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Sámi sports and outdoor life at the indigenous Riddu Riđđu festival

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ABSTRACT

The indigenous Riddu Riđđu Festival, organized yearly in the village of Olmáivággi/ Manndalen (Sápmi/Norway), presents the cultures of Sámi people and indigenous peoples across the world. A study of the activities offered at Riddu Riđđu over an eleven-year period (2009–2019) carried out. Through fieldwork (forty-six in-depth interviews, participant observations and document analysis), I contemplated how sports, physical and outdoor activities included in the festival create indigenous people's identities and cultural understanding. Sámi sports and other indigenous sports and outdoor life are crucial parts of the festival, especially at the Children's Festival: Mánáidfestivála. The activities represent different ethnicities and seem to create sustained ties between persons, networks and organizations and to build identities and bridges between participants. Taking part in festival activities claimed to be crucial symbolic capital, or poly cultural capital, in expressing indigeneity or in the creation of 'indigenous hearts' by participants, staff and volunteers at the festival.

KEYWORDS

Outdoor life; poly cultural capital; Riddu Riđđu festival; indigenous; Sami sports; physical activity

Introduction

The focus of this article is the 'Riddu Riđđu' international indigenous festival far north of the Arctic Circle in 'Sápmi' (Norway). The concept of Sápmi exists in all Sámi dialects and derived from the Sámi's own appellation of themselves. Today Sápmi describes the lands where the Sámi's live (Solbakk, 2006). The name 'Riddu Riđđu' roughly means 'a little storm on the coast' (Hansen, 2007). The festival celebrates the music and culture of the Sámi, the indigenous people of Northern Scandinavia and other indigenous peoples. Research on Sámi festivals is scarce (Jæger, 2019; Viken, 2011; Viken & Jaeger, 2012). The aim of this study is, therefore, to fill the void in our knowledge of Sámi and indigenous outdoor life and physical activities at indigenous festivals.

Outdoor life has long been a tradition in Norway and is associated with indigenous people's lives. This is, among Sámi, closely connected with work (Solbakk, 2006). Dahle (2007, pp. 23–24) defines outdoor life as being 'a lifelong communal process' which 'has been passed on from generation to generation, and has its own rituals that must be learned.' Physical activities and sports are widely defined as being all kinds of bodily movement, which result in increased use of energy (Henrikson & Sundberg, 2009). There is no word for outdoor life in the Sámi language. There are, however, words for doing things in nature such as 'lavvu-ing' which is setting up a 'lavvu' (the Sámi tent) and making it ready to sleep in, or 'bonfire-ing' which is making a bonfire and activities around the fire such as cooking food or making coffee. Outdoor life and outdoor physical activities are integrated concepts in this article.

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A number of different forms of play, games, physical and outdoor activities that are offered at the festival were observed, the aspects of interest being the types of activities and why young people claim that these activities were part of 'taking back Sámi culture', which was the aim of the youth who started the festival in 1991 (Hansen, 2007). Children aged from three to thirteen years old, their parents and relatives, who take part in the festival, particularly the grandparents' generation, are groups of interest because they meet at the festival with the aim of furthering their knowledge of culture and traditions.

I, in this paper, first briefly present the Sámi and the history and context of this multi-ethnic region and the festival and the indigenous peoples who take part in it. I then describe the theoretical perspectives discussed. These are an adaptation of Bourdieu's theory of social space, cultural capital and habitus. The concept of poly cultural capital (Mila-Schaaf & Robinson, 2010) is also a useful tool in the analysis. Next, I present the methods used in fieldwork and the forty-six in-depth interviews and observations made over an eleven-year period. Finally, I introduce some of the findings and discuss them in the light of my theoretical scope. The results presented based on a focus on the organizers' aim for the festival, and children's and parents' experiences of the indigenous sports and outdoor life offered at the festival.

The Sámi

The Sámi are an indigenous people and they are an ethnic minority in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. Sámi's have their own settlement areas, language, culture and history (Eriksen & Niemi, 1981; Hætta, 2007). 'As far back as can be traced and long before the nation states were established, the Sámi have lived in the Nordic and Kola Peninsula.' (Solbakk, 2006, p. 14). Rock carvings at Alta Museum show that their forefathers and foremothers carved pictures of their quarry in the rocks, to narrate successful hunts and to placate the spirits of nature. In Norway, Section § 2–6 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament and other Sámi legal matters ('The Sámi Act', 1987) defines Sámi as:

All persons who make a declaration to the effect that they consider themselves to be Sámi, and who either a) have Sámi as their domestic language, or b) have or have had a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent with Sámi as his or her domestic language, or c) is the child of a person who is or has been registered in the Sámi electoral register.

Similar definitions exist in Sweden and Finland. There is, however, no official demographic registration of ethnicity in the four countries. Estimates of the Sámi population therefore vary with the criteria used, these for example including genetic heritage, mother tongue and the personal sense of ethnicity (Broderstad, 2008). Skogvang (2017) gives an overview of the Sámi in the four countries. All four countries have accepted the Sámi as an indigenous people. Three have a Sámi Parliament (Finland, Norway and Sweden). There are, however and despite the similarities, substantial differences. The Sámi in Norway have the collective right, through the Sámi Parliament (established on 9 October 1989), to act as an advisory body to the national parliament. The Sámi are also entitled to participate in any Norwegian Government Sámi projects and plans. Sámi rights are secured by the 'ILO Convention 169 concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries' (1989), Norway being the first country to ratify this in 1990. Article 32 obliges Norway to collaborate across borders and states that:

Government shall take appropriate measures, including by means of international agreements, to facilitate contracts and co-operation between indigenous and tribal peoples across borders, including activities in the economic, social, cultural, spiritual and environmental fields.

This convention has significantly changed the Sámi's situation in Norway. It gave stronger collective rights than in the three other countries, where the convention is not ratified (Skogvang, 2017, pp. 40–41).

The Sámi today number between 81,000 and 111,000. Approximately 50,000 to 65,000 are in Norway, 20,000 to 35,000 in Sweden, 9,000 in Finland and 2,000 in Russia (Skogvang, 2017). Totally 18,103 are registered in Norway's Sámi electoral roll (Samediggi, 2019), and 2,500 are registered as operating reindeer husbandry (Regjeringen, 2018–2019). The Sámi Language Council estimates there are approximately 25,000 Sámi language users in Norway, the Southern Sámi dialect being the most vulnerable, the Sámi language also no longer being the everyday language in many families (Samediggi, 2019). The Riddu Riđđu Festival therefore situated in a culturally complex region. The population of the municipality in which the festival held, Gaivoutna, today (2019) is 2,074, approximately 60% being Sámi (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2019). The village of Olmáivággi has 850 inhabitants and approximately 80% are Sámi. The Sámi Act has been in force in Norway since 12 June 1987. Nevertheless, the Sámi still struggle with experiences of subordination and discrimination (Eythórsson, 2003; Hansen, 2011, 2015).

A region of cultural complexity

Indigenous peoples often share similar experiences of racism and colonialism. This includes being structurally discriminated against, subordinated for a long period of time and experience of colonisation and assimilation followed by attempts to retrieve and revitalize their culture (Bjørklund, 1978; Hovland, 1999; Olsen, 2010). A quote from Christian Brygfeldt, the chief education officer of Finnmark county (Northern Norway) in the 1930s, is an example of the governing bodies' view of the Sámi at that time;

The Sámi people neither, has the ability nor the will to use their language as a written language. (...) They are hopeless and are one of Finnmark's most underdeveloped and less educated inhabitants. They are the most recruited group to our mental hospitals and schools for the mentally disabled (Eriksen & Niemi, 1981, p. 258).

The aim of the Norwegian government after the Second World War was to assimilate all people living in Norway, including the Sámi, into Norwegian society through the so-called 'Norwegianization' process' (Niemi, 1997; Persen, 2008). The 'yoik', Sámi form of song was for a long period forbidden during this process (Solbakk, 2006). 'Yoiking is, in general, a natural and spontaneous means of expressing moods and feelings in defined situations.' (Solbakk, 2006, p. 148). Today it represents the clearest of all the ancient Sámi cultural traditions. Lehtola (2004, p. 106) highlights that yoik is said to be 'the world's most aboriginal song form', from the most ancient cultural layers of northern peoples. Yoik is a crucial part of the festival, which includes performances from a number of Sámi artists (Skogvang, 2016; Viken & Jaeger, 2012). The object of a yoik may be nature, animals, and often a person. It paints a picture using words, melody, rhythm, expressions and gestures in its performance. Yoik said to remove distance and brings back, through the yoik, the friend who is gone. The song form often performed in combination with small body movements. The comprehensive and personal nature of the feelings expressed in the yoik brings people together, creating solidarity and understanding across different ethnic groups (Lehtola, 2004).

Barth (1998) defines an ethnic group as a population that shares significant values, this realized through cultural forms, constituted by a field of communication, and interaction whose membership identified by themselves and recognized by others. Concepts such as ethnicity, ethnic groups, minorities and indigeneity are socially constructed (Hætta, 2007; Hovland, 1999; Niemi, 1997; Olsen, 2010; Sköld, 2008). Ethnicity is not grounded in biology, genetic origins or traits but on traditions and history, and 'is different from race in that it refers to a particular cultural heritage that people use to identify a particular population' (Coakley & Pike, 2009, p. 263). Olsen (2010) researched Finnmark, the northernmost county of Norway, focussing on the lack of knowledge of the past. Olsen (2010, p. 34) inspired by Barth (1998) defines ethnicity as a boundary-making process, and he argues that 'The continuous construction of common belonging and groupness is the constantly changing meaning-making process of everyday life and demands a more flexible concept such as social identity.' Social identity is a more flexible analytical concept that allows the

creativity of individuals, of heterogeneity and differences and enables the mapping of processes that have a less enduring quality than institutional practices. At the same time, one must pay attention to shifting contexts and changing power relations in the discourses. He describes the public spaces where Sami choose to express their Sámi-ness, and others where they do not, and states that ‘... people’s meaning-making is polyphonic and related to purpose and context, so the institutions that dominate it have their purposes and contexts, which must be understood.’ (Olsen, 2010, p. 37). This might explain how certain reified expressions about representations of culture and ethnicity at macro and media levels perpetuated, for example, through activities at the Riddu Riddu festival.

Hovland (1999) researched Sámi youth identities. He discusses the paradoxes in identities in Northern Norway. Here, to be a Sámi involves a manifold of identities from inland reindeer Sámi, to coastal fisher-farmers, to Sámi living in big cities with mainstream jobs, and to the feeling of being both Sámi and Norwegian at the same time. The region in which the festival takes place has long been a multi-ethnic area, Sámis, Kvens and Norwegians living there. Recent years has also seen new immigrants settling in the area and has, as termed by Eriksen (2002), ‘a cultural complexity’. Historically the area called ‘the place where the three tribes meet’ (Bjørklund, 1978, 1985; Bjørklund, Brantenberg, Eidheim, Kalstad, & Storm, 2000; Guttormsen, 1993). The first settlers were Sámi, followed by the Norwegians, then the Kven (who emigrated from Finland due to poverty in the 1800s and 1900s). The most recent are immigrants who have come with other ethnic origins (i.e. refugees from Afghanistan and Syria).

Few studies of outdoor life, physical activities and sport among the Sámi been conducted (Pedersen, 2013). Schefferus’ LAPPONIA (1674–1956) describes physical activities and games in early times among Sámi. Rafoss and Pedersen (1989) studied sports in the Sámi districts of Northern Norway. Birkely (1994) presents how Sámi used skiing in reindeer herding and hunting, and as transport in general, which is why they were the best skiers in Scandinavia, and introduced skiing to Norwegians, Swedes and Finns. Relevant research have emphasized; sport, politics and ethnicity in worker’s sport in the North in late 1930s (Pedersen, 2008), sport, ethno-politics and Sámi identity in Northern Norway, and the organizing of the Sámi sport movement with a particular focus on football (Pedersen, 2011), modernity, identity and sport in Finnmark from 1908 to 2010 (Pedersen, 2013), and participation in leisure activities by Sámi and Norwegian speaking youth in the northernmost county of Norway (Rafoss & Hines, 2016). Rafoss and Hines (2016) found that Sámi speaking youth are more active outdoors, and more frequently hunt, fish and harvest than their Norwegian-speaking counterparts.

International studies of indigenous people show how identity articulated through sport and how it is used to show opposition to mainstream society and to conduct nation building (Bale & Cronin, 2003; Mangan & Ritchie, 2004). Trollvik (2014) studied indigenous festivals in Taiwan, the Trees Music Festival and the Hunter School. She shows how the festivals focus on encouraging youth to value traditional and practical knowledge and on building indigenous self-esteem. Skogvang and Trollvik (2018) underline that they practice the belief that embodiment of cultural practice is a key to the continuation of a specific culture, and that the taking part in indigenous festivals empowers indigenous peoples. Other events with a focus on sports and that have similarities with the festival studied, are the *North American Indigenous Games* and the *World Indigenous Nation games*. Indigenous peoples in Canada took control of their own sports and sports organizations, and they use the indigenous games in the revitalization process of indigenous peoples (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006; King, 2006; Paraschak, 1997). Kilbourne (2011, p. 8) compared Inuits and Sámis, and found that ‘Their games are closely linked to the environment and their participation is a rehearsal for survival in the Arctic world in which they both live.’ Forsyth and Wamsley (2006) underline that, through the establishment of the *Arctic Winter Games*, an international network of indigenous peoples within sport realized in accordance to the governing bodies’ aims. Sámi youth have participated in the Arctic Winter Games since 2004.

Riddu Riđđu festival

Most festivals are social events and social arenas. They represent a social institution that dates back to ancient times (Falassi, 1987). Many festivals have become more commercialised (Hegnes, 2006). Most arenas are, however, for pleasure and play, and for the celebration of traditions, customs, myths, beliefs and freedom (Falassi, 1987). Some festivals focus on revitalization and development of places (Jæger, 2019; Viken & Jaeger, 2012). Festivals also have qualities, which might contribute to the shaping of identities, having long traditions as markers of identities (Jæger, 2019; Quinn, 2005). It is therefore of interest to study how the participants experience the festival and, in particular, how the physical and outdoor activities offered at the festival connect to identity and belonging.

People from many places across the globe travel to the Arctic village of Olmáivággi for one summer week in July. Riddu Riđđu focuses on art and culture and has a wide program for children, youth and adults. The cultures of the Sámi and indigenous peoples worldwide presented at the festival, one in particular being focussed on each year as *'the Northern people of the year'* (Riddu, 2019). Musical and cultural activities and performances are held, cultural activities including the Youth Festival *Nourat* (for thirteen to eighteen year olds), the Childrens' festival *Mánáidfestivála* (for three to thirteen year olds), film screenings, workshops, art, handicrafts, literature, seminars, exhibitions, theatre, drama and dance performances, games, sports and outdoor life. Norwegians, Sámi, Kven and other people from different parts of the world, whether indigenous or not, take part in the festival.

Mánáidfestivála takes place over three days at the beginning of the festival week (Wednesday-Friday). It is popular and has been fully booked for the last eleven years with 120 children participating each day over three days every year. Children of below school age (three to six years) are required to be accompanied by an adult (parent, older sibling, grandparents, relative or family friend) to assist them in the activities. Themes have, over the last eleven years, related to 'The Northern People of the year'. The theme in 2012 was 'The Inuit culture and mask dance' and in 2016 it was 'Indigenous people from Taiwan', with circle dancing as a central activity. The festival has over the 29 years it has been running, worked to establish and reinforce pride in Sámi culture. Today it has grown to become one of the most significant international indigenous festivals in Europe (Viken, 2011, 2013). Riddu Riđđu has four permanent employees, one project worker, a staff of one hundred and twenty people, and two hundred volunteers during the festival (2019). The ripple effects of the festival include economic development and the desire to move to year-round activity in the region and municipality. It even affects indigenous people globally (Skogvang, 2013; Skogvang & Trollvik, 2018; Viken, 2013). The impact is, however, directly connected to ongoing wellbeing '... prouder youths with their heads held high can proclaim that they have a Sámi background' (Skogvang & Trollvik, 2018, p. 46). The festival has become strong and the aim of revitalizing Sámi culture and identity has gained publicity and attention.

Theoretical perspectives

Bourdieu (1990) describes how the body is a social and cultural phenomenon and how sport and physical activities express the socio-cultural body. Shilling (2003, p. 20) claims that we both 'have' bodies and 'are' bodies, and that bodies are shaped in relationship to the surroundings. An individual's *habitus* is the 'embodied social structures' in which the actors themselves, in their daily practices, are subjects who construct the social world (Bourdieu, 1995, p. 219). *Habitus* cannot explain behaviour without taking into account context. This is because people have constantly to relate to new contexts, which causes lasting changes in *habitus* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1995). Bourdieu's (1996, p. 90) *symbolic capital* concept is defined by the resources which social groups recognize as being valuable, for example, '... ethnic identity, together with name and skin colour is an existence as perceived by others, and which work as a positive or negative symbolic capital.' Symbolic capital includes economic, cultural and social capital. The network between indigenous

peoples in Norway and worldwide at the festival can be social capital and the activities and their closeness to nature and the outdoor life can be cultural capital. The embodied cultural knowledge of similar backgrounds, including experiences of discrimination and suppression in the past and present, might create community and cultural understanding and enable cross-cultural understanding for participants and performers at the festival.

Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) use the concept of '*poly-cultural capital*' in analysing educational achievement among New Zealand-born Pacific peoples. 'Pacific values, cultural pride, Pacific language fluency and acceptance from Pacific peoples and others, were all significantly associated with positive educational outcomes: trying hard at school, doing well at school and making plans for the future.' (Mila-Schaaf & Robinson, p. 14). Participants with several forms of capital, from indigenous and mainstream culture, have a stronger position. They can respond strategically to that which best suits their purposes in different cultural contexts. Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010, p. 12) associate poly-cultural capital with the cross-cultural resources, knowledge, skills and agency that can potentially realize a cumulative advantage. This captures the 'more-than-one' doubling dynamic, this furthermore not being limited to just two. Poly-cultural also encompasses the promise of hybrid synergies, the total being more than the sum of its parts. Possessing Sámi or indigenous cultural capital and capital sourced to dominant social spaces may assist in the realization of cumulative advantage, and may be associated with improved educational outcomes. The question therefore is whether the festival, through offering sports, dance and a number of outdoor and traditional activities, might encompass hybrid synergies, which are more than the sum of its parts.

Methods

The Sámi experiences of governing bodies, the education system and external researchers through the history and during the 'Norwegianization process' has made Sámi's, similar to other indigenous peoples, sceptical to researchers from outside. The festival organizers, when I contacted them, answered: 'There have been a number of researchers who want to study us, and sometimes we are sceptical. But you belong to our people, and therefore we trust you.' I have carried out fieldwork in my own culture, the Sámi culture. I am a Sámi and carry out research in the village I grew up in and where I take most of my summer holidays. As Rigney (1999, p. 119) emphasizes 'Indigenous peoples' interests, knowledge and experiences must be at the centre of research methodologies and construction of knowledge about indigenous peoples.' The Sámi researcher Porsanger (2004, p. 105) addresses how indigenous researchers contribute as an alternative to the Western research paradigm through 'challenge it and contribute to the body of knowledge of indigenous peoples about themselves and for themselves, and for their own needs as peoples, rather than as objects of investigation.' The Maori researcher Smith (1999, p. 91) emphasizes in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies* that this critique is 'about centring our concepts and worldviews and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives.' In line with these researchers the indigenous peoples' interests, knowledge and experiences are in focus in this study.

The fieldwork carried out at the festival every year in the festival week in July, over a period of eleven years (2009–2019). Observation and interviews used. I have fluctuated between the roles of researcher, villager, participant, volunteer, parent and festival organizer. The data includes field notes from conversations and participant observations, transcribed in-depth interviews and document analysis. Observation focussed on activities at the Children's and Youth Festival. The observation period was daytime Monday to Friday when the children's activities held. The field notes written in breaks and at the end of each observation day. In-depth interviews also held with twenty-four festival participants, seven members of the festival governing bodies, and fifteen key informants from among the villagers. Members of four families, adults and children, observed and interviewed, at least once during all eleven festivals. The design of the study made it possible to follow the development of the activities offered at the festival, to follow the four families and their participation in festival activities and to see the influence the festival had upon them.

In-depth interview informants were selected using ‘*snowball sampling*’ (Goodman, 1961). The interview sample included children and parents who took part in the festival, festival governing bodies and young and old people living in the region. Adult interviewees all had a range of skills and experiences from leadership of the festival, including villagers who were critical to the festival. The sample size was appropriate for a qualitative study and the research question asked. Individuals and groups interviewed. Parents interviewed alone and with their child or children. The interviews conducted in Norwegian with use of some Sámi and English words when necessary. The interviews last from forty-five minutes to two hours and were recorded and transcribed verbatim by the author.

A study carried out of the festival’s policy documents, annual report to the governing bodies, websites, meeting reports, and more than 1500 photos, which are included in the data. The study proposal guided by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and the interviewees were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. I have followed the guidelines of NSD. NSD evaluates the proposals of scholars at Norwegian research institutions, to ensure ethical consent in research. All the interviewees gave their informed consent, and informed that they could withdraw from the project at any stage. The informants given fictive names, the date and the year of the interviews been withheld, and so has their exact roles at the festival, to protect anonymity.

Data analysis carried in accordance with the criteria of trustworthiness and of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Henderson, 1991). The transcriptions were coded into main categories and related sub-categories, and cross-case analysed to compare each issue across the sample. The main categories were physical activities, sports and outdoor life, indigeneity, cultural understanding and community. Sub-categories were Sámi sports, indigenous sports, learning of skills, enjoyment, education and knowledge across generations, togetherness and friendship across cultures. This study, in the light of Bourdieu’s theories on habitus and symbolic capital, and Mila-Schaaf and Robinsons’ (2010) concept of poly cultural capital, examines whether physical activities shape identity, community and cultural understanding, and whether and how the festival can build bridges between different peoples. The results, based on the data analysis, presented and discussed in two sections; 1) the aims and experiences of physical activities and outdoor life offered at the festival; and 2) the creation of indigenous people’s identities and cultural understanding across borders as symbolic capital or poly-cultural capital.

Aims and experiences of physical activities and outdoor life

The aims and views of the festival’s governing bodies

The governing bodies state that the aim is to ‘provide activities across ethnicities and, through this, to create and teach “*indigenous hearts*” to new and old generations’, as ‘Laura’ said. All festival leaders were, for all except two of the festival’s twenty-eight years, women. They describe clear goals associated with identity building, pride, understanding, and community across ethnic groups. ‘Jenny’, for example, said:

Our aim is to teach children at Riddu Riđđu how to communicate and transfer Sámi’ and other indigenous peoples’ outdoor activities to children and young people. We want to teach them how to live and survive outdoors, how to dress, what to eat and how to behave to take care of nature as our foremothers did. Elderly people employed in the teaching of children. They know the traditions, how to make different types of bonfires for summer and winter, how to cook and make tools from wood, how to make a camp when outdoors overnight, how to set up a bivouac or a ‘lavvu’, how the traditional lavvu is furnished and equipped and how to make dry fish eatable using a hammer.

‘Berta’ said that the organizers think the aim goes even further because ‘... the children will extend their Sámi and “indigenous heart” after taking part in the Children’s Festival’. Today, the lavvu (Sámi tent, similar to a tipi) used a lot in outdoor life in Norway. Newer light-weighted lavvus produced today, and they are easier to take on longer trips. Schoolbooks and teachers in Norwegian schools, however, rarely teach about the traditional lavvu and the Sámi way of using it through generations.

The festival governing bodies invite people from today's grandparent and great-grandparent generations to teach traditional activities to the children and youth, activities which easily could be forgotten in today's society. 'Janna' described why: 'The aim is to fill this knowledge gap between the generations by teaching the children Sámi traditions in outdoor life and handicrafts.' A number of the activities taught by word-of-mouth from generation to generation, and have never been written down. For example, the old Sámi '*guoatsoballu*' ball game from Furufaten and the '*stallu*'/troll mask parade. 'Janna' said that 'the stallu parade on New Years' Eve still is organized in Olmáivággi.

The grandparents teach the children how to make the stallu masks and what a stallu is, to ensure this tradition continues. The festival organizers underline the need for such a festival and its role in the teaching and bringing up of children across ethnicities. Leader 'Marj-Inga' emphasized that they think that Riddu should be a positive place for children and be an arena in which children can learn. She continued:

We want the children to experience parts of the Sámi culture and to meet other indigenous people at the concerts, performances and activities they take part in. (...) We want them to be outdoors, to be physically active, and to be given challenges and experiences that they cannot gain other places than at Riddu. (...) The aim is that they should associate these positive experiences with Sámi-ness, that they will want to come back and that they talk about Riddu to family, friends and at schools as something positive. (...) A further goal is that Riddu makes the children to entity human beings by bringing a part of the indigenous world to Olmáivággi.

I saw a shift during the eleven years I studied the festival, from activities with a focus on the Sámi peoples only (local coastal Sámi and regional inland/reindeer Sámi), to an increasingly international focus on indigenous peoples in general. The organizers in 2002 started to invite indigenous people from all over the world to the festival. In the last eleven years, the festival has systematically practiced teaching 'indigeneity' through bringing indigenous people to the festival from all continents. A group of indigenous peoples from the same part of the world, each year spotlighted at the festival by being designated '*the Northern people of the year*.' They, by attending, present their culture to the festival and through this bring their indigenous world to the small village of Olmáivággi. For one week every summer, indigenous and non-indigenous peoples therefore meet and share activities and interests. The cultural complexity (Eriksen, 2002) being visible through the activities, the traditions, the history and background presented and shared among the people attending and performing at the festival. 'Ravra-Hans' underlined the core values they want to spread through the education of children, and the transfer tradition:

It is vital that we communicate our core values to our participants, to make future participants as generous, inclusive, open and tolerant as today's festival participants and workers. (...) My wish is that the children will extend their Sámi and '*indigenous heart*' and knowledge through taking part in the children's festival. These participants are our politicians, workers and festival participants of the future. Yes. They are the players in society in large who will create the society of the future.

The leaders explained that when they refer to '*indigenous heart*' they mean that they '... wanted to create acceptance and diversity' ('Laura'), and 'teach people to be proud of being indigenous' ('Laila'). They furthermore, wanted to shape experiences of community and give a knowledge and understanding of different Sámi cultures and, as 'Ravra-Hans' said, 'create the society of the future'. Viken (2011) states that Riddu Ridđu may function in the same way as kindergartens and schools do in the cultural mediation and the upbringing of children. This festival, in many respects, has been a vital force of local change. Researchers state that it has been a coastal reinvention of Sámi-ness—a core in the revitalization of the Sámi identity of local people (Pedersen & Viken, 2009).

Children's and parents' views and experiences

The main festival activities offered to the children are sport, physical activity, handicrafts and outdoor life skills in nature. Most activities take place outdoors. Some of the shows are performed in the school's sports hall, in the Nis'ga Longhouse (a gift from the Nis'ga people of Canada in 2009, when they were 'the

Northern people of the year), or in the indigenous tents (lavvu, tipi or yurt) on the festival site. Children and their parents in the joint interviews explained why they come back to the festival year after year. Their experiences of the festival are summarized as; Enjoyment and fun, being outdoors in nature, learning skills and activities, contact and education across generations, togetherness with other children, meeting their extended families and relatives, making friendships with people from different cultures, and learning about their own culture and similarities with other indigenous peoples.

Outdoor life is a crucial activity and taught across generations. Parents, grandparents and great-grandparents teach activities such as: Lasso throwing as used in reindeer husbandry, fishing, how to make dried fish eatable using a hammer (*tørrfiskbanking*), how to make a rope, traditional ball games (*goatsuballu*), Stallu mask making and Stallu parade dances. *Stallu* is a Sámi troll, one who is experienced as frightening to younger children. Children seem to enjoy these activities in line with 'Heikas' words 'Making my own Stallu mask and walking in the parade on the last day was both fun and a bit scary.' The following quotations suggest the pattern of the children's experiences of enjoyment and fun in traditional Sámi activities: 'It is fun to throw a lasso. Using a hammer on dry fish is a bit scary, but exciting, and its lovely to eat the dry fish after it is hammered until it is eatable, if mother does not steal it', 'Johan-Anders' stated. A local horse breed, which is calm and children friendly, is particularly popular with the children: 'For me, riding the Lyngen horse is the most fun thing every year,' 'Berit-Inga' emphasized. 'Jotta's' words about outdoor life reflect the children's views on being outside the whole day: 'We could be out all the time and do exciting things in nature.' Most of them, such as 'Ante', liked to be active outdoors instead of playing computer games at home: 'We moved around a lot every day, and much more than we do at home (...) at home we play computer games, but here we are outdoors all the time.'

The children is taught kindling, how to make a bonfire, and how to carve sticks of wood for use in grilling meat, fish and sausages. They also learn skills in the nature, which previously were common in all households, and they learn how to build traditional Sámi houses and lavvus. These activities described as being exciting. 'Outdoor activities are fun and I have learned how to make a bonfire and build lavvu,' 'Nillas' underlined. 'Biera' proudly told about what he had learnt from a friend's grandparent: 'Jotta's grandpa showed me how to make wooden things with a knife. My parents are, at home, very afraid and never let me use big knives.' The quotations show that being outdoors and in motion the whole day, experienced as positive by the children. This is in line with Rafoss and Hines' (2016) findings, which shows that Sámi youth enjoy staying outdoors, and be active in nature. Many activities organized across generations. The parents, grandparents and other adults say that the children motivate the adults to participate in the festival. 'Helena' explained that; 'We come only to the Children's Festival and leave when the main festival starts, because our children want to go to Riddu.'

Indigenous peoples' identities; cultural understanding and poly cultural capital

Lasso throwing is common among several indigenous peoples (i.e. Sámi, Veps, Inuit) and is an example of an activity where multiple cultures share similar practices. The San peoples' drumming and dancing (2008), the Hoop-dance of the Six Nations (2015), and circle-dance from Taiwan (2016) are examples of performances and activities shared at the festival across cultures. The following quotations show the children's experiences of their own and other cultures. 'Isak' underlined friendship and doing things together without language: 'We cannot speak with some of the foreign children, but we do things together anyway. It means that we have fun together with other children we cannot talk to.' 'Nelle' is Norwegian and spoke about learning languages: 'I learned about the Sámi and other foreign people from the whole world' (...) 'We learned new languages, and we learned to yoik'. Indigenous dances and song forms, such as yoik and the circle-dance, valued by the children. 'Inga' mentioned 'the artist Suming taught us circle-dances from Taiwan, which I enjoyed'. 'Peder' described it this way: 'It is cool to be Sámi, and it is cool to be First Nations because we sing and dance together.' Peder seems to draw on the richness of different cultures (Mila-Schaaf & Robinson, 2010), and said 'I am proud of being a Sámi.' Here the children explain how language and culture are not a barrier when playing with other children at the festival.

The physical activities offered to children and youth inspired by both traditional and modern sports such as taekwondo, ATV driving, ball games and line-dance. The activities seem to have both local, national and global origins, tradition going hand in hand with modern or post-modern sports. The children put it simply: 'We learned that it is good to be Sámi, good to be Norwegian, good to be Inuit if we are nice to each other', as 'Kristian' emphasized. 'We speak differently, we all look different, but, anyway we understood each other when doing activities together', 'Petra' highlighted. Children learn both traditional and modern skills from their own culture. They also explain the similarities between cultures, which makes them proud. The children introduced to music and dances from all over the world, they also learnt handicrafts and creativity outdoors, and put on performances together. The activities have different roots and seem to create sustained ties between persons, networks and organizations. These 'hybrids' or 'cross-overs' claimed to be crucial symbolic capital in expressing indigeneity or in the creation of 'indigenous hearts' by festival participants, staff and volunteers. The festival also seems to spread interest in, and the visibility of, indigenous peoples' cultural activities, sports and outdoor life activities globally. Here the Sámi artist Mari Boine, Buffy Saint Marie, Inuit artists, the First Nations of Canada, the Six Nations, San People, Norwegians and other artists are pictured performing together and on the same stage in front of spectators, in a region of cultural complexity as defined by Eriksen (2002). The above experience of the eight year old girl ('Petra') of different languages, different looks, but still being able to understand each other when doing activities, might be an example of poly cultural capital or the success of the festival organizers' aim to create and teach 'indigenous hearts' to new generations.

Different forms of physical and cultural activities from different ethnic groups and different indigenous peoples educate children and youth through the transfer of their forefathers' and foremothers' games and play into the life of today. Having to constantly adapt to new contexts might lead participants to changes in their habitus (Bourdieu, 1995; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1995), which gives space for new thoughts, creativity and multiple identities. Participants at indigenous festivals meet people from different worlds and might, through this, draw on the richness of different cultures and reject their negative elements. As Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) argue, the term 'poly-cultural', instead of solely capturing reified multicultural differences, captures cross-cultural interrelationships, overlap, fluidity, and shared spaces. Families travel a long way to get to the festival to meet siblings, the children of siblings and other relatives such as grandparents, aunts and uncles. They also make this an annual tradition in their families, explaining that Riddu Riddu has become an annual meeting place for relatives who live in different parts of the country and in other countries. The data shows that the festival is adapted to families and is not just a 'party'. 'Janna' said 'We travel from Finland to Riddu Riddu every year to meet sisters, brothers and their families.' In line with Forsyth and Wamsley (2006), networks are established that create social capital (Bourdieu, 1996); 'Here we have our extended family and our Riddu and international friends', 'Nilla' highlighted.

Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996) provides, through offering activities in which the modern and traditional walk hand in hand, children with knowledge. A number of the activities even have a global element. The children's habitus (Bourdieu, 1995) shaped through Riddu Riddu and their bodies marked by experiences and influences from the festival and society outside. Norms and values of the group to which they belong and the socio-cultural body (Bourdieu, 1990) are at the same time shaped. This provides opportunities for both subjective and creative action, which seems to shift between tradition and modernity and, at the same time, includes local, national and global characters. The activities offered to children guides what gives value and importance (symbolic capital) (Bourdieu, 1996). The question is whether it shapes lasting traces and identity outside the festival, or if it is primarily ephemeral.

The four families followed over the eleven years period explained how their identities have changed over this time in different ways. Two children of 'Family I' had become volunteers when they grew older: 'The first year we were here, we wondered whether this was a place for families. We have heard rumours about parties and alcohol, etc. (...) But, we were wrong. The children, after a couple of years, wanted to go every year. Today the oldest ones work as volunteers and are proud youngsters.' A teenager of 'Family II' took part as a performer in the Indigenous Youth Camp 2018: 'The children were, in the early years, there to play and have fun. Today they stand as proud youth at the indigenous youth camp, dancing with

indigenous peoples from other continents.' 'Family III' has experienced discrimination and harassment. However, the festival has changed their self-confidence: 'My son has been harassed at school because of his Sámi background. He did not want to go to the festival in the first years. He, after the first year, enjoyed the outdoor activities, liked learning skills in nature, and last year he even wanted us to buy him a Sámi costume. Today he stands as a proud Sámi and works as a Riddu Riđđu staff member.' 'Family IV' has a similar story. They told about family members never wearing Sámi costume until after they had attended the festival: 'I did not dare to wear my Sámi costume until, as a parent, I accompanied my child to the festival. Today, I am proud of being Sámi.'

Taking part in joint activities such as outdoor activities, and at the same time being extra receptive to different kinds of perception, might make the elements of the activities more embodied (Jæger, 2019; Viken, 2011). A strong feeling of community opens up among the participants through their presence in time and place, through the strong thematic focus of the Riddu Riđđu festival, and through tasks and experiences. Many of the outdoor activities the children and youth took part in were work-like activities that gave the children the opportunity to learn about how the inland reindeer Sámi, the coastal Sámi and other indigenous peoples lived in older times. The festival brings together different forms of activities from different ethnic origins, different times and different indigenous peoples. Education, common experiences and carrying out activities together might create long-lasting ties and a feeling of community. Pride in indigenous heritage is, at the same, a strong cultural capital, which is visible through Sámi symbols such as the Sámi costume, the Sámi *yoik*, the Sámi knife, the *Stallu*, dry-fish hammering, and throwing a lasso at the visor of a reindeer. Symbols from other indigenous peoples such as the San drums, the Inuit masks, the Vepsian dolls, totem pole from the First Nations or Nis'ga longhouse from Canada are other familiar symbols in the festival area which are visible to festival participants and show the pride of other peoples.

Concluding remarks

The physical and outdoor activities at Riddu Riđđu festival mirror the activities of the minority cultures and indigenous traditions of the people who participate in the festival. The study shows how such a festival can bring together old and modern sport and outdoor life and traditions, across generations and across ethnicities (Pedersen & Viken, 2009; Skogvang, 2013, 2016; Skogvang & Trollvik, 2018; Viken, 2011, 2013; Viken & Jaeger, 2012). This might influence identity in the region and across all the ethnic groups and indigenous peoples that take part in the festival. Participants tell that Riddu Riđđu has created their identity and, in their opinion, that the activities at the festival have built identities and created bridges across cultures and across indigenous and non-indigenous peoples.

The participants interviewed had developed a pride in their indigeneity and told about their struggle with discrimination in society in large. The young Sámi people who started Riddu Riđđu have done a great deal to restore pride in their ancestral culture. The festival also been used by the organizers, to teach children about their ancestral culture, and to be proud of it. The people organizing the festival have been able to create an opportunity for exchange between indigenous peoples. Using Bourdieu's terms, 'embodied knowledge' (Bourdieu, 1995) and experiences of painful assimilation are deeply rooted in and fundamental to the habitus (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1995) of the young Sámi. Common positive experiences and inputs together with other indigenous peoples at the festival might create changes in self-confidence. Experiencing the common atmosphere through the different forms of play, games, physical activities and (in particular) outdoor life at the Riddu Riđđu festival seems to change shame of one's background into pride. Festival participants underline that a week of outdoor life, in close contact with nature, and of indigenous sports and activities outdoors in the safe Riddu Riđđu festival context, creates pride in one's own culture. Activities such as: Lasso-throwing (used in reindeer herding), preparation of dry-fish (coastal Sámi fishing tradition), yoik and the stallu mask parade, and stallu dance (Sámi), Inuit mask dance, San people's drum and dance and the Amis' circle-dances, might bring about a closer connection and networks between indigenous peoples, when it is presented in this safe context at the festival area (Riddusletta). I therefore conclude that outdoor life and Sámi and indigenous

sports are crucial elements of Riddu Riđđu, an event that builds identities and bridges between people. Bourdieu (1996) defines symbolic capital as resources, which social groups recognize as valuable. Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples' meetings at the festival might expand their relations and equip the participants with social capital through the networking, and experience that to be indigenous is positive symbolic capital. In addition, the indigenous festivals make it possible for performers to travel across the globe to share culture and gain economic capital from showing their culture in safe environments.

Most of the participants live in cities and bring the festival experiences back to their everyday lives at home, whether that be in Tromsø, Oslo, Moscow, Taipei, Toronto or Sydney. Taking part together with other peoples of similar backgrounds in this 'yearly reward', which this festival is experienced as being, is empowering and gives people poly cultural capital, which is an advantage in today's society. Involvement in the festival educates participants in indigenous capital from different indigenous peoples in addition to the capital they have from their mainstream culture. To share performances, knowledge and skills at the same festival seems to add new poly cultural capital to the participants. The knowledge might potentially realize a cumulative advantage due to the opportunity to add resources, knowledge, skills and agency from the dominant cultural values and norms from the country they live in, with the cross-cultural resources of the indigenous peoples who participate in and/or perform at the festival. Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) suggest that this poly cultural knowledge might create *poly cultural people*, or what can be described as: '*indigenous hearts*', the term used by the informants in the study. The knowledge and understanding of both minority and majority populations is a resource that is very useful in a changing world. The participants of the Riddu Riđđu festival draw purposively and strategically on more than one culture and operate inter-culturally in their interpretation of the world. This is an aspect, which can create social change. The education and knowledge given, for example, to the children and youth at the festival gives participants, because they are equipped with more than a mono-cultural capital, an advantage both in the indigenous world and in the mainstream or majority culture in the country in which they live.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

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