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A USES AND GRATIFICATIONS PERSPECTIVE ON MEDIA USE BY REFUGEES FROM MYANMAR AND PAKISTAN IN MALAYSIA¹

*Aida Mokhtar
Nurul Miza Mohd Rashid*

Abstract

A refugee is defined by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 1(A) (2) as a person who encounters the fear of being persecuted for their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, resides away from his or her own country and is not willing to be protected by the country. The United Nations Refugee Agency Malaysia (UNHCR) registered 149,100 refugees and asylum-seekers as of the end of August 2017. Most of these were from Myanmar, comprising Rohingya (n=61,000) and Chin (n=9,900) people, followed by Pakistanis (n=4,200). Given their circumstances and the apparent dearth of literature in the area, there is an urgent need to explore the utilisation of media and non-media activities by refugees from Myanmar and Pakistan in terms of use and gratifications of such activities, as undertaken in this research, based on Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory, which comprises five elements: the audience is active, the link between need gratification and media choice lies with audience members, there are media and other needs competing (non-media needs), many goals of mass media use can be generated from data supplied by audience members, and audience orientations should be examined on their own terms (without considering culture). The study develops U&G theory, contributes to current studies, and provides an insight on refugee needs gratified by media and non-media activities, particularly in terms of communities in Malaysia. The study embraced a multiple case-study research design by investigating the two refugee communities in depth, through interviews.

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Keywords: Refugees, Uses and Gratifications, Media, Non-media, Diaspora

Introduction

Malaysia has refugee communities with significant human and community needs, mainly from Myanmar and Pakistan, but they have not received adequate research attention due to their small numerical proportions relative to the Malaysian population. At the end of August 2017 there were 149,100 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Malaysia, which has a net population of approximately 32 million (i.e. less than 1% of the population have registered as refugees or asylum seekers).² The majority of registered refugees are Rohingyas from Myanmar (61,000) and Pakistanis (4,200) .

Background

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.³

The Rohingya are among the minority groups in their home country to have been persecuted in the world.⁴ Rohingya refugees

² Farhana Syed Nokman, "More than 150,000 UNHCR – registered refugees, asylum-seekers in Malaysia," *News Straits Times*, last modified July 26, 2017, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/07/260905/more-150000-unhcr-registered-refugees-asylum-seekers-malaysia>

³ "What Is a Refugee? Definition and Meaning | USA for UNHCR" *Definition and Meaning | USA for UNHCR*, accessed November 03, 2018, <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>

⁴ Al Jazeera, "Who Are the Rohingyas?" *GCC News | Al Jazeera*, last modified April 18, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/08/rohingya-muslims-170831065142812.html>.

have been driven out from Myanmar, their country of origin.⁵ They originally inhabited Rakhine State in Myanmar, along its border with Bangladesh, and they comprise about four percent of the total population of Myanmar. Their relationship with others, including Buddhist Rakhines and various military and governmental regimes, has been acrimonious, and the Myanmar government has refused to acknowledge the existence of the Rohingyas as an ethnic group indigenous to the country. They were not included among the 135 officially recognized ethnicities in the 1982 Citizenship Act issued by the Junta, and they have been systematically excluded from citizenship for decades as a precursor to stripping away their fundamental human rights.⁶

There are hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees who have managed to flee the Myanmar military and Buddhist mobs and escape to other countries, mainly Bangladesh.⁷ Large-scale ethnic cleansing by the Myanmar military against the Rohingya Muslim population in Rakhine State intensified in August 2017, after attacks on security forces by militants from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA).⁸

Approximately 61,000 Rohingya refugees are currently residing in Malaysia, and as of September 2017 they have comprised the biggest refugee ethnic group in Malaysia.⁹ The ongoing conflicts

⁵ Mahalla Gaskin McDaniel, John Leake, and Thomas Wanner, *The Politics of Identity in Myanmar: The Rohingya, Kachin & Wa Ethnic Minorities* (Australia: Institute for International Development, 2017), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54c899d3e4b0938266f57ab0/t/597ee216e58c621d069855d3/1501487668732/Mahalla_Gaskin_McDaniel_IID_Final_Report+%281%29.pdf

⁶ Syeda Naushin Parnini, "The Crisis of the Rohingya as a Muslim Minority in Myanmar and Bilateral Relations with Bangladesh," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2013): 281-97, doi:10.1080/13602004.2013.826453.

⁷ Ishak Mia Sohel, "Rohingya Genocide Must End," *News Straits Times*, last modified January 03, 2018, <https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/columnists/2018/01/320895/rohingya-genocide-must-end>.

⁸ "World Report 2018: Rights Trends in Burma," *Human Rights Watch*, last modified January 18, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/burma>.

⁹ Farhana Syed Nokman, "More than 15,000"; Gerry Simpson, "U.N. Refugee Agency Must Break Its Silence on Pakistan," *Human Rights Watch: Refugees Deeply*, last modified February 14, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/14/>

in Myanmar could result in the rapid increase of refugees entering the country in the near future. Malaysia is perceived as a safe haven for refugees from neighbouring countries, possibly due to its laidback security system and friendly citizens.¹⁰ The language of Rohingyas is Rohingya or Ruáingga.

The second group of refugees examined in this study are Pakistanis, whose plight is scarcely mentioned in the media and society in general in contrast to refugees from Myanmar¹¹. Pakistan is a Sunni-majority Islamic republic. The official spoken languages of Pakistanis are English and Urdu, nevertheless, there are over 50 minor languages spoken in the country.¹² Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, successive regimes have claimed to defend Islam from numerous external and internal threats, and in the process they have accrued authoritarian leadership and frequently persecuted various minorities.¹³ There has been a continuous stream of violent conflict between the Shi'ite Muslims and Sunni Muslims in the country resulting in deaths and injuries of civilians. In addition, there is also emerging violence against the Ahmadis (who were followers of Mirza Ahmed, who claimed prophethood).

un-refugee-agency-must-break-its-silence-pakistan

¹⁰ Avyanthi Azis, "Urban Refugees in a Graduated Sovereignty: The Experiences of the Stateless Rohingya in the Klang Valley," *Citizenship Studies* 18, no. 8 (2014): 839-54, doi:10.1080/13621025.2014.964546; Aizat Khairi, "Managing the Challenges of Refugees and Their Rights in Malaysia," *Jurnal Studi Hubungan Internasional* 2, no. 1 (2012): 1-12, <http://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/jshi/article/download/1143/1233>

¹¹ Farhana Syed Nokman, "More than 15,000".

¹² Anjum R. Haque, "The Position and Status of English in Pakistan," *World Englishes* 2, no. 1 (1982): 6-9, doi:10.1111/j.1467-971x.1982.tb00510.x; Tariq Rahman, "English-Teaching Institutions in Pakistan," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 22, no. 3 (2001): 242-61, doi:10.1080/01434630108666435.

¹³ Taalia Khan, Karin Österman, and Kaj Björkqvist, "Severity and Reasons Behind Religious Intolerance in Pakistan: Perceptions of Sunnis, Shias, Ahmadis, and Christians," *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research* 10, no. 2 (2017): 193-202, doi:10.26417/ejser.v10i2; Elham Manea, "In the Name of Culture and Religion: The Political Function of Blasphemy in Islamic States," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 27, no. 1 (2016): 117-27, doi:10.1080/09596410.2015.1114241.

There is a lack of legal remedy for those persecuted by violent attackers, including vigilante mobs and elements of the armed forces, and the Ahmadis are commonly incarcerated or executed by legal authorities should they be seen carrying the Qur'an or uttering confessions of Islamic faith (ironically, if Ahmadis profess to be Muslim, this is viewed as an affront to Islam, because Pakistani law officially posits that they are not Muslims). Moreover, there have been reports of violent acts against Christians and Shias in Pakistan.¹⁴ The prevailing acts of violence against non-Muslim and sectarian minorities is the underlying reason why a few thousand Pakistanis have fled to Malaysia.

Despite these manifest historical facts, few research studies have addressed the motives of Pakistani refugees seeking Malaysia as a safe haven. It is clear that both Rakhine State and Pakistan are cataclysmic compared to Malaysia, and the Malaysian government facilitates the activities of charities helping refugees achieve their rights.¹⁵ However, aside from tangible needs such as food, shelter, and clothing, there is a dearth of insight available on the intangible psychosocial needs of refugees, particularly with regard to media consumerism. Pakistani and Rohingya refugees are two distinct groups that differ in several aspects, including their country of origin and conflicts in country of origin. Given the differences reviewed, there is still a gap in identifying their media use, which this research seeks to fill.

Statement of the Problem

The mid- to long-term goals of refugees include adapting to and coping in a new culture, building social networks, reinforcing their identity, being well-received by the host culture and having greater

¹⁴ Elijah M. Brown, "Persecution of Christians in Muslim-Majority Countries," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 51, no. 2 (2016): 198-209, doi:10.1353/ecu.2016.0014; Titus Presler, "A Toll on the Soul: Costs of Persecution among Pakistani Christians," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 39, no. 2 (2015): 72-77, doi:10.1177/239693931503900204.

¹⁵ Alice M. Nah, "Refugees and Space in Urban Areas in Malaysia," *Forced Migration Review*. No. FMR34 (2010): 29-31, <http://www.fmreview.org/urban-displacement/nah.html>.

participation in society. There are several barriers to media access and utilization for refugees in host countries,¹⁶ including the global tone imbibed from the Western media, which presents “swarms” of refugees as dehumanised invaders, whipping up racial and ethnic hatreds due to uncertainty and anxiety regarding immigration policies and enabling callous and cruel treatment of refugees and immigrants.¹⁷ Refugees in Europe are particularly acute in encountering mental problems, and are often assessed for their needs by Refugee Health Screeners.¹⁸ Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh face high levels of mental health issues, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, somatic complaints, and associated functional impairment.¹⁹

This study is essential in order to better understand the impacts of heightened media use among refugee diaspora communities within other countries,²⁰ the growing influx of refugees in Malaysia, continuous evolving digital technology, and unknown media usage patterns, all of which form the basis for recommendations to the UNHCR. The purpose of this study is to identify the needs gratified by media and non-media use among Myanmar and Pakistani refugees in Malaysia, the reasons why they make their related choices, and to make recommendations for future media use among both refugee communities.

¹⁶ Nadia Kutscher and Lisa-Marie Krefß, "The Ambivalent Potentials of Social Media Use by Unaccompanied Minor Refugees," *Social Media Society* 4, no. 1 (2018): 1-10, doi:10.1177/2056305118764438.

¹⁷ Victoria M. Esses, Stelian Medianu, and Andrea S. Lawson, "Uncertainty, Threat, and the Role of the Media in Promoting the Dehumanization of Immigrants and Refugees," *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 3 (2013): 518-36, doi:10.1111/josi.12027.

¹⁸ Elisa Kaltenbach et al., "Efficient Identification of Mental Health Problems in Refugees in Germany: The Refugee Health Screener," *European Journal of Psychotraumatology* 8, no. Sup2 (2017): 2-12, doi:10.1080/20008198.2017.1389205.

¹⁹ Andrew Riley et al., "Daily Stressors, Trauma Exposure, and Mental Health among Stateless Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh." *Transcultural Psychiatry* 54, no. 3 (2017): 304-31, doi:10.1177/1363461517705571.

²⁰ Rienne Dekker and Godfried Engbersen, "How Social Media Transform Migrant Networks and Facilitate Migration," *Global Networks* 14, no. 4 (2013): 401-18, doi:10.1111/glob.12040.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant due to several reasons. Firstly, media are central to the lives of refugees. The media enable them to maintain ties with family and friends and provide information that facilitates migration or information on the place of migration, despite being hampered by the digital divide and some refugees having more access to the Internet than others.²¹

Secondly, more research studies have been investigating the depiction of refugees in the media²² rather than identifying the needs of refugees that are fulfilled by media and non-media activities. There are no known research studies to the best of the researchers' knowledge that have investigated refugees in Malaysia in terms of

²¹ Ibid, 411

²² James Banks, "Unmasking Deviance: The Visual Construction of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in English National Newspapers," *Critical Criminology* 20, no. 3 (2011): 293-310, doi:10.1007/s10612-011-9144-x; Zuraidah Mohd Don and Charity Lee, "Representing Immigrants as Illegals, Threats and Victims in Malaysia: Elite Voices in the Media," *Discourse & Society* 25, no. 6 (2014): 687-705, doi:10.1177/0957926514536837; Esses and Lawson, "Uncertainty, Threat", 519; Peter Gale "The Refugee Crisis and Fear," *Journal of Sociology* 40, no. 4 (2004): 321-40, doi:10.1177/1440783304048378; Marie Godin and Giorgia Doná, "'Refugee Voices,' New Social Media and Politics of Representation: Young Congolese in the Diaspora and Beyond," *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 32, no. 1 (2016), <https://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/viewFile/40384/36384>; Kiranjit Kaur, "Media Reporting on Refugees in Malaysia." *UNEAC Asia Papers* 13 (2007): 8-12, <http://www.academia.edu/download/8936233/no13.pdf>; Sew Kim Low, Jin Kuan Kok, and Wan Ying Lee, "Perceived Discrimination and Psychological Distress of Myanmar Refugees in Malaysia," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 4, no. 3 (2014): 201-05, doi:10.7763/ijssh.2014.v4.346; Samuel Parker, "'Unwanted Invaders': The Representation of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK and Australian Print Media." *eSharp* 23 (2015): 1-21, <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/79108/1/ESharp%20Article%20SP.pdf>; Jacod Reed, "A Divided Media: A Framing Analysis of the United States Television News Coverage of Syrian Refugees" (master dissertation, West Texas A & M University Canyon, USA, 2017); Tammy Speers, "Welcome or Over-reaction? Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the Welsh Media," *Wales Media Forum*, 2001; Terence Wright, "Moving Images: The Media Representation of Refugees," *Visual Studies* 17, no. 1 (2002): 53-66, doi:10.1080/1472586022000005053; Filiz Göktuna Yaylacı and Mine Karakuş, "Perceptions and Newspaper Coverage of Syrian Refugees in Turkey," *Migration Letters* 12, no. 3 (2015): 238-250, <http://www.academia.edu/download/38887692/408.pdf>.

their media and non-media usage in light of U&G theory. It is hoped that this study contributes to the development of U&G theory in view of both groups of refugees and their contexts in order to contribute to the different reasons for their media and non-media choices.

Thirdly, this study contributes to theory development for U&G. The theory in the study has been used to examine media by refugees from Pakistan and Myanmar who have moved to Malaysia presumably still wanting to maintain family relationships and obtain information from their homes. It would be interesting to see how different and the same the needs of both sets of refugees would be.

Fourthly, recommendations are made concerning media and non-media usage of both groups of refugees for consideration by UNHCR.

Research Questions

1. What needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees in Malaysia are fulfilled by the media?
2. How do the media fulfil the needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees?
3. Why do the media selected satisfy the needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees?
4. What additional media are recommended by Rohingya and Pakistani refugees in Malaysia?
5. What non-media choices have been made by Rohingya and Pakistani refugees to fulfil their needs in Malaysia?

Literature Review

The global omnipresence of the media and continuous development throughout the years from the phases of traditional media to digital media makes it an interesting focal point for studies of human behaviour and phenomena. Its presence is eminent in the daily functioning of every individual, including refugees, providing comfort or relieving boredom in the time of need. The needs and gratifications of audience members fulfilled by media and non-media activities make for an interesting discussion, as audience members are more in control of the media now in terms of pulling information from the Internet as and when needed, and contributing

user-generated content to advertisers.²³ The development of the computer-mediated communication environment has rejuvenated the importance of U&G studies that were traditionally applied to newspapers, radio, television and the Internet.²⁴ The absence of studies on U&G of the media in relation to refugees, despite their swelling numbers in Malaysia and worldwide, has spurred the need for the research study.

Despite the largest presence of refugees coming from Myanmar in Malaysia, there is a dearth of studies on their media engagement and use, and aside from their basic extrinsic needs, their media usage and how integral it is in their lives remains unknown. According to U&G theory, the media could assist individuals in fulfilling psychological needs that motivate people to meet their intrinsic needs through media use within a socio-cultural context.²⁵ It highlights that media users are active audience members who are free to choose any forms of media that gratify intrinsic needs, for instance, using social media for escapism or to connect with others.²⁶ These needs vary among individuals and societies, and very much depend on the forms of media available and what is integral to the individuals or societies themselves. This underpins the question of media usage in relation to the media and non-media needs of refugees in Malaysia.

Uses and Gratifications Theory and Traditional Media

There was some initial use of U&G theory on traditional media (see

²³ S. Moriarty, N. Mitchell, and W. Wells, *Advertising & IMC: Principles and Practices* (Boston USA, Pearson, 2015): 57.

²⁴ Thomas E. Ruggiero, "Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century" *Mass Communication & Society* 3, no. 1 (2000): 3-31.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 13

²⁶ Gina Masullo Chen, "Tweet This: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective on How Active Twitter Use Gratifies a Need to Connect with Others," *Computers in Human Behavior* 27, no. 2 (2011): 755-62, doi:10.1016/j.chb.2010.10.023; Áine Dunne, Margaret-Anne Lawlor, and Jennifer Rowley, "Young People's Use of Online Social Networking Sites – a Uses and Gratifications Perspective," *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* 4, no. 1 (2010): 46-58, doi:10.1108/17505931011033551; A. M. Rubin, "Uses and Gratifications: An Evolving Perspective," *The Sage Handbook of Media Processes and Effects* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2010), 147-159.

Table 1). The focus of the studies was on mass communication that enables predominantly one-way messages, as opposed to digital media, which supports an interactive model where both the communicator and audience can act as the senders and receivers (i.e. producers and consumers) of messages.²⁷ The use of media for socialising is unfound in the findings of studies on gratifications obtained from traditional media compared to social media, marking it as the key interactive characteristic of social media.

Table 1: Studies on Gratifications from Traditional Media

No.	Study	Medium	Gratifications Obtained
1.	Herzog (1944)	Radio	Emotional needs, wishful thinking, desire to learn new things.
2.	Berelson (1949)	Newspaper	Reading for escape, reading for information, reading for a social context, reading for social prestige and reading as a tool for daily living.
3.	Greenberg (1973)	Television	For arousal, for companionship, to relax, to forget, as a habit, to learn, and to pass time.
4.	Barton (2009)	Reality television	Vicarious participation, pass time, social utility, personal utility, and perceived reality.

Uses and Gratifications and Social Media

The evolution of the media has given birth to several studies examining U&G theory and social media (see Table 2). There is extensive literature concerning the ways in which the media fulfil innate psychological needs, from quantitative and qualitative perspectives, but there is a critical lack of investigation concerning where the media intersects with refugees and issues related to them. Existing research studies has established that psychological needs gratified by media usage vary according to the types of media utilised; for instance, cellular phones allow one to remain connected with others on a mobile, interpersonal basis.²⁸ Video games remain

²⁷ Moriarty, Mitchell, and Wells, *Advertising & IMC: Principles and Practices*: 124-125.

²⁸ Louis Leung and Ran Wei, "More Than Just Talk on the Move: Uses and Gratifications of the Cellular Phone," *Journalism & Mass Communication*

popular as they continue to gratify needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy, aside from alleviating boredom.²⁹

Table 2: Studies on the Gratifications Obtained from Social Media Use

NO.	AUTHORS OF STUDIES	TYPE OF NEW MEDIA CHANNEL	GRATIFICATIONS OBTAINED
1.	Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008)	Facebook and Myspace	Making new friends and locating old friends.
2.	Foregger (2008)	Facebook	Pass Time, Connection, Sexual Attraction, Utilities and Upkeep, Establish/Maintain Old Ties, Accumulation, Social Comparison, Channel Use, and Networking
3.	Johnson & Yang (2009)	Twitter	Social motive and information motive
4.	Ancu & Cozma (2009)	MySpace	Social interaction, information seeking, and entertainment
5.	Quan-Haase & Young (2010)	Facebook and instant messaging	Facebook: about having fun and knowing about the social activities occurring in one's social network, to find out about social events, friends' activities, and social information about peers. Instant messaging: for relationship maintenance and development
6.	Dunne, Lawlor et al. (2010)	Bebo	Presenting and managing a certain identity and personality in a social context, communicating with others, and, gaining and maintaining peer acceptance.

Quarterly 77, no. 2 (2000): 308-20, doi:10.1177/ 107769900007700206.

²⁹ Andrew K. Przybylski, C. Scott Rigby, and Richard M. Ryan, "A Motivational Model of Video Game Engagement," *Review of General Psychology* 14, no. 2 (2010): 154-66, doi:10.1037/a0019440.

7.	Chen (2011)	Twitter	To connect with others
8.	Smock, Ellison et al. (2011)	Facebook	<p>Motivations for general use of Facebook: relaxing entertainment, expressive information sharing and social interaction and significantly predict general use</p> <p>Motivations for use of specific features of Facebook: habitual pass time, escapism, cool new trend, companionship, professional advancement and meeting new people</p>
9.	Wok, Idid et al. (2012)	Social media	Positive and negative information sharing activities
10.	Dhaha & Igale (2013)	Facebook	Motivated by virtual companionship escape, interpersonal habitual entertainment, self-description of own country, self-expression, information seeking, and passing time gratifications
11.	Whiting and Williams (2013)	Social media	Social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, convenience utility, expression of opinion, information sharing, and, surveillance/knowledge about others
12.	Alakkhouk and Mokhtar (2017)	Facebook	Connecting, source of news and information, freedom of expression, entertainment, and, academic purposes

At the dawn of the digital era, the current generation of audiences actively seek social media for networking purposes.³⁰ Table 2 indicates several studies carried out on various social media platforms using U&G theory. Here, social dimensions like social interaction, social motives, social comparison, and socialising are key differences in the uses and gratifications of social media compared to traditional media.

Studies by Wok,³¹ Dhaha and Igale³² employed the survey method among young people to investigate their use of social media in Malaysia and Somalia, respectively. Other studies were quantitative or qualitative studies that focused on examining the concoction of U&G, students and media.³³ The mixed method research approach of surveys and interviews was embraced to investigate why undergraduate students utilised many forms of communications instead of replacing one medium for another, and explored the needs fulfilled by each medium.³⁴

The influence of Twitter on users' need for connection was examined by Chen's³⁵ survey study, which demonstrates that people who actively use Twitter are doing so to fulfil the basic human need

³⁰ Lawlor & Rowley, "Young people's use", 51; Chei Sian Lee Long Ma, "News Sharing in Social Media: The Effect of Gratifications and Prior Experience," *Computers in Human Behavior* 28, no. 2 (2012): 331-39, doi:10.1016/j.chb.2011.10.002; Anabel Quan-Haase and Alyson L. Young, "Uses and Gratifications of Social Media: A Comparison of Facebook and Instant Messaging," *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 30, no. 5 (2010): 355-356; Andrew D. Smock et al., "Facebook as a Toolkit: A Uses and Gratification Approach to Unbundling Feature Use," *Computers in Human Behavior* 27, no. 1 (2011): 2325-2326; Anita Whiting and David Williams, "Why People Use Social Media: A Uses and Gratifications Approach," *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 16, no. 4 (2013): 362-69, doi:10.1108/qmr-06-2013-0041.

³¹ Saodah Wok et al., "Social Media Use for Information-sharing Activities among Youth in Malaysia," *Journalism and Mass Communication* 2, no. 11 (2012): 1053.

³² Ismail Sheikh Yusuf Dhaha and Abdikarim Barqadle Igale, "Facebook Usage Among Somali Youth: A Test of Uses and Gratifications Approach," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3, no. 3 (2013): 303.

³³ Bader Alakkhouk and Aida Mokhtar, "Facebook and Its Uses and Gratifications: A Study of Palestinian Students at a Public University in Malaysia," *Forum Komunikasi* 12, no. 1 (2017), 79; Smock et al., "Facebook as a Toolkit", 2324

³⁴ Quan-Haase and Young, "Uses and Gratifications", 351

³⁵ Chen, "Tweet this", 759-760.

to connect with others, which is gratified by this digital platform. This social motive was coupled with the information motive in an earlier study by Johnson and Yang,³⁶ that used U&G to examine Twitter in terms of motives (gratifications sought) and perceived fulfilment of the motives (gratifications obtained), and which compared between both types of motives. Other than studies on Facebook and Twitter, Myspace was also investigated by Ancu and Cozma,³⁷ who examined U&G using the survey method to discover why voters were attracted to the Myspace profiles of 2008 political candidates. They discovered that the social interaction factor differentiates Myspace and social networking sites in general from alternative online sources of political content.

Whiting and Williams³⁸ used U&G theory to frame 25 qualitative interviews with the data analysis carried out using Lincoln and Guba's³⁹ guidelines, developed from a list of predetermined uses and gratifications from Palmgreen and Rayburn,⁴⁰ Korgaonkar and Wolin,⁴¹ Papacharissi and Rubin,⁴² and Ko and colleagues.⁴³

³⁶ Philip R. Johnson and S. Yang, "Uses and Gratifications of Twitter: An Examination of User Motives and Satisfaction of Twitter Use," (presentation, Communication Technology Division of the Annual Convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in Boston, Massachusetts, August 2009), 19

³⁷ Monica Ancu, and Raluca Cozma, "MySpace Politics: Uses and Gratifications of Befriending Candidates," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 53, no. 4 (2009): 576-579

³⁸ Anita Whiting and David Williams, "Why People Use Social Media: A Uses and Gratifications Approach," *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 16, no. 4 (2013): 365

³⁹ Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Naturalistic Inquiry," in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 2007, doi:10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosn006.

⁴⁰ Philip Palmgreen and J.D. Rayburn, "Uses and Gratifications and Exposure to Public Television," *Communication Research* 6, no. 2 (1979): 155-79, doi:10.1177/009365027900600203.

⁴¹ Korgaonkar, Pradeep K., and Lori D. Wolin. "A multivariate analysis of web usage." *Journal of advertising research* 39 (1999): 53-68.

⁴² Papacharissi, Zizi, and Alan M. Rubin. "Predictors of Internet use." *Journal of broadcasting & electronic media* 44, no. 2 (2000): 175-196.

⁴³ Ko, Hanjun, Chang-Hoan Cho, and Marilyn S. Roberts. "Internet Uses and Gratifications: A Structural Equation Model of Interactive Advertising." *Journal of Advertising* 34, no. 2 (2005): 57-70. doi:10.1080/00913367.2005.10639191.

Subsequently, ten U&G themes were decided by the researchers and used to guide the data analysis. Dunne and colleagues⁴⁴ engaged a qualitative approach by exploring the U&G theory to understand how girls aged 12 to 14 years of a school in Ireland both seek and obtain gratifications from using Bebo social networking site.

All of these studies have concerned conventional, consumer-based use of social media, while refugee users comprise a very different kind of user and use, as presented below.

Refugees and the Media

The various challenges and situations faced by refugees has become a major area of research in numerous disciplines due to the proliferating number of refugees and the distinct life contexts they endure. Previous studies on U&G and non-refugee audiences relate to numerous different needs from those of refugees and other non-diaspora communities. Studies examining *representation of refugees in the media* seem popular⁴⁵ while there is scant research on the use of media by refugees, and none particularly focused on Pakistani and Myanmarese refugees⁴⁶ The study hopes to fill this gap

⁴⁴ Dunne, Lawlor, and Rowley, "Young people's use", 49

⁴⁵ Banks, "Unmasking Deviance", 1-2; Zuraidah Mohd Don and Charity Lee, "Representing Immigrants", 701-702; Esses, Medianu, and Lawson, "Uncertainty, Threat", 519; Gale, "The Refugee Crisis", 325; Godin and Doná, "Refugee Voices", 62-63; Kaur, "Media Reporting", 10; Low, Kok and Lee, "Perceived Discrimination", 202-203; Parker, "Unwanted Invaders", 4-5; Reed, "A Divided Media", 10-16; Speers, "Welcome or Over-reaction?", 41-42; Wright, "Moving images", 53-54; Yaylacı and Karakuş, "Perceptions and Newspaper", 240-248.

⁴⁶ Donya Alinejad, "Locating Home in A "Digital Age": An Ethnographic Case Study of Second-Generation Iranian Americans in LA and Their Use of Internet Media," *Iranian Studies* 46, no. 1 (2013): 95-113, doi:10.1080/00210862.2012.743309; Houssein Charmarkeh, "Social Media Usage, Tahriib (Migration), and Settlement Among Somali Refugees in France," *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 29, no. 1 (2013): 45-52, <https://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/download/37505/34042>; Dekker and Engbersen, "How Social Media", 405; Rityitnen Miriam Gomwalk, "Social Media Usage Pattern and Users Content Among IDPs In Jimeta-Yola Region, Northeastern Part of Nigeria," (PhD dissertation, American University of Nigeria, 2016); Vanessa Iaria, "Iraqi Refugees Informal Information Systems in Syria and Jordan," *Bulletin for the Council for British Research in the Levant* 6, no. 1 (2011): 43-49, doi:10.1179/175272711x

derived from previous research studies on the use of media by Pakistani and Myanmarese refugees in Malaysia, an area that manifestly needs to be investigated. Previous related studies predominantly examined the use of media by refugees using qualitative research designs, which are more suited to exploring subjective human experiences and perceptions than quantitative methods commonly used to assay refugee phenomena.

Refugees observe other people's experiences through social media. Social media is highly important to migrant communities in general, as noted by a study of 65 Polish and Filipino immigrants in Ireland, which reported that social media permitted a shared experience with family and friends living in the home country and elsewhere.⁴⁷ Refugees embrace this experience by monitoring others passively, sharing their voice recordings, videos, photos and texts on social media. The downside of the relationships established through social media is the contributed delay in the process of integration with locals and the encouragement of the continual movement of migrants.

For survival, Iraqi refugees make decisions based on a variety of sources, including media information. A study by Iaria⁴⁸ conducted among 35 Iraqi participants in Damascus, Syria, and 35 in Amman, Jordan, found that due to the lack of trustworthy official information, Iraqi refugees made decisions from informal

13140948378342; Lina Jarad, "Palestinian Facebook Groups: Their Uses and Gratifications," (master's dissertation, Miami University, 2009); Lee Komito, "Social Media and Migration: Virtual Community 2.0," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 62, no. 6 (2011): 1075-086, doi:10.1002/asi.21517; Jude P. Mikal and Braden Woodfield, "Refugees, Post-migration Stress, and Internet Use: A Qualitative Analysis of Intercultural Adjustment and Internet Use Among Iraqi and Sudanese Refugees to the United States," *Qualitative Health Research* 25, no. 10 (2015): 1319-1333, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jude_Mikal/publication/281171366_Refugees_Post-Migration_Stress_and_Internet_Use_A_Qualitative_Analysis_of_Intercultural_Adjustment_and_Internet_Use_Among_Iraqi_and_Sudanese_Refugees_to_the_United_States/link/s/55da374408aed6a199aaca7f/Refugees-Post-Migration-Stress-and-Internet-Use-A-Qualitative-Analysis-of-Intercultural-Adjustment-and-Internet-Use-Among-Iraqi-and-Sudanese-Refugees-to-the-United-States.pdf.

⁴⁷ Komito, "Social Media and Immigration", 14-29.

⁴⁸ Iaria, "Iraqi Refugees", 43-49

information attained from various sources, including news on Iraqi satellite television channels, phone calls to family and friends in Iraq, Internet services, visits to and from home areas and word of mouth communication with other Iraqis living or transiting in host countries.

The identity of refugees inculcated by the media is considered in studies by Alinejad⁴⁹ and Jarad.⁵⁰ Alinejad's ethnographic study explored how children of Iranian immigrants engage with the Internet whilst forming their identity. It found intimate communications, public self-representations, and convergences with other media uses practised. The idea of the Internet allowing young people to remain embedded in both countries of settlement and origin, thus fashioning the identification process, was emphasized. Jarad's survey study found that Palestinians in diaspora (including some since the establishment of Israel in 1948) fulfil the need of forming their personal identity through Facebook more than their compatriots residing within Palestine.

Social media that facilitates international migration in four ways is underlined by a qualitative study of 90 in-depth interviews with Brazilian, Ukrainian and Moroccan migrants in two places: Amsterdam and Rotterdam.⁵¹ The findings reveal that this happens by: (1) enhancing the likelihood of maintaining strong ties with family and friends; (2) addressing weak ties which is important to organizing the process of migration and integration; (3) establishing a new infrastructure by which unacquainted people can connect; and (4) offering a rich source of detached and unofficial (i.e. objective) insider knowledge on migration issues.

Social media and traditional media are given equal importance with differing purposes by Somali refugees. An ethnographic research study with surveys and interviews investigated the situation of Somali refugees in France and their use of social media during their migration and settlement in three French cities.⁵² The findings suggest that social media is strongly linked to mobility and is used for the purpose of finding a safe refuge, while traditional media

⁴⁹ Alinejad, "Locating Home", 108-112

⁵⁰ Jarad, "Palestinian Facebook Groups", 26-34

⁵¹ Dekker and Engbersen, "How social media", 405-413

⁵² Charmarkeh, "Social media usage", 44-49

provide lessons on France and French culture for refugees.

Refugees from Nigeria use social media as a source of information and entertainment, as found in a qualitative study by Gomwalk.⁵³ The findings on Nigerian refugees depicted that internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees that move to a different country obtained physical, emotional, and psychological satisfaction from social media, and they had different patterns of usage that were appropriate to them individually.

Mikal and Woodfield⁵⁴ examined general trends related to Internet use patterns among Iraqi and Sudanese refugees, factors that contribute to different access to resources among refugee groups and barriers due to technology limitations. Their focus group study generated four trends of how refugees use the Internet: Internet use was related to culture of origin, exploring online was done reluctantly by refugees because of cultural differences or barriers to Internet use, children served as brokers of online knowledge, and limited Internet access is related to increased time and financial obligations. Another study on Syrian and Iraqi refugees investigated news and information delivery and its adequacy for their needs.⁵⁵ The mixed method study included interviews with Syrian, Iraqi refugees and European Commission staff; a content and a discourse analysis of English language news items; an analysis of refugee social networks; and a survey. Several findings were generated from the data identifying the multifaceted impacts of smartphones, including the potential to directly rescue refugees, record and document events and abuses, and enable general communication through social media; and negative potential such as disseminating terrorist ideology, facilitating terrorist attacks, and enabling state surveillance. Limited data access was noted as a technical barrier that can be leveraged by oppressive regimes (i.e. by restricting or preventing Internet access, all communication via the Internet can be terminated).

⁵³ Gomwalk, "Social media usage", 20-34

⁵⁴ Mikal and Woodfield, "Refugees, post-migration stress", 4-11

⁵⁵ Marie Gillespie et al., "Mapping Refugee Media Journeys: Smartphones and Social Media Networks." (Project Report, The Open University / France Médias Monde, 2016), <http://www.open.ac.uk/ccig/research/projects/mapping-refugee-media-journeys>

The need to understand media usage among refugees in Malaysia is urgent due to the undeniable predominance of media among refugee diaspora communities within other countries, yet this whole area has not been broached by dedicated research.

Refugee and Non-Media Usage

The emergence of new communities is generated from the advent of new information and communication technologies that facilitate the formation of groups and anytime, anywhere interaction between people. Not everyone embraces social media. In this day where we appear to be convinced that social media is trendy and used by everyone more than their involvement in non-media activities – much to our surprise there are people who do not support this conviction. Some people seek non-media means of gratification. One of the principal findings of a study on U&G suggests that for all needs examined, non-media sources were more gratifying than mass media in the form of friends, holidays, lectures, and work.⁵⁶ It can be difficult to imagine life without mass media or social media, however, non-media fulfilment of needs is what some people prefer. There seem to be different definitions of non-media, one being activities that do not involve media and another denotes information distributed through below-the-line means other than mass media.

Non-adopters is a label given to people who are sceptical of social media⁵⁷. Non-adopters in Taiwan commonly mistrust news received via email or social media platforms like Facebook and Line, because of their suspicion that the sociability-oriented functions of these technologies preclude them from being serious sources of information. The study also found that non-adopters of social media had significantly lower averages than minimum-adopters,

⁵⁶ Elihu Katz, Hadassah Haas, and Michael Gurevitch, "On the Use of the Mass Media for Important Things," *American Sociological Review* 38, no. 2 (1973): 164, doi:10.2307/2094393.

⁵⁷ Shu-Chu Sarrina Li and Yen-Shen Chen, "Non-adopters of Social Media: Comparing their Lifestyles, Perceived Innovation Attributes, and Sociodemographic Attributes with All-adopters, Partial-adopters, and Minimum-adopters," (presentation, 14th International Telecommunications Society (ITS) Asia-Pacific Regional Conference, Kyoto, Japan, June 24-27, 2017).

partial-adopters, and all-adopters in five perceived attributes: information seeking/sharing, compatibility/popularity, sociability, relationship maintenance, and safe/formal communications.

Another study of 350 tourists that examined non-media and media types of information sources in tourism categorized non-media forms of information as those coming from institutional and commercial brochures, travel agents and the Internet, whilst mass media sources of information encompass advertising and reports in broadcast media.⁵⁸ The findings suggest that the use of institutional brochures has a positive effect in terms of the future use of mass media information sources for their travel plans and of fulfilling their expectations of the destination.

Theoretical Framework

Previous literature has revealed that there are needs that are felt or innate and those that are fashioned by the attributes of the media. It appears that certain gratifications can be predicted by the media other than innate or inborn needs.⁵⁹ This is not supported by some scholars, who claim that media technology can shape user needs, conjure new and distinctive gratifications, and at the same time dispute the idea that all gratifications are produced out of innate needs, while others argue that gratifications acquired from the media are largely based on users' pre-existing needs than on specific technological features of media.⁶⁰ The study opts for the U&G theory as a theoretical framework, which posits that audience members have innate needs that pre-exist before they reach out to the media to fulfil them.

⁵⁸ Claudia Seabra, Jose Luis Abrantes, and Luis Filipe Lages, "The Impact of Using Non-media Information Sources on the Future Use of Mass Media Information Sources: The Mediating Role of Expectations Fulfilment," *Tourism Management* 28, no. 6 (2007): 1541-554, doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2007.02.008.

⁵⁹ Allen Lichtenstein and Lawrence B. Rosenfeld, "Uses and Misuses of Gratifications Research," *Communication Research* 10, no. 1 (1983): 97-109, doi:10.1177/009365083010001005.

⁶⁰ S. Shyam Sundar and Anthony M. Limperos, "Uses and Grats 2.0: New Gratifications for New Media," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 57, no. 4 (2013): 504-25, doi:10.1080/08838151.2013.845827.

The functional approach to the media is adopted in U&G theory, as it does not ask what the media *does to* people, but what people *do with* the media.⁶¹ U&G theory has five elements: the audience is active, the link between need gratification and media choice lies with audience members, there are media and other needs competing (non-media needs), many goals of mass media use can be generated from data supplied by audience members, and audience orientations should be examined on their own terms without considering culture.⁶² An element of the theory entails that the audience are active agents, able to choose their preferred media to use, and discern how the media are able to fulfil specific psychological needs.⁶³ Audience members choose the media they prefer to fulfil specific needs, which is an aspect addressed by this research.

With regard to needs, for Katz and colleagues,⁶⁴ U&G theory is a study of effects where “needs” come from several institutional areas: politics, family, religion, education, self-identity, self-growth, and self-gratification. The scholars reviewed previous literature and compiled a list that classified 35 needs according to their resources and modes to generate five meaningful groups: cognitive needs (related to strengthening information, knowledge, and understanding), affective needs (needs related to strengthening aesthetic, pleasurable and emotional experience), integrative needs (needs related to strengthening credibility, confidence, stability, and status-these combine both cognitive and affective elements), social integrative needs (needs related to strengthening contact with family, friends, and the world) and escape and diversion needs (weakening of contact with self and one's social roles). With this context, asking

⁶¹ Elihu Katz, “Mass Communications Research and the study of Popular Culture: An Editorial Note on A Possible Future for This Journal,” *Studies in public communication* 2, 1-6 (1959): 1-6.

⁶² Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (1973): 509-523, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2747854.pdf?casa_token=8XqvIlhaSikAAAAA:z4q5_1-VMSu-gWBeWrbf5Y0c2YC7VgXp4jBagoLbN94_EGRAUrw0B4FqgewmBO-TrWotJ940vEyK5MEAjp2IYjQ6pyR6PVfND0CAsBf7OuYUsgGoQ.

⁶³ Ruggiero, “Uses and Gratifications”: 18

⁶⁴ Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, “Uses and Gratifications”: 513

individuals how they use the media is the best research approach to take when using U&G theory.⁶⁵

The difference between refugee audiences and non-refugee audience members is apparent, and refugees have different needs than non-refugees; for instance, the former would be more interested in linking with others, including people from the host country, to improve their language for integration and use social media to make connections with others.⁶⁶

Research Methodology

This study embraces the multiple-case study research design centred on 'how' and 'why' questions.⁶⁷ There were two cases examined in the study comprising Myanmar and Pakistani refugee communities underlining the multiple-case study research design. The case studies were qualitative in orientation, employing 24 qualitative, semi-structured interviews.

A qualitative research study has characteristics that serve as an interpretation of people's experiences, regarding humans as the primary instrument for collecting and analysing data, obtaining rich, inductive data by making sense of phenomenon as they emerge rather than based on a pre-existing theory to explain complex phenomena.⁶⁸ Semi-structured interviews involve a series of questions that are general, and which have various sequences using a less structured approach, meaning that interviewers have some flexibility with follow-up questions, depending on the response obtained.⁶⁹ The sampling technique was purposive, with a nonprobability form of

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Alexandra Mittelstädt and Özen Odag, "Social Media Use and Social Integration of Ethnic Minorities in Germany: A New Interdisciplinary Framework," *Athens Journal of Mass Media and Communications* 2, no. 1 (2015): 21-32, doi:10.30958/ajmmc.2.1.2.

⁶⁷ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th edn. (Los Angeles, USA: Sage publications, 2018), 11.

⁶⁸ Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th edn. (San Francisco, USA: Jossey Bass, 2016), 15.

⁶⁹ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 3rd edn. (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2012), 446; Rosalind Edwards and Janet Holland, *What is Qualitative Interviewing?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 110.

sampling relevant to the research questions, not seeking to generalise the findings to a larger population.⁷⁰ Theoretical and snowballing purposive sampling methods were used in this study. Snowball sampling is a nonprobability sampling method whereby each person interviewed is asked to suggest additional people for interviewing.⁷¹ Theoretical sampling is used to decide when to cease collecting new data on a particular theoretical idea due to the lack of new themes emerging from the data.⁷²

Twelve refugees each from Pakistan and Myanmar (see Table 3 for details) were recruited through purposive sampling specified by snowballing and theoretical saturation techniques. The refugees from Pakistan were initially recruited via an online search of schools for Pakistani refugees. The online search managed to recruit four female teachers from one school and two parents from another school. The participants in turn reached out to their close friends and relatives to gain another six participants. The Rohingya participants were recruited through reaching out to Rohingya communities in Kuala Lumpur and Pahang gaining immediate twelve participants available within a few weeks period.

The saturation point at 12 interviews was obtained for each group of refugees; Guest and colleagues⁷³ also reached saturation point after interviewing 12 respondents. The interviews were digitally recorded for transcription accuracy. The data was analysed using Braun and Clarke's⁷⁴ thematising technique and NVIVO 11.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There were several challenges encountered when carrying out the interviews on refugees of different nationalities similar to those faced by other researchers. There are usually significant ethical and

⁷⁰ Bryman, "Social Research Methods", 418

⁷¹ Earl. R. Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research* (Australia: Cengage Learning, 2012), 200-201

⁷² Bryman, "Social Research Methods", 418

⁷³ Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce, and Laura Johnson, "How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *Field Methods* 18, no. 1 (2006): 59-82.

⁷⁴ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77-101.

practical difficulties in conducting research studies of refugees that encompass privacy, security, trust, and informed consent.⁷⁵ Each participant was assigned a codename to ensure anonymity. Research assistants originating from the home countries of the refugees were employed so as to build better trust between interviewers and interviewees. The reassurance of privacy was conveyed verbally and in writing to respondents. The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed in verbatim and translated by two doctoral students from Myanmar and Pakistan, as the interviews were mostly conducted in the native tongue of each respective participant. The interviewers were trained before they were dispatched to carry out the field work.

Trustworthiness in terms of credibility was established through both investigator triangulation, which is when two experts collaborate in one study having initially focused on different projects,⁷⁶ and by developing a consensus between people in the research team. Triangulation uses multiple methods that alleviates personal biases that are produced from single methodologies.⁷⁷ Investigator triangulation is mentioned by the writer as the use of multiple than single observers of the same object that was adopted by the study. Multiple observers were allocated in terms of the research assistants who conducted the interviews being supervised by the two main researchers, who are experts on the subject matter; this gave additional insight and observation to the study.

Rigour and trustworthiness were safeguarded in the study by adapting the technique of the evaluation of the interrater reliability by identifying how close the themes were between two raters.⁷⁸ For this, the researchers discussed the themes until an agreement was reached between them. The credibility of the research findings is also related to how well themes include relevant data, show differences or

⁷⁵ Gillespie et al., "Mapping Refugee Medias", 2.

⁷⁶ Bryman, "Social Research Methods", 633.

⁷⁷ Norman K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*, 2nd edn. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), 291.

⁷⁸ Nancy L. Leech and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, "An Array of Qualitative Data Analysis Tools: A Call for Data Analysis Triangulation," *School Psychology Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (2007): 557-84, doi:10.1037/1045-3830.22.4.557.

similarities by using quotations and by seeking agreement between co-researchers, experts and participants.⁷⁹

Table 3: Participants' Demographic Characteristics

	Frequency	
	Pakistani	Myanmar (Rohingya)
Gender (<i>n</i> = 12)		
Female	7	-
Male	5	12
Age (<i>M</i>)	26 (years)	33.3 (years)
Employment	<i>n</i> = 9	<i>n</i> = 12
Employed	8	11
Unemployed	1	1
Education	<i>n</i> = 7	<i>n</i> = 10
None	1	1
Primary Education	0	4
Secondary Education	2	2
Higher Education	4	3
Marital Status	<i>n</i> = 10	<i>n</i> = 10
Married	4	6
Single Parent	1	-
Single	5	4

Note. Total: Pakistani Refugees (N = 12); Rohingya Refugees (N = 12); Frequency is based on how many participants each item was applied to except for age.

Findings

At the beginning of the interviews, participants were asked their reasons for leaving their home countries. For this question, each participant provided their personal accounts of events that occurred prior to their escape from Myanmar or Pakistan to Malaysia. Several themes were generated from the respondents based on their personal accounts (see Table 4). Rohingya refugees produced three themes: (1) Personal Dispute, (2) Institutional Discrimination, and (3) Violent

⁷⁹ U. H. Graneheim and B. Lundman, "Qualitative Content Analysis in Nursing Research: Concepts, Procedures and Measures to Achieve Trustworthiness," *Nurse Education Today* 24, no. 2 (2004): 105-12, doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2003.10.001.

Persecution. Pakistani refugees yielded six themes: 1) Human Rights Violation, (2) Avoid Detainment, (3) Denied Citizenship, (4) Devoid of Basic Needs, (5) Institutional Discrimination, and, (6) Violent Persecution.

Rohingya refugees predominantly claimed they left Rohingya due to excruciating Human Rights Violations. For example, R4, felt that the government enforced tight control against him:

“Because some Bangladeshi and Rohingya have complained against me with false accusations. After that the Bangladesh government pressured me a lot, leading the destruction of my house and Madrasah. I had nowhere to go then” (Rohingya Participant 4, Male).

According to Ekpa,⁸⁰ “Human rights encompass an articulation of the need for people to be treated in a just, decent and humane way regardless of their ethnic, religious or racial profile. Human rights violations involve denying human beings their basic moral entitlements” (p. 1). The inhumane treatment inflicted by the authorities caused them to flee to Malaysia in order to escape torture in their home countries. Meanwhile, the majority of Pakistani refugees interviewed claimed they had to flee Pakistan due to the violent persecution against them.

“Reason for coming here, because of our community being persecuted there, that’s why we moved here” (Pakistani Participant 1, Female).

“The reason for coming to Malaysia is the situation there, political sectarian biases, target killings. Someone who comes into the limelight is targeted” (Pakistani Participant 6, Female).

⁸⁰ Simon Ekpa, “Human Rights Violation,” *SSRN*, last modified February 26, 2016, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2738447>

Table 4: Reasons for Leaving Home Country

REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME COUNTRY	FREQUENCY	
	PAKISTANI	ROHINGYAS
Avoid Detainment	-	2
Denied Citizenship	-	1
Devoid of Basic Needs	-	2
Human Rights Violation	-	5
Personal Dispute	3	-
Institutional Discrimination	3	4
Violent Persecution	6	4

Note. Total: Pakistani Refugees (N = 12); Rohingya Refugees (N = 12); Frequency is based on how many participants each reason was applied to.

Needs Gratified by Media

The first research question was, “What needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees in Malaysia are fulfilled by the media?” According to U&G theory, users of media are consciously aware of the choices they have made in order to fulfil their own innate psychological needs.⁸¹ Following this theoretical framework, presumably similar behaviour could be observed among both groups of participants. A Pakistani participant, P4, described her media usage and how different media fulfils her needs in great detail:

“I think Facebook. Like we have applied for asylum for several years now, there should be a place where we can get update of our case there. Maybe some website, we can have a link of it. Information could be posted on it, or e-mailed. On TV, there can be only general news, if I need some specific information for myself, like if I want some personal information, I would contact someone personally on WhatsApp, that person wants some information, they will contact me on WhatsApp. Something which will keep our information secret as well” (Pakistani Participant 4, Female).

⁸¹ Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, “Uses and Gratifications”, 510-511

P4 modelled the U&G theoretical framework, showcasing her ability to identify which needs could easily be fulfilled by the media to which she could gain access. Meanwhile, one of the Rohingya participants, R6, exclaimed his media usage and his positive attitude towards it:

“Mostly I watch international news channels from different news media found on the Internet. I follow international news and like them too. I like Rohingya history too. I also compare the news given by my family members from the ground to the posts shared in the Facebook. I always found that the news posted in Facebook is matched with the info received from the ground” (Rohingya Participant 6, Male).

R6 provided an account of how useful the media has been to serve his needs and how he actively uses online media to gain trustworthy information concerning the current situation in Myanmar. Both participants highlighted the media they prefer to fulfil specific needs. Moreover, each participant showcased their ability to identify which media is more prominent in their lives, related to how it fulfils their needs. This output were responses given to the question, “What sort of needs could be fulfilled by the media they have chosen?” The given responses indicate that the U&G theory is appropriate within the refugee context as it highlights that users are actively choosing the media to fulfil specific needs.⁸²

Following an in-depth analysis, there are several distinct needs and types of media outlets specified by participants across both groups. A specific need could be highly prevalent in one group but relatively unnecessary in the other group. In addition, a specific type of media could be a conventional media in one group to fulfil needs whilst being absent in the other group. The types of media and the needs they fulfil is outlined in Table 5, including those with the highest frequency for each respective need. The themes with the highest frequency are explained below.

⁸² Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, “Uses and Gratifications”, 510-511

Table 5: Needs Fulfilled by Media

NEEDS FULFILLED	MEDIA	PAKISTANI	ROHINGYAS
The Need for Connection	Facebook	7	1
	WhatsApp	10	2
The Need for Cultural Retention	YouTube	-	1
	Facebook	-	1
The Need for Education	Internet Websites	1	-
	YouTube	1	1
The Need for Entertainment	Facebook	4	1
	YouTube	4	3
The Need for Information	Facebook	7	2
	Online webpage	4	-
	WhatsApp	1	7
The Need for News	Facebook	5	11
	Ethnic Media	1	3
	Online News Channels	1	4
	Instagram	1	-
The Need to fulfil Professional Conduct	WhatsApp	-	1
	WeChat	-	1
	Facebook	1	-

Note. Total: Pakistani Refugees ($N = 12$); Rohingya Refugees ($N = 12$); Frequency is based on how many participants mentioned which media fulfilling which need.

Pakistani Refugees: The Need for Connection

There is a noticeable difference between what is regarded as the dominant need among the two groups that is fulfilled by the media. Pakistani refugees emphasised that the need for connection is imperative in their daily lives, fulfilled by a selected number of media, the most frequent of which were identified by participants as WhatsApp and Facebook (Table 5). For example, P2 described how WhatsApp and Facebook helped her overcome the distance to connect her and her family members:

“I mean in Pakistan we may not use it that much, but because you are far from your family, and wherever the family is in the world you are in contact with them through WhatsApp, through Facebook” (Pakistani Participant 2, Female).

This need is also visible for P4, as she highlighted media such as WhatsApp and Facebook having importance in her life by allowing her to connect, share and exchange information with a large number of people:

“I am used to with WhatsApp and Facebook... We use it to be in contact with friends and family. Also for all types of information. Like when I want any type of information, I post the question on Facebook. I have lots of friends, lots of groups, I get answer somehow or the other” (Pakistani Participant 4, Female).

Pakistani Refugees: The Need for Information

Among other prevalent needs identified by Pakistani refugees include the need to obtain information, the need for news, and the need for entertainment (see Table 5). Facebook seems to be a popular media outlet for the group to obtain general information. The most common specifically identified information they needed was current refugee status, which was obtained through webpages and not social media. For instance, P10 specified that most of the relevant information regarding refugees could be attained through multiple websites on the Internet:

“Mostly from Internet and from websites, we get most of the information about refugees” (Pakistani Participant 10, Male).

In addition, P6 and P9 regularly checked the official UN website to gain information on their refugee status:

“...we use UNO [United Nations Organisation] accounts to help us update” (Pakistani Participant 6, Female).

“For information about refugee status, we check website of UNHCR regularly or email them, but they are very slow to reply” (Pakistani Participant 9, Male).

Based on the responses given, it can be seen that obtaining information related to refugee status is crucial among Pakistani refugees, and they seek this information from the Internet due to the inefficient and delayed service from the office. Therefore, many others have resorted to seeking this information through Facebook instead, such as P2 and P4’s remarks:

“You can have information on Facebook. You see we are sitting here [in Malaysia] for a long time after giving an interview [to the UNHCR], we don’t know what the progress is. They can post progress on their website” (Pakistani Participant 2, Female).

“I think Facebook. Like we have applied for asylum for several years now, there should be a place where we can get an update of our case there. Maybe some website, we can have a link for it” (Pakistani Participant 4, Female).

Some participants (P2 and P4) expressed their concern over their prolonged stay in Malaysia and the lack of resources by which they can receive updates regarding their refugee status. They resorted to seeking the latest information on Facebook instead, but still insisted that the UNHCR ought to provide their current progress on their official website.

Pakistani Refugees: The Need for News

In order to fulfil their need for news, the majority of participants chose Facebook to stay updated. P2 mentioned that Facebook has a range of news channels available for her to access, and P11 uses Facebook to keep updated with news from around the world.

“Facebook has all news channels. I have joined many news channels there” (Pakistani Participant 2, Female).

“And Facebook keeps me informed with what is going on in the parts of the world, in my country, Pakistan. Also here in Malaysia” (Pakistani Participant 11, Male).

Pakistani Refugees: The Need for Entertainment

The participants claimed that Facebook and YouTube collectively have a wealth of movies, dramas and news videos which could easily be viewed and downloaded to gratify their needs for entertainment, as remarked by P9 and P11:

“For entertainment we use Facebook as well as YouTube, where we can download videos for entertainment in the form of movies, dramas, news, and such” (Pakistani Participant 9, Male).

“For entertainment, YouTube, we can see movies, dramas, also information” (Pakistani Participant 11, Male).

Online digital media is the most popular source for the participants to fulfil their needs, and only one participant cited television.

“Television, because in a country like this, we need something for entertainment... Cartoons and things like this” (Pakistani Participant 1, Female).

The Pakistani refugees who claimed that the media gratifies their entertainment needs showed a preference for media that could be viewed visually without doing any physical movement, such as movies, dramas, or cartoons.

Rohingya Refugees: The Need for News

In contrast to the Pakistani participants, there was a lacklustre list of needs fulfilled by the media among Rohingya refugees. The need for news was their most prominent need, mentioned by all participants. One participant emphasised how the media is able to provide news on Rohingya, especially tragic cases of the kind they personally had endured before residing in Malaysia, and which could now be affecting the lives of their loved ones.

The needs fulfilled by the media are...We need to contact with the country [Myanmar], as I do community-based works. As we came here due to persecution and hardships, thus, we need to know what is happening or not happening in the country round the clock (24 hours) (Rohingya Participant, 8, Male).

Most of the participants chose Facebook as a reliable source to acquire the latest updates from Myanmar, as supported by the following quotes by R10 and R12:

“From Facebook... If something happens in the country, we could watch and see... I watch the news about the persecution and genocide of Rohingya from the Internet, through social media... I watch the latest news videos and pictures about Rohingyas... The social media users and some from the ground... I write comments [i.e. advocacy, including on fake news posts]” (Rohingya Participant 10, Male).

“I watch the videos related to our Rohingya situations in Myanmar [on Facebook]. For example, how Rakhine are carrying attacks on Rohingya Muslims in Maungdaw, how Rohingyas are being persecuted, etc” (Rohingya Participant 12, Male)

However, the majority of participants were aware of fake news circulating through various media outlets, and R8 for example distrusts the official reports from the Myanmar government or any information disseminated by the nation’s news outlets:

“We can’t believe these media, but I still check them to know what bogus news they are broadcasting there. I keep myself alerted to what kind of fake news they are spreading” (Rohingya Participant 8, Male).

Some participants used Rohingya ethnic media as a source they deemed most reliable and authentic:

“RVision, ANA [Arakan News Agency], Arakan Times, for getting true and real news” (Rohingya Participant 1, Male).

With Rohingya refugees physically distant from their hometowns, coupled by the unreliable news outlets that restrict Rohingya refugees from acquiring accurate and up-to-date situation in Myanmar, Rohingya refugees have been accessing other news outlets to obtain verified and authentic news. For instance, R6 would compare the news obtained via Facebook with the news sent out by family members from Myanmar to ensure similarity:

“Mostly I watch international news channels from different news media found in internet. I follow international news and like them too. I like Rohingya history too. I also compare the news given by my family members from the ground to the posts shared in the Facebook. I always found that the news posted in Facebook is matched with the info received from the ground” (Rohingya Participant 6, Male).

The above participant exemplifies a common medium used by Rohingya refugees to verify the authenticity of news: WhatsApp. The news or current situation in Myanmar could easily be obtained and most often verified for its authenticity by contacting friends or family members who are presently in Myanmar using WhatsApp:

“I prefer WhatsApp group for my country news, because it consists of my friends and family members who give the real information on the Rohingya situation... I don't merely share or forward the news without verifying it immediately, through friends in Myanmar” (Rohingya Participant 3, Male)

“I contact (them) through Imo and WhatsApp, and I have some colleagues who used to be the teachers with me in Maungdaw” (Rohingya Participant 5, Male).

Direct phone calls are used on certain occasions, albeit they are an unpopular option, mainly to verify the authenticity of particularly egregious unpleasant news:

“Yes, I called sometimes for verifying the news, if I hear something problematic” (Rohingya Participant 9, Male).

“I can’t do anything to Rakhine and/or Buddhist mobs of Myanmar from here, but I could call my parents and siblings there. If there is any serious issue, then I call directly... I use direct phone call to talk to them. My parents and siblings in Myanmar need to use the phone secretly” (Rohingya Participant, 12, Male).

Rohingya Refugees: The Need for Entertainment

The need for news was subsequently followed by the need for entertainment, with a great difference in the frequency of mentions relative to the ubiquity of using the media for information; five Rohingya participants out of twelve mentioned how media fulfilled their need for entertainment. The need for entertainment in media usage appears to be eminent among the Pakistani refugees, but is less so for their Rohingya counterparts. Less than half of the participants whom had partaken in this study mentioned their need for entertainment fulfilled by the media (Table 5). Among these, most chose YouTube as a source of media to gratify their entertainment needs. When prompted regarding entertainment needs, a few participants specifically seek for religious content as preferred content for entertainment videos:

“Islamic lectures instead of entertainment videos...I always prefer to watch entertainment videos via YouTube” (Rohingya Participant 2, Male).

“Yes, I don’t [watch entertainment videos]. I watch Islamic lectures...It is free to use after 12 midnight, at this time I watch Islamic lectures from YouTube” (Rohingya Participant 9, Male).

Based on the quotations presented above, R2 and R9 chose to seek videos containing Islamic lectures as a form of entertainment instead

of other available choices. However, YouTube was not the only source of entertainment as another participant chose to use Facebook and Television to watch entertainment videos:

“I watch Mr. Bean’s funny videos in Facebook and some of his movies on television” (Rohingya Participant 10, Male).

Similarly, Rohingya and Pakistani refugees prefer visually stimulating media to gratify entertainment needs however, the Rohingya preference leaned towards informative and religious affiliated content.

Reasons Why the Media Fulfils the Needs of Rohingya and Pakistani Refugees

The second research question, ‘Why do the media fulfil the needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees?’ has six themes generated from interviews with Pakistani refugees and five themes from the interviews with Myanmar refugees (Table 6). Pakistani refugees used the media to fulfil their needs outlined in themes such as entertainment, information/news updates, wealth of information, linkage, convenience and affordability. Rohingya refugees used the media to fulfil their needs for: entertainment, information news/updates, wealth of information, positive attitude to media, linkage, convenience, affordability and religion.

Following U&G theory, we asked the participants regarding their reasons for choosing media to gratify their personal needs. The theory sees every individual as an active agent who consciously selects and uses media based on their pre-defined needs.⁸³ The results of the interviews indicate that each subject has pre-defined values of what needs they desire from the media and on what basis they consciously select media options. This section specifies why each subject chose media to fulfil some of their basic needs, based on the nature of the medium.

The theme with the most number of codes for Rohingya (nine codes) and Pakistani refugees (seven codes) was for

⁸³ Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, “Uses and Gratifications”, 511

Information/News Updates that demonstrated that both groups of refugees selected the different media mainly for obtaining the latest information and news. The specific types of information and news and diversity of media use differed between them. Rohingya refugees were mostly interested in news from home that were reliable as demonstrated by the large frequency of codes for Rohingya news, and the assortment of media that were selected to fulfil this need (see Table 6). Pakistani refugees were more diverse in their reasons for obtaining information updates and news, as the codes for the theme were: official information on immigration, share information in groups, good for photos not information, information can be secretive, international information of different events, upload status and access to news (see Table 6).

The Rohingyas went further than the Pakistanis in acquiring information and news updates, as underscored by R6 and R8, who indicated that attaining credible news is imperative for them through verification of news and accessing credible media.

Table 6: Reasons for Media Selection to Fulfil Needs by Myanmarese and Pakistani Refugees

THEMES	PAKISTANIS			ROHINGYAS		
	CODES	MEDIA	CODES	MEDIA	CODES	MEDIA
Entertainment	need for movies and entertainment fulfilled	TV, Facebook, YouTube	watches videos shared			Facebook
Information/news updates	videos can be downloaded	YouTube, Facebook	-	-	-	-
	official information on immigration	social media, website	positive attitude to true and real news			ethnic media
	share information in groups	Pakistani channels on Internet	source of news is reliable			Friends, Imo, WhatsApp, Facebook
	good for photos not information	Instagram	used to verify news			WhatsApp (2), Facebook
	information can be more secretive	WhatsApp	watch videos			YouTube
	international info of different events	Facebook (2)	Rohingya news			International news media (2), Ethnic media, children, WhatsApp, WeChat, Facebook (3)
	upload status	Facebook	current news/history			Facebook (2), Twitter, Imo, WA, WeChat
	access to news	Facebook and WhatsApp	children help show news on Facebook			Facebook
	-	-	serious issues			phones (personal medium)
	-	-	accurate/truthful			Facebook, international media

Wealth of information	many news channels on social media	Facebook, Twitter	global news	Facebook
	a lot of information to access	YouTube (2), electronic media	local news	WhatsApp
Positive attitude	-	-	all sorts of news	Facebook, WhatsApp
	-	-	positive attitude to Facebook (2)	Facebook
	-	-	likes news from Saudi Arabia	ANA
	-	-	user friendly	WhatsApp
Linkage	keeping in touch with each other (like UNHCR)	Facebook (2), WhatsApp	trendy	Facebook
	-	-	call friends	WhatsApp
Convenience	linking with others all over the world	WhatsApp (4), Facebook	light communication	WhatsApp
	easy to use	Facebook	talk to family members from afar	Facebook
	easy to get access to entertainment from home	Internet, move channels online	-	-
Affordability	Can contact friends and family at a reasonable price	Facebook	free to use after 12am	YouTube
	Affordable to use	Facebook	-	-
Religion	-	-	media fulfils need to get reward from Allah SWT	WhatsApp
	-	-	religion	Facebook

Note. Total: Pakistani Refugees (N = 12); Rohingya Refugees (N = 12); Frequency is based on how many mentions were made for each reason and medium

“Mostly I watch International news channels from different news media found in Internet. I follow international news and like them too. I like Rohingya history too. I also compare the news given by my family members from the ground to the posts shared in the Facebook. I always found that the news posted in Facebook is matched with the info received from the ground” (Rohingya Participant 6, Male).

“Outside of Myanmar, for example, Al-Jazeera, VOA [Voice of America], BBC, The Guardian, CNN and other types of media available that I have in my phone. After looking at the news of these media, I get the real info about what is happening in my country. I also can decide what should we do and how could we help those stranded in Bangladesh for instance” (Rohingya Participant 8, Male).

Pakistani refugees mentioned the use of social media for various reasons related to the features of the media themselves. There was the use of social media for obtaining Information/News Updates in the form of their refugee status, information with others through WhatsApp, photos on Instagram and television channels online to obtain updated information or knowledge in a language they understood, as mentioned by P2 and P11, and information that is obtainable through Facebook, as mentioned by P11.

“In Pakistan we used it (social media) too, but because TV was one option there, every hour news from news channels there, now that we don’t have TV here, we use social media a lot here. I keep myself updated through joining lots of Pakistani channels on the Internet. I do not use Malaysian channels due to language, as I do not know Malay. But English channels on the internet satisfy our need for information and entertainment as well. I feel I am much more aware than before” (Pakistani Participant 2, Male).

The next two research questions ask whether the media in Malaysia satisfies the needs of Rohingya and Pakistani refugees and what additional media are recommended by them. This was important to provide insight to UNHCR as to whether the current media in Malaysia is sufficient, and whether additional forms of media are needed for both groups of refugees in Malaysia. Reasons that depended on Religion and Positive Attitudes to the Media were the two themes generated from the interviews with Rohingyas but absent with Pakistani refugees.

“Yes, media fulfils my needs because I like ‘Facebook’” (Rohingya Participant 1, Male).

“I watch videos about Quran and Hadiths, especially from the Book of Al-Bukhari and Muslim, and different associated books (FB)” (Rohingya Participant 6, Male).

Table 7: Frequency of Current Media Sufficiency and Recommendations

THEMES	CODES	PAKISTANI	CODES	ROHINGYAS
INSUFFICIENT	-		Daily newspaper in Myanmar needed	8
	Recommends more Malaysian media in English and Urdu as language is a problem of local media	10	Malaysian media need to cooperate with Rohingya media	1
	-	-	Satellite television	1
	Total	10	Total	10
SUFFICIENT	Media satisfaction	2	No other media needed	2
		2	Total	2

The third and fourth research questions have the following dominant codes mentioned by ten respondents from the twelve interviewed: refugees from Myanmar are dissatisfied with the media in Malaysia, they call for a daily newspaper in Myanmar language, the cooperation of Malaysian media and ethnic media to disseminate news, and the formation of satellite television (see Table 7). Only two respondents were satisfied with the media in Malaysia in meeting their needs. The problem of not understanding the media language in Malaysia spurred the respondents to bring up the recommendation of having their own daily newspaper. As for Pakistani refugees, ten respondents recommended that the media in Malaysia should be available in Urdu and English, for their better understanding and two people felt no other media are required.

Non-Media Choices by Pakistani and Rohingya Refugees

For the fifth research question, “What non-media choices have been made by Rohingya and Pakistani refugees in Malaysia to fulfil their needs?” to clarify amidst the omnipotent presence of media in their daily lives, do they seek for non-media to gratify their needs. When asked, Rohingya refugees generally look out for Rohingya society or network meetings to acquire news related to Rohingya issues.

“The non-media choices I prefer are organizations of Rohingya in Malaysia... RSM [Rohingya Society Malaysia] and Rohingya Women Development Network” (Rohingya Participant 3, Male).

“I don’t know who the President of RSPM (Rohingya Society Pahang Malaysia) is, but I have attended few of their programs. RSPM does weekly or monthly programs, but I attended when it invited us publicly” (Rohingya Participant 11, Male).

Aside from that, some others conduct casual family gatherings or meetings among friends to either acquire news or for connection, or simply for connection:

“As for non-media choice, if I arrived to the office, I ask the people about the updated news of the day and they

can reply me the required info in a very short time...
When I am back to my house from UIA, I have my father, mother and brother at the house whom I ask about the news updates on the situation in my country” (Rohingya Participant 8, Male).

“I gossip with friends if I have to wait for the food [at wedding ceremonies]” (Rohingya Participant, 12, Male).

There seems to be a pattern of the Rohingya refugees actively seeking news, predominantly allowing them to know current events taking place in Myanmar. Meanwhile, Pakistani refugees were more creative in their non-media choices to gratify multiple needs. Notably, they seek out non-media sources to gratify needs for entertainment, information, and connection, including seminars, conferences, or workshops:

“In addition there are NGOs here, they also have conferences and workshops we can attend...” (Pakistani Participant 6, Female)

Moreover, P6 also had a wide range of networking with other Pakistani refugees and community workers, which helped her to gain useful information for residing in Malaysia.

“About non-media choices, the Pakistanis who have come here before us, the old Pakistanis, we take guidance from them. Or maybe any Malay or any other community person with us on the job, we take information from them. They give us guidelines” (Pakistani Participant 6, Female).

P9 mentioned that non-media could gratify her entertainment needs, such as visiting gaming clubs in malls:

“Non-media sources of entertainment, we go to malls in our spare time, sometimes, I go to gaming clubs.” (Pakistani Participant 9, Male)

Another source of non-media choices made was meeting up with friends. P10 described that having the ability to meet friends provide a source for news, information and connection.

“Friends, when I meet them, I know about any news...
In addition, I keep in touch with friends in the office, I can get information (Pakistani Participant 10, Male).

The differences between non-media choices gratifying specific psychosocial needs between Pakistani and Rohingya refugees were apparent. Rohingya refugees heavily emphasised the need for news based on their responses to the first research question, and this need was not only fulfilled through media but also non-media sources. It was found that they continuously sought news related to the current situation in Myanmar through media and non-media means from community gatherings or meeting with friends and family members. On the other hand, Pakistani refugees sought out a greater variety of non-media sources to fulfil several needs, as discussed previously, related to their needs for connection and entertainment, in addition to information. Nevertheless, there were some instances where both Pakistani and Rohingya refugees claimed that non-media sources were insufficient to fulfil important needs, such as regarding refugee status.

“But there is no special source where I can get information about refugees...” (Pakistani Participant 10, Male)

While Participant 10 expressed his disappointment at the lack of non-media sources of important information regarding refugee status, another participant claimed that non-media is incompetent compared to the media for needs gratification:

“Non-media choices could not fulfil our needs as required, because they are not as powerful as the media... If I have any information, I also share it with my friends, which can benefit us, but my important aim [needs] may not be fulfilled through non-media sources” (Rohingya Participant 6, Male).

A small number of Pakistani refugees were unaware of non-media choices that could be used as substitutes for the media.

“I am not aware of any non-media choices for information. There is nothing of that sort here.”
(Pakistani Participant 11, Male)

“I don’t know. I get all my information from the internet and Facebook.” (Pakistani Participant 12, Male)

Consequently, some of the refugees from both groups recommended non-media activities that could potentially help them with needs gratification. A frequent recommendation put forward was that various communal activities could provide them with information and assist them to sustain their lives as refugees in Malaysia in addition to strengthening bonds.

“We should have a committee for each and every Rohingya village and hold meeting every week, united [in solidarity], so that we could do something for those who are in need of help. Wherever we stay, if we are united, it would be very helpful for our cause...”
(Rohingya Participant 11, Male)

“I don’t think there is anything of such [community activities] to help us or get information, except if we receive a call from the UNHCR, and we go there... There should be seminars, meetings for community persons. To know about our case progress, how to survive, how to live as a refugee” (Pakistani Participant 4, Male).

Discussion

The present study is framed under the notion that media users actively select specific media available to gratify their psychological needs.⁸⁴ In the instance where users crave the need for escape, there

⁸⁴ Jay G. Blumler and Elihu Katz, *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1974).

are specific media they would opt for to satisfy this need.⁸⁵ Studies from the pre-digital era focused on television, radio and newspapers in order to understand U&G phenomenon across varying societies, as researched by Herzog,⁸⁶ Berelson,⁸⁷ Greenberg,⁸⁸ Barton.⁸⁹ Extensive research has extended our understanding of the representation of refugees in the media,⁹⁰ rather than investigating media use by refugees⁹¹ and those studies did not consider the specific cases of Pakistani and Rohingya refugees, nor the particular circumstances of such communities in Malaysia.

Rohingya and Pakistani refugees differ in their reasons for fleeing their countries to seek refuge in Malaysia (see Table 4). Therefore, the present study inculcated this notion to understand media usage and needs gratification across two different refugee groups residing in Malaysia. Using the qualitative thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke,⁹² several codes and themes were generated from the data.

⁸⁵ Quan-Haase and Young, "Uses and Gratifications", 356

⁸⁶ Herta Herzog, "What Do We Really Know About Daytime Serial Listeners," *Radio Research* 1943 (1942): 3-33.

⁸⁷ Bernard Berelson, "What Missing the Newspaper Means," *Communications Research 1948-1949* (1949): 117-121.

⁸⁸ Bradley S. Greenberg, "Gratifications and Motivations of Television Viewing for British Children," (presentation, Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, Montreal, April 1972), 9-18

⁸⁹ Kristin M. Barton, "Reality Television Programming and Diverging Gratifications: The Influence of Content on Gratifications Obtained," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 53, no. 3 (2009): 463-474

⁹⁰ Banks, "Unmasking Deviance", 16-17; Zuraidah Mohd Don and Charity Lee, "Representing Immigrants as", 701-702; Esses, Medianu and Lawson, "Uncertainty, threat", 519; Gale, "The Refugee Crisis", 325; Godin and Doná, "Refugee Voices", 62-63; Kaur, "Media Reporting", 10; Low, Kok and Lee, "Perceived Discrimination", 202-203; Parker, "Unwanted Invaders", 4-5; Reed, "A Divided Media", 10-16; Speers, "Welcome or Over-reaction?", 41-42; Wright, "Moving Images", 53-54; Yaylacı and Karakuş, "Perceptions and Newspaper", 240-248.

⁹¹ Alinejad, "Locating Home", 95-98; Charmarkeh, "Social Media Usage", 44; Dekker and Engbersen, "How Social Media", 405; Gomwalk, "Social Media Usage", 22-34; Iaria, "Iraqi Refugees", 43-49; Jarad, "Palestinian Groups", 26-34; Komito, "Social Media and Immigration", 14-29; Mikal and Woodfield, "Refugees, Post-migration Stress", 11.

⁹² Braun and Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis", 77-101

The Most Important Needs Gratified by which Media: Pakistani vs Rohingya Refugees

Previous research studies found that refugees who fled their home country during ongoing crises could suffer feelings of uncertainty due to the deprivation of basic resources, loss of contact with loved ones, and the prospect of an unpredictable future.⁹³ As uncovered by the present study, both refugee groups claimed that they had to flee their home countries due to inhumane treatments and fear of persecution from the authorities. To date there has been a dearth of studies looking at media usage and needs gratification among refugees, especially among Rohingya and Pakistani refugees, amidst continual attempts to understand the needs of refugees or the lack of basic needs resources.⁹⁴

Previous literature has shown that the media exists as a mediator of information, a provider of entertainment, and a form of connection among refugee communities scattered across the world.⁹⁵ Within the

⁹³ René D. Drumm, Sharon W. Pittman, and Shelly Perry, "Social Work Interventions in Refugee Camps," *Journal of Social Service Research* 30, no. 2 (2004): 67-92, doi:10.1300/j079v30n02_05.

⁹⁴ Lindsay Hill et al., "Inter-professional Learning to Prepare Medical and Social Work Students for Practice with Refugees and Asylum Seekers," *Social Work Education* 28, no. 3 (2009): 298-308, doi:10.1080/02615470802659514; Jonathan Parker, "Social Work with Refugees and Asylum Seekers: A Rationale for Developing Practice," *Practice* 12, no. 3 (2000): 61-76, doi:10.1080/09503150008415191; Selcuk R. Sirin and Lauren Rogers-Sirin, *The Educational and Mental Health Needs of Syrian Refugee Children* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015); Ruth Wells, David Wells, and Catalina Lawsin, "Understanding Psychological Responses to Trauma Among Refugees: The Importance of Measurement Validity in Cross-cultural Settings," *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* 148, no. 455/456 (2015): 60; Wright, "Moving images", 53-54.

⁹⁵ Amanda Alencar, "Refugee Integration and Social Media: A Local and Experiential Perspective," *Information, Communication & Society* 21, no. 11 (2017): 1588-603, doi:10.1080/1369118x.2017.1340500; Charmarkeh, "Social Media Usage", 46-49; Dekker and Engbersen, "How Social Media", 411-413; Yu Shi, "Identity Construction of the Chinese Diaspora, Ethnic Media Use, Community Formation, and the Possibility of Social Activism," *Continuum* 19, no. 1 (2005): 55-72, doi:10.1080/1030431052000336298; Doug Walker, "The Medias Role in Immigrant Adaptation: How First-year Haitians in Miami Use the Media," *Journalism & Communication Monographs* 1, no. 3 (1999): 158-96,

present study, the results presented demonstrate a similar pattern of media usage and needs gratification among both Pakistani and Rohingya refugees. Both groups seek media to gratify their needs for information and connection. The identified needs gratified by refugees include connection, education, entertainment, information, news, and completing work related tasks. The participants only mentioned needs that could be gratified by the media resources available to them. Some needs were more frequently mentioned compared to others, such as the need for connection among Pakistani refugees and the need for information among Rohingya refugees.

Regardless, there were apparent differences in media choices and needs gratified by media across the two groups. These differences were indicated from the frequency of mentions across the two groups. The Pakistani refugees emphasised that to remain connected with family members and friends dispersed around the world is a key need gratified by media, with 17 mentions from the group (see Table 5). In order to gratify this need, the refugee group chose social media, specifically WhatsApp and Facebook. Previous literature found that Facebook motivates users due to its ability to provide social connectivity and gratify needs for affection with others.⁹⁶ The need to remain in touch with friends and family is integral and the existence of social media easily gratifies this need. Other needs that were predominant among the Pakistani refugees include the need for entertainment, news, and information. Another key factor underlying Facebook usage was seeking social information, updates on relatives or members of communities. The refugees stressed that information pertinent to refugee status is crucial, and the lack of latest updates frustrates them due to their prolonged sojourn in Malaysia, which

doi:10.1177/152263799900100301.

⁹⁶ Nicole B. Ellison, Charles Steinfield, and Cliff Lampe, "The Benefits of Facebook "Friends: Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 12, no. 4 (2007): 1143-168, doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x; Cliff Lampe, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfield, "A Face(book) in the Crowd: Social search vs social browsing," (proceedings, 20th Anniversary Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work - CSCW Banff, Alberta, Canada, November 04 - 08, 2006, doi:10.1145/1180875.1180901; Quan-Haase and Young, "Uses and Gratifications", 355-358.

suggests a commonality in crucial needs among refugee communities.⁹⁷

In contrast, Rohingya refugees prioritised their need for news of recent events in Myanmar to be gratified by the media. For them it is better to be fully apprised of the latest developments and not to remain ignorant of the fate of their compatriots still suffering from persecution and human rights violations. This showcases that seeking out news is a psychological need, as a way for them to alleviate distress induced from being deprived of knowledge regarding incessant violent persecution in Myanmar, which threatens the lives of their loved ones. Rohingya refugees heavily relied on WhatsApp to gain the latest news from Myanmar. Participants did not distinguish between news and information related to their community or loved ones, due to the fact all the news they sought from the media closely involved these people. The majority chose WhatsApp to fulfil these needs. Similarly in Malaysia, there is a great amount of time spent on WhatsApp by Malaysian Internet users.⁹⁸ However, in Malaysia, the use of WhatsApp is mainly for leisure and desire for connection with friends and family or even to alleviate social anxiety.⁹⁹ The current situation of Malaysian netizens do not necessitate concerns for news from relatives akin to those in Rohingya. The popular alternative to WhatsApp is the use of WeChat in Malaysia and, for Malaysian young adults, the main gratification fulfilled by WeChat is need for connecting.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Charmarkeh, "Social Media Usage", 48.

⁹⁸ "Malaysian Internet Users amongst the Most Socially Engaged in the." *TNS Global Market Research Company* accessed December 06, 2017, <http://www.tnsglobal.com/press-release/malaysian-internet-users-amongst-most-socially-engaged-world>.

⁹⁹ Senutha P. Rathinan and Nor Hafizah Selamat, "Understanding the Push and Pull Motivational Factors of Technology Usage for Traveling among Women Students in USM, Penang," *Journal of Information* 2, no. 4 (2017): 52-63, <http://eprints.usm.my/36016/1/jistm-2017059.pdf>

¹⁰⁰ Olowo Emmanuel Opeyemi, Raduan Shariff, and Anita Morah Abas, "WeChat Uses and Gratifications among Young Malaysian Adults In Klang Valley, Malaysia," *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 23, no. 6: 87-95, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Emmanuel_Olowo/publication/327836295_WeChat_Uses_and_Gratifications_Among_Young_Malaysian_Adults_In_Klang_Valley_Malaysia/links/5ba88a8845851574f7e1a6d3/WeChat-Uses-and-Gratifications-Am

The stark difference between previous studies and this one is the influence of demographics on the need for specific social information. Studies targeting non-refugee communities clarified that social information obtained from WhatsApp involves knowing about current life events of peer networks, such as activities they were involved in or relationship status.¹⁰¹ Previous findings were not inclusive of diaspora communities and thus are incomplete to determine the influence of current life situation on needs gratified by media relative to patterns of media usage.

The present study shows that refugees who came from countries with an ongoing crisis would continuously use available social media platforms in order to obtain the latest news/information relative to the ongoing crisis. However, despite their heavy reliance on WhatsApp, they still emphasised that they could be consuming bogus news from it. Therefore, they proceeded to direct phone call to ensure the safety of their loved ones back in Myanmar at times when they heard unpleasant news or to verify towards what extent the news they received were true. Alternatively, a few of them seek out to ethnic media such as RVision, ANA and Arakan Times in order to acquire news relating to current events occurring among the Rohingya community back in Myanmar. The novelty of this study is based on this observation, adding to the evidence from other studies on the existence of ethnic media and its significance in minority communities worldwide.¹⁰²

According to Deuze,¹⁰³ in his analytical account of ethnic media, minorities create ethnic media due to the declining credibility

ong-Young-Malaysian-Adults-In-Klang-Valley-Malaysia.pdf

¹⁰¹ Evangelos Karapanos, Pedro Teixeira, and Ruben Gouveia, "Need Fulfillment and Experiences on Social Media: A Case on Facebook and WhatsApp," *Computers in Human Behavior* 55 (2016): 888-97, doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.10.015.

¹⁰² Stuart Cunningham, "Popular Media as Public 'Sphericules' for Diasporic Communities," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 4, no. 2 (2001): 131-47, doi:10.1177/136787790100400201; Mark Deuze, "Ethnic Media, Community Media and Participatory Culture," *Journalism: Theory, Practice & Criticism* 7, no. 3 (2006): 262-80, doi:10.1177/1464884906065512; Leo W. Jeffres, "Ethnicity and Ethnic Media Use," *Communication Research* 27, no. 4 (2000): 496-535, doi:10.1177/009365000027004004.

¹⁰³ Deuze, "Ethnic Media, Community", 266-267.

of mainstream media – due to misrepresentation or a lack of representation of content serving ethnic needs. For the Rohingya community, they are aware of their lack of presentation and misrepresentation in the mainstream media, therefore they resorted to their ethnic media, particularly RVision, ANA and Arakan Times. To date there has yet to be a study which highlights ethnic media among the Rohingya refugees and the possible discrepancy between worldwide mainstream media and the Rohingya ethnic media; the findings of the research study is an original contribution for current research.

The Reasons Why the Media Were Selected by Pakistani and Rohingya Refugees

Among the reasons why media selection provides an extension to the development of U&G theory, one of the main elements of which is that audience members actively seek media that gratify their needs. The reasons why the media were selected were mainly due to their features or ability to provide particular services provides an extension beyond identifying psychological innate needs gratified by the media. Rohingya refugees selected particular media due to a plethora of reasons defined by the codes generated, such as their ability to provide real news/information, information/news updates, a wealth of news, linkages, user-friendly attributes, catering to religious needs, being trendy, being free/affordable, entertainment, convenience, and their positive attitude to the media selected. It seems that the Pakistani refugees provided fewer reasons for selecting media, such as the ability to provide information/news updates, a wealth of news, linkages, free/affordable services, entertainment, and convenience.

Facebook appears to be the most important platform for obtaining truthful news on Myanmar and more recent news and information for Rohingyas (see Table 7). The issue of fake news was emphasised by Rohingya participants, who were spurred to obtain authentic news mainly from Facebook or to verify news stories on the ground with those depicted on Facebook. The idea of the need for credible, verified news and information could be considered as a new development to U&G theory in relation to Rohingya refugees, for whom the reliability of the media platform in providing trustworthy news is an imperative issue.

The issue of distrust was raised previously with regard to Iraqi refugees, examined by Iaria,¹⁰⁴ uncovering that Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan make decisions based on informal information obtained from an assortment of media sources, including television, phone calls, Internet, and word of mouth, as they distrusted official information. The impression of social media providing unofficial, richer insider knowledge on migration was revealed by other studies.¹⁰⁵ It comes as no surprise that fake news is an issue for Rohingya refugees, as it has played a role in fuelling the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar, with more recent development in terms of greater potential for Internet and smartphone use.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, it was found that Pakistani refugees were not concerned by the problems of fake news but were more interested in getting updated news from their own television channels and immigration information on social media. The use of the media for information is comparable to a study of refugees from Nigeria by Gomwalk.¹⁰⁷

Recommendations for Alternative or Adapted Media

It was interesting that the idea of blending into the society was raised through recommended changes to the media landscape. Rohingya refugees predominantly requested their own daily newspaper in Malaysia, and Pakistani refugees mostly requested for Malaysian media to provide more news and information in Urdu and English languages to cater to their needs for news and information in these languages. The idea of the reinforcement of the identity of refugees through the media appears to be existent but with different intensity for either group of refugees. Rohingya refugees, through their recommendation, would like to reinforce their own identity through a credible newspaper, while Pakistani refugees would prefer that the existing Malaysian media landscape accommodate them and their identity.

¹⁰⁴ Iaria, "Iraqi Refugees", 43-49.

¹⁰⁵ Dekker and Engbersen, "How Social Media", 411-413.

¹⁰⁶ Eric Wishart, "A Wire Agency Journalist's Perspective on 'Fake News'," *Media Asia* 44, no. 2 (2017): 102-106.

¹⁰⁷ Gomwalk, "Social Media Usage", 20-21.

This again provides an extension to the use of U&G in a research study in terms of examining whether other media are needed or adaptations should be made to the media of the host country. The idea of identity is found in Alinejad's¹⁰⁸ ethnographic study concerning how the children of Iranian immigrants engage with the Internet whilst forming their identity. Another study by Jarad¹⁰⁹ depicted that Palestinians in diaspora gratify the need of forming their personal identity through Facebook more obviously than those living in Palestine. Identity and media use have been associated with before in previous studies.

Non-Media Choices for Needs Gratification: Pakistani vs Rohingya

There are instances whereby non-media would provide gratification replacing media.¹¹⁰ Following needs identified from the first research question, the needs gratified by non-media were classified in a similar manner, addressing the lack of research on non-media choices made by refugees and how these resources gratify such needs.

The present study found that Rohingya refugees could be seen to continuously seek out resources that could help fulfil their need for news. They chose community networks or societies, such as the Rohingya Society Malaysia, in order to gain information regarding current situations in Myanmar. Through this method they acquire the space to gratify their need for connection.

On the other hand, Pakistani refugees have varied choices of non-media to gratify different needs including entertainment, connection, and information. Unlike the Rohingyas, Pakistani refugees attend seminars and workshops to acquire information related to current refugee situations, how to survive in Malaysia, and the path forward.

However, some of the participants stated that they were unaware of or do not believe that non-media activities could gratify their essential psychological needs. This could potentially be due to non-media incompetency in gratifying needs the way media does, as

¹⁰⁸ Alinejad, "Locating Home", 108-112.

¹⁰⁹ Jarad, "Palestinian Groups", 26-34.

¹¹⁰ Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications", 511.

mentioned by R6. The existence and accessibility of media in the present era could have benefited refugees due to its nature of being user-friendly, fast, and immediately accessible. The reasons outlined in Table 4 indicate that non-media is not as efficient as media in gratifying psychological needs. This indicates that technological advancement allows media influence to be disseminated through all forms of society in varying forms of options.¹¹¹

The media's ability to gratify users' needs leads them to be a preferred choice in fulfilling several psychological needs, including the need for information and connection. A possible reason could be that technological advancement has more positive changes on technology itself rather than human kind. It leads to non-media options offering a rather slow approach to gratify psychological needs, whilst advanced media is increasingly well-equipped and designed to fulfil them.

There are several implications of this study, as follows:

1. Pakistani refugees are in Malaysia because of personal problems and Rohingya refugees are here because of genocide by their government.
2. Social media is used mainly by both sets of refugees for various reasons.
3. The media is sought for its ability to provide updated information and news stories by both groups of refugees. Media platforms should ensure that they provide credible news stories for Rohingya refugees.

¹¹¹ Hossam Ali-Hassan, Dorit Nevo, and Michael Wade, "Linking Dimensions of Social Media Use to Job Performance: The Role of Social Capital," *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems* 24, no. 2 (2015): 65-89, doi:10.1016/j.jsis.2015.03.001; Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, "A Theory of Media Power and a Theory of Media Use: Different Stories, Questions, and Ways of Thinking," *Mass Communication and Society* 1, no. 1-2 (1998): 5-40, doi:10.1080/15205436.1998.9676398; Lawlor and Rowley, "Young People's Use", 53-55; Lee and Ma, "News Sharing", 335-338; Drew D. Shade, Sarah Kornfield, and Mary Beth Oliver, "The Uses and Gratifications of Media Migration: Investigating the Activities, Motivations, and Predictors of Migration Behaviors Originating in Entertainment Television," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 59, no. 2 (2015): 318-41, doi:10.1080/08838151.2015.1029121; Smock, Ellison, Lampe, and Wohn. "Facebook as a Toolkit", 2326-2328; Sundar and Limperos, "Uses and Grats 2.0", 517-522.

4. A daily newspaper is recommended by Rohingyas, who appear to hunger for credible information. By having their own newspaper in their own language, this could be interpreted as them needing to fulfil the strong need of establishing their identity.

Conclusion

The two biggest groups of refugees in Malaysia are the Rohingya and Pakistani refugees. With the dearth of research studies examining their use of the media, the study of U&G, media use and non-media activities amongst Rohingya and Pakistani refugees, this makes the study pertinent to fill the identified research gap. The key limitation of qualitative research studies in terms of the inability of generalisations to be made from the small data is obvious, hence the main goal has been to provide in-depth (not broad) insights into media and non-media use by Rohingya and Pakistani refugees to contribute to the current literature, make recommendations to UNHCR, and develop the U&G theory. Themes centring on information, connection, credible news stories and identity reinforcement through the media make up the main raised by the study.

AL-SHAJARA

Special Issue

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