is now assigned to do a bar shift every now and then. The new policy of TV Rapiditas is also highly focused on improving the volunteer policy. *'A culture where members think that paying a membership fee is enough, is a kiss of death for an association. Such a culture belongs to commercial business, where a fee is paid for commercial service delivery, not to a voluntary sport association'*. Although the difference between a commercial business and a voluntary sport association is underlined, ter Horst mentions that the association is managed quite professional. *'There is a clear structure within the association. The board clearly delegates tasks to committees who in turn sometimes delegate other tasks to operating volunteers, the bar committee for example'*. Ter Horst mentions that this is also necessary in such a large association.

4.2.1.6 Wielervereniging Het Stadion

Wielervereniging Het Stadion *'has changed enormously after we got our own trail'*. The new trail led to introduction of new sport activities, such as hand biking, mountain biking and also the introduction of women teams, consequently leading to extensive member growth. However, a large amount is just member to have a license to compete, but does not come to practises. *'Members are more and more 'cherry picking' the nice events instead of coming to practises. You could call that consuming'*. This is in contrast to when the association was significantly smaller. The association is still

managed by a small amount of active members. However, it deems harder to attract members that want to actively participate on a structural basis. What Eyck calls 'ad hoc' volunteers is easier. People are still willing to help out on an ad hoc basis. While it is harder to find volunteers, people are expecting more of the association, according to van Eyck. *'They expect more events, and everything being organised to perfection'*. This has resulted in a slightly more professional way of managing the association. For some roles, the volunteers have to have specific knowledge or qualities, for treasurer or chairman for example. However, since the amount of active members is still relatively small, a professional way of managing with long lines is not the case.

4.2.2 Intention regarding disability sports

The next part of the analysis is concerned with the intention of the association. This part considers the underlying reasons for the integration of disability sports at the six sport associations.

4.2.2.1 Be Quick '28

Vermeer explains how the association was approached by Sport Service Zwolle to integrate wheelchair basketball in their association. They had been in contact with around 15 athletes who wanted to play wheelchair basketball in Zwolle. Be Quick'28 had tried to integrate wheelchair basketball before, but this stopped because of a lack of players. Vermeer mentions that the integration of wheelchair athletes is very natural. *'They are just part of the association as everyone else'*. Furthermore, Vermeer mentions that the integration of the athletes with disabilities has been a gradual process.

4.2.2.2 BVC Holyoke

Sitting volleyball has been integrated in BVC Holyoke for a long time already. Hendrix mentions that this happened only a few years after the association was established. Two inhabitants from Blerick, both having a disability, joined the association and motivated more athletes with disabilities to join the association. Within two years, they had a complete sitting volleyball team. More athletes from the region who wanted to play sitting volleyball joined, and throughout the years the level and amount of members grew. Hendrix explains that the integration of the sitting volleyball athletes is just a matter of course. *'The sitting volleyball teams are just teams within a volleyball association. Just as you have women, man and youth teams, we also have sitting volleyball teams. These are just all part of the association'*.

4.2.2.3 HollandSchermen

HollandSchermen was encouraged by the municipality of Alkmaar to enlarge their societal role. Because HollandSchermen is accredited as a 'core sport' of the municipality, they receive a relatively large amount of funding and possibilities. However, in order to retain this accreditation the association

has to also take on a societal role. *'We really appreciate the benefits of being accredited as a core sport, so when the municipality told us that we needed to take on a larger societal role in return, we started thinking what could be done'*. Van Dijk started reading about disability sport and became very enthusiastic. After researching and preparing what needed to be done to integrate wheelchair fencing for almost a year, the association now has four wheelchair fencing members. *'What is so amazing about wheelchair fencing is that it is completely integrated in the association, they practise together and even play tournaments together'*. That the suggestion came from the municipality does not make a difference. *'It is just that most of us had not really thought about it before. Wheelchair fencing is not really well-known you know. Now we learnt about it and have integrated it, we wish we would have integrated it earlier'*.

4.2.2.4 TTC Asterix

The integration of wheelchair table tennis has not been a deliberate choice according to Huijs. After the association was established some people with disabilities became member and they just played sports together with the other members. Nonetheless, this integration was not just a matter of fact for everyone. *'In the beginning some people were really sceptical, not many mainstream associations had members with a disability back then. Some people just roughly said: No I do not want to play against that disabled person. However, by really talking to people and explaining that everyone can play sports, this prejudice disappeared'*. Huijs underlines the importance of sport in society. *'Everyone just plays and participates the same, if that is not even possible in a sport association, than where it is?'*

4.2.2.5 TV Rapiditas

Ter Horst explains that her interest in wheelchair tennis developed out of 'boredom'. *'I have been a fulltime tennis trainer and coach for so long now, I just wanted to learn and do something new. So when I could subscribe for a course about wheelchair tennis I just subscribed'*. This wheelchair tennis course was promoted by the Esther Vergeer foundation. After she completed the course she was *'completely sold'*. Together with the board they started researching the possibilities for wheelchair tennis within TV Rapiditas. In the mean time she subscribed for a more advanced course. According to ter Horst, it is easy to become stuck in your routines. That is the main reason why wheelchair tennis was not integrated earlier. *'I think it is just general unawareness of how easy it is to integrate disability sports'*. Now the whole association embraces the wheelchair athletes, not just because it is something new and exciting, but because it just belongs in the association, according to ter Horst.

4.2.2.6 Wielervereniging Het Stadion

The new trail of Wielervereniging Het Stadion has not just been the start to some general changes in the association, as explained in the previous part. This has also led to the fact that athletes from different sport disciplines joined the association. Eyck mentions that this does not require a very proactive stand of the association. *'In the beginning, the few hand bikers that were a member just practiced themselves, they became member to be able to practise on the trail. Only when this group started to grow and hand bikers indicated to have interest in a trainer, the association started actively provide hand bike training'*. This marked the beginning of the actual integration of the hand bikers according to Eyck. The hand bikers were no longer members that only used the trail, but were seen as active part of the association.

4.2.3 Realisation participation of athletes with disabilities

While the previous part has explained how disability sports became integrated in the association and what the intention of the sport associations is regarding disability sports, this part examines what has been realised. In the following part is described how athletes with disabilities participate in the sport associations.

4.2.3.1 Be Quick '28

Vermeer mentions that the wheelchair athletes have the same responsibilities as the rest. 'Of course, they also have to do their count and referee turns. Although they do count turns instead of referee turns, *'simply because it is not possible to roll with your wheelchair through the field during a regular match'*. Furthermore, the wheelchair athletes are also represented in several committees and one of them is a board member. According to Vermeer, it is important that all teams and members are represented in those roles. Also, the GAM's are just as much visited by the wheelchair athletes. Also Vermeer deems this important. *'Because large decisions need approval of the GAM and because we think it is important that there is a general meeting where everyone can express their opinion, the GAM is organised on Thursday evenings, the day when all teams have practise. We take the last hour of the early group and the first hour of the late group. Everyone is in the sports building anyways and hence visits the GAM'*.

4.2.3.2 BVC Holyoke

Hendrix does not see any difference in participation of sitting volleyball athletes compared to mainstream athletes. Every team has to do referee or account turns. Furthermore, the organisation of various events is assigned to teams. *'This year ladies 1 was responsible for organising the end of the year barbeque, next year this is another team. Every team is responsible for the organisation of something.'* Furthermore, Hendrix mentions that the sitting volleyball athletes are represented in all

sorts of volunteering roles. He is for example part of the board; a fellow team member is trainer, while again others are active in a committee. According to Hendrix, sitting volleyball athletes are completely integrated in the association.

4.2.3.3 HollandSchermen

Because HollandSchermen only has a limited amount of athletes with disabilities integrated in the association, it is hard to explain if they are equally participating. From the 4 members with disabilities, 2 come to practise very week. The other 2 are only come to practise every now and then. However, this is also the case within the mainstream athletes. None, of the athletes with disabilities takes on an active role within the association. However, van Dijk mentions that they are always present. *‘Those two come to every practise, as well as to every event, although one of them has to travel all the way from Hoorn to Alkmaar. Also during the GAM they are present. I think they are involved in decision-making processes as much as they want, and yes I often ask them personally if they want something changed’.* Van Dijk ones more underlines the fact that only a small amount of members actually takes an active role in the association.

4.2.3.4 TTC Asterix

In TTC Asterix, athletes with disabilities are fully participating according to Huijs. The association also has member with mental disabilities and even they are actively participating. *‘You just need actively listen to people. Everyone can and should participate, sometimes you just have to adjust some things and put in a little more effort, but so what?’* The athletes with disabilities are represented in the board, and also participate in ‘ad hoc’ volunteering efforts. Furthermore, Huijs mentions that it is important to encourage people to come up with their own ideas. However, he often receives feedback that everything is fine, also when he asks it in a personal setting. He suggests that this is, because the association tries to actively listen to and incorporate the good suggestions, *‘whether they come from mainstream athletes or athletes with disabilities’.*

4.2.3.5 TV Rapiditas

In TV Rapiditas, the wheelchair athletes have only been integrated lately. Also, this group is only a marginal part of the large association. According to ter Horst, the number of athletes that actively comes to practise is even higher than among the mainstream members. They also help out when needed. However, since wheelchair tennis has only been integrated lately, no one is yet taking an active role in a committee or in the board. However, the board is actively trying to incorporate the wheelchair athletes in improving the practises, events and the association as a whole.

4.2.3.6 *Wielervereniging Het Stadion*

Eyck does see that athletes with disabilities are more passive than the other athletes. The amount that actively comes to practise is very low. According to Eyck, this is mainly attributed to the fact that the Dutch participation law⁵ (In Dutch: *Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning*) provides a reimbursement for the athletes for the costs of their hand bike, given that they are member of a cycling association. *'It is way cheaper to pay you membership fee than to pay your hand bike, so that's what they do. However, after they receive their hand bike you never see them again.'* This is even strengthened by the individualistic character of cycling suggest Eyck. *'You don't need to come to practise in order to compete, and you do not need teammates in order to practise.'* The association does see this passiveness as a problem, and therefore tries to extra encourage active participation of hand bikers.

4.2.4 **Strategies to encourage participation**

The six sport associations have adopted a diverse but also a common set of approaches and strategies to encourage participation and foster inclusion. This part elaborates on the actual practises and methods and separates the unique approaches from the approaches that clubs have in common, in two different parts.

4.2.4.1 *Similar approaches and methods*

The approaches and strategies used by the majority of the six sport associations are discussed here. The following similar approaches and methods are identified on the basis of the interviews:

A clear policy to completely integrate and include disability sports

At the core of the successful integration and inclusion of disability sports and its athletes stands a clear policy and mission regarding the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities. Vermeer, Hendrix, van Dijk, Huijs, ter Horst and Eyck explicitly mention that a clear statement regarding the integration and inclusion of disability sports is the key to success. Whether it concerns the athletes with or without disabilities, everyone knows what is expected from them and everyone knows that these rights and obligations are the same for all athletes. All associations have stated this in their policy plan and/or on their websites.

⁵ Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning (WMO) is a law designed to support self-reliance and participation in society. The WMO is targeted to people who face problems in participating, for example the elderly and people with a disability.

Provision of good facilities and support

Next to the core of a clear policy and mission regarding the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities, the six sport associations provide their members with the needed facilities and accommodations. Ter Horst explains that at first the athletes with disabilities were exempted from bar turns. However, with some small additions the wheelchair tennis athletes could easily do the bar turns as well. Now they do have to do just as much turns as all other members. Vermeer mentions that if it is not possible to do a referee turn because of the dependence on a wheelchair for example, the athlete has to do an extra count turn for example. Furthermore, the representatives mention that not only the sport facilities, but also the meeting places should be accessible for athletes with disabilities. All sport associations organise the GAM in the sport building, which is easily accessible. Other gatherings and meeting sometimes take place somewhere else. Hendrix provides an example for the gathering in a local café that is a sponsor of the association, before the annual “strawberry sale”. The board makes sure that also these external locations are accessible for everyone. Huijs also underlines the importance of support. During the annual offertory for “the disabled children” (In Dutch: *NSGK: Nederlandse Stichting voor het Gehandicapte Kind*), the athletes with disabilities sometimes need some help, for example to get up the sidewalks or ring the bells. This requires support from other members.

Active communication

Not only mention the representatives the importance of a clear policy and mission regarding the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities, those values need to be actively communicated. Just stating in the policy plan that everyone should participate and be included in the association is insufficient. Huijs, van Dijk and ter Horst mention that the board members should lead by example. A board member should actively approach people to encourage them to become active. Van Dijk and ter Horst mention that this is even more important in the beginning, when athletes with disabilities are only recently integrated in the association. In order to make sure that they do not become a separate, own group, the board members should actively approach them and clearly communicate the rights and obligations of all athletes. Furthermore, Huijs and Van Dijk underline the importance of active communication with members that oppose the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities. Huijs faced that problem especially in the beginning, when the first athletes with disabilities became member. Van Dijk on the other hand organised a meeting to inform the members about the integration of disability sports to create understanding and enthusiasm even before the athletes with disabilities became member of the association.

Clear communication roles

An important part of the active communication mentioned in the previous paragraph, is having clear communication roles and lines. Be Quick '28 and BVC Holyoke make use of team captains as main contact person between the board and the teams. In this way, the wants and needs of all teams are addressed to the board. TTC Asterix and TV Rapiditas created a confidential committee, which has to make sure that the wants and needs of all members reach the board.

Focus on pleasure in sports

Pleasure in sports is another important aspect for the sport associations. Creating an environment where everyone can play sports at his or her level without focusing too much on winning and competition is seen as an important tool to encourage people to participate. Sport is often seen as excluding in nature, because it focuses on being the best, which deems hard to reconcile with having a disability. Therefore, providing an environment where everyone can play sports at its own level and is valued for that, people are more likely to actively participate in the association.

Creating social cohesion

The last aspect all six sport associations mention is the importance of social cohesion. Various events are organised that aim to create social cohesion, rather than separate groups. This is especially important when a new group is integrated in the sports association, as is the case with the integration of disability sports. TV Rapiditas and Wielervereniging Het Stadion have included the disability sports in their annual club championships (In Dutch: *clubkampioenschappen*). Be quick '28, Hollandschermen and TTC Asterix organise tournaments where the members participate in mixed teams. The representatives of the associations state that these mixed events help everybody to feel welcome. This is seen as a prerequisite to become active in the association.

4.2.4.2 Unique approaches

The six sport associations also have some unique distinctive approaches and methods to encourage participation. The following unique approaches are identified on the basis of the interviews:

Delegating responsibilities to teams

BVC Holyoke delegated responsibilities to the different teams. In this way, it aims to make sure that everyone participates in the association, and that everyone has the chance to organise an event. These responsibilities shift every year. Another benefit is according to Hendrix that a large number of members are present at the activities, because they are familiar with it. This in turn positively benefits the social cohesion among the members.

Organising decision-making events on a practise evening

Be Quick '28 organises its GAM's on the evening that all teams have practise. Since everyone has to come to the sports building for practise, most members also join the GAM. In this way, all teams are relatively equally represented and all opinions can be voiced.

Practising together

Within HollandSchermen and (partially) within TTC Asterix, the athletes with disabilities practise in the same groups and the same teams as the mainstream athletes. This decreases the feeling that athletes with disabilities are a different group.

Equal representation in the board

Be quick '28 and Wielervereniging Het Stadion have a policy that aims to have the different teams and sport disciplines equally represented in the board of the association. Practically, this means that when an athlete with disability for example quits his position in the board, the board actively seeks for a new board member from this discipline. This in order to ensure that all voices are incorporated in the board's decisions.

Providing voice through a questionnaire


The board of HollandSchermen acknowledges the limited attendance of and the responses during the GAM, and the limited number of active members. Therefore, the board set out a questionnaire that received a significant response rate, making sure policies are supported within the whole club, and that everyone can provide their opinion anonymously. Also, all possibilities to become active were enlisted in the questionnaire; from taking pictures (1 hour per month) to being a board member (2 hours per week). Van Dijk pointed out that this made all tasks that can be done within the association more clear and stimulated involvement.

Season ending with all volunteers

At BVC Holyoke and TTC Asterix, the board end every season with a party to thank everyone that actively participated in the association. According to Hendrix and Huijs, this contributes to the social cohesion and encourages further participation.

Welcome talk with new members

The board of TTC Asterix always asks new members for a welcome talk before they start practising. In this way, the wants and needs of both the association and the new member can be united.



5. Discussion and conclusion

Source: Be Quick '28

This qualitative multiple case study with its explorative nature has researched how board of voluntary sport association can encourage participation and inclusion of athletes with disabilities. The previous chapter has provided the outcomes of the desk research and the interviews per case. This chapter provides a cross-case analysis per theme before moving to answering the research questions and the identification of good practises.

5.1 Discussion of different themes

5.1.1 Context

In the literature has been suggested that associations are changing. They are becoming more professional while members are becoming more passive a show a consumerist attitude. In the result has been shown that all associations except Wielervereniging Het Stadion remained stable throughout the years. Weilervereniging Het Stadion faced extensive member growth and an increasing amount of passive members. All the other associations addressed to have a stable amount of members. The other associations also do not see an increase of passive members. They address that it has always been hard to attract new structural volunteers; that it is not per definition changing. All six associations mentioned that it is easier to find volunteers for a specific, what Eyck calls “ad hoc” tasks. This is more related to programme management, as explained in part 2.3.2. Programme management associations are focused on clearly specified tasks in which the priority to the volunteer is to carry out the specific,

small task without fear of committing unlimited amounts of time. Furthermore, only the tennis association, which is with 1036 member significantly larger than the other associations, mentions that its management has become more professional, with longer lines and a clear structure. The other associations do not deem that necessary in small association and/or see that as opposing social cohesion.

Also, both the associations that provide team sports (Be Quick '28 and BVC Holyoke) as well as the majority of the other associations (TV Rapiditas, HollandSchermen, and Wielervereniging Het Stadion) have mentioned the power of a team in encouraging members to be active. They argue that people are more likely to actively participate if they otherwise harm themselves and the team, by not being allowed to play the match and letting the team bear the costs. HollandSchermen and TTC Asterix also reported an increasing demand from members. Members are expecting more and more of the boards.

Hence, although most associations have indicated that they remained stable, the fact that they acknowledge a shift toward more “ad hoc” volunteering, a more professional ran organisation and a growing demand of members, might suggest that these mutual support associations are incorporating parts that are more closely related to service delivery organisations.

5.1.2 Intention

In the theoretical background is explained that sport associations are expected to take on a larger societal role. Municipalities and institutions have coupled their subsidies to the societal role of the sport association. This push can easily result in the fact that associations start to provide disability sport as a service, in order to fulfil their expected role, without including them in the association (figure 9). Therefore this research examined the intention of sport associations. The sport associations that have integrated disability sport the longest ago, BVC Holyoke, TTC Asterix, and a little more recently Wielervereniging Het Stadion, mentioned that the integration more or less ‘just happened’. Athletes with disabilities joined the association to play sports. It was not considered a deliberate decision.

Be Quick '28 and HollandSchermen have been asked by the municipality to start to provide disability sports. Both of them mention that the integration is not limited to the provision of sports, disability sports is seen a part of the whole association. Wheelchair tennis was also integrated because an institution promoted wheelchair tennis and promoted courses for tennis trainers. Although this is a very different institution than the municipality, the integration of wheelchair tennis within TV Rapiditas has still been initiated because an external institution promoted it. All six associations mention that disability sports needs to be a part of the association, not apart from the association.

Concluding, this means that the intention of the sport associations is to fully include the athletes with disabilities; not providing disability sports merely as a service. This intention is embedded in the social model, and is depicted in figure 9B, in part 3.1.

5.1.3 Realisation

Not all associations have realised the same outcomes regarding the participation of athletes with disabilities. Be Quick '28, BVC Holyoke and TTC Asterix mention that the participation of athletes with disabilities is completely the same as those of other athletes. Everyone has to do tasks, the athletes are represented in the different stratification levels, and are encouraged to be actively involved in democratic decision-making and also do so. This relates to the highest level of the participation ladder, as explained in part 2.2.2, where decision-making is completely shared and all athletes are deemed equal.

Wielervereniging Het Stadion on the other hand, clearly defines that athletes with disabilities are more passive than other athletes. Eyck attributes this to the fact people need to become a member in order to compete and especially to get the costs of their hand bike reimbursed; they do not need to practise in the association in order to compete, most of them practise themselves. Within the association, the hand bikers are overrepresented in the “lowest” stratification level of passive athletes. Because of the lack of hand bikers that are actively involved in the association and the decision-making, their participation is limited to “symbolic participation”, the middle step of the participation ladder. However, Wielervereniging Het Stadion acknowledges the fact that the hand bikers are underrepresented, which is not in line with their aim to fully include disability sports. Therefore, Wielervereniging Het Stadion is trying to more actively encourage the participation of hand bikers.

HollandSchermen and TV Rapiditas find it hard to make a statement about the involvement of athletes with disabilities in the association. In both associations, the amount of athletes with disabilities is only marginal. However, both association say that everyone is encouraged to express their ideas and influence decision-making.

5.1.4 Core of board's policies to encourage further participation

In the previous part, a discussion of the context, intention and realisation of the integration and inclusion of disability sports is provided. This part now discusses the actual approaches to foster inclusion. Part 4.2.4 has enlisted all similar and unique approaches to encourage participation. This research has found three overarching policies to encourage further participation and foster inclusion. These approaches are listed on the next page:

Clear policy to completely integrate and include disability sports

All six sport associations mentioned that disability sports and its athletes are no different than other athletes and are completely integrated and included in the association. This is clearly mentioned on their website and/or in their policy plan.

Social cohesion

Social cohesion is deemed an important tool. The associations suggest that creating social cohesion, through mixed event, tournaments etc., creates an environment where everyone feels excepted. This is especially important for athletes with disabilities, who sometimes feel hindered to participate.

Personal approach

All associations emphasise the need of a personal approach. Putting emphasise on the belief that everyone has to contribute to the association and personally approaching members, in particular athletes with disabilities that sometimes already feel an extra hurdle to participate, encourages participation. The board in this case have to lead by practice. Short lines between the board and the members create that personal approach. If short lines are not possible, one can have a team captain or another person assigned to the task of being the spokesperson between the board and the members.

5.2 Cases and assumptions

5.2.1 Case selection

It can be questioned whether all six sport associations that are considered suitable to finding good practices regarding the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities, indeed all provide good practises. The author specifically refers to the cycling association in this case. The board member itself, Geert Eyck, acknowledges that the hand bikers were highly passive in the association, compared to athletes from other disciplines. Nonetheless, the board has recognised this issue and actively tries to involve the hand bikers more in the association. Therefore, the analysis of this case has still been useful for this research. Furthermore, when analysing the cases, it turned out that the nature of the sport also influences the approaches taken. The two team sports for example, empower the team as catalyst for participation, while the individual sport faced trouble to encourage members to become active.

5.2.2 Role of the board.

The theoretical background has shown that the role of the board is often paradoxical in voluntary sport associations. Nonetheless, this research assumed that the board has a leading role in encouraging participation. All six representatives acknowledge that the GAM is highest decision-making body within the association. However, the board does play an important and leading role in encouraging participation. The three main policies, as enlisted before, all need to be intended or executed by the board. In the literature, all three policies are embedded in the word “transformational leadership”. Transformational leadership is seen as a style of leadership where a leader, in this case the board, work together with members to create a vision (clear policy), and execute that vision together with the committed members (social cohesion) and inspire them (personal approach). Transformational leadership has been attributed to an increasing sense of identity, being a role model and inspiring members to take greater ownership of their “work” (Deluga, 1988).

5.2.3 Integration, inclusion and the continuous process

The shift from the medical model of disability toward the social model of disability is clearly visible in all associations. None of them regards the athletes with disabilities as dependent, pathetic, cuddly-athletes, but aims to fully include them in the association. It seems that the fact that full inclusion is not depicted in all association cannot be addressed to the usage of a medical lens to look at athletes but disabilities, but is embedded in the assumption that inclusion is an ongoing process. The associations that have integrated disability sports a long time ago, BVC Holyoke and TTC Asterix, are also the one that depict active participation and full inclusion of athletes with disabilities. The associations that have integrated disability sports more recently, HollandSchermen and TV Rapiditas are still trying to find their way in attracting and including more members. Furthermore, the representatives mention that it takes time to encourage people to participate. Especially in the beginning, more energy needs to be devoted to the new group of athletes with disabilities. The fact underlines the assumption that inclusion is a continuous process.

5.3 Answering the main research question

In the previous parts, the four underlying themes of the sub questions are discussed, and policies are discovered to encourage participation. This builds up to answering the main research question:

How can boards of local sport associations in the Netherlands where integration has taken place increase active participation and eventually foster inclusion of athletes with disabilities?

Sport association should have a clear vision and intention regarding the participation and inclusion of athletes with disabilities. Furthermore, an environment should be created where everyone feels welcome to participate. Irrespective of the size of the association, a personal approach is needed to

convince the athletes to become active. Especially in the beginning, encouraging athletes with disabilities to become active in the association requires an active approach of the board. Inclusion does not just happen overnight.

However, when it comes to best practises, this work does not suggest that every approach or practise of the researched sport associations are universally applicable to all other sport associations that integrate disability sports. This research has clearly show that in all the six sport association, other factors play a role that hinder or encourage participation. Therefore, individual solutions for every club need to be designed, looking at the context of the club and the sport discipline. This research has shown that board do play an important role in encouraging participation. They are in the end the ones that design the policy and can lead by example. By providing some insights in how these sport associations that are seen as good practises have integrated and included disability sports, other boards can extract suitable information form this research and apply it in their own sport association.



6. Limitations and future research

Source: Erasmus Volley, author

This research explored the concept of integration of disability sports within local, mainstream sport associations. The study sought to identify good practises that encourage not only integration, but actually foster inclusion. However, this research is not without limitations, which will be discussed in part 7.1. As this research covered a relatively new research field, there are several critical suggestions for future research on the topic of inclusion of athletes with disabilities in local, mainstream associations. These suggestions are discussed in part 6.2.

6.1 Limitations

Despite an in-depth analysis of six mainstream associations that have integrated disability sports in different disciplines and in different parts of the country, this research has not been executed without limitations. General limitations regarding this new research area and the sample size are discussed, as well as the most important biases in this research.

6.1.1 Limited existing research

First of all, as addressed in the research challenges of part 4.2, this research acknowledges its limitation on the existence of the right literature or earlier research done on the topic. Based on the extensive theoretical background and research landscape, assumptions and contextual factors have been defined aiming to partly cover the absence of a theoretical framework. When a concrete theoretical framework on this topic becomes available, a re-evaluation of this work is suggested.

6.1.2 Sample

Another limitation of this research is the sample group. The author conducted one interview per sport discipline, which was identified as (one of the examples of) an association where integration and inclusion was successful. Hence, this research used a sample group of six sport associations wherefrom the outcomes are translated into good practises of associations in the Netherlands. This might be considered as a small sample. However, the sample size is often a large ambiguity in qualitative research (Patton, 1990). There are no set rules to determine the size of the sample. Rather, the sample size is determined by what the researchers wants to know, the purpose of the research, and what will be credible. 'The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative research has more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the capabilities of the researcher than with sample size' (Patton, 1990, p. 245). Since the author has carefully selected the six most relevant sport disciplines and has used the information of the federations to select rich cases, the author believes she has done everything possible within the limited time available to minimise this limitation. Nonetheless, limited data makes it difficult to draw definite conclusions.

The selection of cases across the whole country has its benefits regarding generalizability. Nonetheless, it also has its limitations. The selection has not been done randomly but purposefully, resulting in a selection bias. In sport disciplines in which various suitable cases were identified the author chose one case, based on geographic location. However, it might be that the other cases would have provided more insight on the topic. Furthermore, this research only focuses on associations that are expected to provide good practises. This is in line with the main research question. However, studying both good and bad cases makes it easier to identify gaps, defining how far some clubs lag behind the good-practises.

6.1.3 Researcher's limitations

Another limitation of this research is the role of the researcher. As Morse et al. (2008, p. 18) stated, 'research is only as good as the investigator'. First of all, the researcher decides what questions are asked in the interviews, and how information is recorded and interpreted. Researcher bias includes using those tools selectively (Johnson, 1997). A key determinant of the quality of this research is therefore the quality of insights and thinking brought by the author. Although the author tried to present adequate evidence, a researcher bias might have occurred.

Furthermore, during the interviews an interviewer bias can occur. The interviewer's facial expression, tone of voice and style of language may introduce bias. It may give clues to the interviewee to provide data to match the researcher's thoughts (Creswell, 2003). Much care was taken to prevent this. The author remained as neutral as possible and did not provide its own opinion during the interview. Still, interviewer bias might have occurred during the interviews. If this has been the case,

this was not deliberate, as the author holds no preference to specific responses. However, also the interviewer's age, race and gender may produce bias. These cannot be controlled by the author.

Another issue is that the interviews were for earlier defined reasons conducted in Dutch and later translated to English to finalise the results, discussion and conclusions. Therefore, a translation bias cannot be neglected. Birbili (2000) states that when data is collected in one language and the findings are presented in another, the translator must make translation-related decisions. In this research, the author also took the role of the translator. The translation-related decisions have impact on the research validity. In cases such as this research, where the translator is the same person as the researcher, the quality of translation is influenced by three factors. The researchers' knowledge of the language and the culture of the people under study (Vulliamy, 1990, p. 166), the researcher's fluency in the language of the write-up, and the autobiography of the researcher. The author believes her knowledge of the culture and people under study to be sufficient. This view is strengthened by the fact that extensive desk research was conducted, before the interviews took place. The author's fluency in English language is also deemed sufficient to be able to translate an interview. The author tried to provide lexical equivalence as much as possible. However, where lexical equivalence is not possible, the author tried to provide conceptual equivalence, as Birbili (2000) suggested. This has for example been the case with the typical Dutch word 'gezelligheid'. Nonetheless, a translation is never free from the researcher's own interpretations.

6.1.4 Response bias

The last limitation lays in the responses of the interviewees. Even though the depth of a semi-structured interview is seen as enhancing validity, the researcher can never be fully confident that all answers of the respondent are completely valid. This is enhanced by the fact that the interviews used a self-report approach. In general, research participants tend to under-report behaviours and thoughts deemed inappropriate by the researcher, and tend to over-report behaviours viewed as appropriate (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002). Hence, it might be that the six representative of the sport associations have presented their associations better than it actually is. The extensive desk research partly covers this issue. However the majority of the question asked during the interview could not be verified through desk research. Therefore, the possibility of response bias cannot be ignored in this research.

6.2 Future research

As this research serves as a starting point in research on the integration of athletes with disabilities in mainstream associations, suggestions can be made that are considered advancing research on this topic.

6.2.1 Including other cases

As suggested before, research on this topic could be improved by not solely focusing on exemplary cases, but by also incorporating cases where integration is actually limited to integration only, rather than inclusion. This makes it easier to identify differences between approaches associations take and determine why athletes with disabilities participate more in some associations than in others. Furthermore, this research is focused on mainstream associations that have integrated disability sport in their association. Also associations that have deliberately chosen not to integrate disability sports in their mainstream association, but create for example an independent foundation for the organisation of disability sports, could be included in further research. This is how Hockey Club Blerick for example has organised its disability sports. Researching why associations choose a specific organisational form and what this form implies for inclusion creates a more comprehensive overview of the issue. This implies that the amount of interviews should be expanded, which was due to time and resource constraints not possible for this research.

6.2.2 Incorporating other perspectives

As already mentioned, this research is conducted from a 'management' perspective, looking at the inclusion of athletes with disabilities from a board's perspective. To be able to gain more insight in the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities, other perspective could be included in other research. It would be highly interesting to also incorporate the insight of the athletes with disabilities themselves and how they think about integration and inclusion. Especially given the limitation mentioned in part 6.1.4, that organisations tend to portray themselves better than they actually are, it would be of added value to also incorporate the voices of the athletes themselves. Also adding the perspectives of local governments and sport support services would be a valuable extension. In particular since the majority of the associations mention that they cooperated closely with other partners.

6.2.3 Differences between regions

To increase generalizability, the author decided to select cases from different parts of the country if possible. Still, some regions were over represented, while others were underrepresented. Both the volleyball federation and the table tennis federation indicated that the integration of disability sports was best developed in the south of the country. Based on the six federations that were

asked to provide suitable cases, no conclusion can be drawn. However, it would be valuable to see whether there really is a difference between different regions and what the underlying reasons are for that.

6.2.4 Differences in boards

What further grasped the author's interest were the non-typical board members the author interviewed. While the literature suggested that the majority of boards often consist of older men, the board members involved in this research were all relatively young (except for Huijs, who has been board member of the association for over 35 years now). A research by Smith and Turner (2015) has shown that age matters when defining inclusion. Younger people, so called millennials, defined inclusion as the support for a collaborative environment that values open participation from different individuals. Furthermore inclusion is seen as having a positive impact on the organisation. For this generation, inclusion and fairness are highly correlated. The older generation, called baby-boomers, or generation X, defines inclusion as the integration of individuals of all demographics into an organisation. It is seen as a legal imperative, the right thing to do to achieve compliance, regardless of whether it benefits the organisation. The findings of this research suggest that the thinking of the older generation relates to integration, rather than inclusion. The line of thinking of the younger generation on the other hand, seems more related to inclusion. Based on the six board members interviewed for this research, no conclusions can be drawn. However, it would be interesting for future research to examine whether there indeed is a correlation between the age of the board members and how integration and inclusion is embedded in the organisation.

Appendices

Appendix A: Case selection process

In general, the databases of the federations showed that the number of mainstream sport associations wherein disability sports is integrated is relatively low. The majority of disability sports is still part of categorical associations, specially targeted to athletes with disabilities. Only the fencing is completely integrated in mainstream associations. Hence the population is limited. The associations that were named as highly suitable to this research were:

Basketball:	Be Quick '28	Zwolle
	Barrons Breda	Breda
Cycle racing:	Wielervereniging Het Stadion	Utrecht
Fencing:	Scaramouche	Arnhem
	HollandSchermen	Alkmaar
	Pallas	Breda
Table tennis:	TTC Asterix	Belfeld
	TTV Zuiderhuis/Megacles	Weert
Tennis	Rapiditas	Nijmegen
	Vego	Apeldoorn
Volleybal	BVC Holyoke	Belfeld

Both BVC Holyoke and Wielervereniging Het Stadion were named as one best example within, and thus selected for this research. Furthermore Be Quick '28 and HollandSchermen were the only associations to represent the north-east and the north-west of the country. The province Limburg, in the south-east of the country is seen as the pioneering province with respect to wheelchair table tennis (NTTB Team Parasport). Both the associations TTV Asterix and TTV Zuiderhuis/Megacles are seen as good examples. Since both associations are situated in the province Limburg, the author could not simply select an association based on location. Therefore the author did deskresearch for both associations and found more available information about TTV Asterix than about TTV Zuiderhuis/Megacles. Therefore, the author selected TTV Asterix. Last, to maximise the spread of the associations over the Netherlands, the author selected TV Rapiditas in Nijmegen as tennis association. The selected cases are marked in bold.

Furthermore, the author found it remarkable that both the table tennis federation and the volleyball federation mentioned that disability sports are better developed in the south of the Netherlands. The volleyball federation has for example a national competition for sitting volleyball,

and only in district south a regional competition for sitting volleyball. This is the only region where a decent number of sitting volleyball associations exist to create a regional competition. On this observation if further elaborated in part 7.2

Appendix B: Interview protocol (in Dutch)

The interview protocol has been designed according to the eight principles McNamara (2009) suggests for the direct preparation of the interview. These principles include: 1) choose a setting with little distraction; 2) explain the purpose of the interview; 3) address terms of confidentiality; 4) explain the format of the interview; 5) indicate how long the interview usually takes; 6) tell them how to get in touch with you later if they want to; 7) ask them if they have any questions before you both get started with the interview; and 8) do not count on your memory to recall their answers. These principles led to the following interview protocol:

Ik zal eerst even kort uitleggen wat de bedoeling is van dit onderzoek. Voor mijn master Global Business & Sustainability schrijf ik nu mijn afstudeerscriptie over de integratie van sporten aangepaste sporten binnen lokale verenigingen. Via de (database van de) bond ben ik bij uw vereniging uitgekomen als een vereniging bij wie de aangepaste sport volkomen geïntegreerd is. Binnen het onderzoek ben ik vooral geïnteresseerd in de vraag hoe/waarom dit proces geïnitieerd en verlopen is, wat de rol van de aangepaste sporters is binnen de vereniging en hoe het bestuur deze integratie kan bevorderen.

Alles wat er binnen dit interview besproken wordt, zal alleen gebruikt worden voor mijn afstudeeronderzoek en zal met niemand anders gedeeld worden. als u liever heeft dat de naam van u en/of de vereniging anoniem blijven, kunt u dat ook aangeven.

Ik zal eerst een paar korte introductie vragen stellen, om een beeld te schetsen van de vereniging, waarna ik wat vragen zal stellen over de integratie van aangepaste sporten en hun sporters, en wat het bestuur doet en kan doen om dit te bevorderen. Ik zal tussendoor af en toe wat aantekeningen maken op mijn blaadje en met uw toestemming wordt het interview ook opgenomen. Het interview zal ongeveer 40 minuten duren.

Als u na het interview geïnteresseerd bent in de resultaten, of nog iets met mij wilt bespreken, dan kunt u mij altijd bereiken op mijn emailadres en/of mobiele nummer. Heeft u wellicht nog vragen voordat we beginnen?

Introduction

1. Could you shortly introduce yourself?
probe: position in the association, how long a member
2. Hoeveel leden heeft vereniging X?
3. Hoeveel leden actief zijn actief binnen vereniging X?
4. Hoe groot is de X (aangepaste) tak binnen de vereniging?

Context

5. Hoe heeft vereniging zich de afgelopen jaren ontwikkeld?
probe: ledengroei, betrokkenheid, consumenten, professionalisme
6. Hebben die ontwikkelingen binnen de vereniging de binding en connectie met de leden veranderd?

Intention

7. Wanneer is deze aangepaste sport geïntegreerd, en hoe is dit geïnitieerd?
probe: gevraagd vanuit externe organisatie, mensen met handicap kwamen naar vereniging, zelf geïnitieerd
8. Hoe verliep dit proces en wat was het doel?

Realisation

9. Hoe participeren de aangepaste sporters binnen de vereniging; is dit genoeg?

Encouraging further participation

10. Welke acties, plannen en methodes past de vereniging toe om inclusie van te bewerkstelligen?
11. Wat is de kern van het beleid dat wordt gevoerd door de vereniging omtrent de integratie en inclusie van de X (aangepaste sport en atleten)?
12. Kan er nog meer gebeuren, en wat dan?
13. Zijn er nog dingen die u wilt toevoegen aan dit interview?

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd, betrokkenheid en bereidheid mee te werken aan mijn onderzoek. Heeft u verder nog vragen aan mij? De informatie die u en anderen mij gegeven hebben zal ik verder gaan uitwerken en analyseren, met als einddoel rapport te schrijven over 'good practises'. Mocht er nog wat zijn, dan kan u me altijd bereiken.

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