DETERMINING RESOURCE-NEEDS IN REFUGEE CAMPS: A STUDY OF REFUGEE CAMPS IN GREECE

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ABSTRACT

Globally, millions of refuges are hosted in a refugee camp, as refugee camps are the preferred means of hosting displaced people. Within the camp environment, refugees are not expected to make demands, thus their resource-needs are often neglected and misunderstood. Neglecting refugee needs in the camp environment has a detrimental effect on both short-term and long-term recovery and psychosocial wellbeing. Furthermore, it is not known how these needs differ with age, gender, and nationality. To address this problem, this research asks: (1) What built environment resources are valuable to refugees in refugee camps? (2) How do these resource-needs vary with age, gender, and nationality? Using a combination of interviews and surveys, this research will identify and then rank the needs of refugees in Camp Moira and Camp Skaramagas. Interviews (N=50 each camp) will be used to identify resource-needs in the camp environment and then they will be analyzed using grounded theory. Surveys will be created based on these identified needs to rank and determine how needs vary with age, gender, and nationality. The surveys will be analyzed using AHP and then linear regression analysis. This research shows policymakers that identifying and designing around the resource-needs of refugees will result in camps that better address refugee needs and help with recovery and integration into the host country.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2015, more than one million refugees have fled to Europe and they have been hosted in refugee camps (UNHCR 2016). This refugee crisis has been a major factor in producing a shift in the humanitarian aid sector’s approach to refugee crises (Gabiam 2016): a focus on emergency humanitarian aid is giving way to a focus on refugee recovery. Indeed, with the number of forcibly displaced people at an all-time high (Miliband 2017; UNHCR 2016) and the increasingly long time that it is taking to find

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durable solutions to refugee situations (the average time one remains a refugee is now more than 20 years), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is pushing for an approach that focuses simultaneously on refugees’ immediate needs and long-term wellbeing.

Refugee camps seek to provide immediate needs such as basic as water, shelter, telecommunications and sanitation. However, these resources are generally scarce in the built environment and limit refugees’ quality of life and ability to recover (UNHCR 2016). The built environment of refugee camps represents the human-made surroundings that provide the physical space for activities (e.g. water, shelter, sanitation, public space, roads). The camp provides refugees with basic resources and space in the host country for what is supposed to be a temporary period. This period may extend only through the asylum applications process or may last until a more permanent solution is found, which can take years or even decades (Gabiam 2016). Understanding the resource-needs of refugees is essential because camp experience can affect psychological distress after being resettled (Briant & Kennedy 2004, Chung & Kagawa-Singer 1993). Moreover, when considering the resource-needs of refugees, they are often conceptualized as universal. In other words, all refugees have similar needs when transitioning to a host country and escaping war. However, this is not necessarily the case as previous research has shown that demographic groups have different experiences and expectations in refugee camps (Briant & Kennedy 2004, Rasmussen & Annan 2009).

To address this issue, this research identified essential resources to refugees in the camp’s built environment and how age, gender, and nationality affect a refugee’s resource needs. Specifically, this research asked: What built environment resources are valuable to refugees in refugee camps? How do these resource needs vary with age, gender, and nationality? To answer these questions, the research will employ interviews and surveys in two refugee camps in Greece, Camp Moria and Camp Skaramagas. This paper presents the research design for answering the two research questions. Data collection will include three phases. First, refugees will be interviewed (N=50 at each camp) to identify their resource-needs in the camp environment. This method created a comprehensive list of resource-needs. Second, based on these identified needs, surveys will be created and distributed out to the entire camps to assess the relationship between resources and age, gender, and nationality. Survey data will be analyzed using analytical hierarchy process (AHP) to determine how the importance of each resource varies against one another. Survey data will also be analyzed using linear regression analysis to determine how resource-needs vary with demographics. By identifying and modeling what resources refugees need, this research can better inform development organizations and local governments regarding camps’ planning and design.
RESEARCH RATIONALE AND THEORY

Globally, millions of refugees are managed and helped in a refugee camp (UNHCR 2016). These camps are generally the standard approach to helping displaced people because they attempt to provide temporary order and shelter. While the intent of refugee camps is to provide the space and resources for facilitating transition to the host country, the camps can be problematic for refugees’ transitions for two primary reasons. First, refugee camps are perceived as the immediate response to migration and often seek to address short-term needs while neglecting the long-term needs (Briant & Kennedy 2004). Second, refugee camp are usually located far from cities and they are often bound by fences to indicate a distinction from the host country (Turner 2015). As such, refugees are often portrayed as victims and provided with basic services such as shelter, food, and healthcare (Turner 2015). Because refugees receive aid and shelter from the country of asylum, refugees are not expected to make demands in the camp environment (Turner 2015). This status strips refugees of political capacity, which results in the ignoring or failing to understand their resource needs (Turner 2015).

While refugee needs are often ignored, addressing them is important for adaptation within the country of asylum, as it greatly impacts their wellbeing and long-term recovery (Chung & Kagawa-Singer 1993, Rasmussen & Annan 2009). In a study of Southeast Asian refugees who had resettled in America, Chung & Kagawa-Singer (1993) found that pre-migration trauma events and refugee camp experiences were significant predictors of psychological distress even five years or more after migration. These negative effects on wellbeing happen because refugee camps represent the space in which refugees adapt to both their host countries and to the events that caused them to flee their countries (Turner 2015). Because the camp experience can have a significant impact on refugee health, it is critical to understand what the resource-needs of refugees are in order to mitigate potential stressors and provide appropriate resources.

Existing frameworks and processes have been developed to help with assessing what is important to refugees (Briant & Kennedy 2004), but they do not account for variation in needs based on refugee demographics. Because of this gap, Rasmussen and Annan (2009) studied stressors in the built environment based on different demographic groups among Darfur refugees. The study showed that factors such as age, gender, and marital status all affect how a refugee interacts with the built environment. For example for men, being employed and providing for families was essential. As a result, men who were unemployed and unable to provide for their families suffered high levels of stress. (Rasmussen & Annan 2009). The complexity of these interactions shows that there needs to be further studies on what refugees consider important. As such, this research seeks to identify how refugees’ needs differ across age, gender, and nationality. To do so, this research expands previous literature by taking an intersectional perspective to identify the needs of refugees. Intersectionality asserts that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as
reciprocally constructing phenomena that shape complex social inequalities (Crenshaw 1989). Expanding on this, this research will show that refugees’ demographics are critical when to addressing their resource-needs within the camp environment.

RESEARCH PLAN, METHODS, AND METHODOLOGY

To determine the priorities of refugees in refugee camps, this research will employ a mixed-method approach. First, fifty refugees in each camp will be interviewed and asked about resource-needs in the camp environment. Second, these interviews will be coded using grounded theory to determine what their resource-needs are. Then, the identified resource-needs will be used to create surveys, which will be distributed to a random sample of 200 refugees in each camp to compare resource-needs and collect demographic data. Survey data will be analyzed using analytical hierarchy process (AHP) to determine how the importance of each resource varies against one another. Survey data will also be analyzed using linear regression analysis to determine how resource-needs vary with demographics.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The work in this paper will be conducted in the context of two refugee camps in Greece: Camp Skaramagas and Camp Moria. Data collection will occur between May and August 2018. Greece currently hosts around 60,000 asylum seekers in refugee camps and the latest reports show poor conditions and lack of institutional support (UNHCR 2016). Over 70% of these asylum seekers in Europe are from countries in the Middle East (Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan) with the other 30% are from Northern Africa (Nigeria, Libya, Eritrea). Of this group, about 40% are men, 20% are women, and the other 40% are children.

Camp Moria and Camp Skaramagas were chosen based on Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports which show stressed conditions within these camps (UNHCR 2016). The two camps were managed by UNHCR. In addition to UNHCR oversight, the camps receive ancillary support from NGOs and the local government. Despite this ancillary support, Camp Moria is grossly overcapacity because it is the first point of entry into Europe for many refugees fleeing the Middle East. Because of the overpopulation, the camp services such as shelter, water, and sanitation resources were strained (UNHCR 2016). Camp Skaramagas is one of the largest camps on the Greek mainland and its conditions are less stressed than those in Camp Moria but are still poor (UNHCR 2016). The camp was chosen with the goal to increase generalizability of the study. Because of the inadequate resources in these two camps, we chose these camps as it will allow us to identify a comprehensive list of resource needs.

RESEARCH TIMELINE
The research in this paper is ongoing. Data collection will occur between May 2018 and August 2018. Table 1 outlines the proposed research plan.

### Table 1 – Research Timeline

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<th>Task</th>
<th>May 2018</th>
<th>June 2018</th>
<th>July 2018</th>
<th>August 2018</th>
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<td>RQ2 Survey Camp Skaramagas</td>
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<td>RQ2 Analyze Survey Data from Camp Skaramagas</td>
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<td>RQ1 Conduct interviews in Camp Moria</td>
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**IDENTIFYING RESOURCE NEEDS**

**DATA COLLECTION**

To first identify resource-needs, refugees will be interviewed and asked to describe the resources that are important for their quality of life and recovery. This study will utilize snowball sampling and recruitment flyers to recruit participants. Snowball sampling and the flier will allow the team to establish initial contact with the refuges in the camp. Next, emergent sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015) will be used. Emergent sampling occurs when the researcher makes sampling decisions during the process of collecting data. As the observer gains more knowledge of a setting, he or she can make sampling decisions that take advantage of events, as they unfold (Palinkas et al., 2015). The sample population will include refugees off all demographics above the age of 18.

We will interview 50 refugees at each camp or until theoretical saturation is reached. Example of interview questions will include: *What are the resources that important to you in the camp environment? Why are these facilities important to you in the camp environment? What facilities that are not in the camp are important for your everyday activities?* These questions were chosen and developed to assess what refugees consider important in the built environment. We will conduct most of the interviews in English. When the interviewee does not speak English, a translator will help translate the
interview in other main languages spoken in the camps are (Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish, and French). The interviews will then be transcribed verbatim using a transcription service.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Due to the explorative nature of the research, interview data will be coded using grounded theory to identify important resource-needs (Glasser and Strauss 2008). Grounded theory is a methodology that works inductively and studies contexts and topics that have had limited exploration. We will develop new codes and themes based on the responses on the refugees’ resource-needs identified in the interviews. Interviews will be coded using QSR NVivo, a qualitative coding software.

**COMPARING AND RANKING RESOURCE-NEEDS**

**DATA COLLECTION**

Using these identified resource-needs, a survey will be sent to refugees in the two camps. The first section will ask participants to complete pairwise comparisons, indicating how important each selected resource is relative to another. To minimize surveyor fatigue, six main resource needs identified in the interviews will be selected for AHP, creating 15 pairwise comparisons. Questions will include comparisons such as “On the below scale, indicate how important Resource X is compared to Resource Y?”. The participants will be able to understand the pairwise comparisons because a visual scale will be used to allow the participant to visually see the pairwise comparison. In addition, the question will provide directions to the participant.

The survey will be distributed to a random group of 200 people in each camp. Camp Skaramangas has a population of 3,300 and Camp Moria has a population of 6,160 (UNHCR 2016). Participants will be recruited using fliers and emergent sampling like the interviews. Surveys will be distributed physically at a central point out to the first 200 people who show-up to a set-time and place within the camp. The surveys will be translated into Arabic, Farsi, French, and Kurdish so that all the main groups in the camp will be able take the survey. The participants will then turn the survey back into the central distribution point when completed. The first author will be present while the participants take the surveys to answer any questions they might have.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

We will then use AHP to rank and compare the different resource needs refugees. AHP is an effective method for group decision-making and for obtaining consensus among individuals between a range of alternatives with in-depth rigor that both reveals and analyzes contextualized priorities (Saaty 1994). The AHP uses pairwise comparison to develop an ordered list of priorities in the context of decision making (Saaty 2008). In pairwise comparison, judgments are used to determine one priority’s relative importance over the other. These judgments have numerical values and range from indicating two
priorities that are equally important to one priority that has extreme importance over the others, a value from 1 to 9, respectively. AHP allows us to understand what resource-needs were most important to refugees in the camp. The analysis will reveal and rank the top six resource-needs among refugees in the two camps.

COMPARING RESOURCE-NEEDS ACROSS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Data collection
Data collection for the comparison of resource-needs will be included in the same survey as mentioned in the previous section. This second section of the survey will determine how refugees’ resource-needs vary with age, gender, and nationality. Age and nationality will be open-ended questions. For gender, the participants could pick “male”, “female”, or “prefer not to answer”. Then, the respondents will be asked to answer the following statement using a Likert scale: “On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is Resource X?”

Data analysis
To evaluate how a refugee’s resource-needs vary based on demographics, survey data will be analyzed using linear regression analysis. In this case, the independent data will include the refugee’s demographic data and the dependent variable will include their rankings of the resource needs.

EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS

This research contributes to scholarship on displaced people by identifying the needs of the refugees according to intersectional demographics. In terms of theoretical contribution, this research is expected to validate theory of intersectionality in times of humanitarian crisis. In other words, this research argues that the needs of people are not universal in the times of humanitarian crisis. For example, it can be expected that men and women will have different resource needs (Briant & Kennedy 2004; Rasmussen & Annan 2009) and those needs will also differ across nationalities. Furthermore, by identifying essential resources and how the importance of these resources differs with age, gender, and nationality, this research will make refugee needs more visible to the organizations that manage these camps. By making these needs visible, this research will help organizations better respond to the needs of the community. Through addressing and understanding community needs, policymakers will be able to improve camp management and design by designing to these needs. This will help ensure that the camp environment is more suitable for refugees trying to recover and adapt to their host countries. Furthermore, this research provides a comprehensive methodology that can be used in the future to assess the needs of a refugee community. This methodology will help policymakers with assessing the
resource-needs in the camp environment, thus resulting in human-centered camp management.

CONCLUSION

Globally, refugee camps manage millions of refugees; however, the organizations that manage these camps often neglect and misunderstand the resource-needs of refugees. Prior studies and literature have shown that when refugee resource-needs are misunderstood or ignored, a refugee’s long-term recovery and adaptation are impeded (Chung & Kagawa-Singer 1993; Briant & Kennedy 2004). In addition, the complex relations between demographics and resource-needs are not well understood, which can be detrimental to specific demographic groups (Rasmussen & Annan 2009).

To address this problem, this research will ask (1) What built environment resources are valuable to refugees in refugee camps? (2) How do these resource-needs vary with age, gender, and nationality? Using a mixed methods approach comprised of interviews and surveys, the team will identify, rank, and correlate the resource-needs of refugees in Camp Moria and Camp Skaramagas in Greece. These camps were chosen because of their overpopulation and strained resources (UNHCR 2016). Interviews (N=50 in each camp) will be used to identify resource-needs in the camps. The interviews will be coded and analyzed using grounded theory because of the exploratory nature of the research (Glasser and Strauss 2008). The identified-resource needs will be used to create surveys with two sections and goals. First, the survey will ask refugees to rank the identified resource-needs against one another. The second section will then ask refugees to identify their age, gender, and nationality and then it will ask which resource-needs were most important to them. Surveys will be distributed out to a random population of 200 refugees in each camp to capture a profile of how resource-needs vary. Data from the surveys will be analyzed using analytical hierarchy process (AHP) to determine how the importance of each resource varies against one another. Survey data will also be analyzed using linear regression analysis to determine how resource-needs vary with demographics.

Like previous studies aimed at assessing refugee needs, this study is expected to have limitations. For example, it is possible that that refugees did not tell the interviewer their needs due to shame or belief that they will be ignored (Briant & Kennedy 2004). Furthermore, the interviewer will be an American male. Since the interviewer is not positioned within the community, the participants could be reluctant to answer fully.

Despite these limitations, this research shows that identifying and understanding the resource-needs is important when planning for refugee camps, which are typically designed to be generic regardless of the context. This research shows policymakers that identifying and designing around the resource-needs of refugees will result in human-centered camps. This is because the camps will address needs that refugees consider important for their recovery. Future studies could expand on this by examining how these resources affect a refugee’s psychological wellbeing. These studies could show the affect
these resources have on both a refugee’s psychosocial health and recovery within the camp environment.

References
UNHCR. (2016) *Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe*
UNHCR. (2016) *Global Trends*