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Covering Syrian refugee women Online: The influence of time,
location, and space on news

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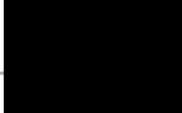
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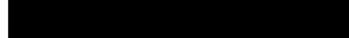
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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the representation of Syrian refugee women in online news sites in Lebanon and the UK between 2014 and 2016. This paper asks, “How do different contexts influence news coverage of Syrian refugee women in the *BBC*-UK and *The Daily Star-Lebanon*”? Similar themes that emerged in the *BBC* and *Daily Star* include an emphasis on the benevolence of host-countries and security measures abroad. Home was discussed according to spatial, relational, and emotional aspects. Both news sites draw on the invisibility of identifiable refugee facial features, when cued in line. Distinctly, a women empowerment theme appeared in the Lebanese sample only. Whereas, the British news site is polarized by articles covering relocation policies to the UK. Outliers in the data include: family separations between Syrian women married to Palestinians and their un(official) return to Syria. Findings support a multi-level/modal perspective to news analysis. Especially, expanding on the multi-level approach by introducing new contexts of location, time, and space. Through reviewing news articles in national level news sites, this paper highlights dominant political actors, narratives, and policies in Lebanon and the UK.

Keywords: Syrian, Refugee, Woman, Space, Time, Location, News

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Chapter One

Syrian refugee women in the news

In the wake of the 2011 Syrian uprisings, refugee discourse is now prevalent in online breaking news reports (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018). Increasingly, researchers capitalize on media archives available on the “Syrian-civil-war” to study the influence of news on readers.

Despite researchers’ increased interest in studying different cross-border Syrian refugee experiences, women are still understudied in news (See Abid, Manan, & Rahman, 2017; Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018; Sacco & Gorin, 2017; Freedman, Kivilicsm, & Bakalacloglu, 2017; Szanto, 2016; Szczepanik, 2016).

Problematically, even when Syrian refugee women are represented in academia, researchers tend to discuss refugee women as a single, unidimensional, and all-encompassing category (Ayoub, 2017). In turn, when researchers treat women’s experiences as unified the dimensions of location, time, and space are overlooked (Gilboa, Jumbert, Mikilan, & Robinson, 2016).

To fill this gap, this paper addresses the relationship between the contexts of: location, time, and space, on news portrayals of Syrian refugee women. Chiefly, drawing on 168 news articles in mainstream news outlets between 2014 and 2016. More specifically, this paper maps similarities and dissimilarities in national-level news coverage on the following news websites: *The Daily Star-Lebanon* and *BBC-UK*.

To clarify, national-level news is classified as news coverage within nation states’ political precincts/boundaries, which cater to a specific nation (Gilboa et al., 2016). At times, national news coverage detail conflicts in the newspaper’s direct

proximity, periphery, or local surroundings. Significantly, this comparative analysis hopes to contribute to understandings of refugee women portrayals or perspectives in Lebanon and UK at the case study level.

This thesis selectively focuses on refugee women. To demonstrate, men, girls, and boys are only mentioned in relation to refugee women. Instead of discussing refugee women in general terms, there is a need to discuss individual newspaper articles and narratives.

According to Kosho (2019), migrant voices are underrepresented across news sources. More narrowly, the press overlooks Syrians' public opinions regarding decision making in Syria (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantii, 2013). A multi-level approach, which looks at newspapers individually, facilitates discussions on different and conflicting women narratives within newspapers.

Correspondingly, qualitative case-studies, which draw on national news coverage help reveal dual perspectives of the different stages involved in Syrian refugees' forced migrations to Lebanon and the UK. To this end, both Lebanon and the UK, reflect two different time-sensitive dimensions of Syrian refugees' journeys of migration or exile.

Typically, Lebanon represents the *start* of some Syrian migrants' journeys abroad. Also, the first country of reception due to geographical proximity (Abid, Manan, & Rahman, 2017). Conversely, the UK, represents a *later* stage in Syrian refugees' emigration from Syria- with a peak in registrants in 2016. Depending on different refugee perspectives, Lebanon may be viewed either a space of transit or settlement (Turner, 2015). Dually, Lebanon is considered both a destination country (i.e., some Syrians settle permanently) and a transit country (i.e., refugees resettle elsewhere).

Spatially, the UK, is considered a resettlement country as reflected by refugees' tendency to arrive to the UK from other transit countries (Nasser-Eddin, 2017). More often than not, media studies focus on international and global news outlets and prioritize foreign policy at the expense of local-level policy implementations or news stories (Kosho, 2016; Gilboa et al., 2016).

Significantly, a focus on national-level news merits attention since negative national media portrayals sometimes draw on readers' insecurities or fears by portraying refugees as "invaders". Negative portrayals in news may influence the degree of inclusion, which refugees experience in host-countries (Kosho, 2016).

Arguably, the local-level, is where policies are implemented. However, research overlooks how national newspapers portray local events or policies, in favor of foreign policy (Doucet, 2018; Gilboa et al., 2016). This comparative qualitative study highlights the different levels of exclusion or inclusion refugee women face abroad. Additionally, this paper addresses the inclusion or exclusion of refugee women by newspaper sources also.

As a reference, this study is twofold including: a multi-level and multi-modal approach. The multilevel perspective addresses the representation of Syrian refugee women in news according to: location, time, space. Whereas, the multimodal approach addresses text-visuals on online websites. In the scope of this paper, text visuals refer to the cohesion between picture and video captions within individual newspaper articles.

1.1 Location, Space, and Time

To date, research predominantly represents Western portrayals of conflicts and Western foreign-policy during humanitarian crises (Alhayek, 2014). Unsurprisingly, researchers recently took notice of the methodological nationalism in media, which

favor Western sources (Alhayek, 2014; Al-Hejin, 2015; Cozma & Kozman, 2018). In this vein, the location of news relates to the types of media reception refugees receive. Since most research on news predominates from the West (Alhayek, 2014; Asaf, 2017; Cozma & Kozman, 2018), a persistent gap exists concerning how Arab media depicts national news.

Previous international research reflects unequal attention to refugee women or underrepresentation in research and biased representations as victims or the “good refugees” (Freedman, Kivilicsm, & Bakalacloglu, 2017; Szczepanik, 2016). Theoretically, this paper differentiates between location and space. Location refers to countries discussed in news articles. Whereas, space refers to newspaper reachability being national (i.e., mainly written for a national audience). Also, the notion of “secure” or “insecure” spaces in host countries is discussed.

Understandings of the notion of time may differ depending on cultural spaces. According to Levitt and Rajaram (2013), time is a social term, which may be valued differently in various spaces. For instance, time, in a refugee protracted situation, may change depending on host-country perspectives (Melander & Oberg, 2006). Indeed, refugees' perceptions of *when* it is time to enter or leave may also change depending on location and space.

Refugees, politicians, and news writers' perspectives of how “long”, “quick”, “permanent”, or “temporary” refugee situations are may differ. Hence, re-analyzing statements, interviews, and policies in *national news*, shed light on how different actors perceive time. This paper revealed that women were more represented in the *Daily Star*- Lebanon than the *BBC*- UK. As a reference, representation was measured by the percentage of articles discussing Syrian refugee women on the news sites.

Interestingly, research on refugee women tend to juxtaposition the inclusion or exclusion of refugees in host-nations. Significantly, qualitative studies shed light on specific social contexts of refugee exclusion abroad. Namely, comparative qualitative studies include examples of the different strategies refugee women adopt, in order to be included in mainstream society abroad (Burkner, 2012; Freedman, Kivilicsm, & Bakalacloglu, 2017).

At the structural level, newspapers may be considered as spaces of: inclusion, exclusion, or “othering”. These spaces vary depending on social, political, and economic changes (Nasser-Eddin, 2017). In this vein, news coverage on policies or policy initiatives help shed light on social spaces.

To paint a clearer picture, news portrayals of Syrian refugees as “threats” resulted in an “exclusionary” space online. Here, space addresses the notion of “secure” or “insecure” spaces. Whereby, popular diction on secure spaces discuss humanitarian spaces of “protection”. A case study perspective facilitates in depth-analyses of exclusion and inclusion.

Furthermore, the notion of “exclusion” does not necessarily equate “negative portrayals”. Exclusion may involve less visible forms of exclusion via portraying refugees as “different”. According to Abdelhady and Malmberg (2018), Swedish media portray Syrian refugees as “others”, “different”, or “inferior”, by constructing narratives of Islam as incompatible with Western culture. To illustrate, Western portrayals of Syrian refugees identify females as “others” or “different” by emphasizing coverage as: victims, escapees, or pawns (Szanto, 2016).

Based on previous research, this paper initially hypothesized that “othering” in the *BBC*-UK would reflect portrayals of refugees as different or inferior due to cultural or religious differences. However, news coverage in the *BBC*-UK did not discuss

refugee women beyond the scope of security measures taken prior to implementing resettlement policies in the UK. Instead, ‘othering’ was reiterated by the emphasis of refugee women as ‘vulnerable’ and ‘victims’.

1.2 Why focus on The Daily Star-Lebanon and BBC- UK?

This paper explores how an English-language mainstream newspaper in Lebanon compares to Western media by exploring, which themes emerge in relation to the *BBC*-UK. Lebanon is considered as one of the freest media systems in the region, including numerous privately-owned newspapers (Cozma & Cozman, 2018; Dajani, 2013). Historically, Lebanon was the first Arab-country to implement private radio/television. However, Arab media is often overlooked in news studies (Cozma & Cozman, 2018). Media in Lebanon tends to be affiliated, owned, or linked to: politicians and religious groups (Dajani, 2013). Hereby, providing an interesting source to look at the overlap between politics and media. Lebanese news tends to reflect varying narratives of different political or religious sub-groups. In other words, many Lebanese news sources do not attempt to provide national narratives. Instead, opting to focus on issues relevant to particular sub-religious groups (Cozma & Cozman, 2018).

According to The Daily Star website (www.dailystar.com.lb), the news site aims to provide daily national-news-updates to expatriates and introduce non-Arab readers to the region. The Daily Star's English language focus, shows the influence of foreign powers. Further, shedding light on what an elitist newspaper in Lebanon, perceives as relevant to expatriates. Although the BBC is government linked, it pioneered conflict-reporting, including 24/7 follow up that is standardized internationally by private newspapers. Notably, the *Daily Star* is similar to the *BBC* regarding to language, conflict-reporting format, and the incorporation of international audiences when reporting on national news.

1.3 Research Question and Aims

Primarily, this paper seeks to ask, “How do the different contexts of time, location, and space influence news coverage of Syrian refugee women in newspapers in the UK (i.e., *BBC*) and Lebanon (i.e., *Daily Star*)”? In particular, media coverage of policy initiatives influences portrayals of Syrian refugee women in national level news in Lebanon and the UK regarding time, location, and space.

Semantically, a rich archive of sources and stories is required to analyze the intersections of time, location, and space in news. In this perspective, both the *BBC*-UK and the *Daily Star*- Lebanon are linked to newspapers, which house daily 24-hour news coverage including, on-the-spot follow up (i.e., live blog format). Specifically, media sources, which provide “24/7” conflict-reporting, are prevalent in policy discourse, which highlight interactions between: information and political or social action (Burkner, 2012; Doucet 2018).

A secondary aim of this research is to analyze similarities/dissimilarities between themes covered in the *BBC*-UK and the *Daily Star*-Lebanon regarding news coverage of policies and local level events. To recap, national news involves news sources, which focus on stories/events relevant to a particular nation. Both the *BBC*-UK and *Daily Star*- Lebanon (<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk> ; www.dailystar.com.lb) include a designated section on their websites for national news.

Here, the categorization of “national news” is not representative of the entire nation’s perspective. Instead, the case studies shed light on “national news” and national perspectives within the scope of the *BBC*-UK and the *Daily Star*-Lebanon only.

The research question is needed to shed light on research gaps including: who key sources of coverage in the *BBC*-UK and the *Daily Star*- Lebanon are. Also, which

political parties are referenced most when covering Syrian refugee women? In regards to the UK, it is relevant to record *where* Syrian refugee women are coming from (i.e., as identified as a resettlement country). Particularly, are Syrian refugees arriving from Lebanon mentioned, if so what is discussed?

During the proposal stage of this research, this paper projected that dissimilarities and variations would appear according to refugee women exclusion in Lebanon and the UK. However, many similar themes appeared in both the *BBC* and *The Daily Star*- with an emphasis on “security” and “safety”. National news covered topics such as: national interest, national policies, and policy making during humanitarian crises. Particularly, national news also incorporates local perspectives involving refugee narratives or interviews in relation to the Syrian humanitarian conflict.

1.4 Research Agenda

This paper aims to re-orient research back to national news reporting on Syrian refugee women. Perhaps, re-looking at national level news reporting on “local stories” may emphasize more narrative-based reporting (Kosho, 2016) on Syrian refugee women (i.e., previously overlooked). There is a need to review online newspapers since media historically shapes individuals’ knowledge, ideas, and opinions concerning specific issues such as refugee crises. For instance, negative media coverage of migrants/asylum seekers in specific contexts lead to anti-immigrant sentiments (Balch & Balabanova, 2014) and influence degrees of “othering” or “exclusion” (Abdelhady & Malmberg, 2018).

1.5 Conclusion: The Paper Map

In conclusion, this chapter addressed the research agenda, research question, and literature review. In total, this thesis is subdivided into six chapters. The upcoming

chapters cover the literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion. The findings are split into two chapters, in light of the two-fold research approach in this paper (i.e., multi-level and multi-modal research methodology). Namely, chapter 4, is dedicated to findings within the multi-level approach, including, refugee women portrayals in news according to: location, time, and space.

First, each context (location, time, and space) will be discussed separately. Then, Section 4.3, demonstrates how time, location and space intersect in specific cases of: home-narratives and policy discourse. Also, this section explains how researchers can identify and operationalize location, time, and space as research tools in qualitative research.

Secondly, chapter 5, addresses text-visuals in newspaper articles. The paper wraps up with a discussion in chapter 6, on how successful a multi-level and multi-modal methodology were in this study. Specifically, highlighting how researchers' can use a multi-level and multi-modal approach for qualitative content analysis, future research recommendations, and a conclusion on the relevance of this study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011, anti-government protests eventually resulted in the Syrian civil war (Canefe, 2018; Di Peri & Meier, 2016). Relatedly, the civil war resulted in many Syrian refugees attempting dangerous boat-journeys to Europe (Di Peri & Meier, 2016).

In spite of increased migrations to neighboring countries, refugee women experiences are often overlooked in newspapers regarding asylum claims, border related deaths, and narrative stories (Freedman, Kivilicsm, & Bakalacloglu, 2017). Accordingly, this paper is interested in refuge experiences portrayed in news according to the frequency of themes discussed. The themes discussed in this thesis pinpoint what journalists emphasize or (de)emphasize in online newspapers. In the context of online newspapers analyzed in this study (i.e., *The Daily Star*; *BBC*), which female experiences are prioritized?

For comparison, in 2016, Lebanon hosted more than 1.5 million refugees with a population of around 6 million; Whereas, the UK hosted 8,269 refugees with a population of roughly 65.6 million (UNHCR, 2017). Notably, Freedman, Kivilicsm, and Bakalacloglu (2017), detail the gendered portrayals of refugee women during different migratory stages including: pre-migration, during migration, and post migration.

With this in mind, news content analyzed in this study reflect different stages of the migratory process. In particular, Lebanon is a primary host-country (i.e., hosts majority of Syrian refugees per capita) due to proximity to the Syrian border and is used as a transit country. Conversely, the UK is a resettlement country (Canefe, 2018).

2.1 Taking a closer look at Lebanon and UK

In detail, a review of Lebanese and British policies regarding Syrian refugees may help contextualize online portrayals in newspapers. To this end, Lebanon is not a signatory of the 1951 refugee convention or the 1967 protocol (Turner, 2015). Distinctly, drawing on specified guidelines for refugee issues, including the notion of “non-refoulement” or the “non-return of refugees” (Aranki & Kalis, 2014; Turner, 2015).

Mainly, Lebanon manages refugee populations via reliance on informal settlements (Turner, 2015). In this context, Syrian migrants’ legal status in Lebanon is what some researchers (Aranki & Kalis, 2014) describe as “limited”. According to Nasser-Eddin (2014), refugees in Lebanon tend to work in irregular jobs. At some point, Lebanon implemented policies to mitigate forced migrations (Canefe, 2018). In January 2015, Lebanon introduced visa requirements for Syrians crossing the border. Distinctly, registration with the UNHCR does not ensure “legality”, requiring additional fees. In light of the differences in policies towards Syrians, a country’s background may influence how refugees are portrayed in news outlets.

Historically, Lebanon and Syria share political history dating back to when the Syrian army occupied Lebanon (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). Prior to the refugee crisis, Syrians were sources for “unskilled labor” and many refugees had familial ties in Lebanon prior to the uprisings. According to Khattab and Myrttinen (2014), at times, Syrian women are viewed as threats to Lebanese morality, in light of fears of joining sex work or “stealing Lebanese men”.

On the other hand, British media, especially the *BBC*, is extensively studied internationally. Mainly, studies on British media reveal how refugees are sometimes portrayed as “unwanted” or “invaders” (Nasser-Eddin, 2017), particularly after

terrorist attacks (i.e., 2016 Belgium attacks/2015 Paris attacks). To elaborate, Abdelkaher (2016) suggests that women refugees felt monitored or visible when wearing a veil in the UK.

The notion of “othering” in British media may be linked to policy initiatives and news reports on migrant screening. For instance, in 2014, the “Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement” program was implemented to screen/process refugee admissions in the UK, as refugees, who are victims of sexual violence, torture, elderly, or individuals with disabilities (Nasser-Eddin, 2017; Turner, 2015). The stringent entrance criteria may be linked to the notion of “insecurity” or the threat of Syrian refugees to neighboring countries within the EU. For instance, in the same year, Theresa May, the former house secretary, fueled narratives that highlight the need for stringent refugee screening to ensure lack of terrorist affiliations (Nasser-Eddin, 2017).

2.2 Reviewing Salient Gendered Imagery in Media

Repeatedly, Syrian refugees covered in Western media are described as: victims, escapees, or pawns (Szczepanik, 2016). Also, the glorification of female protestors in war may exclude other female narratives (Szanto, 2016). Regularly, media frames females as “victims” or “genuine” refugees while portraying men as “aggressors” or “bad” refugees (Szczepanik, 2016).

In Lebanon, Syrian women are sometimes viewed as threats to Lebanese social morals due to fears of engaging in sex work or marrying Lebanese men (Nasser-Eddin, 2017). In this vein, other research addresses gendered imagery in Lebanese media depicting refugee women as “stealing men” (Yasmine & Moughalian, 2016).

2.3 Theoretical Approach: Content Analysis

Previous researchers suggest a systematic way of collecting/analyzing data using NVivo, a qualitative software analysis (Bengston, 2016; Kaefer, Roper, & Sinha,

2015; White & Marsh, 2016). This paper draws on a software assisted content analysis. Content analysis is a technique for systematically describing written, spoken, or visual communication. Accordingly, units of analysis are the basis for reporting analyses (i.e., data as words/themes). Qualitative content analysis is flexible to both: quantitative elements (i.e., word frequencies) and context specific analyses (White & Marsh, 2006). In line with this paper's context-specific goals (i.e., location, time, and space), NVivo facilitated the analysis of contexts via the creation of nodes, which covered refugee women only.

Traditionally, news studies focused on either genre specific or theme specific aspects of news coverage. Extensive media research draws on the concept of "framing" and how framing influences refugee crises (Wallace, 2018). The notion of "theoretical framing" dates back to Goffman, in 1974, who defined framing as tool, which helps explain or categorizes life experiences (Evans, 2010).

Nowadays, framing theory covers news reporting of events, which influence how audiences receive news information and form opinions. A frame may be regarded as a type of genre analysis. In the scope of irregular migrations, human interest framing is used to provide faces for invisible populations (Figenschou & Thorbronnrsrud, 2015). A human-interest frame, incorporates an emotional angle or human face to the presentation of an issue. More narrowly, in this paper the focus is on Syrian refugee narratives or personal stories.

In view of Mathes's (2012) argument, that framing theory overlooks issue-specific phenomena due to emphasis on genre analysis; this paper opts to draw on an issue-specific notion of Syrian refugee women portrayals in national level online news. This paper draws on a multi-level/modal approach to explore how online news sites report on humanitarian crises (Gilboa et al., 2016). In detail, a multi-level approach

involves re-analyzing and understanding media conflicts at different levels of interaction, such as time, space, and location. Notably, a multi-level approach highlights how various actors interact and shape understandings of: conflicts, policies, and peace-building.

Content analysis is also used to analyze text-visuals. Nowadays, online news websites include various tools and modes on sites. For example, the *BBC* website includes: video top stories, a radio show, and live-coverage. Images and audiovisuals are a part of modern news sites. Text- visual relationships refer to the comparison or use of both texts and visuals in news (Mellese & Muller, 2012).

2.4 Empowerment Theme in Media

Recently, researchers are shifting media emphasis from binary depictions of “positive” or “negative” portrayals in favor of discourse on empowerment or disempowerment. Presently, newspapers tend to reflect multiple and nuanced perspectives. However, coverage is depicted as “marginalizing”, “othering”, “empowering”, or “disempowering”.

An empowerment paradigm covers the notion of power or dis(empowerment) in news (Gerodimos, Scullion, & Liliker, 2013). Often, news stories, which feature refugee narratives, provide a face to a news-story. Through the use of narrative stories and human-interest pieces, certain news stories are categorized, created, and shared, with the intent to “empower” women (Dandona, 2015).

For instance, newspaper articles may provide specific recommendations or information to readers in an attempt to “give the power back to women” (Gerodimos, Scullion, & Liliker, 2013). As a reference, empowerment involves the term “power”, usually described as a process of regaining or acquiring “power” (Berns, 2017). From a political perspective, media sometimes provides the political context (i.e., via news

stories), where citizens or audiences create political meaning/understanding of empowerment or (dis)empowerment (Savigny, 2013; Witschge, 2013).

To illustrate, policy initiatives and politicians discuss how to “empower” women in the Syrian refugee crisis (Asaf, 2017). However, research has yet to analyze the empowerment of Syrian refugee women in national news coverage on online news-outlets.

2.5 Is Media Empowering?

In short, researchers provide conflicting findings concerning media as empowering (Berns, 2017; Witschge, 2013). Historically, media is often deemed as empowering to both audiences and citizens due to providing “direct” knowledge to citizens vis-à-vis news (Savigny, 2013; Witschge, 2013).

Today, social media and “new media” are sources of knowledge. Correspondingly, social media was perceived as “empowering” or “emancipatory” during the “Arab Spring” (Morrison, 2011; Witschge, 2013). Presently, online news involves a shift of power from producers to consumers (Turner, 2015; Witschge, 2013). However, Savigny (2013) questions the extent of empowerment provided by media because it provides the illusion of social change; despite, pre-existing socio-economic structures remaining the same. To elaborate, power remains concentrated vs. dispersed in the structures of media and political systems (Berns, 2017).

2.6 The changing format of online newspapers

Contemporary researchers credit online media as a principal source of news-content (Kozman & Melki, 2017; Meis, 2017). In particular, online newspapers reflect shifts in state perspectives, public opinions, and refugee self-narratives (Costa, 2011; Evans, 2010).

To contextualize the Syrian conflict in news, this section addresses the changing format of online news. Certain scholars suggest that the Syrian conflict impacts or challenges traditional ways of reporting (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018; Sacco & Gorin, 2017). Particularly, promoting debates regarding the influence of digital media on news (Witschge, 2013; Wu, 2007). To illustrate, news reports that incorporate live blogs and social media videos are criticized for oversimplifying the refugee crisis from an emotional, sensational, and subjective perspective. Eventually, leading to the decline of news media as an “official media source” (Saleh, 2017).

Increasingly, reporters draw on user-provided content including eye-witness reports, videos, and photographs when reporting on the Syrian crisis (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018). Partly, the salience of user-generated content stems from “life-risks” journalists face when reporting on the Syrian conflict (Sacco & Gorin, 2017; Saleh, 2017). As a result of increased kidnappings and user-demand for “quick paced” and interactive news, organizations began to incorporate user-provided videos, photos, and sources provided on social media into online newspapers (Sacco & Gorin, 2017; Sambrook, 2016).

As a reference, user-generated content involves resources provided by “everyday-citizens” who participate in collecting/reporting information (Cottle, 2016; Saleh, 2017). To some scholars, interactive tools and audience participation are viewed as “democratizing” or contemporary forms of “democratic debate” (Ruiz et al., 2011).

Whereas, Turner (2015) suggests that audience participation is not synonymous with the “democratization of news”. Instead, audience participation is regarded as conversation vs. journalism. Digitalized news is now provided in different forms, including the ability to share content via Facebook, Twitter, or Email.

Unsurprisingly, publishing industries capitalized on the influence of social media users' sharing/commenting on news (Indarti, 2018; Ruiz et al., 2011). With this in mind, contemporary research may also benefit from analyzing different forms of user interactivity in online newspapers. In general, both local and international online news sites share similar web formats (Indarti, 2018). Often, including "sharing features" on various platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Email. Also, the *BBC*, is funded by a universal license fee, which offers the news site the flexibility to discuss news topics, which are not commercially "popular" (Kung-Shankelman, 2012). Hence, the *BBC* is more likely to share government perspectives.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This study drew on a content analysis of news articles to compare the intersection of contexts regarding Syrian refugee women portrayals in online newspapers. To specify, case studies of mainstream newspapers in Lebanon (i.e., *The Daily Star* and the UK (i.e., *BBC*) were analyzed. Procedurally, key-words were inputted on online newspaper searches starting from 2014 until 2016. Key search words inputted into news-site archives include: refugee, Syrian refugee, female refugee, and Syrian refugee woman or women.

3.1 Sample

Following a process of elimination, based on articles, which mention Syrian refugee women only, 168 articles were selected for analyses. There were more newspaper articles in the Lebanese sample than the British sample. The Lebanese sample included 135 news articles vs. 33 news articles in the British sample. Newspaper websites were mainly selected due to the availability of online archives, which cover the Syrian conflict at the national level.

3.2 Materials

Both the *Daily Star* and *BBC* are English-language news outlets, which feature “national” news. In Lebanon, two key newspapers, which cover national Lebanese news for expatriates include: *The Daily Star* (in English) and *L'orient-Le-Jour* (in French). The *Daily Star* was selected because it includes a national perspective while targeting international and pan-Arab audiences. Media discourse, language, and word choice utilized by journalists influence how conflicts are discussed and the terms used (Doucet, 2018). In detail, translations

sometimes misinterpret or change connotations. Hence, this paper opts to cover *The Daily Star*, the English speaking daily newspaper in Lebanon, to ease comparisons with the English language newspaper in the UK (i.e., *BBC*).

Correspondingly, *The Daily Star*, in Lebanon, is a leading English-language newspaper aimed at providing national news to expatriates (i.e., as described on their website). Relatedly, comparisons encompass what the news-outlet, self-describes as “national”. An emphasis on “national news” is relevant to the Lebanese case. To elaborate, Lebanese media often reflects varying target audiences based on: political, religious, or economic affiliation.

Hence, reviewing intersecting views of time, social, and political space sheds light on what this particular newspaper, views as “pertinent” to expatriates. Moreover, policy initiatives discussed on *BBC*-UK highlight government agendas or perspectives, since the *BBC* is linked to the British government and funded by a universal license fee (Kung-Shankleman, 2012).

Both the *BBC*-UK and the *Daily Star*-Lebanon are mainstream national newspapers, including high circulation and viewership and various editions in different countries. Specifically, *The Daily Star*, is linked to print newspapers and opened branches in other countries surrounding Lebanon. Both the *BBC* and *The Daily Star* are a source of daily news including a 24/hour format.

Additionally, both news sites represent mainstream sources of online news content in their regions. The newspaper’s “mainstream” reach is reflected by high circulation and international viewership ratings. According to the web trafficking estimator site, *Similar Web* (<https://similarweb.com/>), *BBC*, is ranked 19th out of news and media worldwide. Likewise, *The Daily star*, is a newspaper, which is circulated around the Arab world, including 24 hour daily/continuous regional and Lebanese news coverage (Dajani, 2013).

3.3 Research Design

This paper draws on a comparative research design to explore how time, space, and location influence news coverage on Syrian refugee women in *The Daily Star* and *BBC*. This paper incorporated an exploratory design to see, which themes fall under location, time, and space based on data collected. To illustrate, word frequency queries on NVivo (a qualitative analysis software tool), involve automated records of the most frequently used terms in articles.

Attributes of space such as polices, politics, and security were not pre-coded. Instead, this paper drew on grounded theory, an inductive method of data collection/analysis, involving the identification of themes and theories, which emerge from data (Kaefer et al., 2016). This approach helps identify, which attributes were linked to location, time and space. Instead of searching for keywords of location, time, and space on NVivo, this paper relied on content analysis and word frequencies to determine what was discussed. Then, categories were regrouped into classifications of: space, time, and location.

The multi-modal design looks at textual and visual frames available in online news. Online news websites include varying modes such as text, social media reports, photos, and videos when reporting in online newspapers (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018; Gilboa, Jumbert, Miklian, & Robinson, 2016; Sacco & Gorin, 2017). However, researchers tend to overlook the intersection of modes within online newspaper articles (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012). In line with Mellese and Müller's (2012) suggestion, this paper looks at photo captions, video captions, or social media sources only when shared within articles (128 articles in total).

3.4 Method of data collection and analysis

This study drew on a software-assisted qualitative content analysis of news articles. Previous researchers suggest that qualitative content analysis is a systematic way of collecting/analyzing data using NVivo, a qualitative software analysis (Bengston, 2016; Kaefer, Roper, & Sinha, 2015; White & Marsh, 2006). A content analysis is a technique for systematically describing written, spoken, or visual communication. Content analysis benefits this study's research aims regarding analyzing newspaper themes (i.e., facilities frequency queries of topics/ themes, which emerge) relating to female Syrian refugees in UK and Lebanon.

The unit of analysis are the articles. Whereas, the method of data collection, included a multi-level coding approach drawing on steps by Kaefar et al. (2015). The steps include: selecting/learning the software, data import/preparation, coding procedures, and visualizing the data and presenting the results.

1. Primarily, NVivo, a qualitative software program, was selected because it facilitates comparative coding. In detail, the program's comparative feature is compatible with comparisons of national news coverage in Lebanon and UK (i.e., previous studies used NVivo as content analysis tool for newspapers).
2. Each article was downloaded/saved as an individual file on NVivo.
3. In regards to coding procedures, attributes include: country (i.e., to see patterns in newspapers in different locations), the time-period (i.e., year). In view of my objective to see different contexts according to countries and time periods, a multilevel coding system was incorporated. Nodes were structured within a hierarchy including both parent/child nodes.
4. Presentation of results include tree maps and tables.

In order to minimize preconceptions concerning portrayals of women in media-explorations, of female context included ‘text search queries’- a search for selected words for Syrian refugees, saved on a new node on NVivo (i.e., See Figure 1).

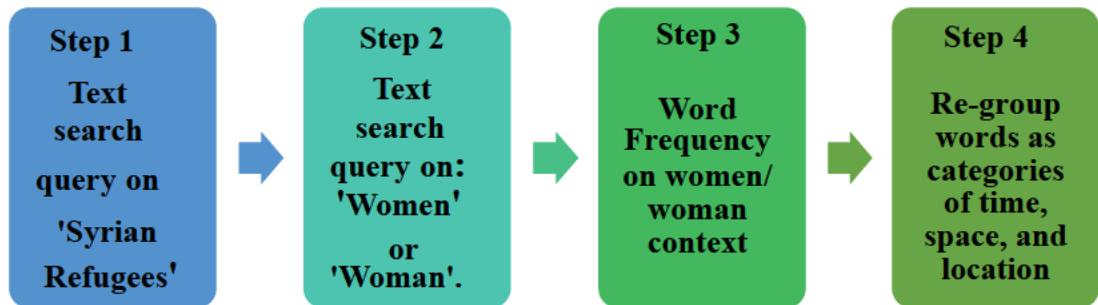


Figure 1 Coding Steps

A “text search query” included anytime woman or women were mentioned, on previously saved Syrian refugee query (i.e., discussed above). Aforementioned processes result in a “female context” node.

A word frequency query of newly created female-context node (i.e., 1000 most referenced words) were saved in separate nodes. After reviewing initial word counts, words were regrouped into key themes. Framing descriptors such as descriptive words were categorized according to: location, time, and space.

3.5 Sampling challenges

During the data collection process, sampling issues that emerged include unrelated captions linked to the key word “woman” were recorded by NVivo text analysis. To elaborate, the word refugee or women was sometimes linked to hyperlinks to other articles or advertisements. Hereby, requiring saving each news article on a separate word document to exclude unrelated blurbs.

Chapter Four

Findings

To recap, the research questions asks, “How do time, location, and space influence news coverage of Syrian refugee women in the *BBC*-UK and *The Daily Star*- Lebanon”? This section starts by demonstrating key similarities and differences in findings on the *BBC*-UK and *Daily Star*-Lebanon. This chapter mainly focuses on word descriptors of time, location, and space. Whereas, the next chapter will focus on different text-visuals and tools used within individual news articles.

Principally, news-content is created through the inclusion, emphasis, and selection of an issue (Janssen, 2010). Findings in this section represent the most common text descriptors included in newspaper articles in the *BBC* and *Daily Star*, in relation to “Syrian refugee women”. Mainly, reiterating, which words or themes are emphasized, selected, and included. According to Van Gorp (2007), devices journalists use to emphasize news include text descriptors, which differ according to different cultures and locations.

Relatedly, the below table represents the top words relating to Syrian refugee women based on word frequencies per the Lebanese and British news site between 2014 and 2016. All findings in this chapter are based on an automated word search query of the top 1,000 words referenced in each news site relating to refugee women. Each key-word was analyzed according to surrounding paragraphs where “women” was mentioned. To avoid repetition, the below table only mentions the top 20 words relating to Syrian refugee

women. Other key words were regrouped according to the themes of time, location, and space (i.e., in upcoming sections).

Table 1 Top words relating to Syrian refugee women per news site

	Word	Count	Percent of Articles Referencing Word	Weighted Percentage of Word
Dailystar.com.lb (Lebanese site)	Lebanon	173	56 %	1.37 %
	Lebanese	92	37 %	0.73 %
	Beirut	90	42 %	0.71 %
	Secure, security	74	34 %	0.59 %
	Police	71	33 %	0.52 %
	Child, Children	65	14 %	0.52 %
	Prostitution	61	27 %	0.48 %
	Arrested	58	26 %	0.46 %
	People	56	23 %	0.44 %
	Family	70	18 %	0.56 %
	Works	68	38 %	0.54 %
	Years	52	16 %	0.41 %
	Help	47	21 %	0.37 %
	Reported	44	24 %	0.35 %
	Forces	44	22 %	0.35 %
Bbc.co.uk (British Site)	Country	43	22 %	0.34 %
	Living			
	Syria	24	34 %	2.08 %
	Mother	17	28 %	1.48 %
	Children	16	40 %	1.39 %
	People	15	44 %	1.30 %
	Year	14	19 %	1.22 %
	Torture	13	38 %	1.13 %
	Medical	12	38 %	1.04 %
	Country	10	19 %	0.87 %
	Home	10	28 %	0.87 %
	Need	10	31 %	0.87 %
	Risk	10	31 %	0.87 %
	Survivors	10	31 %	0.87 %
	Urge	10	12 %	0.87 %
	Violence	10	31 %	0.87 %
	Help	9	18 %	0.78 %
	Prioritizes	8	25 %	0.69 %
	Travel	8	19 %	0.69 %
	Family	7	9 %	0.61 %

Note: Weighted Percentage refers to the frequency of words recorded in relation to all words listed on the table. Values reflect the word's significance within the paragraph

where the word was listed. Whereas, percentage of articles refers to the percentage of total articles, which mention the key word.

In Lebanon, the most frequently used words surrounding Syrian refugee women were: Lebanon, Lebanese, Beirut, security and police. Noticeably, the term police were referenced in 33 % of articles across the *Daily Star*. Headlines linked to police, officers, and arrests, included, “Lebanese police bust” or “Lebanese authorities arrest”, which emphasize security mitigation efforts by authorities.

In the *BBC-UK*, the most frequently referenced words included: Syria, mother, children, people, year, and torture. The weighted percentage was included in analyses, because the texts represent the most mentioned words in paragraphs surrounding ‘Syrian refugee women’. This helps map similar or polarizing narratives in the British case. Illustratively, in the *BBC*, the weighted average of the words: country, need, risk, survivors, and urge are all equal (0.87 %). These terms were all repeated and used to describe the Syrian Relocation Plan using the same terminology and narrative.

Both the *Daily Star* and *BBC* refer to women in relation to their children or families. This supports Shchrover and Moloney’s (2014) findings that women are primarily categorized as “family refugees”. However, in the Lebanese case, 38% of articles referenced Syrian refugee women working. Hereby, representing the shift in categorizing women as working migrants.

4.1 Key differences in news coverage

Noticeably, Lebanon included much more coverage of Syrian refugee women between 2014 and 2016. Also, Lebanese news includes breaking news coverage linked to Syrian refugee women. However, the British news site does not include breaking news linked to refugee women. This leads to the assumption that topics surrounding Syrian refugee women are more relevant to a Lebanese cohort. Of the 207 articles in

Lebanon discussing Syrian refugees, 135 articles mentioned Syrian refugee women.

In the *BBC-UK*, of the 60 articles analyzed, 33 mentioned Syrian refugee women.

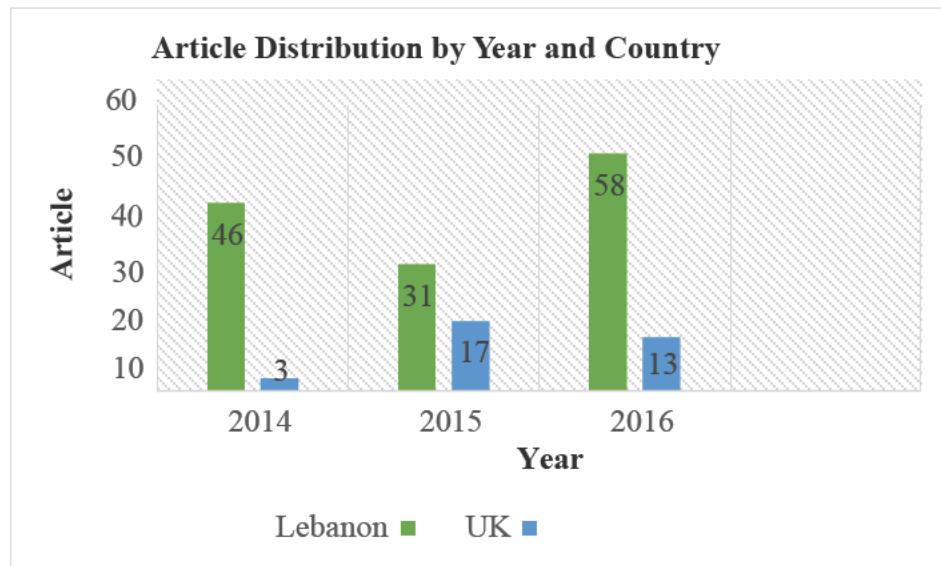


Figure 2 Article Coverage by Year and Time

The above chart represents the sample of news articles by country and year in the *BBC-UK* and *The Daily Star-Lebanon*. Discrepancies between newspaper coverage by year may be explained by the following factors:

1. The UK introduced the Vulnerable Relocation Scheme (i.e., an initiative to relocate the most vulnerable refugees in the UK) in 2014.
2. In Lebanon, 2016, included the Lebanese presidential elections, which demonstrated links to political debates on the Syrian refugee crisis.

Initially, this paper projected that the above mentioned two policies would reflect an increase in news coverage in Lebanon and the UK. In 2014, the UK introduced the “Vulnerable Relocation Scheme”, which aimed to resettle refugees. The news articles in 2014 served as an introduction to readers in the UK (i.e., preface of upcoming policy implementations).

However, there was more coverage in 2016, in the *BBC-UK* since that is when the initiative was implemented on the ground. This policy influenced how the *BBC-*

UK, frames refugee women entering the UK by emphasizing their “vulnerability”, “need”, and “risk”. Also, the UK received the most refugees in 2015 and 2016, which can be reflected by the increase of national news discussing Syrian refugees. Spatially, the national context of the newspapers may have resulted in more coverage of refugee women in the Daily Star-Lebanon than the *BBC*-UK.

Many local issues influence Lebanese daily lives as opposed to British local events as represented by the diverse range of topics discussed in Lebanese news (i.e., prostitution, schooling, work). For example, the Syrian elections in Lebanon, is a local issue, since election turnouts influenced traffic jams, and even led several Lebanese students to skip official exams.

The next sections address location by mapping Syrian refugees' migratory journeys (location), then time, and space. Finally, intersections of time, space, and location are applied to the specific situations of: mapping home and policy discourse.

4.2 Location and the migration journey or stages

In part, this paper aims to map the migratory journey of Syrian refugees during different stages of conflict. Different stages discussed include refugee experiences prior to migrating, the journey, and experiences in host-countries. Both the *BBC* and *Daily Star* focus on pre-migration experiences in Syria and how life in host countries was "liberating". Especially, regarding escaping abuse and dressing up. Prior to arriving to Lebanon, chronic health treatments during the uprising were unavailable for Syrian refugee women in Syria.

In early stages of the migration journey to Lebanon, a prominent fear cited was harsh winter conditions (13% of articles mentioned the snowfall, cold, weather, and winter). Particularly, the BBC- UK, featured refugee stories of women's lives prior to migrating including: imprisonment by the regime's police, witnessing bombings, and restrictive clothing rules. Through the perspective of a Syrian refugee

woman, interviewed in the *BBC*, ‘They bombarded our homes and fired on people directly’ (“Syria refugee recalls beatings, whippings, electric shocks”, 2014).

News reports in the *Daily Star*-Lebanon emphasize how Syrian refugees who cross borders to reach Lebanon, face danger at both the Lebanese and Syrian side of the border. For instance, isolated cases of Syrian refugee women dying from freezing weather conditions occurred in both 2015 and 2016 (referenced in two articles). Distinctly, an article in *The Daily Star*-Lebanon reports on how a Facebook page promotes Syrian refugee brides, who fled Syria to Arab men offering marriage. The Facebook page provides refugee’s names/place of residence (“Facebook page promoting Syrian refugee brides blocked”, 2014). Here, the women’s place of residence plays a role in marriage pursuits and exploitation.

Geographically, locations frequently mentioned in Lebanon in relation to Syrian refugee women include: Arsal, Kaslik, Bekaa, and Zahle. Arsal was frequently mentioned as it is close to the Lebanese border and is a reception center for refugees crisscrossing between Syria and Lebanon. Events surrounding crossing the Lebanese border include, Palestinians arriving from the Syrian border and being denied entry. Consequently, resulting in family separations for Syrian women whose husbands originate from Palestine.

Conversely, the British news site focused on who was arriving to the UK and who welcomed refugees in the UK. In detail, between 2014 and 2016 the following areas welcomed refugees: Scotland, Bradford, and Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, and Birmingham. In sum, both the *BBC* and the *Daily Star* reported on the amounts of refugees entering the country.

4.3 References to Foreign Locations in National News

Additionally, both the *Daily Star* and *BBC* reference foreign locations and migration routes linked to Syrian refugee women. One article in the *BBC* poses the question, “How do they get here”. In detail, describing how Syrian refugees leave home and arrive at UNHCR camps. Refugees arriving from *other* countries to the UK, identified by the *BBC* include: Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Coverage of the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (VPRS) in the *BBC* highlights how the policy excludes refugees who seek asylum in Europe or countries, including Libya. In the introduction section, this paper addressed interest in highlighting how Lebanon is mentioned in the *BBC*. Lebanon was only mentioned 15 times across newspapers in the *BBC-UK*, in reference, to asylum claims as a country included in policies to seek (re)asylum in Europe.

The VPRS scheme, in the UK, which launched in 2014, admits at risk Syrian refugees, including refugee women (i.e., documentations/papers finalized prior to entry). To clarify, this relocation scheme is contingent on a five-year humanitarian protection period. References to how many refugees the UK accepted were focalized in articles on the *BBC*. Also, journalists covered boat incidents on the Turkish coast and resettlement in other countries such as: Lebanon, Jordan, and Canada, to name a few.

4.3.1 A mother's choice: To leave Europe without children or stay in Lebanon?

News in Lebanon cover refugee women in Lebanon only. Foreign locations were mentioned in relation to women's hopes of moving abroad. From a Lebanese context, an interview, with the charity “Caritas” on *The Daily Star* revealed that 90% of refugee women in caritas shelters want to resettle in Europe (Nashed, 2015).

However, for women with unregistered divorces their choices are limited to: staying in Lebanon with their children or leaving to Europe without them. If women

in Lebanon are unable to register their divorces, child custody agreements are unfeasible. Hence, the majority of mothers decide to stay *in Lebanon* to remain with their children. Thus, reemphasizing how Lebanon is viewed as either a transit or destination country depending on marital status and family relations. Thus far, this section covered the migratory stages including: border crossings and travel experiences. The next section will take a closer look at time.

4.4 Time

4.4.1 Direct and Indirect References to Time

This section addresses time in relation to: duration alongside time as a socially understood concept. To clarify, depending on social understandings, individuals' perceptions of time may shift or change. Adjectives and adverbs, which emphasize time such as feeling 'stuck', 'stagnated', 'unsure', and, 'waiting' emphasize personal reflections on time or social understandings of time.

In newspapers, time is an observable measure, either by direct references to the word time or duration. In this paper, references to time are categorized as: direct or indirect. Direct references to durations include: days, months, or years. Whereas, descriptive words linked to time include: "waiting", "next", or "future" and are indirect references. The below figure represents how the time-theme was constructed on NVivo and the hierarchy of nodes (refer to Figure 3). The tree map was saved from the NVivo program, of the node "time". As a reference, a node is a way to save references about specific themes and relationships. In this case, the theme is time.

With the exception of one article, all references to time in the UK referenced visible or direct notions of time. Lebanese articles include 21 direct references to time across newspapers vs. the British articles, which referenced time 18 times across articles.

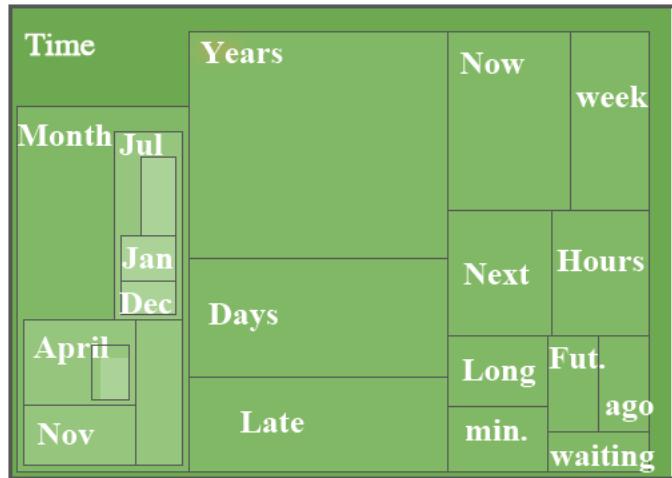


Figure 3 Tree map of Time from NVivo

Mainly, themes reported on the *BBC-UK* cover *when* Syrian refugees began entering the UK and refugee narratives of previous experiences in the Syrian war. Hence, the article coverage/admissions are mostly linked to family asylum/residency claims. Newspaper articles, which discuss relocations see-saw between admission rates of refugees to the UK and the expansion of the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

Direct references to time in Lebanon include reference to statistics of refugees entering Lebanon and refugee arrests. In 2014, Lebanese articles on *The Daily Star*, covered how yearly statistics increase under Syrian refugee crisis influxes, including prostitution related arrests. In the span of three months in 2016, news articles surrounding Syrian refugee arrests and human trafficking breakdowns spanned areas across Lebanon including: Jounieh, Kaslik, Jbeil, and Beirut. News coverage in Lebanon, tends to describe women between 2014 and 2016 as either: trafficking victims or prostitutes.

4.4.2 Indirect references to time in the Lebanese news site

In contrast to the British news site, coverage in Lebanon includes both direct and indirect references to time. Through interviews with Syrian refugees the notion of time as a socially understood category (i.e., indirect references) is traceable. In short, time was referenced as an escape or an indication of “Refugeehood”. Aziza, a Syrian refugee woman, interviewed on *The Daily Star*, described time in “standstill” since arriving to Lebanon. Aziza emphasizes, a need to fill her time with something to escape reality- even if for only an hour or two. Other articles also reiterate the notion of filling time, emptiness, or stagnation through seeking education, work skills, or even teaching in homes.

Notably, in 2014, Manar, a Syrian refugee emphasized how family separation made her feel like a “refugee”. Manar, further explained that during her six years in tent-settlements with family she did not feel like a refugee. This sheds light on how her perspective of space changed over time due to familial relationships (Knutsen & Obeid, 2014).

After time, perceptions of Syrians, in Lebanon, may change. In 2015, a Lebanese article, highlights how the rise of ‘Daesh’ (a terrorist group prominent in Syria and Iraq) led farmers in Bekaa, to view Syrians from Raqqa as threats. One Syrian woman who harvests ‘hashish’, recalls experiencing racism from locals due to her hometown’s association with Daesh. At the same time, she recalls how Lebanon provides her with a measure of freedom to “dress up”. Further, elaborating that if she went out with what she was wearing, she would get whipped in Syria (“Syrians survive by harvesting hashish”, 2015). Time is also linked to health issues. Particularly, a Syrian woman recounts the horrors of malnutrition, resulting from a lack of accessibility to health care *in time*.

4.4.3 Is it time to return?

The notion of “ending” the conflict is reiterated by both Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon. From 2014 to 2016, in both the British and Lebanese news sites, refugees expressed their wishes to return home. Disagreements concerning return prevailed within the same article. One woman was prepared to return, if a consensus between parties was achieved vs. another woman who would not return if Assad remained in power (“Refugees’ spirits low ahead of Geneva II”, 2014).

In parallel, one refugee claims who could agree to go back to that (in reference to lack of education and hunger in Syria). Whereas, another woman emphasizes that it does not matter, which side wins. To her, it is important for politicians to agree so she can return home (“Refugees’ spirits low ahead of Geneva”, 2014).

Another refugee narrative shared in *The Daily Star* reiterates the above woman’s perspective concerning abstaining from returning to Syria where Assad remains in power. Directly, stating that, “If Assad made reforms at the beginning of the crisis, the after-mass would have been averted” (“Refugees’ spirit low ahead of Geneva II”, 2014).

Other refugee women reported returning to Syria or Lebanon (un)officially to visit family members. For example, in *The Daily Star*, a refugee reported returning to Lebanon to rescue her children from her abusive husband (“Lebanon a refuge for domestically abused Syrians”, 2015). Hereby, emphasizing the need to treat Syrian women in literature on newspapers and academia as separate categories.

In sum, this section on time reflected differences in how the *BBC*- UK and *The Daily Star*-Lebanon report on time. With the *BBC* mainly focusing on direct references to time, whereas, *The Daily Star* drew on both. The next section covers spaces of: empowerment, safety, insecurity, and othering.

4.5 Spaces of empowerment, safety, insecurity, and othering

The term space often describes physical characteristics of a place. In literature, space is conventionally understood through human senses such as: hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste (Burkner, 2012). The above-mentioned senses are usually the starting points to narratives of space. At other times, space goes beyond the physical spaces, which individuals reside in. Our senses help creates social spaces of: “acceptance”, “othering”, or “exclusion”. In this section, space is discussed according to socially created spaces of: exclusion, othering, security, and insecurity.

4.5.1 Spaces of empowerment, inclusion, and ‘safe spaces’

Women empowerment in news involves spotlighting refugee women and women initiatives. Specific women empowerment initiatives spotlighted in *The Daily Star-Lebanon*, include teaching women new skills. Skills include: sewing, entrepreneurship opportunities, language skills, and cooking classes. Certain initiatives aim to empower Syrian and Lebanese women through forging ties between Lebanese and migrants.

Other reports appeal to the need for safe spaces for refugee women in light of exploitation or abuse (“Syrian women refugees exploited: Amnesty”, 2016). In the *BBC* article titled, “Syria refugee recalls beatings, whippings, electric shocks”, a refugee woman, highlights how “Security is the most important thing. I lost it for six years” (2014). Hereby, reflecting how the UK represents safety to her.

For one Syrian refugee woman, the war, provided her with the space, to escape an abusive relationship without fearing repercussions (“Lebanon, a refuge for domestically abused Syrian women”, 2015). Furthermore, a Lebanese article in 2014, highlights, how KAFA, a women’s rights NGO in Lebanon, set up “friendly spaces” in Lebanon, for Syrian refugee women (“Refugee crisis boosts women’s services”, 2014). Specific narratives in both Lebanon and the UK reflect refugee women’s

feelings of security in host countries. Hereby, emphasizing how women felt included in the UK and Lebanon. Significantly, the empowerment theme that appeared in Lebanon, is typically linked to the *BBC*, but not in the context of Syrian refugees.

4.5.2 A space of othering and exclusion

The Syrian refugee influx, is often described in the news as a “crisis”, which especially affects Syrian refugee women. Newspaper articles in Lebanon highlight the “insecurity” of Syrian refugee women in public spaces including sexual, verbal, and physical harassment (“LSF denies claims of refugee abuse at the police station”, 2016; “Syrian women refugees exploited”, 2016). In 2014, a *Daily Star* article emphasized how Lebanon is failing to reach national development goals linked to female empowerment, the environment, and poverty due to the Syrian refugee crisis (“Refugee crisis hinders Lebanon development”, 2014). The above emphasis on Syrian refugees hindering Lebanese development, reflects how refugees are ‘excluded’ by certain political actors.

Security measures also exclude certain refugees from receiving aid via the restriction of aid workers access in Arsal, near the Syrian border. Both refugee narratives and politicians on the Lebanese news site discussed how border restrictions led to a lack of aid provisions in a camp near Arsal (“Some of Arsal’s refugees see militants as only advocates”, 2014). This led to a municipality appeal, to formally move the army checkpoint to allow aid workers to reach refugees (“Cut off by checkpoint, refugees struggle”, 2014). However, the appeal was rejected.

Conversely, the British news site, reiterates the exclusion of certain Syrian refugee women via the relocation scheme. To elaborate, the Syrian Relocation Scheme, is linked to a two-step security system, which requires claimants to be survivors of torture/violence, a women or child at risk, or in need of medical care.

Hence, refugee women who are not survivors of torture or risk are excluded from relocation claims and subsequently news coverage.

The above examples of exclusion or othering reference exclusion by policy makers, news articles, and public spaces. However, exclusion can also be self-inflicted by refugees. For instance, an article in the Lebanese news site, references how a bereaved woman, became the female head of the household and was left with “little space” for herself. Consequently, she always wears black, and does not join social gatherings (“Syrian women facing life on their own”, 2016). Thus far, time, space, and location were addressed individually. The following subsections address the intersections of time, location, and space on specific situations including: mapping home in online newspapers, reporting death, and policy initiatives.

4.6 Mapping home in online newspapers

Structurally, this section covers refugee narratives of home, which appear in newspapers between 2014 and 2016. Home was referenced in 28% of articles in the British news site and 20 % of articles in the Lebanese news site. Home is discussed in relation to refugee women perspectives. By unpacking home in relation to time, family, and space, this section aims to provide a multi-dimensional perspective of home in the UK and Lebanon.

This section draws on Taylor’s (2015) definition of home as a multi-dimensional framework for analyses. In detail, spatial aspects of home include physical spaces. Whereas, time related aspects of home include links between the: past, present, and future. Relational facets of home include: familial relationships or friendships. The intensification of the crisis resulted in shifts in refugees’ perceptions of home.

In Lebanon, Syrian refugees mostly dwell in apartments/makeshift homes. The Lebanese system lacks “official” refugee camps. Meanwhile, attempts at ‘building’ homes are interrupted by protracted situations. Stereotypically, the dominant image of refugees ‘living standards’ involve images of white tents, delivered by the *UNHCR*. However, ‘home’ for Syrian refugees in Lebanon ranges across different spaces.

Dually, certain refugees and Lebanese citizens view their stay as temporary-with hopes to reside elsewhere. Conversely, other refugees are *waiting* for the Syrian crisis to subside to return ‘home’. However, the right “time” is a relative, ever-changing term. The focus on refugee narratives in newspapers shed light on what refugees self-describe as important in home. While, extensive studies cover ‘home’, limited research cover refugee perspectives of home in the news (Taylor, 2015). According to Boccagni (2017) time affects migrants' perceptions of home based on context- dependent and emotional elements of home, including nostalgia.

At the country level, differences in portrayals of ‘home’ shift depending on migratory stages. Namely, Lebanon, includes varying reports of home as a space to flee from due to poor living conditions. In the UK, home is a place of reflection into past events. Specifically, a *BBC* article in 2015, mentions how one refugee in Turkey delayed unpacking since she anticipated returning home. This mimics interviews with Syrian refugees living in Lebanese tents, who estimated they would be relocated earlier (“Syrian in Turkey- We just want a normal life”, 2015).

Other housing related initiatives discussed in the Lebanese news site prioritize women empowerment via providing temporary ‘safe housing’. However, emergency shelter provisions are limited to a three-month time period (“Survivors of domestic violence find hope with ABAAD, 2016). The above example reflects spatial or material aspects of home as a shelter, which is non(temporary).

Being in limbo: The interaction of past, present, and future

The following refugee narratives detail references to time in relation to home.

According to Khadija, a Syrian refugee living in Lebanon, returning “home” to Syria with Assad holding the presidential office is not feasible. Particularly, emphasizing how, “Assad ruined our homes”. Nonetheless, she describes her stay in Lebanon as being “stranded” (“Refugees’ spirits low ahead of Geneva II, 2014). Partly, hope to return home may stem from the lack of “stability” living abroad. This sense of being “in limbo” echoes previous findings on protracted refugee situations (Brun & Fabos, 2015). Sometimes, housing in Lebanon is re-purposed as a work space. References include home as a place of teaching, learning, and even dental work.

4.7 Reporting on Death in Lebanon

Reporting on refugee women deaths reflected a country outlier, specific to Lebanon only. Markedly, death related words such as: death, died, killed, and killing, were referenced in 33% of articles in the *Daily Star*. With the exception of two articles, the *BBC*-UK overlooked Syrian refugee women deaths. This difference may stem from the relatively small space Lebanon covers. A country described as roughly, 10, 452 square kilometers, it is unsurprising that news travels fast. To illustrate, the UK only started (officially) resettling Syrian refugees in 2016. Even then, Syrian refugees numbered 119,000 at most (UNHCR, 2017). National news tends to cover policies, stories, and local issues related to specific locations within the UK. In the UK, Syrian refugee women death, is a “foreign” issue, linked to international threats, including Isis. Foreign issues tend to be discussed on *BBC* international vs. the *BBC*-UK edition.

In contrast, the Lebanese news site covered death related topics including: suicide, murder, and border related deaths. Frequently, the term “death” was linked to fire. The leading cause of fires were ill-equipped homes. Spatially, fire related deaths

occurred in: makeshift homes, camp-sites, and apartments. From a temporal perspective, 2016, marked a year of storms, including storm “Vladimir” and “Ursula” in Lebanon. To Syrian refugees, the effects of poor weather conditions triggered fears of relocating. Unfortunately, the cold weather and lack of access to “warmth” led one Syrian refugee woman to die while attempting to cross the border (“Syrian refugee woman freezes to death as Lebanon snowfall resumes”, 2015).

Peculiarly, in a 2016 article in the *Daily Star*, a reporter describes how three Syrian women were killed and thirteen other Syrians were injured. Meanwhile, the gender or age of the *other* Syrian refugees were not reported. Perhaps, by emphasizing that Syrian women were killed reinforces portrayals of females under the archetype of “victim”. This adds to findings by Szezpanik (2016), that women are often viewed as ‘good refugees’. In the context of news reporting, women deaths are often adjoined by children. The phrase “mostly women and children” is frequently reemphasized across articles on the Lebanese news site. Hereby, reiterating how refugee women are often discussed as a reference point to family members.

4.7.1 The influence of death on household dynamics

At the broader level, death sometimes leads to Syrian refugee women becoming primary care-providers and breadwinners due to war linked separations. Specifically, *The Daily Star* article titled, “Syrian woman facing life on their own”, covers why refugee women are found “alone”. To elaborate, the NGO Intaqli, classified vulnerable women as widows or women who witnessed family member’s deaths. Mainly, citing death, detention, and separation as reasons.

While death sometimes provides new opportunities for women, the after-mass of death also begs a significant question, “Where can refugees bury their kin”? To elaborate, for Syrians living in (in)formal settlements in Bar Elias, finding a space to

bury their loved ones, is a difficult and daunting task. This even promotes one refugee woman to claim, “What we wish most of all is to go back to our country and die in our country” (“Syrians struggle to find burial sites for kin, 2016”). Hereby, emphasizing the need for policies to address death related incidents.

4.8 Politics, policies, and legality

Journalists prioritize specific front-page stories, policies, and politicians relevant to a specific nation in national news. This section briefly addresses politics and policies of legality in Lebanon. According to Diongi (2016), the “political elite” in Lebanon are either anti or pro-Assad. The two stages of the Syrian crisis include the preconception that the situation would be short vs. later acknowledgment that refugee crisis and situation is protracted.

During the primary phases of the crisis, some politicians drew on “hospitable” or “welcoming approaches” in Lebanon. Where, concerns voiced by politicians on increased Syrian presence in Lebanon, trailed back to Christian party members. In line with Diongi’s (2016) perspective, 2013 marked, a switch to the second phase of understanding that the crisis is protracted.

Both the *BBC* and *The Daily Star*, mainly reiterated references to dominant policies or politicians’ statements in their respective countries. In Lebanon, prostitution was the most referenced theme. During 2016, *The Daily Star*, introduced debates on legalizing prostitution. Specifically, emphasizing how prostitution is illegal yet commonplace in Lebanon (“Fourteen arrested in social-media ring”, 2016; Lebanon arrests 3 women for prostitution”, 2016).

For example, in 2015, a *Daily Star* article highlights how, in Lebanon, refugee women can only renew their stay *after* their spouses. What does this mean for women separated by their husbands? At this point, time evokes a decision-making role, and

reinforces state boundaries (“Lebanon, a refuge for domestically abused Syrian women”, 2015).

Time sensitive policies may influence Syrian refugees’ ability to join the country legally or become legalized. According to a *BBC-UK* article in 2016, after five years, refugees have the option of returning to Syria or applying for British citizenship, if they do not have criminal records (“Syrian refugees- 14 families and 20 children to arrive in NI”, 2016).

Meanwhile, in Lebanon, in 2014, the government implemented a policy to legalize Syrian refugees. At the surface level, the policy seems to be welcoming. However, when refugee narratives are taken into consideration, the “welcoming” stance is debatable. For instance, a Syrian refugee woman, shared how she stopped finalizing paperwork in Bekaa after witnessing others returning empty handed. Hereby, re-emphasizing the need to take refugee narratives into consideration when reviewing policies.

4.8.1 Foreign visits and policies in Lebanon

Furthermore, other news emphasized include political visits by foreign actors or politicians, and economic/health initiatives. In Lebanon, a visit by Dion, a Canadian politician included expressions of economic support on winter gear for Lebanese military troops, and social stability projects for both Syrian and Lebanese women (“Dion talks direct flights to Canada”, 2016). Health initiatives include treatments for HIV and safe housing for women who require medical treatment.

Specifically, the Syrian refugee crisis prompted a surge of temporary women shelters and women friendly stations in Lebanon (“Refugee crisis boosts women’s services”, 2014). Conversely, the director of a Lebanese NGO, motioned how processes to combat gender-based violence laws, were ‘slowed down’ by the Syrian

crisis (“Refugee crisis boosts women’s services”, 2014). The above initiatives aim to fill gaps, which housing, emergency, and health services lack.

4.8.2 Welcoming Stance in the BBC-UK

In 2015, news articles in the *BBC*, focused on the prospective arrivals of Syrian refugees and the welcoming committees set up for refugee women across the UK (65% of articles discussed refugee arrivals). In the UK, narratives of welcoming refugees, were adjoined with references to the Vulnerable Relocation Scheme (was mentioned in majority of articles). From a time-perspective, the articles highlight the duration of the scheme and relocation plan, which aims to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees across the UK over a five-year span. The British prime minister, David Cameron, announced the expansion of the Vulnerable persons relocation scheme (VPRS) in 2015, which aims to relocate more Syrian refugees to the UK.

Distinctly, a Syrian woman appeals for the UK to allow refugee entry by emphasizing that, “They would have a great number of children who lost their parents, their fathers and mothers, from hunger, and homeless women who are suffering and cannot support their children” (“Syrian refugee recalls ‘beatings, whippings, electric shocks”, 2014). The refugee woman also highlights how the British government provided her with the rights/securities she enjoys. The refugee’s narrative mirrors the criteria of the relocation scheme and reinforces the “benevolence” of the British government. Refugee narratives in the *BBC* are congruent with the government perspective and polices shared. However, conflicting narratives of refugees in the UK were not provided. Further, emphasizing the polarization of the *BBC*- UK towards government narratives.

4.8.3 Politicians and political actors

In chapter one, this paper highlighted the aim to see, which political actors or politicians are mentioned in relation to Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. To elaborate, key political actors mentioned include: Lebanese interior minister, Nouhad Machnok, and the foreign minister Gebran Basil. Both Machnouk and Basil, emphasized the need for heightened security measures due to the refugee crisis. The foreign minister, Basil, emphasized the need to protect Lebanese identity from the Syrian threat, of Lebanese women, being able to pass on citizenship to their spouses/children (“Refugee crisis threatens Lebanese identity”, 2016). Whereas, Machnouk emphasized a fear of Syrians settling permanently in Lebanon (“Refugee crisis threatens Lebanese identity”, 2016). The interior minister Machnouk also addressed social media smearing campaigns linking the ministry to a human trafficking ring (“Machnouk slams accusations of ties to sex slaves”, 2016).

Finally, policy initiatives emphasized in both Lebanon and the UK, highlight local politicians and political actors’ agendas. Spatially, national-news cover politicians and policies relevant to a specific nation or location. Furthermore, digital diplomacy was a technique used by political actors in both the *BBC* and the *Daily Star*, through public service announcements. In the *BBC* this took on the form of a video appealing to British girls, to stay in Britain and highlighting the dangers of ISIS. Whereas, in Lebanon, debates discussed Syrian refugee women within the scope of Lebanese presidential elections.

Hitherto, the findings referenced textual evidence based on excerpts from news articles. However, the discussion will now switch to an analysis of text-visual frames on photos and video captions (Refer to Chapter five).

Chapter Five

Text visual fames: photo and video captions

Within this section, the sample set, photo and video captions are analyzed within news articles. Previously, researchers established that visuals influence how readers process news (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018). According to Mellese and Muller (2012), visuals influence the “newsworthiness” of a story. Newsworthiness refers to audience’s interests in news stories. However, video and photo captions are sometimes incompatible with the context or body of articles. Misleading captions may lead to the misinterpretation of articles. Texts, visuals, and audio-visuals also compliment news stories to different degrees.

Both the *BBC* and *The Daily Star* draw on visual frames to emphasize tone specific aspects of news stories. However, the *BBC*- UK draws on more multi-modal tools *within* newspaper articles. At times, even incorporating “video top stories” in articles. All the newspaper articles in the *BBC* use either photos or videos.

The image choices in *The Daily Star* and *BBC* draw on different styles. For instance, 29% of newspaper articles in Lebanon exclude visuals. All news articles *without* visuals, feature one paragraph passages, of ‘breaking news’. The short and quick, news articles reflect the “on the spot” updates in the Lebanese sample. None of the news articles in the *BBC*-UK, include breaking news linked to Syrian refugee women. This may stem from the lack of relevant breaking news events in the UK relating to Syrian refugee women. Whereas, Lebanon is geopolitically closer to Syria, including shared experiences with Syrians (i.e., family ties/interracial marriage).

5.1 Text-Visual frames in the BBC- UK

Both the *BBC* and *Daily Star* underrepresented images of Syrian refugees, which feature their faces. For instance, in the BBC, images linked to Syrian refugees arriving to the UK mainly include images of members of host communities being hospitable instead of refugee narratives. In detail, images show how host community members prepare welcome baskets. The primary focus by journalists in Lebanon and the UK was on host communities' benevolence. This reinforces previous findings of news articles in the West, reflecting portrayals as self-benevolent (Abdelhady & Malmberg, 2018). However, the Lebanese sample also reiterated images of Syrian refugees being liberated.

In particular, one image in the BBC captioned as "The UK has accepted 50 Syrian refugees so far under its resettlement program, ministers have confirmed", features an image of a refugee camp, showcasing white tents. The image depicts the conventional idea or image of a refugee camp. All refugees are facing away from the camera and the focus was 'zoomed out'. Likewise, both news sources de-emphasize the role of refugees, in favor of refugee spaces and camps.

According to Guidry et al. (2018), articles covering Syrian refugees, reflect (de)humanizing archetypes, including the 'invisibility' of identifiable facial features. Accordingly, "invisible faces" are less likely to invoke emotional reactions from audiences such as compassion (Bleiker et al., 2014).

Another article in 2015, captioned, "A special operation team set up by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) will manage the arrival of 11 Syrian refugee families on 15 December", is adjoined with an image of beige refugee tents with holes in them. The emphasis on police "managing" arrivals, emphasizes structural aspects of relocations, including security ("PSNI team to support refugee arrivals into Belfast", 2015).

Particularly, a *BBC* article, in 2015, includes a shadowed image of six veiled (Syrian) refugee women cued in line, adjoined with the headline, “Syrian refugee arrivals”. The image is placed next to an explanation of the Syrian refugee relocation scheme, with an emphasis on women being victims. Images of veils or other religious markers emphasize journalists' decisions to highlight religious cues. Previous research suggests that long-distance visuals of groups waiting in line, de-humanize refugees and cultivate distance between refugees and audiences (Bleiker et al., 2014).

Another article, in the *BBC*-UK focuses on a refugee women's previous experiences in war torn Syria, including: abuse, arrests, whippings, and electric shocks. In coordination with the article theme, the image features the aftermath of war. In detail, imagery includes collapsed buildings, half broken houses, and smoke. The caption linked to the photo states, “A Syrian refugee living in the UK has described how she was picked up by the country's secret police and then beaten and tortured before being freed”. The dark image of houses in rubble complements the theme of refugee woman's war experiences. The image reflects a desolated, desolate space, empty or lacking of people (“Syrian refugee recalls beatings, whippings, electric shocks”, 2014).

On the other hand, 16% of articles in the *BBC*-UK incorporated videos or video narratives. News articles with videos tend to be shorter. Particularly, texts linked to videos are more compatible with articles than photographs in news articles. Notably, one video captioned as, “A Syrian mother has urged women in the UK not to travel to Syria in a film by counter-terrorism”, emphasizes the role of refugee women in reference to host societies.

5.2 Text- visual frames in *The Daily Star*- Lebanon

Within the Lebanese sample, frequent images of police cars compliment news stories featuring the detainment of human traffickers and Syrian refugee prostitutes. The captions are consistent with the overall tone of articles, which emphasize arrests. Images of police cars reinforce appeals to security. Another article with a ‘zoomed in’ image of a checkpoint is supplemented by a post, written in Arabic stating, “Stop the Security forces”. “A policeman stands at a checkpoint in Souk Mouawad in Beirut’s southern suburbs”, the caption adds. The image complements the context of the story, emphasizing how security forces are ‘stepping up’ vigilance.

Strikingly, the article titled, “Syrian woman dies from cold while attempting to cross border”, features a photo of an army official on a tank, with binoculars, surrounded by mountains. The photo caption reads, “A Lebanese Army soldier on an APC near Ras Baalbek, northeast Lebanon”. Hereby, emphasizing the soldier’s vigilance and border management vs. the plight of the Syrian woman in the cold. Even, when the tone of the news story, emphasizes border-crossing incidents, the imagery of soldier tanks re-emphasizes border spaces. This echoes research on border visuals previously tackled by Cvetkovic and Pantic (2018), in a study on EU border framing.

All images of Syrian refugees include images of women, with their heads “cut out” of the image. Notably, one caption states: “Syrian refugee Umm Mahmoud, who refuses to show her face, sits in her house in Ouzai”. The journalist’s word-choice of “refused”, implies, that the refugee was “supposed” to take the photo.

Partly, de-emphasizing the agency and choice of the refugee to opt out of the photo-opp. Nonetheless, certain articles include face shots of Syrian refugee women in agony. For example, the article titled, “Syrians struggle to find burial sites for kin”, includes a front-page image, of a woman, with a pained expression on her face, as she stands in front of her husband’s grave (2016). The caption, reiterates the struggle via

captioning, “Khalaf, who fled from Homs, cries near the grave of her husband in Lebanon’s eastern village of Dalhamiyeh”.

Another article highlighted a close-up of a refugee woman’s face, severely beaten, captioned as “Released by Lebanese police”. In relation to health-related issues or human-interest pieces, journalists utilize the face of the individual to emphasize feelings, including pain.

However, in issues relating to border crossings, prostitution, marriage, or sexual relations, Syrian refugee women’s heads are cropped out of images. This places the focus on women’s bodies as sexual and at times, threats. The sexualization of women’s bodies in headlines attract audience’s attention.

To recap, text-visual images in both *BBC* and *The Daily Star* included dissonant images or interactions between text and visuals. Text- visual analyses add to the limited corpus available on visual framing in articles (Cvetkovic and Pantic, 2018). Further, highlighting the role of visuals in “othering”, “dehumanizing”, or “sensualizing”, refugee narratives.

5.3 The use of Twitter and Facebook to create public debate

Increasingly, journalists are utilizing sources found on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, as either sources within newspaper articles or forums to share news and create public debate. Story-sharing in media pressures journalists to find the “new story” or “new faces” to cover. This may be an explanation to why researchers draw on informal forms of media to find the next face.

More specifically, a journalist from *The Daily Star-Lebanon*, shared a Facebook post as a source in a news article. The Facebook comment includes a bold statement by Halabi, a lawyer and human rights activist on May 30, 2016, which alluded to police involvement with human trafficking rings in Lebanon. Mainly,

accusing the internal security forces of trying to “clean itself up from corruption” (“Lebanon lawyer denies wrongdoing, demands apology over house raid”, 2016).

In response, the interior minister, Nouhad Machnouk, called for an investigation within internal security forces, against allegations made towards senior officials in the Lebanese government (“Authorities shutter clinic of Lebanon sex slave doctor”, 2016).

In a political twist, Walid Jumblatt, a Lebanese politician and leader of Lebanon’s Durze party, and progressive socialist party (a political group in Lebanon), accused government officials of being a part of human trafficking criminal organizations vis-à-vis a tweet, stating “The [sex ring] has been working for years with senior officials complicit in the art of secret”; “It was only discovered coincidentally by a police officer who has a free, conscience” (“Machknouk slams accusations of ties to sex slaves”, 2016).

This paper will not delve into the viability (or lack thereof) of the statement. Rather, the above examples were selected to highlight how politics are tied to both: news coverage and prostitution arrests. Additionally, news outsourcing from social media platforms, reflect how social media is shifting news reporting to become increasingly multi-modal. Likewise, in the *BBC*- UK, an article featured an online Facebook video, of an elderly Syrian woman, scolding Isis fighters by equating them to donkeys.

Contextually, journalists appeal to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram posts since Facebook groups and Twitter, helped many Syrian refugees mobilize resources in Lebanon. Also, Facebook pages may be used to solicit illegal activity promoting Syrian refugee brides (“Facebook page promoting Syrian refugee brides block”, 2014”).

From a political lens, the *BBC*-UK shared how, Trump, the current president of USA, used twitter to express how, “We can’t afford to be nice”, in response to viral Internet posts, memes, and commentaries of Syrian refugees ‘flooding’ Europe. One photo was shared of a young Syrian man, stating, “They left women and children in a war” (“The viral roots of Trump’s Syria refugee ‘solution’, 2014”).

Both the Lebanese and British news sites prompt readers to join the conversation on Twitter. The new wave of media reporting and viewership is directly related to sharing practices on social media. Many articles incorporate shorter newspapers featuring summaries and short video-stories, in the *BBC*- UK, in view of intended audiences being on Facebook. Both news sites reported on social media debates and political statements.

5.4 Outlier: Refugee Narrative on Radio Show

An outlier in the data included an article, which is linked to a radio show on the *BBC*-UK. Only one article in the *BBC*-UK, featured a refugee narrative. The Syrian refugee woman was featured in a special interest story in 2016, titled, “All the world let us down”. This article draws on an interview from the *BBC* radio station in Wales, featured on the news site.

This story or content is likely featured on local news, since the refugee both lives in Wales and is married to British man. From a multi-modal perspective, the incorporation of radio reports and examples *within* the article echoes previous findings regarding the increasingly diverse and multi-faceted format of online news-sites.

In sum, despite differences in the type of media tools news sources in Lebanon and the UK used, both news sites, emphasized the benevolence of host-communities abroad and favored images of host-community actors being benevolent. Namely, re-emphasizing the presence of images linked to security or securitization.

Chapter Six

Discussion

Chiefly, this paper examines the multi-level contexts concerning portrayals of Syrian refugee women in online news sites. Surprisingly, similarities appeared in the UK and Lebanon concerning a focus on host country benevolence. Some findings defy cultural norms previously studied in the news. Previously, the *BBC* was linked to a women empowerment theme. Here, the Lebanese news site focused on women empowerment.

In short, portrayals of Syrian refugee women were categorized according to: location, space, and time. This thesis examines the intersection of time, space, and location on home and policy discourse. This paper reiterates the need to re-look at refugee women from a case by case perspective vs. as a uniform group. This may be achieved via the incorporation of refugee narratives and varying contexts in analyses. This paper differs from other analyses of Syrian refugee women in the news by providing:

1. Different perspectives of refugee women portrayals in news according to: location, time, and space.
2. Reviews both texts and text-visuals within newspaper articles.

An integrated and multi-level approach facilitates tracking refugee portrayals with different perspectives. Previously, research suggested that gender is sometimes used as a vital factor of migrant exclusion and inequality in host countries. Yet, research that focus on structural aspects of being a “woman”, overlook the diversity involved in female experiences (Burkner, 2012).

As mentioned in the results section earlier, two Syrian refugee women, within the same article, viewed their experience of exile differently. In particular, women may

draw on different strategies to cope with multiple levels of exclusion. To this end, previous experiences, power relations, spaces, and the migration context, influence refugees' experiences abroad.

From a methodological perspective, there is a need to review how texts, visuals, and captions achieve cohesiveness in accordance with the news article's context. Dissonance or (un)cohesion between texts and visuals within articles may point to different stances within articles. To illustrate, if research was examined according to texts or visuals individually, refugee admission coverage would seem more "favorable" in both Lebanon and the UK. Demonstratively, captions are sometimes incompatible with the overall theme or context of articles.

Operationally, findings in this study regarding space and time include either visible/direct references to time and space, alongside indirect/invisible measures of time and space. Further, reiterating Boccagni's (2017) suggestion that the intersections between the past, present, and future influence migration experiences. Briefly, direct references to time are measurable by coding references of years, months, or minutes. Conversely, indirect time measures include socially created spaces or ideas concerning time such as feeling "stuck".

6.1 A Comparative Review of Research Findings

6.1.1 A closer look at the BBC- UK

Similar trends that appeared include journalists' focus on pre-war experiences to emphasize, how host-countries are liberating. Differences appear in both the *BBC-UK* and *The Daily Star-Lebanon*, in regards to location, space, and time. The *BBC-UK*, tends to be polarized by similar narratives and stances concerning refugee women. Often, the *BBC*, recycles stories based on Syrian refugee arrivals in the UK through the (Syrian) Vulnerable persons Relocation Scheme. As a reference, the scheme relocates Syrian refugees according

to vulnerability criteria, including being a victim of torture and the entry of refugee women to the UK.

In parallel, the *BBC* revealed a “refugee welcoming” stance featuring different residential areas welcoming refugees, meanwhile, the articles simultaneously emphasized security measures and priority schemes. Namely, emphasizing the securitization of the relocation scheme. At first, this paper projected the “Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme” (VPRS) in the UK, would influence news coverage of Syrian refugee women in the UK. While, the hypothesis identified that Syrian refugee women would be identified as: victims, vulnerable, and escapees- this paper expected more news coverage in 2014.

To elaborate, The VPRS was first suggested in 2014. However, the media provided more analyses of the scheme in 2015 and 2016. The data points to more coverage of Syrian refugees due to increased admissions of Syrian refugees in the UK (at the time). Perhaps, the first stage was de-emphasized in news coverage to examine the public’s reaction to the VPRS policy. After deciding to expand the scheme, news coverage increased by reflecting news coverage of refugees being welcomed.

Previously, Travassoli and Jaliffar (2019) suggested that British newspaper stances are identifiable as “welcoming” or “unwelcoming” towards refugee women. Conversely, there were no references to (un)welcoming stances in the *BBC*-UK regarding refugee women in this study. This may be reflective of how the Syrian (Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme), mainly screens for Syrian refugee women and family refugees prior to entry into the UK.

The refugee welcoming stance differs from what previous research found on anti-immigrant sentiments found in the British press (Kosho, 2016). However, the

aforementioned research covers anti-immigrant sentiments in numerous newspapers. These findings are only applicable to the *BBC*-UK. Namely, highlighting how the *BBC*-UK provides a supportive stance on Syrian refugee migrations. In coordination with previous research on the *BBC*, this paper reiterates the notion that the *BBC* discusses ‘war zones’ and locations more than the refugees who live there (Al- Hejin, 2015). As a result, refugee women narratives are underrepresented in news. The lack of coverage on issues or obstacles refugees face while living in the UK, may reflect unbalanced news coverage by the *BBC* in favor of the British government.

6.1.2 A closer look at The Daily Star- Lebanon

News articles in *The Daily Star*-Lebanon include more diverse coverage and stories than the *BBC*-UK. To elaborate, Lebanese newspapers address household changes, refugee women deaths, and empowerment. Partly, topics in the *Daily Star* are more diverse than the *BBC*, since the news site dedicated more stories to refugee women.

In Lebanon, news coverage of Syrian refugee women was highest in 2016. Initially, this paper hypothesized that media coverage of refugee influxes and politicians in 2015- due to Lebanon introducing visa requirements for Syrian refugees crossing the border (Canefe, 2018).

The dismantling of a major sex-trafficking ring, in 2016, led to intense media coverage of trafficking victims and prostitutes. During the Lebanese presidential elections, which were also in 2016, Syrian women trafficking was extensively scrutinized. To illustrate, government officials, human rights lawyers, and politicians accused one another of guilt or participation in human trafficking.

6.1.3 Border Spaces

In regards to border spaces, the BBC-UK and The Daily Star-Lebanon, included different border management strategies. However, emphasis on Syrian

refugees feeling secure in Lebanon and the UK, occurred regarding the freedom to dress-up and enter the work-force. According to Cvetkovic and Pantic (2018), a border management perspective in media, refers to the policing or securitization of borders. In the BBC-UK, the emphasis on border management reflected refugee women's paperwork being finished prior to entry.

Despite differences in news coverage between the *Daily Star*-Lebanon and the *BBC*-UK, the data revealed that previous experiences influence refugee narratives and experiences in host communities. To illustrate, a Syrian refugee woman narrative of feeling "secure" in the UK, *after* living for six years without security, was emphasized on the *BBC*.

Whereas, the border management lens covered in the *Daily Star*-Lebanon reflects conflicts between refugees and officers. The different stages of a refugee's journey to Lebanon were depicted including: pre-migration, border crossings, and life near the border. Pre-migration concerns cover refugees' fears regarding crossing the border, such as the weather.

Also, verbal and visual representations of borders as lived experienced also include personal experiences on why refugees left their country and "cross borders" (Cvetkovic & Pantic, 2018). Borders as lived spaces refer to the daily lives of migrants near borders. This includes surveillance, which affect migrants' lives there. Personal stories of how or why refugees reach borders are examples of lived experiences.

Lived experiences in the *Daily Star* cover both personal stories on why refugees left their countries, and life in Arsal, a town near the Lebanese border. Aid workers' difficulties to reach areas blocked by checkpoints were also highlighted on the Lebanese news site (i.e., *Daily Star*). On the other hand, the *BBC*-UK only referenced narratives of Syrian refugee women's hardships and abuse faced

in Syria, prior to arriving to the UK. However, overlooking difficulties faced in the host country, within the UK.

6.1.4 Representations of Syrian Refugee Women Death in News

News articles discussing Syrian refugee women deaths were only discussed in the *Daily Star*- Lebanon. In the *BBC*, a lack of reporting on refugee women deaths may be attributed to the absence of border-related conflicts in the UK. To illustrate, in UK, the policy aimed to relocate refugees, requires finalized paper work *prior* to entry. Also, there are a lack of statistically significant refugee deaths in the UK. Hence, refugee deaths are not relevant or prevalent in the local context.

On the other hand, in Lebanon, health issues, crime, and living conditions affect Syrian refugees in the host country. This paper's national news perspective likely explains this difference. Perhaps, news coverage from the *BBC*- International, would have revealed more coverage of refugee women deaths or migration journeys in the EU.

6.1.5 Labels in the News

According to Schrover and Moloney (2014), in academia, refugees are cross-categorized as: colonial refugees, family refugees, or labor refugees. In this paper, the most dominant representation of Syrian refugee women was as family migrants. At times, refugees were referenced as refugees in Lebanon (i.e., *Daily Star*) despite the article explaining Syrian women's vulnerability due to lack of documentation. This may be a response to "political awareness" and sensitivity to political connotations of the term "refugee".

In particular, language used in national level newspapers re-emphasize discourse, which paint refugees with labels representing refugees as "different" or an "other". An emphasis on politicians who call out security, identity, and resource threats

invoke fearful narratives. In the *BBC*, ‘othering’ focused on portrayals of Syrian refugees as vulnerable or victims.

Whereas, in Lebanon, ‘othering’ includes portrayals of Syrian refugees as “threats” to Lebanese identity. The emphasis of refugees as threats is significant because a policy focus transmitted from governments to media officials may lead to “media panics” (i.e., fears by readers in reaction to the news). According to Kosho (2016) “media panic” may lead to every-day-citizens “policing” refugees or migrants through attempts to secure their country. According to Moss (2018) many nationals gather around their government’s narratives or decisions during times of national security or panic.

6.1.6 A reflection on home in the news

Methodologically, this paper supports Taylor’s (2015) suggestion that home is a multi-dimensional framework. Further, incorporating the spatial, temporal, material, and relational dimensions of home. In both the *BBC*- UK and *The Daily Star*- Lebanon, familial links to home, especially concerning their children, were spotlighted.

However, changes in household dynamics were only referenced in *The Daily Star* (i.e., in Lebanon). The focus on national level newspapers in Lebanon and the UK allowed for the documentation of refugee women’s perceptions on home. However, feelings towards documentations, law, and exclusion were only referenced in Lebanon.

6.1.7 Structure of National Level news in *The Daily Star* and *BBC*

Structurally, online news sites include different levels of coverage. Gilboa et al. (2016) suggest that there are differences in news coverage depending on the level or space newspapers cover. For example, national news covers issues relevant to a particular population or nation. Whereas, international news covers topics aimed at

international audiences. The regional level covers issues such as the “refugee crisis” pertaining to a particular region (i.e., such as the Middle East, Africa, or Europe).

This study focused exclusively on national news coverage due to an interest in national news, policies, and refugee narratives. In this vein, national news coverage tends to feature quoted materials by different actors such as community members, experts, and external sources. Hence, taking the written content at face value as the journalist’s opinions, includes an overlap between commentator or interviewee opinions as opposed to the journalist’s opinions (Travassoli & Janlifar, 2019).

Rather than focus on if authors were emphasizing alignment or misalignment with positions, this paper emphasizes, which policies, politicians, and stances are emphasized or de-emphasized. Also, identifying terms that surround particular contexts of Syrian refugee women. Research needs to accommodate to the structure and format of different articles.

Furthermore, both the *BBC* and *The Daily Star* drew on user interactivity to attract readers to articles. Repeatedly, including “sharing features” on various platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Email. At the bottom of each news article in the *Daily Star*- Lebanon, there is an “Interesting” or “Not Interesting” button. On the other hand, the *BBC* prompts users to join the conversation on Twitter.

Both the *BBC* and the *Daily Star* websites include regional and international news. Nonetheless, from a multi-level perspective, *The Daily Star* (i.e., international edition) outsources their articles from mainly: Reuters (i.e., in the UK) and the Association press (i.e., headquarters in the US). Yet, concerning “Middle Eastern News”, there are a mirage of sources including both: self-produced (i.e., ingrown articles) and outsourced articles. Hence, research on other levels of news in *The Daily Star*- Lebanon, requires an additional recording of *where* news articles are sourced.

From a multi-modal perspective, media sources available on the *BBC* are widely available including: radio channels, editorials, video stories, and international edition news. Hence, it would be interesting for future research to map differences in digital sources used within different articles on the *BBC* news site at different levels including: national and regional news.

6.2 Outliers in the data

Within the scope of the Syrian crisis, some Palestinian women face double displacement as refugees arriving from Syria to Lebanon. In particular, certain Palestinian refugees were prevented access to the Lebanese border. Furthermore, the living spaces of Syrians and Palestinians also intersect. Specifically, Lebanon already has Palestinian camps in Lebanon such as Shalita Camp.

In particular, the growing co-habitation between Syrians and Palestinians led to a cross-over between Syrian and Palestinian refugees (including those who arrived from Syria and others already settled). In line with the intersections between different refugee populations, it would be interesting to examine refugee interactions with other refugee or migrant communities within Lebanon.

In the wake of increased forced migration, border control, and securitization, the press tends to report on ‘illegal’ Syrian refugee arrivals. Distinctly, a news report on the *Daily Star-Lebanon* revealed how two women were arrested in Lebanon, for attempting to smuggle a child to Syria with falsified documents (“Two women arrested for smuggling a child to Syria”, 2014). This sheds light on an understudied phenomenon concerning refugees’ return to Syria.

Other unexpected findings that emerged from data include how the term ‘girl’ or ‘woman’ changes depending on the context. Most commonly, in popular discourse, women are referred to as individuals aged 18 or above, or of the legal age for the

country (i.e., differs depending on laws of the country). However, on the Lebanese news site examined in this paper, when trying to emphasize refugees' vulnerability the term "girl" is used regardless of the age. Conversely, when trying to de-emphasize a "cry for help", the term woman is strategically used.

Thus, the notion of age changes depending on the context used. In certain news contexts, age is a device emphasizing "innocence" or "inexperience" depending on the situation. In order to further analyze findings in future research, it may be beneficial to re-adjust age criteria as a factor of analysis regarding the inclusion or exclusion of migrants in host communities. According to Burkner (2011), intersectional theory may be applicable to migration studies on the inequality amongst refugees-with the additional incorporation of age.

At large, no references to lesbian or bisexual female refugees were addressed in all articles examined in this study. Is it a representation issue? Or are there limited lesbian Syrian refugees in both Lebanon and the UK? While, this research mimics previous researchers' findings that lesbian and bisexual female refugees are underrepresented in media (Freedman, Kivilicsm, & Bakalacloglu, 2017) - it is still unclear why. It would be interesting for future research to address this gap in refugee research through narratives on lesbian refugees.

The concept of the body as a scale of analysis was touched upon in chapter five, via examples of the sexualization of Syrian refugees in newspaper images by emphasizing refugees' bodies vs. their faces. The everyday rules of conduct regarding how to dress or expose the body at home vs. in public was also discussed through the refugee narrative of a woman who found freedom to dress, as she wishes in Lebanon. In particular, the emphasis on refugee women's bodies in images across newspapers in Lebanon, emphasized the body as a scale of analysis. At face value, common sense attributes to differences shared in news. Yet,

some differences defy cultural norms, such as, the empowerment theme in Lebanon.

6.3 Qualitative Content Analysis

This paper drew on a software assisted qualitative content analysis approach to analyze text and image captions within newspapers. As a reference, a content analysis, is a technique for systematically describing written, spoken, or visual communication (Bengtsson, 2016).

In light of this paper's interest in looking at different contexts, newspaper texts were analyzed on the NVivo program at the paragraph level. Put simply, whenever a key word was mentioned, the surrounding paragraph was analyzed on the software. However, analyzing texts at the paragraph level led to the coding of unrelated words or topics linked to: advertisements and hyperlinks to different articles, which newspapers feature on the bottom of the page.

Consequently, each code or node saved required re-looking at surrounding paragraphs to exclude irrelevant words. Text-search queries of key words such as “woman” and “refugee”, at the paragraph level also include unrelated phrases or sentences in certain cases. In order to mitigate some of the above methodological challenges, this paper drew on grouping of similar words when referencing themes or topics.

To provide, more accurate screening of popular key words within paragraphs, the weighted average of words was also provided. When, conducting research on specific cases (i.e., words surrounding Syrian refugee women), the data set is more specific, and needs to be regarded at the individual level. To elaborate, when the data-set, is limited, one article, with many references to a word can skew word frequency results. Hence, looking at the weighted averages of the most referenced words, within paragraphs, provides a more balanced outlook.

Initially, common articles, prefixes, and conjunctions such as “a”, “the”, “and”, were included in word frequencies. However, the methodology was adjusted to incorporate a limit of four letters for words. Also, to avoid unrelated blurbs such as “com” and “www”, words were added to the stop word list. On the NVivo program, researchers can exclude words from text frequency analyses, by using the “stop word function”.

Accordingly, results of the “text search” on Syrian refugee women are not applicable at the “face value”. Instead, researchers need to re-look at texts or phrases to emphasize the significance or relevance of phrases to the topic. Research is susceptible to “human error” and requires saving all queries in order to re-look at findings and repeat analyses. In detail, all queries were saved on NVivo.

Researchers suggest that qualitative research is not generalizable to other cases. In this vein, this paper provided a step-by-step explanation on how to analyze the “refugee context” in online newspapers, in order to provide the space for future researchers to replicate findings.

For future researchers, it may be helpful to pre-screen newspaper articles and save each article on a Microsoft Word document prior to inputting them in NVivo, to exclude unrelated data, including advertisements. In this section, methodological limitations and suggestions concerning content analysis were discussed. In the next section, other limitations such as article outreach or reachability, will be discussed.

6.4 Limitations and Outlook

This paper overlooks the interactions between local, national, international, and global news outlets. Visibly, less news coverage appeared in the *BBC-UK*. However, in the *BBC*- international edition, more coverage was dedicated to Syrian refugee women. It would be interesting to compare Arab language newspapers to those of the *Daily Star*. Since the *Daily Star* mainly outsources for international

news coverage, it would be interesting to see if there is an intersection between news coverage on the *BBC* and *The Daily Star*, when covering Middle Eastern news.

In light of this research's focus on Syrian refugee women, refugee men, boys, and girls were excluded from analyses. A comparison of the findings in this study with other refugee portrayals may provide a more integrative approach. This study may be viewed as building block for future studies on Syrian refugees in online newspapers.

Perhaps, the incorporation of this methodology may be applied to other Syrian refugee groups (i.e., men). Some journalists cross-reference or use the term "refugee" and "economic migrant" interchangeably. To illustrate, using the term migrant and refugee to reference the same individual within a newspaper article. Hence, a comparison between Syrian refugees and migrants would help shed light on the ambiguous use of the term.

In regards to the tools analyzed in this paper, audios, videos, and radio sources are overlooked. References to images or videos focused on the caption level only. Specifically, formatting features such as: focus, picture alignment, and video content, result in a more accurate description of the various tools used within newspaper articles (Mellese & Müller, 2012). In light of the various contexts already analyzed in this paper, the incorporation of additional video or radio elements, may have resulted in difficulties in grouping categories. Also, from a time perspective, additional elements would have been unfeasible.

Linguistically, the focus on an English language daily news site overlooks Arabic newspapers in Lebanon. From a political lens, this overlooks key political actors and perspectives. In particular, Lebanese media tends to be linked to either religious or political groups (Dajani, 2013).

However, it is difficult to find a Lebanese newspaper, which focuses on a “national” perspective while aiming to share news to an international audience. This paper aimed to map refugee discourse on a news source that aims to report on “national news” to capture a variety of actors involved. To elaborate, the *Daily Star*, aims to provide national news to Lebanese expatriates as mentioned on the newspaper’s website (<http://www.dailystar.com.lb>).

It would be interesting for future research to compare the English daily newspaper in Lebanon, with other leading foreign news sites in Lebanon. For example, the online news site “*L’orient-De-Jour*”, also categorizes news as “national news” and appeals to French speaking expatriates.

The focus on qualitative analysis overlooks statistics and quantitative findings regarding newspaper genres that articles fall under. Traditionally, news media is studied either from a context-specific perspective or genre specific perspective (Matthes, 2012). While findings in this research are not generalizable (i.e., due to being qualitative), examples provided in this paper may shed light on conflict research.

In the scope of policy frameworks and policy discourse, news coverage on conflict scenes or situations are commonplace (Burkner, 2012; Doucet, 2018). However, narratives or news coverage on local events are overlooked in policy discourse. In chapter 4, this paper provided the example of a refugee woman (i.e., living in Dalhamiyeh, Lebanon), who struggled to find a place to bury her deceased husband. The refugee narrative revealed that after paying for the headstone, a marker, which identifies his name was missing. Accordingly, this refugee narrative sheds light on a local issue in Dalhamiyeh, a small town in Lebanon.

In this perspective, refugee narratives help provide information on local conflicts, in order to lead to policy-oriented and political actions. While this paper

sheds light on the specificities of conflict and war, the classification of newspapers according to “economic” issues was overlooked. In this vein, framing theory is needed to shed light on the macro-level of news coverage.

6.5 Future Research

Also, this study excluded user comments from analyses on articles. However, during the data collection process, one user comment, which merits attention, highlighted the criticism of a phrase written on a *Daily Star* article in Lebanon. The commentator states:

Girl along with a refugee? As though a Syrian refugee is not considered a girl? Stupid Person who wrote this article needs to be educated. I don't need to be a Syrian to see the discrimination of this language (Zaatari, 2015, p. A4).

The above comment reflects a reader's response to the newspaper article written. A review of collective user comments may help display dominant “welcoming” or “unwelcoming” perspectives on social media. Although the above newspaper is mentioned under “Lebanese news”, anybody can access the site.

Hence, opinions by people from different backgrounds may provide more information on the relationship between news and readers. However, it is difficult to ascertain the identity of commentators. Nonetheless, an incorporation of user comments in news sites may shed light on digital discourse. According to Ruiz et al. (2011), user comments are a form of modern debate. Even, when narratives are discussed in news- they are chosen by media actors and agents (Pamment, 2016). In the scope of this paper, refugee narratives were discussed as a part of official newspaper articles. Yet, user narratives are also given through newspaper sites.

News sites in both the *BBC* and the *Daily Star* incorporate hashtags (#) to their news stories. Also, news sites encourage readers to join the conversation on Twitter. Certain tweets are even utilized as part of a larger campaign, such as the *BBC* campaign, which features 100 strong, women across the world. Hence, it would be interesting to analyze social media user's use of hashtags on Twitter and other social media platforms in relation to news stories.

Then again, refugee narratives are also available via a variety of other sources. Another avenue for future research is ‘storytelling’. Digital storytelling includes short audio visuals using a combination of tools such as photographs, videos, and voiceovers (de Jager et al., 2017). Often, storytelling campaigns are designed with specific platforms in mind such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Pamment, 2016).

Moreover, Pamment (2016) suggests that political actors sometimes mediate culture exchanges online via digital diplomacy. Digital diplomacy refers to diplomats' roles in directing, monitoring, and coordinating political advocacy and online exchanges. In some ways, lawyers and humanitarian workers who used Facebook to call out “human trafficking” in this study, may also be considered as engaging in forms of public diplomacy. A transmedia focus combines different modes used in news. Transmedia analyzes how information and discourse unfold across various digital platforms. Diplomats or political elites who gate-keep audience's attention by prompting the consumption of various narratives on platforms such as, YouTube or Facebook are considered part of transmedia.

Last but not least, newspapers, user comments, and social media posts are all subject to different levels of censorship (Indarti, 2018). Certain news sites gate-keep reader's comments through restricting certain words such as offensive language.

Hence, a review of the structure of newspapers is also required for accurate analyses of user comments.

6.6 Conclusion

In short, the data presented in this paper reflect newspaper coverage of Syrian refugee women in national news in Lebanon and the UK. Chiefly, this paper emphasizes the interactions between location, time, and space on online news coverage in the *Daily Star*-Lebanon and *BBC*- UK. Specifically, expanding on findings of a multi-level approach by looking at location, time, and space. Further, including the intersections between: location, time, and space on specific situations.

This paper sheds light on Syrian refugee women's migration journeys. Mainly, emphasizing different perspectives in the news based on different actors including: political actors, refugees, and aid workers.

This thesis began with a discussion of the underrepresentation of Syrian refugees in news. In turn, this paper shows that women are still underrepresented in news in the *BBC*-UK. However, in the Lebanese news site, *The Daily Star*, refugee portrayals included diverse perspectives, including both favorable and unfavorable news coverage. This paper appeals for future research to look at different and diverse modes within news articles (especially on social media or blogposts).

It is now 2019, and still the Syrian refugee crisis is ongoing. How would findings in this paper compare to findings in a couple of years? Would much have changed? For instance, depleted resources and the recent garbage crisis may further fuel policy debates in news.

The data presented in this paper focused on issues discussed in the news between 2014 and 2016. While editing this paper, the Lebanese news site examined in this thesis (i.e., *The Daily Star*), used the newspaper platform as a 'call for action' for

Lebanon. Recently, on August 8th, 2019, *The Daily Star*, published a series of blank issues, listing key conflicts in Lebanon. Distinctly, the front page was captioned “Wake up Lebanon”.

The newspaper issue included a series of conflicts linked to Lebanon including: the environment, politics, and government deadlock, in order to inspire readers to make a change. One of the empty pages, including the headline “1.5 million Syrians in the country” only. Now, the newspaper is taking a distinct role of trying to call for change through creating “moral panic”.

As a reference, moral panic in media, refers to the perceived threat to people’s interests and social values via identifying threats causing public concern. Also, leading to responses from government officials and policy makers (Morrison, 2011). By inputting “no news”, the newspaper intended to shock readers into action and infer responses from government officials and policy makers.

Many social media users credited or lauded the efforts for a call for change via twitter. However, other new sites such as “Al Jazeera”, highlighted, social media users’ posts, of how *The Daily Star*, is a private newspaper linked to the Prime minister Saad Hariri (“Lebanon’s Daily Star Publishes ‘no news’ protest edition”, 2019). Specifically, the article references how the “media watchdog reports without borders”, links the *Daily Star* to the prime minister. Further, citing how social media users point to the news site being linked to the “Hariri Political Dynasty”.

While, the origins of the claim have yet to be proven, the controversy on social media shows how news, especially in Lebanon, needs to be studied from a multi-level perspective including political spaces and newspaper outreach. Although the controversy did not specifically mention refugee women, the surrounding drama,

shows how the newspaper is protesting certain situations (including refugee influxes) via not providing the news.

At the start of the crisis, the newspaper was taking a more nuanced and balanced approach to the conflicts in Lebanon. However, the newspaper, took a firmer stand against the government, stating, “Government Deadlock”. Hence, looking at news is more relevant now. Longitudinal research over the course of the conflict throughout the different stages and public reactions may help shed light on the conflict, and the role of news in creating responses. For instance, the British news site, seemed to reiterate the government stance on relocation policies. However, would the stance be the same now?

In conclusion, this paper re-emphasizes the need for both a multi-level and multi-modal approach to studying Syrian refugee women online. In particular, the emphasis on location, time, and space, differentiates this paper from other approaches on Syrian refugee women research online. The findings add to findings on the multi-level approach by utilizing new contexts of time, space, and location. Hereby, highlighting how future researchers may incorporate different levels or contexts to their research.

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