

Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Residents' Response to Neighbourhood Decline

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ABSTRACT

Within urban studies there are many articles on participation, and many articles on residential mobility. However, both options have not been combined, whereas policies clearly aim to influence both residential mobility and participation, especially in deprived neighbourhoods.

The governments pursue both a social mixing policy and a participation policy. This article uses Hirschman's construct of 'exit, voice and loyalty' to explain the reaction of residents to neighbourhood decline.

Will they leave, take action, or wait and do nothing? The primary aim is to generate insight into the conditions for voice (both individual and collective participation), as opposed to exit, as a response to perceived declining neighbourhood quality. Second, we want to gain insight into the impact of neighbourhood characteristics on the expressed behaviour. The answers to our questions are based on data from the Dutch city of Utrecht sample Nieuw Utrechts Peil 2004 [Utrecht Residents Monitor], with N=8,770 among over 270,000 residents. These data enable us to analyse the opinion of residents within different types of neighbourhoods.

Key Words: participation, residential mobility, 'Exit, voice and loyalty'