AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

PILOT STUDY: FACEBOOK USE AMONG
MARGINALIZED SEGMENTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
COMMUNITY

by
HANEEN KHAYRI

A project
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for the degree of Master of Arts
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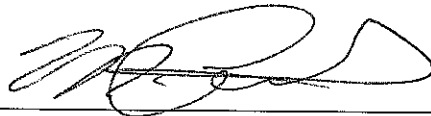at the American University of Beirut

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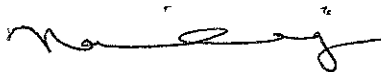
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Haneen Khayri   for   <u>Master of Arts</u>
                            <u>Major</u>: Media Studies

Title: <u>Pilot Study: Facebook Use Among Marginalized Segments of the Palestinian Community</u>

The purpose of the present research was to understand what motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps in Beirut to use Facebook, and, more specifically, what personal and social needs their Facebook use satisfies. This research also aimed to discover whether young Palestinians' use of Facebook helps them to maintain connections with their homeland, and the differences gender plays in Facebook use. Grounded in Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), a quantitative approach was employed in order to learn about such patterns of use. Surveys were used as a method of data collection. The study results showed that young Palestinians in refugee camps use Facebook to obtain information about Palestine, to escape from the camp, to gain a sense of belonging with others, and for entertainment.

Keywords: Uses and Gratifications, Social media, Facebook, Palestinian Refugees.

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Pilot Study: Facebook Use Among Marginalized Segments

of the Palestinian Community

Across the world, the increasing number of people using the internet as a new

medium to communicate has affected the way and the speed in which people interact

with each other (Raacke& Bonds-Raacke, 2008). More specifically, the time spent using

social media networks is increasing rapidly. This growing worldwide reliance on

technology and social media is consistent in the Arab world. According to Aouragh

(2008), the role of the internet and specifically social media networks in reshaping the

Arab world has become a core topic of research (p. 109). These social media networks

provide people in many countries a space in which they can speak out for themselves

while avoiding government censorship, and at times causing change (Najjar, 2010).

Within this context of new media and the changing landscape of communication in the

Arab world, this research was concerned with the study of how marginalized groups,

such as Palestinians in refugee camps, use Facebook.

The purpose of this research was to discover what motivates young Palestinians in

refugee camps in Beirut to use Facebook, and whether gender had an impact on such use.

Additionally, this study addressed whether Facebook is used by this population to maintain

connections with their homeland.

Previous studies (e.g., Aouragh, 2008; Hanafi, 2005; Khalili, 2005; Shehadeh,

2012) have shown how the Internet allows Palestinians to virtually cross-geographic

borders that they are not allowed to cross physically. Most of these studies have focused

on examining the different practices, purposes, and the importance of using the internet

to connect Palestinians in the diaspora. Moreover, other research has either analyzed the

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timeline of events that took place during the second Palestinian Intifada or investigated

online sources to obtain qualitative data about the different uses of online

communication (Najjar, 2010; Hanafi 2005). However, little is known about the primary

motivations behind young Palestinians' Facebook use and whether it has helped them

maintain connections with their homeland (Breuer, 2012). Therefore, this pilot study

offers a preliminary understanding of how Facebook can help marginalized segments of

the Palestinian community, such as Palestinian refugees in Beirut maintain connections

with their homeland. Moreover, previous studies have focused on examining gender

differences in internet use and the factors that lead to these differences (Jackson, Ervin,

Gardner & Schmitt, 2001, p. 363). Nevertheless, little research has been conducted to

examine gender disparities in using social media among marginalized groups, which is

important in drawing attention to the difference between how men and women use social

media. The gap in the research is what the present study has attempted to begin to

address.

The first time I visited a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, I became curious

about how the refugees managed to maintain connections with their Palestinians identity

and how they learned about their homeland, through which channels have they been

exposed to their homeland, and how do they learn about and understand their homeland.

I was interested in learning how they "belong" to a place they have never been to. The

old generation, (The "*Al-Nakba generation[1]*") desires to return to a place they know;

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[1] There are several definitions for the term "generation". As Victoria Mason (2007) notes, it can refer to a group of people who were born at around the same time. Alternatively, as she noted, illustrating on the work of Karl Mannheim "it can refer to a generation of an actuality in which contemporaries are exposed to and defined by the effects of a powerful historical stimulus and develop a shared consciousness about it" (p. 271).

they were born there, and have memories and stories that connect them with their original hometowns in Palestine. However, I wondered what connects the new generations with a place they never been to, a place that only exists in the stories of their parents and their grandparents. The present research was therefore motivated by an attempt to answer these questions, to understand how the new generations are attached to an "imaginary" place that only exists in the stories they hear. Thus, I hope to show how young Palestinians in the refugee camps, who were born in Lebanon and have never had the chance to see their homeland in reality, are using social media and whether this use is connected to a search for information and photos of Palestine that would allow them to better understand and feel connected to their homeland.

In this study, I investigated whether the young refugees use of social media helps to inform their national "identity". Indeed, while the concept of identity has been problematized in scholarship across disciplines; here I refer to its basic definition as found in the *Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication*, which states that identity is a social category defined by the membership to a "certain subcultural group (including ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, and gender" (Chandler & Munday, 2011). As such, I sought to explore whether refugees in Beirut used Facebook to understand their membership within the Palestinian community.

The present research relies on a uses and gratifications (U&G) theoretical framework to help explain why young Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon use

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Within the literature on Palestinian refugees, the term is usually used to describe several groups of refugees. The first generation or "Al- Nakba generation" commonly refer to those who experienced Al- Nakba and fled to countries bordering Palestine in 1948. The "second generation" refers to the children of the first generation who were born in the new country.

Facebook. The study applied a quantitative approach in order to learn about the patterns

of Facebook use. Through surveys, participants were asked to rate gratification

statements and motivational and behavioral questions in relation to their Facebook use.

The surveys were given to 60 young Palestinian from two Palestinian refugee camps in

Beirut; Burj Al Barajneh and Shtaila. After collecting the data, the Statistical Package

for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the results.

Literature Review

There is a growing body of literature on the role of the internet in building

collective social and political relationships (Aouragh, 2008; Hanafi, 2005; Khalili, 2005;

Najjar, 2010& Shehadeh, 2012).As I elaborate below, most of the previous studies,

concerning Palestinians have focused on examining the various practices of using the

internet to connect Palestinians in the diaspora. Other studies have focused on examining

gender differences in internet use and the factors responsible for these differences.

Media Usage by Palestinians in the Diaspora

In a recent study, Aouragh (2008) investigated how the internet can strengthen

the social and political activism of Palestinians living in the diaspora. Her fieldwork

research examined the impact of internet usage on the individual's political and social

participation. Aouragh conducted in depth interviews with Palestinians living inside

Palestine and Palestinians living in refugee camps in Lebanon. She found that

Palestinians inside Palestine use the internet to spread news about Palestine that is not

covered by the mainstream media, while those in the diaspora are communicating online

with the Palestinians inside Palestine in order to stay up to date with daily news and in

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becoming politically active (p. 111). Although this study failed to explain how the sample of participants was chosen and on what basis, it presented a framework that explains how Palestinians inside and outside Palestine use the Internet to become more socially and politically active.

In a study of a "unique Internet-based network" called PALESTA, which connects Palestinians abroad with Palestinians inside Palestine (p. 582), Hanafi (2005) argued that internet networking can reshape geography by connecting various isolated communities to each other. Like Aouragh, Hanafi used in-depth interviews as a method of data collection. He found that Palestinians using the PALESTA network considered it more than a network that connects Palestinians to their land (by updating them about the intifada and the political situation), but also a network that provided information about "job opportunities, scientific and technological development, specialized conferences, and so on"(p. 592). Hanafi offered a strong explanation of how Palestinians outside Palestine are using the Internet to become more aware of their Palestinian identity away from "a completely territorialized framework" (p. 592).

In an earlier study, Hanafi (2003) also examined Palestinian identity representation in the diaspora. He focused on analyzing the timeline of online events that took place before the second Palestinian Intifada. His study raised questions about the identity of Palestinians living abroad and their relationship with both Palestine and the foreign countries they live in. Also, he discussed how foreign host countries legally deal with the Palestinian refugees. His study raised significant questions about the status of a Palestinian identity between "homeland" and "hostland" (p. 166), which is useful to my

research specifically in understanding the particular situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

With the internet becoming more accessible via internet cafes in refugee camps, Khalili (2005) examined how poor living conditions encouraged Palestinian refugees to spend time on the internet. She concluded that the internet helped Palestinians in the refugee camps in Beirut engage in "cross-border political debates, circulation of contentious images, and cyberleafleting" (p. 127). Her study offered a more in depth analysis than previous research undertakings on how important the internet is to a marginalized segment of the Palestinian society in helping them connect with people that share the same suffering with them.

In a study investigating media use in relation to national identification among Palestinian refugees in Beirut, Farah (2011) argued that the internet or what she called "second- hand accounts" helped young Palestinian in the refugees in Lebanon to connect with their homeland. Employing an ethnographic approach to compare media use by young Palestinian refugees in Beirut living inside camps with refugees living outside the camps, she found that, while Palestinians living outside camps have more access to the internet, the Palestinians who live inside the refugee camps are more likely to use the internet to help them remain connected to their homeland and to their Palestinian identity than refugees living outside camps. She found that virtual images and photos circulated on the internet helped connect Palestinians in the refugee camps with Palestinians inside the homeland, Palestine, and played "a role in reminding refugees of what they no longer have" (Farah, 2011).

With a more specific focus on new media, Al-Zobaidi (2009) examined how the internet can help Palestinians reconstruct their "personal and collective identity" by sharing photos online (p. 394). Interested in the relationship between space, time and memory, he explained how the internet allowed Palestinians to save and share their memories and stories over time. Al-Zobaidi used a qualitative content analysis approach to describe the photos that are posted and shared on the internet by Palestinians living inside and outside Palestine. His study found that new media allowed Palestinians to see places in Palestine that they are not allowed to reach in reality; moreover, he argued that the "Internet fosters the production of all kinds of communities that are scattered over discontinuous geographies" (p. 296). Additionally, Al-Zobaidi pointed out that Palestinians use the internet to share photos about Palestine not published by mainstream media, and to connect families from outside Palestine with families inside Palestine. This was particularly helpful at a time when the Lebanese and Syrian governments had banned all calls to Palestine. Therefore, the internet made it possible for the Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria to connect with their families inside the West Bank and Gaza. He explained how Palestinians used the internet not only to form virtual communities, but also to "challenge traditional political parties and to influence change" (p. 313).

In another study on internet use among Palestinians, Najjar (2010) argued that the internet allows individual Palestinians in the diaspora to participate in narrating their personal stories that compete with other narratives in the mainstream media. She focused on events that took place during the second Palestinian Intifada by studying the Electronic Intifada (EI) website. Najjar used focus groups with young Palestinians who

live in Dubai and Abu Dhabi and use the EI website as a source for news. She found that

Palestinians using the EI website considered it more than a network that connects

Palestinians to their land; it also updates them on the intifada and the political situation.

The Electronic Intifada provided them with information about Palestine, its people and

culture.

Finally, Mattar (2010) discussed how Palestinians construct their national

identity through mediated narrations inside Palestine and in the diaspora. She argued that

a Palestinian identity is reconstructed through popular storytelling and oral memory. She

conducted in-depth interviews with Palestinians living inside Palestine and outside

Palestine in different refugee camps, cities and villages. Mattar found that the

Palestinian identity is more strongly presented inside the camps than outside the camps.

Also she concluded that the power of storytelling lies in preserving Palestinian

memories and in countering the dominant Zionist narrative of *Al-Nakba*. She

emphasized the role of storytelling in strengthening the Palestinian identity of a

generation that has never had the possibility of experiencing Palestine firsthand.

Gender Difference in Media Use

While the effects of gender have been over looked in information technology (IT)

research, the internet has been found to be important for highlighting the difference

between how men and women use online sources (Correa, Hinsley & De Zuniga, 2010).

Indeed, according to Gefen and Straub (1997) "the effects of gender differences on the use

and perceptions of other forms of human discourse are well established" (p. 393). As such,

I was interested in investigating whether there existed gender differences in how Facebook

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was used among Palestinian refugees. Previous studies have documented such distinctions in more general media use.

For example, in a study investigating media use in relation to gender differences, Jackson, Ervin, Gardner and Schmitt (2001) examined the main factors that might be responsible for those distinctions. The results of surveys given to a sample of undergraduate students from Angelo American College in Prague showed that males and females use the internet equally but differently. Males use the web more than females, while females use their e-mails more frequently than males. Moreover, anxiety and loneliness were the major factors that affected the use of media. The results also demonstrated that females are more nervous and tense when using computers and were less familiar with computer technology and this reflected in their use. The study thus examined how gender can have a direct impact on internet usage.

In a similar exploration, Weiser (2000) compared internet application preferences between a sample of male and female internet users at Texas Tec University. According to Weiser, while males use the internet mostly for entertainment and leisure, females use it mainly for interpersonal communication and educational objectives. Although the internet was the only mediator studied and Weiser did not examine social media at all, he offered a detailed explanation for the reasons behind the differences in internet usage between males and females. For example, he discussed the gender bias that young females face in their societies and how they are raised in a way that direct them away from computer and science majors.

With the internet becoming increasingly used to ease mobilization in times of

crises, researchers have started to address how online activity is allowing for more active

participation in political debates, circulation of news, and as a handy forum in a male

dominated society. Sakr (2002) studied Arab women's activism and their use of different

media platforms to challenge their status. She also examined the way Arab women are

portrayed in media. Her purpose was to discover whether the internet and other media

platforms in the different Arab countries have "contributed to a qualitative change in

media treatment of women's status" (p. 823). She discovered that many Moroccan,

Tunisian and Jordanian females have used internet and TV to produce media campaigns

that promote equal rights of women. Most of the campaigns focused on the issue of

honor crimes, asking the authorities to change the laws that protect males. Even though

these laws didn't change, Sakr argued that these women have succeeded in creating

awareness on the matter (p. 824). She also discussed how Palestinian women mainly use

the internet to promote equal rights of women in politics and in political debates. She

argued that Palestinian women learned how to make their voices heard on the internet

and television.

In another study on internet use among Arab women, Al Hail (2005) focused on

Qatari's use of web and email. He discovered that Qatari women use their email more

than Qatari men. Al Hail provided a detailed analysis of the reasons for gender

differences between Qataris internet usage, arguing that the internet is a means for

escapism and is being used to promote specific ideas among Qatari women. He noted

that the internet is "increasingly becoming an agency for cultural and social change" (p.

100).

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In a related study, Shalhoub (2011) explored the role of the internet in areas of conflict. Her study focused on discussing and analyzing the living conditions of Palestinian women. Shalhoub began by observing Palestinian women at checkpoints then she conducted a focus group to understand the problems faced by these women. She concluded that the internet helped Palestinian women who live in "daily terror under militarized surveillance and other architectural constraints (such as curfews and roadblocks)" try to find new ways to resist the occupation. She gave examples of how Palestinian women use cyberspace in order to "have control over their bodies, spaces and places" (p. 64).

While these studies examined various aspects of, and motivations for, the use of the internet and other media platforms in the Arab world in general, and by Palestinians more specifically, little is still known about why young Palestinian refugees use social media and whether this use can help them maintain connections with their homeland (Breuer, 2012).The present research has tried to offer a preliminary understanding of this use. As noted earlier, a uses and gratifications theoretical framework was employed to investigate what motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps in Beirut to use Facebook. This study therefore attempted to lay the groundwork towards a better understanding of how Facebook may help marginalized segments of the Palestinian community - young Palestinian refugees in Beirut - maintain connections with a Palestinian community, particularly one inside Palestine. Additionally, this study attempted to discover whether media use is different between Palestinian males and females. This is important in elaborating existing research about gender differences in media use in general. More specifically, this study is important because it will help us understand whether gender impacts the different objectives for using Facebook.

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Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

In this section, I present a brief background on the history of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and the two camps (Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh). Additionally, I provide a brief description of the living conditions inside the camps in order to contextualize the reasons that might influence the media usage of these young Palestinian refugees

Historical Background

Al- Nakba marks the beginning of the Palestinian refugee history, when more than 700,000 Palestinian were expelled from their homes during the 1948 war. Shortly after, a series of laws were issued by the Israeli occupation to prevent the Palestinians from returning to their homes or even claiming their property (Mason, 2007).

In 1949, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was created by the United Nations General Assembly to provide education, health care and social services for the Palestinians who were expelled from their homes during *Al- Nakba*. In order to provide humanitarian assistance, UNRWA developed a working definition for a refugee as " [a person] whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 and 15 May 1948 and who lost both their home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict" (Roberts 2010, p.6).

Most of the Palestinians who were forced to leave their homes in 1984 fled to countries bordering Palestine (Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and Syria). According to Hanafi most of Palestinian refugees who fled to Lebanon from Palestine came from villages in the north, such as Safad, Akka, Nazareth, Haifa and Bisan (p. 13), and settled in camps around the major cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Saida and Sour (Sayigh, 1878, p.98).

According to Hanafi and Tilnes (2005), in 1949 UNRWA registered around 100,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Indeed, the number of refugee has grown over the last 65 years; UNRWA today has around 455,000 registered refugees registered in 12 different refugee camps in Lebanon (UNRWA, 2014). It's important to note, however, that the official number of refugees in Lebanon today is not accurate, as many were naturalized, others emigrated from Lebanon to other countries, and still others reside outside the official borders of the refugee camps (Hanafi & Tilnes, 2005, p. 12). Moreover, many refugees aren't registered with UNRWA for different reasons: some don't have paperwork, while others who live outside the camps have learned to secure their own services (Shafie, 2007, p. 2).

Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila Camps

Burj Al Barajneh is the most populated refugee camp in the Beirut area. According o UNRWA the camp accommodates more than 16,000[2]Palestinian refugees (UNRWA 2014b). The camp was established in 1948 as the first camp in Beirut area, and its inhabitants were mainly from the Palestinian cities of Safad, Akka, and Haifa. At first, it was a tent camp, and then the refugees replaced the tents with homes made out of cinder blocks. The Lebanese government has continuously imposed restriction on Palestinians and passed laws to prevent them from building more houses (p. 135).

Established in 1949, the Shatila Camp is the second largest Palestinian refugee camp in the Beirut area. According to UNRWA the camp accommodates more than

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[2] The actual figure of refugees is probably much higher. In 1949, Burj Al Barajneh was initially able to accommodate 4000 refugees (Ghannoum, 2012).

9,800[3] Palestinian refugees (UNRWA 2014b). The residents were mainly from the

Palestinian cities of Amka, Al Yajour and Majed Al Kroum. The camp was heavily hit

during the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982, and was the site of the *Sabra and Shatila*

massacre (UNRWA, 2014). This massacre took place when Beirut was under the Israeli

Occupation; the Lebanese Phalangist militias entered the Palestinian refugee camps and

killed more than 1,000[4] men, women, and children from the Palestinian refugees

residing in Shatila and the Lebanese civilians residing in Sabra (Shafie, 2007,p.7). Since

the 2011 war in Syria, the camp has become home to many Syrian refugees, mostly from

a lower economic class.

Living Conditions

UNRWA describes the living conditions in both the Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh

refugee camps as "extremely poor". The borders of both camps have not been expanded

since their establishment, causing serious overcrowding. Even though both camps are

connected to the public water and electricity infrastructure, the sewage system is

inadequate, and during winter the rains cause old sewage lines to flood dirty water inside

the streets and alleys of the camps. As a result, the dirty water enters refugees' houses

(UNRWA, 2014b).

The houses inside the refugee camps lack telephone lines, but all of the NGOs

and political institutions are connected to the Lebanese network (Khalili, 2005). Most

families have satellite television connections that have been illegally secured. On the

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[3] The actual figure of refugees is probably much higher. In 1948, Shatila was initially able to accommodate less than 1000 refugee

[4] There is no accurate total for the number of civilians killed in Sabra and Shatila massacre. Other scholars have estimated much higher numbers (e.g., Sayigh (2001) & Hanafi (2003))

other hand, very few families inside the camps have computers with internet connection in their homes because of "hardware expenses, the irregularity of electricity suppliers, and the absence of telephone lines" (Khalili, 2005, p. 128). According to Hanafi and Tilnes (2005), most young Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are unable to secure employment, as they are not allowed to work as doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, and many other professions. The Lebanese authority does not automatically grant Palestinians permits to work in the Lebanese market, and the Lebanese market does not allow foreigners to work unless they have an official work permit by the Lebanese authority (p. 6). Additionally, because the Palestinians refugees in Lebanon lack citizenship, they are treated as "foreigners" and many of their rights are denied (p. 5). Even if the refugees find jobs, they have to renew their work permits yearly, which is time-consuming and expensive. Therefore, and even after more than 60 years of being refugees in Lebanon, Palestinians are still treated like "foreigners," which discourages them from working. As a result, most of the young refugees spend time around the camp doing nothing (Khalili, 2005, p. 131). The introduction of internet cafés inside the camps offered the young Palestinians "new gathering places" that compensate for the lack of public spaces for the youth. The internet cafes, which have become popular hangout places, did not only provide public spaces and gatherings for the youth in the camps, but they also helped in facilitating cross border connections that will be elaborated in the next section. Before elaborating, however, I first turn to a discussion of the theoretical framework in which this study is grounded.

Theoretical Framework

The origin of uses and gratification theory (U&G) can be traced to Lasswell's (1948) interest in individual needs, and his model of "who uses which media, how, and with what effect" (Papacharissi, 2009). Uses and gratification theory attempts to answer questions about "why' people use specific media platforms and "how" this use can fulfill particular needs or wants (Quan, Haase& Young, 2010). This theory assumes that media audiences are actively involved in selecting the content and the medium that can satisfy their needs (Papacharissi, 2009).

The uses and gratifications approach suggests that people's needs affect the type of media they use. U&G differs from other theoretical approaches in that it deals with the audience as active and not passive receivers of information (Katz, 1959). For example, Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) found that people use media to satisfy their needs more readily than the media influence them (Katz, Gurevitch and Haas, 1973).

In 1979, Blumler& Katz discovered that media served the purposes of "surveillance, correlation, entertainment and cultural transmission for both society and individuals" (Blumler and Katz, 1974). Since then, U&G research has been strengthened and extended, as new media forms emerged providing people with more options of media use.

U&G researchers argue that different individuals use the same media for different reasons (Jere& Davis, 2011). At the core of U&G is media use to satisfy different needs, which can be classified as cognitive, affective, personal integrative, or social integrative (Katz, Blumler, &Gurevitch, 1974; Lev-On, 2012). Within these needs are a host of sub-needs that have been elaborated over the years. For example, McQuail (1983) outlined a number of these, such as: a) to find information about other people or other societies, either

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out of curiosity or to gain a sense of security through knowledge (cognitive); b) to discover

the self (affective); c) to connect with family and friends and to gain a sense of belonging

with others (personal integrative); and (d) for entertainment (social integrative) (p. 73).

Early U&G studies (e.g. Herzog, 1944; Lazarsfeld, 1940) focused on studying the

motivations that encourage people to listening to different radio programs, and the needs

that are satisfied by listing to these programs. In the 1960's, researchers started using U&G

to study why people purchase magazines and why they watch different TV programs

(Eighmey& McCord, 1998, p. 188).Over the years, as new technologies emerged, U&G

research has been employed to investigate each new media use, such as DVDs, video

games, internet and cell phones. More recently, with the increasing number of people using

the internet, U&G researchers have started to focus on this new medium (Quan-Haase&

Young, 2010). For example, Eighmey and McCord (1998) used a U&G framework to

investigate why people use commercial websites. Their study focused on five different

commercial websites and the participants in the study were asked to evaluate each website.

Similarly, Rafaeli (1986) studied why students use "university computer bulletin boards"

and if this use can cause isolation or depression (p. 124). Rafaeli found that students use

computer bulletin boards as a source of entertainment and information (p. 126). In a

similar study, Kuehin (1994) employed U&G theory to investigate "computer aided

instructional (CAI) settings" (p. 173). Kuehin's study was significant not only because it

uncovered why people use computer aided instructional settings, but it also suggested new

ways to improve these settings. Kuehin was able to evaluate the uses of CAI programs for

designers to improve the quality of these programs (p. 179).

More recent U&G studies have focused on social media. Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) conducted a study to evaluate why college students use "friend-networking sites" (p. 169), and found that these sites are most often used to keep in touch with friends (p.172). Quan-Haase and Young (2010) discussed how different social media platforms have different uses. They focused on comparing the uses of Facebook to the uses of instant messaging (IM), and found that people use Facebook for entertainment, and to know about the different social activities occurring in their social networks, whereas instant messaging wasused more for relationship maintenance and development purposes.

Most of these studies have focused on how people use media to satisfy either cognitive or affective needs. However, little research has investigated the relationship between social media use and identification with a larger social group. As such, this study aimed at understanding the motives for using Facebook among young Palestinians in the refugee camps in Beirut. According to Papacharissi (2009), U&G provides an analytical framework for explaining what motivates individuals to use mass media (p. 137).

In the present context, then, discuss why young Palestinian refugees in Lebanon use Facebook based on the U&G theory. The needs that will be studied are the needs that McQuail (1987) established as reasons behind "why individuals use media": entertainment, escapism, information and socializing need. These needs have been investigated in previous U&G studies that focused on new media (e.g., Lim & Ting, 2012; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Jere & Davis, 2011; and Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008).

The entertainment need is one of the common reasons identified by McQuail (1983) for media use. It refers to the need to engage in media for leisure, fun and amusement (Park, Kee& Valenzuela, 2009, p. 730).Previous U&G research on new media showed that "the need to be entertained" is a typical motive for media consumption (Katz et al., 1974). For many people "entertainment and mass media are nearly synonymous" (Shao, 2009, p. 11). Previous literature on U&G shows that many people use the internet to consume entertaining messages, pictures, video clips, blogs and music. In addition, through the consumption of entertaining media content, people are able to alter their outlook; indeed, the selection of specific media content for consumption "often serves the regulation of mood states" (p. 14).

Another type of need is escapism, which can be identified as the need to escape personal or social problems. According to Katz, and Foulkes (1962), social scientists have applied the concept of escape to every step in the social-psychological process of attending to the mass media"(p. 286). The escapism need is related to the need to release tension and reduce depression and fear. According to Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) "people like to turn to a "dream like world of the mass media for substitute gratifications" (p, 520). U&G researchers have studied how people go to the movies, for example, "to forget about their problems", "to lose track of time", "to escape the routine" or "to run to a fantasy world" (Lim & Ting, 2012; Harwood, 1999; Jere & Davis, 2011; Raacke& Bonds-Raacke, 2008).

The information seeking need refers to individuals' desire to increase knowledge and awareness about themselves, others, and the world (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009, p. 730). This can be seen from the fact that people often watch a specific TV channel or

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access a webpage to get information about subjects that are of specific interest to them. Researchers have argued that the need for information might affect or help (Jere &Davis, 2011; Lim & Ting, 2012).

The last need studied and discussed in this research is the socializing need. According to McQuail (1987), this can include " identifying with others", "connecting with family and friends", "gaining a sense of belonging", and "social empathy". This need refers to an individual's desire to meet and connect with others and to maintain relationships (P.16).

U&G Strengths and weaknesses

While uses and gratifications theory (U&G) can aid in explainingsocial-media use and the motivations behind social networking, the theory is not without limitations. First, it ignores sources other than the media, like friends and family that may also influence people's gratification (Papacharissi, 2009). These other sources can directly affect the behavior and attitude of the person under study. For example, the many Palestinians in the diaspora may primarily learn about Palestine and their national identity through the narrative of their parents and grandparents (Matar, 2010). Second, according to Danial (1994), U&G theorists tend to ignore the negative effects of the use of media and only focus on the positives. For example, most of the gratifications obtained are positive ones (example: "I use the internet to have fun", "I use the internet because it's entertaining", "I use the internet to connect with friends"). Nevertheless, in many instances the uses could be negative (example: "The internet is destroying my social life" (p. 2). Third, the U&G approach is based on the idea that the audience is "completely" active, despite the fact that many individuals use the media as a result of

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habit. For example, many people may turn on their television set as soon as they get home without actually watching it (Papacharissi, 2009). This factor is not considered in U&G theory. Fourth, U&G is based on the assumption that uses equal gratifications and this might not always be true.

Despite these limitations, research in this theory has been useful in explaining audience motives for using radio, TV, newspapers, and most recently, new technologies, such as the internet and smart phones. As such, and despite its limitations, U&G theory can still help to explore the needs that Facebook satisfies among young Palestinian refugees living in the Burj Al Barajneh or Shatila camps in Beirut, as previous findings suggest.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand why young Palestinians in refugee camps in Beirut use Facebook, and whether Facebook has helped them maintain connections with their homeland. Furthermore, this research aimed to discover the differences, if any, gender plays in Facebook use, which can help us understand whether gender impacts objectives for using Facebook. Thus, the research questions (RQs) that guided this study were:

RQ1: What motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps in Beirut to use Facebook? In other words, what gratifications were sought in using Facebook?

RQ2: What differences does gender play in how and why these young Palestinians refugees use Facebook?

Methodology

This section provides an explanation of the methodology employed to address the research

questions, including: a) uses and gratifications research techniques, b) the instrument

(Appendix A), and c) participant selection.

Uses and Gratifications Theory Research Techniques

All U&G research studies have used quantitative methods, employing one of two

research techniques. The first is an inductive approach; it does not involve any

assumptions on the way the gratification statements are organized. Instead this approach

tries to discover the gratification factors through the research (Jere& Davis, 2011;

Chigona, Kamkweda, &Manjoo, 2008). The second technique, followed by researchers

such as Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), is based on a collection of gratification factors and

statements from previous U&G studies that investigate whether these gratifications apply

in a new research context (Jere& Davis, 2011). As with any quantitative research, it is

important to ensure high internal validity. Internal validity is about estimating how valid

the measures are based on the research design and any other variables that might affect the

accuracy of results (Leavitt, 1991). To increase internal validity, survey researchers often

employ research designs that were used before (Leavitt, 1991). Therefore, in order to

ensure high internal validity in the present study, I followed the second research approach

and adapted the gratification factors used in previous studies; I also added statements

specifically related to the present context.

Instrument

Most U&G studies employ surveys and multivariate statistics to collect and analyze data. According to Leavitt (1991), surveys are the best way to collect original data that describes attitudes and orientation of a population that are too large to observe directly. Surveys can be cheap, easy to design, interpret, and implement (p. 152). Surveys are used to answer questions about "members of a population, including objective facts about them and their attitude, knowledge, and behavior patterns" (p. 153).

In this study, a survey instrument was used that included 22 gratification statements. From these 22 gratification statements, 16 were taken from previous U&G studies and applied to my context. Additionally, I added another 6 gratification statements of my own related to Palestine and maintaining connection with homeland. I translated the survey into Arabic because it is the primary language used by the target audience (see Appendix A). Each survey was divided into three sections. The first section of the survey consisted of common socio-demographic questions about age, gender and name of refugee camp. The second section contained a list of statements about different gratification factors (for example, entertainment, information, escapism, socialization, and maintaining connection). The third section contained a collection of unique motivational and behavioral questions related to this research context (for example, how often do participants share photos or news related to Palestine?). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale (see Table A for a summary of the entries and sources used in the survey).

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Table A Summary of entries and sources

Variables	Research Variables	# of entries	Sources
Socio-Demographic variables/ Independent Variables	Gender Age Name of Refugee camp	3	Lim & Ting (2012)
Independent Variables/ Dependent/ Variables	Entertainment Information Escapism Socializing Maintain connection	16	Lim & Ting (2012); Harwood (1999); Park, Kee, & Valenzuela (2009); Jere& Davis (2011); Raacke& Bonds-Raacke(2008).
Dependent variables	Identity recognition/ maintain connection throw the use of Facebook	6	Harwood (1999); Park, Kee, & Valenzuela (2009).

Participants

The surveys were distributed to a sample of 60 young Palestinians (age 18- 29)

from Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila refugee camps at internet cafes in the camps[5].Since

there are few published guidelines concerning pilot study size, I looked at previous uses

and gratification studies to help guide my sample size. Previous uses and gratifications

pilot studies used a sample size between 30-80. Therefore, I chose 60 Palestinian

refugees as a sample size to correspond to what has been established in previous

research undertakings. Additionally, according to Hertzog (2008), the recommended

sample size for a pilot study should be between 25-30 per group. I chose to include more

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[5] The majority of homes in the camps don't have internet access, so the internet cafes are where most camp residents go to access online content.

participants, as I also wanted to include an equal number of males and females from each camp. Thus, I chose a sample size of 60, which included 30 males and 30 females, and 30 participants from each camp.

I chose Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila refugee camps because, according to UNRWA, they rank as the first (16,000 of which 9,120 are youth) and second (9,800 from which 3,200 are youth) most over populated camps in Beirut,[6] Moreover, this particular age group was chosen because it is this segment of the population that is the most active on the internet (Najjar, 2010).

The internet cafés were chosen using simple random sampling. My objective was to select one internet café in each camp using a random number generator applied to a full list of internet café's tabulated by the *Palestinian Cultural Club –Shatila* (Appendix B). I decided to choose only one internet café from each camp since the internet cafes are similar to one another: they charge the same fees, are more or less the same size and offer the same services.

After obtaining the full list of internet cafes from the *Palestinian Cultural Club* in Shatila, I used the online random number picker tool (Miniwebtool.com) in order to pick one internet café from each list. The online number picker tool chose Bilal Ayoub Net from the Shatila internet café list and Ali Kasem Net from the Burj Al Barajneh internet café list (See Appendix D: figure 1 & figure 2).

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[6]As noted previously, the numbers presented by UNRWA represent a modest estimate of the real numbers of Palestinian refugees, since not all refugees are registered with UNRWA.

It was particularly challenging to get a full list of internet cafes in both refugee camps because the communication infrastructure is illegal in both camps. It took almost two weeks for the club in Shatila to provide me a full list of internet cafes' inside the camps. Like the other restrictions imposed on Palestinians, refugees are not permitted to apply for an internet license. To overcome this obstacle internet café owners have to turn to a Lebanese ID holder in order to get a telephone or internet license. When the Lebanese ID holder gets the license of the line, the internet café owner connects to the internet from this legal source outside the camp (Aouragh, 2011, p. 194). According to Nidal Hindawi, a Palestinian refugee in Shatila camp, "It's very hard to find a Lebanese ID holder who's willing to help, that's why most of the internet cafes use illegal connections, which the Lebanese government halt once discovered".

Access to the Palestinian camps in Lebanon differs from one Palestinian camp to another. Some camps have checkpoints and their entry requires special permits. Both Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh camps don't have checkpoints at their entrances. Thus, accessing the camps wasn't a problem. Moreover, no one raised any question or objections regarding my research study or presence[7].

The easy access to the camps might be related to the fact that both camps are surrounded by areas, which are mainly Lebanese-populated neighborhoods. The Shatila camp is geographically connected to *Sabra*, which is a Lebanese neighborhood but populated by many different nationalities (Palestinians, Syrians and other minority groups). Similarly, Burj Al Barajneh is geographically connected to *Hai Al Solum*, which is a Lebanese neighborhood populated by Lebanese and Syrians. Therefore, a

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[7] Access to camps was easy because I'm a Palestinians. Therefore, I wasn't seen as an outsider.

checkpoint outside the camps might limit the access and circulation of the Lebanese

population. Another possible reason for easy access could be related to the 1969 Cario

Agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)[8] and the Lebanese

General (Emile Bustani), which defined the relationship between the Lebanese state and

the Palestinian refugees. This agreement gave Palestinians autonomy over their own

camps (Kundsen, 2007, p. 5). According to (Knudsen (2007) "Although the agreement

was abolished by the Lebanese government in 1987 following intense clashes in and

around the camps, it is still commonly accepted that Lebanese security forces are at the

very least to cooperate with Palestinian security forces before entering a camp" (p. 22).

At Bilal Ayoub and Ali Kasem internet cafés, potential participants were informed

about the purpose of the study, the risks and benefits involved and their right to decline

answering any question or decline participation at any time. Potential participants received

a hard copy of the consent form (Appendix C) with information on who to contact if they

felt their privacy or rights had been violated. Participants who met the eligibility criteria (a

refugee from the camp, between the ages 18-29, and use Facebook) and agreed to

participate in the study were asked to fill out the survey at the manager's desk(of the

internet café), since managers usually have private offices or at least the most private space

in the café. This way the participant's privacy was secured. Furthermore, as I decided to

keep the entire survey process anonymous, participants were not asked to sign the consent

form in order to reduce the minimal risk that might result from breach of confidentiality

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[8] The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established in 1964 by the Arab league. The purpose of this organization was to "destroy" Israel through armed struggle. The PLO is considered the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" inside and outside the occupied Palestinian territories" by more than one hundred states (Becker, 2014)

since the only record linking the participants and the research would be the consent

document. The fieldwork took place during October 2014.

Because I was interested in comparing the differences in Facebook usebetween

males and females in the camps, I used a stratified random sampling technique. This way I

ensured that the sample selected (60) had a proportional number of (30) males and (30)

females.

The relaxed nature of the internet cafe environment made the fieldwork easy and

informal. Having casual conversations with some respondents improved my understanding

of the young generation in the camp, and it also improved my understanding of the situation

of refugees in Lebanon. Many Palestinians decided to share their stories with me. Some

told me how they use Facebook to talk with Palestinians from their original city. Others

told me how they were connected with Palestinians from Gaza during the last war. Many

young Palestinian refugees used to write messages of solidarity with the people of Gaza and

share them on Facebook, such as "From Shatila to Shuja3iyah ... we support you", "Here is

Gaza from Shatila Camp", and "I'm with the Palestinian resistance". Other young

Palestinian refugees opened their Facebook pages to show me photos they shared and some

of their "Facebook notes".

Being a Palestinian from Palestine certainly represented a condition that could

affect the information the respondents provided. The respondents might have fallen into

the social desirability bias, by answering the survey questions in a manner considered

favorable by me. On the other hand, I believe the respondents trusted me because they

may have felt that I'm one of them (I belong to the same community). Indeed, some

respondents were very curious about my presence in the camp; for some I was representing Palestine not just a Palestinian coming from Palestine.

Limitations of Method

Like any other mode of research, surveys have weaknesses. First, surveys are subject to dishonesty. A person giving nationalist answers doesn't mean that the person is a patriot. As Leavitt (2005) noted, "surveys cannot measure social action; they can only collect self reports of recalled past action" (p. 275). Second, surveys are generally weak on validity. The respondents' opinions usually take the form of "agree, disagree" or "strongly agree, strongly disagree" with a statement. Their survey answers are considered an indicator to what the researcher has in mind when he/she wrote the question (p. 275). There might be a gap between what the researcher meant by the question and what the respondent understood from the question. Finally, it can be difficult "to gain a full sense of social processes in their natural settings" (p. 278). Although surveys can ask questions related to social life, the researcher rarely develops a sense of what the respondents are thinking or observing. The survey researcher is usually unaware of the importance of any new variable operating in the phenomenon he/she is studying because the researcher is not carrying out direct observation of this new variable (p. 275). Despite all these limitations, I still used the survey as a method to collect data in my study as it was the fastest and most efficient way, and because all previous U&G studies have demonstrated surveys as a reliable and efficient method of data collection.

Results

After collecting the data from 60 participants, SPSS was used to analyze the results

of the surveys in order to answer the two main research questions. For the first research

question: What motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps to use Facebook? SPSS was

used to generate frequency tables for data pertaining to each U&G statement. A list of

motives were provided to participants to rate their level of agreement on a 5 point Likert

scale. The motives were "entertainment", "seeking information", "escapism", socializing"

and "maintain connection".

When looking at the frequency results of all motives of Palestinian refugees use of

Facebook, the "maintaining connection" motive had the highest mean (M=1.11.,

S.D=0.37), and "information seeking" had the second highest mean of (M=1.56,

S.D=0.94). When looking at items individually, factor 1, *entertainment*, comprised two

items measuring refugees' use of Facebook as a means of providing a form of

entertainment. The results show that 96.7% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed

that they use Facebook "because its entertaining" (Table 1) and 43.3% agreed or strongly

agreed that they use it "because it's exciting" (Appendix E: Table 2).

Table 1-Because it's entertaining

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	23	38.3	38.3	96.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Factor 2, *information seeking,* comprised four items measuring how refugees use Facebook to receive information about "their refugee camp", "other refugee camps", "Palestine" or "the world". According to the data, the young Palestinians refugees who use Facebook to satisfy information needs are generally interested in seeking information about Palestine. Table 5 shows how 88.3% from the participants who use Facebook to get information agreed or strongly agreed that they use it to get information about Palestine while 55% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use Facebook to get information about other camps (Appendix E: Table 4).

Only 30% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use Facebook to get information about the world (Appendix E: Table 6),or to get information about their own camp (18.3%).

Escapism was the third factor identified and consisted of four items measuring the extent to which Facebook helps users to "lose track of time", "escape from routine", escape to a fantasy world", "escape from the camp virtually/ psychologically ". The data shows that the young Palestinians in refugee camps who use Facebook to satisfy their need for escapism are generally using it to psychologically escape from the camp. Table 10 shows that 90% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use Facebook to escape from the camp. Similarly, 90% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use Facebook to escape to a fantasy world (Appendix E: Table 7).Only 51.7% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use Facebook to lose track of time (Appendix D: Table 8), and just 20 % said that they use Facebook to escape from routine (Appendix D: Table 9).

Table 10- To escape from the camp

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	19	31.7	31.7	90.0
	Neither Agree nor disagree	3	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Socializing was the fourth factor and encompassed four items that measured

individuals' use of Facebook as a means to meet new people and stay in touch with people.

When looking at the results of all gratifications related to satisfying the socializing need,

"to stay in touch with people I know" had the highest percentage, 98.3% (Appendix E:

Table 14), and "to talk about homeland with others" had the second highest percentage,

86.7% (Table 13).

Table 13- To talk about homeland with others

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	17	28.3	28.3	86.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	6	10.0	10.0	96.7
	Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Furthermore 71.7% of refugees who use Facebook to satisfy socializing needs are

generally using it to connect with other people from Palestine (Appendix E: Table 12) and

only 13.3% of the participants strongly agreed that they use Facebook to meet random

people (Appendix E: Table 11).

Factor 5, *Maintaining connection with homeland(Finding Palestine)*, consisted of

three items and measured the extent to which respondents use Facebook to connect with

Palestine, meet people from the same background, and gain a sense of belonging with

others from Palestine. According to the data, 86.7% of the respondents agreed or strongly

agreed that they use Facebook to "find and learn about Palestine" (table 15);86.7% strongly

agreed that they use Facebook to gain a sense of belonging with others (Appendix E: Table

17); and,80% of the respondents said Facebook allows them to meet people from the same

Palestinian background (Appendix E: Table 16).

Table 15- To connect with Palestine(Find and Learn about Palestine)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	34	56.7	56.7	56.7
	Agree	18	30.0	30.0	86.7
	Neither Agree nor disagree	6	10.0	10.0	96.7
	Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The third section of the questionnaire consisted of five questions related to the

respondent's attitude/ behavior. The first question asked: *When was the last time you*

used Facebook to connect with Palestinians inside Palestine? The results showed that

the majority of participants, 44.1%, use Facebook two or three times a week to connect

with Palestinians inside Palestine (Appendix E: Table 18).

Additionally, when respondent were asked: *How often do you share photos or*

news related to Palestine? Sixty percent of the participants answered that they share

photos or news related to Palestine every single time they use Facebook (Table 19). The

third question asked: *How often do you share news about your camp with other*

Palestinians outside Palestine? The majority of the participants 33.3% said that they

share news about their own camp with other Palestinians outside Palestine less than once

a month (Appendix E: Table 20).

Table 19- How often do you share photos or news related to Palestine?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every time i use Facebook	36	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Two or three times a week	15	25.0	25.0	85.0
	Once or twice a month	9	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The last two questions in the Attitude/Behavior section asked respondents to rate

on a 5 point Likert scale their level of agreement with two statements. The results show

that 90% of the participants (Appendix E: Table 21) agreed or strongly agreed with the

first statement: "Facebook helped me connect with my homeland (Palestine)"; and

88.3% agreed or strongly agreed with the second statement: "Facebook helped me

understand my Palestinian identity" (Table 22).

Table 22- Facebook helped me understand my Palestinian identity (Facebook brought Palestine closer to me)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	39	65.0	65.0	65.0
	Agree	14	23.3	23.3	88.3
	Neither Agree nor disagree	3	5.0	5.0	93.3
	Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

For the second research question: *How do gender differences of young Palestinians*

in refugee camps affect their Facebook use? SPSS was used to generate a cross tabulation

that shows how the gratifications of Facebook use correlates with refugees' demographics.

The main effects for gender emerged on 16 of the 18 gratification items. Results

showed that males, relative to females, reported greater agreement in using Facebook to

satisfy "entertainment" needs (Agreement percentage (AP) = 57.1% and 42.9%

respectively- Appendix F: Table 23). Moreover, males reported greater agreement than did

females in using Facebook "to get information about Palestine" (AP = 68.4% and 31.6 %

respectively -Appendix F: Table 24). However, males and females differ less substantially

in their agreement rating for using Facebook "to escape from the camp" (Appendix F:

Table 25). Furthermore, there were no gender differences in the gratification "to stay in

touch with the people I know" (Appendix F: Table 27).

Table 26

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To talk about homeland with others	Strongly Agree	26	9	35
	Agree	3	14	17
	Neither Agree nor disagree	1	5	6
	Disagree	0	1	1
	Strongly Disagree	0	1	1
Total		30	30	60

Results show that the majority of respondents (74.2%) who use Facebook to satisfy

socializing needs by "talking about the homeland with others" were males (see table 26).

Additionally, males were more likely to use Facebook "to connect with Palestine" (64.7%)

than females (Appendix F: Table 28). The survey results for the behavior attitude questions

show that males were 2.8 times more likely to use Facebook (two or three times a week) to

connect with Palestinians inside Palestine than females (74% males, 26% females).

Females were nine times more likely to use Facebook (once or twice a month) to connect

with Palestinians inside Palestine than males (10 % males, 90% females -see table 29).

Table 29

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
When was the last time you used facebook to connect with Palestinians inside Palestine?	Every time i use Facebook	8	8	16
	Two or three times a week	20	7	27
	Once or twice a month	1	10	11
	Less than once a month	1	5	6
Total		30	30	60

According to the data, males were 1.7 times more likely to share photos or news

related to Palestine (every time they use Facebook) than females (64% males, 36%

females). Females were 1.5 times more likely to use Facebook to share photos or news

related to Palestine (Two or three times a week) than males (40 % males, 60% females -see

table 30).

Table 30

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
How often do you share photos or news related to Palestine?	Every time i use Facebook	23	13	36
	Two or three times a week	6	9	15
	Once or twice a month	1	8	9
Total		30	30	60

The results also show that males (54%) were somewhat more likely than females (46%) to believe that Facebook helped them connect with their homeland /Palestine (Appendix F: Table 31). There were no significant gender differences between males and females concerning the following statements: "Facebook helped me understand my Palestinian identity" or "Facebook brought Palestine closer to me".

Thus, gender differences in Facebook use indicated that females were less likely than males to use Facebook "because its entertaining", "to get information about Palestine", "to escape from the camp", "to talk about the homeland with others", "to connect with Palestine", and" to gain a sense of belonging with others from Palestine". This means that young Palestinian males are more concerned with gratifying different needs concerning Palestine when using Facebook compared to young Palestinian females.

Discussion

The results of this pilot study demonstrate that young Palestinians in refugee camps use Facebook because it satisfies their need to obtain information about Palestine, to escape from the camp, to gain a sense of belonging with others, to construct their identity and to find entertainment. Additionally, the results illustrate that the majority of the young Palestinians who use Facebook to satisfy entertainment needs, information needs, and socializing needs are males, while females generally use Facebook to satisfy escapism needs.

This section addresses why young Palestinian refugees use Facebook, based on the results highlighted above. It provides an explanation of the needs and motives, "the gratifications", that encourage young Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon to

use Facebook. As noted, and corresponding to U&G theory, the gratifications Facebook

provides and which will be discussed are: a) entertainment need, b) escapism need, c)

information need and d) socializing need.

Entertainment Need

The entertainment need, as mentioned earlier, refers to the need to fill time and for

enjoyment. This need is also concerned with leisure and relaxation. It suggests that

individuals can use media to entertain themselves by consuming content, such as video

clips, photos, and music (Shao, 2009, p. 9). According to Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch

(1973); social factors may determine the media related needs. For example, in some

cases the social situation can produce tensions, leading to a demand or a pressure for

relief by the use of mass media (p. 517).

As demonstrated here, Palestinians showed a significant need for entertainment.

This can be explained in relation to the social/political situation that Palestinians in

Lebanon experience, such as restrictions on employment, as noted above. Therefore, not

having a job means that there is little money available for traveling or enjoying different

(and more expensive) entertainment activities that employed people are able to. That is,

they can't afford to dine out, go to the movies, frequent cafés, and so on. Consequently,

many young refugees spend the bulk of their time in the camps, and the internet cafés are

one of the only venues for entertainment outside the home.

In a study on Palestinian refugee children and caregivers in Lebanon. "Children of

Palestine: experiencing forced migration in the Middle East", Serhan and Tabari, (2005)

discovered that the majority of Palestinian youth, especially those living in camps, spend

their leisure time within the camp boundaries as a result of the poor economic conditions

(p. 144). During my fieldwork Nedal Halawi, a 22 young Palestinian refugee from the

Burj Al Barajneh camp told me that he and his friends spend their time inside the camp

either "playing football in the streets, watching TV at home or exploring the internet,

YouTube and Facebook at net cafés, or joining the Palestinian Scouts". According to

Jarad (2009), social media platforms, such as twitter and Facebook, are categorized under

the friend networking sites group (FNSs) (p. 9). This group has attracted many youth

around the world. Previous studies have shown that "eighteen to twenty nine year olds

make up 78% of the online population" (Jarad, 2009, p.10). Facebook does not only

provide a means for social interaction forthis young generation, but it also has

applications that include online games and videos (p. 11).

Since the majority of the Palestinians surveyed fell within the 18-29 age group, and

those living in camps don't have many options for entertainment, social media, or

computer-mediated tools appear to be a logical choice. Thus, it wasn't surprising that the

majority of the young Palestinian refugees who participated in my study said that they use

Facebook for entertainment purposes.

Escapism Need

Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) discussed social factors that might determine

media-related needs. They discovered that in some cases the social situation that

individuals experience offers them very poor life opportunities in a way that they can't

satisfy their own needs. Therefore, they turn to the mass media for "complementary,

supplementary, or substitute servicing" (p. 517).

In this study, young Palestinian refugees showed a significant need to psychologically "escape from the camp". One explanation for this need relates to the very poor living conditions inside the refugee camps. According to research carried out by the American University of Beirut (2010), inside the Burj Al Barajnehcamp, most of the refugees suffer from a lack of basic services, such as regular electricity and water supplies. The study included information on infrastructure and environmental services inside the camp. According to the findings, 81% of the camp residents had water leaking through the ceilings, while 84 %experienced water seeping from the walls. Additionally, "85% of households were cockroach and rat infested, and the absence of proper heating systems and exposed electrical wires posed a risk to the well-being and health of camp residents" (Page 5).

The living conditions in Shatila camp are not any better; both camps are overcrowded and lack basic standards of infrastructure. According to UNRWA, the camps now hold five times the original inhabitants, the streets have become narrower, and families are forced to make-shift houses on top of others as permission to expand the borders of the camps have been denied (UNRWA, 2014). It's understandable then that these poor living conditions inside the Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh refugee camps would make residents want to escape. (see pictures in Appendix G) As Aouragh (2011) notes, "internet cafes, particularly those operating in extremely challenging conditions, capture important aspects of the relationship between virtual and everyday life. Internet cafes, via the low-cost internet access they make possible, offer virtual mobility escapism to the community" (p. 180). As the survey results demonstrated, and as many Palestinian refugees that I spoke to in the camps told me, they feel like escaping from

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the camp and from Lebanon, not only because of the bad living conditions, but also because they feel unwanted and insecure in Lebanon. This feeling of insecurity led them to search for ways to escape from their reality. As one young man told me "every time something goes wrong in Lebanon the finger is pointed towards us". It should therefore come as no surprise that the majority of the young Palestinians who participated in my study strongly agreed that they use Facebook to escape from the camp.

Information Need/ Maintaining Connection

The information seeking need refers to individuals' desire to increase awareness and knowledge about themselves, others or the world. This can be seen from the fact that people use frequently search engines like "google" to get information or news about issues that interest them (Shao, 2009, p. 9). The information seeking reasons include "finding out about current events, self education, and gaining a sense of security through knowledge" (Jarad, p. 15). In this study, young Palestinian refugees showed a significant need to "seek information about Palestine". The older generation has been living as refugees for 66 years, so the information they pass on to the newer generations is often outdated and lacking. The young generation who were born in camps have never lived in or experienced the homeland. Thus, this produces ''not only a loss, but a lack of something. The basis of identity is not only lost, but never existed, and the dream of 'returning' represents a search for identity as much as for a place'' (Lindholm Schulz& Hammer, 2003, p. 111).

Palestinians who were raised in the diaspora have many questions about Palestine. As such, their online and Facebook use is one means to address these

questions. As Nassar (2002) argues, refugees are still connected to the memory of a lost home and they use the internet, photographs, and films to bring this memory closer.

In her book, *Palestinians: from Peasant to Revolutionaries* (1979), Rosemary Sayigh describes how Palestinians are attached to their Palestinian identity in refugee camps in Lebanon and how they are connected to their homeland (Palestine) through their insistence on their right of return. For these young refugees, a need for information is about an area that is potentially geographically different than the area they have gown up hearing about. These young Palestinian refugees do their best to stay informed about and connected to the place they want to return to.

During my fieldwork, many participants told me that they use Facebook because they "find true information", and to "see the true image of Palestine". This can be attributed to the mainstream media's misrepresentation or narrow coverage of Palestine. Therefore, it's not surprising to find that Palestinians seek information about Palestine from alternative media, such as Facebook, given that the information is coming directly from people experiencing the situation, rather than reporters whose information is often biased or politicized.

Socializing Need

The socializing need refers to individuals' need to gain a sense of belonging with others (Jere & Davis, 2011, p. 15). According to this need, the social media are seen as a means to connect with people, to share news, opinions, and maintain relationships. In this study, "socializing" seemed to gain the most gratification by Palestinians refugees. McQuail (1987) explained that the reasons for "socializing" and "social interaction" can include " identifying with others", "connecting with family and friends", "gaining a

sense of belonging", and "social empathy". The majority of the participants in the present study strongly agreed that they use Facebook to "talk about the homeland with others", demonstrating that young refugees spend time on the internet talking with people who share the same situation of suffering.

During my fieldwork Hind, a 26 year old from the Shatila camp told me, "I talk with people from the West Bank and Gaza; they share with me photos live from Palestine even during any invasion or bombing". She added: "the best thing about social media is that we can communicate with Palestinians directly". Ahmad Daher, a 28 year old Palestinian refugee from Burj Al Barajneh, told me "the stories we hear on Facebook from Palestinians inside Palestine are different than what we get from media ... we are interested to know about what mainstream media consider as unimportant; we want to hear personal stories, the daily life stories ..that's why we like social media.. we hear the stories from them[Palestinians] and we get to ask back".

Moreover, because many of the new generation of refugees in Lebanon have lost their Palestinian accents when speaking Arabic, they consider socializing with Palestinians from inside the occupied territories as a way to revive their lost Palestinian accents. As Khalili (2005) notes, a "Palestinian accent is considered a significant marker of national identity" .Thus its loss is perceived as sign of humiliation and betrayal (p. 31).

It is important to note that the entertainment, escapism, information and socializing needs are not independent from each other. As Lull (2000) noted, "some needs are contained within or overlap other needs" (p. 102). For example, in this study the (bad) living conditions inside the Palestinian refugee camps can encourage the

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Palestinian refugees to use Facebook for entertainment and to escape from the camps at the same time. Also, the "socializing" need and "seeking information" need can overlap because Palestinians inside the camps socialize with Palestinians in order to get information

When examining the characteristics of users, as mentioned earlier, women and men were equally likely to use Facebook to maintain connections to Palestine and Palestinians. However, a difference was found in the amount of time they spent using Facebook to connect with Palestinians or share photos or news related to Palestine with others. Moreover, when Miriyam Aouragh (2011) was conducting interview in the camps a young woman told her "Men are the ones with the best access; they're privileged in using the internet. We're fighting on many fronts; we're poor, refugees and female" (p. 211). The reason behind this difference might be that Palestinian refugee culture is still male dominant; as such, people in the camps might not feel comfortable sending their daughters to internet cafes (Aouragh, p. 200). Some parents might accept to send their daughter to internet cafes for a shorter length of time. Therefore, girls go the internet café to do what they need to do (example: Check their emails or finish school homework), while boys can go and hang out there all night.

Finally, it must be underscored that Facebook competes with other sources for need satisfaction. The need served by Facebook presents a segment of the wide range of human needs, and the degree to which these needs can be met through the use of the different sources varies. Consequently, the role of Facebook in satisfying individual (information, socialization and escapism) needs should take in to account the different ways of fulfilling these needs, including more traditional media, such as radio, television, and newspapers.

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Conclusions

The purpose of the present research was to understand what motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps to use Facebook, and what differences, if any, gender plays in their Facebook use. Additionally, this study tried to discover if social media, and specifically Facebook, can help young Palestinians in refugee camps in Beirut maintain connections with their homeland. This research was grounded in the uses and gratification theory and surveys were employed to investigate the needs that Facebook satisfies.

The main contribution of this study lies in understanding the relationship between the uses and the gratifications of Facebook by the young Palestinian refugees in Beirut. The findings demonstrated that young refugees who use Facebook are more likely to log on to seek information about Palestine, to psychologically escape from the camp, and to connect with Palestinians inside and outside Palestine. A number of young refugees stated that they frequently used Facebook to share photos or news related to Palestine. On the other hand, the refugees' need to "seek information about other refugee camps", "to lose track of time", "to escape from routine", and "to meet random people" were not significant motivators for Facebook use. Another contribution of this study is that it demonstrated that young Palestinians in refugee camps are more interested in seeking information about Palestine than their own camp or other camps, or even the world. Future research can explore this further and it would be interesting to compare Facebook use between different camps in Lebanon.

Given the limited scope of this study to two Palestinian camps, the findings cannot be generalized to a wider Palestinian refugee population. However, it does suggest that further exploration of Facebook use to a larger sample of young refugees in

Lebanon would be useful in order to learn whether the desire to connect with Palestine and a Palestinian community is indeed more prevalent. The majority of young Palestinians in the refugee camps strongly agreed that they use social media to search for Palestine (whether they search for photos of Palestine or Palestinians living inside Palestine). Most of the young Palestinians in the refugee camps think that Facebook is helping them understand their connection to a Palestinian community and is bringing Palestine closer to them.

One limitation of my research was the social desirability bias. As previously noted, because I'm a Palestinian asking Palestinian refugees about their Facebook use, the respondents may have answered the survey questions in a manner that could be considered favorable by me. Additionally, since the pilot survey was given to only a representative sample of 60, the results obtained cannot be considered representative. When a Chi- square test was used for calculating the statistical significance of the cross-tabulation tables, the results were mostly insignificant due to the small sample size. Therefore, increasing the sample size would increase the chance of significance and the probability of the sample reflecting the population. Another limitation of my study was the use of survey as instrument for data collection. As mentioned earlier, although surveys can ask questions related to social life, the researcher rarely develops a sense of what the respondents are thinking or observing (Leavitt, 1991, p. 275). Surveys offer researchers the ability to gather huge amounts of data from many respondents in the most efficient time. On the other hand, the data gathered are limited in what they can tell us about a population (p. 275). For example, in this current study respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale with statements such

as "I use Facebook to get information about Palestine" and "I use Facebook to escape from the camp". The survey results indicate whether respondent agree or disagree with these statements but they do not offer answers as to "why" respondents experience these needs or "how" these needs were more precisely satisfied. Future research could employ a "mixed-methods" approach, combining the survey method with a qualitative approach, such as interviews or focus groups, in order to produce data and conclusions that are richer and more revealing and informative (Leavitt, 1991, p. 276).

Also, it is important to keep in mind that Facebook competes with other sources for need satisfaction. The needs served by Facebook present only a portion of the wide range of human needs, and the degree to which these needs can be met through the use of the different sources varies.

When examining the characteristics of users, as mentioned earlier, women and men were equally likely to use Facebook to maintain connections to Palestine and Palestinians. However, a difference was found in the amount of time they spent using Facebook to connect with Palestinians or share photos or news related to Palestine with others.

Overall, this study is valuable in that it outlines the uses and gratifications that Facebook provided to young Palestinian refugees living in two camps in Beirut. The analysis of the surveys suggests that Facebook as an online tool plays a significant role in facilitating communication and information seeking among marginalized segments of the Palestinian community, such as young Palestinian refugees in Beirut.

Recommendation

This study demonstrated that there is significant interest among young Palestinian refugees in Beirut in using Facebook to learn more about Palestine and to maintain

connections with a Palestinian community inside Palestine. However, securing legal internet connections inside the camps is a challenge (Khalili, 2005, p. 128). One way to overcome this obstacle is for more computer clubhouses with internet connections inside schools. This could be achieved through the cooperation of UNRWA who is charged with running the schools inside the refugee camps (Aal, et al., 2014, p.112).

According to Fincham, (2012) "schools are often key sites for the reproduction of tradition, national memory, the dominant language, religion, culture and social hierarchies in society (p. 120). UNRWA is the main education provider for the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. As such, UNRWA schools could work with the camp's popular committee for potential cooperation in establishing and running computer clubhouses in UNRWA schools. These clubhouses could target more than just the young Palestinian refugees who attend UNRWA schools; they could open their doors to different age groups who are interested in using the internet to stay in touch with Palestine. UNRWA schools could also provide computer-training courses for elderly refugees who don't know how to use computers or the internet. Additionally, this can aid Palestinian females inside the refugee camps who are forbidden from going to or are discouraged from spending too much time at internet cafés inside the camps.

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Appendix A

Survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand why young Palestinians in refugee camps in Lebanon use Facebook from a uses and gratifications perspective, and if this usage may help them to maintain connections with their homeland (Palestine).

Factor Analysis of Facebook Uses and Gratifications

Section 1				
Gender	1- Male		2- Female	
Age	18-20	21-23	24-26	27-29
Name of Refugee Camp	1-Shatila		2-Burj Al Barajneh	
Section 2				
Factor 1 Entertainment	1=Strongly agree	2= Agree	3=Neither	4=Disagree	5=Strongly disagree
Because it's entertaining	1	2	3	4	5
Because it's exciting	1	2	3	4	5
Factor 2 Information	1=Strongly agree	2= Agree	3=Neither	4=Disagree	5=Strongly disagree
To get information about my refugee camp	1	2	3	4	5
To get information about other camps	1	2	3	4	5
To get information about Palestine	1	2	3	4	5
To get information about the world	1	2	3	4	5
Factor 3 Escapism	1=Strongly agree	2= Agree	3=Neither	4=Disagree	5=Strongly disagree
To escape to a fantasy world	1	2	3	4	5
To lose track of time	1	2	3	4	5
To escape from routine	1	2	3	4	5
To escape from the camp	1	2	3	4	5

Factor 4 Socializing	1=Strongly agree	2= Agree	3=Neither	4=Disagree	5=Strongly disagree
To meet random people	1	2	3	4	5
To connect with other people from Palestine	1	2	3	4	5
To talk about homeland with others	1	2	3	4	5
To Stay in touch with people I know	1	2	3	4	5

Factor 5 Maintain connection/ Finding Palestine	1=Strongly agree	2= Agree	3=Neither	4=Disagree	5=Strongly disagree
To connect with Palestine (Find and learn about Palestine)	1	2	3	4	5
To meet people with the same identity	1	2	3	4	5
To gain a sense of belonging with others from Palestine	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3					
(Attitude/ Behavior Questions)					
When was the last time you used Facebook to connect with Palestinians inside Palestine	1-Every time I use Facebook	2-Two or Three times a week	3-Once or twice a month	4- Less than once a month	○-Never
How often do you share photos or news related to Palestine	1-Every time I use Facebook	2-Two or Three times a week	3-Once or twice a month	4- Less than once a month	○-Never
How often do you share news about your camp with other Palestinians outside Palestine	1-Every time I use Facebook	2-Two or Three times a week	3-Once or twice a month	4- Less than once a month	○-Never

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1= Strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= neither, 4-disagree , 5= Strongly disagree)				
Facebook helped me connect with my Homeland, Palestine	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook helped me understand/construct my Palestinian identity (Facebook brought Palestine closer to me)	1	2	3	4	5

Note: These statements were used in previous Uses and Gratification studies. The exact sentences were adapted to the Facebook use context for the present study.

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استبيان

يهدف هذا الاستبيان الى فهم الاسباب التي تدفع الشباب الفلسطيني في مخيمات الاجئين في لبنان الى استخدام الفيسبوك
و اذا ما كان هذا الاستخدام يساعدهم في الحفاظ على التواصل مع وطنهم الاصلي

تحليل عوامل استخدام الفيسبوك

القسم الاول				
الجنس	١-ذكر		٢- انثى	
العمر	18-20	21-23	٢٤-٢٦	27-29
اسم المخيم	١-برج البراجنة		٢- شاتيلا	
القسم الثاني				
العامل الاول التسلية	١= أوافق بشدة	٢= أوافق	٣= لا أوافق ولا اعارض	٤= أعارض	٥= أعارض بشدة
لأنه مسلي	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
لأنه مشوق	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
العامل الثاني الحصول على معلومات	١= أوافق بشدة	٢= أوافق	٣= لا أوافق ولا اعارض	٤= أعارض	٥= أعارض بشدة
للحصول على معلومات حول المخيم الذي اسكن به	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
للحصول على معلومات حول مخيمات أخرى	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
للحصول على معلومات عن فلسطين	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
للحصول على المعلومات عن العالم	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
العامل الثالث الهروب من الواقع	١= أوافق بشدة	٢= أوافق	٣= لا أوافق ولا أعارض	٤= أعارض	٥= أعارض بشدة
للهروب إلى عالم الخيال	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
لفقد الاحساس بالوقت	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
للهروب من الروتين	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
للهروب من المخيم	١	٢	٣	٤	٥

</div>

٥= أعارض بشدة	٤= أعارض	٣= لا أوافق ولا أعارض	٢= أوافق	١= أوافق بشدة	العامل الرابع التواصل الاجتماعي
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للقاء بالناس بشكل عشوائي
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للتواصل مع ناس آخرين من فلسطين
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للحديث عن الوطن مع الآخرين
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للبقاء على اتصال مع الناس الذين أعرفهم
٥= أعارض بشدة	٤= أعارض	٣= لا أوافق ولا أعارض	٢= أوافق	١= أوافق بشدة	العامل الخامس الحفاظ على التواصل مع فلسطين/ (العثور على فلسطين)
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للتواصل مع فلسطين
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	للقاء بأشخاص من نفس الهوية
٥	٤	٣	٢	١	كي أشعر بالانتماء مع الآخرين (من فلسطين)

القسم الثالث

					(أسئلة موقف- سلوك)
٥-ولا أي مرة	٤-اقل من مرة في الشهر	٣-مرة او مرتين في الشهر	٢-اثنين أو ثلاثة مرات في الأسبوع	١-في كل مرة استخدم الفيسبوك	متى كانت آخر مرة استخدمت فيها الفيسبوك للتواصل مع الفلسطينيين داخل فلسطين
٥-ولا أي مرة	٤-اقل من مرة في الشهر	٣-مرة او مرتين في الشهر	٢-اثنين أو ثلاثة مرات في الأسبوع	١-في كل مرة استخدم الفيسبوك	ما عدد المرات التي شاركت بها صور أو أخبار متعلقة بفلسطين
٥-ولا أي مرة	٤-اقل من مرة في الشهر	٣-مرة او مرتين في الشهر	٢-اثنين أو ثلاثة مرات في الأسبوع	١-في كل مرة استخدم الفيسبوك	ما عدد المرات التي تبادلت بها أخبار حول المخيم التي تعيش به مع فلسطينيين آخرين خارج فلسطين

الى أي مدى تتفق مع العبارات التالية (١ = أوافق بشدة ، ٢ = أوافق ، ٣ = لا أوافق ولا أعارض ، ٤ ـأعارض ، ٥ = أعارض بشدة)				
ساعدني الفيسبوك لاتواصل مع وطني فلسطين				
١	٢	٣	٤	٥
ساعدني الفيسبوك في فهم / أو بناء هويتي الفلسطينية (اصبحت فلسطينأقرب لي)				
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

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Appendix B

A Full List of internet cafés at Shatila and BurjAl Barajneh refugee camps

List of internet café's tabulated by the Palestinian Cultural Club –Shatila		
	Shatila refugee camp	**Burj Al Barajneh refugee camp**
١	Abu el Taan Net- (ابو الطعان نت)	Al Jeza- (الجيزة)
٢	Abu Jehad Net- (ابو جهاد نت)	Ali Kasem- (علي قاسم)
٣	Alzoabi Net- (الزعبي نت)	Arara- (عرعرة)
٤	Bilal Ayoub Net- (بلال ايوب نت)	Blue Net-(بلو نت)
٥	Jadallah Net- (جاد الله نت)	Burj Net- (برج نت)
٦	Mohammad abd el latif Net- (محمد عبد اللطيف نت)	Camp.com- (كامب دوت كم)
٧	Mousa Net- (موسى نت)	Inner space- (انير سبيس)
٨	Nizar Net- (نزار نت)	Isamselbayro-(عصام سلبايرو)
٩	RabeeShariyeh Net- (ربيع شرعية نت)	Mohammad Rezk-(محمد رزق)
١٠	Scorpio Net- (سكوربيو نت)	Sirhaan Net- (سرحان نت)
١١	Selki la selki- Wired wireless (سلكي لاسلكي)	
١٢	Shatila Net- (شاتيلا نت)	
١٣	The development center for Modern services- (مركز التطور للخدمات العصرية)	
١٤	W!-L@N	
١٥	Zaid Net- (زيد نت)	

Appendix C

Oral Consent – Student Project

Facebook Use Among Marginalized Segments of the Palestinian Community

Dr. May Farah

Haneen Khayri

Hello. My name is Haneen Khayri. I am a graduate student in the Department of Media Studies at AUB. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that focuses on discovering what motivates young Palestinians in refugee camps to use Facebook, the personal and social needs that Facebook satisfies, as well as connecting these needs with the reasons that leads to its use. This study is conducted purely for research purposes.

Before we begin, I would like to take a few minutes to explain why I am inviting you to participate and what will be done with the information you provide. You will be asked to fill out a multiple choice survey that consists of common socio-demographic questions, level of agreement about different gratification factors and a collection of motivational and behavioral questions. Please stop me at any time if you have questions about the study.

I am doing this study as part of my studies at AUB. I will be asking 50 individual to complete the survey and will use the information as the basis for my final project. I may also use this information in articles that might be published, as well as in academic presentations. Your individual privacy and confidentiality of the information you provide will be maintained in all published and written data analysis resulting from the study.

Eligibility criteria:

    -Participants should be Palestinian, from the Shatilla and Burj Al Barajneh refugee camps, age 18-29 and use Facebook

If you meet all the study eligibility criteria and are willing to participate then please note that your privacy will be protected and I will not request any identifying information from you at any time. Your data will be kept strictly confidential. I will not record any personally identifiable information during completion of the survey or after. You will never be personally identifiable from the study data you provide or the publications that result from it. In order to protect your privacy you will be asked to fill out the survey at the desk of the manager of the internet café.

Your participation should take approximately 10 minutes. Please understand your participation is entirely on a voluntary basis and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. There are no predictable personal risks to participants in this study. There are no more than minimal risks. Also, there are no personal benefits to those participating in this study. There is no payment for your participation. There are no alternatives to participating in the research.

Refusal to participate or deciding to withdraw from the study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled and neither will affect your relation with AUB. This study will be conducted at internet cafes and this informed consent is applicable to this site only. You will be provided with a copy of the consent form.

If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer not to answer any questions, please feel free to skip those questions. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a late date, or stop altogether. You will not be penalized for deciding to stop participation at any time.

After filling out the survey document you will be asked to place your completed survey into a sealed envelope to protect confidentiality.

If you wish to contact the research team for questions, concerns or complaints about the research, you can contact:

May Farah

Email:mf15@aub.edu.lb

Tel:00961 1 374374, ext: 3827

If you have any questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at:

HaneenKhayri
Email: Hbk02@mail.aub.lb
Tel: 00961- 71058879

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you can contact the Institutional Review Board at AUB:

American University of Beirut
Tel: 00961 1 374374, ext: 5445
Email: irb@aub.edu.lb

Are you interested in participating in this study?

موافقة شفوية – مشروع طالب

استخدام الفيسبوك بين شرائح المجتمع الفلسطيني المهمشة

الدكتورة مي فرح

حنين الخيري

مرحبا. انا اسمي حنين الخيري، طالبة دراسات عليا قسم الاعلام في الجامعة الامريكية في بيروت. أود ان ادعوك للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية تهدف الي كشف العوامل و الاسباب التي تدفع الشباب الفلسطيني في مخيمات الاجئين لاستخدام الفيسبوك و كشف الحاجات الشخصية و الاجتماعية التي يوفرها الفيسبوك ومحاولة ربط الاحتياجات بالاسباب.هذه الدراسة هدفها بحثي بحت.

قبل ان نبدأ، اود ان استغرق بضع دقائق لكي اشرح لك اسباب دعوتي لك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة و ماذا سأفعل بالمعلومات التي ستفيدني بها. سأعطيك استبيان يحتوي على اسئلة اجتماعية و ديموغرافية عامة و اسئلة اخرى تتعلق بمدى تأيدك لعوامل و احتياجات مختلفة و مزيج من الاسئلة التحفيزية و السلوكية. اتمنى ان توقفني اذا كان لديك اي سؤال حول الدراسة.

هذه الدراسة هي جزء من مشروع تخرجي من الجامعة الامريكية في بيروت. سوق اقوم باعطاء الاستبيان ل ٥٠ شخص و استخدم المعلومات لاكمال مشروع التخرج. و يمكن ان اقوم باستخدام المعلومات في مقال قابل للنشر او في عرض اكاديمي . و لكن سيتم الحفاظ على خصوصيتك و سرية المعلومات التي ستقدمها عندما يتم تحليل البيانات الناتجة عن الدراسة.

معايير الأهلية:

يجب أن يكون المشارك لاجيء فلسطيني ،من سكان مخيم شاتيلا أو برج البراجنة عمره من ١٨-٢٩ سنه ويستخدم الفيسبوك

اذا كان تتنطبق عليك جميع معايير التأهل، وكنت ترغب بالمشاركة، اعلم أن خصوصيتك سوف تكون محمية وأني لن أطلب منك أي معلومات تحدد هويتك في أي وقت من اوقات الدراسة. سأحتفظ ببياناتك بسرية تامة. واعلم اني لن اقوم بتسجيل اي معلومات شخصية عنك أثناء تعبئة الاستبيان او بعده . ولن يتم التعرف عليك شخصيا من بيانات الدراسة التي سوف تقدمها أو المنشورات التي تنتج عن ذلك.لحماية خصوصيتك سنطلب منك ان تملأ الاستبيان في مكتب مدير مقهى الانترنت.

الاستبيان سيأخد من وقتك حوالي ال ١٠ دقائق. مشاركتك ستكون تطوعية و لديك الحق في سحب مشاركتك او التوقف عن اجابة الاسئلة في الوقت الذي تريد دون اي عقوبة. لن يترتب على مشاركتك اي مخاطر شخصية

لايوجدأكثرمنالحدالأدنمنالمخاطر. و ايضا لا يوجد منافع شخصية من مشاركتك . و لن يكون هناك مبلغ ستتقاضاه بناءا على المشاركة. ولن يكون هناك أي بديل عن المشاركة.

رفض المشاركة أو اتخاذ قرار الانسحاب من الدراسة لن يشمل أي عقوبة أو اي نوع من الخسارة ،ولن يؤثر ذلك على علاقتك مع الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت ستجري هذه الدراسة في مقاهي الانترنت وهذه الموافقة الشفوية تطبق على هذا الموقع فقط. سوف يتم تزويدك بنسخة من "نص الموافقة الشفوية"..

اذا اردت ان لا تجيب عن سؤال محدد او عن مجموعة من الاسئلة في اي وقت و لاي سبب من الاسباب ارجو ان لا تتردد في ذلك . و ان اردت التوقف عن المشاركة بشكل كامل ارجو ان تعلمني بذلك. يمكننا اخذ قسط من الراحة او التوقف و الاستمرار لاحقا او التوقف بشكل تام. لن يتم معاقبتك لاتخاذ اي قرار مما سبق في اي وقت.

بعد تعبئة الاستبيان سوف يطلب منك أن تضعه في ظرف مغلق لضمان سرية المعلومات.

الدكتورة: إذاكنت ترغب في الاتصال مع فريق البحث لطرح أسئلة اومخاوف أوشكاوى حول البحث،يمكنك الاتصال بـ:

مي فرح

البريد الالكتروني: Mf15@aub.edu.lb

هاتف:00961 1 374374, ext: 3827

اذا كان لديك اي سؤال الان اتمنى ان تسألني به. و اذا كان لديك اي سؤال في ما بعد يمكنك الاتصال بي على العنوان التالي:

حنين الخيري

البريد الالكتروني: Hbk02@mail.aub.lb

الهاتف: 00961-71058879

اذا كان لديك اسئلة حول حقوقك كمشارك في هذا البحث، يمكنك الاتصال بلجنة الاخلاقيات في الجامعة الامريكية في بيروت

الجامعة الامريكية في بيروت

هاتف: 00961 1 374374, ext: 5445

البريد الالكتروني: irb@aub.edu.lb

هل ترغب بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة ؟

Appendix D- Internet Cafes
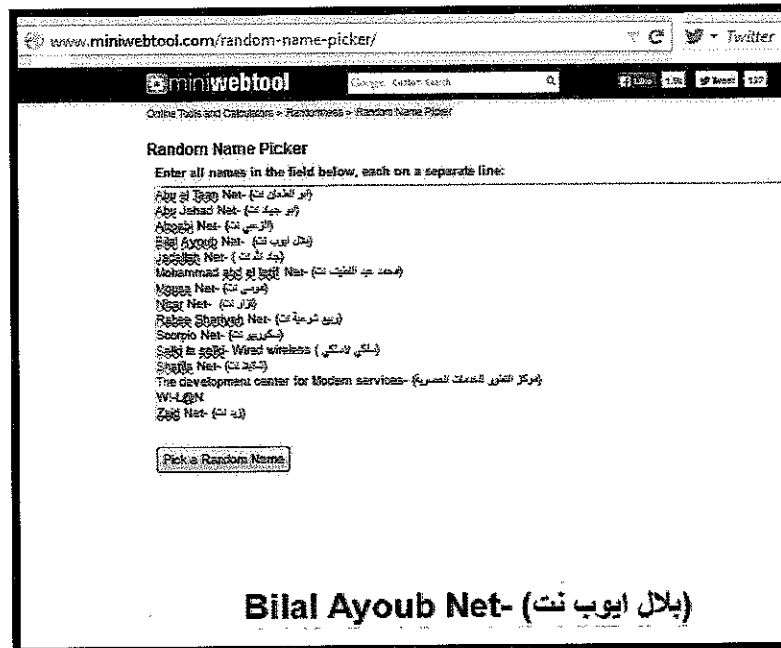
Fig. 1- Internet cafés in Shatila refugee camp
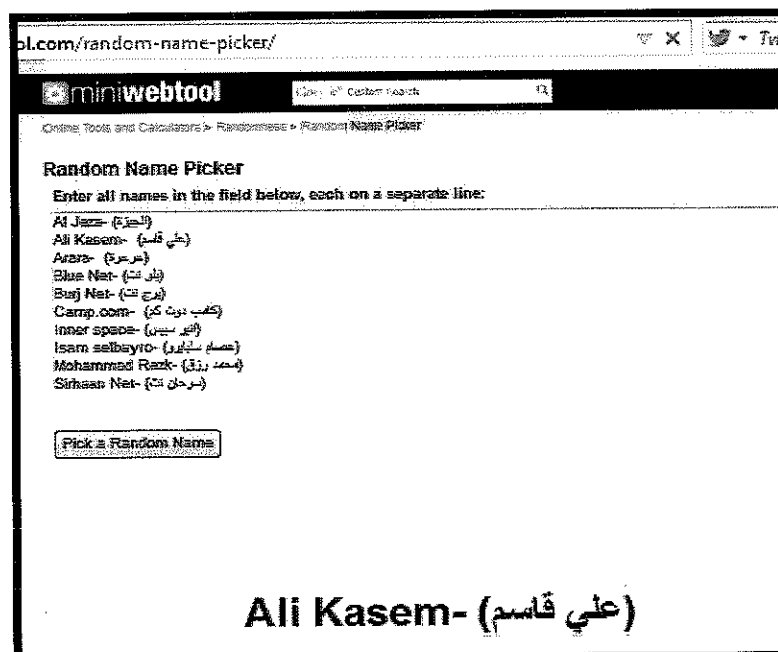
Fig.2- Internet cafés in Burj Al Barajneh refugee camp

Appendix E- Frequency Tables for Uses and gratification Statements

Table 1-Because it's entertaining

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	23	38.3	38.3	96.7
	Neither	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 2-Because it's exciting

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	22	36.7	36.7	43.3
	Neither	20	33.3	33.3	76.7
	Disagree	11	18.3	18.3	95.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 3- To get information about my refugee camp

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Agree	9	15.0	15.0	18.3
	Neither	23	38.3	38.3	56.7
	Disagree	19	31.7	31.7	88.3
	Strongly Disagree	7	11.7	11.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 4- To get information about other camps

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	11	18.3	18.3	18.3
	Agree	22	36.7	36.7	55.0
	Neither	19	31.7	31.7	86.7
	Disagree	6	10.0	10.0	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 -To get information about Palestine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	38	63.3	63.3	63.3
	Agree	15	25.0	25.0	88.3
	Neither	4	6.7	6.7	95.0
	Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 6- To get information about the world

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	11	18.3	18.3	18.3
	Agree	7	11.7	11.7	30.0
	Neither	12	20.0	20.0	50.0
	Disagree	19	31.7	31.7	81.7
	Strongly Disagree	11	18.3	18.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 7- To escape to a fantasy world

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	27	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Agree	27	45.0	45.0	90.0
	Neither	2	3.3	3.3	93.3
	Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	95.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 8- To lose track of time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Agree	28	46.7	46.7	51.7
	Neither	21	35.0	35.0	86.7
	Disagree	7	11.7	11.7	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 9- To escape from routine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Agree	10	16.7	16.7	20.0
	Neither	28	46.7	46.7	66.7
	Disagree	16	26.7	26.7	93.3
	Strongly Disagree	4	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 10- To escape from the camp

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	19	31.7	31.7	90.0
Valid	Neither	3	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 11- To meet random people

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Agree	7	11.7	11.7	13.3
Valid	Neither	12	20.0	20.0	33.3
	Disagree	23	38.3	38.3	71.7
	Strongly Disagree	17	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 12- To connect with other people from Palestine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	19	31.7	31.7	31.7
	Agree	24	40.0	40.0	71.7
Valid	Neither	14	23.3	23.3	95.0
	Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 13- To talk about homeland with others

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	17	28.3	28.3	86.7
	Neither	6	10.0	10.0	96.7
	Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 14- To stay in touch with people I know

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	54	90.0	90.0	90.0
	Agree	5	8.3	8.3	98.3
	Neither	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 15- To connect with Palestine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	34	56.7	56.7	56.7
	Agree	18	30.0	30.0	86.7
	Neither	6	10.0	10.0	96.7
	Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 16- To meet people with the same Identity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	24	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Agree	24	40.0	40.0	80.0
Valid	Neither	11	18.3	18.3	98.3
	Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 17- To gains a sense of belonging with others

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	29	48.3	48.3	48.3
	Agree	23	38.3	38.3	86.7
Valid	Neither	4	6.7	6.7	93.3
	Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	96.7
	Strongly Disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 18- When was the last time you used Facebook to connect with Palestinians inside Palestine?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Every time i use Facebook	16	27.1	27.1	27.1
	Two or three times a week	27	44	44	71.2
Valid	Once or twice a month	11	18.6	18.6	89.8
	Less than once a month	6	10.2	10.2	100.0
Total		60	100.0		

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Table 19- How often do you share photos or news related to Palestine?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every time i use Facebook	36	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Two or three times a week	15	25.0	25.0	85.0
	Once or twice a month	9	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 20- How often do you share news about your camp with other Palestinians outside Palestine?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every time i use Facebook	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Two or three times a week	7	11.7	11.7	13.3
	Once or twice a month	15	25.0	25.0	38.3
	Less than once a month	20	33.3	33.3	71.7
	Never	17	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 21- Facebook helped me connect with my homeland, Palestine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Agree	19	31.7	31.7	90.0
	Neither	6	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 22- Facebook helped me understand my Palestinian identity (Facebook brought Palestine closer to me)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	39	65.0	65.0	65.0
	Agree	14	23.3	23.3	88.3
	Neither	3	5.0	5.0	93.3
	Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Appendix F- Cross tabulation Gender/ Uses and gratification

Table 23

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Because it's entertaining	Strongly Agree	20	15	35
	Agree	9	14	23
	Neither	1	1	2
Total		30	30	60

Table 24

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To get information about Palestine	Strongly Agree	26	12	38
	Agree	1	14	15
	Neither	2	2	4
	Disagree	1	0	1
	Strongly Disagree	0	2	2
Total		30	30	60

Table 25

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To escape from the camp	Strongly Agree	19	16	35
	Agree	9	10	19
	Neither	1	2	3
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3
Total		30	30	60

Table 26

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To talk about homeland with others	Strongly Agree	26	9	35
	Agree	3	14	17
	Neither	1	5	6
	Disagree	0	1	1
	Strongly Disagree	0	1	1
Total		30	30	60

Table 27

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To stay in touch with people I know	Strongly Agree	27	27	54
	Neither	3	2	5
	Agree	0	1	1
Total		30	30	60

Table 28

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
To connect with Palestine	Strongly Agree	22	12	34
	Agree	7	11	18
	Neither	1	5	6
	Disagree	0	2	2
Total		30	30	60

Table 29

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
When was the last time you used facebook to connect with Palestinians inside Palestine?	Every time i use Facebook	8	8	16
	Two or three times a week	20	7	27
	Once or twice a month	1	10	11
	Less than once a month	1	5	6
Total		30	30	60

Table 30

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
How often do you share photos or news related to Palestine?	Every time i use Facebook	23	13	36
	Two or three times a week	6	9	15
	Once or twice a month	1	8	9
Total		30	30	60

Table 31

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Facebook helped me connect with my homeland, Palestine	Strongly Agree	19	16	35
	Agree	11	8	19
	Neither	0	6	6
Total		30	30	60

Table 32

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Facebook helped me understand my Palestinian identity (Facebook brought Palestine closer to me)	Strongly Agree	19	20	39
	Agree	8	6	14
	Neither	1	2	3
	Disagree	2	1	3
	Strongly Disagree	0	1	1
Total		30	30	60

Appendix G- Pictures from Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh refugee camps