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Living in a Limbo between two homes: Have Syrian refugees found a second home in Lebanon?

By

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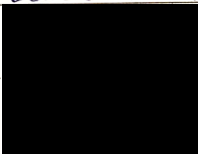
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Dedication Page

To my mom Randa Saadeddine I hope I made you proud, and to my best friend Noura Ghazale who was thankfully pushing me to do my best.

Living in a Limbo Between Two Homes: Have Syrian Refugees Found a

Second Home in Lebanon?

Lana Khafaji

ABSTRACT

As a result of the Syrian crisis which began in 2011, Lebanon has been a main country of refuge for a large number of Syrian refugees. According to the annual report from the Danish Refugee Council (2016), 25% of Lebanon's population are refugees. This has led to serious concerns on the issue of their return. Interdisciplinary scholars from different backgrounds have discussed the concept of repatriation, however, there has been a lack of scholarly research on the return of Syrian refugees in Lebanon to their home. This paper aims to study the challenges of repatriation of Syrian refugees and examine whether they consider Lebanon as their second home. In my study, I will assess their living conditions in Lebanon and their everyday ordeals based a number of semi-structured interviews I have conducted with them. Collected data are cross-referenced and analyzed with the general concept of repatriation that has been discussed by scholars. Basically, it is found that the return to Syria is not happening in the near future, and some refugees have found a second home in Lebanon due to the severe losses they have faced after the 2011 war on Syria. Studies that have been conducted for this project state that Syrian refugees portray the return to their homeland as a 'myth' because the nostalgic feeling for Syria that they once knew is no longer there.

Keywords: Repatriation, Syrian refugees, Return to Syria, Identity, Home

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Introduction Chapter

1.1 Chapter Overview

The debate over the Syrian presence in Lebanon is not a new phenomenon in our society. In recent history, it goes back to 1977 when the Syrian army entered Lebanon and the Syrian state dominated Lebanese politics until their official withdrawal in 2005. After the Syrian crisis which began in 2011, Lebanon became a major destination for a number of Syrians fleeing the war. Subsequently, this has escalated the tensions between the two countries especially with regard to the future of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. That being stated, the political division between the major political forces in Lebanon over this issue resulted in the failure of the Lebanese state to properly control the vast influx of refugees across its borders and to adequately manage their presence within its territory.

1.2 Background

The Arab Spring that started in Tunisia in the late 2010 was ignited due to the oppressive regimes and the poor living standards that, in return, led to protests to overthrow the government. The rebellious effect of the Tunisian revolution was huge and it spread to several neighboring countries such as Libya, Egypt, Yemen, and Syria. In the case of Syria, the dream of democracy that began in 2011started as a peaceful protest against the regime but ended as a violent riot against the government. This led Syria into a war that has split the country into several parts (the pro-regime and anti-regime parties) which then escalated to an ongoing civil war.

After the Arab Spring, many Syrian refugees fled to neighboring countries seeking asylum. The Syrians' decision to do so was due to the political crisis they witnessed which resulted in instability and civil war. Lebanon has been host to a vast number of these Syrian refugees. Statistics provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) states that in 2013 over 1.5 million refugees have scattered to nearby countries such as Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Lebanon (El-Khatib et al., 2013). Lebanon hosted a high number of Syrian refugees at a high price that affected both refugees and the Lebanese

population. In 2014, the Lebanese population was estimated to be 4.2 million of which 20% of the population are Syrian refugees (Calestini, 2014). As the crisis in Syria continued to worsen, many refugees kept fleeing to Lebanon in which some of them have limited legal status and limited access to services in Lebanon. With the Syrian crisis still ongoing, the vast majority of Syrians settled in areas located at the borders with Syria which further exacerbated the tensions between Syrians and the host community.

1.2 Thesis scope, aim and objective

The focus of my study is to assess the social situation of Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon and understand the reasons why many Syrian refugees are still residing in Lebanon and not returning back to their home country. The purpose of this research is to provide an analysis that questions whether Syrian refugees have found a second home in Lebanon and established a new beginning for themselves in the country. I want to study their living conditions and further assess if the aid that has been provided by local and international NGOs and the government are the reasons preventing Syrians from returning back to Syria.

Recent overviews on the topic mainly focuses on the economic, political, and social aspect that affected the lives of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Since the war, which has ended in some parts of Syria, is a recent event and the literature regarding the topic of my study is limited, my study will examine the livelihood of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and assess the push/pull factors that are influencing their decision on the return to their country.

1.3 Defining the significance of the research question

Researching such a topic is important because it highlights certain aspect that might affect the Lebanese society in the near future and the reasons behind why Syrian emigrants are refraining from going back to their homeland. Despite their ordeal and limitations in Lebanon, will Syrian refugees recreate the history that was once left behind by the Palestinians'? Will Syrian refugees return to their country to rebuild Syria or will they adjust to their environment and settle in Lebanon? As long as Syria

does not provide safety and economic stability for the Syrian refugees, repatriation is far from being achieved.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

2.1 Chapter Overview

This Chapter explains the approach that I used in order to accomplish the research goals. Research methods will be discussed in details, these methods will include interviews, and show the sequences of interviews and how refugees where approached. A thematic structure of the questionnaire will be discussed in more details.

2.2 Methodology

The type of research that will be used in this study is theoretical and qualitative. It aims to collect an in-depth understanding of the Lebanese policies concerning refugees and to investigate the reasons behind the certain reforms and examine the phenomenon. Primary and secondary research has been conducted for this paper using the previous work done by researchers, through the literature review on refugees and repatriation and by collecting data from the UNHCR, reports by Carnegie Middle East Center, journal articles, news, and face-to-face interviews with Syrian refugees. Furthermore, to pinpoint the challenges associated with the legal framework and faced by the Syrian refugees, it is important to look into the laws and governmental decrees issued by the Lebanese government relating to their presence in Lebanon.

Research mainly focuses on collecting and analyzing existing information and gathering data that reflects the geographic distribution of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The main focus of this thesis is to find out the refugees' area of origin, their demographic background, and the challenges they face to return to their country. This helped me to organize focus group discussions and to profile the participants selected for the semi-structured interviews. The thesis will explore the 'push/pull' factors in both the host country and Syria and to evaluate their differential impacts on different kinds of possible repatriation.

Field research includes one-on-one interviews with Syrian refugees who are divided into 3 parts: Refugees coming from areas that are still in war, areas that are controlled

by the Syrian government forces, and areas that are controlled by the rebel and Kurdish forces. The area of origin is important in this regard because it determines the push and pull factors associated with the area and the attitude of the refugees towards returning.

In the table below you will find the interviewed individuals:

Table 1: Sequence of Interviews

Syrian Refugee/workers

Varies from agriculture to infrastructure to housewives

Key informative interview

Total of 21 particiapnts (randomly chosen)
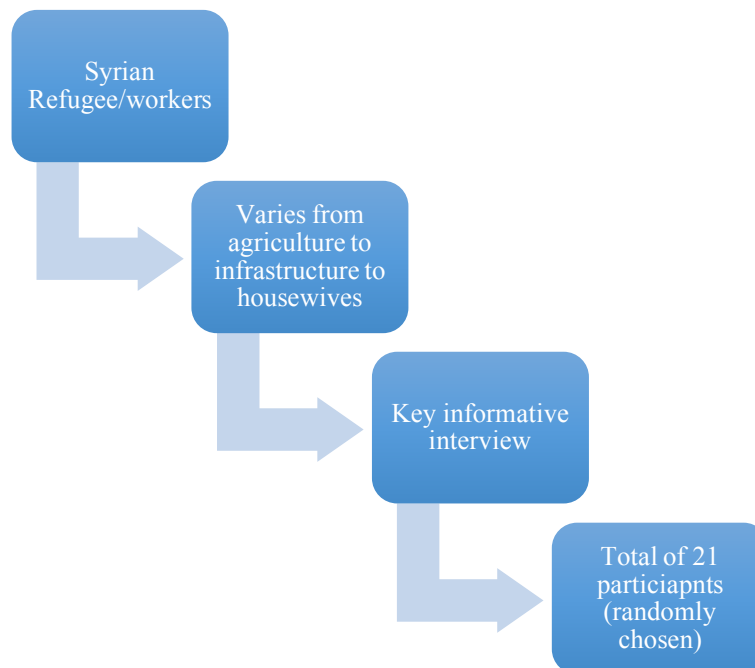
The choice to conduct semi-structured interviews with Syrian refugees as a qualitative research method for my project is informed by my plan to gain a better understanding (i.e. empathy) of their perspectives on the issue of return. This allowed me to explore their ideas and feelings in more depth. Interview-based research will illuminate the real struggle of refugees on ground. The topic that is being tackled covers the beliefs of individuals and their affiliation to their homeland. Conducting interviews with individual refugees will provide a better understanding of sensitive topics and help to better study their reaction.

The choice to conduct face-to face interviews with these individuals was done to help probing deeper into the participants' feelings and emotions and extract rich qualitative data which could not be obtained by using quantitative research methods such as the survey. Interviewing individuals will give me the opportunity to obtain specific

information about their opinions, feelings, and perspectives on the subject. In brief, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews enable me to give a voice to the people concerned and empower the respondents to tell their stories in their own words. To ensure the safety of participants while writing this thesis, the information about the names of the participants and any other identifying information about them were stored in a locked container until the writing of the thesis is accomplished, or stored in a password-protected file.

2.3 Interview Design

Conducting interviews with Syrian refugees proved to be very important for my research and for building the argument for my thesis. This is so because based on the information gathered from participants, I was able to fill the gap on the literature on the repatriation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and provide valid and substantive evidence in support of my hypothesis.

In order to organize my interview questions, substantial literature was first read on the subject. Since the war in Syria is somewhat a recent event, I found a serious gap in literature concerning the return of Syrian refugees to their homeland. Therefore, I took a different approach to reach my goal. I have read literature on 'repatriation' and looked into the discussions made by scholars on the matter and related it to the the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Interview questions were divided into several sections covering different themes that vary from the idea of 'home' to 'refugee'. A background profile on the participants gave me a better understanding on who they were before coming to Lebanon. This then helped me shift the questions into more personal and detailed explanations on their journey as refugees and the current situation they are facing in Lebanon.

2.4 Thematic structure of the questionnaire

Interviews were divided into several sections: profile on the participant, identity and how they relate to it, the notion of home, their current situation in Lebanon, being a refugee, return to the home or 'repatriation,' and future plans and challenges. The first part of the interview focused on the participant's socio-economic status. Next, questions relating to their identity and how it is shaped by its relation to their 'home' was inquired. This has allowed me to assess their affiliation to their country and explore how attached individuals are to Syria. In addition, it was important to assess their living situation in Lebanon and study what kinds of services they were obtaining. Being a refugee and living the hardships of their situation. The idea of a 'refugee' was also tackled, and their reaction to the term was also assessed. It was also important to understand how they perceived themselves. Evaluating these issues, questions were then asked about repatriation. Specifically, whether there was something hindering their return to their home, or did they find a second home in Lebanon? Finally, addressing the challenges of refugees in Lebanon and their future plans was significant to this project because it will help answering the question of whether Syrian refugees are willing to settle or repatriate.

After gathering all the required information and analyzing the interviews/focus group discussions, at the end of this study, I became in a better position to establish whether the fear of the Lebanese from Syrians wanting to settle in Lebanon is well founded or not.

2.5 Limitations

Semi-structured interviews were done with Syrian refugees who were randomly selected for this project. However, I wanted to have the opportunity to organize a focus group discussion in camps for Syrian refugees but was not given permission to do so. This led me to conduct interviews with Syrian refugees that have integrated into the Lebanese hometowns and villages. Another important limitation to my qualitative research study is that obviously my conclusions could not be automatically generalized on the total number of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon, but I can firmly state that they could be used to better inform any future survey on the question of repatriation of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In addition, I was able to conduct

interviews with 21 participants of which 19 were male and only 2 were female. Hence my results maintain a significant gender skew. Females respondents were not willing to participate in this project due to the fact that their male partners would not allow them.

One more important limitation I faced was the constant resentment by the Syrian refugees to openly talk to me as a Lebanese citizen about the real issues they were confronting in Lebanon. It took me a lot of time and effort to ease their fear and explain that I am only a student and no harm will result from this study. I got rejected by many due to that. Those who have participated were sometimes reluctant to answer all the questions. However, I found a different approach to get answers from them by restating the question in a different way. Guiding the conversation of sensitive topics, particularly through repeating phrases in the middle of the conversation when the interviewee was more at ease, oftentimes gave the opportunity for answers to be more elaborative and at other times rephrasing the question into a rhetorical form gave the interviewee more time to think and respond to the question.

2.6 Ethics

According to Resnik (2011) "ethics are norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior." Ethics in research is seen as a code of professionalism which protects both parties. It is an important factor to take into consideration when gathering information on human subjects. In order to gain trust from participants, it is crucial for their anonymity and identity to be protected. Furthermore, following the proper procedure to conduct these interviews, it is important to assure participants that they have the right to withdraw from the research whenever they feel uncomfortable. For the purpose of this research, participants were explicitly informed of their right to withdrawal at any time from the study. Additionally, all data and information gathered was anonymized to protect the identity of participants, and the interviews conducted were either under lock and key or password-protected with proper encryption. Furthermore, prior to beginning the interviews, participants were fully informed of the intentions and research aim of the researcher, that the interview would be recorded, that consent was required, and that their data and privacy was of the researcher's utmost concern.

2.7 The everyday experience of Syrian refugees

Narrative inquiry of refugees highlights the importance of their ordeal as refugees in Lebanon. According to Clandinin & Connelly (2000) a detailed narrative study "highlights the importance of acknowledging the centrality of the researcher's own experience – the researcher's own livings, tellings, retellings, and relivings". In the case of Syrian refugees who took part in this project many shared their hardship throughout the 8 years of being labelled as refugees and how they are looking for coping mechanisms in order to survive it all. This gave them the opportunity to share their stories and experiences and gave them a voice to be heard.

21 participants took part in this project, each participant had expressed their experiences and had a different story to share. Despite the different characteristics of the members of my sample, the data that I have collected will show that there are commonalties in their everyday experiences of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon that could represent shared concerns by the respondents.

Many respondents expressed the hardships of their everyday life in Lebanon and how they are being exploited, one of the respondents stated "I don't recall the last time I was happy to be honest, I know that a lot of the situation we are living in Lebanon is bothering me. Income is very low, I make 300$ a month I pay 100$ house rent and the rest we spend on food and necessities. I am here in Lebanon because my father died in the war, my sister lost her sight and my brother lost his leg. I am the only member of the family that provides income. We are exploited by the locals. I am currently living without electricity because the owner asked for money that I can not provide and so I have to accept that"

The journey of my respondents from Syria was not an easy one, let alone the difficulties that they are facing in the hosting country. Most of the participants that took part in this project come from a working class background. Hence they share similar stories about their everyday challenges. "I was captured three times by Daesh, I knew they were going to kill me until an airstrike hit next to were I was captivated and so I was able to run away. I lost my life saving trying to get my family out of Al-Raqqa, then I got lucky and came to Lebanon but was unfortunately labeled as a refugee and can barely afford a decent living".

Syrian refugees have various professional backgrounds and level of educations. Some were students in their home country and became low paid workers in Lebanon while others came from a middle class background and lost everything. Many of them have experienced downward social mobility whilst being labeled as a 'refugee'. According to them they were law abiding citizens and were living decently before migrating to Lebanon. One of the main recurring themes among the participants is the living situation in Lebanon. One of the respondents narrated "I left Syria with a small hand bag, throughout my stay in Lebanon I bought new clothes for my children maybe once or twice". Another respondent stated "my daughter has a heart conditions and I can't pay for her medical bills"

It is obvious that participants coming from the working class have faced and still are facing many difficulties. Despite the ordeal that they have faced in Syria, Syrian refugees are facing a new form of ordeal in Lebanon and seeking coping mechanisms for their survival.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter studies and analyzes the literature on repatriation. It starts by explaining what is repatriation and studies the different definitions provided by scholars. It examines the concept of a refugee and what the word portrays to the notions of home, identity, safety, and dignity. The literature review then focuses on patterns of repatriation discussed by Stein and Cuny (1994) and how these patterns will be of a guide to my thesis.

3.2 Repatriation

Repatriation is a concept used to describe one's return to their home country. It is commonly associated with the voluntarily movement of refugees to their homeland. According to Black (2002), the aftermath of war and the subsequent results which led to creating refugees is mainly seen as a disruption to the natural order of the world. The author points out that the 'territorializing metaphors of identity' are washed away due to the result of war and refugees. Therefore, repatriation as mentioned by Black (2002), is more than just a subject of reducing economic burden but is a procedure used to restore the natural order. In some cases, repatriation is usually seen as a 'durable solution.' In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, repatriation was seen as an opportunity to replace ethnic divisions with reconciliation, and the opportunity to reintegrate shattered communities (Black, 2002).

The concept of repatriation arose due to a particular space and time. According to Crisp and Long (2016), the aftermath that was left behind after World War II forced the Russian Allies to return to the Stalinist Russia. The Soviet citizens, fighting together with the Germans, led many individuals to be shot or sentenced into forced labor or internal exile (Crisp & Long, 2016). Due to these experiences, the 1951 Refugee convention was drafted to make sure that the principles of non-refoulement and voluntary repatriation were intended to prevent the reoccurrence of such an event.

That being stated, it is important to understand who is a refugee and what their relation is to repatriation.

3.2.1 Being a refugee

In order to have a better understanding of the concept of repatriation and how its implied, it is important to understand the nature of refugee hood and its relation to the concepts of citizenship so as the meaning of repatriation can be accepted and not just referred to as return to 'home' (Long, 2012). That being said, who is a refugee? The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees states that a refugee is an individual who:

'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is ... unable. or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.' (Long, 2012).

Even though in recent interpretation the term refugee has managed to focus on the notion of 'persecution,' it is also very important that focus is placed on the of 'protection' as well (Long, 2012). The author further suggests that the relation between the refugee and the host country that they are residing in is experiencing normal circumstances and is governed by the obligation of protection. However, Bradley (2014) discusses that even though international law states that a refugee returning to their homeland should be voluntary, safe and dignified, it is believed that in many cases refugees are pushed to return even when conditions in their homeland remains unstable. The author explains that this is because repatriation is believed by international actors as a major factor of peace building and a sign of fledgling peace processes. The former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, reflected on the earlier notion in a statement in 2005, "that the return of refugees and internally displaced persons is a major part of any post-conflict scenario, and it is far more than just a logistical operation. Indeed, it is often a critical factor in sustaining a peace process and in revitalizing economic activity" (Bradley, 2014).

According to the article entitled "Understanding Repatriation: Refugee Perspective on the Importance of Safety, Reintegration, and Hope," repatriation is the preferred solution for the host country and for the UNHCR due to the general assumption that

once the conditions in their homeland gets better, they will voluntarily return (Zimmerman, 2012). This is something that the Lebanese community may relate to regarding the Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon. It is assumed that the return of Syrian refugees to Syria will be voluntarily after conflicts in certain parts of Syria have been resolved. Nevertheless, repatriation in the case of Syrian refugees is a combination of political, social, and economic pressure. The general assumption, that repatriation is voluntary, is not always the case, in which many Syrian refugees are a living proof of this case in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Zetter (1991) examines on what basis people are defined or labelled as refugees. He further looks into the conceptual and operational limitations of the term 'refugee.' The author further examines the consequences that lead someone to become a refugee, and how one's identity is manipulated and transformed according to public policy and bureaucratic practices. Despite the many definitions used to describe a refugee, Zetter (1991) believes that refugees are 'fully labelled' in people's mind. According to the author, this mentality is not just a classification problem, but it conveys a complex set of values and discrimination which are way more than just definition.

There are many difficulties that come with the term 'refugee.' Zetter (1991) states that there are interventions and definitional acts imposed by the state and their political interests which prove that the simple rights or legal rights are sometimes not given. Due to many given definitions and interpretations of the term, the author compares refugees to currencies; according to Zetter (1991), they both have "fluctuating values and exchange rates." The author believes that labels intervene in the social and developmental policy discourse. "Labelling is a way of referring to the process by which policy agendas are established and more particularly the way in which people, conceived as objects of policy, are defined in convenient images" (Zetter, 1991).

Zetter (1991) further discusses the outcome that comes along when describing or defining the criteria that is applied to the refugee label. They are seen as a group which is inhabited by a population of particular demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The image is directly pinned to to their physical characteristics as well. Obviously, once these assumptions are imposed, it automatically leads to stereotyping an identity. When it comes to the topic of refugees, many discuss the idea of returning

and what 'home' has become. Therefore, notions such as home, identity, repatriation, memories, and safety are directly connected to a refugee.

3.2.2 Repatriation and the concept of home

"Conceptions of 'home' and the political geography of refugee repatriation: between assumption and contested reality in Bosnia-Herzegovina" discusses the different concepts of 'home' (Black, 2002). The concept of 'home' is linked to different factors such as identity and memory as much as it is related to territory and place. According to Black (2002) 'home' can be made, imagined, or desired. It is something that can be referred to by beliefs, traditions, or physical places. The concept of 'home' is subjected to different interpretations by individuals. Black (2002) discusses the various examples of how the concept of 'home' has been theorized in academic literature, especially in ways that are directly related to the return of refugees. Different scholars, as discussed by Black (2002), give different interpretation on the concept of 'home.' Morley and Robbins state that the 'project of modernity' is directly related with the metaphysical loss of a 'home' in which it portrays security and gives a sense of identity to individuals. Moreover, the German/European concept of *Heimat* (a German word referring to home or homeland according to the Oxford dictionary) is primarily characterized as a "mythical bond rooted in the lost past, a past that has already disintegrated" instead of being related to a particular nation, land, or community (Black, 2002). However, Al Rasheed (1994) interprets the concept of 'home' in the case of Iraqi refugees in London as the 'myth of return.' It involves the many aspects that makes the 'home' extremely inaccessible which is defined as a 'point fixed in space' with an imaginary return of home that is impossible. On another hand, the UNHCR (1998:43) argues that "unless uprooted population can go back to their homes and enjoy a reasonable degree of security in their own community, the transition from war to peace may be … delayed or even reversed" (Black, 2002). Building on such an explanation, the limitation of returning home is more related to the political tension and economic problems faced back home. This can be very much related to the Syrian **r**efugee case in Lebanon. The idea of 'home' is not far away but the aftermath that the war has left, and the idea of peace is far from accessible at this point.

The article entitled "Revisiting the Debate on People, Place, Identity and Displacement" Kibreab (1999) states that since we are all mobile, we are therefore, and there is no 'home' in a physical, material, or national sense. Therefore, according

to the author there is no 'home' that refugees can return to and there was never a 'home' in the first place. He believes that the idea which roots people in a particular time whether it is a place, country, or space is a result of sedentarist thinking. Kibreab (1999) concludes by stating that since there is no need for individuals to belong to a specific place. The concepts of repatriation or retuning to one's home as a solution to the problem of displacement is a misconception.

Scholars have different perspectives on 'home' and 'identity.' Some identify 'home' as the land or a territory where an individual has been raised, while other scholars believe that there is no need for an individual to belong to a particular land or home. Many interpretations of the idea of 'home' can be easily reflected to the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The aim of this study is to explore whether Syrian refugees have found a 'second home' due to the similarities of culture and tradition, or are they living in a limbo between two borders?

According to Brun and Fábos (2015) home and place are two entities that are interrelated with forced migration adding a different aspect to the idea of belonging and identity. However, the authors explain that 'place' has a different notion to refugees and forced migrants. 'Place' is no longer tied to a particular territory, but it is the social relations that migrate with individuals. According to Brun and Fábos (2015), 'place' highlights the physical, social, economic, and cultural realties whereas a home is a "particularly significant kind of place with which, and within which, we experience strong social, psychological, and emotive attachments." The choice of words used by the authors present 'home' in two elements: first which describes 'home' as a place, and second as an idea that is portrayed through sentimental values.

Brun and Fábos (2015) further argue that the huge interest of scholars in defining 'home' has been taken for granted in which they conceptualized home as a haven. According to the authors, home may be seen as a house, but it may also refer to something more social, such as family, community, nation, etc., in which an individual can feel a sense of acceptance and belonging. Therefore, 'home' is no longer an idea that protects individuals but is a translucent notion that may be defined in relation to the wider social and political locations (Brun & Fábos, 2015). According to the article entitled "Making Homes in Limbo? A Conceptual Framework," home is seen as a site in which outer relations of the wider society, such as gender, religion, ethnicity, and class, are played out (Brun & Fábos, 2015). That being said, the displacement of

people is a result of being targeted in one's home country. The schemed attacks and damage done to civilian homes brings us to the idea of the political meaning of 'home' (Brun & Fábos, 2015). The idea of the 'political meaning of home' focuses on the forced displacement of individuals from their houses, homelands, etc. and discusses the different perspectives of 'home' and illustrates how unsettled the idea can be once an individual is displaced and no longer sees their home as a safe haven. Therefore, the concept of 'home,' according to the authors, is now discussed through multiple and extraterritorial ways of belonging. 'Home' can be viewed as a "process marked by openness and change," and, due to forced migration, the concept of 'home' is now more focused on the personal and emotional aspects rather than a territorial connection to a home (Brun & Fábos, 2015). The concept of 'home,' as described by Eastmond (2006), is defined by the normal activities that can be implemented in daily life. Home is a place where there is economic security, a social belonging, and a sense of belonging. However, Eastmond (2006) reflects that these qualities are very hard to be applied to a forced migrant, and therefore, the only way to implement such activities is when the migrant brings and applies their values in their new place of refuge. Social remittances are also something that has migrated along with many immigrants and not only refugees. In the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, many refugees have imported ideas, behaviors, and identities into the Lebanese community. These qualities will be further elaborated in the argument.

a) *Roots and Identity in Repatriation*

Malkki (1992) rethinks the question of roots and identity and its relation to a territory or place. Malkki introduces identity by using the phrase quoted from Simon Weil: "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul." The symbolic notion of having roots is directly related to the linkage between people and place. The study of the migration in anthropology is not a new phenomenon. The focus on 'moving targets,' which is the constant movement of people, dictates the focus on borderland and boundaries and highlights many new aspects for scholars as opposed to the study of invisible peripheries of these moving targets (Malkki, 1992). In other words, the existence of boundaries and their transgression no longer focuses on the movement of specific groups of people, but instead it focuses on the main concern which is the cultural displacement of people, things, identity, and traditions (Malkki, 1992).

According to Malkki (1992), the world that we live in is seen as a division or spatial partitioning of territory. The division of territory is seen through the conceptual and visual device which is referred to as a map. 'The nation' is a common term that is used in our everyday language that mainly refers to a 'country,' 'land,' or 'soil' (Malkki 1992). According to the author, these terms are not only used to identify a country but are also used to define people and cultures.

In another study, Malkki (1995) states that to become uprooted, displaced, and/or removed from one's national society will automatically lead to the loss of one's identity, traditions, and culture regardless of how close the geographic proximity of the asylum country may be. Malkki (1995) justifies the above statement by stating that refugees are searching their way through the asylum country and looking to find a 'home' in a "strange and frightening society." Therefore, the pattern that they were once accustomed to in their original home is no longer provided. Even though Syrians and Lebanese may share many common cultures and traditions, many believe that due to common practices and geographic proximity Syrians can easily integrate in the Lebanese society. However, Malkki's argument shows that no matter how close the cultures and traditions two societies may share, the unsettlement of refugees and the search of a 'home' in the host country will eventually segregate both societies.

Nevertheless, Kibreab (1999) argues that for the last 20 years migration and the movement of people have become a main interest for scholars. Furthermore, such scholars have been particularly intrigued in the relationship between people, home, and identity. According to the author, human mobility has always been there, but in the age of globalization, mobility has been more highlighted upon. Kibreab (1999) states that the mobility of humans and the processes of integration through international markets for services, good, technology, media, finance etc. has become the essential aspect for human existence. This arguably has led to the insignificance of national borders. That being stated, the author believes that due to these circumstances identity has become de-territorialized. He argues that period that we are living in is best characterized by a 'general condition of homelessness' in which he explains that 'we are all refugees' or even 'tourists.' The results of these findings are not just due to the denial of the relationship between place and identity, but regardless of an individual's origin, they have become citizens of a de-territorialized global world (Kibreab, 1999). He adds that the concept of homeland, locality, nationality, or

collective identity has either lost its significance to individuals or became a part of their past. These discussions have an important reflection on the recent events, namely, whether Syrian refugees are planning to repatriate or integrate in the Lebanese society. Nevertheless, it is important to differentiate between voluntary repatriation and repatriation led by external forces.

b) *The notion of Voluntariness in Repatriation*

In "Refugee Repatriation and Voluntariness," Gerver (2015) discusses the different aspects of repatriation led by the government or the host country which may lead refugees to return home without their free will. According to the author, the literature points toward the 'voluntariness' in repatriation which he believes is 'relatively empty terminology' in the case of refugees and the return to their homeland. According to Gerver (2015), there is little importance when it comes to voluntary movement especially in the cases where the rights for refugees are limited regardless of how the United Nation Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) might facilitate their movement.

Gerver (2015) further discusses different factors which a government may play in the influencing of repatriation and whether this movement is to be considered 'voluntary.' Pressure can result from the host countries by forcing threats and cutting of basic services which might affect refugees' stay as impossible (Gerver, 2015). According to the author, signing a voluntary repatriation form is not enough plausibility that refugees are truly exercising their free will to return. In other words, by making refugees sign a legal agreement pertaining to their movement or repatriation to their homeland does not necessary mean that their movement is a result of free will. Gerver (2015) somehow reflects on the situation the Syrian refugees are facing in Lebanon. For instance, several services provided by the Lebanese government have been cut down and/or not provided to refugees. Thus, this makes their stay even more intolerable. In this case, voluntary repatriation is no longer seen as voluntary due to the many factors that are pressuring on refugees.

Due to the many definitions and explanations of voluntary repatriation and the possible reasons behind it, the article discusses five criterions to consider when mentioning voluntary return. The five criterions are: Autonomy, no 'irresponsibly substantive'

decisions, non-coercive formation of preference, consistency with Parfit's Principle of Consent, and consistency with Parfit's Rights Principle.

The autonomy presents the persuasive notions of when and how particular decisions are being made. Grever (2015) states the substantive and procedural explanations for autonomy. Substantive autonomy describes the characteristics an individual hold when making a decision instead of the process of the decision itself. On the other hand, the no 'irresponsibly substantive' decisions mainly focus on children as they do not have the ability to 'rational reflection about rules.' In turn, parents tend to make decisions for them. In such cases, guardians often focus on their needs and neglect legitimate responsibilities towards minors and how they may be affected accordingly. Examples presented by the author discuss decisions made by a parent which may have an effect on the whole family; meaning that the decision was not a voluntary or a unanimous decision.

The non-coercive formation of preference explains the decision made by individuals without any pressure forced upon them. Therefore, this decision is based on their preference without any intimidation from others knowing the consequences that follows. Consistency with Parfit's Principle of Consent discusses the idea that repatriation is an irreversible decision. In other words, the meaning of the consequences that accompany repatriation may constrain one's future choices and thus prevent them from being able to make voluntary choices in the future.

Finally, consistency with Parfit's Rights Principle discusses the rights that an individual is eligible to make when changing their mind on a decision that was previously made (Gerver, 2015). The author describes that an individual might be under certain pressure that forced a certain decision, therefore, a person has the right to change their mind in the future. These five criterions highlight what the motivation of individuals are rather than focusing on the conditions that are imposed upon them. When discussing repatriation, it is important to highlight the safety that comes along with voluntary repatriation.

c)   'Safety and Dignity' in Voluntary repatriation

The principle of 'safety and dignity' that comes along with voluntary repatriation has been recent. According to Crisp and Long (2016), the idea behind 'safety and dignity'

should be seen as foundational to all refugee repatriation. According to Article 33 of the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees: "no contracting state shall expel or return refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened" (UNHCR, 1951). However, this principle was then reinforced by Article 5 of the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) which specifies that "the essentially voluntary character of repatriation shall be respected in all cases and no refugee shall be repatriated against his will" Organization of African Unity. (1969). The notion of 'safety' was implemented in the normative framework of refugee repatriation by the OAU convention. It stipulates that there should be arrangements focusing on the safe return of refugees in collaboration between the country of asylum and the country of origin (Crisp & Long, 2016). However, these principles were further developed throughout the years. The UNHCR's Executive Committee reached a decision in 1985 which states the need for voluntary repatriation "to be carried out under conditions of absolute safety." Furthermore, this discussion on the safety of refugees evolved in 1993 by the UNHCR which concluded that the return of refugees to their homeland "must be carried out under conditions of safety and dignity" (UNHCR, 1993). The authors further mention the idea of voluntariness, safety, and dignity and their interpretation in a number of different ways and different perspectives. In 1996, the UNHCR released a handbook on voluntary repatriation which defines it as "the absence of any physical, psychological, or material pressure… which push the refugee to repatriate" (UNHCR, 1996). The handbook stated that in order for this to happen repatriating refugees should not be "manhandled" when they "return unconditionally" and at "their own pace."

Whilst discussing the factors which are associated with refugees, it is important to assess the patterns of movement in which refugees undertake in the process of repatriation.

3.3 Patterns of Repatriation

Stein and Cuny (1994) present the patterns and process of repatriation. According to the authors, the influencing process of repatriation is due highly to the easy access of borders between countries. Refugees' willingness to return depends on the events in their home country that led them to exile, and the host country which assesses the

conditions of whether it may be hopeless, isolated, or precarious. The article then discusses the five processes of repatriation:

Ricochet Repatriation: The exodus of people is a result of sudden events such as a military action or a 'stampede' away from particular dangers. In this case many individuals feel the need to leave even whether or not there is a direct threat on their wellbeing. These individuals will seek ways to return back to their homeland. The author discusses the fear that follows many individuals even if they are not directly threatened or in danger. They may have decided to leave their homeland, in this case, many rethink their decision and make an effort return to their homeland.

Relocation-stimulated repatriation: Once the government chooses to gather refugees and move them to camps, refugees have a choice of either accepting the fact the host government has control over them or finding a way of eluding the authorities. They would then look for other choices for living away from living in refugee camps. For those residing outside the refugee camps, repatriation mainly is a viable alternative for them.

Community and alienation: The formation of refugees into small communities that consists of politically cohesive organized members. Refugees tend to organize and co-habitat as members of the community with their own traditions and values to share. Nevertheless, some members or refugees will feel different from the refugee community in terms of their values, customs, and common causes. These individuals tend to leave the camp or place of settlement and repatriate.

Secondary relocation-stimulated repatriation: Sometimes the host government decides to relocate or transfer refugees. The proposed relocation triggers decisions with individuals if they are willing to accept the transfer along with its consequences or leave the camp and try to integrate in the host community, or repatriate.

Major repatriation: this is where the UNHCR plays a role in facilitating and providing assistance in the movement of refugees back to their homeland. The return to the homeland or repatriation is not a one-time event. It is, in fact, a long process that requires a lot of time. The success or failure of returnees influences not only those for later returns, but also affects internal politics in the home country, along with the host country, and the international community as well (Stein & Cuny, 1994).

The patterns described by Stein & Cuny (1994) will support the argument of this thesis by analyzing the movements of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and relate them to findings of my own. These patterns will help me steer through the different movements taken by individuals depending on what is affecting them and their surroundings. The movement of a single individual will no doubt differ from that of a family. The following patterns will be a guideline to the results of this paper.

3.4 Precarity of Place

Banki (2013), on the other hand, discusses the idea of 'precarity of place.' The notion of precarity, according to recent literature, describes the situation of an individual being vulnerable to exploitation and/or abuse. Therefore, the concept of precarious work is not only related to unemployment but also to the constant threat of it. The author describes two empirical analyses of precarity, the spatial and the political, which helps better understand the idea behind it. The term 'precarity of place' mainly discusses the challenges that a migrant face, the hardship they endure, and the quality of living a non-citizen life (Banki, 2013). The author describes the imbalance that is brought by the colonialism, neoliberalism, and how it affects the 'precarity of place' (Banki, 2013). He believes that the extreme movement of capital as a part of the neoliberal agenda has provided seasonal and temporary work, and where it facilitates the 'economic logic' of migrant labour. In an in-depth explanation, Banki (2013) explains how undocumented migrants are an asset to the neoliberal regime, and at the same time, they are its primary victims. He states that there are too many social and economic interests that are benefited from illegal migrants. As Banki (2013) quotes: "too many populists depict attempts at legalization as eroding the security of the citizenry." In other words, the imbalance of labour and capital across borders not only creates migrant populations but causes deprivation that highlights many of the worlds current conflicts. The author adds that due to globalization, migrants of all kinds are a result of precarity. Banki (2013) concludes by stating that colonialism lies at the roots of many conflicts which have resulted in the number forced migrants. Moreover, many of them are in lack of any legal documentation.

What has been described by Banki (2013) and the interpretation of labour precarity is something that can be included in the understanding of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The exploitation of refugees, their abuse, and vulnerability is something that is seen

on a daily basis in Lebanon. The fact that many Syrian refugees are undocumented and living in differing modes of survival has resulted in some Lebanese citizens to exploit the Syrian refugees' precarity for their own benefit. This portrays the explanation provided by Banki on how refugees can, at times, be an asset to a society, and yet they are victims.

'Precarity of place' discusses the literature of precarity at its initial stage and does not only focus on human rights implications, but also mentions the basic requirements and the quality of life that comes along with the permission to reside (Banki, 2013). The 'precarity of place' acknowledges the idea that the state has the ability to relocate individuals from their territory. It thus automatically creates a 'class' of individuals, and these could create challenges for the sovereign power. Finally, 'precarity of place' focuses on the importance of the mobility of individuals and its significant element of residence.

When discussing the concept of repatriation there are several aspects that are directly related. Being a refugee is connected to the notion of home, identity, and its interrelation to one another. This chapter provided the different meaning and connotations of the terms that will be discussed in the findings. As a result of the research done, repatriation was discussed as a general term hence there is a gap on the focus of repatriation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It is helpful to link the patterns discussed by Gerver (2015) to the argument because it will support the thesis by analyzing the voluntary movement of a refugee and the possible reasons behind it.

The first step in answering my research question is through connecting the concept of home discussed by scholars and relating it to what participants have shared in their interviews. Gradually, the notions discussed earlier about home, being a refugee, repatriation, and identity will be linked through discussions made by scholars on the subject and see whether they are applicable in the case of Syrian refugees. To be able to assess the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, a general overview of their situation in Lebanon should be taken into consideration. It is important to understand the process of how these refugees came into Lebanon and how they integrated into the Lebanese community and the hardships that came along.

Chapter 4

General overview of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter gives the general understanding of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It highlights the different movements of Syrian refugees since the beginning of the crisis up until the present time of writing this paper. This section will help analyze their movement from their home country up until their stay in Lebanon at the present moment.

4.2 Analysis of the Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

According to sources from UNHCR (2017), Syria is the largest humanitarian and refugee crisis in history. It is stated that at the beginning of the crisis Syria's population was estimated to be around 20.5 million of which 6.15 million individuals are internally displaced, and a total of 13.5 million people are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

Statistics provided by the UNHCR state that as of September 2017, there are 5.2 million Syrian refugees which are distributed in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. Relative to their population, it is believed that Lebanon and Jordan have hosted the largest number of Syrian refugees amongst other countries. In Lebanon 1 out of every 5 individuals is a refugee, whereas in Jordan, 1 out of 15 is a refugee (UNHCR, 2017).

UNHCR registration data shows that 52 percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and neighboring countries such as Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq, were registered in 2013.
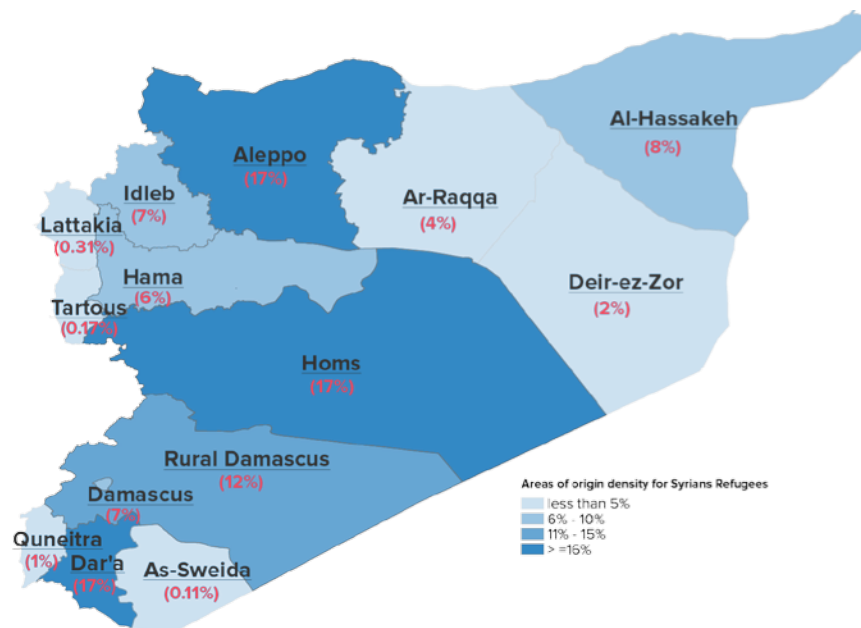
Figure 1: Origin of Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. *Retrieved form : www.unhcr.org*

Due to the border proximity between Lebanon and Homs, 23% of Syrian refugees have originated from Homs, followed by Aleppo at 21%. In Jordan, it is stated that due to geographic proximity, 42% are from Dara'a and 16% originated from Homs. Figure 1 states that in Iraq most refugees originated from an area called Al-Hassakeh (58%) and Aleppo by (25%). In Egypt the majority of Syrian refugees where from Damascus (32%) and rural Damascus (30%) (UNHCR, 2017).

According to Naufal (2012), in the article entitled "Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: The Humanitarian Approach under Political Divisions," refugees in 2011 mostly settled in Northern Lebanon mainly in two areas: Wadi Khaled and Tripoli. After the crisis in Syria began to escalate, statistics show that in March 2012 Syrian refugees started to settle in the Bekaa Valley since it is closer for Syrians trying to flee from Homs. Most Syrian refugees are settled in the north regions in Lebanon with 30,550 individuals that are registered and 4,390 that are waiting to be registered (Naufal, 2012). In the Bekaa valley, studies show that 22,417 refugees got registered by the UNHCR whereas 12,642 are waiting to do so. Whereas in Beirut and its districts, 1,489 Syrians have been registered while 5,616 are still waiting for registration (Naufal, 2012).

Table 2: Distribution of household and individual refugees registered in Lebanon by Mohafaza

Mohafaza	Number of Housheolds (June - Sept)		Number of individuals (June - Sept)		% of total (June - Sept)	
Beirut	153	225	344	513	1.5	1.1
Mount Lebanon	219	309	457	734	2.03	1.59
North	3263	5535	15672	25739	69.56	55.74
Bekaa	1319	4129	6030	19136	26.56	41.44
South	12	23	27	55	0.12	0.12
Total			22530	46177	100.00	100.00

In spite of the existence of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Lebanon is not a part of the 1951 refugee convention, thus there is a limited legal protection provided by the government to the asylum seekers in the country. Nevertheless, it is obliged by the customary law of the principle of non-refoulement which states that Lebanon is not allowed to send refugees back to their home country. According to Moldovan (2016), the main principle behind non-refoulement is that states are prohibited to return a refugee to his/her homeland where there is substantial risk of prosecution of any kind. Storey (2016) argues that the numerous definitions attributed to the word 'refugee'; protection, is a term used to define a refugee, however it fails to provide a clear definition of what 'protection' has yet to emerge in this situation.

Therefore, the government's duty, according to human rights treaties, is to fulfill its obligation and to provide the refugees with temporary protection. The Lebanese government, abiding to its policy of 'dissociation' from the crisis occurring in Syria, had left its borders accessible for individuals. Yet the government refused to open camps in order to host refugees (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). The Lebanese

government further did not acknowledge Syrian refugees as 'refugees,' however, they did view Syrians in their condition as 'displaced' individuals (Naufal, 2012). According to the rules and regulations provided by the Lebanese law, legal documents are to be held by individuals that are not of a Lebanese origin in order for their stay to be legalized. Therefore, refugees coming from Syria are considered to be 'illegal' due to their restricted legal status in the Lebanese state (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). According to Mufti (2014) the situation in Lebanon, which has been caused by the huge influx of Syrian refugees, created a kind of 'policy of no-policy' context for the Lebanese authorities. Since Lebanon is not a conducive state for asylum seekers, it still abides by the non-refoulement policy (Trad, 2014). He adds that the policy of not sending refugees back to their country has shown to be insufficient towards the government's management, the provisions on assistance, and other security related issues. Trad (2014) states that this aspect sheds light on the weakness and lack of readiness from Lebanese authorities to handle and manage issues that are related to refugees.

Lebanon, a country consisting of 4.4 million citizens, is now hosting more than one million registered Syrian refugees and a further 30,675 Palestinian refugees whom emigrated with the one million Syrians. This country also hosts 6,000 Iraqi refugees and 280,000 Palestinian refugees. Thus, 1 out of every 4 citizens are refugees; This has been described as extraordinarily significant and troublesome (European Commission, 2017). Moreover, the influx of refugees has added substantial pressure on the Lebanese economy and infrastructure. The strain of refugees on the host community has been present in all sectors including; education, health, water, housing, and competition for jobs (European Commission, 2017).

The influx of refugees into Lebanon has resulted in economic and social challenges which has had a major effect on both the refugee and the host community (Dahi, 2014). The circumstances in Lebanon is set apart by financial and regional inequality, joined by profound social cleavages and sectarian division that have been exacerbated by the Syrian conflict (Dahi, 2014). According to Dahi (2014), 60% of the registered refugees are settled in the North and Bekaa Valley area which are some of the poorest areas in Lebanon. He further states that the North region has the lowest per capita expenditure with a high level of discrimination. Zetter and Ruaudel (2014) go into more details and discuss the economic impact which was the result of the Syrian refugees on the micro- and macro-economic level. On a micro-economic level, housing and rent prices have

increased which has resulted in the exclusion of locals and leaving them out of the market (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014). The inflow of refugees has also led to many negative aspects such as unemployment due to the low wage labour that came along with the Syrian refugees. In spite of the law that constrains refugees from working, many refugees have sought low-wage labour which has affected the local market by increasing the prices on basic goods (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014). Zetter and Ruaudel (2014) state that 25% of the locals in Lebanon live on the edge of the poverty line and can only afford to spend US4/day. Furthermore, the flow of refugees is perceived to have sent around 170,000 Lebanese individuals into poverty and increased the unemployment rate to over 20% by 2014. This has caused tensions between both communities, and the Lebanese have become resentful towards refugees blaming them for the economic distress that they are facing (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014).

On a macro-economic level, there has been a great loss in the economic performance in Lebanon, whether it is in terms of taxes, investments, profits or the increased percentage of unemployment (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014). An example given by Dahi (2014) shows that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate declined from 8.5% to 1.4% in Lebanon. He believes that the economic crisis began as a result of the Arab spring. This led to cuts in foreign investments and reduction in tourism. A recent study done by Zetter & Ruaudel (2014) further adds to these issues by stating that statistics on the growing impact has decreased the government's income by $1.5 billion meanwhile increasing the government's spending due to the high demand for public services by $1.1 billion. It is with no doubt that the Syrian crisis has affected Lebanon in many ways. As Proquest (2014) indicated, the number of Syrians that entered Lebanon is equivalent to having the population of Mexico enter the US within a 2-3 year phase. The conflict in Syria has not only affected public expenditures on basic accommodations for the refugees, but it has also slowed down the tourism and retail sectors as well which have further impacted the Lebanese economy. Nevertheless, the conflict occurring in Syria and the huge influx of refugees resulted in the increase of remittances by 13%. Furthermore, there does exist numerous refugees from the middle and higher class of society which have contributed to society on a social and economic level.

Due to the political tension in Lebanon, the United Nation has put a lot of effort, along with other agencies, to aid refugees, yet they are being obstructed in several ways

(Kauffman, 2013). Meanwhile, the Lebanese government collapsed because it got affected by the turmoil in Syria because the inflow of refugees inside the Lebanese borders are more than they can handle. Within the political context, the Syrian crisis has also affected the Lebanese sovereignty significantly. Since the beginning of the Arab spring in Syria, several conflicts have occurred in Tripoli as a result of the crisis in Syria (Naufal, 2012). In spite of this situation, the Prime Minister has attempted to keep the government unbiased.

It has been estimated that about 30% of Syrian refugees have settled in camps while others became urban refugees (Kauffman, 2013). With that being stated, it is important to highlight that none of the policymakers in Lebanon are in favor of camps (Loveless, 2013). In fact, the government has banned camps; a policy that is well supported by the UNHCR. All agencies agree that it is better for refugees to integrate in society (Loveless, 2013).

Hezbollah and its associates in the government have also stated that they are against camps for refugees believing that by using this strategy it would avoid tensions with the Bashar Assad regime in Syria (Naufal, 2012). In accordance, many refugees were hosted by the Lebanese community and were not settled in camps. A deputy in the Northern region of Lebanon, who is working on the ground with Syrian refugees and who is an active member of the Al-Mostaqbal party, stated that the acquiring information of who entered Lebanon is essential. This is not only important for the Lebanese government for security reasons, but also to be able to know the needs and wants of the refugees on the ground and to better streamline the medical assistance processes (Naufal, 2012). Thorleifsson (2014) elaborates on the reason behind why the Lebanese government banned camps in Lebanon. He explains the situation the Lebanese government experienced with the Palestinian refugees since 1948 and how it affected the nation negatively. Due to this experience, the Lebanese government banned official camps fearing that it would increase the likelihood that Syrians will stay and form areas of confrontation in exile. In other words, the main argument is the fear that camps may provide a long term stay for refugees rather than giving them the opportunity to manage their own lives. According to the fact sheet provided by the European Commission (2017), due to the 'no camp' policy implemented by the government, many Syrian refugees are distributed in more than 1700 localities across Lebanon. Syrian refugees are living in apartments, warehouses, garages, worksites,

etc. Statistics provided by the European Commission states that 9 out of 10 refugees live in 251 different locations in which they are considered to be the poorest and most vulnerable areas in the country.

Camps usually accommodate a large number of people but, in relation to the geographical size of Lebanon, there is not much land that is vacant (Loveless, 2013). Therefore, it has been agreed with land-owners to lease their land and collaborate with the local communities; whether they are with or against such establishments (Loveless, 2013). With that being stated, camps have become spread out all over Lebanon, and they are growing in size and number. Much is going to these settlements since it was prioritized by the government and UN planning (Loveless, 2013). Therefore, aid agencies have focused on the largest settlements with the most needs, attracting many people to these sites. According to Loveless (2013), this situation should be addressed methodically since this issue will not be resolved easily.

The cost that comes along with refugees is another issue that needs to be handled. It is often perceived that it is more expensive to accommodate refugees in camps than in the community. However, the latter is expensive as well. Since the direct expenses that cover accommodations such as rent, food, heating, healthcare, and other basic living expenses need to be covered (Loveless, 2013). Then there is the price to be paid for the refugees' safety, well-being, and their dignity which come from the coping strategies that they can not keep away from or unavoidable (Loveless, 2013). Furthermore, there is also the cost which is absorbed by the host community such as a decrease in incomes as a result of the low wages due to the competition for jobs and the decline of amenities due to over-demand (Loveless, 2013). Moreover, Syrian refugees are accused of competing with the Lebanese in the local labor market in order to survive (Mufti, 2014).

According to Mufti (2014), many Syrian refugees have established illegal businesses which have drawn the attention of Lebanese economic and political bodies. Thus, this resulted in the closing of them down. Halawi (2013) adds that the Ministry has been concerned about this issue and carried out a survey in order to shut down any illegal business held by the Syrian refugees. Halawi (2013) states that this decision helped to inform the mayors of particular localities to close down any businesses that were held by Syrians in their area. Halawi (2013) states that officials were open to the idea that

Syrians open businesses as long as they are legal and pay taxes as any other legal business in Lebanon.

Statistics provided by the UNHCR shows that 65% of refugees are not living in camps but are scattered in regional areas (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). Since Syrian refugees are residing in over 1,000 municipalities, mostly in poor urban parts of Lebanon, this diversity of locations puts pressure on medical and health interventions (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). Studies done by the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in the Bekaa valley and Saidon claim that Syrian refugees have limited access to health benefits in Lebanon (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). It is shown that 52% of the Syrian refugees cannot afford medical treatment for chronic diseases, and almost 30% of refugees are not able to continue treatments due to its very high costs (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013).

According to Loveless (2013), in "Crisis in Lebanon: Camps for Syrian Refugees," there should be a change in the government policy by permitting properly planned camps. He believes that this change will allow aid organizations and municipalities to plot and build proper camps that will avoid the chaotic situation that the country is witnessing. He states that it is important for aid to be shared among refugees and the host population for a fair result since the needs of the Lebanese society are somehow similar to that of the refugees, and the camps will reduce the tension faced by both communities. However, Thorleifsson (2014) in "Coping Strategies Among Self-Settled Syrians in Lebanon," states that Syrians prefer to integrate in society and not live in camps believing that it will enhance their situation and provide better opportunities.

Refugees settled in urban areas have difficulty in accessing health benefits due to the overstrained public systems in the country (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). The fact that both refugees and locals have the same needs and vulnerabilities, they must share the under-resourced health systems which have left a hostile attitude from the locals towards the refugees. This then leads to segregations and inequalities in the provision of services (Abu Sa'ada & Serafini, 2013). On the contrary, El-Khatib et al. (2013) states that a study held by the MSF provides surveyed information on how the basic needs, such as healthcare, chronic diseases, and antenatal care, are easily encountered in Lebanon. This is due to the large healthcare organizations that consist of a total of

165 hospitals and 158 health care centers that are spread all over Lebanon with a highly trained and skilled staff (El-Khatib et al., 2013). Nevertheless, it is stated that the influx of Syrian refugees has strained the Lebanese health system, which led to obstacles when accessing healthcare. According to the European Commission (2017) it is stated that refugees who suffer from chronic diseases are not covered by the healthcare system in Lebanon.

Refugees fall under two categories: the registered and the unregistered. When the crisis first began, figures provided by the UNHCR display that 172,361 Syrians have been registered as refugees in Lebanon and 88,582 individuals are communicating with the commission seeking to get registered (Gulland, 2013). Nevertheless, not all refugees were able to register. According to the Médecines Sans Fronières, the valued number of unregistered refugees at the beginning of the crisis were about 50,000 (Gulland, 2013). It is perceived that being a registered refugee facilitates getting assistance, however, this was not always the situation. Statistics provided by Jean-Clément Cabrol, director of operation at the Médicins Sans Frontièrs (2013), stated that unregistered refugees whom are settled in the Bekaa Valley region are finding it hard to get a proper healthcare (Gulland, 2013). It is shown that only 11% are given free treatment, as opposed to the 24% registered population; and 20% of those who are getting free hospital protection, in comparison with the 56% of those who are registered refugees (Gulland, 2013). Jean-Clément Carbol in the article entitled "Syrian Refugees in Lebanon Find It Hard to Access Healthcare Says Charity," acknowledged that registration and the record keeping of refugees was difficult. He further added that around 2,000 to 3,000 refugees came every day to the UNHCR in order to get registered. Those who were expecting to be fully registered were given pre-registration documents providing them with the same medical services in relation to those who are fully registered. The UNHCR, in severe cases, paid up to 85% on medical charges leaving 15% of the medical bill for the refugees to pay (Gulland, 2013). Abu Sa'ada and Serafini (2013) agreed with Gulland (2013) by presenting the link between the registration of refugees and the ability to access services. However, Abu Sa'ada and Serafini (2013) stated that 41% of interviewees admitted that they are not registered basically because they required more information on how and where to register while others complained that registration centers were too far. They further

feared that they would get caught on their way to the centers and be sent back to Syria for not having proper legal papers.

The Lebanese government allowed the UNHCR to register refugees, however, the protection presented by being a registered refugee was somehow limited (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). Being an irregular individual that is listed with the UNHCR in Lebanon does offers some legal protection and is significant for providing access to services, but it does not allow refugees to pursue asylum seeking, a legal stay in Lebanon, nor a status of being a refugee. This dilemma faced by the Syrian refugees leaves them in a challenging position (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). To overcome these challenges, Zetter and Ruaudel (2014) discuss how Syrians tend to adopt coping strategies to assure their survival. The authors further explain that while refugees have access to humanitarian aid and some services, they are not entitled to work without legal documentation. Therefore, it is the informal sector in society that provides them with chances of income, but pay is very low and usually working conditions are unfair (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014).

Moreover, Syrians with no legal documentation for their stay in Lebanon are considered to be 'illegal' according to the Lebanese government. This results in a limited legal status within the state (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). A Syrian refugee with a limited legal status has a limited mobility, legal protection and assistance while staying in Lebanon. Aranki and Kalis (2014) state that being a refugee with a limited legal status raises their risk of abuse and mistreatment. In the article entitled "Limited Legal Status for Refugees from Syria in Lebanon," Aranki and Kalis (2014) explain two factors that result in having the 'illegal' status. It states that Syrian refugees enter Lebanese territory through unofficial borders, because they do not have the chance to renew their residency visa. In Lebanon, a residence permit is compulsory to all immigrants. The residence permit serves for a six-month period with a chance to be renewed for another six months (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014). Due to this dilemma, refugees gradually fall into an illegal status in Lebanon which restricts their mobility, causes fear of arrest, or fear of being transported back to Syria. Thus, many refugees are very concerned about the possible risks they might face from this 'illegal' condition. Refugees with limited legal status have limited access to services provided to the them; whether it is basic needs, work, or registration with the UNHCR. The limited legal status also prevents them from the ability to register their marriages or

register the birth of their newborns (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). One of the troublesome problems which was not addressed by Aranki and Kalis (2014) and Zetter and Ruaudel (2014) is the freedom of movement. The Norwegian Refugee Council stated that the mobility of refugees was the main challenge faced by those of a limited legal status. It was reported that 73% of the 1,256 refugees questioned gave the same answer as a result (Aranki & Kalis, 2014).

4.3 Current situation on Syrian refugees
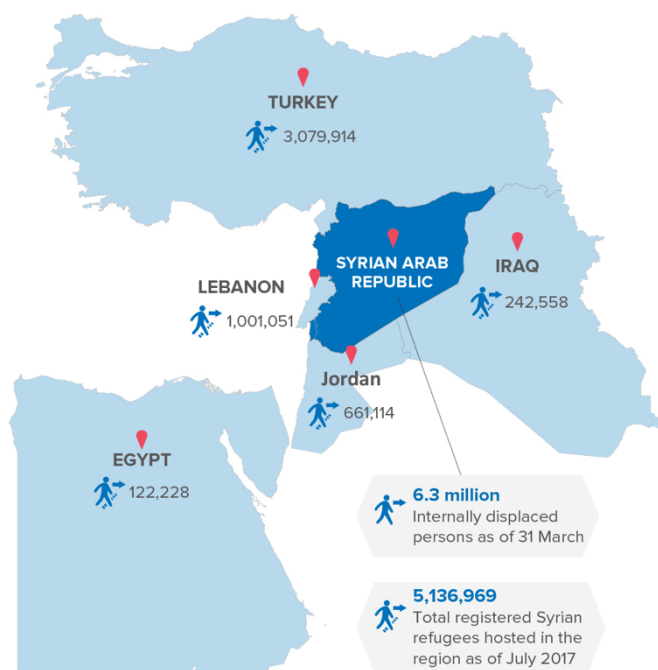
Figure 2: Distribution of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and neighboring countries. *Retrieved form:* *www.unhcr.org*

According to numbers provided by the UNHCR (2017), around 1.1 million displacements of refugees were logged at the beginning of 2017. It is estimated that, on an average day, around 7,300 displaced Syrian refugees were recorded. Though, there are more than 5 million Syrian refugees in the area, in which some individuals have been in exile for more than 5 years UNHCR (2017). On the other hand, around 22,200 self-organized individuals have chosen to return to Syrian in May 2017 (UNHCR, 2017).
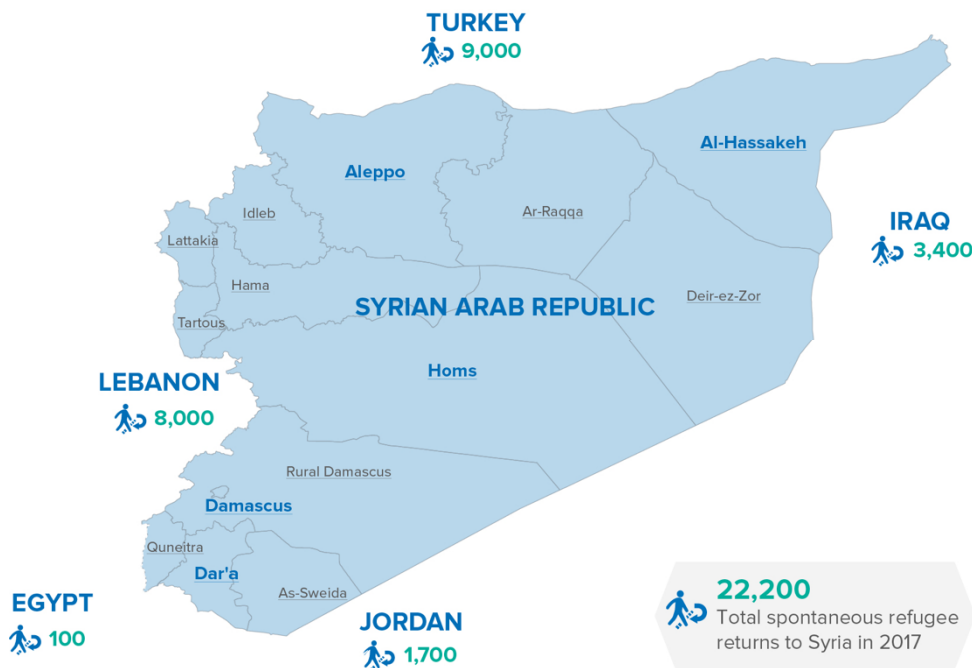
Figure 3: Return of Syrian Refugees from the region. *Retrieved form:* www.unhcr.org

* Note, the previous issue of UNHCR's Flash Update reported a higher figure of returns from Turkey, based on other data and reports. The estimated number for all countries reported in this Flash Update reflects those spontaneous returns captured by UNHCR border monitoring and/or continuous registration.

Figure 3 shows the number of returnees of Syrian refugees from around the region into Syria. Even though talks, such as the Geneva talk and the Astana in collaboration with local agreements, may have provided opportunities for peace and some stability in particular areas of the country. However, as stated by the UNHCR (2017), not all returns were voluntarily. It is believed that internally displaced people (IDP) returns were anticipated to increase in 2017, and there are plans provided to regulate such movements (UNHCR, 2017).

In countries of asylum, the UNHCR usually monitors self-organized departure of refugees from Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan to Syria (UNHCR, 2017). The collection of data by the UNHCR across those 5 countries revealed that family size plays a role on return decisions to Syria. It is stated that the majority of returnees consists of small families and single individuals, and it was rare for families that consisted of more than five members to return (UNHCR, 2017). Findings by the UNHCR further explain that decisions to return to Syria is highly related to family members (90% of returnees travelled with their family). The main reason for Syrian refugee return to Syria is for 'family reunification' (UNHCR, 2017).

According to Al Jazeera (2017), in the article entitled "Nearly Half a Million Displaced Syrians Return Home: UN," since January 2017, around 440,000 people have returned to their homes mainly in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus. In addition to those individuals, it is stated that 31,000 refugees in neighboring countries have returned to their homeland bringing the total number of refugees since 2015 to 260,000 (Al Jazeera, 2017). According to Andrej Mahecic, a spokesman of UNHCR, the main reason for refugees to return home were "seeking out family members, checking on property, and in some cases, a real or perceived improvement in security conditions in parts of the country" (Al Jazeera, 2017).

Analysis provided by the Needs and Population Monitoring (NPM) for Syria claims that there were two peak points for the return of refugees in 2016. In other words, there were two events that resulted in the return of Syrians (approximately 90,000 returns occurred between March and September) (NPM, 2016). Those that returned in March were connected to the US/Russia sponsored cessation hostilities. The September returns were linked to the short term displacements that were the cause of earlier month's fighting in Jarablus and Menbij (NPM, 2016). Further statistics provided by the NPM state that refugee returns were mainly from Turkey (43%) and Jordan (37%). 44% of returns were mainly to Aleppo and Al-Hasakah governorates.

Returnees by Governorate
565,696 Returnees

Governorate	Returnees
Aleppo	278,545
Hama	57,914
Idleb	46,018
Rural Damascus	45,764
Al-Hasakeh	42,742
Homs	39,390
Dar'a	30,090
Ar-Raqqa	12,350
Damascus	5,600
Deir-ez-Zor	4,704
Quneitra	1,253
As-Sweida	1,251
Lattakia	75
Tartous	0

Internally Displaced Persons by Governorate

6,325,978 Internally Displaced Persons

Governorate	IDPs
Rural Damascus	1,383,017
Aleppo	1,002,023
Idleb	908,929
Damascus	651,000
Homs	476,703
Lattakia	388,495
Dar'a	329,928
Hama	261,350
Al-Hasakeh	231,951
Tartous	217,565
Ar-Raqqa	193,846
Deir-ez-Zor	181,915
As-Sweida	51,770
Quneitra	47,486

Data source: NPM Baseline Data, December 2016

Graph source: OCHA Humanitarian Snapshot as of 31 January 2017

Figure 4: Locations of Syrian Refugees Returnees

The graph above demonstrates the allocation of returnees and IDPs across all governorates in Syria. According to the explanation provided by NPM (2016), 3 out of 4 governorates hosted the highest number of both returnees and IDP (Aleppo, Rural

Damascus and Idlib). Nevertheless, NPM (2016) specifically mentions that this does not mean that these individuals are 'safe' or 'stable' in Syria but rather focuses on the fact that during the times of conflict, there were high levels of displaced individuals along with moderate level of return when events were de-escalated.
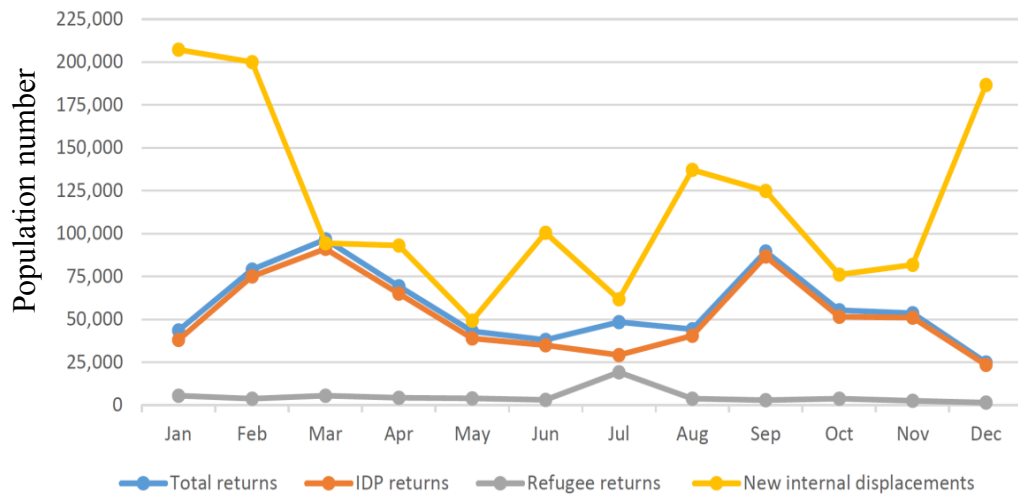
Figure 5: Return of Syrian Refugees and Displaced People in 2016.

The graph above shows that the highest level of returns mainly occurred after a decisive end to a violent conflict in a particular region, whether it is through a particular side winning and gaining control of the region, or through a negotiated ceasefire (NPM, 2016). Statistics provided by the above graph show that the largest number of returnees occurred in the following weeks after a significant skirmish had occurred. With refugee returns at its peak in July, the NPM (2016) states that those who returned during that time were refugees residing in the Rukban camp in Jordan. During that time, 19,000 refugees went back to Syria mainly to Homs, Aleppo, Deir Ez Zour, and Ar-Raqqa governorates (NPM, 2016). The majority of these returnees were primarily from Turkey, Iraq and the Rukban camp.

Chapter 5

Legal framework and Syrian refugees in Lebanon

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter studies and analyzes the legal reforms and examines whether the lack of the ratification of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees has affected the Syrian refugees. Furthermore, it also seeks to understand the factors that may lead Syrian refugees to go back to their homeland. The purpose of this section is to question whether policies that are being implemented are a push factor for Syrian refugees or are they adjusting to the situation. In this sense, I will discuss different policies on the national and international level about the legal frameworks that manages the refugees' existence in Lebanon.

5.2 Legal structures on refugees

5.2.1 Difficulties in refugee protection under the Lebanese law

This section will focus on the legal struggles facing the Syrian refugees in respect to the Lebanese law. Primarily, how the lack of proper legal protection is affecting the everyday lives of refugees. This, thusly, drives them to find coping mechanisms that, in return, clashes with the Lebanese society. The increased securitization, the increase in harassments of refugees at checkpoints, and harassment by the Lebanese nationals as well play a major role in hindering their access to services. With regards to the following, I will study the absence of protection for what is known as 'illegal' migrants/workers and the lack of wage regulation for foreigners, and how it is directly affecting the refugee's livelihood and causing a dilemma with the nationals. This, in return, will help me analyze whether such pressure is a motive for Syrian refugees to go home, or will they find a loophole and adjust to the situation.

5.2.2 Minimal legal protection and securitization of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon

5.2.2.1 Overflow of Syrian refugees and the legal protection deficiency: non-ratification of 1951 convention and the weak domestic legislation.

According to the Lebanese Constitution "Lebanon is also a founding and active member of the United Nations Organization and stands by its covenants and the Universal declaration of Human rights. The Lebanese government shall exemplify these principles in all its areas without any exceptions (Lebanese Constitution,1995). However, Lebanon has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees according to the Lebanese Law. The most convenient and relevant articles were selected from the Conventions 46 articles:

• Article 8 "Exemption from Exceptional Measures:" expresses that the contracting state ought to treat the refugees in an exceptional manner irrespective to the political circumstance between the nation of asylum and the nation of the displaced person (Lebanese Constitution,1995).

• Article 9 "Provisional Measures:" expresses that the contracting state is forbidden to utilize uncommon and temporary measures-securitized measures-during the time of war or a security crisis (Lebanese Constitution,1995).

• Article 10 "Continuity of Residence:" expresses that a displaced person has the right to save his/her status in case they return back to their nation and then returned to the contracting country where it is viewed as a continuous and lawful residence (Lebanese Constitution,1995).

• Article 15 "Right of Association:" where the refugee is given the right to partake in political and non-political associations so as labor syndicates (Lebanese Constitution,1995).

• Article 16 "Access to courts:" which expresses that displaced people can freely access the courts in every nation that ratified the convention and be treated the same as the nationals and legal residents. Refugees are also entitled to free legal consultation (Lebanese Constitution,1995).

Another perspective on legal vulnerability is the absence of legal protection in the domestic legislation. In fact, there is no law that specifies the national refugees. The 1962 law is the only domestic law under the Lebanese sovereignty that mentions governing refugees. Which states "Law regulating the entry and stay of foreigners in Lebanon and their exit from the country."

According to Saliba (2016), the mentioned articles from the mentioned law are the most relevant to the refugee context:

- Article 26 expresses that foreigners may request political asylum in case they were convicted of a politically related wrongdoing by a foreign authority so as if their life and freedom are threatened.
- Article 31 states that a political refugee can not be sent to a country where his/her life or freedom is endangered.
- Article 32 states that any foreigner that enters Lebanon in an irregular movement can be imprisoned from one to two month up to three years and/or fined.

In order to fill the gap in the lack of a comprehensive national refugee law, the UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lebanese government in 2003. This agreement was mainly issued to manage the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Nevertheless, the memorandum had minimal effect on the protection of refugees as it only covered the asylum seekers by providing them with a short term residency permit which was mainly given for 3-6 months (Saliba, 2016).

5.2.2.2 Increasing securitization on a national scale.

The refugee community is facing legal vulnerability in Lebanon due to the lack of clear domestic legislation under the non-ratification of the 1951 convention. The lack of a proper legal framework has facilitated the securitization of the refugees' situation in Lebanon and held those who mistreat refugees, whether they are civilians or government officers, unaccountable.

Throughout the years, as the war intensified in Syria, many Syrians accessed Lebanon through official borders. They were privileged with entry onto the Lebanese soil free of charge that lasted for a period of six months which could then be renewed for another six months free of charge. After one year of stay, each refugee is responsible to settle a payment of USD 200 for a residency permit. According to the office of the General Security, they state that the governmental offices in charge of border regulations and protection facilitated the renewal of permits after the one-year stay was expired.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of the Syrian refugees were not capable of providing

the USD 200 fee for renewing the residency for each member. As a coping mechanism, some refugees had to go back to their home country and could re-enter Lebanon free of charge, but the majority of refugees were afraid of the consequences they might face and stayed in Lebanon without renewing their legal stay.
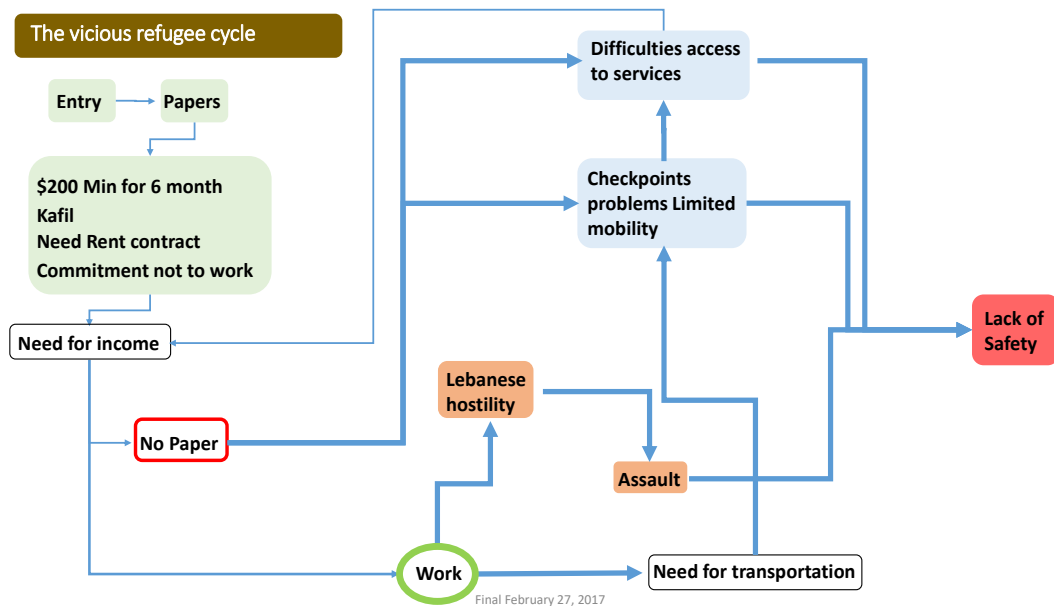
Figure 6: The vicious Refugee Cycle. *Retrieved from a study done by the political science institute at USJ and funded by the UNHCR*

Legal barriers are one of the most challenging aspects in the Syrian refugees' daily life. It hinders their access to many services which has had a major effect on their livelihood. According to Kukrety and Jamal (2016), once a refugee's stay is legal, they must sign a pledge not to engage in any economic activities in Lebanon or else they will face consequences. One such consequence could be the deportation back to Syria. Nevertheless, many refugees could not afford to renew their stay for financial reasons, hence they sought survival modes and worked as undocumented individuals. This supports the above figure which explains that there is no freedom for a refugee in Lebanon. This is because, in one way or another, their rights as refugees and individuals are not acquired due to their limited legal status.

The most prevalent challenge for refugees came from not possessing the proper legal documents. Oftentimes, Syrian refugees can be arrested or detained for not possessing the proper legal documentation. Arrests were not limited to checkpoints only. Random arrests were made and through raids mostly in informal tented settlements (ITS). It

was noticed, either by the situation getting worse in Syria, by the existence of terrorist groups, or by the belief in the association between Syrians and terrorists' acts, aggressiveness towards refugees had significantly increased with time. That being said, if Lebanon had ratified to the 1951 convention, such actions would have violated a number of conventions mentioned in the Articles above, in particularly, Article 8 (Exemption from Exceptional measures) and Article 9 (provisional measures).

Within the domestic legislation, found in the 1962 "Law Regulating the Entry and Stay of Foreigners in Lebanon and their Exit from the Country," it states that it is allowed to imprison refugees if their stay is illegal and undocumented according to the Article 32 as mentioned above. Refugees that have been interviewed expressed that since they could not afford to pay the USD 200 fee for their residency permit are being arrested and/or sent back to Syria. Therefore, the 1962 law and the actions of the Lebanese state contradicts with Article 26 of its own constitution since it is not providing asylum for the refugees.

5.2.3 Legal reforms considering refugees' rights

In order to tackle the legal pressure on refugees, there are two factors to emphasize: the international law and the domestic law. Lebanon has not ratified to the 1951 Refugee convention which provides basic human rights. Additionally, the social and economic rights offered to refugees which is mentioned in Article 24: "Labor legislation and social security" is also of great importance. That being said, it is obvious that the livelihoods of refugees are directly affected by the lack of legal coverage. If Article 8, Article 9, Article 10, Article 15, and Article 16 were properly imposed and applied by the Lebanese authorities, this could very well ease many of the stresses and anxieties of the Syrian refugees.

On the domestic level, the 1962 "Law Regulating the Entry and Stay of Foreigners in Lebanon and their Exit from the Country" should be properly planned in parallel with the ratification of the 1951 Refugee convention. It is obvious that there are loopholes and blind spots in the legal reforms which have failed to balance and regulate laws to ease tension between Syrian refugees and the host community. As mentioned earlier, the lack of proper legal protection for refugees can deeply affect their everyday lives. In the context of labor protection, the absence of specific laws which tackle and regulate this issue can lead to exploitation by employers.

Regardless of the possibility that refugees are not considered migrant workers, the 1951 convention recognizes that they can be a part of the domestic labor market. There are specific laws, if abided by properly, may ease the possible tension between refugees and the host communities. For example, Article 24 "Labour legislation and social security" discusses the labour and social security concerning refugees whom has become part of the labor market. Article 24 imposes on the contracting country fair and equal treatment of refugees with that of the national. One of the main aspects of Article 24 is to provide the same treatment as well as equal pay. If these were equally applied, then it might give equal opportunities and chances for both parties. This could potentially prevent the triggering of further tensions which have been ongoing between the locals and the refugees (many nationals believe that refugees are replacing Lebanese in the local market). As stated above, since Lebanon did not ratify the 1951 Refugee convention, the rights and duties towards working refugees were overlooked.

Labour law is initially implemented to maintain justice in the labor market Furthermore, the law should protect and provide an equal working environment for its locals first and then foreigners. It is the Labor law duty to prevent unfair competition and ease the tensions between Syrian refugees/workers and the local communities. Labor law should be implemented in a way that provides working sectors the prioritization of Lebanese citizens (i.e. education since teaching and education is one of the prominent features in the Lebanese society). That being said, equal working opportunities and equal wages should be provided for Syrians refugees which would prevent tensions between both communities. One main issue that locals are facing is that of taxes. Such taxes are only paid by the locals and not imposed on Syrian workers. In this case, labour law should protect both locals and Syrian refugees/workers by imposing laws protecting both parties. One way this could be imposed by the government is by specifying certain working field that Syrians have mastered the most (i.e. agriculture and infrastructure). Nevertheless, such fields should not clash with the local communities but fill a gap in the local market. That being said, this might decrease the exploitation and mistreatment of refugee workers due to their lack of legal protection.

After analyzing the refugees' status, could legal and economic vulnerability result in Syrian refugees going back to their home country? This question can be resolved in three cases: firstly, if the Government of Lebanon (GoL) provides working condition

for the Syrian refugees/workers which do not clash with the Lebanese community. The GoL should provide working opportunities which fill the gaps in the labor market or where Lebanese labor is not willing to do it themselves. Secondly, in cases when a refugee seeks to work alongside the Lebanese, there should be law that protects both parties and where no side can negatively affect the other. One example could be: for every three Lebanese there should be one Syrian refugee/worker in return. Balancing the working environment is very important since the Lebanese community is facing similar challenges as the refugee. Also, they are not getting any aid for their hardship. Therefore, in this case, there should be law which protects the Lebanese in their working environment. Then, the acceptance of foreigners in the same working environment would be more easily accepted. Once Lebanese's rights are protected, this will then ease the tension between the workforces. Thirdly, there should not be a big wage difference between the locals and refugees as this has led to exploitation of Syrian workers. This will also aid in the increasing of tensions between the two groups since the Lebanese are feeling replaced in the working environment by Syrian workers.

Chapter 6

Interviews and findings

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter seeks to examine the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon particularly since it was the most affected by the crisis and has hosted a large number in proportion to its own national population. I will examine the results that I have conducted from interviews with Syrian refugees. Results will be discussed into 7 parts: general profile on Syrian refugees; identity; the notion of home; the current situation of the participants; the concept of refugees; return to home; and current challenges and future plans.

6.2 Profile on Interviewees

Table 3: Age Range of participants

Age Range	Number of Participants
18-24	6
25-30	5
31-40	5
41-50	4
51+	1

The above table shows the age range of participants that were interviewed about the challenges of repatriation. Out of the 21 individuals that participated in this project, the highest number of participants fell in the age range of 18-24. This made up 6 of the total number of participants. Following that, the number of participants that fall in the 25-30 and 31-40 age category each consist of 5 persons of the total number of participants. The category 51+ makes up the smallest number of the age group in which only one individual took part of the interview. This shows that the majority of interviewees who participated in this project fall between the age range of 18-40 indicating that most active Syrian refugees accessible to this project were young adults.

6.2.1 Origins of Syrian refugees
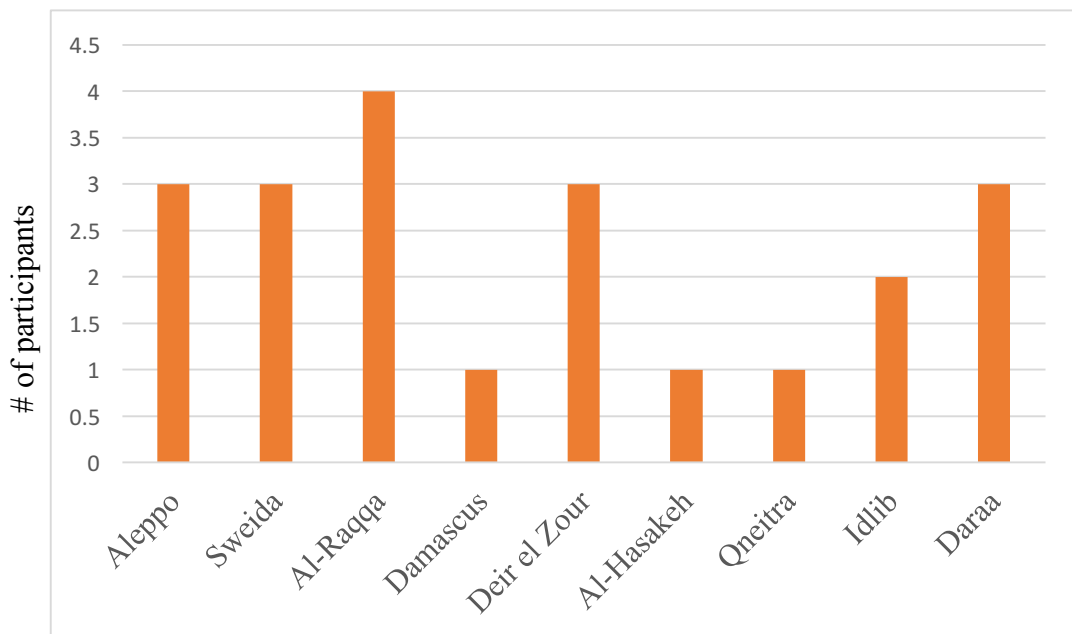
Figure 7: Place of Birth of Syrian Refugees.

The above pie chart illustrates the origins of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. This section is important because it will help analyze the demographic make- up of the Syrian refugees in relation to the challenges they were facing in their hometown. As can be seen, the highest number of individuals who participated in this project originated from Al- Raqqa (4 persons). Furthermore, Sweida, Deir el Zour, Daraa and Aleppo are also significant with a result of 3 individuals participated from each area. The smallest number of participants came from Qneitra, Damscus, and Al Hasake with 1 person from each region.

6.2.2 Marital status
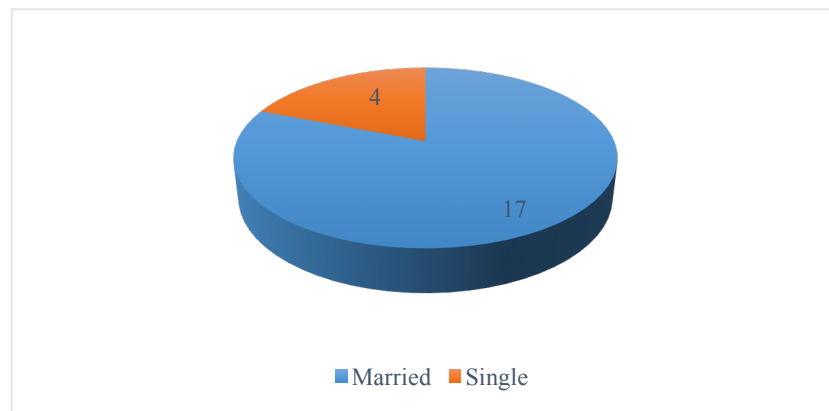
Figure 8: Marital status of participants.
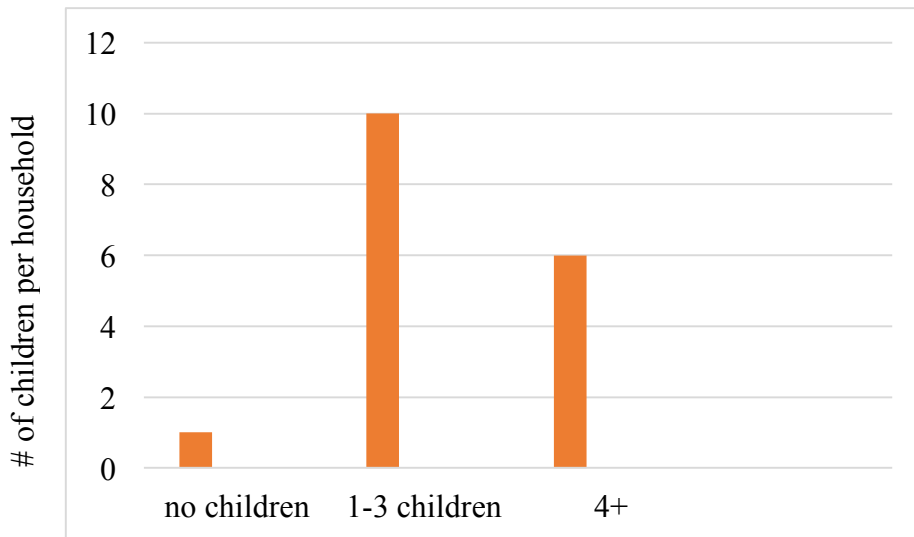
Figure 9: Average number of children per household

The above figures give a better understanding of the family status of participants interviewed. This section helps in understanding whether being a refugee is preventing them from having a family. In addition, it helps for the understanding of what kind of services or aid they are in need of in accordance with the number of family members. 17 out of the 21 interviewed have families to take care of while the other 4 were single. 17 out of the 21 of these individuals have a family that consists of 2 or more individuals. 1 couple of the interviewed Syrian refugees have no children, therefore, their family only consists of a wife or a husband. Nevertheless, the highest number of Syrian refugees have 1 to 3 children in their household which results in 10 out of 21 of the total participants for this project. On the other hand, 6 of the married couples have a family that consists of 4+ children. It is evident from the above chart that Syrian refugees are seeking to establish medium sized families.

6.2.3 Employment in Lebanon

Table 4: Occupation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon

Profession	# of individuals
Restaurants	3
Freelance	3
Concierge	3
Driver	2
Car Body Works	2
Agriculture	3
Housewives	2

Automotive/spare parts	4

It is important to understand what kind of occupation each participant is contributing to in Lebanon. This will help illustrate what part of the market sector they are working in and whether their employment interferes with the Lebanese workforce. The highest percentage of Syrian refugees are working in the automotive and spare parts industry. Alongside the spare parts industry, occupations such as concierge, freelance work, agriculture, and working in restaurants and cafés make up 3 individuals in each of the respective fields. The employment opportunities that have been available for Syrian refugees are in the low skilled jobs within the Lebanese workforce.

6.2.4 Occupation in Syria
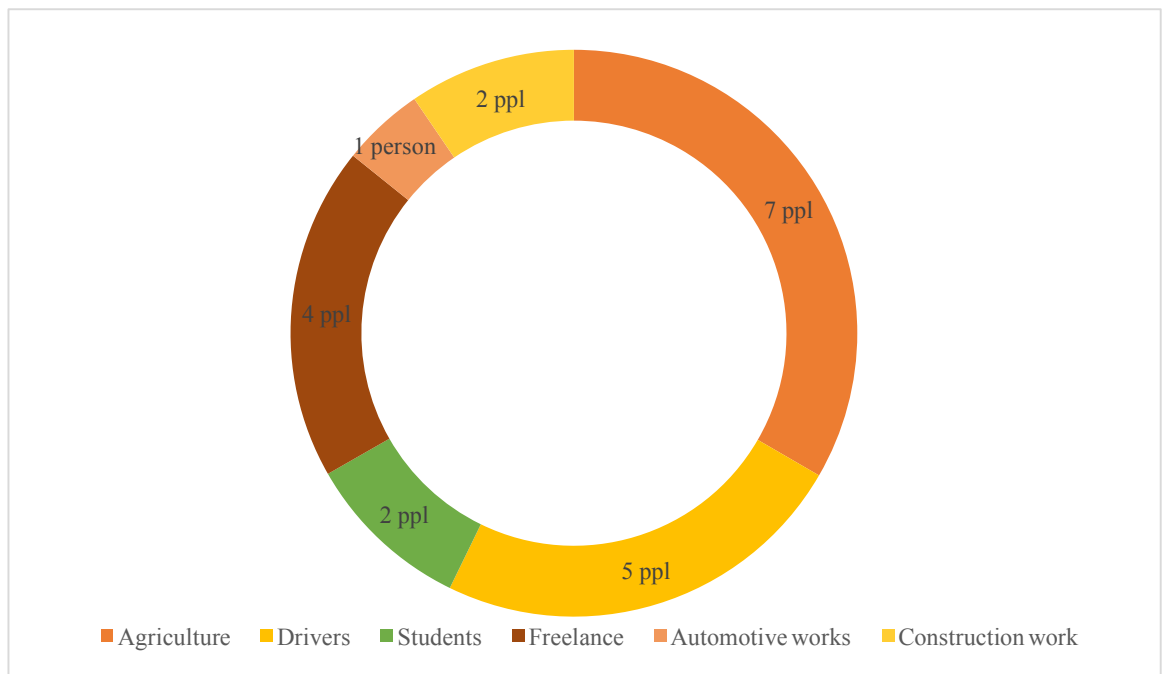
Figure 10: Occupation of Syrian refugees in their Country of Origin

It is important to consider the former occupations of Syrian refugees when they lived in their home country. This will provide insights on the changes that have been imposed on them. This further will illustrate whether they are still working in their field or working in another sector in the host country for the purpose of survival.

According to the above pie chart, the majority of Syrian refugees worked in the agriculture sector (7 out of 21) when they lived in Syria. Many were responsible for their own farms and land as the agricultural sector is quite common in Syria. Second to agriculture comes transportation (5 out of 21) which varies from taxi drivers to truck

drivers. Nevertheless, many took freelance work (4 out of 21) on different assignments which were not focused in a particular field. The occupation with the smallest percentage varies from construction work (2 out of 21) to automotive work (1 person).

6.2.5 Comparison of occupations in Syria and Lebanon
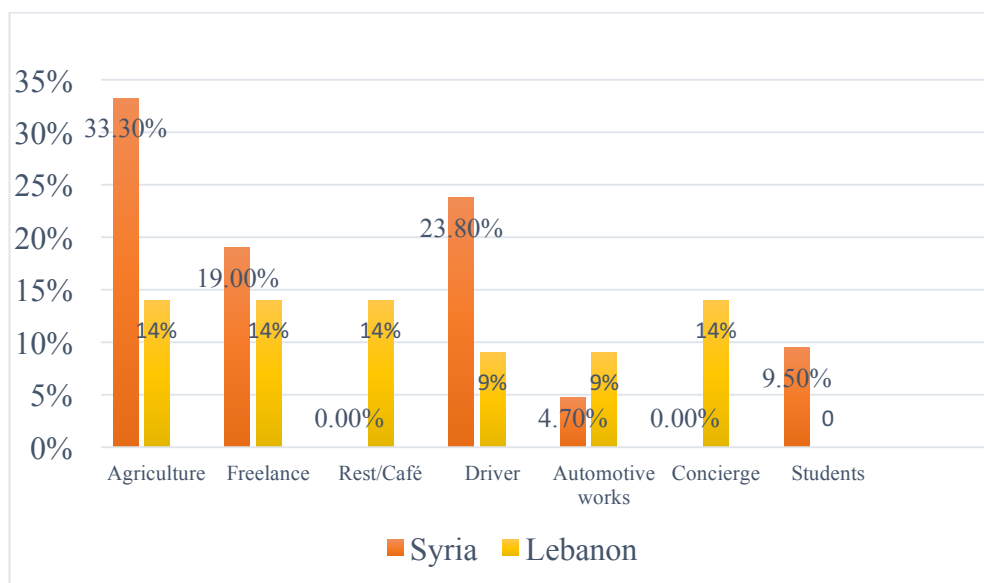
Table 5: Different occupation of Syrian Refugees in Country of Origin vs Host Country

Many participants in this project were willing to change their occupation for survival reasons. The majority (33.3%) had worked in the agriculture sector in Syria. In Lebanon, this rate has decreased to 14% as many worked in different sectors that may have better served their needs. The percentage of freelance jobs is somewhat similar in both countries; freelance jobs were easily accessible to many in both countries because such jobs allowed them to work in different sectors that had an open assignment. Refugees in Lebanon commonly worked in restaurants or as concierges, however, these jobs were not common in their homeland. Fourteen percent of refugees worked in the food industry and another 14% of the total population of this project worked as concierges.

Another difference in the percentage rate was in the transportation sector. In Syria 23.8% of participants worked in transportation whereas in Lebanon this percentage decreased to 9%. The reason behind that might be due to the fact that Syrian refugees were unable to obtain a driver's license. Consequently, this hinders their movement with automobiles. It is significant to note that the 9.5% of individuals were students in

their homeland; however, this category was non-existent in Lebanon. This suggests that many refugees gave up their education in order to work and support their families.

6.3 Identity

Of the notions that were highlighted during the interviews, one important was that of 'identity.' This part of the interview helped to better understand each individual and their commitment to their homeland. The interviewees' responses can lead to a better understanding of their affiliation to their country prior to being labelled refugees and the reason behind their migration. The memories and the feelings of nostalgia they described when discussing the nation will be used to examine their affiliation to Syria and how it relates to their identity.

6.3.1 Reasons for leaving Syria

When asked about the reasons for leaving Syria, a common answer was due to the situation in their homeland. Answers given represent the reality they faced back home. Many stated that the reason for leaving Syria behind was due to the destruction, the constant war between the pro-regime and anti-regime factions, and the occupation of Daesh in some of their hometowns. However, many stated that they sought refuge in Lebanon due to the economic constraints in Syria. Financial reasons were another factor that were constantly mentioned by respondents. Reasons vary from the lack of employment to the unbearable living conditions that the war has created.

The answers provided by the respondents show the reasons behind the migration of Syrians to Lebanon which vary from the occupation of Daesh in their city to the economic reasons that the war has caused. The answers illustrate the push factors that lead them to leave everything behind and look for survival modes in Lebanon. Through examining their responses, it became obvious that many have migrated to Lebanon due to the aftermath of the war which caused them to leave their homes, land and many family and relatives.

6.3.2 Affiliation for homeland (sense of belonging)

After tackling the reasons behind their migration to Lebanon, it was important to understand what Syria means to them and what they miss the most about it. Respondents were very nostalgic to the pre-conflict Syria that they once lived in. They

expressed a sense of entrapment in which they have the desire to go back to Syria yet believe that it is somehow impossible at the moment. Syria is described by many individuals as an identity, many described it as ones 'heartbeat,' and that it is an identity given to them at birth.

The answers given depict the thoughts and feelings of the refugees to their homeland. The answers given is just a small sample of a bigger population living the same situation as those who participated in this project. It is obvious that these individuals have a strong sense of belonging to their homeland and country. The answers do not serve the feelings of pain and sorrow felt when answering these particular questions. Their attachment to Syria is far from what words can describe. Many described it as the mother that cannot be forgotten; others described it as one's heartbeat; while others said that Syria shapes their identity.

6.4 Home

One of the reasons to inquire about the notion of home is to be able to analyze what makes a 'home' according to the participants. Some visualize it as a memory and others describe it as a place or identity. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of these interpretations was important to help analyze their point of view on the mentioned notion. Noting their statement on the particular concept, a further understanding was important to evaluate their definition of home and found it in Lebanon.

6.4.1 Notion of home
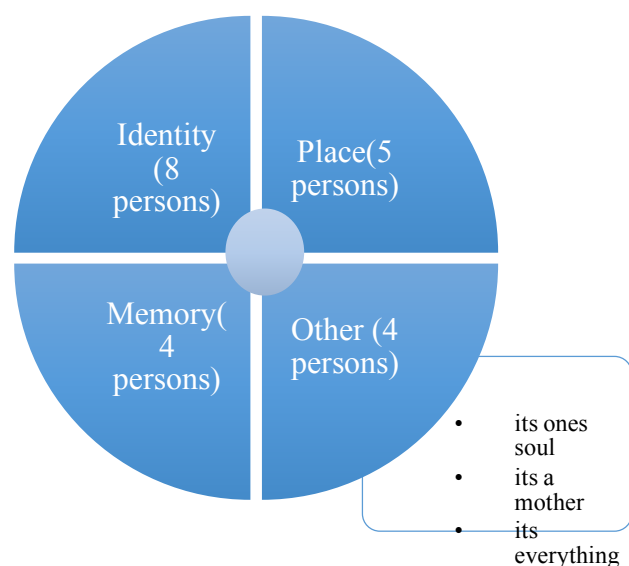
Figure 11: Interpretation of home.

8 out of the 21 respondents said that home is their identity, it shapes them and it is who they are. Many expressed their deep attachment to their home and how it molds their existence and created their identity collectively as Syrians. Others expressed that it is a place (5 persons), a land that represents their belonging to. Others expressed it as a memory (4 persons), a memory of their childhood, and of the good times that will never come back due to the aftermath the war has left behind. Some expressed it as their soul and their heartbeat; while others voiced the notion of home as Syria is their "everything."
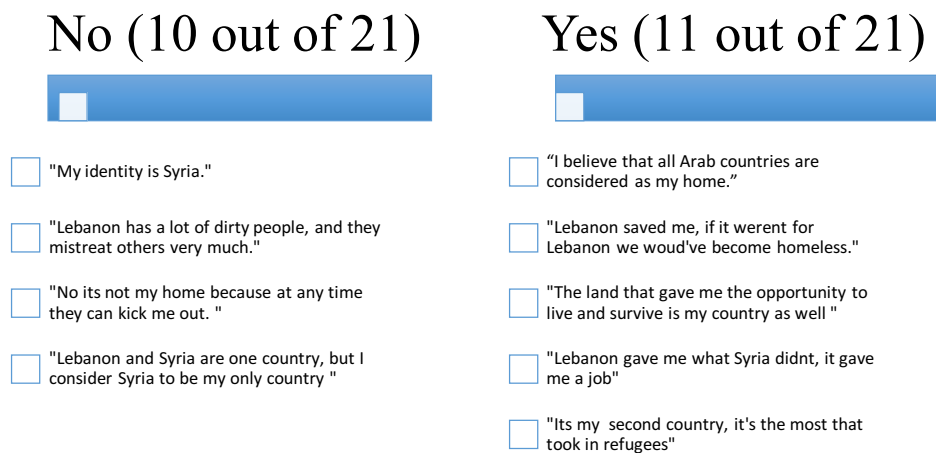
6.4.2 A second home?

When asked if Lebanon was considered as a home to the Syrian Refugees 10 out of 21 said no while 11 participants replied yes.

No (10 out of 21)

- "My identity is Syria."
- "Lebanon has a lot of dirty people, and they mistreat others very much."
- "No its not my home because at any time they can kick me out. "
- "Lebanon and Syria are one country, but I consider Syria to be my only country "

Yes (11 out of 21)

- "I believe that all Arab countries are considered as my home."
- "Lebanon saved me, if it werent for Lebanon we woud've become homeless."
- "The land that gave me the opportunity to live and survive is my country as well "
- "Lebanon gave me what Syria didnt, it gave me a job"
- "Its my second country, it's the most that took in refugees"

Figure 12: Answers to whether Lebanon is a second home

Many considered Lebanon to be a second country to them. They appreciate the fact that Lebanon hosted the most refugees in relation to its population. It has provided jobs for those who need them and basic living standards. While others state that they do not feel welcomed, that they are mistreated, and in some areas, they are exploited. Others expressed the discrimination that is so obvious towards the Syrians by the Lebanese. This is often attributed to political conflicts between the two countries.

When asked what turns a place into a 'home,' what do they value most from their culture and traditions, and how do they identify themselves, the most common answer by the participants were "the people." According to these individuals, it is the people in a certain society that makes a land or a place become a home. The kindness of a

community and sense of security are two aspects that were major issues to participants. They believe these are what makes a land a 'home.'

Most of the participants believe that people and their kindness is what makes a place feel like 'home.' Several individuals stated that part of their culture and traditions is their religion and how it was a part of them and a part that reminds them of Syria. Additionally, many individuals stated that both Lebanon and Syria share similar cultures and traditions, yet, Lebanese lack respect towards other communities.

Social interferences between both nationalities is what affected the Syrian refugees the most. Many have stated that the lack of respect the Lebanese community has towards refugees is what is preventing them from feeling at home.

6.5 Current Situation
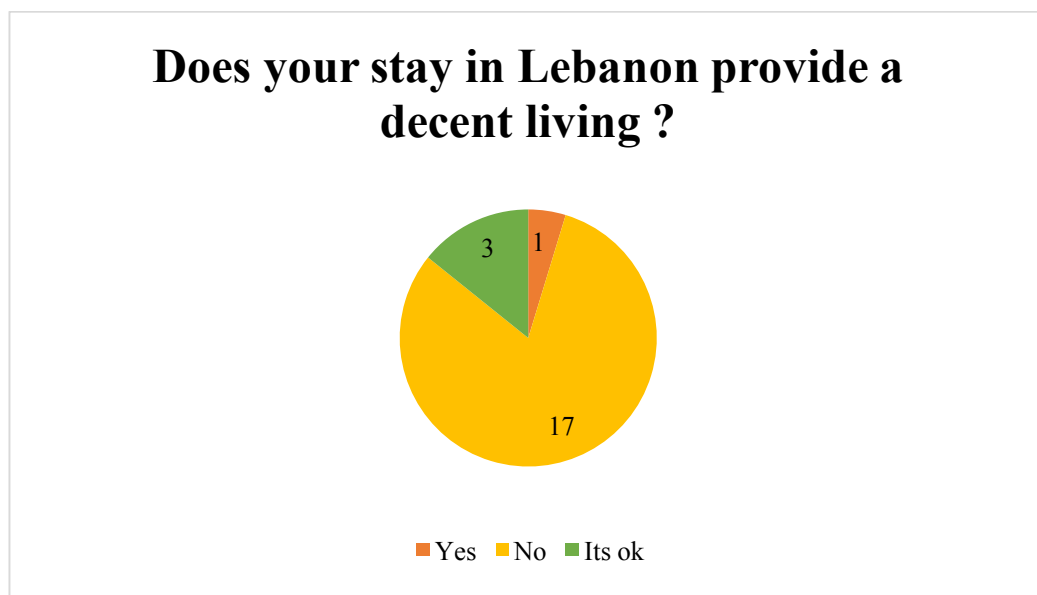
Figure 13: Syrian refugees living conditions in Lebanon

This section will provide an idea of the everyday life of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. 17 out of 21 of the respondents said that their living conditions do not provide a decent living. Whereas 3 individuals stated that "its ok," and 1 person stated that it does provide decent living standards.

Many participants stated that one must sacrifice in order to live and apparently that is what the Syrian refugees are compromising in order to have a livable situation here in Lebanon.

Some responses on this issue were the following:

- "Expenses are too high. I had to take my daughter to the hospital and it cost me a lot."
- "My salary is $300. I pay $100 rent and the rest is my allowance for the rest of the month."
- "It's not decent, but I am forced to work and provide to my family. It's better than stealing."
- "It's ok, I'm covering my expenses."
- "Everything we are making we are spending it directly; we can't live like normal people."
- "I get paid $500, and they are gone before the end of the month."
- "Thank God, it's ok. If we don't work, we can't live and provide."

6.5.1 What is Lebanon to you?

The aim of this question is to be able to see if the living conditions and the hardship that they are living on a daily basis will affect their opinion on the host country. When asked what they think of Lebanon, many stated that they are thankful that it provided them with security while others described that it means nothing to them other than a place they are living and working in.

The answers given portray their living conditions and the consequences they are facing due to exploitation by some Lebanese. When asked, "what does Lebanon mean to them?" many individuals expressed anger and hatred towards the Lebanese society. Expressions used to describe Lebanon were "Lebanese are dirty people;" "it's a place where we are labelled as refugees." Some individuals were hesitant to express how they feel about their stay in Lebanon and so referred to it as "a neighboring country" or "Lebanon is Lebanon, I got used to it."

Some answers depict bitter feelings while others express their gratitude because Lebanon, unlike many other Arab countries, had actually opened its borders and allowed refugees to enter refugees.

6.5.2 Services provided by the Government and NGO's
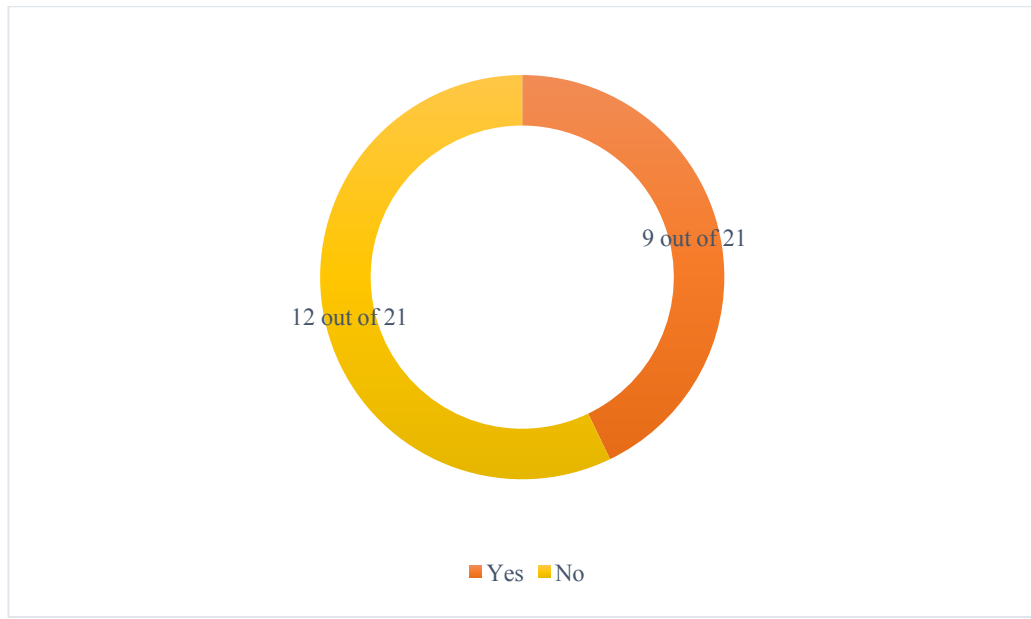
Figure 14: Percentage of Syrian Refugees access to Services

While interviewing Syrian refugees many complained that they did not receive any services from NGOs because they were labelled as 'unqualified' to get the proper aid. Many have applied for services and were rejected. Some respondents stated that the NGOs are discriminating between refugees and are giving to those who do not necessarily need aid and denying services to those more in need. On the other hand, 12 out of 21 are getting access to some services such as schooling and medication. Nevertheless, many complained that they are not getting full coverage of these services. A man who has diabetes stated that the NGO covers a part of his treatment when it should be covering it all. Others commented that there are not enough studies taken by the NGOs to investigate and distribute services in a fair manner.

Participants stated that they did not get much aid from these institutions, whereas others expressed that they have had access to some services such as medical treatments that were not fully covered. Many of those interviewed registered with the UN yet some were declined access to their services and others were given mere access. "I was registered with the UN and they used to give each person $20 which then went down to $19 and then to $8." For those who have children, some managed to enroll their children into public school while others complained that many schools had rejected them for the lack of vacancies. "I registered my kids in school last year. the UN gave me 20,000 L.L. They then called and apologized for not having enough funds." It is

obvious that, only within a few years, both NGOs and the government have limited their services to refugees.

Apparently not all Syrian refuges are getting the same access to services by the government and NGOs. Some were able to enroll their children to public schools while others were denied it. Others also received access to health services but had to pay a part of it. Many stated that NGOs are not fair with their distribution of services as they are helping some more than others, and they are discriminating between them. As described, services are not equally distributed amongst refugees. Some are getting more than others, and some are denied access to any services. However, for those who were getting some services from the UN, they were all given the 'Red Card,' as described by Syrian refugees, which helps them get food essentials.

6.5.3 What is provided to you in Lebanon that wasn't provided in your home country?
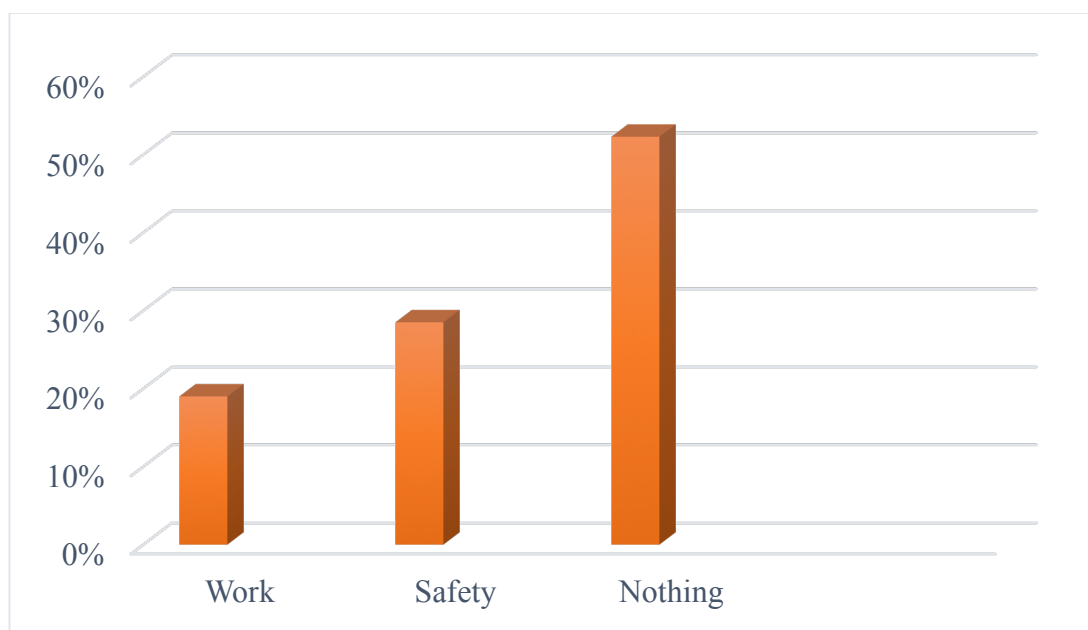
Table 6: Provision of services in Lebanon and Syria

It was important to ask this particular question because it helped for the understanding of the certain services provided to the Syrians which may be preventing them from going back to their homeland.

The above table states the answers given by the refugees on what Lebanon has provided them that was not given to them in their home country. 52.3% of participants strongly stated that Lebanon provided "nothing" as a lot of services were provided to the Syrians in their home country. While most refugees expressed that the one

important aspect that Lebanon has provided is safety (28.5%) which is something that their home country was not able to deliver. 19% said that what has been given to them is the opportunity to work and provide for their families. However, many stated that Lebanon has provided them with nothing other than humiliation.

6.6 Refugee

Refugee or Migrant Answer
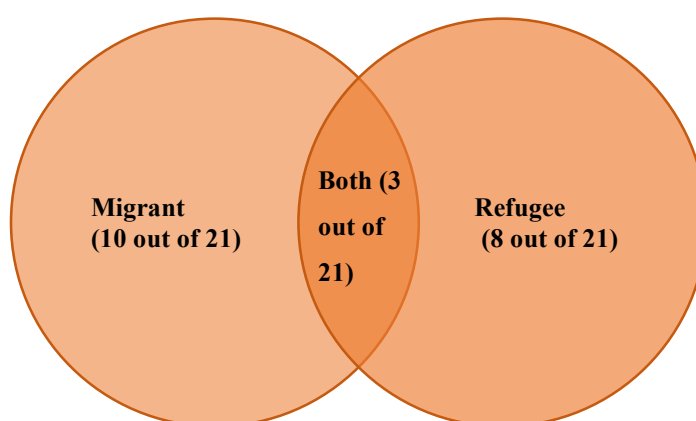
Figure 15:Participants answers on being a migrant or refugee

The following section highlights Syrians' conceptions of being a refugee and what it means to each participant. Why are they labelled as refugees and why some consider themselves as migrants? The term 'refugee' is used to give a better understanding of the notion by the refugees themselves.

The above figure shows the answers given by the participants. 10 out o 21 considered themselves as 'migrants' because they considered it a friendlier word to be used since they are here working and would go back once the war is over. 8 out of 21 described themselves as 'refugees' because it is "just what they are" as some have stated. Nevertheless, 3 participants stated that they feel they fit in, both because they are currently working which makes them migrants, but they are unable to return to their home country, so they are refer to themselves as refugees.

Many participants defined themselves as migrants when they were asked which described their situation best: migrants or refugees. Many participants were self-

conscious to the fact that they are labeled as refugees and preferred the term 'migrant.' They state that their stay is only temporary. Terms used to define a refugee by participants were strongly expressed. Many considered the term 'refugee' to be an insult, and many defined it as a term that degrades human beings. One answer intrigued me: "In Lebanon, being a refugee feels like an insult." That being stated, some believe that being a refugee in Lebanon only is insulting when being a refugee in another country is not. Others portrayed the term to a sense of being homeless and not accounted to any land.

Due to the ongoing socio-political conflict between the Lebanese and Syrians, being defined as a 'refugee' by the Lebanese government or society has made Syrians feel degraded and merely unwelcomed. When in other countries, being a refugee is not as insulting as it is in Lebanon; A statement expressed by a number of participants.

6.7 Repatriation

Repatriation is seen differently by the Lebanese and the Syrians. Many Lebanese sense that once things are settled in Syria, refugees will pack their bags and go back. Many Syrian refugees see it differently because the Syria they left is not the Syria they know now.

When asked why they did not do their best to stay in Syria, do everything within their power to make it a better place, and to build a better future, some stated: "do my best to do what? Fight whom? My brothers, my cousins who are in the army? Should I stand by the revolution? Even my brothers and relatives are fighting in the revolution. If I fight on both sides I am useless because I wouldn't know who I am fighting against." Others have narrated it as such: "if I stayed I would've stole or killed." Many individuals expressed their entrapment when discussing why they have not stayed back in Syria to fight for their land. Many have lost their homes and lost family members while others stated that they do not want to be a part of this war and kill their own people. Some believed that this war is not theirs to fight. It is a war between Sunni and Shiite and other bigger countries.

Standing up for their land is not as easy as one might think. As shown in the above answers, many Syrian do not want to end up in the military services and fight their own people. It is apparent that, when enrolling in the military services, they are forced

to fight against their family and friends. On the other hand, many have lost their homes and families, and their losses were too big for them to stay. What was interesting is that many are aware that this fight is not theirs to fight because it is considered a cold war with bigger countries fighting in their homeland.

6.7.1 Return to the homeland
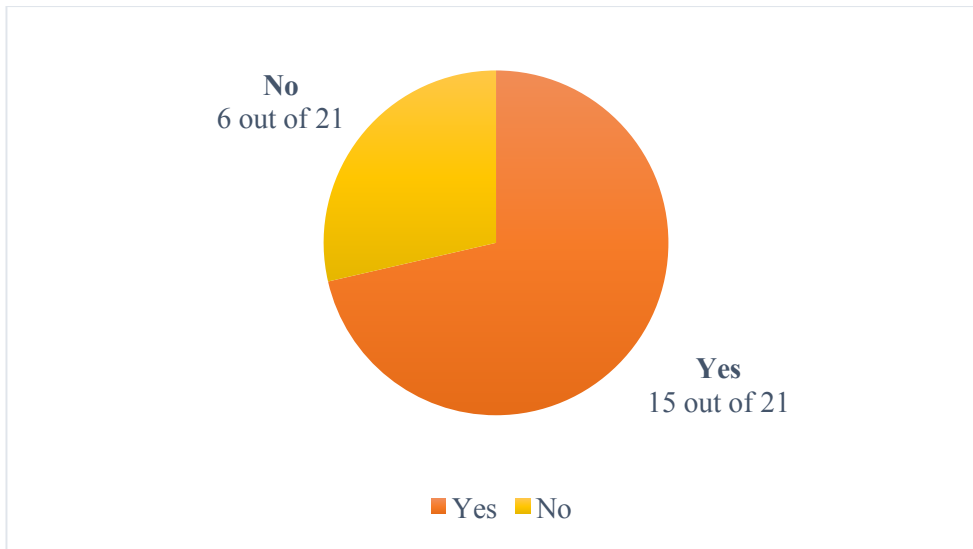
Figure 16: Return to Syria.

15 out of 21 of participants answered that they are willing to go back to Syria on conditions that there is safety and work. Whereas 6 out of 21 stated that there is nothing left for them to go back to, that they have settled in Lebanon, and adjusted themselves accordingly.

However, when the question was if they are willing to go back to Syria or any European country of their choice, their answers are as shown in the below figure.
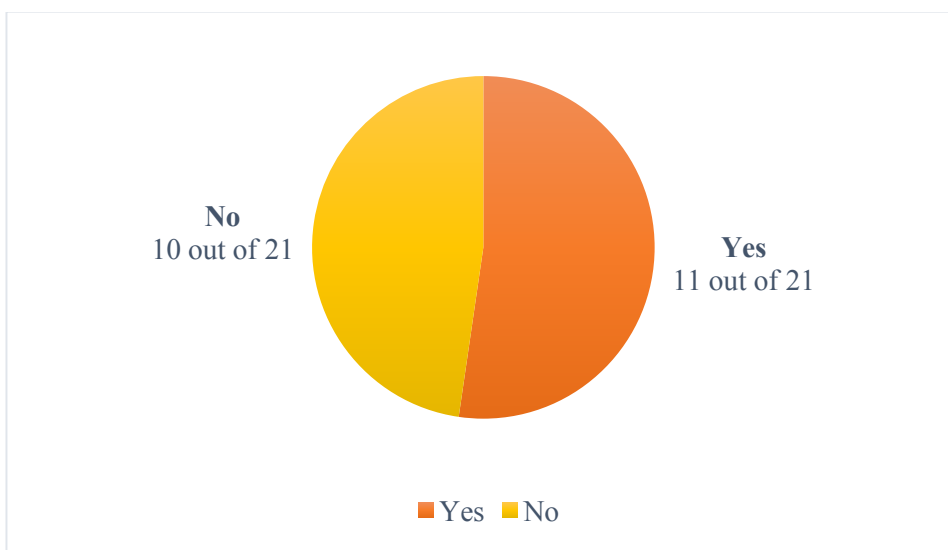
Figure 17: Migrate to Europe

Many expressed their love to return to Syria from Lebanon, but when asked if they got the chance to leave to another country, 11 out of 21 stated that they would leave because it would give them a chance to live freely and be more respected. Plus, the idea of having a European citizenship over the Lebanese and Syrian is expressed as more appealing. Nevertheless, 10 participants voiced their utmost devotion to their country and were willing to go back once they are assured safety.

6.7.2 Hinders of repatriation

Many have stated that what hinders their movement back to their home country is, first and foremost, safety reasons. Second, was the provision of work in order to provide for their families. Nevertheless, 52.3% of participants stated that what prevents them from going back to Syria is the fear from being caught and enrolled in the military services.

6.8 Current Challenges and future plans

Most Syrians have answered that their current challenges are providing for their families especially since their income is low and living in Lebanon is very expensive. Plus, many have expressed that one of the challenges they face is their movement in Lebanon. This is due to curfews that have been implemented in cities and villages. Over-generalization is another challenge they are facing. According to them, there are some Syrians that are ruining their reputation and the Lebanese are generalizing it to all Syrians. Another aspect that they are facing is the discrimination in schools to those who have children and discrimination in their workspace. "The teasing of my children in school is one of the hardest thing a mother can see her children go through." Discrimination is not only targeted to adults, but unfortunately it is being aimed at Syrian children at schools. Exploitation is another factor that the Syrians are facing in the Lebanese society. Many are working overtime and not being paid while some are not paid at all.

 On the other hand, when they have been asked about their future plans, many have expressed that their future is unclear so far. Those who have kids, they foresee a future that is safe and that provides better education and a better lifestyle for their themselves and their families.

6.9 Commonalities between rural and urban refugees

From the selected sample for this thesis there are two kinds of people, those from rural areas and those from urban areas. 9 out of 21 came from rural areas whereas the rest come form urban areas such as Al-Raqqa and Daraa. It was noticed that those from rural areas tend to work in agriculture and freelance jobs whereas individuals coming from urban areas tend to work in automotive industries. Despite their different characteristics, the interviews that I have conducted showed that there are commonalities which illustrate common concerns by the respondents. One main factor that these individuals share was their vulnerability in Lebanon and their attachment to their hometowns and not Syria as a homeland. One respondent stated, "Syria is no longer what it was, it is a war of other countries in our Syria." Another respondent quoted, "I wish I can migrate not only my culture and traditions with me to Lebanon, but I wish I can bring a part of Al-Raqqa with me because I know for a fact that its gone and will no longer be the same." One main concern they tend to share is the fear of their safety, "we are not safe in Syria because of the war and at the same time we are facing a different kind of fear in Lebanon in which we are being abused and exploited and we have to keep our mouth shut!"

Being a refugee is the hardest thing to be labeled with; this is an aspect that most respondents share. Being a refugee is an 'insult' as one of the respondents expressed. "How am I a refugee? I am working day and night to provide for my family and not getting any help from any organizations."

6.10 Middle class versus working class refugees

2 out of the 21 participants were of a middle class status, but due to the war in Syria, their status has shifted to labor work refugees. According to one of the participants. "I used to go to Beirut for 10-15 days and stay at a hotel, and I travelled around Europe and the United States, I lost everything, look at me now." The pain those individuals have expressed is more obvious than the rest of the sample group. The state of shock that they have expressed is due to the clear shift in their social status. They were businessmen and now they are bus drivers for a private school. Nevertheless, the common concerns between all these individuals is the ability to provide a decent living for their families. "I used to be a business man, married to two women, living a decent

life, now one of my wives is living with my children in a camp in Tripoli and the others are living with me here in Bchamoun." Another commonality between these individuals is the way the locals perceive them. Some were farmers in the hometown while others were business men, nevertheless, they are seen as vulnerable and poor by the host community. "I hate the Lebanese, just because I am a refugee they think I am an animal and do not deserve their respect."

6.10.1 Students versus Workers

Another group from the interviewed participants that have captured my attention is the division between students and those that were in the labor force. 2 out of the 21 refugees used to be students, but due to the situation in their hometown, this forced them to drop out of school and join the labor force. One student explained, "I used to go to university everyday until one day an armed soldier pushed me onto the ground and verbally abused me and then threatened me, this is when I knew its dangerous for me to stay." Each individual had a different background but their movement to Lebanon forced them to join the labour force. Each refugee had a different story to share, a memory, a nostalgic feeling of what they used to be in Syria. Due to the war which forced them to migrate to neighboring countries, they are no longer seen as unique individuals but are seen as a collective group of people that are a threat to the Lebanese community.

Information gathered by participants and stories that have been shared and documented were assessed and analyzed in the following chapter which, in return, is connected to what scholars have discussed in the literature review chapter.

Chapter 7

Analysis of findings

7.1 Chapter Overview

This section will examine the data that was shown in the previous chapter. I will discuss the relevance of data that was provided by the respondents to the literature discussed in the chapter on the literature review.

7.2 Analysis

The conflict in Syria has generated a lot of refugees migrating into Lebanon for the past 8 years. According to a report written by Maha yehya (2018), it is estimated that 5.5 million Syrians have left their country whereas 6.1 million are internally displaced. According to the UNHCR, there are 1.5 million refugees settled in Lebanon of which 673,414 are registered with the UNHCR. That being stated, this project is based on qualitative data collected from a small percentage of a bigger population. I was able to conduct 21 interviews with Syrian refugees that live in different areas of Lebanon and work in different sectors of the labor market.

There are numerous efforts from different countries to resolve the Syrian refugee conflict issue, but unfortunately all of these efforts simply assume the return of refugees once there is peace in their homeland. Nevertheless, Syrian refugees contemplating return to their homeland require physical assurance, employment, education, and basic needs and services for their families.

It is with no doubt that Lebanon is facing immense challenges with hosting a large number of Syrian refugees. Many believe that once the war in Syria comes to a close, refugees will go back to their homeland. However, the condition in Syria is far from being resolved to allow the return of its citizens.

7.3 Home

In previous chapters, home has been interpreted differently by many scholars, some believe that it shapes one's identity, while others believe the concept of home can be

made, imagined or desired (Black, 2002) Furthermore, others portray it through security and a sense of identity (Morley & Robbins, 2002). 'Home' is a word that is worthless to some and means the world to others. Being a refugee, 'home' is sometimes considered as one's identity. Many of the interviewees express an exasperated emotion each time their hometown or Syria is mentioned. Many referred to home as their "soul" or "motherland" and it means the world to them. According to the data provided in Figure 5 in the previous chapter, identity was the most prevalent term used to describe their attachment to their home. 8 out of 21 refugees described their affiliation to their home and portrayed Syria, their homeland, to be a big part of their identity. It is what they believe to be an ascriptive identity that was given to them at birth. On the other hand, five of the respondents described 'home' as a place or a land. As mentioned by Brun and Fabos (2015), the term 'place' can be looked at from different perspectives. It can be seen through its physical aspects or social, economic and cultural realities. According to one of the participants, home is seen through the "smell of the morning coffee" and another participant expressed that home is the just seen as a land but home is made from its people.

Many relate home to physical characteristics that derives from sentimental values such as their villages, houses, the scent of fresh air, or the morning coffee; while others relate home to a memory (4 persons). Rasheed (1994) further elaborates on this aspect by comparing the notion of home as the 'myth of return.' The author relates home to a memory or a myth due to the fact that it is inaccessible to refugees at some point, therefore, it becomes a 'point fixed in space' where only memories can be built. Due to the damage that has been done in many hometowns in Syria, many individuals expressed that home will always be a memory and not something that they can go back to because they have lost a lot from this war. One participant explains, "go back home to what? I have lost my family, relatives and my home. Home that I once knew is no longer there."

The invasion of Daesh (ISIS) and the conflict between the pro-regime and anti-regime factions have led Syria to become a battlefield for all parties which has resulted in the exodus of its citizens to find a safe haven elsewhere. Due to the political clashes happening in their hometown, the 'Syria' that they once knew was no longer there. Therefore, it's a fixed memory of something that is unapproachable. Interviews conducted with Syrian refugees have demonstrated the limbo that they are trapped in,

between the nostalgic feeling for their lives pre-war Syria, the current situation that they are living in, and the awareness of the situation back home. Kibreab (1999) adds that due to such situations sometimes the concept of home, land, nationality, or the collective identity of such individuals are either lost in significance or became a memory and a part of their past. That being said, the notion of home is related to one's identity as described by many Syrians in which their culture, traditions, and nostalgic feelings shape their memories of a home.

7.3.1 Exploring ones Identity

Exploring the concept of identity, two factors should be tackled; the knowing of oneself (in this case knowing who these individuals were back in their homeland) and the dynamic construction of who they are in the host country (in this case seen as refugees and a burden to the host citizens). "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul" (Malkki, 1992). Malkki (1992) believes that to be rooted to a certain land or community might be the most important and least recognized factor. However, when it comes to the case of the Syrian refugees, to be rooted to their nation is one of the most important aspects in which such rootedness shapes their identity and affects their existence as individuals and as a community. According to one refugee living in Mount Lebanon, "I hate the way Lebanese generalize that Syrians are terrorists or criminals, if one individual behaves incorrectly, then the whole community is condemned for one individuals act." Many of my respondents expressed that they show pride in their Syrian identity. However, due to the bad reputation that some refugees might be maintaining, it is with no doubt affecting the whole Syrian community. Many of those interviewed stated that when one Syrian individual is charged with a criminal activity, the whole Syrian community is convicted and not the individual himself. Therefore, a collective identity of the Syrian refugees is somehow affecting them negatively in certain situations.

When mentioning identity, it is important to understand who these individuals were in their homeland. As mentioned earlier when discussing the topic of identity, two factors should be taken into consideration: the self and the dynamic construction of one's self in the host country. The latter, as described earlier, is what the community defines them and shapes their collective identity. On the other hand, the self, is a part of the characteristics of who they were before being labelled as refugees. A 53-year-old man

from Raqqa narrated his identity as such: "I was a migrant, I used to live in the Gulf, I was very respected, and I lived a middle class life. I used to travel to Europe to America and come back. When the war happened, I lost everything! My house, my life savings, everything. Now I am labelled as a refugee I'm here in Lebanon and barely providing for my family." That being stated, it is obvious that these individuals carry two kinds of identities: The memory of what they were and that of what they have become.

Malkki (1992) highlighted a very important topic, the term 'nation' or home which refers to one's land, country, or soil. Such terms are not only used to identity one's country but terms used to define people, communities, and cultures as well. Therefore, the notion of home and identity are inter-related as they both complement each other. In recent days, home can define one's identity, as discussed by Malkki (1995), when an individual is uprooted and displaced. This automatically leads to the loss of their identity, traditions, and cultures no matter how close the geographic proximity of the asylum country is.

The statement made by Malkki defines the reality that is happening in Lebanon between the Syrian refugees and the local citizens. No matter how similar their traditions and cultures, the division between these two communities will always be there. One of the refugees narrated "Lebanese and Syrians might share the same cultures and traditions, but what was once broken can never be repaired. Therefore, the situation between both communities will never be the same no matter how similar our cultures and traditions are."

7.4 Being a refugee

To recap, the 1951 convention defines refugees as individuals who:

'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is … unable. or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.' (Long, 2012).

Therefore, according to the given definition, all Syrians in Lebanon are considered as refugees. However, when the topic about being a refugee was tackled, many

participants labeled themselves as a migrant rather than as a refugee. They believe the term refugee is an insult. As Figure 8 shows in the previous chapter, 10 out of 21 considered themselves as migrants, whereas 8 out of the 21 considered themselves as refugees, and only 3 individuals stated that they see themselves in both categories. The reason behind considering themselves as migrants is because they are working to provide and therefore not relying on any assistance from the government/NGO's.

Even though Lebanon is not a part of the 1951 refugee convention, there is a limited legal protection provided by the government to the asylum seekers in Lebanon. As stated in the previous chapter, according to the Lebanese constitution, "Lebanon is a founding and active member of the United Nations Organization and stands by its covenants and the Universal Declaration of Human rights. The Lebanese government shall exemplify these principles in all its areas without any exceptions." The notion of protection has been mentioned and the Lebanese government should abide by it. Unfortunately, the host country failed to provide protection for those seeking refuge in Lebanon. Many refugees that have participated in this project stated that they are not well protected by the government against discrimination and racism.

As a couple from rural Aleppo stated, "a while ago we were attacked. A couple of drunken guys broke into our house hit my pregnant wife and my child. One of these men was a soldier recruited by the Lebanese army but was off duty of course. I directly called the police, and due to this issue my brother and I were imprisoned for 17 days, plus I paid L.L 534,000 bail money. The mayor of the village that we are residing in asked us to waive our right because one of the men was a soldier and he'll face consequences." Being a refugee in Lebanon means being exploited and discriminated against. Even though Article 16 in the Lebanese constitution states that displaced people can freely access the court from every nation that ratified the convention and treated the same as the national and legal residents. These rights have clearly not been met and remain only 'ink on paper.' These individuals have been physically and emotionally abused as well as they paid a financial price for a fault not of their own.

The idea of protecting the refugees or displaced individuals as mentioned in the legal chapter has not been properly applied. There are many loopholes in the institution that neglect the protection of these individuals. Due to such negligence by the government, xenophobia towards the Syrian refugee has become a serious issue.

7.4.1 Discrimination and marginalization of refugees

Many Syrian refugees interviewed have expressed the different levels of discrimination against them. The Lebanese community has marginalized them by enforcing laws that they had to abide by (i.e. curfews, the control of freedom of movement, the restrictions on residency, and severe exploitation in the workforce). The host community has expressed its widespread xenophobia against Syrian refugees through law enforcement and restrictive rules which hinders the protection of these displaced individuals. Due to such matters, it has led refugees into isolation and marginalization. "After being detained for 17 days, I've been informed that my file was titled as 'terrorist.'"

Syrian refugees are being disconnected to the community in which they exist, and at times, they experience mistreatment from various personnel. Referring the Syrians as Daeshi (ISIS) and/or terrorists have isolated the Syrian refugees from the host community. The segregation of both communities have led to a hostile environment between the two societies.

In addition, due to the many years of the Syrian domination in Lebanon, which led to the increase in tension between the two countries, many highlighted the fact that the Lebanese were not mistreated when they sought refuge in Syria due to the Israeli invasion in the 2006. That being stated, Article 8 in the Lebanese constitution states that the contracting state ought to treat refugees in an exceptional manner irrespective of the political circumstances between the nation of asylum and the nation of displaced persons. However, this was not applied in Lebanon. Refugees were not only made vulnerable through the application of strict rules and regulations, but were also exploited in the labor force and physically abused on many occasions.

7.5 Aid by the Lebanese government and NGOs

It is without a doubt that the Lebanese government has opened its borders to the Syrian refugees at the beginning of the Syrian crisis. Nevertheless, it is obvious that they have gradually applied policies that project the profound fear of the Syrians' elongated stay in Lebanon. The fear of history repeating itself with the Palestinian refugees has led the government to implement a stricter policy which, in return, has affected unemployment, the educational and medical infrastructure, and the mobility of

refugees (Carnegie Middle East Center, 2018). In addition to these concerns, Carnegie Middle East Center (2018) stated that security imperatives concerning the demographic and sectarian division of the huge influx of refugees might be of a big concern, however, it is no excuse for the mistreatment of refugees. When the conflict first began, the government refused to provide camps for Syrian refugees hoping not to repeat the past experience with Palestinian refugees as mentioned earlier. Therefore, refugees were scattered in Lebanese society at large, which led to an increase in tension between the host and the receiving communities.

Due to the political deadlock in Lebanon, the Lebanese government has delegated policy making concerning refugees to local authorities. This then made them responsible for monitoring and regulating refugees (Carnegie Middle East Center, 2018). At the beginning of the crisis, UN agencies, along with NGOs, provided substantial aid to Syrian refugees. Nevertheless, out of the 21 individuals interviewed for the project 12 out of 21 stated that they are not receiving any kinds of aid, with 9 out of 21 stating that they are receiving 'some.' Many respondents also said that they were rejected by those agencies and not given any help of any kind. The latter narrated that they are only getting food coupons or, as they referred to it, a 'red card' from the agencies that provide food resources. On the other hand, those of whom have children were enrolled in schools, but their parents were not able to pay for transportation as it was not covered. Due to the extra money that Syrian families had to pay for schooling, many were only able to enroll one child and not the others.

Syrian families were expressed disappointment by the aid coming from such agencies. This was due in part to cuts in services that were once provided to them. According to these families, answers given by the UN agencies stated that they did not have enough funds to keep covering them. Therefore, the implementation of policies by the government and the cut backs of aid by international agencies have left many Syrian families to their own coping mechanisms. The formal and informal restrictions they have faced have affected their mobility including their access to employment, healthcare and other welfare related services.

7.5.1 Restrictions to employment

Figure 4 in the previous chapter shows the kind of occupations Syrians have had in their country of origin. The highest percentage of individuals worked in the agriculture and transportation sector. However, in Lebanon, the highest percentage of occupations were in the automotive department, followed by occupations in restaurants, concierge, agriculture and freelance work. According to Jones & Ksaifi (2016), Syrian refugees do not have the right to legally work in Lebanon to support themselves. Therefore, as coping mechanism, they took up jobs that do not require any legal forms. This reality left the door wide open for their exploitation from employers. Those who signed with the UNHCR were asked to sign a pledge not to work in Lebanon, and those with work permits were denied getting jobs in 70 different occupations (Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). Clearly, finding an occupation is very hard to maintain as a refugee. Therefore, many are working in their residential area due to the limitation of movements. Hence, they end up doing low paid work that the Lebanese community tends not to be interested in. That being stated, many Syrian refugees are being exploited and mistreated by their employers, and what is worse, is the fact that they could not press charges against their employers. A male from Al-Raqqa narrated this issue in this regard: "We are being exploited at work. My employer did not pay me and that was my right, instead they fired me, and one of them hit me when I told them you're stealing from me. They didn't pay me L.L. 300,000."

Syrians are facing more obstacles by the day which has forced many individuals to work informally. This, in turn, has subjected them to extreme exploitation. Many have expressed frustration over the overtime hours they work with no pay, the disrespect they face on an everyday basis, and discrimination. The notion of precarity, as discussed earlier by Banki (2013), captures best the situation of the Syrians in Lebanon. The vulnerability and the exploitation that they are facing is not only related to their unemployment status, but also to everyday hardships they face derived from the attribute of being a non-citizen. According to Banki (2013), sometimes undocumented migrants are an asset to the regime, but in parallel they are victims. Citizens of a nation are usually provided with basic services and rights, with access to healthcare, and other services. In this case, Syrians are living in a limbo. They are 'invisible citizens' who are deprived from the rights that are otherwise granted to any other citizen. Therefore, in many cases, they are being exploited for social and

economic benefits by the host community in which their rights and concerns are not being taken into consideration.

Mentioning all the hardships that Syrians are facing in Lebanon, is it enough reason for them to go back to their homeland or to seek a second home in Lebanon and settle in the host country for much longer?

7.6 Return to Syria

The cessation of the war in Syria does not necessarily mean that Syrians are going back to their homeland. It was important to listen to the refugees and understand their point of view on that matter. In this context, it was essential to assess their attitude towards this topic and what it takes for them to return to their home.

7.6.1 From Syria to Lebanon

The decision to migrate from Syria to its neighboring countries was not an easy decision to be made by the refugees. Most faced several displacements before landing in Lebanon. They were subjected to life threatening situations in which they lost their homes and witnessed deaths of family members and relatives. The destruction of their homes, lands, and the occupation of external forces onto their hometowns were certain 'push' factors which resulted in them being seeking refuge Lebanon. The biggest motivation for refugees to migrate into Lebanon was to find a safe haven. The only thing Lebanon was able to provide them, which their home country did not, was 'safety.' That being stated, Stein and Cuny (1994) discusses the events which can lead refugees back into repatriation. To recap, the five movements were:

- **Ricochet repatriation**: the return of people in huge numbers due events such as a military action or a stampede from danger.
- **Relocation-stimulated repatriation**: the decision made by the government to settle the refugees in a camp, in which the government has total control over them.
- **Community and alienation**: the formation of refugees into small communities that consist of politically cohesive organized members.
- **Secondary relocation-stimulated repatriation**: the relocation of the refugees by the government.

- **Major repatriation**: when the UNHCR plays a role in facilitating the movements of refugees back home.

The patterns discussed by Stein & Cuny (1994) are not applicable to the refugees in Lebanon since the country has not ratify the 1951 convention. Thus, refugees are not placed in camps in which these patterns can be applied. The author stresses on the movement of refugees as a general concept. Whereas Gerver (2015), on a more recent study, examines the autonomy of the refugees and the reasons behind their repatriation and focuses on voluntary repatriation. To recap, Gerver states that there are five concepts to mention when discussing voluntary repatriation are:

- **The autonomy:** which assess the 'when' and 'how' a particular decision is taken and focuses on the characteristics of individuals making this decision.
- **No 'irresponsibly substantive' decisions**: due to the fact that children are not wholly capable for rational decisions, this leads to many parents making decisions for their children's well-being and being responsible for them.
- **Non-coercive formation:** decisions made by individuals with no forced pressure on them.
- **Consistency with Parfit's Principle of Consent:** this states that repatriation is an irreversible decision. The consequences of repatriation may have an effect on an individual's future choice which might also affect the decision making of any future voluntary choices.
- **Consistency with Parfit's Rights Principle:** this discusses the rights that individuals have when changing their mind on previously made decisions. This principle discusses the elements that caused these individuals to change their mind about earlier decisions. Gerver (2015) states that, in some instances, individuals may be under threat or their judgment may be impaired. Therefore, they have the right to consciously endorse their decision.

Despite the desire of many refugees wanting to return to Syria, voluntary return is not necessarily in the near future. 71% of the interviewed participants stated that they want to return to Syria if 'safety' was to be provided to them. However, if they had the chance to choose between Syria or travelling to a European country, 52% would choose to settle in Europe. Many individuals preferred migrating to a European nation than going back home believing that they would be more appreciated and treated like

respected citizens. Many stated that it is something that neither Lebanon nor Syria could provide it to them.

17 out of the 21 individuals that were interviewed are married with children. Therefore, two patterns are applicable to their case if they were to return: 'Autonomy' and 'no irresponsibly substantive' decisions. When voluntary repatriation is discussed, two questions ought to be asked: when and how. The 'when' question is discussed by individuals to assess the conditions they are in. Safety and security are two major factors that are essential to all refugees when discussing their return to Syria. When these are provided, along with stability, then the process of return is more acceptable to them. The 'how' question, on the other hand, is asked when thinking of the process of going back: "How are we going back if everything we have is destroyed?" Many of the refugees have lost everything in their homeland. Along with 'autonomy' and the 'no irresponsibly substantive' decisions, the two patterns complement each other when discussing the repatriation of a family that includes children. The livelihood of children is an important factor to assess before returning home. Due to the severe destruction in Syria, education and healthcare, along with many basic essentials, are very limited. Since choices made my adults directly affects children, decision making of repatriation is even harder. 17 out of the 21 members that were interviewed have children ranging from one to six children.

A 50-year-old man from Qneitrah narrated that, "I sent my 12-year-old back to Syria because no school would accept him for his age here in Lebanon, I know I risked his return but I don't want him to stay out of school." Such actions portray the 'no irresponsibly substantive' decisions due to the choices made by adults that directly affect their children. However, many Syrian families are concerned for their young ones and the idea of return is not in the near future because they fear their safety.

Due to the fact that Lebanon did not ratify the 1951 convention, the Lebanese government cannot send back Syrian refugees or displaced individuals as they might refer to them. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, there are many rules and regulations that are indirectly pressuring Syrian on their return to their homeland. That being said, 'non-coercive formation' can be seen in two perspectives. Firstly, it can be understood that Syrian are not being pressured by the government because they cannot send them back to Syria. Hence, their decision to return is not forced upon them. Secondly, when

considering the hardship and restriction of movement that Syrians are facing on a daily basis, thus 'non-coercive formation' is not applicable.

When it comes to 'consistency with Parfit's Principle of Consent,' it is the believe that it ought to apply to all refugees in Lebanon. If they were to decide to return under the current circumstances, there would be serious consequences to their return. Some fear going back due to the political instability and the fear from being persecuted by the regime. "Unless uprooted population can go back to their homes and enjoy a reasonable degree of security in their own community, the transition from war to peace may be … delayed or even reversed" (UNHCR, 1998). Building on unhcr's interpretation, there are factors that is preventing them from going back home which has to do with political tension and economic problems in their homeland. On the other hand, 'consistency with Parfit's Rights Principle' is not applicable to most refugees. This is because some of them are illegal in the country. Changing their mind and returning to the host country is something that cannot be easily done.

7.6.2 A second home?

Despite all the hardship that Syrian refugees are facing on a daily basis, 11 out of 21 individuals expressed that they consider Lebanon as a second home, and 10 out of 21 stated that Lebanon will never be their second home. It is believed that the concept of a second home was forced upon the refugees. Due to the consequences they will face in Syria if they return, they have managed to accept staying in Lebanon despite the fact that they have isolated themselves from the Lebanese community at large. According to the Carnegie report (2018), the Syrian government is enforcing new legislative framework in which it will hinder the return of refugees. The measures initiated have included vetting mechanisms, the reconsideration of rules and regulations concerning properties, and revising the law regarding military services (Yehia, 2018)

Participants that expressed Lebanon to be a second home were living a more decent lifestyle than those who expressed the opposite. According to many individuals, Lebanon and Syria share the same culture and traditions, and it was easy for them to find a second home in Lebanon. However, some strongly stated that the Lebanese community made them lose their dignity due to the constant discrimination and insult.

Participants who do not face any restrictions from going back home to rebuild their lives have chosen to stay in Lebanon. Lebanon has provided them with jobs, safety, education for their children, and basic needs that Syria, at the moment, is unable to provide for its citizens. According to Brun and Fábos (2015), home and place are two notions that are related to each other in which forced migration adds a different interpretation to the idea of belonging and identity. The authors expressed that for refugees and forced migrants 'place' is no longer linked to a particular place or land but instead to the social relations that defines the meaning of 'home.'

The similarities in culture and traditions between the Lebanese and the Syrian community somehow eased their movement at first. But, due to the political tension for over 30 years between the two nations, it has made it difficult for the two societies to integrate. Even though Syrians are not living in camps and are dispersed into the Lebanese hometowns, Syrians have managed to form small communities of their own in which they share the same values and norms and formed their 'second' home.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Syrian refugees left a huge impact on Lebanese society. It is without a doubt that the Lebanese community has hosted them and has provided as much aid as possible. According to Ghostine (2016), Lebanon welcomed 1.5 million Syrian refugees which is equivalent to one third of the Lebanese population. The main reason why Syrian refugees seek Lebanon as a refuge destination is to flee the war that is occurring in their homeland. Nevertheless, their existence on the Lebanese soil made their experience a different kind of violence. Repatriation is a term used to describe the return to the homeland. Syrian refugees and their existence in all parts of Lebanon left us with a question to whether Syrians are planning their return to their homeland, or are they going to adjust in the Lebanese society.

The Lebanese government has provided Syrian refugees with a six-month residency permit without paying any fees and which is renewable for another six months. However, due to their vulnerable status, many Syrians were unable to pay the residency permit fee. Thus, their stay in Lebanon was then considered 'irregular.' Since Lebanon has not ratified the 1951 Refugee convention, there has been limited legal protection offered by the government to asylum seekers in Lebanon. Nevertheless, it is obliged by the customary principle of non-refoulement whereby authorities are not allowed to send refugees back to their home country. Furthermore, legal barriers are one of the reasons that have hindered the movement of refugees' since they are afraid to be detained and face serious consequences. As the number of refugees increased with time, so has the tension. Due to the vast number of refugees entering Lebanon, the influx has resulted in political, economical, social, and religious tensions. That being stated, and due to the reason that Lebanon has not signed the 1951 Refugee convention, this concludes that there is no international law that Lebanon has to abide to when considering refugees. Nevertheless, the Lebanese constitution mentions certain Articles which target refugees, yet oftentimes they are not met. There are certain factors that can be worked upon in order to ease the tension between refugees and the host communities: management in the labour market and providing rights equally and apply laws that protect both parties from one another.

In revising the laws, the Lebanese state fails to provide a scheme which protects both the refugees and the locals. In conclusion, the most affected by the legal and economic vulnerability are the refugees because they suffer the most from legal constraints, exploitation, and insufficient foreign aid.

Syrians came into Lebanon looking for safety, something that their country couldn't provide them with. There are several reasons of which prevents refugees from going back, fear of their safety, destruction of their homes, and the lack of employment. It is believed by many participants that the war in Syria is not theirs to fight as it is a civil war between bigger countries and different parties fought in their homeland. Hence, they found a safe haven in Lebanon and built a second home for them and their families.

Repatriation is a term that is usually connected to voluntary movement. Gerver discusses 5 patterns of repatriation which is applicable to the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. He discusses the reasons or decision making that pushes refugees to repatriate. The return to Syria is not an easy decision to be made, there are many factors that affect such a movement. Given the reality that Syrian refugees have been a burden on such a small country, many policymakers as well as the locals do not want to see refugees integrate and settle into the host community. However, the current situation in Syria is very unpredictable. Hence, it is not appropriate for refugees to go back at the moment. Military operations are still ongoing in several parts of Syria, such as Idlib, which makes return to their hometown unreachable for some due to safety reasons. However, individuals from a more settled area, such as Sweida, prefer to stay in Lebanon for economical reasons. So while many refugees tend to stay in Lebanon, access to services for refugees has become increasingly harder. Access to employment, healthcare, education have become more restricted which, in return, results in locals exploiting Syrians and marginalizing them. In addition, several legal Articles in the Lebanese constitution fail to protect its refugees which makes them more vulnerable and an easier target to abuse.

Refugees are constantly facing unsatisfactory choices, making their everyday life a challenge. The return of refugees to Syria is a decision that doesn't guarantee their safety. They are faced with the following choice: either they return to an unsettled Syria or remain in a host country that provides 'safety' but fails to protect and grant them their basic civil rights.

The project concludes that Syrian refugees are not going back to Syria in the near future, but, in fact, they have found a second home in Lebanon despite all the hardships that come along. Lebanon provided them with 'safety,' something that their home country failed to do. The majority of the participants in this project expressed the need to stay in Lebanon to provide for their families. Nevertheless, the return to Syria is not as easy, as one might imagine, because the "Syria" they once knew is no longer there, therefore, their return to their homeland will hold a lot of risks.

Much research has been done on Syrian refugees but very limited research has been conducted on the issue of their return to their homeland. In my thesis, I addressed this issue and conducted a study of a small sample of refugees in Lebanon to highlight the factors that would lead to their repatriation. Building on that, research should be done on refugees in general and not limited to those who come from Syria. It is important to study refugees living in camps and those relying on the aid of the government and organizations and to analyze whether such services along with other benefits are the reason behind their stay in Lebanon. Results from this thesis state that many Syrian refugees are not willing to go back due to economical reasons. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we highlight further on this issue and encourage more research to be done on the subject which redound of a better understanding on the topic.

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Appendix 1- English Survey

Interview Question:
[profile on the interviewee]
Age:
Sex:
Work (in Lebanon):
Date:
Duration of residency in Lebanon:
Origin in Syria:
Marital Status:
Number of Children:

Identity:

1. Tell me what made you leave Syria?

2. What does Syria mean to you?

3. Do you miss Syria? What do you miss most?

4. What do you think of the situation in your area back in Syria?

5. What was your job before you arrived in Lebanon?

Home:

1. What is home to you? A Memory, a place, identity?

2. Did you consider Lebanon a home? if yes how? if not what is preventing it
   from feeling as such?

3. In your opinion what makes place a home? is it people, culture, relations with
   family and people, traditions?

4. What do you value the most about your culture and traditions?

5. What did you bring with you from place of origin to make you feel at home
   in Lebanon?

Current Situation:

1. When did you migrate to Lebanon?

2. What is Lebanon like for you?

3. What do you work now?

4. What do you think of your stay in Lebanon? Does it provide a descent living?

5. What services is the government providing you? or NGO?

6. What is provided to you in Lebanon that wasn't provided in your home
   country?

   Refugee:

1. What does it mean to be a refugee?
2. Do you see yourself as a migrant or refugee? Which one of the two words describes better who you are?

Repatriation:

1. Why didn't you stay in your own country and do everything within your power to make it better place to live and build a better future?
2. Will you go back if you're given the chance?
3. What are the conditions that would make you return to Syria?
4. What hinders your repatriation?
5. Do you consider Leaving Lebanon and go to another country instead of going back to Syria? if Yes why? If not, why not?

Current challenges:

1. What are the major changes that you have faced during the past 7 years?
2. What are you biggest challenges at the moment?
3. How would you describe your future?

Future Plans:

1. What kind of future would you like to see yourself in? And Why?
2. What is you 5-year plan?