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List of Abbreviations

VR.....	Virtual Reality
PWD.....	people with disability
PWOD.....	people without disability

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Introduction

Imagine you are passing through the cramped streets of New York, trying to find a café. People are staring at you, but ignoring your questions, a curb cut feels like a small earthquake and the café you wanted to visit is not accessible to you. In the next place, the waitress asks your friend what you would like to drink instead of you.

If you are a person with disability, these situations might be more than just familiar to you – they might portray your everyday life. If you are a person without disability, you were probably surprised about the reactions of the surrounding people. And now think, what would happen if instead of trying to imagine this situation, you would put on glasses and see the world through the eyes of this person, describing his everyday life sitting in a wheelchair in New York in the film ‘Inside my Head’ (Cerebral Palsy Foundation, 2018)? Virtual Reality (VR) provides exactly this possibility: putting people with different backgrounds into someone else’s shoes, letting them experience the world as someone else and thereby, increasing the understanding of what it feels like to be in this position.

Prior research has well established exactly this: an increase of empathy after a first-person VR experience (see: Ahn et al., 2013; Ahn et al., 2016; Shin, 2018; Shin & Biocca, 2017; Schutte & Stilianovic, 2017, Loon et al., 2018). However, firstly, in many of those studies the term “empathy” is defined very broadly. Secondly, while the effect of personal traits on creating empathy through VR is widely investigated, social group-differences and their effects are usually not accounted for. This thesis tries to fill this research gap. Based on these considerations, the question to be answered is how does group identification influence a first-person Virtual Reality experience regarding empathy and pro-social behavior? Specifically, the study attempts to investigate on the one hand, to which extent identifying as member of the group of people with disability impacts subjective reports about empathy and prosocial intentions. Prosocial intentions are seen as the effect creating empathy for out-

group members aims at (Sanchez-Laws, 2017). Inspiration for this way of analysis derives from Social Identity Theory, as well as the idea of intergroup empathy (Stets & Burke, 2000). In addition, underlying processes that are found to mediate those dynamics, such as a sense of embodiment and the feeling of actually being in the VR experience – so-called presence - are examined.

First, the theoretical basis of the paper discussing the definition of empathy, as well as the phenomenon of intergroup empathy and intergroup media effects is outlined. Subsequently, an overview of previous studies on the effect of VR experiences on empathy, prosocial behavior, presence and embodiment is provided. The methodological approach to answer the underlying question is described followed by the results and a detailed discussion of the implications, as well as the limitation of the study. Lastly, suggestions for further research are presented.

Group-Identification and its effect on empathy

Hoffman (2000) defines empathy very broadly as a learning process with five different steps: mimicry, conditioning, direct and mediated association and role taking. While the first three steps are identified as being automatic, the concepts of mediated association and role taking are of importance in this context. Mediated association means indirectly (via oneself) perceiving another person's emotion, while role taking means to consciously imagine oneself in the others position, including the situation and emotion of the other person. This distinction is an important one to make, as will be outlined in the discussion below. Hoffman further points towards the importance of one's own experiences and memories of a situation, as e.g. in the direct and mediated association personal memory of a similar situation and event is transferred to the situation of the other person.

The main theoretic groundwork in this paper relies on the definition of empathy by the philosopher Coplan (2011), who calls for a narrow definition of empathy. In her paper she

distinguishes between emotional contagion, pseudo-empathy and empathy proper. Emotional contagion herein is defined as underlying automatic and often unconscious processes such as mimicry and the synchronization of postures or movements. This would relate to the first two steps of empathic processes as described by Hoffman (2000). Pseudo-empathy relies on self-oriented perspective taking and aligns with Hoffman's (2000) direct and mediated association. In other words, pseudo-empathy means imagining how oneself would feel, think and act in another individual's position, which means, transferring one's own emotions and experiences to the situation of the others. This process resembles empathy as conceptualized in this paper and thus, will be included as a measurement. Lastly, empathy is defined by Coplan (2011) as a "process through which an observer simulates another's situated psychological states, while maintaining clear self-other differentiation" (p.58). According to Coplan (2011) depends empathy proper to some extent on familiarity and knowledge of the other person's situation. People are more likely to achieve the state of empathy proper, the more familiar and the more similar individuals judge the other person.

Additionally, Sanchez-Laws (2017) points towards the importance of adding intended action to the definition of empathy. According to her, the evolutionary effect of empathy is to take actions, such as helping or generating relief, to another person.

To summarize, the definition of empathy in this paper relies heavily on the definition of pseudo empathy by Coplan (2011) combined with the action component as presented by Sanchez-Laws (2017). Nevertheless, an attempt to measure empathy proper is included in the framework as well by measuring the feeling of 'oneness' during the VR experience.

Intergroup-empathy

As already pointed towards by Coplan (2011), similarity and familiarity are facilitators for empathy. The more familiar a situation is, the easier it is to transfer oneself into the other person's shoes. However, one of the reasons to use VR to foster empathy is to

empathize with people and situations that individuals wouldn't necessarily find themselves in, as is illustrated by Chris Milk (2015) in his Ted-talk about VR and its impact. According to him, the goal of mediums such as film and VR is "to feel empathy for people that are very different than us and worlds completely foreign from our own," (Milk, 2015). Scientific literature further highlights the beneficial outcomes of feeling empathy for individuals that are different from ourselves. For instance, within the framework of emotional intelligence, empathy is seen as a crucial component (Goleman, 1995), which has further been shown to positively influence peaceful conflict resolution (Hämmerle, 2018).

Categorizing individuals based on perceived similarity or familiarity also means to position oneself in contrast to those individuals. These individuals are then further categorized in groups in contrast to one's own group. Thus, individuals identify themselves as belonging to certain social groups, so-called 'in-groups', and not belonging to other groups that are dissimilar from in-groups. The distinction between in-group and out-group in the thesis relies on the Social Identity Theory, which defines a social group consisting of individuals identifying "themselves as members of the same social category" (Stets & Burke, 2000: 225). Individuals tend to rate in-group members more positively and preferably for interaction than out-group members, a phenomenon that is typically referred to as in-group bias (Brewer, 1979).

As several studies show, people tend to be less empathic towards members of out-groups than towards members of in-groups (Montalan et al., 2012; Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara et al., 2014). However, empathy towards exactly those groups are found to be beneficial. For example, Batson et al. (1997b) has found higher levels of empathy to reduce negative attitudes towards a stigmatized group, and Stephan et al. (2005) found higher levels of empathy to reduce negative attitudes towards immigrants.

Regarding the effect of perceived group-membership on empathy, Azevedo et al. (2013) show in a fMRI study with an experimental setup a relationship between group-membership depending on race and empathic processing. Participants in this study exhibited more neural activity the more similar they estimated themselves with the other. The least neural activity was indicated for models with a violet skin color, indicating little motivation to empathize with different, non-familiar individuals.

Cikara et al.'s (2014) experimental investigation of the mechanisms behind failures to empathize with out-group members supports the notion that individuals do not empathize with out-group members as much as with in-group members, and further shows that strong group affiliations even lead to a form of pleasure in response to the observing of pain of outgroup members. This finding is replicated by Cikara et al. (2014), where identifying strongly with a social group elicits pleasure when observing pain of out-group members. This effect is called intergroup-Schadenfreude and is found to predict lower intentions for help and higher intentions to harm out-group members.

Concerning status in general, Mashuri (2013) found that empathy levels are higher with a low status out-group in comparison with a high status out-group. Somewhat contradicting, Chung and Slater (2013) did show that less perspective taking occurs with highly stigmatized characters (in this case a recovering drug addict) than with less stigmatized characters (in this case a single mother). They argue further that perspective taking with stigmatized individuals increases the affiliation towards the in-group rather than reducing perceptions of group differences.

Mediated stimuli have previously been found to generate empathy towards out-group members. Most notably did Paluck (2009) find in a field study in Rwanda that a radio show focusing on positive interactions between groups led to an augmentation of empathy between Hutus and Tutsis. Similarly, an interaction via video between Palestinians and Israelis

showed higher levels of empathy towards members of the out-groups than before the interaction (Bruneau & Saxe, 2011). Berthold et al. (2013) show that perspective taking with an out-group induced a more positive evaluation of out-group members.

As the examples above indicate, approaches towards increasing empathy through media interventions with out-group members exist. As outlined prior, familiarity plays an important role when empathizing with others, thus, making information crucial when empathizing with unfamiliar groups. Indeed, Gehlbach (2015) demonstrated in a perspective taking study, that receiving information about the other group elicited perspective taking. Additionally, those participants who were handed an emotionally rich text did not only show higher effects on perspective taking, but also compromised more in a discussion following the experimental setup than participants.

Summarizing these results, media interventions to increase empathy between groups have been successful in achieving this goal under the aforementioned circumstances. Nevertheless, empathy was found to generally be higher in strongly-identifying individuals towards in-group members in contrast to out-group members (Cikara et al., 2014; Cikara, et al., 2011), or the more similar one thinks the other person to be (Azevedo et al., 2013). Thus, it is argued that the stronger participants identify with an in-group, the more empathic they are.

Virtual Reality media effects

Effects of Virtual Reality on empathy

The unique aspect of VR is its ability to transport someone to another place, another situation. This aspect is for example widely used by medicine students, who are studying the anatomy of the human body in great detail in VR, as well as by gamers who are now able to fight zombies eye to eye. In media, VR is used by journalists and NGOs to try to foster empathy. “How virtual reality can create the ultimate empathy machine” is one of the famous

Ted Talks by the VR producer Chris Milk (2015) discussing the possible effect of VR on empathy. Intertwining with this real-life discussion have researchers also focused on finding to which extent empathy can be fostered in VR.

Several studies showed VR to have a positive impact on empathy, in contrast to lower- immersion treatment conditions. Sundar et al. (2017) found in their study comparing two types of stories with three storytelling mediums that VR elicited the highest levels of empathy in comparison to text and 360° videos viewed on a laptop. Further, the more emotional the content, the higher were empathy levels across all storytelling mediums – but the weaker were the effects of technological mediums such as VR. On the other hand, the less emotional the content of a story was, the higher were the differences in results between the mediums. The study also shows a higher level of attention and arousal during the experience of VR stories than during the other two conditions; however, it also finds lower levels of recall of information in the VR condition.

Archer and Finger (2018) were able to replicate these results in an experimental study. Participants were assigned randomly to a textual or a VR treatment, then completed a questionnaire post-stimulus, two and five weeks after the original stimulus. According to their results, VR videos resulted in a higher empathic response in comparison to texts or photo treatments, in particular with those individuals that were not familiar with the technology before. Furthermore, higher empathic responses increased intentional political participation and facilitated the recall of the story one week after the treatment. Lastly, in accordance with Shin (2018) the study shows that despite VR having an impact on empathy, personal attributes, such as a lack of interest or over-familiarity with a subject, could not be outweighed with the technology.

Shin (2018) found in her study of the effect of presence on engagement and the mediating role of empathy and embodiment that the most important factor leading to empathy

and embodiment were interpersonal traits, rather than presence or immersion. According to the results of Shin (2018), users experience VR as a two-tiered process. First, users are put into a virtual environment and therefore, are exposed to a technical level of immersion that leads to presence. Secondly, according to user's cognition and personal empathy traits, users experience high or low levels of presence and embodiment, which then ultimately influence empathy. Regardless of participants personal empathy tendency, the VR condition did increase empathy in contrast to the flat-tv condition; however, with different strengths. While participants with a high empathy tendency showed only a moderate correlation between their experienced presence and post-stimulus empathy, participants with a low empathy tendency did show a high correlation between resulting empathy and presence.

Schutte and Stilinovic (2017) in their study with the stimulus of the VR film "Clouds over Sidra" by the New York Times about a refugee girl in a camp close to the Syrian border found that individuals watching the VR film showed higher levels of empathy than individuals watching the control condition. Participants in the control condition watched the same film via a headset, with the difference that they were not able to turn their heads and hear spatial sounds, thus, without the characteristics of a VR experience. These results show the strong impact of specific VR traits, such as controlling agency during a VR film. Further, a mediating effect of engagement on empathy was identified. However, the causal direction between engagement and empathy is not clear yet. Schutte and Stilinovic (2017) directly contradict Shin (2018) regarding the relationship between engagement and empathy. While prior argue that engagement has a mediating role between a VR experience and empathy, Shin (2018) argues that empathy leads to a higher engagement in groups.

Herrera et al. (2018) found in a study comparing cognitive perspective taking to VR perspective taking by embodying the avatar of an individual belonging to a socio-economically low-status, stigmatized group leads to more intentional and actual helping

behavior. However, no significant differences were found between perspective taking tasks and reported levels of empathy. These findings are partly replicated by Hamilton-Giachristis et al. (2018), who show that embodying a low-status perspective (children) via VR led to higher levels of empathy than prior to the treatment, particularly in those instances where negative behavior towards the inhabited group was experienced. Thus, status and stigmatization of the inhabited group influence empathy.

Taken together, these studies indicate a complex process of arising empathy evoked by VR experience. Personal traits, such as personal empathy-ability or confirmation of technology have been found to majorly influence empathy levels and the feeling of immersion in a VR experience. Further, the more trustworthy a narrator, the newer the technology to the users, the newer the topic to the users and the more information about the character itself was provided, the higher tends empathy to be for VR users.

Generally, a VR condition has been found to positively influence empathy in contrast to a control condition, regardless of whether the only difference between the stimulus was the VR agency (Schutte & Stilinovic, 2017), whether the control stimulus was textual (Archer & Finger, 2018), visual (Shin, 2018; Sundar et al., 2017, Shin & Biocca, 2017). The effects of VR further have been found to override prior empathy tendencies (Shin, 2018), and lead to empathy towards specific others (Loon et al., 2018). However, interpersonal traits (Shin, 2018) as well as overfamiliarity with a topic (Archer & Finger, 2018) showed to impede an increase of empathy post treatment. Group differences on empathy during a VR experience have not yet been studied widely; the results by Hamilton-Giachristis et al. (2018), as well as Herrera et al. (2018) suggest, that perspective taking via VR of a low-status group increases empathy, while a low-status stigmatized group shows no effect on empathy.

The effect of Virtual Reality on pro-social behavior

The aim of fostering a culture of empathy is not to create empathy itself but to trigger pro-social behavior that has been found to be triggered by empathy. For example, Prot et al., (2013) found empathy to function as a mediator between prosocial-media use and helping behavior. Roberts and Strayer (1996) found in an experiment with children empathy tendencies to be strong predictors of prosocial behavior for boys, and for prosocial behavior towards friends for girls. Empathy was further found to change behavior such as interactions between individuals or the intention to help (Ross, 1993).

De la Pena et al. (2010) have written a seminal paper in the field that laid the groundwork for research on the prosocial aspects of VR. De la Pena et al. (2010) conducted deep interviews with participants after they have experienced a first-person, interactive VR-news story called “Hunger in LA”. They found a high level of involvement and engagement with the content of a short, animated clip.

VR has been found to alter human behavior. Male participants who had a record for domestic abuse who took on the perspective of female victims in a computer-generated VR experience showed alterations of their socio-perceptual process after the VR intervention. Prior to the VR experience, participants who exhibited aggressive behavior towards females were less likely to categorize the facial expression of female victims correctly in comparison to a control group. After the VR experience, aggressive participants were more likely to categorize facial expressions of victimized females adequately, thus hinting towards impacts on behavior (Seinfeld et al., 2017). In a study by Herrera et al. (2018) comparing cognitive perspective taking to perspective taking through VR taking on another person’s perspective by embodying the avatar of an individual belonging to a low-status, stigmatized group leads to more intentional and actual helping behavior.

Thus, VR has been shown to have an impact on human behavior, as well as on prosocial behavior. Furthermore, as pro-social behavior is seen as being induced by empathy (see: Sanchez-Laws, 2017), the logical next step in studying VR and its effect on empathy is to investigate to which extent prosocial behavior can be influenced by VR induced empathy.

‘The sense of being there’: Presence

The technology of Virtual Reality (VR) has been found to have several effects depending on the topic (Archer & Finger, 2018), perspective (Slater et al., 2010), whether an avatar was inhabited (Ahn et al., 2016; Ahn et al., 2013) and whether direct interaction with the protagonist occurred (as seen in De la Pena et al., 2010). However, the concept of presence seems to be one unique characteristic of a VR experience as indicated the study of Sundar et al. (2017), where different mediums were measured regarding different characteristics. Presence was found to be tied to visual mediums and particularly heightened in effects for non-gaming VR experiences when the narrative itself was not extremely emotional. Furthermore, several studies have shown the concept of presence to directly influence the impact of VR on users (see: Nicovich et al., 2005; Schutte & Stilinovic, 2017).

Presence is commonly defined as ‘the sense of being there’, with ‘there’ referring to the virtual environment the user is exposed to, and consequently not only feeling, but also behaving as if the user is ‘inside’ the virtual environment (Sanchez-Vives & Slater, 2005). Higher senses of presence have been found to correlate with higher levels of empathy, as the two concepts have been found to share features such as projecting the self into a different setting or person (Nicovich et al. 2005; Gerry, 2017). Früh and Wunsch (2009) in their definition of media empathy even suggest the relationship between empathy and presence to be crucial for understanding mediated empathy. Several studies illustrate accordingly higher levels of presence to result in higher levels of empathy (Shin & Biocca, 2017; Shin, 2018). Other studies similarly found higher levels of presence to result in higher levels of fear

experienced in a VR experience (Lin, 2017), and higher levels of confirmation of the technology (Shin & Biocca, 2017). Thus, it is hypothesized that presence functions as a predictor of empathy.

Group effects on presence have not yet been studied widely. However, existing literature points towards higher presence when an in-group is inhabited in the virtual environment. In particular Kyriakou and Chrysanthou (2018) indicate in their study of the impact of virtual crowds on helping behavior during a threat, in group participants to show higher engagement, interaction and presence when the crowd was shown to be similar to the participant's character, e.g. were socially related or were identified with the same colors.

Similarity of inhabited avatars and participants further have shown to have a positive impact on the sense of presence. In a comparison of three avatars – one created by a 3D artist to most resembles the participant, a comic version and an avatar only similar in body composition the comic version had the strongest effect on presence, while the avatar only similar in body composition showed less perceived presence. Contrarily, however, did the character most resembling the real world participant created by a 3D artist show the least effect on presence and engagement (Dongsik et al., 2017). Similarity in voice was additionally found to have significant positive effects on presence, while facial similarity did not impact presence (Aymerich-Franch, Karutz & Bailenson, 2012).

Despite scarce research available on this topic, presented findings hint that belonging to a virtually presented group increases presence. Thus, the relationship proposed in this thesis assumes presence to be influenced positively by group identification, which in turn positively affects empathy.

Embodiment

Embodiment, or sense of body-ownership, refers to the feeling of the existence of a body in the virtual environment. Inhabiting an avatar or body in a VE has shown to increase

the feeling of presence in the virtual environment (Slater & Usoh, 1994; Slater et al., 2010). Regarding the effect of embodiment on empathy, Ahn et al. (2013) found that embodied experiences in VR led to a greater self-other merging, defined as “put the self in another person’s shoes” (Ahn et al., 2013: p. 7) than cognitive perspective taking (imagining oneself as another person). Additionally, Groom et al. (2001), showed that embodying a racially different avatar in an VR experience increased racial bias in contrast to imagining inhabiting a racially different body. Inhabiting a racially different avatar has further been shown to not only alter racial bias, but increase behavioral signs of empathy, such as mimicry (Hoffman, 2000), after the VR experience (Hasler et al., 2017; Peck et al., 2013).

Similarities, so called “morphological similarity” (Kilteni et al., 2012: 377), between one’s own body and the avatar, the body inhabited in the VR experience, has been found to enhance the sense of embodiment (*ibid.*). A full body transition is more likely to occur, the more similar one’s own body is and moves in comparison to the inhabited avatar with respect to reflections in the VR experience, one’s position (third person vs. first person) and touch (Slater et al., 2010). While tactile sensations similar to those visualized in VR experiences are known to have the biggest impact on body ownership illusion, merely inducing similar movements in real life and VR can create the feeling of being in the virtual avatar, despite not being as pronounced (Slater et al., 2009; Steed et al., 2016). Additionally, “cognitive consciousness” (Tham et al., 2018: 190), as well as a high technological quality, helps to employ a state of embodiment during the experience.

Taken together, it is assumed that the similarity of personal experiences, as well as the similarity of the physical situation of in-group members using the VR set to the embodied experience influences their feeling of embodiment positively, which in turn influences empathy.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Based on the prior outlined literature, the following research question and hypothesis are proposed.

RQ: How does group identification influence a first-person Virtual Reality experience regarding empathy and pro-social behavior?

While a majority of the aforementioned studies analyzing the effect of a VR stimulus on empathy focused on the underlying process, such as the role of embodiment, presence, technological confirmation and familiarity, as well as interpersonal traits, the focus of this study lies on the user's and their VR experience. The idea of this study is to analyze the effect of a VR stimulus on people of a different background – in this case people who identify with the depicted group. Based on the findings (Cikara et al., 2014; Cikara et al., 2011; Azevedo et al., 2013), the assumed effect of group identification on empathy reads as follows:

H1: The more an individual identifies with the inhabited group, the more empathetic are they towards the inhabited group after a first-person-VR experience of the inhabited group.

Based on the conceptualization of Sanchez-Laws (2017), as well as results as aforementioned (Prot et al., 2013; Ross, 1993; Herrera et al., 2018), empathy is further thought to impact intended prosocial behavior.

H2: The higher empathy towards the inhabited group, the higher is the intention towards pro-social behavior directed at people with a disability after a first-person-VR experience of people with a disability.

Additionally, the relationship between group identification and VR specific variables such as presence, and in turn the effect of presence on empathy is investigated. While presence has been found to positively predict empathy after a VR stimulus (Shin, 2018; Nicovich et al., 2005; Gerry, 2017), only a few studies hint towards a positive impact of group identification on presence (Kyriakou & Chrysanthou, 2018; Dongsik et al., 2017).

H3: The more individuals identify with the inhabited group, the higher are their levels of presence.

H4: The more presence an individual experienced during the VR experience, the more empathic they are toward the inhabited group.

Similarly, embodiment has been identified to be an important predictor of post-stimulus empathy after a VR experience (Ahn et al., 2016; Ahn et al., 2013). Similarity between participants and inhabited avatar in movement has been found to positively influence embodiment (Kilteni et al., 2012; Slater et al., 2010; Slater et al., 2009). Based on these findings, the assumed relation between group identification and embodiment, as well as between embodiment and empathy reads as follows:

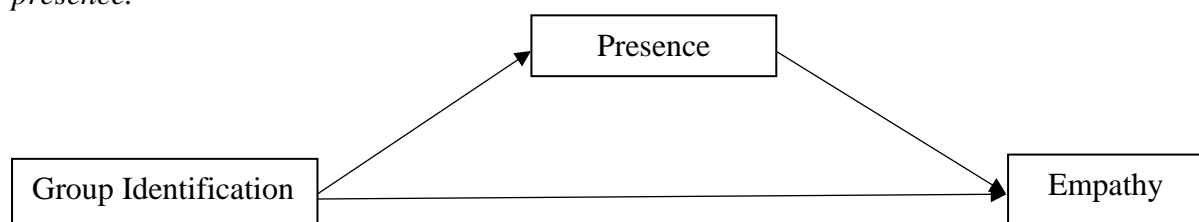
H5: The more individuals identify with the inhabited group, the higher are their levels of embodiment.

H6: The more embodiment an individual experienced during the VR experience, the more empathic are they toward the inhabited group.

In addition, two separate mediation models are proposed. Firstly, is embodiment assumed to mediate the relationship between group identification and empathy, thus combining H5 and H6.

H7: The more an individual identifies with a group, the higher will be their perceived embodiment, which will in turn increase empathy.

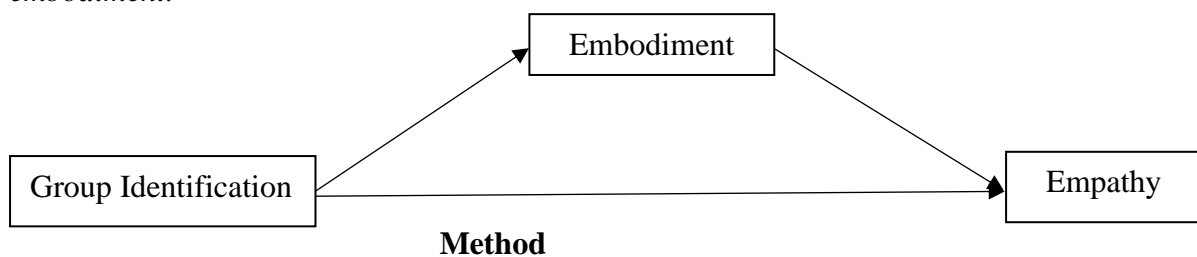
Figure 1 – proposed mediation model; effect of group identification on empathy via presence.



Secondly, as presence has been found to be a magnifier of the impact of VR on empathy, it is assumed that presence also functions as a mediator between group identification and empathy, combining H3 and H4.

H8: The more an individual identifies with a group, the higher is their perceived ‘sense of being there’ (presence), which in turn will influence empathy levels.

Figure 2 – proposed mediation model; effect of group identification on empathy via embodiment.



Design

To test the proposed hypotheses, real-world group members are tested, as Ruckmann et al. (2015) found that in certain cases a simple group-membership stimulus might not be sufficient for participants to classify themselves in a specific group. Hence, a quasi-experimental setup utilizing the VR film “Inside my head” where people with a disability are assumed to belong to the in-group and people without a disability to the out-group is implemented. Data collection took place at arranged locations. When participants were not able to complete the experimental set independently, an aid chosen by themselves was allowed to assist filling out questionnaires.

All participants completed a pre-stimulus questionnaire asking about their technological affinity, familiarity with VR, general empathy and prosocial behavior questions, their group identification with people with a disability and their personal status, as well as the status of the average person with disability. The status questions were used to validate, whether people with a disability are thought to be a low-status group, which has been shown to result in high empathy levels (Herrera et al., 2018; Hamilton-Giachristis et al.,

2018; Mashuri, 2013). After the first set of questions, participants were shown the VR film “Inside My Head” (Cerebral Palsy Foundation, 2018) showing the first-person-perspective of a young man living with a severe permanent disability, cerebral palsy, in New York. The experience highlights issues such as accessibility, interaction with other people and personal issues regarding the dating life of the protagonist. The VR film was originally filmed in English and dubbed by the research team to German in order to increase understanding of the German speaking population. The VR film was shown with the “Virtual Reality Glasses IVR 1000” and a phone, each participant completed the VR experience seated. Great care was taken to ensure the privacy and to limit disturbances on the location. After the treatment, questions about presence, embodiment, different aspects of empathy, such as the emotional and the perspective taking aspect as well as intentional pro-social behavior were asked. Then participants were asked to provide demographic data and it was controlled for motion sickness and perceived realness of content. Lastly, participants could sign up for receiving the rotary and for receiving the results of the research project. Then they were orally debriefed. Completing a questionnaire took 30 to 50 minutes, depending on special needs of participants.

Participants

Data collection took place from 25.05. until the 07.07., in Austria. Individuals were recruited through different channels. Folder and newsletters were put out on university premises and the special need departments of three Viennese Universities, as well as niche online platforms and radio stations targeted to people with a disability. Lastly, sports clubs offering classes for people with and without disabilities were contacted, and subjects both with and without disabilities were recruited from there. Participants with a physical disability and participants without a disability were included. In exchange for participation, subjects were given the possibility of signing up for a raffle to win a voucher for a well known Virtual

Reality Café in Vienna. These approaches resulted in 96 participants. One subject had to be excluded, as the subject was physically unable to watch the VR stimulus. The remaining number N=95.

The final sample consisted of 45.3% female and 54.7% male participants, none choosing the „other“ option. Participants were on average about 35 years old, ages ranging between 19 to 65 years, ($M= 35.64$, $SD=13.797$). Out of the 95 participants, 51.57 % (49) reported to have a disability, 48.42 % (46) participants reported to not have a disability. Regarding family status, 41 % reported to be single, 35.8% to be in a relationship and 14.7% to be married, while 7.4% reported to be divorced or widowed. The majority of participants is working (46.3 %), 20% are students with a job, 12.6% full-time students, 10.5% of the people are already retired. 35.8% reported the highest completed education to be A-levels (Matura), 20% apprenticeship certificate (Lehre), 18.9% Bachelor's degree, 10.5% a Master's degree, 9.5% obligatory school and 2.1% to have completed a PhD. Between groups of people with a disability and without a disability, two demographic variables show to be of significant difference. Firstly, are participants with a disability older ($M=41.79$, $SD= 13.52$) than participants without a disability ($M= 29.08$, $SD= 10.84$) ($t(93)= 5.03$, $p<.001$). Secondly, do the groups differ significantly in their working situation, with people with a disability being more likely to work (work= 59%, 16.3% retired, 8,2 % students, 6.1% unemployed, 4.2% self-employed), while people without disability are more likely to still be in education (32.6% students with work, 32.6% work, 23.9% full-time students, 4.3% unemployed, 4.3% retired) $X^2(6, N=95) = 25.2$, $p<.001$ with a medium strong correlation ($\Phi=.515$, $p<.001$).

Measures

Technological Affinity. Technological affinity towards electronic devices was measured by the originally German multi-factor questionnaire TA-EG (Karrer et al., 2009). Technological Affinity ($M= 6.96$, $SD= 1.46$, Cronbach's alpha = 7.65) is measured on a 10

items (*1 – do not agree to 10 – strongly agree*), 4 dimension scale covering enthusiasm for technological devices (e.g. ‘I love to own new technological devices’), technology competency (e.g. ‘I know most functions of the technological devices I own’), positive attitudes (e.g. ‘Technological devices make everyday life easier’), and negative attitudes (e.g. ‘Technological devices cause stress’) towards technological devices. The scale was used as it covers different factors regarding technological affinity, which are particularly directed at state-of-the-art technology, thus fitting well to check for affinity towards VR.

Virtual Reality familiarity. Familiarity with VR ($M= 3.17$, $SD= 1.94$, Cronbach’s $\alpha= .727$) was tested with two items asking how many individual times VR has been either used for gaming or watching a video. In addition, on a scale from 1 to 10 participants should report how well they know the technology of VR. These single numbers were recoded to match a scale from one to ten.

Empathy Tendency. To assess whether the groups differ in their empathetic tendency significantly from each other, before being exposed to the stimulus participants answered a fourteen item empathy questionnaire based on the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) (Spreng et al., 2009). The questionnaire incorporates different conceptualizations of empathy, such as emotional contagion (e.g. ‘When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too’) and cognitive empathy (e.g. , I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything‘). The overall Cronbach’s Alpha of the scale was .611, thus being questionable. Six questions were negatively formulated, thus, a Cronbach’s Alpha was calculated strictly for positively formulated items, which resulted in an acceptable Cronbach Alpha (.720), which is used for this analysis ($M= 8.054$, $SD= 1.403$).

Group Identification. Group identification was measured with twelve items based on the multicomponent in-group identification scale by Leach et al. (2009), which was also validated in different studies (Lovakov, 2015). Four dimensions of group identification are

considered by applied scale, namely solidarity (e.g. 'I feel a bond with people who have a disability'), satisfaction (e.g. 'I think that people with disabilities have a lot to be proud of'), centrality (e.g. 'Being a person with disability is an important part of how I see myself') and individual self-stereotyping (e.g. 'I have a lot in common with the average person with disability'). Participants were asked to rate these statements on a ten-point scale (*I – do not agree to 10 – strongly agree*). The options "Does not apply to me", as well as "No answer" were provided as possible answers. "Does not apply to me" answers were interpreted as being on the lowest side of group identification and subsequently coded as 0, "No answer" replies were coded as missing values. The group identification scale results in an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha of .874 (M= 4.67, SD= 2.35).

Group membership. In addition to group identification, participants were asked to state whether or not they had a disability, and if so, to indicate their specific disability. This procedure leads to 49 people reporting as having a disability.

Status. Status was measured with two pictorial questions based on Adler (2000). The pictures each showed a ladder with ten steps. Participants were asked to first, indicate where on the ladder representing hierarchy in society the average person with disability is located. Then they were asked to report on the same ladder, where their personal location in society was. The status of participants with a disability was rated lower (M=4.79, SD= 1.94), than the status of oneself (M=6.2, SD=2.02). Subsequently, a variable indicating the difference of the two status groups was calculated (M=2.02 SD= .19).

Presence. To measure presence, the Igroup Presence Questionnaire (IPQ) (Schubert et al., 1999) measuring the four most common dimensions regarding presence in originally fourteen items has been used. The questionnaire is based on previous detrimental work, such as Witmer and Singer (1998), as well as Sanchez-Vivez and Slater (2005). The four factors measured are general presence (e.g. 'In the computer generated world I had a sense of "being

there”), spatial presence (e.g. ‘Somehow I felt that the virtual world surrounded me’), involvement (e.g. ‘I was not aware of my real environment’) and experienced realism (e.g. ‘the virtual world felt absolutely real to me’). The German translation of the scale was utilized, further three items were rephrased to fit the scheme of the answers (*1 – I do not agree to 10 – I strongly agree*). The resulting thirteen items show a high Cronbach’s Alpha (.841, M= 6.042, SD= 1.716).

Embodiment. Embodied cognition is measured with four items based on previous work by Shin and Biocca (2017), and Ahn et al., (2013). The four items with a Cronbach’s Alpha of .820 (M= 4.381, SD= 2.299) referred to the extent to which participants felt they had a body in the virtual experience (e.g. ‘During the VR experience I felt as if I could influence the virtual world with my avatar’).

Empathy. To cover a close definition of empathy as outlined before, three distinct empathy measurements based on previous research were combined in order to create a robust model of empathy. Using a 10-point scale, participants indicated to which extent they experienced the following emotions during the VR experience: sympathetic, compassionate, touched and softhearted (Cronbach’s Alpha= .660, M= 6.495, SD= 1.847). These four emotions have been shown by Herrera et al. (2018), as well as by Batson and colleagues (Batson et al., 1997a) to be closely related to empathy. To add a second dimension to empathy, a scale based on the IRI as developed by Davis (1983) and reformulated by Schutte and Stolinovic (2017) is utilized. Two of the four dimensions of the IRI, namely empathic perspective taking (e.g. ‘I felt as if I were in the protagonist’s shoes’) and empathic concern (e.g. ‘I felt protective towards the protagonist’) were used (Cronbach’s Alpha= .872, M= 7.225, SD= 1.978) (*1 – I do not agree to 10 – I strongly agree*). Lastly, the inclusion of the other in the self was measured as exemplified by Herrera et al. (2018) by providing participants with a pictorial question including ten pictures of two overlapping circles, a

higher degree of overlapping indicating a higher inclusion of the protagonist of the story in the self. Participants were asked to choose the circle that best exemplified their relationship with the protagonist during the story ($M= 4.57$, $SD= 2.636$). Taken together, these fourteen singular items and three measurements of empathy form an inclusive concept of empathy (Cronbach's $\text{Alpha}= .883$, $M= 6.796$, $SD= 1.73$).

Intentional Pro-social behavior. To assess the intent to prosaically behave after the treatment, two different scales were adapted. Firstly, the scale of pro-social behavior as proposed by McIntyre (2015) assessing the results of constructive journalism on pro-social behavior was utilized. This scale is made up of four items mainly drawn from the idea of prosocial behavior in society (e.g. 'I would donate money to a fundraiser to help people with a disability') (Cronbach's $\text{Alpha}: .409$, $M= 5.694$, $SD= 1.667$). The second measurement is appropriated from Baumsteiger and Siegel (2018), who as one of the first developed a measurement for prosocial behavior. In four items, participants were asked how likely they would be to help a person with disability with different tasks, such as carrying groceries, or help searching for a key (Cronbach's $\text{Alpha}: .574$, $M=9.063$, $SD= 1.152$). Both scales were measured on a ten point scale asking for level of agreement ($1 - I do not agree to 10 - I strongly agree$). While resulting in unacceptable Cronbach's Alphas by themselves, taken together, the Cronbach's Alpha passes the lowest acceptable threshold of .6 (Gliem & Gliem, 2003) (Cronbach's $\text{Alpha} .660$, $M= 7.858$, $SD= 1.223$).

Motion Sickness. In order to exclude motion sickness as causing possible issues regarding presence and empathy, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they felt nauseous, uneasy or experienced physical discomfort ($1 - not at all to 10 - very strongly$), (Cronbach's $\text{Alpha}= .777$, $M= 2.712$ $SD = 2.1616$).

Realness. Three items measured were used to confirm, whether participants felt the experience was realistic, truthful and mirrored everyday situations of people with disability (*1 – not at all to 10 – very strongly*) (Cronbach's Alpha= .681, M= 8.1228, SD= 1.848).

360. To assess behavior during the VR experience and ensure participants took use of the specific traits of VR, participants were asked to indicate, whether they turned their head often, sometimes, almost never or never (M= 1.63, SD= .737, Median: sometimes (37.9%)).

Qualitative questions. As studies regarding group identification and the effect of VR technologies are not yet established, two qualitative questions were posed to participants. The questions were "Please describe in your own words, how you personally experienced the Virtual Reality film", and secondly "How did you perceive the presentation of the protagonist?" A qualitative analysis based on Mayring (2000) was conducted to compare the free mentions of people without disability and people with disability. After a coding scheme was developed, two coders were trained to code the qualitative answers. Cohen's K was run to see to which extent coders agreed. Strong agreement was found between the two coders analyzing the responses of people without disability (K= .085, $p < .05$), and people with disability (K= .81, $p < .05$) (Viera & Garrett, 2005). 178 separate responses were coded for participants without a disability, 116 for people with disability, leading to 294 codes overall.

Results

To test, whether participants of the two groups under investigation, people with and without disability, showed significant differences regarding their demographic constitution, as well as empathy, technological affirmation and knowledge about the technology, the two groups were compared. As can be read from table 1, an independent sample t-test indicated that there is no significant difference between groups with (WD) and without disability (WOD) regarding motion sickness, perceived realness of the experience, technological

affinity, general empathy tendency. However, significant differences between people with a disability and people without a disability can be detected when it comes to the age of the participants and familiarity with VR technology. As aforementioned, do participants with a disability tend to be older than people without disability (PWD: $M= 41.79$, $SD= 10.8$; PWOD: $M=29.9$, $SD= 10.84$) and less familiar with the VR technology than people without disability (PWD: $M= 2.79$, $SD= 1.88$; PWOD: $M= 3.59$, $SD= 1.96$).

Lastly, there is a significant and important difference of people with a disability and without a disability regarding their indicated group identification. Thus, people with disability identify stronger with the social group of people with a disability than people without a disability (PWD: $M= 6.03$, $SD= 1.94$; PWOD: $M= 3.22$, $SD= 1.85$).

A Chi-Square test of independence was conducted to analyze a possible relation between sex, family situation and behavior during the VR experience, such as utilizing agency (360). No significant differences were found between sex (WD: $M= 1.63$, $SD= .487$; WOD: $M=1.46$, $SD= .504$; $X^2: 1$, $N=95= 2.97$, $p>.05$), family situation (WD: $M=2.04$, $SD= 1.09$; WOD: $M=1.78$, $SD= .814$; $X^2: 4$, $N=95= 4.42$, $p>.05$), and 360 (WD: $M= 1.59$, $SD= .788$; WOD: $M= 1.67$, $SD= .680$; $X^2: 3$, $N=95= 3.63$, $p>.05$). On the other hand, the working situation (WD: $M= 5.10$, $SD= 1.475$, WOD: $M=3.30$, $SD= 2.107$; $X^2 (6, N=95) = 25.2$, $p<.001$), and educational background (WD: $M= 4.49$, $SD=2.10$; WOD: $M=4.00$, $SD= 1.30$; $X^2: 7$, $N=95= 20.848$, $p<.01$) were found to be significantly different between participants with disability and without disability. Participants with disability further tend to be in a working position (WD= 59.2%) than people without a disability (WOD= 32.6%), while 23.9% of people without a disability are students (WD= 2%).

To ensure comparability of results, Z-scores were calculated.

Table 1

Results of *t*-tests and Descriptive Statistics motion sickness (MS), realness (REAL), technological affinity (TECHAFF), general empathy tendency (GET), familiarity with VR technology (VRFAM) and group identification (GID) and age by grouping: people with disability (PWD) and people without disability (PWOD).

Outcome	Group						95% CI for		t	df
	WD			WOD			Mean Difference			
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n				
MS	2.68	2.32	46	2.73 ₉	2.00	49	-.833 - .938	.117	93	
REAL	8.02	2.21	46	8.23	1.37	49	-.544 - .967	-.555	93	
TECHAFF	6.73	1.50	49	7.20	1.40	46	-.124 – 1.063	1.57	93	
GET	8.21	1.58	43	7.88	1.15	49	-.909 - .254	-1.12	90	
VRFAM	2.79	1.88	49	3.59	1.96	46	.023 – 1.586	2.05*	93	
age	41.79	10.8	49	29.9	10.84	46	-17.72 - -7.69	-5.03****	93	
GID	6.03	1.94	49	3.22	1.85	46	-3.58 - - 2.03	-7.19****	93	

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; #p<.1.

Hypothesis testing

To test the proposed hypotheses, a series of OLS based, hierarchical multiple regression analyses (for an overview see table 2 in text & Table I in the Appendix) was conducted. Demographics, technological affinity, VR experience and VR related variables (motion sickness, realness, 360 experience) were used as controls in each multiple regression. Before each regression, a linear relationship was assessed by analyzing scatterplots and correlations.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 assumes a positive relationship between group identification and empathy towards the protagonist after a first-person VR experience. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis including demographics, as well as technological and VR specific variables, was found to be significant ($F(12,79)= 5.319$, $p<.000$, $R^2= .447$). Group identification was found to be moderately positively related to post-stimulus empathy

($B = .395, p < .001$). However, at the same time, group membership (dummy variable no = 0) was found to be strongly negatively associated with post-stimulus empathy levels ($B = -.414, p < .001$), indicating that membership to the group of people with disabilities has a negative effect on empathy (see table 2). These results show a more complex underlying process to be at hand than originally hypothesized. While group identification positively predicts empathy, group membership negatively predicts empathy. A conducted independent samples T-test showed furthermore, people with disabilities to indicate lower post-stimulus empathy than people without a disability (PWOD: $M = 7.32, SD = 1.37$, PWD: $M = 6.3, SD = 1.89$; $t(93) = 2.97, p < .01$).

A moderation analysis with SPSS PROCESS macro, model number one (Hayes, 2013) was conducted in order to understand, whether group identification functions as a moderator between group membership and empathy. Indeed, if group identification of people with disability was low (-1.049) or moderate ($-.144$), being a person with disability had a significant negative impact on empathy levels (low: $-.111, SE = .303, p < .001, CIs [-1.704 - -.498]$; moderate: $-.805, SE = .217, p < .001, CIs [-1.24 - -.374]$). However, when group identification of people with disability was high (2.16), being a person with disability did not lead to significantly different empathy levels in comparison to people without a disability (high: $-.383, SE = .323, p > .05, CIs [-1.025 - .259]$) (also see: Appendix Table II).

Additionally, differences regarding the three different measures of empathy in the thesis can be identified. While an independent-sample T-test did not show significant differences between group membership and Oneness (PWOD: $M = 4.3, SD = 2.53$, PWD: $M = 4.82, SD = 2.74$; $t(93) = -.945, p > .05$), a significant difference between group membership and in perspective taking (PWOD: $M = 7.73, SD = 1.37$, PWD: $M = 6.7, SD = 2.28$; $t(93) = 2.49, p < .05$).) as well as emotional empathy (PWOD: $M = 7.24, SD = 1.54$, PWD: $M = 5.79, SD = 1.84$; $t(93) = 4.15, p < .01$) can be identified.

Based on these results, it can be claimed that while group identification showed no significant effect on people without a disability, low and moderate group identification for people with a disability resulted in lower post-stimulus empathy in comparison to people without a disability. However, for those people with a disability who showed a high group identification, post-stimulus empathy showed no significant difference to people without a disability. Hypothesis 1, assuming a positive effect of group identification on empathy thus cannot be fully verified. However, it can be stated that high positive group identification outweighs the negative effect of group membership, thus, partially verifying H1. Implications of these results will be further discussed.

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis two (H2) assumes a positive relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior. A linear relationship could not be confirmed with a scatterplot, similarly, the correlation between empathy and prosocial behavior was not significant ($r = .124, p > .05$). Additionally, a multiple regression analysis (see table 2) found no positive model for predicting intentional prosocial behavior after the VR stimulus ($F(11,80) = 1.275, p > .05, R^2 = .149$). Hypothesis H2 assuming a positive relationship between empathy and intentional prosocial behavior is rejected.

Hypothesis 3. Regarding the assumed positive effect of group identification on presence (H3), as can be read from table 2, a significant multiple regression analysis was conducted ($F(12, 79) = 4.256, p < .001, R^2 = .39.3$). The analysis confirmed a moderate effect of group identification on presence during the VR experience ($B = .252, p < .05$) and thus, confirms H3. Other than with empathy, group membership did not have an impact on presence.

Hypothesis 4. Presence was further thought to positively influence empathy towards the protagonist (H4). The significant multiple regression analysis ($F(11,80) = 5.118, p < .001, R^2 = .413$) indeed shows a moderate positive relationship between presence and empathy ($B =$

.365, $p < .001$). As assumed does empathy increase, when presence increases. Hypothesis four (H4) is confirmed.

Table 2

Linear multiple regressions predicting the effect of group identification on empathy (H1), Presence (H3), Embodiment (H5), and the effect of empathy on prosocial behavior (H2).

	Presence		Embodiment		Empathy		Prosocial Behavior	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Block 1 - Demographics								
age	-.060	.126	.016	.141	.004	.121	.262#	.104
sex	-.090	.107	-.150	.121	-.032	.104	.088	.143
family	.007	.105	-.017	.118	.015	.101	-.157	.124
work	-.076	.108	-.154	.121	-.218*	.104	-.006	.125
education	.065	.095	.223*	.107	.039	.092	.072	.112
R ²		2.2%		3.3%		9.1%		8.5%
Block 2 – Technology								
Technical Affinity VR familiarity	.102	.105	.131	.118	.018	.102	.104	.124
	.009	.110	.018	.123	-.083	.106	.089	.130
R ²		4.5%		4%		9.4%		10%
Block 3 – Virtual Reality								
Motion Sickness Realness	-.142	.094	.043	.106	.129	.091	-.029	.109
	.554***	.092	.264*	.103	.510***	.089	.140	.126
360 behavior	-.064	.095	.038	.107	-.082	.092	.128	.113
R ²		34.8%		9%		32.8%		14.6%
Predictors								
Group Identification	.252*	.117	.521***	.131	.395**	.113	-	-
Group Membership	-.007	.121	-.139	.136	-.414**	.117	-	-
R ²		39.3%		24.8%		44.7%		
Empathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	.073	.126
R ²								14.9%
N	92		92		92		92	

Cell entries are final-entry OLS unstandardized regression coefficients.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; # $p < .1$.

Hypothesis 5. The expected positive effect of group identification on embodiment was tested with a multiple regression analysis ($F(12, 79) = 2.168$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .248$) (see table 2). The results indicate a strong positive effect of group identification and embodiment during

the VR experience ($B = .521, p < .000$), while group membership showed no significant effect on embodiment ($B = -.139, p > .05$). Hence, hypothesis five (H5) is confirmed.

Hypothesis 6. Embodiment was in turn assumed to have a positive impact on empathy levels (H6). A significant multiple regression ($F(11,80) = 5.45, p < .001, R^2 = .429$) found that indeed, higher levels of embodiment predict higher levels of empathy ($B = .333, p < .001$).

Model testing

In order to test the proposed mediation models (H8 and H9), an OLS based mediation analysis using SPSS PROCESS macro, model number 4 (Hayes, 2013), was conducted.

Hypothesis 7. In the first model, the mediating effect of embodiment between group identification and empathy is investigated. Testing the mediation model, bootstrapping re-sampling was put to 10,000 to calculate confidence intervals. Further, the level of confidence for all intervals was set to 95%. Control variables were included based on prior findings. As group membership has been found to have a significantly negative impact on empathy ($B = -.414, p < .001$) that contrasts the effect of group identification, it is included in the analysis as a control variable. Additionally, VR familiarity, work and age are included as control, due to their significant difference regarding groups with and without disability (age: $t(93) = 5.03, p < .001$); working situation ($X^2(6, N=95) = 25.2, p < .001$); familiarity with VR technology ($t(93) = -2.05, p < .05$). Lastly, realness was included as a control due to the significant impact on presence, embodiment and empathy in multiple regression analysis (impact on presence: $B = .554, p < .001, SE = .092$; impact on embodiment: $B = .264, p < .05, SE = .103$; impact on empathy: $.510, p < .001, SE = .089$; see table 1).

As can be read from table 3, results verify the hypothesized positive effect of group identification on embodiment ($a = .447, SE = .124, p = .0005$), as well as the hypothesized positive effect of embodiment on empathy ($b = .264, se = .085, p = .0027$). A bootstrapped

confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = .118$, $SE = .053$, $CI = [.028 - .234]$) shows that group identification increases embodiment during a VR experience, which in turn increases empathy levels. Additionally, the results also suggest group identification to have a positive influence on empathy while taking into account the mediated route ($c' = .242$, $SE = .106$, $p = .025$). Thus, a partially mediated effect of group identification via embodiment on empathy is found, hypothesis H8 is confirmed.

Table 3

Summary of simple mediation model: predicting the effect of group identification (X) on empathy (Y) mediated through embodiment (M).

	<i>d</i>	M: Embodiment		DV: empathy	
		<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
Control					
group membership	-.156		.129	-.348**	.105
VR familiarity	-.028		.104	-.064	.083
realness	.247*		.093	.419***	.082
age	.027		.121	-.0002	.097
work	-.162		.114	-.203*	.093
Predictor					
Group Identification	.447***		.124	.252*	.106
Embodiment					
	-		-	.264**	.085
R-sq		R-sq= .188		R-sq= .485	
F (df1, df2)		3.39 (6, 88)		11.68 (7, 87)	
Sample N		N=95		N= 95	
Bootstrapped N		N= 10,000		N= 10,000	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, # $p < .10$.

Hypothesis 8. The same approach was taken in testing a simple mediating effect of presence between group identification and empathy (see table 4). Results similarly show a moderate positive influence of group identification on presence ($a = .286$, $SE = .111$, $p < .05$), as well as a moderate positive influence of presence on empathy ($b = .283$, $SE = .103$, $p < .05$). The indirect effect of group identification via presence on empathy was found to be significant, albeit low ($ab = .077$, $SE = .0468$, $CI = .0045, .1870$). Lastly, a moderately strong

direct effect of group identification on empathy can be detected ($c' = .283$, $SE = .103$, $p < .01$).

Hypothesis 9 thus is confirmed, despite the low mediating effect.

Table 4

Summary of simple mediation model of group identification (X) predicting empathy (Y) mediated through presence (M).

	<i>d</i>	M: Presence		DV: empathy	
		<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
<u>Control</u>					
group membership		-.054	.116	-.374***	.104
VR familiarity		.011	.093	-.073	.083
realness		.561***	.089	.325*	.096
age		-.048	.108	.021	.097
work		-.117	.102	-.213	.096
<u>Predictor</u>					
Group Identification		.268*	.111	.283*	.103
Presence		-	-	.288*	.095
R-sq	.348			.482	
F (df1, df2)	7.83 (6, 88)			11.56 (7, 87)	
Sample N	95			95	
Bootstrapped N	10,000			10,000	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, # $p < .10$.

Qualitative Data Analysis

A look into the analysis of the qualitative data gathered (for an overview, see Appendix table III) reveals further insights. Taking the number of codes as baseline, free answers of people with disability and without disability were put in order of most mentions. For participants without disability, 15.5% of the codes related to the experienced situation to have been realistic, 11.2% mentioned they emphasized with the character, 10.7% referred to the film being good (e.g.: very good, interesting), 9.5% referred to the perspective to have changed during the VR experience, 7.9% express the protagonist to have more issues than other people. For participants with disability, the five most coded instances were realistic with 30.2%, 13.8% referred to the film being good, 7.7% indicated the experienced situation

to be familiar to them, 6.9% expressed to have emphasized with the protagonist and lastly, 5.2% criticize the behavior of the people seen in the film, and express the protagonist to have been depicted as too sympathetic.

Discussion

Virtual Reality has the potential of being an empathy machine, creating empathy for specific others as well as whole groups. Prior research has well established an increase of empathy after a first-person VR experience (see: Ahn et al., 2013; Ahn et al., 2016; Shin, 2018; Shin & Biocca, 2017; Schutte & Stilinovic, 2017, Loon et al., 2018). In this study, the effect of group identification on empathy and empathy-predicting variables in VR, such as presence and embodiment, was observed. Additionally, prosocial behavior was assumed to be predicted by higher feelings of empathy. By doing so, this study attempts to close the gap in literature regarding the effect of group identification on presence, embodiment, empathy and prosocial behavior.

Most importantly – and raising the most questions - results point towards a complex relationship between group membership, group identification and empathy (H1). In contrast to expectations, people with disability generally showed less empathy towards the protagonist after the VR experience, while empathy tendencies tested prior to the treatment between the groups did not significantly differ. In more detail, participants with a disability with low and moderate levels of group identification were shown to be less empathetic, while participants with disability with a strong group identification were similarly empathetic as people without disability. These results contradict the proposed underlying theory of intergroup empathy, which, based on psychological studies, indicates in-group members to be more empathetic towards each other than towards out-group members (Montalan et al., 2012; Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara et al., 2014).

However, studies showed the level of group identification to be crucial for group based empathy rather than mere group membership. For instance, Azevedo et al. (2013) found that the strength of assumed similarity of in-group members to result in higher empathy. Also Cikara et al. (Cikara et al., 2014; Cikara et al., 2011) show the level of group identification to matter rather than mere group-membership. Within this study, strong group identification led to similar high empathy levels as out-group members, even if group-membership in general resulted in lower empathy. Thus, group identification had a positive effect on empathy; however, this positive effect is assumed to be outweighed by a negative effect related to group-membership.

This negative effect could possibly be explained by the phenomenon of over-familiarity. Similar to the findings of Archer and Finger (2018) could over-familiarity with the perspective of a person with a disability could outweigh the VR specific capabilities when generating empathy. Archer and Finger (2018) found individuals who are extremely familiar with a topic depicted in VR to show no significant empathetic response. In contrast, those participants who indicated to have the least knowledge about the depicted topic showed the strongest empathetic response. An analysis of the qualitative responses in this study underlines this interpretation. Participants with a disability stated the situation in VR to be familiar to them, while participants without a disability indicated to have changed their perspective during the VR experience, as well as to have been empathic. Additionally, as aforementioned, participants with a disability indicated not to have taken on the perspective of the protagonist, as well as not to have felt sympathy for the protagonist. Familiarity with the content thus might impede a change of perspective and in consequence, impede a change in empathy as the result of a stimulus in those individuals, who are not identifying strongly with the depicted group.

While the results of the study partially disqualify H1, their implications are not negative. As has been outlined, the purpose of particularly journalistic VR is to increase empathy of out-group members (exemplified by Chris Milk, 2015), which has been shown to have beneficial effects such as reducing negative attitudes (Batson et al., 1997b; Stephan et al., 2005). With this study, it has been assumed that the effect is not as generalizable as assumed, as it was thought that participants of an in-group mainly empathize with their peers. Hence, based on these findings, the assumption that empathy can be raised through a VR experience in particular for out-group members towards a low-status group is not disqualified.

Secondly, results indicate group identification to have a positive impact on embodiment (H5), as well as on presence (H3), while group membership did not show any significant effect on both variables. Embodiment is further identified to influence empathy (H6) and thus, take on a mediating role when explaining the effect of group identification on empathy (H7). The more participants identified with people with disability, the stronger was their embodiment illusion, which in turn positively influenced empathy. These findings support previous findings regarding the effect of perceived similarity of movement on embodiment (Slater et al., 2009; Steed et al., 2016) and the positive effect of embodiment on empathy (Ahn et al., 2013; Groom et al., 2001). While presence was found to have a strong impact on post-stimulus empathy (H4), as has previously been shown (Nicovich et al. 2005; Gerry, 2017; Shin & Biocca, 2017; Shin, 2018), the mediating role of empathy (H8) between group identification and empathy is marginal, albeit significant. These results validate the importance of presence and embodiment when it comes to generating empathy via VR. Additionally, strongly identifying with the group depicted improves the sense of embodying a virtual avatar during a VR experience.

Lastly, no significant effect of empathy on prosocial behavior (H2) could be detected. Thus, the assumed real-life and prosocial impact of empathy could not be found in this study. However, the separate measurements of prosocial behavior chosen within the study resulted in low Cronbach Alpha levels (below .6), thus, this outcome might be a result of poor measurement quality. Nevertheless, results also might indicate that the mediated empathy was not strong enough to - or simply did not lead to - pro-social intentions, as was assumed to be the real-life of empathy according to Sanchez-Laws (2017).

Limitations of the study include methodology, data collection and scope of the study. Methodological issues encompass the lack of a control group, which makes it hardly possible to conclude whether the observed differences result from the story content or are a result of the employed VR technology. Nevertheless, several indicators as well as previous studies (Schutte & Stilianovic, 2017; Shin, 2018; Sundar et al., 2017, Shin & Biocca, 2017) suggest VR to have had a positive impact on empathy. For example, high correlations of VR implicit measures, such as between presence and empathy as well as embodiment and empathy, point towards the impact of the VR experience on empathy. Additionally, motion sickness is rated low, while realness of the experience is rated highly, thus indicating the VR experience to have been technologically successful. A more extensive pretest furthermore would also have allowed for a deeper understanding of the effect on in-group members. Did out-group empathy levels increase through the VR story, while empathy levels of low identifying in-group members stayed the same? Additionally, utilizing characteristics of real-world participants as predictors, no random sorting into groups could be conducted. Despite being supported by theory, causal interpretations of the results are not definitive. Regarding data collection, collecting data in non-laboratory conditions might have influenced results. Participants with disability occasionally needed assistance in filling out questionnaires, as sometimes they were physically not able to, possibly resulting in socially desirable answers.

Lastly, are there non-neglectable differences in the sample between people with a disability and people without a disability regarding age, working situation and prior VR-familiarity.

Including more participants in the study would help diminish some of these issues.

Further research needs to be conducted in order to answer questions raised by this study. A more extensive pre-test could answer, whether attitudes of group members change before and after the treatment. Instituting a control group could help to disentangle the effects of content and the VR technology. Whether the effect of group identification on embodiment is a direct or a mediated one, could be studied by a more complex outline, also taking into account similarity of real-life movements or perceived personal similarity between oneself and the character. Studying a variety of in- and out-groups further would help to generalize findings. Lastly, whether the phenomenon of over-familiarity could be a reason for group-members to show less empathy as a result of a media stimulus than out-group members should be investigated.

The results of this study have implications for both media specialist and media scholars. For media specialists, implications are threefold. Firstly, similarity between an avatar and oneself seems to have positive impacts on presence, as well as embodiment, which have been identified by previous studies as well as the presented results to increase empathy. Secondly, a focus on increasing empathy does in this specific setup not lead to intentions to prosaically behave, such as donating money to a cause or participating in a fundraiser. Results further imply the importance of focusing on topics that are new to a targeted group. Scholars of Virtual Reality effects are confirmed in their identification of embodiment and presence as playing important roles in mediating outcomes of VR interventions. On a more general level, results imply the importance of taking into account characteristics of the audience when studying media effects. On a specific level, existing assumptions about

intergroup empathy might not be transferable to media effects, such as empathy generated through a treatment.

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Wir wollen nun noch etwas mehr über dich erfahren. Diese Informationen sind wichtig für unsere Analysen.

6. Hast du eine temporäre oder permanente körperliche Einschränkung? (Bsp. gebrochenes Bein, Rückenmarksverletzung etc...)

 Ja – temporär

 Ja – permanent

 Nein, ich habe keine körperliche Einschränkung

7. Wenn ja, welche?

8. Hast du ein Familienmitglied oder kennst du jemanden (einen Freund/eine Freundin, Bekannte, Chefin, Arbeitskollegin) mit einer temporären oder permanenten körperlichen Einschränkung?

 ja – temporär

 ja – permanent

 nein

9. Wenn ja, welche?

10. Wenn ja, wie gut kennst du diese Person?

Beantworte diese Frage auf der Skala von 1 – trifft überhaupt nicht zu bis 10 – trifft völlig zu.

	trifft überhaupt nicht zu	trifft völlig zu
Ich vertraue der Person meine persönlichen Geheimnisse an.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Ich fühle mich der Person extrem verbunden.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Ich spreche sehr regelmäßig mit dieser Person.	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

11. Auch im folgenden geht es um dich und deine persönlichen Einstellungen.

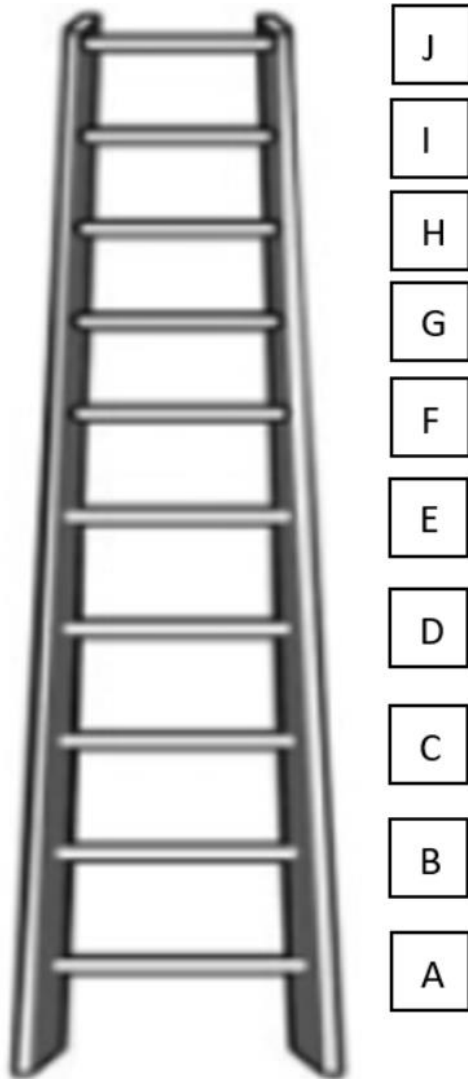
Bewerte die Aussagen mithilfe der Skala von 1 – 10, wobei 1 „ich stimme gar nicht zu“ und 10 „Ich stimme völlig zu“ bedeutet. Es kann sein dass eine Aussage nicht auf dich zutrifft, bitte kennzeichne das auf der rechten Seitenleiste.

Alle Antworten werden anonymisiert ausgearbeitet, und es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten. Deine ehrliche Meinung ist uns wichtig!

	Ich stimme gar nicht zu	Ich stimme völlig zu	Trifft nicht zu	Keine Angabe
Ich bin einer durchschnittlichen Person mit Behinderung sehr ähnlich.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Der Fakt, dass ich eine Behinderung habe, ist ein wichtiger Teil meiner Identität.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich freue mich darüber, zu anderen Menschen mit einer Behinderung dazu zu gehören.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich glaube, dass Menschen mit einer Behinderung viel haben, worauf sie stolz sein können.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eine Person mit Behinderung zu sein kann auch Vorteile haben.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe viel gemeinsam mit der durchschnittlichen Person, die eine Behinderung hat.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich bin stolz darauf ein Mensch mit Behinderung zu sein.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich fühle mich Menschen mit einer Behinderung gegenüber verpflichtet.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich denke oft darüber nach, dass ich eine Person mit Behinderung bin.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eine Person mit Behinderung zu sein beeinflusst stark, wie ich mich selbst sehe.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich fühle Zugehörigkeit mit Menschen, die eine Behinderung haben.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich fühle mich Menschen mit einer Behinderung verbunden.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Stell dir vor diese Leiter zeigt, wo sich Personen in unserer Gesellschaft befinden. Ganz oben auf der Leiter sind die Menschen, die es am Besten haben - die, die das meiste Geld, die meiste Bildung und die besten Jobs haben. Ganz unten auf der Leiter sind die Menschen, die es am Schlechtesten haben - die, die das wenigste Geld haben, die geringste Bildung und die schlechtesten oder gar keine Jobs.

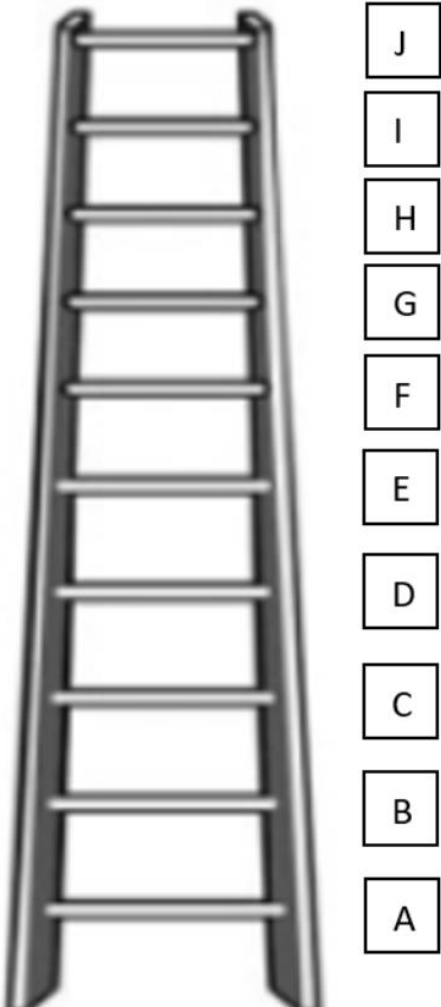
12. Wähle auf der Leiter die Sprosse aus, von der du denkst, dass sie die Position der durchschnittlichen Person mit Behinderung widerspiegelt.



Die Sprossen reichen von ganz oben auf der Leiter (J) bis ganz unten auf der Leiter (A).

- J
- I
- H
- G
- F
- E
- D
- C
- B
- A

13. Wähle auf der Leiter die Sprosse aus, von der du denkst, dass sie deine Position in der Gesellschaft widerspiegelt.



1. Als nächstes wirst du den Virtual Reality Film „Inside my Head“ anschauen.

Schau dir dafür zuerst die untenstehende Anleitung an. Melde dich dann bei unserer wissenschaftlichen Mitarbeiterin, wenn du fertig bist.

Der Film dauert ca. 4 Minuten, danach haben wir noch ein paar Fragen an dich.

Sollte dir während dem Film unwohl sein, schließe kurz deine Augen. Versuche aber trotzdem so gut es geht dem Geschehen zu folgen.



1. Setze zuerst die Virtual Reality Brille, dann die Kopfhörer auf.

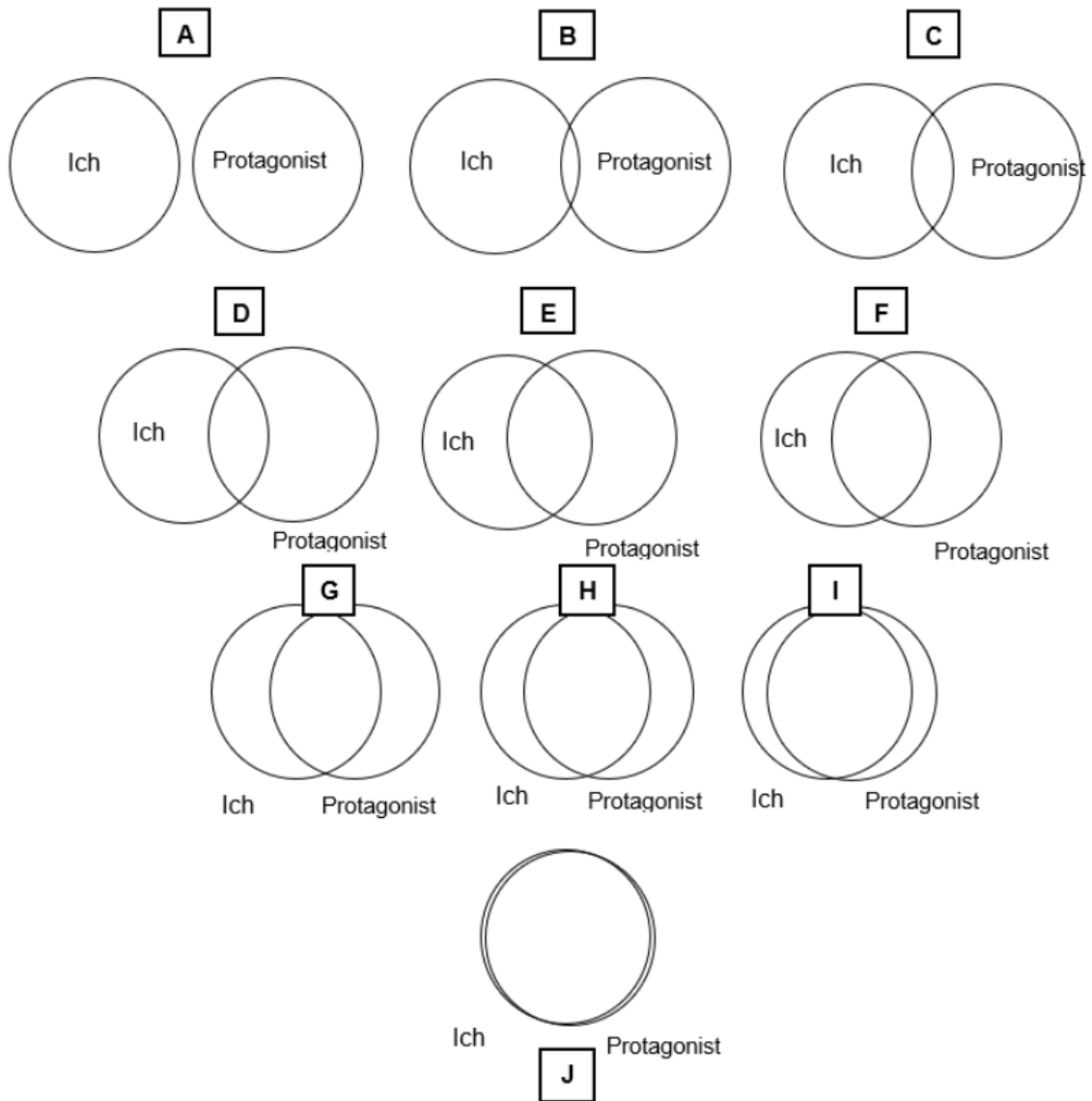


2. Stelle die Schärfe an den dafür vorgesehenen Rädchen oberhalb und seitlich der Brille ein.



3. Du kannst den Kopf während dem Film nach links, rechts, oben und unten bewegen, um dem gesamten Geschehen zu folgen.

20. Wähle aus, welches Bild (unten) deiner Meinung nach am besten die Beziehung zwischen dir und dem Protagonisten während dem Virtual Reality Film beschreibt.



- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- I
- J

21. Stell dir vor du bekommst in Zukunft in deinem Alltag folgende Möglichkeiten, um Anderen zu helfen. Zeige auf der Skala an, wie sehr du die folgenden Tätigkeiten in einer solchen Situation durchführen würdest.

Beurteile die Tätigkeiten auf der Skala von 1 – Das werde ich niemals machen bis zu 10 – Ich werde das auf jeden Fall machen.

Alle Antworten werden anonym ausgewertet und es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten!

	Werde ich nie machen	Werde ich auf jeden Fall machen
Ich würde einem Menschen mit Behinderung den Weg zeigen, wenn ich bemerke dass er oder sie sich verirrt hat.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich würde einen Menschen mit Behinderung unterstützen, nachdem er Not erfahren hat.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich würde einem Menschen mit Behinderung mit einer kleinen Aufgabe helfen, wie zum Beispiel Lebensmitteleinkäufe tragen oder auf ihre Wertsachen aufpassen, während sie die Toilette benutzen.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich würde einem Menschen mit Behinderung helfen, wenn er etwas verloren hat, wie zum Beispiel einen Schlüssel.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich werde einen Fundraiser starten, um Menschen mit Behinderung zu helfen.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich glaube, dass man nicht viel tun kann um das alltägliche Leben von Menschen mit Behinderung zu verbessern.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Wenn es die Möglichkeit gibt, würde ich Menschen mit Behinderung helfen.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ich werde einer Organisation Geld spenden, um Menschen mit Behinderung zu helfen.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Im folgenden möchten wir dir die Möglichkeit geben, deine Meinung und Anmerkungen zu dem gezeigten Virtual Reality Beitrag auszudrücken.

22. Beschreibe in eigenen Worten, wie du den Virtual Reality Beitrag empfunden hast.

23. Wie hast du die Darstellung des Lebens des Protagonisten empfunden?

24. Fast geschafft! Beantworte die folgenden Fragen wieder auf der Skala von 1 – stimme überhaupt nicht zu bis 10 – stimme völlig zu.

	stimme überhaupt nicht zu	stimme völlig zu
Mir wurde während dem Virtual Reality Film schlecht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich empfand die Virtual Reality Erfahrung als unangenehm.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich empfand den Virtual Reality Film als sehr wahrheitsgetreu.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe mich während des Virtual Reality Filmes unwohl gefühlt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich glaube die im Virtual Reality Film dargestellten Situationen sind normale Erfahrungen für Menschen mit Behinderung.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Virtual Reality Erfahrung erschien mir sehr realistisch.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Hast du während dem Film den Kopf bewegt, um zu sehen was in dem Film neben dir passiert?

- Ja, sehr oft
- Ja, manchmal
- Nein, ich habe den Film auf dem Laptop gesehen
- Nein, ich habe nicht bemerkt, dass das möglich ist

26. Welche Perspektive hast du während dem Film eingenommen?

27. Wie alt warst du an deinem letzten Geburtstag?

[Bitte auswählen] ▾

28. Welchem Geschlecht fühlst du dich zugehörig?

weiblich	männlich	sonstiges
----------	----------	-----------

29. Was ist dein derzeitiger Familienstatus?

Single	Verheiratet	Keine Antwort
In einer Beziehung	Geschieden, getrennt, verwitwet	

30. Was ist deine derzeitige Arbeitsverhältnis

In Beschäftigung	Selbstständig	Anderes
Student (ohne Job)	Arbeitslos	
Student (mit Job)	in Ruhestand	

31. Was ist dein höchster abgeschlossener Bildungsgrad?

Volksschule

Pflichtschule

Lehrabschluss

Matura / Abitur

Bachelor Abschluss oder vergleichbarer Abschluss

Master Abschluss oder vergleichbarer Abschluss

PhD / Dokoratsabschluss

Sonstiges

32. An welchem Ort (Bspw. UZA 2 1090; Ferry-Dusika-Stadion 1020) befindest du dich während dem Ausfüllen dieses Fragebogens?**33. Wenn du an der Lotterie für ein gratis VR-Abend im VR-Cafè VREI im 7. Bezirk teilnehmen willst, hinterlasse unten deine E-Mail Adresse. Daten werden getrennt erhoben, die Analyse des Fragebogens wird also trotzdem anonym durchgeführt.**

- Ich will am **Gewinnspiel** teilnehmen. Ich willige ein, dass meine E-Mail-Adresse bis zur Ziehung der Gewinner gespeichert wird. Diese Einwilligung kann ich jederzeit widerrufen. Meine Angaben in dieser Befragung bleiben weiterhin anonym, meine E-Mail-Adresse wird nicht an Dritte weitergegeben.
- Ich interessiere mich für die **Ergebnisse dieser Studie** und hätte gerne eine Zusammenfassung per E-Mail.

Appendix B – Qualitative Answers

Question 1: Please describe in your own words, how you experienced the VR film.
[Beschreibe in eigenen Worten, wie du den Virtual Reality Film empfunden hast]

Answers of people with disability:

Ton synchronisierung war mangelhaft (Nicht stimmig, NY + Deutsch), daher hat es sich sehr künstlich angefühlt.

Für mich war es mein erstes VR-Erlebnis und ehrlich gesagt war ich anfangs ein wenig enttäuscht, weil ich es mir "echter" vorgestellt habe. Gerade das mit dem Ruckeln des Rollstuhls war für mich jetzt nicht wirklich so gemacht, dass es stört - nach Aussage des Protagonisten sollte es ja aber genau das sein.
Die Situation am Gehsteig und auch im Lokal fand ich sehr realistisch gemacht, ab da hat mir auch der Beitrag sehr gut gefallen. Besonders beeindruckt hat mich, dass man sich, während der Protagonist spricht, die Reaktionen der Menschen im Lokal links und rechts von ihnen anschauen kann.

Ich bin so froh, dass wien ein Stadt ist, in der fast alle Möglichkeiten für die Behinderte gibt. Ich arbeite gerade bei der Caritas als freiwillige Mitarbeiter und einige Zeit habe ich beim Pensionistensheim gearbeitet. Ich helfe natürlich den Menschen auf der Strasse ob ich was machen kann.

im Grossen und Ganzen nicht schlecht, leider wanderte das Bild bei mir immer etwas nach rechts.

Interessant und realistisch

Es ist dem Alltag eines Rollstuhlfaheres

-

Behinderung ist voll geil, ich liebe meine Behinderung

okay

Sehr Maßstabsnah, kommt es an Erfahrung ran

der beitrage war sehr toll

Sehr gut

grundsätzlich nahe der Realität. Wie zum Beispiel die mangelnde Barrierefreiheit und die Reaktion von Menschen im Umfeld.

xxx

-

Ich hatte das Gefühl, an seiner Stelle zu sein, weil ich die gezeigten Situationen aus meinem eigenen Leben nur zu gut kenne.

Verstörend, ich war sehr genervt von den Leuten. Das Verhalten der Kellnerin habe ich als Frechheit empfunden. Da selbst in einer Stadt wie Wien die meisten Lokale nicht barrierefrei sind, war ich entgegen des Kommentars des Protagonisten überhaupt nicht "überrascht".

ganz gut gemacht, die Qualität/Farben fand ich aber irgendwie doch nicht ganz der Realität entsprechend, sondern eher wie ein Film.

habe das Gefühl gehabt das die Leute den Rollstuhlfahrer nicht ernst genommen haben wie er Hilfe brauchte

-

Ich fand ihn gut, es war so wie es wirklich ist.

-

Sehr gut, ich habe dasselbe Gefühl

Super. Er hat gezeigt wie Menschen mit einer Behinderung sich fühlen

Ich finde es würde ein einfacher Film reichen. Ohne dieses komische Ding aufzusetzen. Fühlte mich unwohl mit der Elektronik.

Ich bin selbst behindert und lebe zum Teil in einer "virtuellen Welt"

Beim Sehen wurde mir schwindelig, da ich das zum ersten Mal tat.
Der Beitrag selbst ist völlig korrekt dargestellt. Ich hatte viele Jahre mit Personen zu tun, die ähnliche bzw. gleiche Probleme hatten.

Für mich ist es nichts neues, der Film ist keine neue Erfahrung
Das Gespräch im Café über Beziehungen hatte ich noch nicht
Bauliche Barriere auch in Wien, Es ist die Barriere im Kopf, nicht die Barriere in der Realität. Die Barriere im Kopf ist schlimmer als die Barriere in der Realität.

-

Ich konnte vieles nachvollziehen und in meinem eigenen Leben wiedererkennen

Ich konnte mich sehr gut in die Situation des Behinderten versetzen, hatte aber nicht das Gefühl, dass ich da bin.

Im Nachhinein bin ich deprimiert.

Viele Themen wurden angesprochen, Liebe - Barrierefreiheit - Barrieren in den Köpfen, irgendwie war es nicht so stringent. Mir war es auch etwas zu emotionalisiert. Andererseits gefiel mir gut, die Perspektive einzunehmen.

Ich habe mich selber darin gesehen.

Normaler Alltag

hinreichend

-

sehr realitätsnahe

Rollstuhl-Perspektive sehr gut! Aber Protagonist hat noch viel mehr Behinderung als nicht laufen können. Schwer greifbar.

Sehr real, mir ist es im realen Leben auch schon mehrmals so ergangen

Zeigt das Leben im Rolli sehr gut und entspricht der Wahrheit, dass viele kaffees z.. nicht barrierefrei sind

war alles sehr neu für mich

interessant

Alltagssituationen für menschen mit Behinderung. Schlecht gewähltes Lokal - es gibt genügend Rollstuhl - gerechte.

gut gemachter Kurzfilm, beleuchtet ein paar Probleme die man als RS Fahrer hat

sehr realitätsnah!

realitätsnah

Zeigt ganz klar die negativen Seiten des Leben mit Behinderung im Alltag. Leider fehlt da die klare Linie der Politik um wirklich etwas zu verbessern.

nicht gut, es zielt ausschliesslich auf mitleid ab

Answers of people without disability

Es war mir nicht zu Genüge möglich, mich von der realen Welt zu trennen, jedoch konnte ich den Situationen nachempfinden, aufgrund von Erlebnissen, die ich beobachten konnte. Hindernisse, die im Film dargestellt wurden, hatte ich mehr oder weniger bereits

gesehen. Der Film hat jedoch mit Sicherheit dabei geholfen, sich empathisch in seiner Rolle wiederzufinden und das eigene Bewusstsein für verhinderte Menschen "aufzuwecken".

Berührend. Und der Beitrag hat meine Sicht auf die Schwierigkeiten von Menschen im Rollstuhl doch etwas geändert.

Der Beitrag berührte mich mehr als erwartet. Die Geschichte an sich ist mir nicht neu, auch dachte ich mich in die Situation halbwegs hineinversetzen zu können. Aber wirklich verstanden habe ich ihre Situation nicht. Schlichtweg weil ich die kleinen Dinge nur aus meinen Augen gekannt habe, in welcher manche Situationen einfach nicht als Problemkategorie eingestuft sind.

Ich denke, ich konnte mich recht gut in die Situation des Protagonisten einfühlen. Besonders sind mir die Reaktionen umstehender Menschen aufgefallen und ihre Blicke waren verstörend.
Im Nachhinein ist es schwierig zu sagen, was für einen Umgang ich mir gewünscht hätte. Wahrscheinlich einen solchen wie die Begleitperson. Allerdings weiß ich selber wie es ist, einem Menschen mit einer solch schweren Behinderung zu treffen und nicht zu wissen, wie man sich verhalten soll. Dabei hat der Virtual Reality Beitrag geholfen, da es sich wirklich anfühlte, als würde man die Perspektive des Protagonisten einnehmen.

Emotional, wirklichkeitsnah, interessant, neu, unterschiedlich,

künstlich

Lebensnah, Situationen aus dem Leben wieder erkannt

Es hat sich alles einerseits sehr real angefühlt, andererseits war die Situation sehr ungewohnt für mich, weil ich selbst noch nie selbst in der Situation wahr und ich deshalb keine ähnlichen Erfahrungen zum Vergleichen habe. Besonders spannend waren für mich die Interaktionen mit anderen Menschen bzw. nur zu beobachten, wie andere Menschen auf mich reagieren oder mich beobachten. Dabei habe ich gemerkt, wie unangenehm vieles für mich in der Rolle als Protagonist ist.

Sehr informativ. Man gewinnt die Information aus einer Art von der ich es davor noch nicht erlebt habe. Es erweckt durch den VirtualReality-Effekt mehr Empathie in einem und kann die Probleme des Protagonisten besser nachempfinden und nachvollziehen, da ich in dem Moment, in dem ich die Brille aufsetze mehr in die Welt der anderen Person eintauche als z.B. im Gegensatz zu einer Fernsehwerbung.

der Beitrag hat mir gezeigt, wie viele Einschränkungen Menschen mit Behinderung auch heute noch überwinden müssen

Etwas hilflos, auch alleine unterwegs zu sein.

Es war für mich sehr interessant und berührend, die Perspektive eines jungen Mannes mit Behinderung kennenzulernen. Es hat mich geärgert, zu sehen, dass manche Menschen ihn nicht wie jeden anderen behandeln, andererseits ist es für Außenstehende schwierig, sich in eine Person mit einer körperlichen Einschränkung hineinzusetzen und ich habe mich gefragt, wie ich z.B. als Kellnerin handeln würde. Allerdings hatte ich nicht völlig das Gefühl, die Person selbst zu sein, sondern eher, dass er mir seine Welt zeigt und näherbringt.

Ich habe, es sehr spannend gefunden, die Welt eines Menschen mit Behinderung hautnah miterleben. Durch Virtual Reality kann man sich viel mehr in die Lebenswelt anderer hineinversetzen.

Sehr realistisch. Virtual Reality bietet die Möglichkeit an, damit sich eine Person mit einer anderen Person besser identifizieren könnte. Obwohl es keine Gerüche oder Berührungen gibt, erlaubt Virtual Reality sich in die Lage eines anderen zu setzen.

Als meine zweite VR Erfahrung, fand ich das VR set sehr realistisch. Ich hab gedacht ich wäre an Stelle des Protagonisten. Ich glaube, dass mit einer besseren Auflösung, würde man eine bessere VR Erfahrung haben. Ab und zu kam ich aus dieser "VR trance" heraus, weil die Auflösung nicht so klar war.

Ich finde, dass der Virtual Reality Beitrag sehr effektiv ist.

gut gemacht, interessant die Gedanken des Protagonisten zu hören in Verbindung mit dem was um ihn herum passiert, wie seine Umgebung auf ihn reagiert und wie er auf seine Umgebung reagiert

Der Film war sympathisch, aber die Synchro auf Deutsch war sehr künstlich und eher schlecht... das hat mich etwas irritiert. Es ist sehr interessant, sich die Welt aus seiner Perspektive anzuschauen und auch natürlich leicht verstörend. Aber an sich war der Film schon gut gemacht und auch realistisch.

-

Leichte motion sickness.
Verwirrt, dass in NY Deutsch geredet wird ;-) Wieso kein Video in Wien?
Neue Erfahrung!

es hat mich sehr berührt, traurig gemacht, hat sehr gut dargestellt wie schwierig das Leben für jemanden mit Gehbehinderung ist, v

mir wurde davon schwindelig
ich denke für menschen die keinen oder sehr wenig kontakt mit menschen mit schweren behinderungen haben ist es sicher hilfreich diese besser zu verstehen - für mich war es nicht wirklich neu weil ich immer wieder mit menschen mit behinderungen kontakt habe und auch die probleme kenn zb im restaurant

guter Versuch, um die Sicht des Protagonisten in einer Alltagssituation zu vermitteln!
Hinter mir gab es kein Bild (d.h. ich konnte mich nicht umdrehen um hinter mich zu schauen)
- was aber auch mit der Sicht des Protagonisten zusammenpasst.

sehr interessant, man konnte sich doch in die Situation des Protagonisten hineinfühlen.

Ich hatte das Gefühl, dass er am liebsten nicht behindert wäre.

Ein feiner Beitrag aus dem Leben einer Person im Rollstuhl und Sprachcomputer, die sich mit einer Freundin trifft und einen netten Nachmittag verbringt. Menschliche Wärme war spürbar, aber auch manche Barrieren etwa auf dem Weg ins Café oder zum Platz.

Das war für mich das aller erste Mal, aber es war wie im echten Leben.

Ich habe es gut empfunden wie es so war. Für mich war das wie im Kino oder Fernsehen.

Sehr interessant, es ist aber einseitig und nicht unproblematisch sofort das Thema Partnersuche & Handicap zu thematisieren.

Das relativ enge Blickfeld und die Sprachsynchronisation haben mich öfters aus der Immersion geholt. Die Stimme des Sprechers hat sich jedoch angefühlt als würde der Protagonist seine Gedanken mit mir teilen.

Es war eine gute Erfahrung, mal die "Perspektive wechseln" zu können. Natürlich war mir im Vorhinein klar, dass es Ungerechtigkeiten gibt (einfach im alltäglichen Leben) aber mir war nicht klar bzw. ich wusste nicht wie weitreichend in kleinen Situationen und wie frustrierend die Beeinträchtigung ist. Deshalb war das eine gute Erfahrung, mir war auch weder schlecht oder so...

Sehr treffende Art zu zeigen, wie sich eine Person mit Behinderung fühlen muss/kann - mir war nie klar, dass gerade in einer Stadt wie New York es so schwierig ist für eine Person im Rollstuhl in ein Café zu gehen.

ganz gut umgesetzt

Interessantes Erlebnis. Ich habe mich nicht vollständig in den Protagonisten einfühlen können, weil es noch eine Erzählstimme gab.

Es hat die Thematik bei mir wieder etwas bewusster gemacht.

wie mit einer Go-Pro, als Dritter bei einem Erlebnis dabei zu sein. Ein trauriges Erlebnis und interessant zugleich, weil mir schwer fällt, mich in die Welt eines Patienten mit cerebraler Parese hineinzusetzen. Die Summe der kleinen Alltagsprobleme muss erdrückend sein!

Sehr respektvoll gegenüber behinderten, er Film hat kein Mitleid erzeugt und war nicht deprimierend, er hat einzig das tägliche Leben eines Behinderten näher gebracht und damit Anreiz zu Verständnis, Empathie und Aufmerksamkeit für dieses Thema gegeben.

Es war sehr realistisch und betrubt

spannender und erkenntnisreicher Perspektivenwechsel

berührend,
sehemotional
sehr
realistisch
fassungslos
verständnislos

realistisch, ungewohnt , schwierige Situationen für Menschen mit Behinderung

Sehr interessant einmal einen Ausschnitt aus der Ich-Perspektive zu sehen oder zu erleben.
Der Beitrag vermittelt das Gefühl, dass Menschen mit Behinderung im Alltag nicht wirklich geschätzt oder beachtet werden.

Sehr berührend, stellte mir die Situation wenn ich eine Behinderung hätte
vor

Ich fand es schade, dass bis auf eine Person niemand auf der Straße versucht hat zu helfen oder viel Aufmerksamkeit aufgebracht hat um dem Protagonisten großräumiger aus dem Weg zu gehen, um ihm mehr Platz zu schaffen.

Intensiv. Der Einblick und Eindruck ist einiges intensiver und realer, als wenn man sich nur so in die Situation hineinversetzt

Ich hatte mitleid mit der Person, habe es jedoch mehr als Person von außen wahrgenommen.

Question 2: How did you perceive the presentation of the protagonist?

Answers of people with disability

Zuviel Selbstmitleid, traurig, alles schwierig. Ich kenne viele Menschen mit behinderung die ihr Leben / ihre Umwelt nicht so wahrnehmenn (alles schlimm) trotz Barrieren.

Ich denke, sie ist sehr lebensnah. Ich kann ihn aufgrund meiner eignen Einschränkung sehr gut verstehen, auch, wenn die im Vergleich zur Erkrankung des Protagonisten "klein" ist. Dennoch ist sie auch ständig da und begleitet mich und es vergeht fast kein Tag, wo ich nicht in einer merkwürdigen Situation deswegen bin. Selbst

wenn es nur so ist, dass ich verunsichert bin, weil mein Gegenüber sehr undeutlich und leise spricht und ich mir aus den Wortfetzen eine Aussage bilden muss. Mir ist auch schon aufgefallen, dass viele Menschen auch darauf aufmerksam gemacht, nichts an ihrem Verhalten, ihrer Gewohnheit, ändern. Mich hat der Beitrag aufgrund seiner Lebensnähe stark bewegt.

Was ich im Film gesehen habe, habe ich nicht gut gefunden, da die Leute wollten die Behinderte nicht sehen. In dem Fall fühle ich mich nicht gut, wenn ich behindert bin.

Wäre es besser wenn die Leute zumindest ihre Gesichter von den behinderten Menschen nicht wegrehen.

Ein Extremfall. Menschen die auf einen E-Rollstuhl und eine computergestützte Sprachausgabe angewiesen sind wollen zwar auch möglichst wenig bemitleidet werden, allerdings sind sie stark auf Mitleid und Mitgefühl ihrer Mitmenschen angewiesen.

Mitgefühl

Wurde gut dargestellt

-

Sehr schlecht, viel zu mitleidig.

nö

Für diesen Menschen mit dieser Behinderung sehr real.

war sehr gut

So, als wäre mein eigenes Leben dargestellt worden.

war eine Momentaufnahme mit typischen Situationen, die Menschen mit Behinderung tagtäglich erleben, z.B. dass Lokale nicht barrierefrei sind oder eine Bedienung mit der Begleitung spricht, statt mit der behinderten Person direkt. Weniger realistisch war die Darstellung wie der Mensch mit Behinderung über den Sprachcomputer kommuniziert, da dies in der Realität wesentlich langsamer geht als hier dargestellt.

xxx

-

Es ist Realität.

Da ich selbst Rollstuhlfahrer bin, ist mir die Perspektive des Protagonisten durchaus bekannt. Viele der behandelten Klischees treffen leider genau so zu.

Den Part fand ich sehr spannend, wie das Wackeln und die Leute, die ihn anstarren oder nicht ausstellen, auch die Kellnerin, die nicht wusste wo sie das blöde Getränk hinstellen soll - das wirkte alles sehr wirklichkeitsbezogen.

er ist ein armer Kerl der sich schwer tut im leben

-

Er ist arm, weil er so viel nicht kann, und weil er auf der Straße und im Verkehr so viel Probleme hat. Fußgänger an sich sind gefährdet, und Rollstuhlfahrer sind noch gefährdeter.

- nicht gekünstelt
- aus dem Leben

-

Schrecklich. niemand nimmt ihn ernst, auch wenn er ein ganz normaler Mensch ist.

Passend

War ok, hätte es vielleicht noch mehr herausarbeiten können, wie es ist eine Behinderung zu haben (andere Szenen zeigen wie Katheter)

Stimmt leider vollkommen.
Physische Barrieren sind überall in Städten + das Problem der Kontaktaufnahme zu nichtbehinderten ist leider tatsächlich sehr groß

Es wäre schön, den Protagonisten auch stärker zu zeigen.

-

Er hat mit vvielen Unannehmlichkeiten im alltäglichen Leben die für andere ohne Behinderung einfacher sind

Die optische Darstellung war sehr gut. Es war trotzdem keine Realität.

Ehrlich und total real

Die Schwierigkeiten standen im Vordergrund und die Musik sowie die Sprache waren hoch emotionalisiert. Man spürt den Amerikanischen Charity Zugang sehr stark. Das entspricht aus meiner Sicht nicht dem menschenrechtsbasierten Ansatz (UN Behindertenrechtskonvention).

Sehr real.

Entspricht der Realität

übertrieben

-

ich kann mich nur an die Hände erinnern diese gesehen zu haben und an einen leeren Rollstuhl. war für mich ok

Rollstuhl in der Großstadt sehr gut erkennbar.

sehr real, so ist der Alltag mit einer Behinderung

Er wird teils wie ein Kind behandelt

sehr berührend und ich denke authentisch

schwer

Nicht schlecht, finde allerdings das man hier auch Behinderte zeigen könnte, die aktiv Sport betreiben (evtl. Jungs vom Weißen Hof Interviewen, Reha Zentrum nahe Wien)

ganz gut

glaubhaft, realitätsnah!

gut

Schwierig... die Anforderungen und Bedürfnisse sind gleich mit Menschen ohne Behinderung. Gerade im Bezug auf intime Beziehungen ist es schwieriger.

zu wenig, nur eine momentanausnahme

Answers of people without disability

Ich bin mir unsicher, ob all diese Hindernisse tatsächlich in solch einer schnellen Abfolge auftreten, jedoch empfand ich das Beschriebene als realistisch dargestellt. Anhand der Schauspieler, konnte man nicht nur das Hindernis als solches sehen, sondern auch nachempfinden, wie unangenehm es für die behinderte Person ist. Jedoch war mir das, durch vorherrigen Kontakt, bereits zuvor schon bewusst.

Das ist nicht so einfach zu sagen. Es hat aus meiner Sicht alles recht stimmig gewirkt.

Es war eine ehrlich wirkende Darstellung. Es sollte das Leben nicht beschönigen, noch durch sehr starke Emotionalisierung der Umstände noch schlimmer/bemitleidenswerter erscheinen lassen. Es wirkte wie die Erzählungen eines normalen Alltags, allerdings ein Alltag mit Handicap, mit spezielleren Bedürfnissen als es einen Menschen ohne eine vergleichbare körperliche Behinderung verstehen oder besser gesagt nachvollziehen kann.

Die Darstellung des Lebens war sehr bedrückend. Angefangen damit, dass es wenig barrierefreien Raum gab bis zu den Blicken und den Reaktionen der umstehenden Menschen. Auch die Schlussbemerkung, er sei 20 Jahre alt und versuche eine Partnerin zu finden, wüsste aber nicht, wann er seine Behinderung ansprechen sollte, war eine sehr schwierige Situation.

emotional, wirklichkeitsnah, traurig, furchtbar

interessant

viele Hindernisse im Leben

Ich habe die Darstellung als sehr real empfunden und kann mir gut vorstellen, dass es für den Protagonisten im Alltag genau so abläuft.

Als Leben mit hilfsbedürftigen Situationen und individuellen Problemen wie jeder andere Mensch sie auch hat.

einschränkend, teilweise bedrückend, aber auch etwas hoffnungsvoll

-

Es hat auf mich sehr realistisch gewirkt. Ich kann mir gut vorstellen, dass Menschen mit Behinderung hier mit einigen Hindernissen und Barrieren zu kämpfen haben und habe auch einen guten Eindruck davon erhalten.

Ich habe es sehr realistisch gefunden. Es wurden alltägliche Dinge dargestellt, die man sich normalerweise gar nicht vorstellen kann, wie sie damit umgehen und welche Schwierigkeiten es gibt.

Die Perspektive in dieser Weise hat ein insight ins Leben des Protagonisten gegeben, wie es anderes nicht möglich wäre. Darstellung hat mich persönlich sehr stark berührt und beeinflusst.

Das Video ist ziemlich gut gemacht. Man hat den Eindruck man ist selbst an Stelle von ihm. Die Umgebungen wurden auch sehr realistisch dargestellt, die Kamera hat sogar, wie erwähnt, wie im echten Leben gewackelt.

Ich konnte mich mitfühlen und ich konnte besser seiner alltägliche Situationen erleben.
Es war sehr lehrreich.

es wird einem bewusst gemacht wie ärgerlich und ausgrenzend die Welt sein kann wenn man im Rollstuhl sitzt bzw. eine Behinderung hat und wie eigenartig manche Menschen darauf reagieren, ich hatte aber nicht das Gefühl Mitleid mit dem Protagonisten haben zu müssen, da er selbst sich wie ein "normaler" Mensch sieht, ich fand es eher unfair von seiner Umgebung den im Rollstuhl Sitzenden so anders zu behandeln

Es war wirklich leicht bedrückend. Aber auch trotzdem ein normales Leben, eines normalen 20 Jährigen, der ganz normale Probleme hat, es ist natürlich an sich nicht absolut normal, weil der Junge ja gewisse Einschränkungen hat, aber man sieht einfach, dass alle um ihn herum nicht wissen wie sie reagieren sollen und wie sie sich verhalten sollen und versuchen nicht zu zeigen wie unangenehm es ihnen ist. Und das finde ich sehr traurig. Ausserdem war es natürlich hart, aus der Perspektive des Protagonisten das ganze zu erleben, weil man sich automatisch in die Situation hineinversetzt.

-

Realitätsnah - soweit man es sich vorstellen kann.
Ertrückend so angewiesen und eingeschränkt zu sein.

sehr eingeschränkt, vorallem der Rollstuhl ist in New York wegen der Infrastruktur und den vielen Menschen sehr behinderlich, eine Teilnahme am sozialen Leben anderer fast unmöglich

realitätsnahe

Die Darstellung der Probleme - inkl. rütteln, durchquetschen - wurden gut vermittelt.

realistisch, ohne verschönerung habe das Gefühl, dass es genau so im echten Leben laufen kann

Die Darstellung ist leider im realen Leben nicht anders.

Selbstbestimmt, aber trotzdem aufgrund von Barrieren manchmal auf Unterstützung angewiesen

Wie Menschen mit Down Syndrom unbekannt am Rande der Gesellschaft. Ohne einen Ausweg zu haben.

Ich habe es so gut empfunden wie es so war.

-

Außgeliefert seiner Umwelt
abhängig von der Unterstützung durch andere

Ein bisschen künstlich, weil es ein wenig diesen Filmcharakter hatte...innerer Monolog und so. Aber die Bewegungen bzw. Begegnungen mit anderen - in dem Fall fuer den Protagonisten fremde Personen - in einem Lokal fand ich sehr realistisch. Und auch traurig...wie er von der Kellnerin nicht fuer "voll" genommen wurde. Frustrierend.

Ich denke die war sehr treffend - ruhig aber definitiv betrübt über seine Situation - teils frustriert (verständlicherweise)

interessant die perspektive einer person mit behinderung zu sehen.
der teil im restaurant und die hilflosigkeit der kellnerin wie sie mit dem protagonisten umgeht war sehr einsichtsvoll

Sehr kurz, sehr unvollständig. Aber sehr instruktive Beispielsituationen.

traurig

Gelungen. Die kurze Fahrt mit dem E-Rolli hat eindrucksvoll dein paar Schwierigkeiten im Alltag eines CP Patienten gezeigt. Seine Probleme eine Freundin zu finden hat ihn gleichzeitig vollkommen relateable gemacht, weil jeder weiß wie es ist, Beziehungsprobleme zu haben.

Sehr realistisch, aber nicht deprimierend und Mitleid erzeugend, sondern einfach nur "alltäglich". Sehr realistisch und nachvollziehbar wie viele Hindernisse der Protagonist täglich noch außer seine Behinderung hat, und wie viel Unsicherheit und Distanz er von anderen Personen erfährt (z.B. Kellnerin)

Das hat mein Eindruck viel beeinflusst. Andererseits diese Darstellung hat seine Geschichte persönlicher gestalten.

ehrlich, ungeschönt, nachfühlbar

realistisch
berührend
fassungslos
sehrwahrheitsgetreu

Führt ein sehr eingeschränktes Leben. Hat es nicht leicht mit Leuten zu kommunizieren.

War nur ein kleiner Einblick in eine von vielen Alltagssituationen. Schwierig zu sagen wie der Rest des Lebens aussieht.

Schwieriger als vor dem Film

Allgemein sehr anstrengend.
Aufgaben, welche für uns alltäglich sind, sind für diese Menschen eine Hürde.

Doch durch tolle Entwicklungen in der Branche könne Menschen mit Behinderungen mehr an Selbstständigkeit genießen und haben einen Weg sich besser auszudrücken.

Sehr offen, auch darauf abzielend Gefühle zu erregen. Die aufgesetzte Freundlichkeit der Menschen hat mich erschreckt, aber ich denke es ist tatsächlich so.

Im Alltag stark eingeschränkt und oft komische Situationen mit den Mitmenschen. Es ist sehr schwer einem Behinderten helfen zu wollen diesen jedoch nicht anders zu Behandeln. Man merkt die Unsicherheit der Menschen und dadurch auch die Auswirkungen auf den Protagonisten.

Appendix C – Tables

Table I

Linear multiple regressions predicting the effect of presence on empathy (H4), embodiment on empathy (H6).

	Empathy		Empathy		Empathy	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Block 1 - Demographics						
age	-.062	.118	-.09	.117	-.063	.127
sex	.001	.103	.007	.102	-.011	.111
family	.076	.102	-.075	.101	.082	.109
work	-.213	.101	-.201*	.100	-.220	.109
education	-.026*	.093	-.064	.092	-.017	.098
R ²		9.1%		9.1%		9.1%
Block 2 – Technology						
Technical Affinity	-.04	.103	-.036	.101	-.017	.109
VR familiarity	-.05	.108	-.054	.106	-.048	.115
R ²		9.4%		9.4%		9.4%
Block 3 – Virtual Reality						
Motion Sickness	.107	.092	.056	.089	.04	.097
Realness	.313**	.094	.431***	.091	.498***	.099
360	-.048	.094	-.081	.092	-.078	.100
R ²		32.8%		32.8%		32.8%
Predictors						
Presence	.365***	.107	-	-	.-	.-
Embodiment	-	-	.333***	.089	-	.-
Status	-	-	-	-	-.021	.100
R ²		41.3%		42.9%		32.9%
N	91		91		91	

Cell entries are final-entry OLS unstandardized regression coefficients.

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; #p < .1.

Table II*Conditional Effects of Group Membership on Empathy (H1).*

Group Identification	β	p	95% CI	
16th	-1.10	< .005	-1.704	-.498
50th	-.805	< .004	-1.237	-.374
84th	-.383	.239	-1.026	.259

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; # $p < .1$

Table III

Table of codings of qualitative answers of people without disability (PWOD) and people with disability (PWD).

code	PWOD		PWD	
	number	% of mentions	number	% of mentions
Perspective				
third person	3	1.7%	-	-
P. changed	17	9.5%	2	1.7%
Empathy				
hard to emphasize	3	1.7%	1	.08%
emphasized	20	11.2%	8	6.9%
Emotion				
changed attitude	8	4.5%	-	-
negative emotions	11	6.2%	3	2.6%
f. too emotional	9	5.1%	4	3.4%
Technology				
artificial	2	1.1%	4	3.4%
no immersion	3	1.7%	-	-
VR good quality	9	5.1%	3	2.6%
VR bad quality	1	0.5%	3	2.6%
VR uncomfortable	2	1.1%	2	1.7%
Situation				
was new to me	7	3.9%	1	.08%
seemed unreal	1	0.5%	4	3.4%
is familiar	3	1.7%	9	7.7%
is realistic	28	15.7%	35	30.2%
Content				
one-sided	3	1.7%	1	.08%
criticising action	4	2.2%	6	5.2%
Protagonist				
normalized	4	2.2%	1	.08%
more problems than others	14	7.9%	5	4.3%
too sympathetic	-	-	6	5.2%
dependent	3	1.7%	1	.08%
sad	2	1.1%	1	.08%
film was good	19	10.7%	16	13.8%
Total	178	100%	116	100%

Kappa PWOD: .85 ($p=.04$) Kappa PWD: .81 ($p=.04$).

Abstract English

While interpersonal traits and processes in generating empathy via Virtual Reality (VR) have been previously identified, the impact of group identification on generating empathy via VR has not yet been studied. The purpose of this thesis is to fill this gap in literature by investigating the assumed positive effect of group identification for people with a disability on empathy and consequently intentional prosocial behavior, as well as on the empathy predicting variables presence and embodiment. In a quasi-experimental setup, the effect of a first-person VR experience on people with disability and people without a disability and their respective group identification on empathy, embodiment, presence and prosocial behavior is investigated. Results show that low and moderate group identification resulted in lower empathy levels of people with disability in contrast to people without a disability, while high group identification led to no significant difference between the groups. Additionally, a positive partial mediation of group identification on empathy via embodiment, as well as positive partial mediation of group identification on empathy via presence has been identified. Empathy did not predict intentional prosocial behavior. These findings indicate VR to be successful in creating empathy with out-group members, while group membership has negative effects that are only outweighed when group identification is high.

Abstract German

Während Studien über den Effekt von Virtual Reality (VR) bereits interpersonelle Eigenschaften und weitere Empathie anregende Mechanismen herausgearbeitet haben, gibt es derzeit wenig Indikatoren, die einen Effekt von Gruppenzugehörigkeiten auf den Effekt von VR Filmen auf Empathie untersuchen. Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, diese Lücke zu schließen, indem ein positiver Effekt von Gruppenidentifikation auf Empathie und die Intention zu prosozialem Verhalten angenommen und untersucht wird. Zudem werden Präsenz und Verkörperung eines Avatars als Mediatoren zwischen Gruppenidentifikation und Empathie angenommen. Ergebnisse eines Quasi-Experiments mit Menschen mit und ohne Behinderung zeigen, dass Menschen mit niedriger und moderater Identifikation mit Menschen mit Behinderung weniger Empathie zu der eigenen Gruppe zeigen, während eine hohe Identifikation keinen Unterschied zwischen den Gruppen erkennen lässt. Zusätzlich zeigt sich eine unvollständige Mediation von Gruppenidentifikation auf Empathie über Verkörperung eines Avatars und Präsenz. Kein Zusammenhang zwischen Empathie und der Intention sich prosozial zu verhalten, konnte festgestellt werden. Diese Ergebnisse zeigen, dass VR sehr wohl Empathie mit Menschen, die nicht einer Gruppe angehören, kreieren kann. Des Weiteren, kann Gruppenzugehörigkeit sogar einen negativen Effekt auf Empathie haben, der nur bei Menschen mit hoher Gruppenidentifikation aufgehoben wird.

