

A Comparative Look at the Experiences of Displacement: The Cases of Amsterdam and Istanbul



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Description of the Research Project:

This comparative PhD research project investigates the residents' experiences of displacement (forced relocation) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Based on a qualitative methodology and deriving its empirical evidence from case studies in two restructuring disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Amsterdam (Indische Buurt) and Istanbul (Tarlabası), the study explores different geographies of displacement.



Tarlabasi Renewal Area-Istanbul



VanderPekblokken- Indische Buurt



Ceramplein- Indische Buurt

Research Progress:

A. Research Steps Completed/ September 2008- August 2009

1. General Literature Review about Displacement and Urban Policy
2. Review of the urban policy documents, relevant legislations in two contexts;
3. Exploratory Research to Select the Neighborhoods to Study;
4. Preparations for the Fieldwork

B. Current Focus/ August 2009 –January 2010

5. Fieldwork in Amsterdam
 - a. Ceramplein/ August –December 2009: 23 interviews with temporary residents + 8 with permanent residents, in total 31 interviews completed so far;
 - b. Van der Pekblokken/ November- December 2009: 9 interviews completed with permanent residents, who came back to their original block after renovation

C. On the Agenda:

5. Fieldwork in Amsterdam Cont.: In-depth Interviews (Ceramplein and VanderPek Blokken) + Participant Observation;
6. Within-case Analyses/ Amsterdam;
7. Preparations for the Fieldwork in Istanbul;
8. Fieldwork in Istanbul;
9. Comparative Data Analyses (Cross-case and within-case);
10. Writing Process

Displacement Experiences: Operational Definition

- 1) Perceived impacts of displacement on housing situations and the households' social economic wellbeing,
- 2) Perceptions and opinions regarding the displacement process and how the policy is implemented,
- 3) The private and collective strategies that the households develop to deal with displacement and their perceived impacts.

Research Aims:

1. To examine the role of urban policy and regulatory frameworks in explaining the different ways residents experience displacement in different cities.
2. To examine whether and how different resident groups (permanent vs. temporary; renters vs. owner-occupiers; residents with migration background vs. native ones) in a certain city experience displacement in comparative terms.

Methodology of the Research

- Qualitative methodology, multiple case study design
- Triangulation of data and methodological triangulation
- A mix of qualitative data collection techniques: In-depth interviews, document analyses, participatory observation + Longitudinal Analyses
- Comparative analyses are engaged at two different levels: *Cross- case comparison* and *Within- case comparison*

Initial Research Findings:

1. Relocation Neighborhoods of the Van der Pek Blokken/ Indische Buurt Residents

2. Selected Initial Findings / Temporary Residents at Ceramplein

- a. Almost all rent temporarily as *they had no other choice*.
- b. Almost all are satisfied with Indische Buurt and *don't perceive Indische Buurt as a "problem neighborhood"*.
- c. Most have a *tendency to lower their expectations regarding their housing*. Most have *no clue about their rights regarding housing* and are *illiterate about the organizations that can help them with the problems they face in the housing field*.
- d. Almost all are worried about paying higher rents and finding alternative housing and most have *"we will see"* approach about finding another house and relocation.

