

Challenging Imposed Representations of Environmentally Displaced Persons

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Abstract

In the past decades there has been an emergence of climate change issues on the global political agenda which has become a major concern for the international community. The impact of climate change on migration has increased the attention of policymakers and researchers. Environmentally displaced persons, who can be internally, or crossed border displaced, are not recognized by the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951 and cannot be granted refugee status as an asylum seeker within the current judicial system.,. These people are seen as silent passive others who when they appear confirm stereotypes and do not convey individual stories, diversity and agency. Furthermore, this is the difference between representations and voice, if given a voice these different groups would be able to be seen as individuals instead of others that these representations create. This thesis analyses the frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons through a media visual analysis of CNN and Al Jazeera and conducting interviews that allow environmentally displaced persons to rebuild the representation that has been imposed on them and gives them a voice. This research argues that the frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons are not identical to the frames as expressed by the interviewees. Their misrepresentation by the media has important implications for how displaced persons are perceived.

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Introduction

Climate change has emerged over the last decades as a global crisis that is scientifically and politically contested and has drawn significant international media attention (Schmidt, 2012). Mass media has been enmeshed in the ongoing debates about the authenticity or reliability of climate change phenomena, this has been described as the “scientific uncertainty” frame. Many news outlets in Australia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) have contributed to the uncertainty around climate science through what has become known as “balance as bias”(Boykoff, 2008) “Whereby they provide relatively equal coverage to climate scientists who support and question the likelihood of human-induced climate change despite the fact that the scientific field is not equally divided along these lines" (Boykoff, 2008 in Dreher and Voyer, 2015, 61). It has been proposed by Lakoff (2010) that the phrase “climate change” is a product of a political strategy of the Bush administration in the USA created to reframe ‘global warming’ into a less threatening frame which makes human effect unclear.

According to Schmidt (2012), the scientific uncertainty around climate change is predominantly limited to the powerful Anglophone countries, specifically the USA, while for example news media in Germany and India mostly accept the scientific consensus and focus on debates about the most suitable way to respond to climate change. Natural disasters or extreme weather are frequently connected in some way to climate change in news media (Boykoff, 2008). Therefore, climate change is predominantly seen in the USA, UK, and Australian media as an environmental or political issue, comparatively little coverage is given to the human aspects of climate change.

Climate change has specifically been associated with migrating populations since at least the mid 1980s because of its impacts on sea-level change, impacts on agricultural productivity, as well as the presence, frequency and severity of natural disasters like storms, floods, droughts and fires (Brown, 2008 in Detraz and Windsor, 2014). “The gravest effects of climate change may be those on human migration as millions will be displaced” (United Nations Intergovernmental Report on Climate Change, 1990). Since climate change has been linked with migration it has become one of the gravest effects as the quote claims, but unfortunately the number of people that are displaced due to climate change is hard to know and predict. According to The International Organization for Migration (IOM), there is a difficulty in predicting how many people will be forced to move because of climate change impacts in the future. “Some of the difficulty in predicting the number of people who will become climate migrants stems from differing definitions used to distinguish climate migrants from other types of migrants along with the variability in climate models (Biermann and Boas, 2010 in Detraz and Windsor, 2014, 128).

For this thesis environmentally displaced persons will be used instead of climate migrants/refugees or environmental migrants. Using climate refugees would be misleading because climate is not one of the listed reasons a person is considered a refugee. Climate refugees are not recognized by the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951 and cannot be granted refugee status as an asylum seeker within the current judicial system (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). Environmentally displaced persons can be internally, or cross-border displaced, these are persons that are forced to leave their place of residence due to their lives and /or livelihoods being threatened as a result of unfavourable environmental processes and events. Climate-induced displacement can happen everywhere, not only in low-income states. However, several scholars

have identified high income countries as host countries for people displaced because of floods, droughts, shrinking coastlines and other disasters, but also people displaced because of indirect climate related problems such as food and livelihood insecurity (Feng et al. 2010). This has impacted how environmentally displaced persons have been represented and framed.

Both media and academia have framed environmentally displaced persons as innocent victims that have no control over what is happening to them and around them but also as a security threat or a threat to the socioeconomic status quo of Western societies (Greussing and Boomgaarden, 2017). There is previous research on representation of environmentally displaced persons focused on news media platforms in Western media, Methmann (2014) focusing on the United Kingdom and, Germany and USA, by looking at 135 images collected and conducting a visual discourse analysis and Dreher and Voyer (2015) focusing on Australia who analysed the way in which Pacific Islanders view the existing media coverage of their concern over climate change. There is also one that focuses on BBC and Al Jazeera to bring a comparative media analysis of British media and Arab/International media (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). As mentioned above, the US has a small coverage in the human aspects of climate change, Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) research looked at a 17-year-period from 2000-2017 of media representations on climate refugees on the BBC and Al Jazeera.

Therefore, this thesis will include a media visual analysis of CNN and Al Jazeera. These news channels were chosen because they offer two different perspectives, and both provide extensive coverage of global events and issues. They represent somehow the global North and the global South. The first contribution of this thesis is that the Media visual analysis on Al Jazeera will analyse whether there has

been a change and if so what changes in the representation from 2017 to 2023. The second contribution of this thesis is that it will introduce personal accounts, feelings and emotions into research about representations of environmentally displaced persons. This will be done giving environmentally displaced persons a chance to share their experiences in their own words through interviews. Allowing environmentally displaced persons to rebuild the representation that has been imposed on them and most importantly challenge them.

In order to have full understanding of the conceptualisation and differing definitions of environmentally displaced persons chapter one will explain the origin of the concept that emerged in the 1970s and will discuss the differences between climate migrant/refugee, environmental refugees and environmentally displaced persons. Furthermore, it will include a literature review of the frames of representations imposed on environmentally displaced persons. Chapter Two will draw on the frames identified in chapter one and use it in the visual discourse analysis of both CNN and Al Jazeera and will also highlight new frames that have been found and their significance. Chapter Three will discuss the main frames that emerge from the interviews and how they differ and can be similar from the ones present in the visual discourse analysis in Chapter Two but also in frames existing in the media and academia.

Chapter 1: Conceptual Framework, Literature Review and Methodology

Due to climate change, the strength and frequency of natural disasters have intensified forcing many people to abandon their homes. What to call or how to refer to these people that have to move because of environmental issues has been debated. This debate has resulted in conceptual issues and many different labels from 'environmental refugees', 'climate refugees', 'climate migrants', 'environmental migrants' and 'environmentally displaced people'. Firstly, in order to fully comprehend the political or ethical stakes of the conceptual debate why it has been difficult to agree to one name it is necessary to have a closer look at all of them. Second this chapter will review the frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons and lastly a methodology explaining how the research will be conducted.

1.1: Conceptualising Environmentally Displaced Persons

The concept of environmental refugees emerged in the 1970s in correlation with the environmental crisis, specifically the desertification in Africa (Farbotko, 2012). Berchin et al (2017) claim that Lester Brown popularised the term in 1970, however a discussion on environmental refugees started in 1985 when El-Hinnawi published a paper on the United Nations Environmental Programme in which environmental refugees are defined as "those people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardise their existence and/or seriously affects the quality of their life" (El-Hinnawi, 1985, 4–5). The choice of the word 'habitat' in this definition is essentially an ecological term that brings another layer of implication. This term is present in Bierman and Boas' (2010) definition of 'climate refugees' is very similar to the one by El-Hinnawi of environmental refugees who both

use habitat. Defining climate refugees as “people who have to leave their habitats, immediately or in the near future because of sudden or gradual alterations in their natural environment related to at least one of three impacts of climate change: sea-level rise, extreme weather events and drought and water scarcity” (2010). However, it is clear that Bierman and Boas definition is very specific in terms of what climate impact the climate refugee has to go through in order to be considered one and does not include indirect consequences of climate change the way El-Hinnawi has added in his definition when he mentions “environmental disruptions natural and/or triggered by people” (1985).

The word ‘habitat’ has received certain criticism. Malkki (1992) has criticised the use of habitat claiming that it alludes to problematic representation of indigenous people and people from developing countries that are reduced to the territory to which they live in, they are like a plant species rooted in their territory “as a kind of force of nature” while wealthy westerners without any scrutiny or criticism embrace their freedom to be highly mobile global citizens decoupled from nature (Malkki, 1992 in Farbotko, 2012, 6). The use of habitat is not the most appropriate and should not be part of any definition no matter the concept. The use of territory instead of habitat introduced by Myers (1997) defines environmental refugees as the “people who feel extremely unsafe on their own territory because of climatic hazards, e.g., droughts, deforestation, and have no other option but to flee to somewhere secure, with few expectations to go back to their homelands” (Myers in Berchin et al, 2017, 148,). This should have been more or less an accepted definition and reduce the problematization that comes with using habitat instead territory, but further criticism is still present. Castles argues that the concept of environmental refugees is very “simplistic, one-sided and misleading” (2002 in Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire, 2011,

17). Furthermore, explains that it is very rare for monocausality to exist, the natural or environmental factors are part of different factors such as economic, social and political ones. For example, a region may be suffering from drought but if there are adaptive measures in place by the government the people affected will not have to move or be displaced.

Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire took this argument further by making a bold statement that if the approach by Castles is taken then there will never be any “environmental migrant” or “climate refugees” because “it will never be possible to identify a group of people who migrate only because of environmental variables” (Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire, 2011, 17). McNamara and Gibson (2009) claim that the first document found naming climate refugees was published by Jacobsen (1988) at the Worldwatch Institute. Although this institute researches the connection between environmental social and economic issues, he still believes people can be climate refugees. Jacobsen explains that “local disruptions such as avalanches or earthquakes, chemical contamination, land degradation and climate change and sea level rise all cause refugee movement (Jacobsen, 1988 in McNamara and Gibson, 2009, 477). Within this definition of climate refugees there are three categories created, these three categories are also present in El-Hinnawi (1985) definition.

Although Jacobsen (1988) calls the people affected by environmental issues climate refugees and El-Hinnawi (1985) environmental refugees their categories are the same. His first category: people “temporarily displaced due to temporary environmental stress but who return to their habitat once the area has been rehabilitated, such as following a natural hazard or environmental accident” (Williams, 2008, 506). The second: refugees that have to leave their territory permanently because of anthropogenic disruptions to their environment and climate (Berchin et al,

2017). The third and last group: people who made the decision to migrate looking for better livelihood because of environmental disturbance (Berchin et al, 2017). This can be seen as a more subjective categorisation because it puts the emphasis on the refugees making the decision. Although it can give the impression that in most cases people have the choice to remain in their homes which is not true and can be misleading.

According to Felli (2013) two competing discourses exist which are climate refugees and climate migrants and in order to differentiate between the two categories were created. The categories include climate policy, view/nature of migration, responsibility that includes the consequences of these responsibilities and of migration, institutional level, form of the law and the storyline. The most important categorisations are climate policy, responsibilities, and solutions. In the climate refugees discourse the policy is mitigation, meaning that if the people have to migrate it is seen as a failure and something that is forced, but in the climate migrants discourse the policy and strategy is adaptation. Both discourses differ in terms of who is responsible for the migration. For climate refugees the responsibility falls on Northern countries and climate change, the solution is reparation funding for adaptation to climate change (Felli, 2013, 345). Furthermore, for climate migrants the responsibility is on the vulnerability of the people and the solution is building the resilience of vulnerable populations. The significance of this categorisation is that it explains why certain countries, media or organisations use climate migrants/refugees.

However, these concepts go beyond these categories and have more implications beyond discourse as already discussed above. According to Brown (2007), the use of refugees creates openness and emotional sensitivity to the public. On the other hand, migrants can be seen as people moving for a better life because

they want to move and not that they have to move (Berchin et al, 2017). However, environmental reasons are not part of the definition of refugees in the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugees Convention). This is why it is important to highlight the experience of people that are or have been displaced because of environmental issues to encourage legal protection to them.

Due to the fact that the discourses and definitions of climate refugees/migrants or environmental refugees/migrants have all these conceptual issues, the notion of environmentally induced migrants and environmentally displaced persons were introduced as a solution. The International Organisation of Migration (IOM) uses the term environmentally induced migrants and views them as “mobile subjects with agency in a changing environment” (Farbotko, 2012, 7). IOM defines “them as persons or groups of persons who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently and who move either within their country or abroad (94th IOM Council, 2007 in Warner et al, 2009, 2). Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire (2011) believe that this definition suffers the same shortcomings as of environmental refugees or climate refugees. The shortcomings of being too broad and not specific for example what are considered compelling reasons? It leaves many things to personal interpretation. Furthermore, Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire (2011) argue that maybe ‘environmentally induced population movement’ would be a more neutral term but vague and not appealing to the public (2011, 17). It is not appealing to the public as it is a very long name and can include many different types of groups.

Perhaps the most suitable term is that of environmentally displaced persons. Both Berchin et al (2017) and Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire (2011) introduce the

concept of 'environmentally displaced persons', which according to Berchin et al came about to avoid the use of the term 'refugees'. The term 'environmentally displaced persons' was used in the Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios (EACH-FOR) research project between 2007-2009. The term includes three subcategories: environmental migrants, environmental displaces and development displaces. Environmental migrants are people who decide to move voluntarily from their place of residence mainly because of environmental reasons. Environmental displaces are people that are forced to leave their place of residence due to their livelihoods being threatened as a result of unfavourable environmental processes and events. Development displaced are people that intentionally move or resettle because of a planned land use change (Piguet, Pecoud and Guchteneire, 2011, 17). These subcategories overlap and are similar to one another and can be very confusing. These subcategories can be included in a single complete definition of environmentally displaced persons that is specific. The definitions of the subcategories are just a repetition of one another or just reworded differently.

My thesis will use the term 'environmentally displaced persons' which can be internally, or cross-border displaced, these are persons that are forced to leave their place of residence due to their lives and /or livelihoods being threatened as a result of unfavourable environmental processes and events. No matter what term is used, people that must move due to climate change face challenges in terms of how they are represented. There are frames, themes and categories that are created which they fall into. These frames imposed on environmental displaced persons have legal, political implications and the next section will take a closer look at them.

1.2: Frames of Representation: Literature Review

Frames present in the representation of environmentally displaced persons are parallel to those of refugees in both media and academia. Although one of the principles of journalistic practice is the inclusion of diverse voices to construct news narratives that provide access to all possible actors and allow the media outlet to serve as an open space for different points of view (Vos and Wolfgang, 2018). This is not the case of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and displaced persons as they face obstacles to have clear access to share their experiences and their points of view. The media representation of asylum seekers includes components of race, religion and out of context narratives based on their (il)legal status (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). Refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and displaced persons are seen as silent passive others who when they appear confirm stereotypes and not convey individual stories, diversity and agency. Furthermore, this is the difference between representations and voice, if given a voice these different groups would be able to be seen as individuals instead of others that these representations create. Multiple research and academic work done throughout different countries and different years have established the frames of innocent victims and a threat to the socioeconomic status quo of Western society (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017) to environmentally displaced persons.

In terms of environmentally displaced persons the two main frames associated with them are the same, frames of victims and threat. The victim frame is rooted in the idea of people as passive and helpless in the face of changing climate (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015). This representation provides a humanising potential as it “encourages a relationship of compassion and care with displaced people, but at the same time proves effective in creating a threat of instability presented by their condition of statelessness (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017 in Sakellari, 2022, 75).

There is an excessive number of reports written by International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) that create an idea of an approaching suffering that environmentally displaced persons will go through alongside a negative breakdown in socio-ecological systems which drive the victim frame (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015). These INGOs also “have constructed a symbolic human face of environmental change and disasters in terms of helplessness and passivity in need of ‘saving’ through donor financial assistance and even asylum” (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015, 109). The intention of a victim framing is usually to raise awareness, promote policy action or sell news (Baldwin, 2014). Meaning that the actual experiences of environmentally displaced persons are only used for a specific motive and not to give them a voice and recognition as individuals.

Scholarly work on media representations of environmentally displaced persons demonstrate how media in developed and traditionally host countries capture people who flee the impacts of climate change as victims, forced to abandon their homes or a possible threat to the social order of the host country (Sakellari, 2021). Environmentally displaced persons can also be framed as drivers of conflict and terrorism, a content analysis of UK print media coverage results have shown this (Randall, 2017). A lot of the existing literature on climate migration perceives it mainly as a state security issue, meaning that the problem and solution in terms of climate migration are defined at the state level (White, 2011). The state security discourse advances that environmentally displaced persons free ride on the collective goods provided by ‘legitimate’ citizens like access to health care, education and employment opportunities and may bring with them diseases and ideologies from their country of origin (Detraz and Windsor, 2014). Environmentally displaced persons are regularly presented as threats to global, regional, national, or sub-national security in sections

of the news media by the military, researchers, and civil society (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015). This frame makes military and the protection of sovereignty as the solution to environmental displacement or change instead of a common global problem and an issue for foreign policy according to Barnett (2003).

Climate security has also joined the list of one of the reasons states manage immigration as found by White (2011). Human security framework assesses the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that environmentally displaced persons encounter, focusing mainly on how vulnerable people are to climate change (Detraz and Windsor, 2014). The focus is not in the states but on the people, vulnerability is crucial to the issue of climate displacement because it involves economic, social and physical factors (Raleigh et al, 2008). Vulnerability has a huge influence in terms of whether people will be forced to relocate in the face of climate change and if they have the capacity to do so. Facing deteriorating conditions in their environment, environmentally displaced persons can face hardships in their journey to new destinations (Detraz and Windsor, 2014). These hardships introduce two other frames in the representation of environmentally displaced persons which are a gendered frame and racialized frame. Additionally, the gendered and racialized frames demonstrate that in order to fall into a specific frame of either victim or threat other factors are also considered.

Some scholars express a fear that securitizing the idea of climate migration could lead to oppressive policies aimed at keeping environmentally displaced persons as a threat to state security at bay (Trombetta, 2008). However, Detraz and Windsor argue that this has already been happening for decades and believe that it will not decrease and introduce a new alternative to security and environmental discourse. Which according to them has “political salience, justice and gender emancipation as driving goals” (Detraz and Windsor, 2014, 133). Nonetheless it is important to point

out that feminist scholars have contributed useful scholarship on migration for several decades. A gender lens is important to understanding migration/displacement because it affects women and men differently even when it comes to policies (Piper, 2008). The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations found in 2009 that women make up approximately forty nine percent of international migration/displacement. Methmann in the visual discourse analysis he conducted of British, German, and American media expresses that “the majority of people are women or children, of 85 pictures, the 55 showing people are populated exclusively by these two groups” (Methmann, 2014, 422,).

Gender was still present, although Methmann (2014) main themes identified in his visual discourse is that environmentally displaced persons appear as racialized figures that are passive and equally dangerous. As racism and sexism share common genealogy which is why racialized images are often also feminised ones (McWhorter, 2004 in Methmann, 2014). Methmann (2014) explains that racialization is the most visible pattern in the visual discourse of environmental displacement, it associates being an environmentally displaced person with “not being white and attaches a number of racializing tropes to it by drawing on deeply ingrained stereotypes about poor Southern populations.” (Methmann, 2014, 421). This is seen in the case of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Kiribati and Tuvalu because there are debates about the legitimacy and accuracy of climate change science in the political and scientific arena. There is a search for what is the ‘truth’ of climate change (Boykoff, 2008) this resulted in international environmentalists and journalists searching for the truth by producing ‘eye witness’ accounts of climate change impacts, facilitated by online news and social media (Cameron, 2011 in Dreher and Voyer, 2015). SIDS have

become the proof of climate change once again reinforcing environmentally displaced persons as a Southern problem.

The same way environmentally displaced persons can be seen as proof of climate change there are other frames imposed on them too. Frames that represent agency such as agents of change (Methmann, 2014) or adaptive agents (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015) and frames as political subjects (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015). These frames are pushed by different research disciplines with a range of objectives. People become active “agents of change” that are supposed to creatively adapt to climate change (Methmann, 2014). Bringing back the frames of vulnerability and racialization it's important to point out that in terms of adaptive agents; “resilience remains closely tied to the idea of a vulnerable, racialized subject located in a natural or rural environment. The resilience subject is supposed to adapt itself to the dangers of a warming world, but it is not allowed to transgress the ‘global life-chance divide’ (Duffield, 2010 in Methmann, 2014). The frame of environmentally displaced persons as political subjects has been pushed forward by disciplines of political ecology (Shearer, 2012) critical political economy (Felli, 2013) and by post-colonial theory (Marino, 2012). Although scholars working within this frame can still see environmental migration/displacement as a potential adaptation strategy their main focus and interest is in “how socio-economic, political and institutional structures constrain the way in which displacement/migration as well as possible in situ adaptation may become available and experienced” (Wrathall et al, 2014 in Ransan-Cooper et al, 112, 2015).

The main and emerging frames that may be imposed on environmentally displaced persons are of victim, threat, gendered, racialized, proof of climate change and frames that represent agency, agents of change and adaptive agents and finally of political subjects. My research will answer how environmentally displaced persons

have been represented in the media? Focusing on what implications do such representational practices have? This is because “to construct a representation is an act of power; representations are fundamentally political” (Johnson, 2011, 1017). My research aims to give voice to environmentally displaced persons and give them an opportunity to have agency and autonomy and not be used as political subjects. In order to do this my research will also answer the question; how might personal accounts of environmentally displaced persons challenge these representations? The empirical part of my research is divided into two parts, the first is my own media visual analysis using the frames identified in my literature review, and the second is online interviews with five environmentally displaced persons.

1.3: Methodology

Erving Goffman is credited with developing frame analysis, according to which frames are the basic component of a person’s experience through which a situation is interpreted (Goffman, 1974 in Cooper, 2015). Frame analysis presumes that frames establish “the fundamental categories in which thinking can take place. It establishes the limits of discussion and defines the range of problems that can be addressed” (Dreher & Voyer, 2015). “Categorisations of people and events, social relationships and institutions form the content of the social and political structures that shape our lives” (Johnson, 2011, p.1017). Taking this into consideration for this research most of the literature present in the literature review used categorisation or frame analysis in their research. The aim of this analysis is to find out which frames are predominantly imposed on environmentally displaced persons, the reasons behind these frames and the consequences of such framing.

The aesthetic turn in IR theory introduced by Ronald Bleiker encourages to look and use interpretive aspects of politics to understand international relations (2001).

Arguing that looking at aesthetics is the opposite of looking at mimetic forms of representations that is a common approach in IR. The aesthetic approach accepts that "there is always a gap between a form of representation and what is represented therewith" (2001, 510). Although a photograph is seen as an authentic reproduction of events, it can be deceptive because it is taken "at a certain time of the day with a certain focus and from a certain angle. Indeed, these choices make up the very essence of the photograph: its aesthetic quality" (Bleiker, 2001, 513). All these decisions are made by the photographer which may have nothing to do with the actual object being photographed.

Visual as a form of knowledge plays an essential role because "discourse theory assumes that society's ways of visualising do not neutrally reflect our world, identities, and social relations, but instead play an active role in creating and changing them" (Herrmann, 2017, p.206). Gillian Rose, in line with post-positivist IR theory, developed a critical visual methodology which takes into account the "cultural significance, social practices, and power relations" (Rose, 2012, xix). That are "embedded in each image, with the aim of challenging mainstream ways of seeing, understanding and acting." (Callahan, 2015, p.896).

Media framing is the way news is constructed, organised or presented, emphasising principles drawn from a small number of theories about what exists, what happens and what matters (Todd Gitlin, 1980). There are three potential sources that influence the formation of media frames: journalist-centred influences, organisational routines, and external sources of influence (Scheufele 1999). Furthermore, framing theory accuses media of omitting aspects of an issue (De Vreese, 2005 in Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019) "as part of journalistic practices based on institutional givens as to how a story should be told" (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019 233).

Previous research on representation of environmentally displaced persons focused on news media platforms in Western media Methmann (2014) focusing on the United Kingdom, Germany, and USA and Dreher and Voyer (2015) focusing on Australia. My media visual analysis will be focused on two alternative international media platforms, CNN, and Al Jazeera. They represent somehow the global North and the global South. CNN being American and very focused on western media and western perspectives and Al Jazeera being an Arab media outlet with a more international overview of news. These news channels were chosen because they offer two different perspectives, and both provide extensive coverage of global events and issues. CNN and Al Jazeera have significant differences in terms of their editorial perspective, approach to opinion, analysis, and coverage of specific issues. Al Jazeera usually features experts and commentators who offer distinctive and in-depth analysis of events (e.g., scholars) and CNN features pundits and commentators. Both have been accused of biased views by Al Jazeera for their coverage of events in the Middle East and CNN for their coverage of US politics.

The content has been gathered by entering the terms “climate migrants” and “climate refugees” on the search engines of CNN and Al Jazeera. The use of climate migrants/refugees over environmentally displaced persons is because the media addresses people that have to flee their homes due to environmental reasons/climate change as such the time period is from 2017 to February 2023. This period was chosen as in 2019 an article was written about media representations of climate refugees on the BBC and Al Jazeera (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019), but it looked at a 17-year-period from 2000-2017 using framing theory. One aspect of my media visual analysis in terms of Al Jazeera is to analyse by looking at the findings of the article whether there has been a change, and if so, what changes in the representation from 2017 to 2023.

In the CNN search engine when you search for something there are two sorting options, newest and relevancy, the difference between the two is that one will show the news from the most recent to the oldest and the other will show what the search engine believes is relevant in terms of what you have typed into the search engine. I had a look at both sorting options to make sure that I was not leaving out a story produced by the media outlet. When “climate migrants” was searched 365 results were presented; only 8 stories were about climate migrants which was established by looking at the articles’ titles. When “climate refugees” was searched, 508 results were presented; only 5 stories had to do with climate refugees and not just refugees. From a total of 13 stories, 10 photos were collected for the visual media analysis. Most of the stories contained videos, not actual photos.

The Al Jazeera search engine and how results are shown is completely different as there is no way to sort the results or to know how many results are available, but a total of 13 stories were found and from these stories 30 photos were collected. Together, this resulted in a visual discourse analysis of 40 photos, which have been separated by media outlets but put into chronological order in terms of when the story was written and given codes.

The interviews in my research allow environmentally displaced persons to rebuild the representation that has been imposed on them and gives them a voice. This allows environmentally displaced persons to express what they actually need. Three of the interviews used in my research are part of SEEK, a Feminist Research Network’s project *#IAMBECAUSEWEARE Our climate stories*. During the summer of 2022, I was an Intern at SEEK, where I worked on this project and had to either conduct interviews or edit interviews conducted by my other team members. The three interviews for this were conducted between June-September 2022 online through

Zoom in English. Three of the interviews were conducted by my fellow team members at the time and edited by me with the supervision of Sumbal Bashir and Umbreen Salim. The other two interviews are part of NPR 24 Hour Stream Morning Edit show on the 2nd of December 2022. The Morning Edit spoke about new emerging environmentally displaced persons and interviewed two of them.

The limitation of the interviews is that all the environmentally displaced persons are African and have been displaced to another African country. However, this also challenges the notion that the global North is the destination for environmentally displaced persons in the global South. The interviews are narrative interviews as the environmentally displaced persons are talking about their personal experience in key events that are consequences of climate change (Rodoreda, 2020 p. 293). These interviews will bring in feelings and emotions that are not present in the visuals and literature. They will be broken down into themes that emerge in comparison to the frames established in the previous section. To see if there are similarities or differences in terms of perception and reaction.

Chapter 2: Media Visual Analysis

The following chapter will thoroughly analyse the images collected from news articles present in CNN and Al Jazeera. Firstly, a general discussion of the main findings will be done, after a detailed analysis of each frame based on the sub categorizations that were created and lastly a discussion of the new depictions present in the visuals. Each image used in this media visual analysis has a code based on which news outlet it was taken from C plus a number for CNN and A plus number for Al Jazeera.

2.1: Main Findings

The first main finding in this media visual analysis is the same as found by Hoeg and Tulloch's (2019) in Al Jazeera's coverage. The vast majority of lead photos in their coverage continue to depict environmentally displaced persons without names, just information of what is happening in the photo or sometimes just random statistics. CNN's coverage is exactly the same in terms of names, but the images do contain places and context under them. The second main finding is that in a span of almost 6 years only 13 stories were found in both CNN and Aljazeera that contained images. These 13 stories do not include videos or just news stories without images. This means that although the emergence of climate changes issues on the global political agenda, the small numbers of articles on the websites of two the world's biggest broadcasters underlines the perceived fact that the concept 'climate refugees' 'climate migrants' remains a widely underreported subject (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). The visual discourse analysis conducted by Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) of both BBC and Al Jazeera that looks at the online coverage from 2000-2017 found that the two media outlets had an almost identical total of news aggregates. This is also the case of CNN and

Aljazeera. They both have almost the same number of news focusing on ‘climate migrants’ or ‘climate refugees’.

Another interesting and frequent finding is that the images CNN and Aljazeera use come from third parties such as Reuters, Getty images or that were released by the government where the natural disaster occurred. Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) also mention “all these pictures are credited to the news bureau AP and the photo agency photos EPA” (2019, 238). This means that for some more generic news like “*In 2020, more people will be displaced by extreme climate than conflict*” random photos that are supposed to fit with climate change are used. In the images collected for this visual discourse analysis there was an example of this situation. Both CNN and Aljazeera had the same photo for two different climate change articles, one was written on the 25th of May 2021 (Al Jazeera) and the other one on the 2nd of December 2020 (CNN). The photo A1 used in the article for Aljazeera did not have a description of the photo, the captions of the photo only refer to “how there will be more people like these in the future and they do not provide valuable information by themselves” (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019, 238). The people portrayed are deterritorialized in the images; they are taken from their specific geographic context and turned into rootless icons of a global but distant problem (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). However, CNN explained who the woman is and where she is located and what happened.

Lastly, although there have been wildfires due to drought or heat waves and hurricanes in the United States images of the people affected that may be classified as environmentally displaced persons are not used to illustrate articles about ‘climate refugees’ or ‘climate migrants’. Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) argue that “Unidentified victims of Hurricane Katrina in the United States for example, are not used to illustrate articles about climate refugees implying that this is an issue mainly affecting southern

hemisphere countries” (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019, 238). Nonetheless images of people affected by the Australian wildfires known as the *‘Black Summer’* that happened between July 2019-March 2020 were also not present or used when illustrating climate refugees/migrants. This may be because the people in the mentioned examples were internally displaced to other parts of their own country and not cross-bordered displaced. The definition of environmentally displaced person used in this research project also includes the people affected in both the United States and Australia but not of the media and the narrative it is trying to portray.

2.2: In-depth Analysis of Frames

The frames identified in the literature are victim, threat, gendered, racialized, proof of climate change, political subjects and frames that represent agency; such as adaptive agents and agents of change. Sub categorizations were created for each frame in order to fully analyse each picture. The victim and agents of change frame are analysed through looking at their setting (urban, camp, nature, rural or water) and what they are doing when photographed (mobility or preparation). The threat or securitisation frame includes the presence of police, border control or military in the visuals and for the gendered category, how many photos of women and men are part of the visuals. In terms of racialization, who is photographed white or non-white. Non-white meaning people of colour and lastly for proof of climate change what natural disasters are happening or have happened in the images (drought, flood, rain or storm). In the tables the number of times present means how many photos are displayed. It is important to note that images of mass people were also counted for in terms of women, men and children.

In order to be a victim, the person has to be vulnerable to climate change to the point that they end up displaced due to this vulnerability. Vulnerability is crucial to the

issue of climate displacement because it involves economic, social, and physical factors (Raleigh et al, 2008). The pictures of vulnerable people are mostly in their supposed natural environmental in line with colonial stereotypes of naturalness, nativeness and primitive lifestyles (Methmann, 2014) this is present in many of the photos of rural areas as seen in photos A8, A9, A16 and C9 these pictures show people getting water, trying to farm, or just seated doing nothing. The same way the victim frame and the vulnerable frame go together so does resilience and frames that represent agency such as change or adaptive.

Most of Al Jazeera's photos show nature, trees, greenery or just water see, Table 2.1. The water setting is quite similar as the finding in the last visual analysis of the online coverage from 2000-2017. Where recurring images of Al Jazeera's coverage "shows nameless people walking or swimming in water up to their thighs, waist and neck" (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019, 238). In the images collected for this visual analysis there is no photo of people swimming or water neck high, just either ankle high or thigh high water. This can be seen in image A3 where two people and more than three cars are in water. Although water is less present on the images from CNN it is still present on fifty percent of the images collected. Image C1 shows a group of people crossing a river on foot with the water being thigh high.

Table 1: Frames: Victim & Agency (change or adaptive)

CNN		Al Jazeera	
	Number of times present		Number of times present
Urban	2		9
Camp	-		-
Nature	5		14
Rural	2		8
Water	5		10
Mobility	4		4
Preparation	-		1

The number of pictures that show mobility is very high in terms of CNN although the same number as Al Jazeera as for Al Jazeera is just present in four photos out of 30 and for CNN four photos out of 10. In terms of adaptive agents there is only one picture in both CNN and Al Jazeera photo A19 shows two men building what seem to be boats; this photo fits the framing of environmentally displaced persons as adaptive agents; “resilience remains closely tied to the idea of a vulnerable, racialized subject located in a natural or rural environment. The resilience subject is supposed to adapt itself to the dangers of a warming world, but it is not allowed to transgress the ‘global life-chance divide’ (Duffield, 2010 in Methmann, 2014).

The visual discourse analysis done by Methmann (2014) of media in the UK, Germany and America finds that racialization is the most visible pattern in the visual discourse of environmental displacement. My visual analysis finds the same, it associates being an environmentally displaced person with “not being white” and attaches several racializing tropes to it by drawing on deeply ingrained stereotypes about poor Southern populations. There were only three pictures of non-white people

out of thirty photos that contain people. Furthermore, these three non-white people were border control and present in the visuals of CNN, Aljazeera had no non-white people in their photos that contain people see, Table 2.2.

Table 2: Racialisation

CNN		Al Jazeera	
	Number of times present		Number of times present
Non-white	8		23
White	2		-

Contrary the finding of Methmann (2014) where the majority of the people in his visual discourse analysis are women or children. In the visuals collected from both CNN and Aljazeera, they were only in 12 out of the photos of people that were women. The majority of people are children in CNN and men in Al Jazeera see, table 2.3 below.

Table 3: Gendered

CNN		Al Jazeera	
	Number of times present		Number of times present
Women	2		11
Men	3		20
Children	5		3
Mass	3		4

Although women made up 47.9 per cent in 2019 of international migration/displacement according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. However, while women are ubiquitous as ‘innocent victims’, it is the portrayal of children that usually leads the ‘hierarchy of innocence’ (Moeller, 2002).

Innocence is also a way to control a space of purity, meaning to be without knowledge, intention, free from desire and free from guilt (Ticktin, 2017). An example of this would be photo C4 showing a boat full of people that have crossed the US-Mexico border because the people are children. It is portrayed differently because the promise of purity extends to potential political engagement with the power relations of the dominant order and construction of collective life. In early theological interpretations, innocence symbolises the state of calm Macmillan (2015). Children are not seen as threats or agents, just people that have no knowledge and no ulterior motives.

When the frame of security threat is imposed on environmentally displaced persons, photos that show poor people in great numbers, threatening to destabilise society (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019), which are seen as photos of masses in this visual discourse analysis. These figures as called by Triandafylidou (2000) “are framed as agents provocateurs capable of altering the political order and threatening geopolitical order” (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019, 236). The frame of Environmentally displaced persons being a threat to global, regional, national or sub-national security in sections of the news media by the military, researchers and civil society (Ransan-Cooper et al, 2015) is present in the images used in CNN reporting of environmental displaced persons which contain border control, see table 2.4. This also demonstrates what White (2011) explains, that ‘climate security’ joined the list of one of the reasons states manage immigration.

Table 4: Threat/Securitisation

CNN		Al Jazeera	
	Number of times present	Number of times present	
Police	-	-	

Border Control	3	-
Military	-	1

The threat frame can also be seen on photos of masses such as image A11, A15 and A17 this focus on masses of identifiable people works to emphasise the 'threat' to global social order embedded within these new flows of people (Sakellari, 2021, 72) Photo A4 is a of a mass in a boat which can frame this men in the photo as drivers of conflict and terrorism, a content analysis of UK print media coverage results have shown this (Randall, 2017). Photo A17 shows a mass of people in small boats then crossing what seems to be a bridge. Photo A4 and A17 also fits with one of the visual tropes out of the five visual tropes identified by Sakellari (2021) in the UK news media which are images of the refugee crisis.

The other visual tropes present in the visuals collected for this research are images of damaged infrastructure, catastrophe and deprived areas, and snapshots of environmentally displaced persons. Catastrophe and crisis focus on individual displaced persons e.g., a man in front of the ruins of a destroyed house or images of displaced children in precarious situations. While these images cast environmentally displaced persons as objects of care (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017 in Sakellari, 2021, 73), it also means that such depictions allow viewers to comfortably imagine people forced to relocate due to climate change predominantly as distressed, clueless and powerless (Sakellari, 2021, 73). Photos A27 shows a man outside his destroyed house holding what seems to be luggage, this image also shows mobility.

CNN had more pictures of heavy rain and Al Jazeera more pictures of flooding once again, water being the main theme again see Table 2.5. Many articles that focus on environmentally displaced persons title have to do with water for example, *wishful sinking* Farbotko (2010) or *sinking strangers* Hoeg and Tulloch (2019). It was

unexpected that the photos collected from CNN do not have one that shows drought. Image A10 shows two children in drought conditions from behind this a photographic depiction highlighted by Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) when stating that many environmentally displaced persons are difficult to identify because they are photographed from behind. Images A1 and A2 are also photographed from behind. In the pictures collected other photos are difficult to identify because its blurry images A8 and A20 are examples.

Table 5: Proof of Climate Change

CNN		Al Jazeera	
	Number of times present		Number of times present
Drought	-		3
Flood	2		13
Rain	3		3
Storm	2		2

The depiction of environmentally displaced persons as a vague phenomenon and a subject of intangible scientific debate is known as the abstraction frame. The visual content of this frame is usually environmentally displaced persons at a distance or not shown at all. C3 the photo shows a man walking in an area flooded, while people standing outside the house he is passing by are distant and you can almost not see them. Snapshots of environmentally displaced persons consist of photographs of locals from climate hot-spot areas. Individualisation embraces a close-up perspective and offers a more humanised representation of those displaced amid a changing climate (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017 in Sakellari, 2021). “It makes their active fight visible and encourages a relationship of compassion and care.” Nonetheless it highlights their otherness as they are seen as outsiders literally on the border

(Sakellari, 2021,73). When environmentally displaced persons are framed as 'facing the direct consequences' their faces are shown confronting the reader directly (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). This can be a frame of picture A12 of a woman standing outside her house by the door directly staring at the camera and 'confronting the reader'. The attempt to gain recognition of her situation.

2.3: New Depictions

New depictions were found in this media visual analysis, the first one being that there were no pictures of camps or people at camps (see Table 2.1) which can be seen as a difference between refugee imaginary and environmentally displaced persons imagery. However, CNN had pictures of slums or people that live in slums which is not present in the images collected from Al Jazeera. The second depiction is that the Military is present in one of the images from Al Jazeera (see Table 2.4), but they are part of an emergency crew rescuing people affected by the flooding and landslides; this can be seen in image A24. Military is not showing threat and securitisation but with helping the vulnerable. Firefighters are also present in the images collected but not present in CNN, firefighters are part of the rescue team just like the military present this is seen in image A21.

Third, a lot of pictures of landslides are present in this discourse analysis which is new as Methmann (2014) and Hoeg and Tulloch (2019) did not focus or even have code for those. Lastly, pictures of catastrophes seem to be increasing and becoming more part of news articles rather than images of environmentally displaced persons. These shots are either far and close of the disaster as it's happening or after it has happened. It was present once for CNN but seven times for Al Jazeera. examples of these are seen in photo A6, A13, A18, C10, and in other photos too. This can be possibly environmentally displaced persons being less used as proof of climate

change but showing the reader the actual consequences of climate change that turn people into environmentally displaced persons.

As explained, the frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons identified in the literature are still very much present in both the coverage of CNN and Al Jazeera. Furthermore, the coverage done by Al Jazeera has not improved in terms of giving more voice and access to environmentally displaced persons, it has remained the same with some changes and depiction such as less images of sinking people or swimming people in their coverage of 'climate migrants' and 'climate refugees'. New depictions introduce a different approach in the framing of proof of climate change by including more images of the disaster than of the people affected by this disaster.

Chapter 3: Giving Environmentally Displaced Persons a Voice

This chapter firstly will analyse the main frames that have emerged from the interviews and how they differ and can be like the frames present in the literature and in Chapter 2. It will lastly contain a discussion of the main findings of the interviews. Three of the interviewees (two environmentally displaced persons and one representative of the UN's refugee agency) were part of the NPR 24 Hour Stream Morning Edit show that focuses on new emerging environmentally displaced persons. The positionality and their aimed narrative are taken into consideration in this analysis.

3.1: Frames Present in the Interviews

All the interviewees fall into the definition of the environmentally displaced person used in this thesis, which is persons that are forced to leave their place of residence due to their lives and /or livelihoods being threatened because of unfavourable environmental processes and events, the displacement can be internally or cross-border. The interviewees were displaced due to drought and flooding. The main frames that have emerged from the interviews are feelings and mental health, displacement as a continuous event, resources and conflict and lastly climate change.

Coverage of environmentally displaced persons lacks their voices, they are rarely quoted and addressed as a collective not individuals in media discourse. When turned into statistics they are deprived of their human features as individuals, making it harder for the reader to empathise with their situation (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019). Focusing on their feelings and mental health shows that environmentally displaced persons are human beings like any others. The feeling of grief is present in all the interviews that are part of this research project, although never directly mentioned or expressed. This feeling is present when explaining about the life they have had to

leave behind, the deceased that they watched die and most importantly a part of them that has died and no longer exists. God is what many environmentally displaced persons hold on to continue after going through so much grief. Interviewee A1 gives thanks to God for his life after explaining everything he has lost. Explaining “*Our people and our properties, families behind and coming over to start a new life. It’s not really been easy, but we thank God for life.*”

Even through all the encounters he has suffered and seen others experience, interviewee A1 has faith and still believes in a God and thanks this God for keeping him alive and for guiding him to where he is now. This hope and positivism comes from a religious place that does not allow him to see himself as a victim but a survivor that is blessed by God. The feeling of grief causes other emotions and of course affects environmentally displaced persons’ mental health. This is expressed by Interviewee A1 “*It’s very, very hard and tough, you feel like giving up, some of people along the line they committed suicide. Some of them couldn’t just keep up because of the stress, hunger and people are not welcoming.*” Nonetheless it is interesting that Interviewee A1 is the only interviewee that spoke about suicide, but never spoke of it as something to do with deteriorating mental health but of giving up or not being strong to withstand such conditions.

When interviewee A1 stated in quote above “people were not welcoming” demonstrates that even when environmental displaced persons arrive at the host country, they face new hardships of integration and if they had a choice they would prefer to stay home. This creates the feeling aborigines have in Australia, where residents in inland Australia suffer from increasingly harsh conditions. Many aboriginal people do not welcome the prospect of moving away from their communities and their countries as an adaptation strategy (Nash et al. 2018 in Askland et al, 2022, 7). This

sentiment is also present in all the interviewees, if it was their choice, they would not have fled their homes.

Displacement is a continuous event and can be internal or cross-border, environmentally displaced persons may face deterioration conditions because of displacement. Displacement being a continuous event challenges state security discourses. However, there is a lot of misconception when it comes to fleeing because of climate change. One of them is that travel happens directly, the person moves and settles in a neighbouring country or that they chose where to flee. However, this is not the case most of the time. The displacement happens many times until environmentally displaced persons find a place to settle and attempt to restart and rebuild.

Interviewee C1 was displaced, as in July 2019 the region of Montserrado in Liberia experienced extremely heavy rain causing flash floods. Unfortunately for her she is still in the search for a place to settle down. Interviewee C1 expresses that *“So due to climate change from 2019, we’ll be moving from one place to another, from one place to another, from one place to another because of climate change”*. Contrary to Interviewee C1, Interviewee A1 has found a place to settle and restart. Interviewee A1 is displaced from Somalia, he travelled all the way to Nigeria in order to survive the drought. He explains that *“We went through a series of suffering and before finally made it through Ethiopia, Sudan down to Nigeria. Going through severe and harsh weather”*. These deterioration conditions in the environment of environmentally displaced persons and the challenges they face when displaced as present in interviewee A1 recollections of events is mentioned by Detraz and Windsor (2014) *“facing deteriorating conditions in their environment, environmentally displaced persons may encounter hardships in their journeys to a new destination”* (2014, 132).

The conditions are “exposure to conditions that compromise their health, such as insect- or water-borne illnesses, inadequate nutrition, lack of personal security and risk of assault or detention” (Gregory et al, 2005 in Detraz and Windsor 2014, 132)

State security discourse is challenged by displacement being a continuous event because the discourse advances that environmentally displaced persons free ride on the collective goods provided by ‘legitimate’ citizens. They are believed to take advantage of access to health care, education and employment opportunities and may bring with them diseases and ideologies from their country of origin (Detraz and Windsor, 2014). As explained by interviewee C1 *“I started my fish business again and started selling fish. It is better than being homeless or jobless”*. Being displaced has not given her any access to what legitimate “citizens” have as she had to start the same type of business she had back home as it was either that or she would be hungry. There is also no job opportunity for her or for interviewee A1, as both speak of hunger even already being in the host country/area.

The frame of displacement as a continuous event is similar to one of the discourses and framings of environmentally displaced persons identified by Sakellari (2021) in the UK news media - that of an uncertain future. This discourse is different from the others because it focuses on real-life stories of people who have been displaced due to climate change and treats people as individuals instead of collectivisation. This is present in the interviews because an uncertain future humanises the environmentally displaced person instead of objectifying them.

There has been numerous research conducted that have associated climate change to conflict focusing mainly on African countries. Some studies claim that ‘drier-than-normal conditions will have no effect on conflict but ‘wetter-than-normal conditions’ seem to decrease the risk of violence in East Africa (O’Loughlin et al. 2012,

2014 in Koubi, 2019). Furthermore, there are more studies that indicate that drought conditions, or water scarcity increases conflict (Gleditsch et al, 2006) and others indicate that water scarcity encourages riparian states to work together instead of fight (Dinar et al, 2015). However, these studies neglect many factors when making such claims and associations. Many host nations especially in Africa are also suffering from effects of climate change and their own populations are also being internally displaced. This may cause friction between the internally displaced persons and the cross border displaced persons.

As stated by Reuveny (2007), the arrival of environmentally displaced persons can burden the resources available in the base of the receiving area. Pressures are expected to rise when resources are scarce in the receiving area. “The excess demand for resources may also generate lateral pressure, expansion of economic and political activities beyond the regions or state’s borders in order to acquire resources, which increases the risk of conflict” (Reuveny, 2007, 660). This is the case of Cameroon and Chad. According to a report published by The UN Refugee Agency (2022), there were 45,000 people that have been displaced from Cameroon in Chad, “As of 31 March 2022, there were 570,000 refugees in Chad”, out of these “407,000 are internally displaced persons”. Interviewee NP3 states that; *“We also have people moving within the country because they have a lack of water.”* This is the case of three of the environmentally displaced persons interviewed. Both interviewees NP1 and NP2 before fleeing to the neighbouring country of Chad from Cameroon were experiencing water scarcity because of lack of rain in their region. NPR reported that a lot of people escape to Chad due to problems linked to a lack of resources (2022).

NP1 is a farmer and was competing for water access with another group that survived on fish. This competition turned into a dispute that afterwards unfortunately

turned deadly. NP1 explains that *“Villages and houses were burned, people were killed and burned.”* The fighting lasted three days and happened in December 2021, it was reported that 150 people died (Marx, 2022). Interviewee NP2 also went through the same traumatic experience of people getting killed because of water, he had to leave his parents behind and has now escaped to Chad. Although interviewee NP2 fled to Chad, he expresses a life that has not improved, but has remained the same with new challenges, just without the imminent threat of getting killed because of water scarcity. Expressing that; *“There is less food than in Cameroon. In Cameroon you eat three times a day but here two times”*. This may be the case because Chad also has to provide food to those internally displaced, not only cross-border.

The frame of resources and conflict has demonstrated that “while it is acknowledged that climate change does not cause conflict directly, it is clear that climate change can have significant implications for social stability through potentially increasing the likelihood of social unrest and conflict” (Sakellari, 2021, 69). This frame has challenged the frame of environmentally displaced persons being drivers of conflict and terrorism, present in the findings of a content analysis of UK print media coverage (Randall, 2017). This is because the interviewees are not drivers of conflict but people that have escaped conflict. Secondly the interviews also challenge this notion that climate change necessarily causes conflict. People were killing each other because of the water scarcity that is caused due to climate change, but if adaptation measures were in place and the government had policies or ways to help these people, most probably it would not have turned into conflict.

Environmentally displaced persons are in certain circumstances used as ‘proof of climate change’ (Boykoff, 2008), this is not only the case of SIDS but usually countries in the global south. Nonetheless, the interviews did shine a light on

something that is usually forgotten in this 'search for the truth' in terms of climate change. Which is that many people experiencing the effects of it are unaware of what climate change is and that what is happening to them is due to climate change. As interviewee A1 expresses clearly; *"But some of us, some people in Africa like now, like lots of people. When I talk to them about climate change, I notice that they don't even know what it's about"*. There is no association to lack of rainfall or dry conditions or any other environmental event they are going through with climate change.

When interviewee NP1 is explaining about the situation that turned her into an environmentally displaced person there is never a mention of climate change and not even drought; *"These days farming isn't good, you know when you over exploit the land for many years the land's fertility is depleted. There's not enough rain"* she explains. Even interviewee NP2 never mentioned climate change, just expressed how he had no access to water due to water scarcity. However, there is self-awareness in terms of the part that they played in terms of climate change and how bad it has gotten in the last years as is present in the quote by interviewee NP1.

Interviewee A1, A2 and C1 do mention climate change in their interviews, but this is because they were interviewed as part of a project called climate stories and were asked about their views on the matter. This may justify why environmentally displaced persons are mostly "anonymous symbols rather than individuals" (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019, 238) in the news and academia to fit whatever narrative is needed. If given a voice the frames imposed on them such as proof of climate change will no longer be possible.

The frame of climate change highlights a similarity to one of the frames present in media representation, which is hierarchy of safety. Interviewee A1 and A2, when asked what can be done to address the issue of climate change, A1 stated Europe as

an example to follow, continuing the developed and developing countries' hierarchy of safety. In this hierarchy of safety, as Farbotko (2005) explains, the developed world is "a secure place, capable of offering a lifeline to suffering developing countries" (Farbotko, 2005 in Sakellari, 2021, 72). However, they both emphasise climate change as a global issue challenging the frame of something that only happens in the Global South. Interviewee A1 states that *This is not just a regional problem, it's a global problem. Governments' world leaders can come together and support more in the fight against climate change.* It sees environmental displacement and climate change as a common problem and an issue of foreign policy (Barnett, 2003) instead of environmentally displaced persons as threats of global, regional, national, or sub-national security and that the only solution is militarisation and the protection of sovereignty.

3.2: Main Findings of the Interviews

The main findings of the interviews were that first the most challenged imposed frame by environmentally displaced persons is that of victims when explaining what has happened to them and where they currently are in life. The wording is always of survivors and never of victims. Even though most of them have endured endless obstacles, pain, and risk. Second, the interviews part of the NPR 24 Hour Stream Morning Edit show was not narrative but more of finding environmentally displaced persons that fit the topic. The interviewees were still introduced by their first and last name, their professions were also mentioned, and the listener got to know their story and what led to their displacement. Which is already different from Al Jazeera's coverage, where the vast majority of lead photos depict environmentally displaced persons without names, place, or context (Hoeg and Tulloch, 2019).

Third, although multiple research and academic work done throughout different countries and different years have established environmentally displaced persons as a threat to the socioeconomic status quo of Western society (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017), the interviews challenge this as none of the environmentally displaced persons were displaced to a western country. All the interviewees were displaced inside their continent of Africa, some to the neighbouring countries or to three or four countries after theirs. The fourth is that many host countries, especially in Africa, are also dealing with internally displaced persons from other areas and still receive cross-border environmentally displaced persons. Next the interviews challenge the colonial stereotypes of naturalness, nativeness and primitive lifestyles as one of the interviewees is a university student that was displaced due to scarcity of water. Both interview A1 and A2 were aware of climate change consequences in various parts of the world citing Sudan, Pakistan and many other countries currently suffering.

The sixth main finding is that the interviews challenge the idea that environmentally displaced persons are drivers of conflict and terrorism. As for many, the conflict that arises due to limited resources available because of climate change and lack of adaptive and resilience methods implemented by the government is the last straw and they have fled making them environmentally displaced persons. This finding goes hand in hand with the next one which is, it is not climate change that causes conflict, but the lack of adaptive and resilience methods implemented by their government. This leads to scarcity of resources such as water and food and this is where the conflict stems from.

Lastly, if given a voice and a chance to share their stories, environmentally displaced persons would not be able to be framed as threats or proof of climate

change, as many do not speak about climate change when explaining what has happened to them. As vulnerability has a huge influence in terms of whether people will be forced to relocate in the face of climate change and to be a victim the person has to be vulnerable to climate change. The victim frame is the hardest to challenge even though the interviewees speak about themselves as survivors with hope and positivity sometimes.

Conclusion

Environmentally displaced persons are deprived of their humanity and used as objects to prove and confirm narratives. This is because scepticism around the climate change phenomena and lack of scientific consensus has turned climate change into a divisive issue. Meaning that climate change can only either be an environmental issue or a political issue fully neglecting the human aspects of climate change. This thesis, through a media visual analysis, looked at the coverage of CNN and Al Jazeera and gave voice to environmentally displaced persons by bringing in their voices.

The biggest misconception is that displacement due to environmental issues and events are a global south problem and associated with environmentally displaced persons being non-white. This association gets combined with radicalised tropes because it draws on deep-rooted stereotypes about the southern population. This is visible through the media visual analysis where Al Jazeera did not have a single white person in the images collected, although white people were present in the images collected from CNN's coverage. However, the white people present in CNN's coverage were border control, further highlighting the otherness and this far reality that this misconception creates.

In addition, unidentified victims of environmental events that happen, for example in the United States or Europe, will not be used in articles about climate refugees/migrants or about migration/displacement because of environmental issues. This once again creates detachment from the experiences of environmentally displaced persons. For example, Hurricane Katrina in the USA or the Floods in Germany and Belgium in 2021 that caused a lot of internal displacement were not part of the images collected from either CNN or Al Jazeera coverage. A future research

project could be on what the victims of the provided examples would be classified as and the implications.

Environmental events that happen in the global north not being part of the coverage of either CNN or Al Jazeera coverage furthermore emphasises the hierarchy of safety Fartboko (2005) speaks about. This is because they are seen as safe place without any suffering that can offer a lifeline to those in the global south that are experiencing the effects of climate change. This leads to another misconception - where the majority of environmentally displaced persons will be displaced to a western country, which shows the naivety and lack of knowledge of the difficulties of displacement. The interviewees part of this thesis challenged this as they all moved to another African country or were internally displaced.

The frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons are victim, threat, gendered, racialized, proof of climate change, political subjects and frames that represent agency, which are adaptive agents and agents of change. It is important to highlight that journalists using images of environmentally displaced persons as eyewitness accounts of the impacts of climate change are gradually shifting as pictures of catastrophes have increasingly become part of news articles rather than images of environmentally displaced persons, focusing more on the consequences of climate change that cause people to become environmentally displaced persons. Meaning that the frame of proof of climate change may in the future not be imposed on environmentally displaced persons which is a positive development, but once again moving away from the human impact of climate change.

Furthermore, it is necessary to reiterate that vulnerability has a huge influence in terms of whether people will be forced to relocate in the face of climate change, and to be a victim the person must be vulnerable to climate change. The victim frame is the hardest to challenge even though the interviewees speak about themselves as survivors with hope and sometimes positivity.

However, being vulnerable to climate change does not make environmentally displaced persons silent, passive people with no agency and that have no control over their own lives. When Anglophone media focus more on the human aspect of climate instead of only the political or environmental one, environmentally displaced persons may be seen as individuals with unique experiences and agency. Therefore, if given a voice many of the frames imposed on environmentally displaced persons would no longer be present, which would allow a more realistic depiction of environmentally displaced persons' experiences and needs that would lead to better policies and adaptive strategies.

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