

Should I stay or should I go? The decision to flee or stay home during civil war

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Introduction

The movement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees occupies a prominent position in commentary on global current affairs. This is because by the end of 2019, more than seventy million people were displaced from their homes. This means that there are currently more forced migrants globally than at any other time since records have been kept (The Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees 2019). At the heart of the current situation is the Syrian civil war. Headlines have tended to focus upon the more than five million Syrians who have left the country in search of a safe haven in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and elsewhere (e.g. Todd 2019). However, this ignores the perhaps six million Syrians who have been displaced internally within Syria and remain in considerable need, as well as the ten million or so that have remained close to their homes (The Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees 2019). In order to mount a meaningful public policy response to benefit the victims of humanitarian situations of this kind, it is necessary to better understand the root causes of forced migration.

The literature on forced migration places strong emphasis on factors that drive decisions to leave hometowns and head toward new destinations, frequently leveraging cross-national data to focus upon so-called “push” and “pull” factors that explain origin-destination journeys (Turkoglu and Chadeaux 2019; Schewel 2019). Often, a chief factor identified by the theoretical framework expounding “push” and “pull” forces is conflict-related violence and its influence on the decision-making calculus of potentially displaced persons (Adhikari 2012, 2013). While this literature has adduced evidence supporting a link between violence and displacement, three issues remain to be addressed.

First, in conceptualizing and operationalizing violence, previous work often either proxies violence through specific events or processes, such as civil war (Turkoglu and Chadeaux 2019)

or genocide (Uzonyi 2014), or by simply distinguishing between individuals who experienced conflict-related violence and those that did not (Adhikari 2013). The former approach obscures the effects of specific forms of violence carried out in the midst of conflict. The latter empirical strategy does not allow for the possibility that different forms of violence may influence an individual's decision-making process in a myriad of ways.

Second, Schewel (2019) argues that the literature overemphasizes questions, theories, and empirical strategies aimed at understanding issues of mobility while neglecting conditions that may weigh against movement in the form displacement, giving rise to a “mobility bias.”¹ One key condition in understanding immobility stems from a potential “home bias” possessed by individuals potentially arising from a number of factors, including the presence of dense social networks or economic opportunities fashioned over many years. Such a “preference for home” is not immutably resolute. For example, survey research of Syrian refugees suggests that individuals that fled their homes during the Syrian civil war commonly did so only as a last resort (Crawley et al. 2018; Ghosn and Braithwaite 2019). Accordingly, we would benefit from an improved understanding as to how violence impacts these decision-making dynamics (Carling and Schewel 2018; Schewel 2019).

Lastly, displacement is often construed as an aggregate phenomenon, thereby neglecting key distinctions between internally displaced persons and refugees. While refugee crises often garner considerable international attention, the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has come to realize, over recent decades, that IDPs, while not having left their home countries, find themselves in equally difficult settings as refugees. In fact, they are perhaps

¹ Another manifestation of mobility bias occurs when studies sample only from displaced populations. In this study, we remedy this problem by sampling displaced individuals as well as those who elected to stay at home in the midst of war.

even more vulnerable than their refugee counterparts, as they remain subject to the rules and powers of a government that may actually be the source of their original displacement. In addition, internal displacement is likely linked with the movement of refugees across borders because affected individuals often become IDPs before becoming refugees. For example, six of the ten countries that produced refugees in 2015 were also among the ten countries that produced the most IDPs (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2017; Crawley et al. 2018). A better understanding as to how violence shapes displacement will help enable domestic and international actors to fashion holistic strategies for addressing different permutations of conflict-related migration.

We offer an exploration of these processes. To do so, we focus upon Lebanon, which experienced a civil war between 1975 and 1990. Specifically, we draw upon responses from an original survey of 2,400 residents of Lebanon conducted between May 31 and August 31, 2017. Respondents were asked to detail their own experiences of violence during the Lebanese civil war, as well as indicate whether they stayed in their home or fled during the war to other areas of the country or to another country.

Our analyses indicate that individuals exposed to violence were more likely to become internally displaced than were individuals not directly exposed to violence; however, this effect was not homogenous across types of violence or survey respondents. Indirect violence, such as shelling, increased the likelihood that survey respondents elected to leave their homes yet remain in Lebanon rather than remaining at home throughout the war or leaving the state. However, direct forms of violence, such as torture and sexual violence, motivated individuals to flee Lebanon. These results reveal the complicated link between violence and displacement, necessitating more focused research on these dynamics.

The “Push” of Violence

In the midst of civil war, non-combatants often find themselves beset by violence emanating from one or more of the warring parties. Conflict-related violence harms individuals, destroys infrastructure, and limits economic opportunities (Adhikari 2012). Displacement of non-combatants through forced migration is often a consequence of civil war as individuals suffer the terrors and hardships that accompany conflict (The Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees 2019). Yet, not all who are beset by the volatility of conflict become displaced, electing instead to remain home throughout the hostilities. Thus, studies should analyze theoretically and empirically the manner by which salient factors in the decision-making calculus may weigh toward or away from displacement as a means to account for individuals who either stay or flee (Schewel 2019).

In order to avoid a narrow analysis devoted primarily to those who fled conflict-affected areas, Schewel (2019) advocates for an aspiration-capability framework that analyses decisions regarding migration as involving factors that influence an individual’s motivation to migrate (aspiration) yet are potentially mitigated by their capacity to migrate (capability). “Capability” may involve external constraints, such as strict migration controls or a lack of economic capacity to migrate, or may arise from an individual’s preference against migration (Schewel 2019). In contrast, the literature identifies a number of factors that may induce a decision to flee one’s home during war, including: geographic proximity; social networks; transportation networks; communication technologies; former colonial relationships; ethnic ties in safe areas; and individual characteristics, such as gender, age, and socio-economic status (Schmeidl 1997; Crawley et al. 2018; Schon 2019; Schewel 2019). Importantly, one of the most robust conditions “pushing” individuals from their homes is the violence inflicted upon non-combatant populations in the midst

of conflict (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Lischer 2007).² Given the aspiration-capability framework's focus on these different dimensions of the decision-making calculus undergirding the choice to migrate, this framework allows scholars and policymakers to analyze how these various factors impact two overarching decisions: (1) whether an individual decides to leave their home and, if so, (2) whether to seek shelter in another part of the conflict state or attempt to cross international borders and seek protections as a refugee (Schewel 2019). Moreover, this holistic approach mitigates the dangers of "mobility bias" because it incorporates consideration of the pressures to remain or to migrate.

In this study, we analyze both aspects of conflict-related displacement, arguing for the forthcoming reasons that conflict-related violence will increase the likelihood that non-combatants decide to leave their homes in the midst of conflict. However, this effect is going to vary with respect to the *type* of displacement that occurs. The decision to leave one's home during war is undoubtedly a difficult one, yet it can be compounded by the subsequent issue involving whether to remain in the conflict state or seek refuge outside the state. Moreover, the interface of the factors involved in the aspiration-capability framework likely vary between IDPs and refugees, which we anticipate having a demonstrable effect on the decision-making calculus. For example, attaining refugee status potentially triggers certain international protections and may afford economic advancement if a host country's economy rivals or exceeds that of the conflict state. Conversely, the decision to seek sanctuary elsewhere in a conflict-state may remove them from the front lines of combat, yet IDPs may nevertheless remain physically and economically insecure if the violence

² However, governments and rebel groups can also use displacement as a weapon of war. Conflict migrants are often forced to depart their homes when they are targeted by repressive actions by their governments (Neumayer 2004; Moore and Shellman 2007). Moreover, armed combatants in conflicts in Colombia, Uganda, Syria, and many other countries, have engaged in violence with the strategic goal of clearing specific populations from a territory in order to observe their loyalties (Kalyvas 2006; Balcells and Steele 2016; Steele 2017).

from which they fled was perpetrated by the state or the war has had a deleterious effect on economic activity. While such “pull” factors may argue in favor of seeking refugee status, the opportunity costs associated with such an effort may deter individuals from seeking transport across international borders (Sladkova 2007; Turkoglu and Chadeaux 2019).³ Furthermore, to the extent a “home bias” impacts individual decision-making, individuals exposed to violence may be more willing to seek refuge elsewhere within their home state (Schewel 2019). Based upon this reasoning, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Individuals are more likely to become displaced rather than remain at home when exposed to violence.

*Hypothesis 1b: Exposure to violence is more likely to lead individuals to become IDPs rather than refugees.*⁴

Although we anticipate general violence increasing the likelihood of forced migration, conflict-related violence can vary in its form. For example, the literature is punctuated with a myriad of operationalizations for the concept of violence, including the onset of international conflict (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Schmeidl 1997; *but see* Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Melander and Öberg 2006), civil war (Lischer 2007; Turkoglu and Chadeaux 2019), genocide and politicide (Uzonyi 2014), and repression (Apodaca 1998). Scholars have also identified specific acts of violence, including, but not limited to, physical assaults, abductions, torture, and sexual assaults, as a separate measure of wartime violence (Adhikari 2013). Yet, these

³ Opportunity costs may stem from the risk of arrest and prosecution for crossing borders illegally; the need to traverse mountains, lakes, or seas; learning a new language; or costs arising within the employment context.

⁴ Given displacement can involve either internal displacement within a conflict-state or external settlement, a holistic understanding of the dynamics of forced migration necessitate considerations of the decision to flee as well as the choice to remain in the conflict-state or seek refuge elsewhere. To that end, our theoretical framework addresses these different aspects of the research puzzle and we implement an empirical strategy to test these dynamics. Ultimately, however, limitations imposed by the data and discussed on pages 10 and 11 urge caution related to the inferences drawn regarding the subset of individuals who report becoming refugees.

studies often combine violent acts into a single category for analytical purposes (Kalyvas 2006; Adhikari 2013).

Just as the effects of different types of political violence may vary on the propensity for displacement, the differences between types of violent acts may have differential impacts on individual decisions to stay or flee a war-torn setting. In order to test for differential effects among types of violence, we focus on two types of violence: (1) indirect and (2) direct violence. Generally, we conceptualize indirect violence as that originating from or involving common ordnance leveraged as tools of war, such as shelling or shootings. Moreover, indirect violence may be less likely to target specific individuals; rather, non-combatants may be exposed to indirect violence due to a proximity to a battlefield. Conversely, direct violence specifically targets and attacks an individual, and this category of violence includes, as examples, physical assaults, torture, sexual violence, abductions, forced labor, and wage theft.⁵ As the forthcoming discussion indicates, we argue that the differences between indirect and direct forms of violence influence non-combatants' decisions to remain in the midst of war or flee to more secure areas.

In line with Hypothesis 1a, we anticipate that either form of violence should increase the likelihood of displacement; however, we argue that different types of violence lead to different forms of displacement. First, indirect violence may be construed by communities as an inherent property of civil war, and exposure to such violence may not unveil or entail antipathy or discrimination harbored by either the government or rebel actors against civilian populations. Therefore, civilian populations may be able to expect some level of state protection if they can remove themselves from the immediate theater of war. Consequently, if an individual wishes to

⁵ Wage theft relates to forms of economic coercion emanating from an employer to an employee, including violations of labor standards, failures to pay workers, underpaying workers, or stealing from employees. Forced labor occurs when individuals are coerced into performing certain types of labor through intimidation or violence.

remain within the host state and avoid the costs associated with seeking refugee status, indirect violence should incline them toward displacement as an IDP. Direct violence violating the personal integrity of an individual, however, has the opposite effect. These acts demonstrate an animus against a particular individual, severing any expectation of state protection should one move to another part of the state. With fewer protections anticipated within the home state, direct violence should compel individuals to absorb the costs associated with crossing international borders and becoming a refugee. Based upon this logic, we propose the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2a: Individuals exposed to indirect violence are more likely to become IDPs rather than refugees.

Hypothesis 2b: Individuals exposed to direct violence are more likely to become refugees rather than IDPs.

Research Design

Our evidence is drawn from the Lebanese civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1990 and resulted in the deaths of more than 144,000 individuals (Charif 1994). The war involved frequent, strategic uses of violence by armed sectarian groups, which displaced more than 30% of the population (approximating one million individuals) from their homes with about 40% of towns or municipalities (379 of 1000) experiencing some population displacement (Ghosn and Khoury 2013). The overwhelming displacement occurred during two particular phases: (1) the sectarian fighting throughout the “War of the Mountains” (1982-1983) and (2) the Israeli occupation (1978-2000), mainly the military operations of 1978 and 1982 (Ghosn *forthcoming*). As part of this, Christian militias attempted to cleanse Druze and Palestinian Muslim populations from areas under their control. In turn, Druze fighters and the Palestinian Liberation Organization targeted Christian populations for displacement in order to gain territorial control of contested areas (Hägerdal 2019).

Importantly, this displacement occurred across several waves and was not evenly distributed and experienced across the whole country.

To explore variation in patterns of displacement, we draw upon responses from an original survey of 2,400 Lebanese residents. The survey was fielded between May 31 and August 31, 2017. By design, we were interested in hearing from individuals who had lived through some portion of the civil war so as to gauge how being exposed to violence influenced their displacement experiences. As a result, we restricted participation in the survey to individuals that were born before the civil war ended in 1990.

A majority of violent events and cases of population displacement during the civil war occurred across three governorates: Mount Lebanon, the South, and Beirut. Therefore, we oversampled from these areas of the country in the proportions detailed in Table 1. On-the-ground enumerators randomly selected clusters of villages from each region nationally. In each village, aerial maps were used to determine street sectors. In each sector, the enumerators visited a first house to determine if a respondent was available or eligible to complete the survey. If they were not accessible because there was no one in the household that was forty-five years or older, they were unwilling to participate, or no one was present at home, the enumerator moved to the second house. In each sector chosen, up to five surveys were collected. This process resulted in 2,400 completed surveys across the country as a whole, with, as shown by Table 1, a spatial distribution of sampling that strikes a balance between capturing the whereabouts of the total and displaced populations.

Table 1: Distribution of Survey Sampling Population for Lebanese Residents by Region

	Total Population	Displaced Population	Sampling Population
Beirut	10%	25%	10%
Mount Lebanon	35%	60%	48%
South & Nabitieh	20%	23%	24%
Bekaa & Baalbek-Hermel	12%	2%	6%
North & Akkar	23%	4%	12%

Dependent Variable

Since we seek to answer how violence may affect an individual's decision to flee their home, our analyses focus on two groups of individuals in the Lebanese civil war: (1) those who decided against leaving their homes and (2) those who fled in the midst of war, becoming either IDPs or refugees. The operationalization of our dependent variable relies upon two survey questions. The first question inquired as to whether a respondent experienced violence during the civil war and decided to move from their home.⁶ The second question followed from the first in asking for the ultimate destinations of those who fled. This process allowed us to differentiate between IDPs and refugees. Between these two questions, we generate a categorical variable, in which we differentiate between individuals who were not displaced (N = 1,579), those that were displaced internally within Lebanon (IDPs; N = 735), and those that were displaced outside of Lebanon (Refugees; N = 86). Each category includes individuals who experienced violence as well as those who were not exposed to violence during the civil war.

Importantly, our sample only includes refugees who eventually returned to Lebanon and does not include individuals who remained overseas by 2017, raising the prospect that the survey omits a crucial group from the sample thereby potentially under sampling those with exposure to violence who decided to leave Lebanon during the civil war. A key inquiry is whether there is a systematic difference between those who returned versus those who remained outside of Lebanon. Demographically, Maronites, more than the other groups in Lebanon, were most likely to flee the state and remain elsewhere following the war. In addition, Maronites, according to the survey,

⁶ The survey question from which this aspect of the dependent variable is derived asks respondents whether they decided to leave their homes as a result of the violence they suffered, that is, it focuses on displacement instigated by conflict-related violence. Thus, this dependent variable is well situated for testing the hypotheses because the study is interested in understanding how specific types of conflict-related violence influence displacement.

reported more instances of violence exposure than other groups in the survey. Lastly, while individuals identifying as Maronite make up the largest group in the sample, the number of Maronite refugees in the sample is fewer than refugees with Shia or Sunni backgrounds. Taken together, these descriptive markers urge caution in the forthcoming analyses with respect to the findings on the refugee dimension. Nevertheless, given the representativeness of sample as it pertains to individuals living in Lebanon in 2017, we believe this sample does allow us to make reasonable inferences for this particular subset of those living in Lebanon during the civil war.

Primary Independent Variables

As discussed previously, we anticipate violence conditioning an individual's decision to stay or flee in the midst of civil war. As a means to test our theoretical expectations, we leverage survey data from a question that asked respondents whether they individually experienced one or more of the following forms of violence during the Lebanese civil war: a physical assault or a beating; physical and mental torture; an abduction; sexual violence; a shelling; a shooting; forced labor; or wage theft. From these data, we create the primary independent variables for our analyses. First, we create a dichotomous variable identifying survey respondents who experienced at least one type of the aforementioned forms of violence. For the second set of key independent variables, we divided the eight forms of violence into four categories, disaggregating respondents among those who did not experience violence, those who experienced indirect forms of violence (shootings or shelling), those who suffered direct forms of violence (physical assaults, torture, abduction, sexual violence, forced labor, and wage theft), and respondents who experienced both indirect and direct forms of violence.⁷ For the analyses in Figure 2, the baseline category for this second set of

⁷ Arguably, shootings could be a form of direct violence, and based upon the survey question, we cannot differentiate targeted shootings from broad-based shootings. While we incorporate shootings into the category of indirect violence for the main analyses, we conduct a robustness check in the Supplemental Information in which we include shootings in the direct violence category, and the results are consistent with those depicted in Figure 2, herein.

variables is the subset of respondents who report not experiencing conflict-related violence. Tables 2 and 3 present the distribution of the primary independent variables over the categories of respondents who answered whether they fled their homes or remained in their communities during the war.

Table 2: Distribution of Individual Actions and Experiences of Violence

	Did Not Experience Violence	Experienced Violence	Totals
Did Not Flee	470 (30%)	1,109 (70%)	1,579
IDPs	111 (15%)	624 (85%)	735
Refugees	23 (27%)	63 (73%)	86

Table 3: Distribution of Individual Actions Across Types of Violence

	No Experience of Violence	Direct Violence	Indirect Violence	Mixture of Violence	Totals
Did Not Flee	470 (30%)	267 (17%)	675 (43%)	167 (11%)	1,579
IDPs	111 (15%)	101 (14%)	400 (54%)	123 (17%)	735
Refugees	23 (27%)	19 (22%)	32 (37%)	12 (14%)	86

Looking first to Table 2, the descriptive data track the overall sample of respondents in that the predominant decision between the two categories involved staying home throughout the course of the civil war. However, in terms of the displacement categories, the majority of respondents who become either an IDP or a refugee experienced some form of conflict-related violence, with 85% of respondents who became IDPs and 73% of respondents who were refugees answering that they experienced violence during the civil war.

Turning to Table 3, the decision leading individuals to become either an IDP or refugee predominately followed exposure to indirect violence relative to either direct violence or a combination of violent acts. Interestingly, respondents who experienced a mixture of violence appear less likely to stay in their homes relative to individuals accosted solely by indirect or direct violence. Yet, the descriptive data indicate that individuals subjected to direct violence were a little

more likely to become refugees relative to respondents experiencing different forms of violence, whereas the latter group of individuals appear more likely to become internally displaced. The data suggest a critical distinction be made between acts of indirect and direct violence and their potential effects on the decision to stay or flee a war-torn area.

Control Variables

As Schewel (2019) argues, studies pursuing answers to research puzzles involving migration should account both for factors that may incline individuals to leave their homes and those that may convince them to remain. We include a number of measures derived from our survey to account for these different factors bearing on the decision-making process. These factors also serve to provide additional context for individual experiences with conflict processes. Accordingly, we include each respondent's gender, their age at the end of the war (in 1990), whether they were married at the time of the war,⁸ their level of educational attainment, and their religious identity. An individual's financial well-being may also condition the ability to relocate in the midst of civil war; therefore, we include variables for each survey respondent's economic standing during the war. Descriptive data for these variables can be found in the Supplemental Information.

We also include district fixed effects to account for unobserved heterogeneity based on respondents' hometown locations. This helps us to control for a number of factors that are hard to measure directly, including regional and geographic variation in experiences of violence, ease of communication, and access to services during the war.⁹

⁸ Of the 2,400 survey respondents, 195 did not answer the question asking if they had been married at the time of the war. As a result of listwise deletion, the sample size leveraged for the regression analyses is 2,205 individuals.

⁹ The supplementary materials file details full descriptive statistics for all variables (Table 1), as well as the distribution of our main variables of interest across the range of a variety of control factors (Tables 2 through 14).

Results

In order to assess the relationship between our Lebanese respondents' personal experiences with violence during the Lebanese civil war and whether or not they were displaced from their homes as IDPs or as refugees, we estimate a series of multinomial logistic regression models. In this study, we are interested in understanding how violence shapes decisions to stay or flee one's home during war; thus, we shift the baseline category across the models from individuals who did not flee to those who became IDPs.¹⁰

Our first set of analyses tests the proposition that exposure to violence increases the likelihood that individuals will become IDPs or refugees rather than remain in their homes. In this set of analyses, we utilize the dichotomous measure of violence exposure as our primary independent variable and the results are provided in Figure 1.

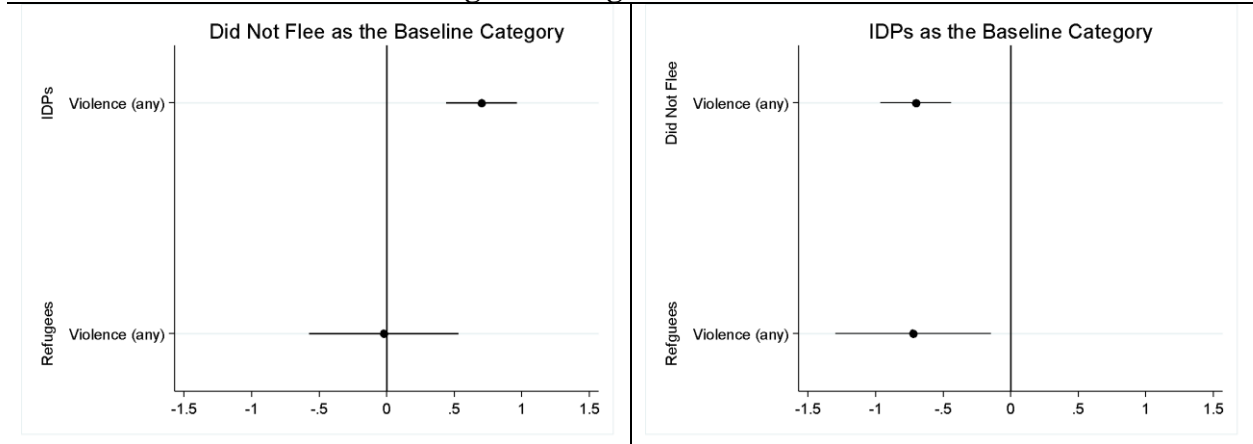
The force of the findings in Figure 1 relate to the effect of violence on the propensity of individuals who became IDPs, that is, the likelihood of becoming an IDP rather than a refugee or remaining at home became greater if an individual was exposed to violence. In substantive terms, violence exposure makes a respondent approximately 101% more likely to become an IDP rather than decide to remain home. The effect of violence is more muted with respect to the types of displacement, with violence exposure decreasing the likelihood of a respondent becoming a refugee relative to an IDP by nearly 2%.¹¹ Interestingly, exposure to violence exhibits no statistically significant effect between refugee status and the decision to remain at home in the midst of war. Thus, violence exposure appeared most likely to displace individuals within their

¹⁰ We present results through coefficient plots. Full tables of results are available in the supplementary materials file through Tables 15 through 16. Notably, the coefficient plots present the regression coefficients for the independent variables of interest; however, the analyses that calculated these results include the full range of control variables described in the previous section.

¹¹ All substantive effects were calculated using the `listcoef` command in Stata 15 and can be found in full in Table 28 in the Supplemental Information.

home country rather than push them abroad. These results present modest support for Hypothesis 1a and strong support for Hypothesis 1b.

Figure 1: Regression Results

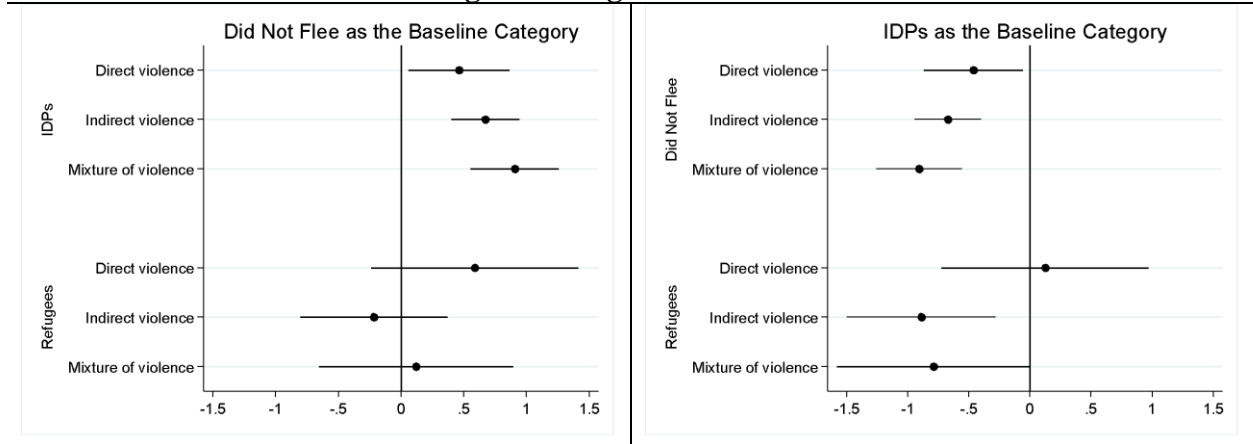


The empirics bolster the conclusion that violence shapes displacement; however, the nature of violence can vary dramatically among types of acts. To assess such variation, Figure 2 presents the results for the analyses leveraging the variables for indirect, direct, and myriad forms of violence.

The starkest result is that all types of violence made individuals more likely to become IDPs rather than deciding to remain in their homes. The strongest substantive effect pertains to the relationship between IDPs and experiences involving both types of violence, in which the likelihood of a respondent becoming an IDP relative to deciding to stay home when confronted with violence increases by approximately 148%. Notably, the statistically significant effects disappear in terms of refugees. Yet, when we switch the baseline category to IDPs, we see that indirect violence reduced the likelihood of an individual becoming a refugee relative to becoming an IDP. In particular, exposure to indirect violence decreases the likelihood of a respondent becoming a refugee relative to an IDP by roughly 55%. Thus, violence, predominately indirect

violence, appeared most likely to lead individuals to relocate within Lebanon rather than flee their homes or their state.

Figure 2: Regression Results



What do these results suggest about our hypotheses? First, Hypothesis 2a finds the greatest degree of support in that the indicator for indirect violence in both models exhibits an effect that increases the likelihood that violence exposure leads individuals to become IDPs rather than refugees or deciding to remain in their homes. However, Hypothesis 2b finds no support, as the direct violence variable does not have a statistically significant effect.

In sum, the empirical analyses reflect the significant influence conflict-related violence may exert on non-combatants caught in the midst of civil war despite the potential implications of factors that may incline individuals to decide against migration. Furthermore, these effects vary based on the nature of the violence and the type of displacement that may occur. However, given the limitations among the survey data related to the subset of respondents who reported becoming refugees, the weight of our confidence in the inferences drawn from the empirical analyses fall toward the relationship between violence exposure and the propensity of a non-combatant to become an IDP. Nevertheless, we believe we can derive preliminary insight from the full scope of

the analysis to better understand the dynamics of decision-making in the context of forced migration.¹²

Conclusion

The largest forced displacement of persons globally since the end of World War II has resulted in more than seventy million individuals globally fleeing their homes. Despite a growing body of empirical research, a remaining question to address is whether violence taking different forms has differential effects. Moreover, relatively little is known about the similarity (or otherwise) of factors motivating internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. Our analyses of a sample of individuals who lived during the Lebanese civil war spanning the years 1975 to 1990 demonstrate that violence exposure generally made displacement as IDPs more likely than decisions to weather the storm of the war or become refugees. Furthermore, indirect violence proved to be a greater catalyst of displacement rather than direct violence.

Our paper makes three significant contributions. First, by looking at individuals who decided to flee as well as those who chose to stay, our study recognizes the problematic nature of mobility bias and attempts to mitigate much its complications. Second, we are able to compare individuals who decided to flee but stay in Lebanon as well as those that left the country. Third, we demonstrate that not all forms of violence have equivalent effects upon either the decision to flee or the destination of those fleeing. On this final point, our analyses suggest that additional investigation is warranted with respect to the role played by interpersonal forms of violence, such as physical assault and sexual assault, which appear to have effects that are quite distinct from

¹² As mentioned previously, the full tables of results are displayed in Tables 15 and 16 in the online appendix. These tables include results specific to various identity groups. Our data reflect that the majority of individuals that fled their homes were either Maronites (31%) or Shia (28%). However, while both of these groups faced significant levels of shelling, only a minority of their respective populations ending up fleeing their homes (with 68% and 63%, respectively, opting to stay at home). In other words, while these two populations were more likely to be displaced than were Eastern Orthodox, Druze, or Sunnis, there were no obvious differences between their patterns of behaviors.

those of other forms of violence. Relatedly, the findings advocate for future research delving into the factors that mitigate the threat posed by violence and incline individuals to remain home despite dangers to their personal well-being.

Overall, these findings provide evidentiary support for the UNHCR's increasing focus on IDPs and advocates for stronger policies aimed at protecting IDPs from potential predation from the home state or rebel groups. Since IDPs remain under the purview of a home state's power despite displacement, they may be particularly susceptible to wartime predation, which could serve as an impetus to overcome the desire to remain in one's home state and seek refuge outside its borders. Thus, it proves difficult to understand the processes of displacement without analyzing the potential linkage between IDPs and refugees. Given the persistence of civil war and the hardships endured by those caught in its grasp, the expansion of our knowledge on these questions is imperative if the global community is to fashion policies aimed at protecting all those forced to consider whether to stay or flee conflict-related violence.

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