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Displacement and Everyday Resistance: Seeking Spatial Justice in Urban Renewal Processes

Kirsi Juhila [1] and **Riikka Perälä** [2]

[1] Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University, Finland
[2] Y-Foundation, Finland

Correspondence: Kirsi Juhila (kirsi.juhila@tuni.fi)

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Abstract

This study focuses on four housing displacement cases in which residents were forced to move from their homes and neighbourhoods. The data contain interviews with 39 displaced residents. We ask how the residents sought spatial urban justice in resisting their displacement. In analysing the data, we apply the concept of "everyday resistance" complemented with an understanding of resistance as discursive counter-speech to various injustices experienced in the displacement processes. The results demonstrate that even if resistance is not collective or publicly visible, this does not mean that it does not exist. We located four repertoires of resistance in the interviews: reflective, emotional, rejective, and face-to-face. Through them, the residents questioned the processes of displacement and their consequences, identified power relations related to their displacement in the urban renewal processes and reacted to them, and, by doing so, tried to seek spatial justice for themselves.

Keywords

displacement; home; neighbourhood; resistance; spatial justice; urban renewal

1. Introduction

Having a safe and stable place to live and one's own home is central to most people's well-being. However, there are differences among people in this regard. Following Soja (2010), we approach these differences as issues of spatial justice and injustice. Spatial injustices related to the lack of safety and unstableness of living places can occur in many contexts, from extensive catastrophes, such as in situations of wars and earthquakes, to smaller cases, such as domestic abuse. The context of this study is four urban renewal

processes in growing Finnish cities in 2021–2022 that caused large-scale terminations of tenancies and forced residents in vulnerable situations to move from their homes and neighbourhoods. This starting point connects our article to the literature on gentrification and especially on related discussions of displacement (Baeten et al., 2021; Helbrecht, 2018; Soederberg, 2021). Gentrification creates differences and spatial injustices among a city's residents by displacing less-well-off people away from valuable land and property (Glass, 1964; Lees et al., 2008; Marcuse, 1985).

The qualitative data of this study contain interviews with 39 displaced residents and bring the spatial injustices they expressed to the foreground of the analysis. In analysing the data our focus is not, however, only on the descriptions of injustices but rather on how the residents resisted these injustices. More precisely, we ask how the residents sought spatial urban justice in resisting their displacement.

Resistance can be organised in the form of collective social movements, and this kind of public resistance could have also been anticipated in the context of large-scale terminations of tenancies. However, the interviewed residents did not describe much such resistance taking place. Instead, their talk was replete with rich and nuanced disagreement and critical expressions about the displacement processes and the consequences for their lives, which we conceptualise and analyse as everyday resistance complemented with the concept of discursive resistance, which relies on the idea that the use of language is a central means of power and is also a means of challenging established power relations, practices, and interpretations (Fairclough, 1992; Juhila, 2004).

In the following sections, we first review the previous literature on spatial injustice, displacement, and resistance and, in this manner, pave the way for our own analysis of resistance. After this, we present the research sites, interview data, and the process of analysing everyday resistance. The analysis focuses on the residents' repertoires of everyday resistance to spatial injustices involved in the displacement. We interpret these repertoires as the residents' way to voice that they did not accept the displacement as well as bring to the fore their views of more just urban renewal processes.

The article contributes to previous research first by looking at the multi-faceted consequences and dimensions of displacement in the lives of the residents. Second, the focus on everyday resistance enables the investigation of the injustice and power relations involved in the displacement processes in the context of the everyday lives of the displaced residents and the identification of forms of everyday resistance to be considered for future research. Third, on a theoretical level, the article aims to demonstrate the fruitfulness of combining housing displacement studies with the concept of spatial justice.

2. Spatial (In)Justice and Displacement

Spatial justice is the concept used in the field of critical geography to reflect how justice is related to spaces and spatiality and how different forms of injustices are created and maintained in processes of spatialisation (Dikeç, 2001, p. 1785). Dikeç (2001, pp. 1786–1787) considers Harvey's (1973) book *Social Justice and the City* and Young's idea of an "unoppressive city" accessible to everyone (Young, 1990; see also Tsavdaroglou, 2020, p. 232) to be fundamental resources in studying spatial (in)justice. However, Soja (2010, p. 26) notes that "spatial justice" as a specific term was rarely used before the turn of the millennium and that Dikeç's (2001) article on justice and spatial imagination was an important contribution in the field to end this silence.

Later, Soja's (2010) influential book *Seeking Spatial Justice*, along with various other publications, developed this research further.

Research on spatial (in)justice understands space as an integral and constituent part of social life and interaction as well as an element of justice (Cresswell, 2004; Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 2010). As Soja (2010) writes, "[justice] has a *consequential geography*, a spatial expression that is more than just a background reflection or set of physical attributes to be descriptively mapped" (p. 1, emphasis in original). In other words, space is not a passive stage where social life and interaction occur but something that people conceive, interpret, and construct and, thus, live by in their everyday lives (Purcell, 2002, p. 102). Soja (2010) underlines that as spatial (in)justice is always connected to other forms of (in)justice (for example, related to global, legislative, or economic questions or class, gender, and ethnic issues), the aim is not to substitute other perspectives or to introduce spatial determinism (see also Marcuse, 2009, pp. 4, 18). However, as an "integral and formative component of justice itself," it forms an important, less studied, and marginalised aspect of justice (Soja, 2010, pp. 1, 17).

Spatial (in)justice can be studied at many levels and in various contexts, starting with justice related to the human body and ending with questions related to the entire globe and covering, for example, issues such as sexual harassment, nationalism, and environmental pollution (see Soja, 2010, p. 31). Research literature concentrating on spatial (in)justice in urban spaces (i.e., the context of this study) is often inspired by Lefebvre's (1996) formulation of "the right to the city." In a much-cited quote (e.g., Dikeç, 2001, p. 1790; Purcell, 2002, p. 102), Lefebvre writes:

> The right to the city, complemented by the right to difference and the right to information, should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizen as an urban dweller (citadin) and user of multiple services. It would affirm, on the one hand, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area; it would also cover the right to the use of the center, a privileged place, instead of being dispersed and stuck into ghettos (for workers, immigrants, the "marginal" and even for the "privileged"). (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 34; the quote in its original French can be found in Lefebvre, 1986, p. 170)

Purcell (2002) interprets Lefebvre's formulation as meaning that membership of the city is not based on nationality, ethnicity, or birth but "is earned by living out the routines of everyday life in the space of the city" (p. 102). Muñoz (2018, p. 372) adds an important point to the discussion by arguing that participation in everyday routines is difficult without stable housing and homes, which serve as personal safe places and enable social and spatial mobility to other urban spaces. Furthermore, having one's own home in an area that feels like a homely neighbourhood creates well-being. Gentrification that produces home displacement can be seen as a crucial source of injustice in this sense (e.g., Atkinson, 2015; Davidson, 2009; Watt, 2021). As Pull et al. (2021) put it: "It is in the act of displacement that housing injustice finds its prime expression. Therefore, displacement needs to take a much more central place in our understanding of urban injustice" (p. 1).

In previous studies, displacement has been shown to create uncertainty and instability in housing pathways (Desmond & Hollberger, 2015; Helbrecht, 2018; Perälä et al., 2023; Pull, 2020). Displacement has also been seen as reflecting societal power structures, specifically affecting population groups that are unable to resist

the processes (Valli, 2021). An extreme manifestation of urban injustice is homelessness, as it means living in a city in a state of continuous displacement (Preece et al., 2020) and without one's own stable place from which to participate in city life and access urban spaces (Muñoz, 2018).

3. Seeking Spatial Justice and Strategies of Resistance

As the title of Soja's (2010) book *Seeking Spatial Justice* indicates, he suggests that as oppressive and unjust geographies are socially constructed, they can also be resisted by creating and seeking room for more enabling, emancipatory, and equal spatial spaces (Soja, 2010, pp. 37, 48). In urban contexts, seeking spatial justice means struggling for everyone's right to the city.

In previous research, resistance to spatial injustices in urban contexts has been linked to the gentrification of traditional working-class neighbourhoods and the related displacement pressure of low-income population groups (Dekel, 2020; Helbrecht, 2018; Lees, 2014; Newman & Wyly, 2006; Valli, 2021), as well as rights to housing and urban space in general (DeVerteuil, 2011). In addition, various strategies of resistance have been analysed, as described below.

Newman and Wyly (2006) identify public and private strategies of resistance in their analysis of gentrification in New York City (see also Polanska & Richard, 2021). These include arrangements at the household level to resist displacement, such as sharing housing with others or settling for poorer-quality housing. Such tactics of "staying put" have also been identified in other studies, and they consist of a variety of legal and extra-legal means by which residents, residents' associations, and other local actors seek to maintain homes and fight against housing inequalities (DeVerteuil, 2011; Gustafsson et al., 2019). Public strategies include rent regulation, which Newman and Wyly's (2006) interviewees recognised as the single most important form of public intervention that had helped them to secure their apartments and resist displacement.

Resistance has also taken the form of open protests and social movements. In the 2000s, capital areas throughout the world witnessed the rise of anti-eviction and anti-gentrification movements organised by residents, which have aimed at letting residents stay in properties (Helbrecht, 2018; Lees et al., 2018). This mobilisation has been used to shift the power relations that shape who has the right to stay put or to be mobile and on what terms, as Maeckelbergh (2012) summarises (see also Audycka, 2021). Sometimes, resistance is the only option at hand if households lack alternatives of somewhere else to move to (Marcuse, 1985). In some instances, people may be able to resist direct displacement but suffer from indirect displacement (Marcuse, 1985), emotional displacement (Valli, 2021), or symbolic displacement (Atkinson, 2015), resulting from changes in their gentrifying neighbourhoods.

In our data, public and collective resistance were almost completely absent. Only two interviewees mentioned attempts to bring the issue to public attention. Hence, to answer our research question of how the residents sought spatial urban justice in resisting their displacement, we chose as our starting point the theory of everyday resistance outlined by Johansson and Vinthagen (2016, 2020; Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013). The theory highlights the often covert and unpolitical manifestations of resistance. Everyday resistance is, first of all, rarely public or collective, and seldom has a clear, intentional agenda (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p. 18). Rather, it takes place on an individual level and in different forms that vary

according to the context and situation. Furthermore, acts of everyday resistance do not necessarily have to have any effects or outcomes. It is enough that they have the potential to subvert existing power relations.

One important contribution of the concept of everyday resistance is its emphasis on the possibility of agency despite the lack of open protest and political power. As Vinthagen and Johansson (2013) write, "everyday resistance is a type of act available to all subaltern subjects, all the time, in some form or another" (p. 36). They also claim that social sciences have too often focused on public, direct, and overt forms of resistance, leaving everyday resistance outside the scientific discourse of power and resistance (p. 38). Their theory emphasises Foucault's (1982, 1990) idea of the interconnectedness of power and resistance (see also Fairclough, 1992). Therefore, the analysis of resistance is also an analysis of power, and vice versa; each of these dimensions can create the other (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p. 34). In our research, these starting points were critical. Although our interviewees did not have visible or collective forms of resistance at their disposal, we found that their comments in the interview setting were an important form of resistance that allowed them to discuss and bring wider attention to otherwise invisible issues. Some of the participants openly stated that the interview was their way of making the injustices they and the other residents had experienced known to others. This led us to approach the interviews discursively, as counter-speech or "talking back" to various injustices experienced in the displacement processes (Juhila, 2004).

4. Data and Methods

4.1. Research Sites, Data, and Ethics

The sites for the study are four housing displacement processes that took place in Finnish growth centres between 2020 and 2022, forcing the residents of social or supportive housing to move out of their rental homes. The first site concerned around 200 residents who were displaced from an old municipal rental housing area near a city centre. It had been decided that the houses were either to be renovated or demolished to increase the housing capacity of the valuable land. The second and third sites covered one block of flats each, with 60 and 17 residents, respectively, managed by non-governmental organisations offering supportive housing based on permanent tenancies for people with a homelessness background. These houses were sold for more profitable purposes. The fourth site was a suburban block of flats with around 70 residents. These residents were displaced due to a large renovation project concerning the building and the flats. All four processes can be conceptualised as structural evictions or "renovictions" (Pull, 2020) related to urban development, which are increasingly common causes of displacement. Furthermore, all four sites had a somewhat bad reputation, suffering from a territorial stigma (Smets & Kusenbach, 2020), and the processes were partly motivated by the desire to stop the degradation of the sites and their immediate neighbourhoods.

The principle that was applied in all four processes was that the displaced residents would be relocated to new homes. This was also the case for most of them, leading to a general view among public officials of the processes being quite successful. However, some individuals were left homeless (Mäki et al., 2023). Residents also had varying degrees of influence over the type and location of the housing into which they could move. Furthermore, the process significantly worsened the health and well-being of many (Perälä et al., 2023). Regarding the background of the residents, a large proportion of them had a history that included homelessness, substance abuse, and/or mental health problems and required or had required

support in their housing. However, many had been living in their current location or area for a long time, having exited a state of homelessness.

The total number of displaced people in all sites was approximately 345. Of these, we were able to arrange qualitative face-to-face interviews with 39 individuals (20 in site 1, 14 in site 2, 3 in site 3, and 2 in site 4). The interviewees were contacted through the staff involved in the displacement processes at the different sites or by approaching them directly. As the process of displacement had happened two years earlier in site 4, we reached fewer interviewees concerning that process. Informed consent to participate in the study was secured. The participants were given information about the research and ethics and were told that they could withdraw from participating at any stage of the study. A formal ethical review of the study was carried out before collecting the data.

Of the interviewees, 32 were men and 7 were women. All were ethnic Finns. The estimated age of the interviewees ranged from 30 to 75 years. The interviewees were representative of all the displaced residents in terms of gender and age. However, those who were left homeless during the process could not be reached for interview. Also, the interviewees of site 1 represented mostly long-term residents, who probably produced more resistance talk towards evictions than shorter-term residents would have expressed. With regard to gender and age, we did not identify any differences in displaying resistance.

The interviews lasted between one and two hours. Apart from one group interview, the interviews were individual interviews. The interviews were conducted by three different researchers following a jointly designed semi-structured interview format. The interviews covered four themes: (a) life and living in the displacement area/site, (b) the displacement process, (c) settling into a new home, and (d) thoughts on support in general and specifically during the process. The interviewees were also able to discuss topics of interest to them.

Resistance was not initially one of the interview themes but emerged as a key topic during the interviews. Whilst responding to the pre-structured interview themes, the interviewees expressed in many ways disagreement with the official justifications for renovations and the terminations of their rental agreements as well as urban renewal processes in general. They thus created resistance as an important interview topic that we wanted to respect by making it an object of research in its own right.

4.2. Analysis

The analysis proceeded as a combination of data-driven and theory-driven methods. After identifying resistance as one of the key themes of the interviews, we started locating segments of talk from our transcribed interviews that we interpreted as including some type of oppositional talk towards the displacement processes and their injustices. We used the Atlas.ti software for this process. The amount and shape of this talk varied among the interviewees; some were very critical, while others were more concerned with the small details of the process. There was also oppositional talk in the data that was not related to displacement, such as the interviewees' treatment by societal institutions. We did not include these segments in the analysis unless they were linked to displacement in some way. In total, we identified 88 segments of interviews that included resistance talk towards the displacement processes. At this stage, we also looked at the target or object of resistance as expressed in the interviews.

In the second phase, we applied Johansson and Vinthagen's (2016) analytical framework to our data. This consists of four dimensions of everyday resistance: repertoires, agents, spatialisation, and temporalisation. Of these dimensions, spatialisation was the starting point of the analysis, as resistance was self-evidently spatialised in our data, given the underlying displacement and urban renewal processes that we were investigating. In addition, temporalisation was another given dimension in the analysis; the interviewees talked about the time before displacement, the phase of the actual evictions, and the time afterwards when they were settling into new homes. With respect to agents, we asked who was resisting and who and/or what was being resisted. The focus in our analysis was on the fourth dimension—in other words, on the repertoires the interviewees used in their everyday resistance. The concept of repertoire is borrowed from political scientist Tilly (1995) to describe the different forms that resistance takes (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2016).

We constructed the repertoires using a data-driven approach. First, we looked more closely at the 88 segments to see what forms resistance took in them. From this, we identified four different repertoires of resistance: reflective, emotional, rejective, and face-to-face. This crystallised how resistance appeared in our data. We understood that all these repertoires were discursively constructed in the interview talk.

In the following section, we first present an overview of the results of our analysis. We then proceed to demonstrate in more detail how the interviewees applied various resistance repertoires in resisting the injustices of displacement in its different phases and thus sought spatial urban justice. We refer to interviewees by a code showing the site where the interview was collected and the interviewee's order number as an interviewee in that site.

5. Results

5.1. Who Resisted, What Was Resisted, and How?

In most of the interviews, the agents of resistance were the interviewed residents themselves. In some cases, the interviews also included descriptions of resistance by other displaced residents. A notable feature in the data was the absence of resistance from other actors, such as local politicians or community workers. The residents described themselves as standing individually or even being alone in their criticism of the displacement. As one of the interviewees described: "Someone high up makes a decision that the buildings will be demolished, and no one says a thing but behaves like sheep….It feels like we don't matter at all."

The spatial injustices experienced in the displacement process and resisted by the interviewees included the following:

1. Stigmatisation of housing and the displaced residents;
2. Unsatisfactory political and managerial preparation of decisions leading to displacement, including poor information delivery to residents, a lack of communication or listening to residents, and an avoidance of responsibilities;
3. The selling and renoviction of homes to more well-off people (gentrification);
4. Suggesting new accommodations and places to live that were unsuitable and undesirable;
5. Leaving some residents without homes, resulting in homelessness;

6. Local city planning and housing policy that cared mostly for the interests of businesses and the more well-off residents.

The first experienced spatial injustice can be seen as fundamental, forming a basis for other ones. The interviewees described how their neighbourhoods and houses had been stigmatised by the city, thereby justifying the displacements. This experience resonates well with the concept of territorial stigmatisation (Smets & Kusenbach, 2020). The place-based stigma had also been attached to the residents themselves, making them "second-class citizens," as one of the interviewees described it.

As mentioned earlier, the interviewees' repertoires of resistance almost never included public or collective resistance. Resistance was private and not public (Newman & Wyly, 2006). Nevertheless, the interviews contained a rich collection of the repertoires of everyday resistance that we categorised into four groups:

1. Reflective resistance (39 segments): reflecting and critically analysing the displacement process, its origins, reasons, motivations, implementation, and consequences;
2. Emotional resistance (21 segments): expressing negative feelings, such as sadness and anger, towards injustices in the displacement process;
3. Rejective resistance (22 segments): refusing to accept an offered flat after eviction, feeling that it is not suitable;
4. Face-to-face resistance (17 segments): directly verbalising disagreement to someone concerning certain unfair practices in the displacement.

Reflective and emotional repertoires can be described as passive resistance, including "only" a critical analysis of displacement processes (reflective resistance) or descriptions of emotional reactions towards spatial injustices (emotional resistance). Rejective and face-to-face repertoires were more active and were often used simultaneously, comprising specific speech and other acts that residents had used in their resistance. Repertoires were not specific to certain interviewees but were expressed in a range of interviews, and two or even three repertoires were often combined when talking about injustices.

Next, we look at the repertoires more closely to answer our research question of how the interviewed residents sought spatial justice in different phases of the displacement processes. To support our analysis, we present examples from the data that were representative of the different repertoires present in the data and cover all of the research sites (considering their size).

5.2. Seeking Spatial Justice in Displacement: Resistance Repertoires in Interview Talk

5.2.1. Reflective Resistance: Disputing the Justifications of Renewals

The residents' reflective resistance most often targeted the overall justifications for demolishing or selling the houses and how the residents were treated during the renewal processes. What made this resistance reflective in our interpretation was that it was based on some kind of analysis of the causes and consequences of the displacement process, which was then used as a means of questioning and criticising the displacement. In the interview quote below, one of the displaced residents, Alex (pseudonyms are used to refer to all the interviewees in this research), responds to the interviewer's question on whether he agrees

or disagrees with the decision to demolish the houses. Alex's reflective resistance is based on a comparison with the processes in two other nearby neighbourhoods, leading to criticism against the process faced by him and the other residents:

> As there were options, renovating or demolishing, I think they could have done renovations in here as they did in Kaukola and Mattila [anonymised neighbourhoods nearby]. They did renovations there, and they gave temporary accommodations [for residents] so that they could move back. So, that is [why] this creates lots of thoughts as well. Kind of conflicting thoughts about why these should be demolished; and where we all will end up, as there were, I think, a bit over 200 flats there. Where can we all be housed? Of course, it created this kind of thought. (Interview 1, Site 1)

At a different displacement site, Erik questions the justification of the renewal in a similar manner. When asked what he would have done differently, he provided the following response:

> I wouldn't have sold the building at all [with a laughing voice]. Simply. Because it is not known, although a new shopping centre was built there, it is not known how much it would have affected its surroundings. Some, of course, but how much? Kumpula [name of the house] had been there anyway, already over 10 years. The relationships with neighbours had been settled down, and everything worked. (Interview 1, Site 2)

Erik's answer is very straightforward in protesting the decision to sell a building containing homes of over 50 previously homeless residents. He grounds his opinion by suggesting that it was a false cultural assumption that a new shopping centre and the residents living in the sold building would not have been compatible in the same area. In fact, in Erik's opinion, there was more evidence that it would have worked well because the building and its residents had a long history in the area and the residents' relations with their other neighbours had already "settled down," to use Erik's description.

Another form of reflective resistance included talk about unjustified and unequal urban planning. The interviewees critically asked why their houses, buildings, and flats were not renovated earlier, although this had been talked about a great deal during the past few years. Some of the residents had also proposed renovations, but according to the interviewees, nothing had been done. The residents claimed that this was partly purposeful so that more well-off people could move to new or renovated houses. Elmo describes this as follows (Interview 9, Site 2):

> Elmo — The entire 10 years [when the resident was living there], there was talk about renovation.
>
> Interviewer — But there wasn't any, was there?
>
> Elmo — No. Now loft apartments should come there, money talks, money talks. It's in a good location, after all.

Finally, a very common criticism of urban planning was related to a lack of transparency. As Jan describes: "These kinds of cases that are societally [significant] and touch people should be conducted and played out

much more openly" (Interview 5, Site 1). Another interviewee described the undemocratic and non-transparent nature of the process with a story about an eviction notice she had unexpectedly found on her doorstep and the shock that had accompanied it.

5.2.2. Emotional Resistance: Reacting Affectively to the Injustice of Displacement

Whereas the reflective resistance contains mostly retrospective and evaluative talk on injustices related to displacement, the residents' emotional resistance includes remembering unpleasant feelings associated with the displacement. These feelings are usually presented as both personal and shared among the residents, as can be seen from the following description provided by Anton (Interview 1, Site 3):

Anton	Some reacted in a really shocked way and found it really hard. Others seemed to not care at all what happened to them. But I wonder if it was a kind of protective cover or effect that they didn't want to think about it. People can behave like that as well; if they don't want to think about difficult matters, they close them out of their minds.
Interviewer	Did you also react a bit like that? You said that you became a bit depressed?
Anton	Yes, in a way. I focused on substance use during that time, so I didn't have to think.

According to Valli (2015, p. 1206), these kinds of "emotional components of displacement" are essential to study as they open a perspective on the power relations involved in the processes. In the description given by Anton, the power is present as a force that comes unexpectedly and deprives residents of the opportunity to react with anything other than shock or escaping the situation, in Anton's case by escaping to substance use. Sometimes, the residents commented on the futility of emotional resistance. As one interviewee described, the process "was mourned" and "raged about," but this was done only within the displacement sites with no connections or encounters with the decision-makers (Interview 2, Site 2). In other words, this kind of resistance stayed among the residents and was not heard by those who had made the displacement decisions or who had the power to possibly change them.

Not all residents reacted emotionally, but some nevertheless displayed an understanding of others' emotional reactions, as illustrated by Otto in the following (Interview 7, Site 2):

Otto	Well, many people there were really pissed off. They had been living there for some years, but I don't fucking want years.
Interviewer	Yeah, [the place] was not for you…that kind of place [where one wants to] stay?
Otto	No.
Interviewer	Yeah, but for those to whom it possibly was like that [a good place to stay], it was a bit more tough?
Otto	Yes. There were certainly those as well. One [resident] didn't want to leave at all.

Above, Otto thinks back on how those residents who had been living long-term in their homes were angry about the evictions. Otto himself did not feel the need to resist the eviction, as his plan was not to stay in the house for very long. However, his comments can be interpreted as including emotional resistance towards the system, which may have not given him other options than staying in the house in the first place despite his own wishes and plans.

Finally, emotional resistance was present in the descriptions of what had happened and would happen to the residents' own homes and houses after their departures. A central feeling was frustration, as two of the displacement sites were still empty and without any use almost a year after the displacement processes. As one of the interviewees noted: "As far as I have noticed, nothing else has happened other than washing machines and dryers disappearing from the washing room in January…but nothing else has happened in that house for almost half a year" (Interview 1, Site 2). This raised the question among the interviewees of why they were forced to move out of their homes in the first place and in such a quick time frame. Another recurring feeling was sorrow over a lost place soon to be inhabited by other people, discussed for instance in the group interview: "It annoys, irritates a bit, somehow, that they are now there in our places…it was our garden…we played on this sand field" (Interview 9, Site 1).

5.3. Rejective and Face-to-Face Resistance: Refusing and Criticising Offered Accommodations

Among the resistance repertoires, rejective and face-to-face resistance are the most active. These repertoires are connected to the times when the residents were searching for new neighbourhoods and flats after the termination of their tenancies. The repertoires were used mostly in specific situations, especially in discussions concerning certain housing options with landlords or social workers, and could be compared with private resistance strategies described by Newman and Wyly (2006). The following quote is from Matias, who refused to take the first apartment offered to him because of its supposed bad condition (Interview 1, Site 4):

Matias	I rejected the first one [flat] in Backstreet. I said, "I'm not coming to look at this; I know what kind of flats those are."
Interviewer	Why did you reject it?
Matias	Because I knew what kind of flats they were.
Interviewer	What were those like?
Matias	Well, I wouldn't go to any hovel as I already lived in a hovel.

Matias describes the episode of rejection by reporting his own determined face-to-face speech in the situation: "I'm not coming to look at this; I know what kind of flats those are." He explains to the interviewer the reason for his rejection, which is the knowledge that the offered flat was a "hovel," similar to the one from which he had just been evicted. Using the term "hovel" for the flats indicates that, in Matias's opinion, they were both in bad condition and not fulfilling the criteria of proper homes. In this way, Matias is also showing his agency in the face of public officials not understanding the situation.

Similarly, Oiva narrates how he was first planned to be housed in a place that he found unsuitable. He did not reject his first option as clearly as Matias, but it can be implied from his description of it in the interview that he considered it less than suitable and his next option was much better:

> Then in the beginning they would have thrown me to that Yellow House [name of a supported housing unit]; I kind of didn't like it, as it was full of old and disabled people. Luckily, I then had Silja [social care worker] inform me that I would get a flat from here. (Interview 4, Site 2)

Rejections were not only tied to individual housing preferences. Sometimes, the residents refused offered flats and neighbourhoods because they wanted to live near some old neighbours and far away from certain other people. Anna describes this in the following, voicing also the dissatisfaction felt by others:

> It annoys many people here, including me, that the people were housed in different places. It was a bit difficult that [we] were in there, in Marjala, in Mustikkala, in Puolukkala [names of housing areas] and in here…that the community was broken up. It felt somehow bad….It was for many like, "I don't want to go there, as they also live there." It was difficult for many to go to where a flat was offered. They didn't necessarily accept it right away. For example, Maija, who now lives upstairs in the same house where Antti lives downstairs, would have got a flat in Mustikkala [name of a neighbourhood]: "I won't move to Mustikkala." Then, she was asked how about Lakkala [name of a neighbourhood]? "Yes, I can move there, as Lina and Kalle live there, too." (Interview 7, Site 1)

In the quote, Anna explains rejective resistance by people's wishes to have familiar people and old mates living nearby, which helps with settling down in a new living area. Also, in this description, the agency of the residents is highlighted as well as their ability to negotiate better housing for themselves.

Overall, rejective and face-to-face resistance seemed to be rather successful as a private resistance strategy of not accepting non-preferred housing options after evictions. It also clearly emancipated the residents and increased their satisfaction with the otherwise unfair displacement process. However, as a private strategy (cf. Newman & Wyly, 2006), it can also be fragile, as was seen in the story told by several residents about their neighbour in one displacement site, a big apartment block of flats. The resident had refused to move out of his apartment and lived there for some time without electricity or heating, also vulnerable to robbing and violence as the building was sometimes broken into. As the interviewees described, with the severe frosts, the workers had had to almost force the resident into his new home. They also wondered what would have happened to the resident if the workers had not been patient enough to watch him resist for such a long time. Would he have become homeless again?

6. Conclusion

Our analysis shows that even if resistance is not collective or publicly visible, this does not mean that it does not exist. The framework of everyday resistance (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020), complemented with the ideas of discursive resistance constructed in language use, revealed different types of resistance repertoires in our data. Through these repertoires, the interviewed residents questioned the processes of displacement and its consequences in various ways, making them active agents in the process despite the lack of open contestation. By doing so, they sought spatial justice for themselves (Soja, 2010).

Most of the resistance was reflective, which shows that the residents had the ability to see and reflect on the different aspects of the displacement processes. They clearly pointed out the injustices regarding the unstableness of their housing pathways, losing their homes, and becoming territorially stigmatised due to their living conditions, and presented their own descriptions of fairer alternatives to the processes. Overall, they had good abilities in perceiving and criticising the prevailing power relations in urban planning from the margins and thus disputed the justifications of renewals producing displacement. The question is how to better use these reflection abilities in the future by involving the residents in the design of urban renewal processes.

Emotional resistance—in other words, reacting affectively to the experienced injustice of displacement—came to the fore as an important form of resistance. Not only did it highlight power relations involved in the displacement process (cf. Valli, 2021) but it also showed the negative consequences of the use of power, both for the targeted individuals and communities and for society at large. If left unaddressed, emotional resistance can generate bitterness towards decision-making and planning processes and, in this way, increase marginalisation. This was visible in the text segments in which the residents described their own and their neighbours' reactions to the shock of displacement, which included the loss of their homes and communities and their helplessness in the processes. This resonates well with Soja's (2010) ideas of how the geographies of people's everyday lives can construct injustices. Many were still angry or sad about their past treatment at the time of the interview, even though some time had already passed. This illustrates the importance of identifying and dealing with emotions in urban renewal processes and of designing and implementing these processes in ways that do not put people in situations that generate bitterness or other emotions related to feelings of unfairness.

As stated above, descriptions of public and collective resistance were almost absent from the interview data. However, as well as invisible reflective and emotional resistance, interviewees also described moments of more open resistance when the tenancies were terminated and they were finding new places to live. This resistance, consisting of rejective and face-to-face repertoires criticising offered accommodations and refusing them, occurred only at the individual level, leaving the residents quite alone in their acts of resistance. Despite this, some residents achieved some degree of success in resisting and making things work in their favour in the form of slightly better flats and nicer neighbourhoods. This should not be underestimated, as successful resistance clearly had a positive impact on some of the interviewees' assessments of the displacement process. This raises questions of how and under what conditions this kind of successful individual-level rejective and face-to-face resistance could have been expanded to more collective resistance, for example by jointly rejecting certain offered housing options in certain neighbourhoods.

With regards to discussions on "the right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1996), the results of this study demonstrate how far this right was from our interviewees' experiences in their everyday lives. On the contrary, they reported on their lack of rights as city residents; for example, their voices were not heard in the city planning concerning their own homes and neighbourhoods. Still, their repertoires of resistance evidence profound and rich analyses of spatial injustices that should be considered in addressing similar issues while striving to create fair cities in the future that value all residents.

This study was based on 39 interviews with displaced residents from four different processes of relocation. The number of interviews was rather large but inevitably still somewhat selective. We assume that those who volunteered for interviews wanted to talk and reflect upon their experiences of the processes, typically from a

critical point of view, and believed that providing an interview was one way to be heard and made visible. This may have caused more "resistance-rich" talk than would have been the case if we had been able to interview all the concerned residents. However, the variety of repertoires of resistance could also have increased with more interviewees. If we had reached more displaced residents, we could have found, for example, a repertoire of withdrawal—an extreme form of passive resistance in a situation interpreted as hopelessness regarding future housing pathways based on previous experiences of spatial injustices. This was already visible in some of our interviews, where the interviewees described their heavy substance abuse as a way of escaping the reality of displacement and its consequences.

With respect to future research, our results underline the importance of listening to the people and their concerns in the implementation of urban renewal processes. The use of participatory methods, where residents' resistance would be made known and discussed during the processes, would also be highly recommended. This would not only prevent spatial injustice in urban reform processes but could also make the processes more socially sustainable. In our cases, two out of four sites were still awaiting renovation a year after the evictions of the residents, and cost estimates for the processes had increased. There was also vandalism on the sites, making them even more stigmatised. Part of the reason was poor preparation of processes, which could have benefitted from the incorporation of research in the earlier stages of the processes. For instance, residents' options for smaller renovations, enabling them to stay in the sites instead of displacement, might have been implemented or at least considered.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

Data Availability

The data of this study are not publicly available due to the sensitive nature of the information and the need to protect participant privacy.

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About the Authors

Kirsi Juhila is a professor in social work at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University. Her research interests include institutional practices in social welfare settings, social work communication, and the issues of social exclusion, marginalisation, segregation, community care, home, and homelessness.

Riikka Perälä is a postdoctoral researcher at Y-Foundation, a Finnish NGO specialized in homelessness policies. She received her PhD in sociology in 2012 from the University of Helsinki. Her research interests cover the position of vulnerable citizen groups in welfare and housing policies and services.