How and why refugees might change their ICT behaviour when migrating to Europe?

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Abstract

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become part of everyone's' lives and imagining a life without them seems almost impossible. Mobile phones and social media platforms, which are of great importance in this thesis, are used for contacting friends and families, gathering news but also as a tool for organizing a getaway. Therefore this bachelor thesis aims to answer the research question "How and why refugees might change their ICT behaviour when migrating to Europe?". Until now, this questions has not been answered in the literature. Previous studies only focussed on the ICT use at the specific location of migrants and refugees (in their home countries, en route or in their host societies), examined the impact on ICT on social integration or treated the media discourse about refugees, for example, on Facebook.

Contributing to this discourse, the author of this thesis conducted interviews with six refugees of different nationalities in two refugee centers in Düsseldorf, Germany, asking them about their individual ICT behaviour in their countries of origin, en route and in Germany. Based on the method of discourse analysis, the interviews reveal that the mobile phone as well as social media platforms are of great importance for refugees as they enable them to take part in their loved ones lives despite the geographical distances. On the other hand refugees did not changed their ICT behaviour now living in Germany compared to their home country, the purpose, however, did changed.

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Introduction

This bachelor thesis explores the question "How and why refugees might change their ICT behaviour when migrating to Europe?". Until now, this question has not been answered in the literature. Previous studies only focussed on the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) use at the current location of migrants and refugees (in their home countries, en route or in their host societies), examined the impact on ICT on social integration or treated the media discourse about refugees, for example, on Facebook (Schapendonk & van Moppes, 2007; Schau, 2012; Rohde et alt., 2016; Wall et. al., 2015; Harney, 2013; Vancea and Olivera, 2013; Kaufmann, 2018; Alencar, 2018; Dekker & Engbersen, 2013; Alam & Imran, 2015; Biedrzycki and Baum, 2010; Komito, 2011). However, no study examined how and why refugees might have changed their ICT behaviour on their way to Europe. Therefore, this thesis aims to fill this knowledge gap. It can be assumed that refugees change their ICT behaviour as they have on the one hand more possibilities to use ICT in Europe, Germany (e.g. access to the internet, stable mobile phone network and charging possibilities) and on the other hand are less afraid of being surveilled by their regimes (Rohde et al., 2016). Further, particular societal groups, such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTs), might see in ICT a tool to find like- minded people. As the Auswärtiges Amt (2018) reports, LGBTs are discriminated in Ghana, however, they could hope to connect with sympathizers through certain ICT in Europe. The development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the last decades have changed our lives dramatically and continues to have a significant impact on daily life (Castells, 1996; Human Development Research Paper, 2009).

ICT encompass "financial markets, media, knowledge sharing and achieving" (Human Development Research Paper, 2009: 1) and geographical borders are becoming more fluid (Human Development Research Paper, 2009: 1). Although, today around 20% of the world population uses public Internet (Human Development Research Paper, 2009), wide differences between and within countries regarding the public use of the internet exist (Chen & Wellman, 2004). In 2017 there were still big differences of individuals using the internet (ITU, 2017). In Europe 79,6% of the population was using the internet, while in Africa only 21,8% was using the internet (ICT, 2017). The numbers indicate that there is a digital divide- "a term that refers to gaps in access to information and communication technologies" (OECD, 2018, no page number). The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (2017) shows that the growth of mobile phone subscription between 2012 and 2017 is the highest in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and developing countries. However, LDCs and developing countries still show lower mobile phone

penetration rates compared to developed countries (ibid.) These numbers raise the question which consequences will arise from these changes and how people in LDCs and developing countries will use their new ICT opportunities. The Human Development Research Paper (2009) already assumes that the spreading of ICT has an effect on migration. However, it is not clear yet to what extent. Does possessing a mobile phone encourages the decision to migrate or even facilitates migration? These are questions which will be answered in the course of this thesis.

A majority of LDCs is located in Africa (United Nations Committee for Development Policy, 2017). Poverty is a socio-economic factor that is a leading contributor of migration (World Institute for Development Economic Research, 2004). However, extreme poverty may also hinder migration since migration is costly (The Migration Observatory, 2012). Syria, a country which is hit by a catastrophic war, belongs to the list of developing countries (World Bank, 2018). Since 2011, more than 5 million people have fled from Syria, looking for asylum in neighbouring countries and Europe (UNHCR, 2018). People who flee from Syria and other countries face various risks seeking for a better life in other countries. Unfortunately, refugees are vulnerable to human traffickers who might exploit them or endanger their safety (IOM, 2016). Moreover, the migration itself is fraught with risks: including but not limited to rape, being sold for slavery or landmines (ibid.). In addition, a gateway needs to be well organized and planned with trustworthy information. ICT may decrease the risk of uncertainty and promote the establishment of networks. Possessing a mobile phone and having access to the internet might therefore facilitate safe migration. This paper therefore aims to examine which ICT refugees from Pakistan, Iraq and Ghana are using and if there is eventually a change in their usage. These countries have been determined in the course of the research. Further, this research aims to answer the question why refugees might have changed their ICT behaviour. Furthermore, the author will focus on the use of mobile phones and the certain platforms on the internet relevant to refugees. Answering the research question could provide an insight of the acting of authoritarian regimes as they can be witnessed in Syria and Eritrea (Amnesty International a, 2017) and therefore potentially improve our understanding of why people leave their country of origin. In addition, this research could answer the question, if ICT and social media platforms could facilitate refugees to integrate in the Western society. To put this into perspective, in the first quarter of 2018, Facebook had 2.19 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2018). Assumedly, a portion of these users were refugees. Facebook and other social networks might be a platform for refugees and local citizens, to meet, connect and build a common network. ICT could also be a learning tool for refugees, for instance, for learning a new language and which would facilitate the communication with locals. Most studies focus on integrating refugees in to the economy and the labour market (McKinsey & Company, 2016; European Parliament, 2018), however, the social aspect must not

be forgotten. A society consists of diverse parts. So integration is not about assimilation, but about contributing to a colorful mosaic. Refugees and the host society need to strengthen their mutual awareness and overcoming prejudices.

To answer the research question, interviews with refugees will be conducted. In advance, the author of this thesis contacted a refugee center in Düsseldorf, Germany. This refugee center is in sponsorship by the Caritas e.V. Düsseldorf. She organized several appointments with one of the employees when the interviews should take place. After having two appointments in the first refugee center, the author also went to another one to conduct two more interviews.

Participation in this study happened on voluntary basis and interest of the refugees. In total, six interviews were conducted in two refugee centers in Düsseldorf, Germany with three men and three women. The participants had different countries of origin: one was from Pakistan, three from Iraq and two from Ghana. In 2016, 14.484 people from Pakistan fled to Germany whereof Germany accepted 263 asylum applications in the first instance (Länderdaten a, 2016, no page number). In the first half year of 2018 people from Iraq made up the second highest group in applying for asylum in Germany with 9.015 applications (Mediendienst- Integration, 2018, no page number), where as in 2016, 2.581 people from Ghana applied for asylum in Germany whereof Germany accepted ten (Länderdaten b, 2016, no page number). However, the author of this thesis does know, if the participants are asylum seekers or are accepted as refugees.

Moreover, three interviews were conducted in German and in English based on the preferred language by the participants. Further, the age of the participants ranged from 22 to 39. In addition, the participants achieved different levels of education, ranging from a High School diploma to a diploma at a university.

This thesis is structured as follows: First, the author defines the terms "refugee" and "integration" which are of special importance for this thesis. Afterwards, she details previous studies focusing on refugees' ICT usage in their home countries, en route and in different host countries. In addition, the author introduces the reader to studies examining the impact of ICT in social integration. Then, the author introduces her hypotheses, which were derived from the theoretical framework. Before referring to the interviews in the data section, the author gives some information on the countries of origin of the refugees. Next, the author presents her applied methodologies, namely semi-structured interviews on the one hand and discourse analysis on the other. In the data analysis section, she echos the

participants' answers and provides her assessment of and reflection on the interviews. Lastly, the author concludes with her thesis.

Theoretical Framework

The following theoretical section is structured as follows: First, the author answers the question "what is a refugee" and provides several definitions for the term "integration". Afterwards, she discusses previous empirical studies focussing on ICT use in countries of origin, en route and in host countries of refugees. In addition, she introduces to the reader studies on the impact of ICT on social integration, as ICT might facilitate refugees to integrate in their host societies.Then the author provides some background information to the participants' countries of origin, namely Pakistan, Iraq and Ghana with a additional theory section on ICT use in the respective countries. Based on the outlined literature, the hypothesis will be formulated.

Who is a "refugee"?

According to the UNHCR (2018, no page number)

"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 or 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."

Crossing national borders in order to save their lives due to life- threatening conditions in their home countries, makes them "internationally recognized" as a refugee (UNHCR, 2015). This status creates certain rights to the refugees "which states should afford" (ibid.), such as the right to be not returned, gaining access to a asylum procedure and respecting their basic human rights allowing them further to find a long- term solution in a humane environment (ibid.). In contrast, a "migrant" is someone not fleeing for reasons of life- threatening conditions. Migrants rather move in order to "improve their lives" (ibid.) by finding work elsewhere, for education, family reunion or other reasons (ibid.).

This distinction is of great of importance for governments. Migrants are treated by national law and not by international law, nevertheless, they need to be treated as human beings granting them with the same human rights (ibid.)

Clarification of the term "integration"

First of all it must be stated that there is no single definition of the term "integration". In general, literature differentiate between integration as one- way process and integration as two- way process. According to the Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (2018), the German ministry for migration and refugees, "Integration is a long- term process. It aims to include all people into the society who are living durable and legally in Germany. Immigrants shall have a comprehensive and equal share in all areas. Therefore they are required to learn German as well as to know, respect and follow the Constitution and the laws". This definition implies that the Federal Republic of Germany requires from the refugees to actively integrate into the society by learning the language as well as to follow the laws. However, they this definition does not say how this should happen. It only calls upon the refugees to take action but does not remind on its own duty.

In the eyes of Sylvie Da Lomba (2010) integration (of refugees) has to be understood as a two- way process where both refugees and the host societies have to pay their duty. Refugees are required to acquire the "necessary linguistic and cultural knowledge" (Da Lomba, 2010: 4) where as the host government must assure that newcomers have "access to employment and other domains of integration" (ibid.). La Lomba (2010) further argues that framing integration as a one- way process overlooks and denies the advantages of a mutual recognition of cultural benefits where only immigrants have to assimilate to their new environment. In addition, integration as a one- way process puts the burden on refugees alone which will exacerbate their integration (Da Lomba, 2010).

This view is shared by Ager and Strang (2008) who examine core domains which might lead to a "successful integration" (Ager & Strang, 2008: 1). These domains concern areas such as employment, education, language and cultural knowledge, social connections as well as rights and citizenship (Ager & Strang, 2008). It can be seen that a great part of these domains need to be provided by public and private entities, but on the other hand refugees need also to make use of these opportunities for achieving a successful integration emphasizing the fact that integration is a two- way process.

As examined by Lewis (2006) the host society's attitudes and perceptions towards refugees play a crucial role for a successful integration. People who are more informed about ongoing migration debates and

are in closer contact to migrants tend to be more welcoming. On the other hand people from lower socioeconomic classes tend to be more sceptical towards migrants as their scare negative impacts of "asylum seekers on the economy and employment opportunities" (Lewis, 2006: 5). Consequently, attitudes can change. People need to be better informed about actual asylum numbers as their are often overestimated. In addition, great attention should be paid to children at schools challenging hostile attitudes. Lastly, opportunities bringing migrants and locals together should be supported and promoted (Lewis, 2006).

As stated above, successful integration also depends on the refugees themselves. As reported by Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002), foreigners are facing certain obstacles and burdens in their attempts to integrate in a new society. Although refugees might be willing to integrate they are challenged by personal and institutional racism, difficult asylum procedures as well as missing structures integration structures (Mestheneos and Ioannidi , 2002).

The author of this thesis strongly supports the assumption that integration is a two- way process. On the one hand local and federal governments need to collaborate together with the European Union, implementing a comprehensive integration policy framework, providing language classes and working opportunities. Similarly, refugees need also be willing to integrate into their host society by learning the respective language, laws and customs, which does not mean that they should forget about their own identity and culture. Integration is a process of mutual recognition in which both the newcomer and the native need become aware of another, seeing the advantages and contribute to colorful societal mosaic.

ICT use in the countries of origin

Several studies have focussed on the ICT and their potential impact on migration (Schapendonk & van Moppes, 2007; Schau, 2012; Rohde et al., 2016).

Rohde et al. (2016), for instance, examine in their article how opposition forces and political activists are making use of ICT during the civil war in Syria. Their results reveal a "fragmented telecom infrastructure in Syria" (Rohde, et al. 2016: 515) with some regions being cut off from digital infrastructure while other regions are controlled and surveilled by governmental forces (Rohde et al., 2016). Moreover, internet activities were not only surveilled but further social media accounts run by opponent groups were blocked (Rohde et al., 2016), The authors show further that "Syrian refugees and immigrants are often well equipped with smartphones" (Rohde, et al. 2016: 529). However, they cannot use them due to the cut- off infrastructure (Rohde et al., 2016). Therefore, it can be assumed that limited access to the internet due to a damaged infrastrastructure as well as to blocked accounts and contents might be a

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factor for migration and getaway. People might not only leave their homes because of the state of war but also as they hope to have easy access to the internet and are allowed to voice their opinion on social media platforms without being punished. Rohde et alt. (2016) already outline that a majority of refugees and immigrants possess mobile phones. Based on this, Schapendonk and van Moppes (2007) agree with this and show further that the mobile phone is of special importance when travelling through Africa. The mobile phone serves as a tool for information sharing. In addition, mobile phones mediate biased images from Europe which draw a picture of Europe as a paradise. So mobile phones can also be a pitfall. People receive a false picture of Europe on which they risk a life- threatening journey. It is clear that mobile phones not only have advantages, but also disadvantages. Schapendonk and van Moppes (2007) show that the majority is aware that this picture is an illusion, whereas other stay misinformed. In response to this, the Federal Government of Germany started the campaign *Rumours about Germany* on the internet in Afghanistan. This campaign aims to mediate a realistic picture of Germany counteracting against rumors, debunking the myth that refugees are provided with a house when they arrive in Europe, which are spread by human traffickers. In addition, the Federal Government of Germany points out alternatives to migration which can be found in humanitarian programs in their home countries (Bundesregierung, 2018). However, it is not known whether potential refugees are aware of this webpage or trust it. They could also see it as a tool for deterrence preventing them from migrating to Europe.

Nevertheless enlightenment and education is a crucial factor when it comes to migration. People not only leave their countries because of war but also in hope to find education and employment (BBC, 2015; The Economist, 2016). The author of this thesis supports incentives enabling as much as possible children and adults visiting a school. UNICEF for instance aims with its "All children learning" program at identifying barriers to education and to removing them in cooperation with governments and partners (UNICEF a, 2017). Further, an early start in education helps children acquire skills and knowledge which are needed to find employment (UNICEF b, 2017). The Global Partnership for Education (n.d.) lists a variety of advantages of education. Among these benefits are reducing poverty, increasing income as well as boosting economic growth. They show further that, for instance, one year of extra schooling can increase the income by 10%. In addition, completing a secondary education would lift up 420 million people from poverty (The Global Partnership for Education (n.d.). Again, this shows that education is a crucial factor and the basis for human life. A profound and complete education enables more people entering the working sector and hence decreases the number of people migrating to Europe. Nevertheless, education is not all. The author of thesis sees also the sees the need by the EU to establish a secure environment and support the local economy with know- how and financial measures.

Incentives like the Africa Investment Platform, a program which aims to support "investment grants, technical assistance and risk capital and risk sharing instruments" (European Commission, 2017) should be maintained and updated regularly and also expanded to the Middle East.

Additionally, it can be witnesses that the mobile phone penetration is increasing in Africa (Schau, 2012). Schau (2012) shows that the penetration of mobile phones has spread rapidly in the last 20 years in Africa. He investigates the relationship between these increasing numbers with migration. His study reveals that mobile phones facilitate migration since they help migrants to build networks. These networks consist of several entities such as family and friends, human traffickers and the chairmen of the respective communities. The author points further points out that it is not the migrants who depend on having a phone. It is more about that the helper (a close friend or a family member), often living far away, owns a phone (Schau, 2012). Scheu (2012) shows as well that a mobile phone can also serve as an "investment item that can be sold if additional cash is needed" (Schau, 2012: 138).

ICT use en route

While Schau (2012) took a general look at mobile phone use during migration, Wall et al. (2015) investigate mobile use of refugees living in a refugee camp. In their article, Wall and her colleagues (2015) study how Syrian refugees living in a refugee camp in Jordan using their mobile phones in order to deal with "information precarity" (Wall et. al., 2015: 1). Their results show that refugees face "information precarity in five forms" (Wall et. al., 2015: 2) : "(1) technological and social access to information; (2) the prevalence of irrelevant sometimes dangerous information; (3) lack of their own image control; (4) surveillance by the state; and (5) disrupted social support". Wall et al. (2015) state that that mobile phones might be easy to access, however, a stable phone network is not. This is line with what Rohde et al. (2016) witness in Syria. In addition, Wall et al. (2009) outline that the refugees do not trust the news which they got from the media. Instead, they use their mobile phones to call family and friends back home to assess the true state and conditions. Again here, the question arises for the author, do (potential) refugees trust in campaigns counteracting migration? Further, the interviewed refugees told that there mobile phones as well as other means of communication were surveilled by the Syrian government. In consequence, voicing against it becomes a dangerous undertaking and it becomes more evident that the mobile phone is a powerful tool. As shown by Rohde et al. (2016) oppositional forces made use of mobile phones. However, they cannot anymore considering the acting by the Syrian government. It becomes clear that refugees and oppositional forces are caught in a dilemma. The refugees living in camp try to solve this dilemma by using foreign SIM cards which are also send back

home in order to stay in contact with their family and friends. However, here as well a situation exists where a stable connection to the internet is difficult to obtain. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the refugees still seem to be afraid of the Syrian government. They fear consequences not only for themselves, but especially for the ones who still live in Syria. Therefore, the mobile phone becomes even more important as it is the only way to keep in contact with them, making sure that they are fine.

ICT use in host countries

Aside from focusing on ICT use in home countries and en route, several studies also examine ICT use by refugees and migrants in their host countries (Harney, 2013; Vancea and Olivera, 2013; Kaufmann, 2018). Harney (2013) and Kaufmann (2018) especially focus on how the mobile phone helps refugees and migrants with their everyday live. Harney (2013) shows that the refugees build a network among themselves, informing each other about ongoing police controls. This reduces anxiety and strengthens the mutual relationship. Kaufmann (2018) finds other purposes how the mobile phone is used, namely for "place- making and geographical orientation; information access and self- help; language learning and translation; and doing family" (Kaufmann, 2018: 882). The study reveals further that "Facebook, WhatsApp, qando Wien [Viennese public transport app], Google Maps, and Google Translate" (Kaufmann, 2018: .889) are the most frequently used apps among the participants (Kaufmann, 2018). Thus, Kaufmann (2018) argues that "smartphones became a key tool in several areas of the participants' lives and helped them in coping with everyday challenges" (Kaufmann, 2018: 889). On the other hand Vancea and Olivera (2013) focus on "the relationship between mobile phone use and the maintenance of family relationships from distance" (Vancea & Olivera, 2013: 179). Their interviews show that the participants prefer calling their family back home rather than send them text messages. Besides this, the mobile phone is also used as a tool to find a job or to get in contact with people from the same home country. This is similar to Harney's (2013) findings. Refugees and migrants tend seek for the company of the own kind considering their vulnerable and often lonely situation.

It is evident that smartphones are of high importance for refugees and migrants. On the one hand it enables them to keep in contact with their family and friends. Thereby refugees and migrants not only make use of phone calls but are also using social media applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook. On the other hand the mobile phone is a useful tool to get one's bearings in the new and unknown environment. GPS systems as well online dictionaries help them to find around. Katja Kaufmann (2018) therefore argues, "smartphones became a key tool in several areas of the participants' lives and helped them in coping with everyday challenges" (Kaufmann, 2018: 889).

It can be assumed that without a mobile phone they would be lost. Probably they could not get in contact with their beloved ones back home, aggravating their already vulnerable situation. Through their mobile phones they have the opportunity to hear and see their families, despite the geographical distances, getting emotional support. Further, they would have trouble getting around in their host countries. Not only are they living in unfamiliar environments, but also have to deal with new languages. Consequently, it can be argued that the mobile phone is not only useful, it is also necessary to keep in contact with family and friends as well as to cope with the new environment.

The literature showed that refugees are using different ICT in their countries of origin, en- route and in their host countries. However, the outlined studies revealed that especially in the countries of origin and during the journey a reliable ICT infrastructure does not always exists. In the case of Syria, some regions are cut off from the technological infrastructure. Further, people fear surveillance by government regimes and so cannot speak openly, neither on the landline nor on the mobile phone. Most migrants possess a mobile phone when migrating to different countries and make use of it to stay in contact with the family or organize the further journey. However, making calls is not for free, so the concerned rely on an income. Moreover, a telephone network is not always present nor is the electricity needed to charge phones. In Europe it is generally easier to get as stable connection, as well as prepaid phones and batteries (Vancea & Olivera, 2013).

The impact of ICT on social integration

Next, the impact of ICT on social inclusion will be taken into account. Possessing a mobile phone and/ or having access to the Internet might be a tool in promoting social integration. Living in a new environment might rouse the feeling in refugees to meet and connect with the local citizens. On the other hand locals might also be interested in meeting the newcomer.

Amanda Alencar (2018) looks in her article "Refugee integration and social media: a local and experiential perspective" in which ways refugees are making use of ICT in order to adapt to their new environment. Her findings reveal that refugees are using ICT and social media for staying in contact with family and friends in their home countries, but also to establish new social ties in the host countries. Besides, social media is used for learning the new language and gaining cultural competences (Alencar, 2018).

This study show that ICT offers the opportunity to integrate refugees in their host societies. However, studies by other scholars (Dekker & Engbersen, 2013; Alam & Imran, 2015) allude to the fact that the usage of ICT is also limited to personal resources such as the individual educational level, which can be described as the digital divide. Further, Alam & Imran (2015) point to the importance of having access to ICT either for "leaning, assimilating with the wider community, accessing education and job opportunities, and contact family and friends" (Alam & Imran, 2015: 20).

Another study conducted by Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010) examines how socioeconomically disadvantaged groups experience the digital technology in Australia. They point out that ICT are becoming of greater importance to fully participate in the "economic, social, political and cultural life of modern society" (Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum, 2010: 1). Hence, not having access to ICT might be a factor excluding groups of fully engaging in society. The authors find a "digital gradient" (Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum, 2010: 26) in Australia, meaning that a lower socioeconomic status goes hand in hand with a lower technology access and use. This has far reaching consequences as more and more goods, services and societal benefits are supplied by these technologies. Those who are already vulnerable due to their socio- economic situation become even more so disadvantaged.

Lee Komito (2011) is pointing to other limits of ICT. In her article she sees in social media a passive monitoring of others rather than a tool which could facilitate social integration and inclusion. On the other hand, migrants tend to maintain strong ties to their family and friends back home and establish relations with fellow migrants (Komito, 2011).

Consequently, the exact impact of ICT use by refugees on social inclusion is not yet clear. Some scholars (AbuJarour & Krasnova, 2017; Alencar, 2018) argue for a positive impact by using ICT for learning the new language or acquiring cultural knowledge about the host community, whereas Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010), Komito (2011), Dekker & Engbersen (2013) or Alam & Imran (2015) argue for the contrary. Dekker & Engbersen (2013), Alam & Imran (2015), Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010) draw on the theory of the so called digital divide meaning that not everyone is able to fully enjoy and participate via ICT in modern society either due to a non- available connection or due to missing skills. Lastly Komito (2011) sees in social media the potential that migrants might seal off from their host communities, stick with one's kind and adhere to old connections back home.

As can be seen above, the literature does not agree on how and if ICTs have an impact on social integration. Therefore, the author of this thesis explores how it is the case with the respective participants in this study.

ICT use in …

Pakistan

Pakistan has ratified international agreements on civil and political rights and signed as well the Convention against torture in June 2010. Its constitution contains a section on important human rights, However, several factors such as corruption, extremism, the dominant position of the military, feudal systems in regional areas and the still present, but neglected, case system exacerbate the implementation of a liberal democracy, including a functioning state of law protecting human rights (Auswärtiges Amt c, 2018).

According to the Auswärtiges Amt a (2018), radio and the TV are the most important media in Pakistan. By now there are around 85 private TV channels in Pakistan, sending either in Urdu or in the respective regional languages. There is one news TV channel sending in English and seven English Speaking newspapers. Several newspapers are printed in Urdu or in the regional languages (Auswärtiges Amt a, 2018).

However, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is struggling with a limited freedom of speech and expression. The public and private media is pressured by governmental as well as militant groups (Auswärtiges Amt c, 2018). The organisation *Reporter ohne Grenzen* gives Pakistan the rank 139 from 180 regarding freedom of press (Reporter ohne Grenzen a, 2018).

Further, talking about ICT usage one has also to talk about freedom of press and opinion. Rohde et al. (2016) already imply that there is a limited freedom of expression in Syria. Aslam (2015) talks in his article about the risks faced by Pakistani and foreign journalists in Pakistan. He reports about several fatalities by journalists after reporting about politically charged topics and more cases where journalists were threatened. Further, Aslam (2015) outlines that the Pakistani constitution might allow for freedom of expression and freedom of press, however, this freedom can be limited to "restrictions imposed by law" (Aslam, 2015: 185). Hassan (2018) finds similar findings in his article "Social Media, Media Freedom and Pakistan's War on Terror". His findings show that militant groups are making use of social media in

order to recruit new supporters and at the same time threaten journalists "to keep silent" (Hassan, 2018: 197). On the other hand journalist are accused by government forces to be in favour of militant groups and force them as well "to report in the military's favour" (Hassan, 2018: 198). As a consequence, the press might not be able to fulfill its original purpose as a watchdog since the information could be manipulated. Consequently, Pakistani citizens might seek to gather reliable information elsewhere such as on social media webpages.

Javed and Bhatti (2015) take a look at the social media usage of selected Bachelor and Master students in Pakistan. In their paper they demonstrate that Facebook and Youtube were the mostly used social media platforms among the interviewed students. These platforms were further mostly used for keeping in contact with friends, "to connect with people they have lost touch with" (Javed and Bhatti, 2015: 59) and to gather and exchange information (for their study). However, the respondents also reported having problems with a reliable energy/ electronic supply (Javed and Bhatti, 2015).

Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2018) find similar patterns in their study "The impact of Mobile Social Network Applications on Students' Social- Life". They investigate how and why university students make use of Mobile Social Network Applications (MSNAs) and seek to assess how this impacts the students' social life. Their findings reveal that students make most frequent use of MSNAs in order to communicate with "easily" (Abdelraheem and Ahmed, 2018: 7). Further, they find that making use of MSNAs raises "social awareness on the current events" (Abdelraheem and Ahmed, 2018: 7). In addition, Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2018) report like Javed and Bhatti (2015) that students use social media platforms also in order to share information.

When summarizing ICT use in Pakistan it becomes clear that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan limits freedom of press and freedom of opinion from its citizens. The organisation *Reporter ohne Grenzen* (2018) as well as a study conducted by Aslam (2015) show that journalists have to fear dangerous perilous and consequences when voicing against the government. As stated above, the Pakistani constitution guarantees freedom of press as well as freedom of expression, however, it also states that this freedom can be limited. It can be assumed that the government interprets legitimate restrictions for its own good.

Consequently, it can be argued that a limited freedom of press and opinion might be a reason why people leave their country. In addition, The Auswärtige Amt (2018) awards Pakistan high growth potential. Its favourable location allows Pakistan to establish trade relations with Central- and South

Asia, China and via the Arabian Sea. Further, the Auswärtige Amt (2018) sees the richness of resources, low labour costs, a young and growing population as well as a growing middle class as additional factors contributing to a potential growth. However, the Auswärtige Amt (2018) also admits that Pakistan ignored these factors for many years and is struggling with recurring periods of political instability. Further restraints are "corruption, an inefficient bureaucracy, an unstable regulatory environment, an inadequate energy supply and a partly fragile safety situation (Auswärtiges Amt b, 2018). Next to limitations in civil rights, the unstable and unsure economic situation in Pakistan might be another reason leading people to leave Pakistan.

Further, Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2018) and Javed and Bhatti (2015) show that Pakistani students actively make use of the internet and social media platforms such as Facebook. They use it mainly to socialize but also for academic purposes. However, Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2018) and Javed and Bhatti (2015) do not shrink to limitations which are faced by the students, despite the electronic supply (Javed and Bhatti, 2015).

Iraq

In October 2005, the Iraqi people accepted a new constitution. This constitution states that Iraq is a "democratic, federal and parliamentary- republic state (Auswärtiges Amt f, 2018). It further contains a catalogue of human rights and earmarks a women quota of 25% in the Parliament (Auswärtiges Amt f, 2018).
Although the new constitution contains a catalogue of human rights, Amnesty International (2018) reports severe human rights violations done by governmental, paramilitary groups and IS fighters. People, accused by the Iraqi government, of having contact to the terror group Islamic State, have been detained and tortured. Court proceedings have been unfair and often ended with death penalty (Amnesty International, 2018).
Although Al- Abadi, the acting prime minister, declared the victory over the Islamic State in December 2017, the peril is not over yet. The IS might have been destroyed as a territorial entity in Iraq, but, it still endangers the security situation in Iraq with terror attacks (Auswärtiges Amt f, 2018). In 2017, more than three million Iraqi were still fleeing from the terror of ISIS in Iraq (Amnesty International, 2018).
In addition to the human rights violations conducted relating to the fight against the Islamic state, Iraq is also struggling with a non- existing freedom of expression. Amnesty International (2018) notes outrages in the Kurdish region. Blogger and journalists have been victims of "strokes, surveillance, arbitrary

arrestments, death threats and denial campaigns". The organisation *Reporter ohne Grenzen* (2018) reports about systematic violence against journalists. Journalists are targets of assaults. Additionally, a death list of journalists is circulating in Mosul. Government as well as the IS attacking journalist and media agencies. Journalists are not protected by the law, but are blocked and blackmailed by politicians. The organisation ranks Iraq with place number 160 from 180 regarding freedom of press (Reporter ohne Grenzen b, 2018). Freedom House (2016) therefore marks Iraq's freedom of press as not free.

There are around 60 newspapers and several TV channels counting to the most important media in Iraq. Some of them are directly or indirectly under the influence by the government. Of great importance are further the satellite TV stations Al- Jazeera and Al- Arabiya (Auswärtiges Amt d, 2017).
The Iraqi constitutions may guarantee freedom of expression and freedom of press, however, this freedom is also limited, same as in Pakistan, to security purposes. In 2012, there were "no known cases of online censorship" (UNESCO, 2012). However, individuals reported that they were not fully able to enjoy in "expressing their ways via the Internet" (Unesco, 2012). The Iraqi government looks with concern at the growing Internet penetration in Iraq and is "prioritising security concerns and proposing restrictions that clamp down on basic rights" (Unesco, 2012). Regulating the internet is therefore a step away towards a liberal democracy (Unesco, 2012).

A study conducted by the Broadcasting Board of Governors in 2016 revealed that around 90% of the Iraqi adult population owns a mobile phone with 35% having access to the Internet. Further, the study shows that Iraqi people using the TV, the radio, their mobile phone and the Internet, including social media platforms such Facebook and Youtube, for gathering news. In addition the Broadcasting Board of Governors (2016) also reports of 36% having displaced in the last year due to instability.

Taking everything into account, it gets clear that the Republic Iraq is not fulfilling its promise to guarantee freedom of speech and opinion as well as the catalogue of human rights. As stated above, the Iraqi constitution can limit these freedoms when it sees as a threat for its Republic. Amnesty International (2018), *Reporter ohne Grenzen* (2018) as well as Freedom House (2016) criticize the acts by the Iraqi government. In fight against the terror group IS the Iraqi military conducted severe human rights violations costing many civilian casualties. Although there have not been any online censorships (UNESCO, 2012), journalists and reporters cannot voice their opinion freely on the internet to full extent. It can be assumed that the Iraqi government will limit more and more freedom of press and opinion, as internet and mobile phone penetration is increasing (Broadcasting Board of Governors (2016). Facing

the state of war, the economic situation, the human rights violations as well as the limitations regarding freedom of press and opinion, it clarifies why millions of Iraqis are forced to leave their home, hoping to find shelter in the neighbouring countries and Europe.

Ghana

The government, the judicial branch as well as the parliament of Ghana support of the awareness of human rights. Characteristic of Ghana are freedom of expression and being tolerant towards other religions. Compared to other African countries Ghana is doing better regarding certain human rights. However, Ghana is struggling with death penalty, LGBTQ- and rights for mentally ill people (Auswärtiges Amt i, 2018). Amnesty International c (2018) reports about degrading detention conditions. Arrested people reported that they did not have access to medical supply or skilled legal defence. Further convicts revealed that they have not been told how to fight against a judgement of death penalty nor how to get financial support for a legal defense. Proposals to abolish the death penalty failed due to delays in the judicial process (Amnesty International c, 2018).

In addition, Amnesty International c (2018) reports that sexual relations between homosexuals is still illegal and culpable. LGBTQ have been victims of "discriminations, violence, harassments by the police and attempted blackmail". In February 2017, the head of the parliament proposed prohibiting homosexuality completely, claiming it would lead to "sodomy and incest"(Amnesty International c, 2018). The Auswärtige Amt i (2018) explains the missing awareness and missing tolerance for LGBTQs and mentally ill people with the lack of education regarding human rights and non-existing lobbying for the concerned. Despite the human violations against certain groups, Ghana is enjoying a diverse media landscape (Reporter ohne Grenzen c, 2018). The possibility to criticize the government is often used. Since 2011 the government uplifted more and more punishments on press delicts. However, journalist have to pay high fees facing a trial. In addition, journalist still face threats by politicians and police forces and are forced to censor their reports (Reporter ohne Grenzen c, 2018). The organisation (2018) therefore ranks Ghana 23 out of 180 countries.

Hinson (2011) examines in his paper the objective of Internet browsing amongst students at the University of Ghana Business School. His findings show that students use the Internet for mainly three different purposes: social, academic and professional ones (Hinson, 2011). The respondents reported using the Internet for "sending or receiving e-mail messages, chatting with friends online, making new friends and reading the latest sports and entertainment news" (Hinson, 2011: 181). Further respondents

also use the social media webpages Facebook, Twitter and MySpace, explaining further that they used these sites to chat with friends and family, meet new friends or find "old friends from schools, workplaces and associations" (Hinson, 2011: 182). Professional purposes include improving working skill and "getting information on the latest trends in the industry, interacting with clients and receiving up-to- date information from colleagues and clients" (Hinson, 2011: 182). Lastly, the interviewed students were also using the Internet for academic purposes, including "assessing academic journal databases, searching for schools online, registering for professional courses, research, and interacting with lecturers and supervisors" (Hinson, 2011: 182).

Tuurosong and Faisal (2014) examine students' frequency of social media usage, reasons for using them and the harmful effects of their consumption on their academic performance as well as their socio-economic lives. Their study reveals that Facebook and Twitter are the most frequently used apps among students, followed by Skype and YouTube. The majority used these applications to chat with friends and for entertainment, and 20% used them as well for academic purposes (Tuurosong & Faisal, 2014). Further Tuurosong and Faisal (2014) reveal that social media consumption has a negative effect on academic performance as it is time consuming.

Compared to other African countries, Ghana is doing better regarding freedom of press and opinion. However, Ghana has issues with LGBTQ rights as well as rights for mentally ill people. This is due to lacking education (Auswärtiges Amt i, 2018). Education not only serves as a tool for further employment, but it also strengthens sensibility and empathy. Consequently, if more people would attend school, LGBTQs and mentally ill people would be less discriminated. However, as long as LGBTs and mentally ill people still face discrimination, they might see this as a reason to leave the country. In addition, Ghana still has challenges regarding the consequences from low prices for natural resources in the world trade and from its own economic policies (Auswärtiges Amt h, 2018). While economic forecastings might be positive, the state is still indebted. Additionally, incomes are unevenly spread among the Ghanaian people.(Auswärtiges Amt i, 2018). The currently poor economic situation in Ghana might be a further factor encouraging people to leave it.

Hinson (2011) and Tuurosong and Faisal (2014) examine how university students make use of ICT and for what purposes. In both studies students make use of social media applications to communicate with friends but also for academic purposes.

Comparing freedom of press and opinion in Pakistan, Iraq and Ghana, it is clear that Ghana is the country with the most free press and media. Especially in Pakistan and Iraq, journalists fear severe consequences by the government when voicing their opinions (Unesco, 2012; Aslam, 2015; Hassan, 2018). In Pakistan and Iraq, the press and media are not only pressured by the government, but also by militant groups. In Pakistan and Iraq, limited freedom of press and opinion might be a factor encouraging people to leave. Moreover, all three countries face difficult economic situations. They are dealing with the consequences of long-standing corruption, inefficient bureaucracy, unstable energy supply as well as volatile prices for natural resources in the world trade (Auswärtiges Amt b, e, i). So therefore, economic situation might be another factor leading to migration. In addition, Iraq especially is dealing with the disastrous consequences following from the fight against the Islamic state, leading millions of people to leave their home (Auswärtiges Amt f, 2018).

In all three countries people make use of the social media webpages such as Facebook and Whatsapp (Hinson, 2011; Tuurosong and Faisal 2014; Javed and Bhatti 2015; Board of Governors (2016); Abdelraheem and Ahmed, 2018). Further, these applications were used for private, contacting friends and family and entertainment, as well as for academic purposes, such as gathering and exchanging information on topics relating the profession.

Derived Hypotheses

Based on the outlined literature, the author approaches her research question with the hypotheses that can be phrased as follows:

1. *Possessing a mobile phone affected the decision to migrate.*
2. *Possessing a mobile has an impact on the social integration of refugees in their host societies.*
3. *Refugees make use of different ICT on their way to Europe. As their ICT was restricted in their countries of origin, it becomes more open in Europe.*

Methodology

As stated above, this research is going to make use of semi- structured interviews. Semi- structured interviews allow the researcher to "delve deeply into social and personal matters" (DiCiccio- Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 315) of the participants (DiCiccio- Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Moreover, questions in semi- structured interviews are designed open- ended so that the researcher can ask further question. This has the advantage of getting in- depth inside of the participants' experience.

The author therefore considers semi- structured interviews as the most adequate method for answering the research question. Based on the answers, the author will try to describe a development of ICT use, for example, do refugees approach other social media platforms in the host countries than they used in their countries of origin? Due time and other limitations (such as missing financial measures, the author is working on her own and not within a team of researchers), the author was only able to interview a small number of participants (six interviews have been conducted). However, this might give a first glimpse on development in ICT usage where further works can build on.

When conducting interviews the researcher had to get in contact with the participants. Further, the researcher had to establish a relationship of trust and rapport to the participants (DiCiccio- Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The author conducted the interviews at two refugee centres in Düsseldorf, Germany, where the interviewed refugees are living. Reason for choosing these refugee centers in particular was that they were quick to respond positively and their interest in the author's request.

Whiting (2008) suggests to conduct the interviews in a "comfortable environment" (Whiting, 2008: 36). The author hopes that the refugees felt comfortable in the refugee center so it pleasant for them to answer the questions. Putting oneself in the situation of an interview, the author would be more willing to answer questions in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere.

The direct contact with participants also brings other risks and the researcher needs to take several ethical considerations into account (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

Before the author started questioning the refugees, she explained to them the actual core of the research, provided them with all relevant information how their information will be used and handed them the informed consent, provided by the University of Twente, over. The author is aware of the fact that the well- being of the participants is more important than the pursuit of knowledge. Lastly, the author asked for permission to record the interviews. In addition, the author minuted the most striking points, in her opinion, during the interviews.

The interviews have been transcribed and are provided in a separate appendix to this thesis (see, Appendix 1).

An interview scheme was prepared in advance. The author tried to stick to this scheme, depending on the answers.

	Gender	Age	Nationality
Interview 1- Achmed*	male	24	Pakistani
Interview 2- Yana*	female	39	Iraqi

Interview 3- Hossam*	male	22	Iraqi
Interview 4- Memmed*	male	22	Iraqi
Interview 5- Zola*	female	38	Ghanaian
Interview 6- Sara*	female	34	Ghanaian

Table 1.0 Main characteristics of the participants

* Names have been changed

The author was able to conduct six interviews in total, with three men and three women from different countries of origin, namely Pakistan, Iraq and Ghana. The age of the participants ranged from 22 to 39. Three interviews were conducted in English and three in German based on the preference by the participants. The participants were chosen with the assistance from an employee at the respectively refugee centers.

The author makes use of critical discourse analysis, a common method in qualitative research (Mogashoa, 2014), in order to analyze the transcripted interviews. Critical discourse analysis allows the researcher to give written and spoken texts a meaning. Therefore "critical discourse analysis is a tool to help members of a profession understand the messages they are sending to themselves and others and to understand the meaning of spoken and written texts by others" (Mogashoa, 2014: 105). Mogashoa (2014) further points to the fact that not only the words of those that are important, but also those from the ones who are not in power. She argues, drawing on the example of educational policies, that those who are at the heart of teaching, should be involved in the development of learning policies (Mogashoa, 2014). Applying this statement to the objective of this thesis, one can argue that refugees need to be involved in the development of ICT encouraging their integration into their host societies.

Therefore, the author analyzed the spoken words and give them a meaning. The author tried therefore to look beyond the spoken words, what they really mean and imply. However, Mogashoa (2014) also states that critical discourse analysis does not "provide absolute answers to a specific problem, but enable us to understand the conditions behind a specific problem" (Mogashoa, 2014: 106). Putting it differently, critical discourse analysis allows the researcher to get a deeper and more profound understanding what the participants think about the respectively topic.

Data analysis

As outlined above six interviews serve as the basis for answering the research question "How and why refugees change their ICT behaviour when migrating to Europe?". The literature (see Theoretical Framework) entails studies on the pre- migration phase, en- route, studies focussing on ICT usage in the host country and lastly on the impact of ICT on social inclusion. Based on these findings, the author of this thesis asked the participants questions about their ICT use in their home countries, en route, their ICT use now in Germany and a potential impact on ICT on social inclusion. The author of this thesis focused on mobile phone apps and certain social media platforms. The author was further interested why they were using these apps in particular, how they help them.

The data/ document section will echo the refugees' answers. Afterwards, an interpretation of these answers will be provided. Quotations are used to underline the most striking points.

ICT use in the country of origin

All six participants were using a smartphone in their home countries and reported to had access to the Internet. Asking for which apps they were using back home, five respondents reported that they were using Facebook, four were using WhatsApp and three were using YouTube. Asking further why they were using these apps, the participants told the author that they were using these apps in order to stay in contact with friends and family (Facebook and WhatsApp), which is also in line with the findings by Hinson (2011), Tuurosong and Faisal (2014), Javed and Bhatti (2015) as well Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2018). Hereby these social media platforms not only seem as a tool to keep in contact with them, but also to turn up old friends as it happened to Achmed from Pakistan(24)*, Facebook was really important. I was in contact with friends via Facebook. Many found me (on Facebook) after many years, friends from school who I didn't saw for many years. We haven't been in contact via our phones, but now we found us on Facebook. For real, Facebook was really important (July 3, 2018).*
On the other hand, social media platforms allow people to participate in the lives of friends and family, without being physical present as it is the case with Sara from Ghana (34*), I am not a type who always goes out (because of the kids). So when I am in the house, I am just chatting with friends. Visiting them and then chatting with them. That's why I like it. I mostly chat on the phone, (July 5, 2018).* Because of her two children, she often cannot go out with her friends. However, she can call them from home, chat with them and at the same time keep an eye on her kids.

Further, Achmed (24) said, *I also used Facebook for news like BBC or so, when gave the page a like. So I could see what is going on in Europe, or in Arabic countries or in other countries.*

As stated above, the participants were using Facebook and WhatsApp to keep in contact with family and friends and in order to catch up with news. YouTube on the contrary was used for leisure and fun activities. Asking Hossam (22) for instance why he was using YouTube, he stated: "*YouTube? For watching, for fun" (July 4, 2018).*

Further, two participants were also using Twitter, whereas one of them told the following

I used Twitter in my home country, but I left it (Twitter) , because there are problems for us using Twitter. Twitter is more official than Facebook. So, for example, if you post, when you say, when I say Merkel is not good or she did a mistake, then this okay here (in Germany). You can say that, you can even lie. But in our country, if you say that this politician did something bad, then they don't give Achmed the right, then the police is coming, Achmed from Pakistan (24), July 3, 2018.

Asking other participants about restrictions on the Internet or having problems with social media, the participants denies or in the case of Yana from Iraq (39): "*No. And if there was anything blocked, I didn't know about it, July 3, 2018.* However, although the participants did not report about limitations, that does not mean that there are not some.

Scattered the participants were using other apps where one can differentiate between three groups: First for contacting friends and family (via Viber, Skype, Email or SMS Messengers). The second groups makes up leisure and fun activities (Soundcloud, PicsArt, Adobe, CandyCam, Playstore and Snapchat). The last group is made up by apps for different purposes (xdidevelopers, dictionary, calculator).

None of the participants told that they were using their mobile phone in order to get information about their emerging migration. Compared to Schau (2012) and Rohde et. alt. (2016), who find a connection, this bachelor thesis cannot rejects the first hypothesis "*Possessing a mobile phone affected the decision to migrate"* based on the data which has been derived from the interviews .

Comparing further the participants' answers regarding their ICT use in the country of origin, it becomes clear that the mobile phone, a connection to the internet and social media applications are of high importance. Gender, age and the level of education do not influence the usage of social media application. All participants make actively use of social media in order to communicate with friends and family, asking to go out. So despite, the sometimes critical situation in the respective countries, the participants seem to had a social life in the streets. Moreover, social media applications such as Facebook extended their scope as a prior mainly chatting tool to mean for making phone calls and gathering news and information. Further, it is now one of the few possibilities for refugees to keep in contact with the beloved ones back home. Through Facebook they can still take part in their lives,

although they miles apart. Consequently, it can be argued that the type of ICT use has not been changed, the purpose, however, did.

ICT use en route

None of the participants reported to use particular apps, which might have facilitated their migration on their way to Europe, whereas AbuJarour and Krasnova (2017) find the opposite. Two refugees were calling their family. Yana from Iraq (39) even stated: *"We only called them in Greece, to tell them that we are safe. We crossed the sea and we finished without any apps" (July 3, 2018).* On the opposite, Achmed (24) told that he could not use his SIM card which he bought in Turkey: *"When you are coming to Greece or Macedonia, the SIM card is not working. No internet, no signal. For real, there is no signal. But I did not used any help. When I found WLAN, I called my mother, (...). But I did not used any navigation or something similar how to get to Germany. I have not done that."*
Consequently, mobile phones do not seem to be a necessary tool in order to get to Europe. Moreover, the participants seem to be equipped with different kind of mobile phones and SIM cards as they have partly problems to make phone calls, whereas other do not.
Although the participants did not made use of specific apps during their migration, contacting their family seems to be very important. Now being separated from the loved ones, a feeling of insecurity for both sides arises. Therefore, all people involved want to know how the other one is doing, considering especially the perils and dangers which happen during the journey, the tough situations in refugee camps as well as the situation back home.
 Further, there were differences how the refugees got to Europe. A part of the respondents got to Germany by airplane while other ones crossed the dessert and the sea. Memmed (22), for example, told that he did not know exactly how he found his way to Europe. He was together with many others and crossed the dessert and the sea, *"Maybe someone had Google Maps, but I didn't. I just followed the others" (July 4, 2018).*
As can be seen, mobile phones are not necessary in order to migrate. Migration can happen by foot in a larger group as well as via airplane. Although the participants carried their mobile phones to Europe, they did not make particular use of them in order to get to Europe. Consequently, it can be argued that refugees do not change their ICT behaviour from their home country to the phase en route. However, it has to be highlighted that informing the family about the well- being is of great importance.

All six participants use their smartphones now in Germany. Five participants mentioned that they were using Facebook and WhatsApp. They told that there were using it to keep in contact with family and friends at home writing them messages or call them via the video call tool. Yana (39) puts it like this: " You know : *(The mobile phone) is our only way to family now." (July 3, 2018).* Two participants told that he do not have (close) contact to their family back home: "*For God's sake. I do not have to be with my family anymore, Hossam (22) (July 4, 2018).*

However, Memmed (22) also said that he using these apps to meet up with his friends, living elsewhere in the city, "*We are writing via WhatsApp. And then we meet at main station or in the Old Town" (July 4, 2018).*

Further, two respondents told that they were using Google in order to find information on current events, what is going on in the world and in their home countries. Two respondents said that were using navigator apps in order to find the way their way through the city for appointments in public bureaus. Sara (34) told: "*In Africa and Ghana our bus stops in our street, you use it, you cannot get lost. It is not possible. We have rough roads and that's it. But when I came here, everything is fragmented. When I wanna go to this street, I just type this street and that's it." (July 5, 2018).* Two more participants use dictionary apps for translating letters they got from public departments.

Scattered the participants use Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube, whereas Zola (38) told: "*(...) I use YouTube to see movies from my country, and songs from my country and to see news from my country, what is going on in Ada" (July 5, 2018).*

Asking the participants whether they use any help to integrate into their host country or to meet new people from Germany, everyone denied. They told that they do not know any Germans or do not know how to connect with them. Putting it with Yana's (39) words: "*I don't know which apps to use", (July 3, 2018).*

It can be argued that the mobile phone together with its social media applications gives the refugees a feeling of proximity and intimacy. Yana (39) for instance told: "*We call them almost every day, just to say hi, what's happening cause my father is sick, see how he is doing" (July 3, 2018).* Although Yana is not physically present with her family in Iraq, she can participate in their lives for news sharing and mutual emotional support via the phone. Yana shares this experience with a part of the other refugees. Sara (34) who is together in Germany with her two sons is also in frequent contact with her family back home: "*Because of the kids, we cannot talk too often. We try on saturdays. Then I am a little bit free. I video-call them. We chat, we laugh. My parents can see the children. They are really happy about it!"*

(July 5, 2018). It can be seen that staying in contact with the family at home is not only important for the ones living in another country now. The family back in the host countries also wants to take part in their lives and see what is going on. This is line with what Kaufmann (2012) as well as Vancea and Olivera (2013) find in their articles. Next to the aspect of calling and texting the family members, refugees are also making use of video calls. This underlines the fact that communication has also a visual component and that is of high importance to literally see each other. Video Calls therefore close the geographical distance and brings the family closer together. On the other, hand making phone calls via WhatsApp or Viber also saves money. The refugees mentioned that it is cheaper than calling via landline or calling mobile phone numbers. This emphasizes the fact that the refugees and partly their families back home own limited financial resources and depend on their mobile phones including a stable connection to the Internet. On the other hand, the internet connection tends to be more reliable than the land line connection. The refugees come from areas where the infrastructure is partly destroyed due to armed conflicts. Even if they cannot connect to the internet at any time, they receive their messages, when they can.

 The emotional proximity can also be applied to YouTube. As it can been seen at the example of Zola (38) who uses YouTube to listen to and watch music and movies from her home country Ghana. This also indicates that the refugees are still sticking to a part of their own culture and it could be argued that they are trying to overcome a feeling of loneliness, especially taking into account that the interviewed refugees are missing an opportunity to integrate into their host society. As outlined above, it is not clear yet if social media has an impact on social inclusion. Partly, the refugees are already using dictionaries and local GPS systems, however, they are using it for organizing their personal matters, which is in line with the findings by Harney (2013) and Kaufmann (2018) who both argue that the mobile phone is a tool for handling every day challenges such as geographical orientation or translating official letters. In addition, the interviews made clear that not all refugees speak German. In consequence, they might have problems with completing their asylum procedures. Using dictionaries is therefore a handy tool in getting alone with bureaucratic issues.

In consequence, the author of this thesis has to reject her second hypothesis, *Possessing a mobile has an impact on the social integration of refugees in their host societies* with the gathered data*.* There might be a positive impact as it has been, for example, reported by AbuJarour and Krasnova (2017) and Alencar (2018). However, other scholars disagree such as Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010), Komito (2011), Dekker & Engbersen (2013) or Alam & Imran (2015). Therefore, more research needs to be done in order to examine to what extent ICT and social media influences the integration of refugees into their host societies. However, the interviews revealed that the refugees themselves do not know how to

integrate or to meet into their host societies. However, they do seem do have an understanding of the term integration. It is up to them as well the host society to make the term integration work. As outlined above for the author of this thesis integration should be approached as a two- way process. Integration cannot be successful if refugees and public entities remain passive. The author of this thesis therefore sees a call for action by the public and private sector.

At the current state of art it seems like that there are no opportunities for the refugees to integrate into their new environment. However, the author knows herself about events organized by private actors which aim to bring refugees and local citizens together. Apparently, refugees are not informed about such events. Therefore private actors and public actors need to cooperate in terms of organizing events and mediating them to refugees. The interviews showed that almost all refugees use Facebook. Therefore, Facebook can be seen a potential starting point for integrating refugees into the society. On the other hand, integration is a two- way process, also requiring from the refugees a willingness to integrate, learning German and accepting German customs.

Taking all answers into account, the author cannot determine a change in the type of ICT behavior by the interviewed participants. Comparing their answers regarding their ICT use in their home countries to their ICT use now in Germany, one can see that refugees are making use of the same social media apps. However, their purpose changed. While in their countries of origin their used to keep in contact with family and friends, they use it in Germany for giving them a feeling of emotional proximity. In addition to WhatsApp and Facebook, a part of the refugees is also making use of transport and navigation apps as well as dictionaries to get along in their new environment. However, the refugees, except for one, do not report about feeling more free or less anxious about using certain apps. This might be due the fact that they were not aware of blocked contents in their home countries, did not engage in political discussions on the Internet or were afraid of telling the truth. As outlined above Amnesty International as well as Reporter ohne Grenzen report about perils for journalists and others freely speaking on the Internet and in the press, especially in Pakistan and Iraq. This study cannot give an estimation on potential threats and dangers for people living in Iraq and Ghana freely expressing their voices on the Internet. The outlined studies above, however, are strong evidence that these limitations might have been a factor for people to leave their home. For Pakistan, this thesis has evidence about limitations on freedom of expression on the social media platform Twitter. Although the constitution of Pakistan guarantees freedom of expression, this freedom is taken away from the citizens has they have to fear consequences if voicing against the government.

The theoretical framework showed that freedom of expression and freedom of the press is not for granted in Pakistan and Iraq. The constitutions may allow for these freedoms, however, they can be

limited and restricted. Therefore, this thesis shows that the participants are making use of the same social media platforms in their countries of origin as in their host country Germany. However, their purpose changed (see hypothesis 3).

Reflection

In this section the author will reflect on her study with regard to the interviews. First of all, it has to be stated that the author was only able to conduct six interviews. In addition, it was the first time for the author to conduct interviews. Moreover, each interview was different. In consequence, this means that the author had to be able to respond spontaneously to participants' answers. This can also be seen as a disadvantage of semi- structured interviews. Semi- structured interviews require a certain level of experience as well as self- confidence. She was not trained in conducting interviews, noticed that she was missing this experience in asking follow up questions and was further hesitant to ask detailed questions about the situation in the respective countries or about the gateway by the refugees. She did not wanted to wake up memories which might have hurt the participants having in mind that the well-being of the participants is of greater importance than the pursuit of knowledge. Further, the author had the impression that the interviews conducted with the participants who were not (yet) familiar with the German or English language had difficulties with understanding the content of this research. On the other hand, participants who were more trained in English or German were able to tell more detailed stories about their ICT use. However, it could also be that the refugees themselves were hesitant to answer the questions, being afraid, despite the informed consent, of the consequences which might derive for them. Another aspect which has to be taken into account is the situation of some of the participants. One participant, for instance, was pregnant and the author had the impression that she was very tired and could not concentrate on the answers. Another participant joined the interviews together with her children who were clamouring and playing around in the background. So she did not only had to pay attention to the questions but also to her children. Therefore, the author of this thesis suggests that the participants should be in a good health conditions as. In addition, further researchers should take care that the interviews take place in a silent atmosphere.

Conclusion

This bachelor thesis aimed answering the question "How and why refugees might change their ICT behavior when migrating to Europe?". The author chose this research question since it has not been answered in the literature yet. Previous studies only focussed on the ICT use at the current location of migrants and refugees, examined the impact on ICT on social integration or treated the media discourse about refugees, for example, on Facebook. Therefore this paper examined which ICT and mobile phone apps refugees were using in their home countries, en route and now in their host country Germany. It aimed to get an insight of the governmental actings of the respective countries and in the next step tried to answer the question whether ICT facilitates refugees to integrate ICT into their new environment and host society, including the social relevance.

In order to answer this research question the author conducted six interviews with refugees in two refugee centers in Düsseldorf, Germany.

The theoretical framework answered the question "what is a refugee" and provided studies discussing the term "integration" in the first instance which are of great importance in this thesis. Nex, the author of this thesis introduced several studies focusing on the ICT use of refugees in their countries of origin, en route and in their host countries. Rohde et al. (2016), for example, find a restricted use of ICT in Syria due to surveillance by the regime or to a damaged infrastructure. Schapendonk and van Moppes (2007), on the other hand, show how the possession of a mobile phone influences the decision to migrate. The mobile phone draws a picture of a rich and wealthy Europe which wakes desires and wishes.

On the way to Europe, the mobile phone is used a tool to stay in contact with family and friends at home as well as to organize the further journey (Schapendonk and van Moppes, 2007) as well as to deal with uncertainty (Wall et. al., 2009). Next Harney (2013), Kaufmann (2018) and Vancea and Olivera (2013) examine the mobile phone use of refugees and migrants in their host societies. Their results show that the mobile phone is used in order to stay in contact with family and friends as well as to face everyday challenges, for example, language barriers.

The studies reveal that mobile phones are an essential tool for refugees in their lives. They help them to keep in contact with family and friends at any moment, organize their migration as well as to get along in their host societies.

In addition, the author presented several studies examining the impact of ICT on social integration. Different scholars argue for a different impact of ICT on social inclusion. Some scholars (AbuJarour & Krasnova, 2017; Alencar, 2018) argue for a positive impact by using ICT for learning the new language or

acquiring cultural knowledge about the host community, whereas Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010), Komito (2011), Dekker & Engbersen (2013) or Alam & Imran (2015) argue for the contrary. Drawing on the theory of the so called "digital divide", Dekker & Engbersen (2013), Alam & Imran (2015), Newman, Biedrzycki and Baum (2010) argue that not everyone is able to fully enjoy and participate via ICT in modern society either due to a non- available connection or due to missing skills. Lastly, Komito (2011) sees in social media the potential that migrants might seal of from their host communities, stick with one's kind and adhere to old connections back home.

Based on the outlined literature, the author postulated three hypotheses, focusing on a possible effect of mobile phones on the decision to migrate, the relationship between mobile phones and integration and lastly the development of ICT use from their respective home countries to their host country. The methodology section introduced the applied methods to this thesis, namely semi- structured interviews and discourse analysis.

For analyzing the interviews the author made use of critical discourse analysis in order to give the refugees' words a meaning.

Next, the data analysis echoed and analyzed the participants' answers in the three- folded step ICT use in the country of origin, en route an ICT use in the host country as it has also been applied in the interviews. The author outlined that the smartphone is of great importance to all participants allowing them to keep in contact with family and friends whereas WhatsApp and Facebook were the most frequently named social media applications. Refugees seem to communicate with their family and friends mainly via messages, but also via video calls, taking a visual and financial aspect into account. Although divided by distance they can still take part in each others' live which gives them a feeling of intimacy and proximity. Age, gender and nationality does not seem to play a role in determining the participants' type of usage on social media platforms. However, younger respondents described they used photography applications, such as Snapchat, whereas older participants did not. None of the participants confirmed a connection between possessing a mobile phone and the decision to migrate. Therefore the author of this thesis rejects her first hypothesis "*Possessing a mobile phone affected the decision to migrate"* with the deriven data*.

There might be cases where the mobile phone had an effect on the decision to migrate as it has been examined by Schapendonk & van Moppes (2007) or Schau (2012) for instance. However, in this study, the participants did not reported about a relationship between their mobile phone and their decision to migrate. As outlined above, the mobile phone served mainly as a tool for keeping in contact with family and friends living around.

Further, in the conducted interviews, no specific apps used during the migration were mentioned. However, it seems to be of great importance for the participants to inform their family about their well-being.

Next to using social media platforms to keep in contact with the loved ones and reading news, refugees are also making use of video platforms such as YouTube to feel closer to their homes. The literature section already showed that it is not clear yet if social media has an impact on social integration. In this study social media does not play a role. None of the participants reported about using specific apps in order to integrate. Refugees were partly using dictionaries as well as GPS system for dealing with their life now in Germany (translating letters or find their way to appointments). Consequently, the second hypothesis *Possessing a mobile has an impact on the social integration of refugees in their host societies* was rejected based on the deriven data. Here the author of this paper sees call for action by private and public entities. Integration needs to be approached as two- way process in which both sides have to become active. Public and private entities need to provide the opportunities for integration, however, refugees need to seize these opportunities. Member States can here build on best practice examples as they have been outlined by the European Foundation for Democracy (n.d.) for instance.

Finally, the author compared all answers of the refugees regarding their ICT use at home, en route and in Germany. A change in the ICT behaviour could not be found. The interviewed refugees make use of the same social media platforms in Germany as in their home countries Pakistan, Iraq and Ghana. The participants, except for one, did not report any restrictions in their home countries compared to Germany. However, the purpose seems to change. Mobile phones are now of greater importance since it is the only way to stay in contact with family and friends still living in the home countries. Therefore the author is not able to test her third hypothesis "*Refugees making use of different ICT on their way to Europe. As their ICT was restricted in their countries of origin, it becomes more open in Europe*" to full extent with the data derived from the interviews.

In summary, the author could not test her three working hypotheses to full extent. However, a greater number of interviews might have resulted in a different outcome. Therefore, more research needs to be done in order to get clearer picture.

This thesis might not be able to answer the question "How and why refugees might change their ICT behaviour when migrating to Europe" to full extent. Nevertheless, new insights about individual ICT behaviour were presented by showing that the mobile phone is of great importance to the participants. Future research can build on this thesis and find an answer to the research question.

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