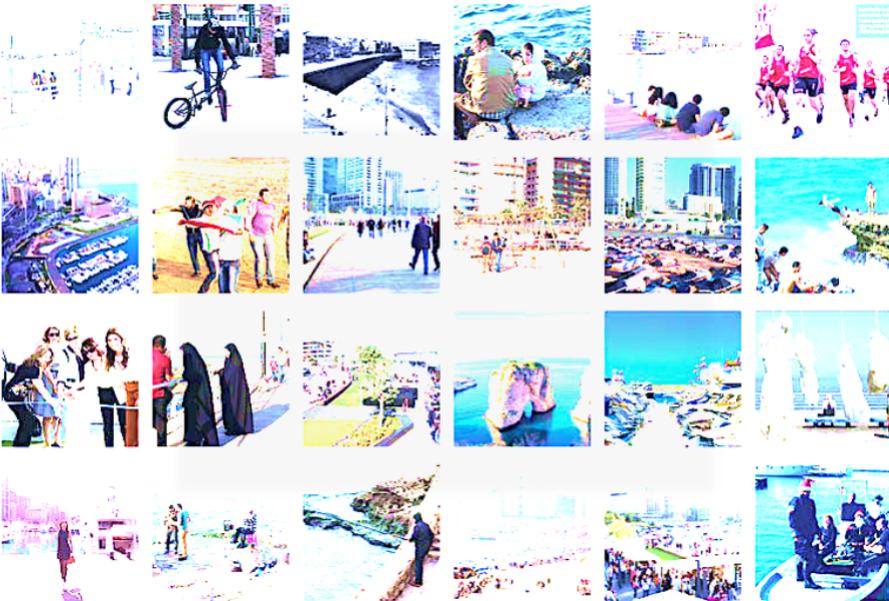# Beirut's (Dis)integrated Seafront: Diverse Identities, Experiences, Typologies and Governance at the Edge of the City

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis looks at multiculturalism and integration to answer what different levels of seafront show us about how typologies of public open space can unite across differences and divisions and, conversely, in what ways these divisions are further entrenched. The thesis offers an understanding of leisure cultural practices across ethnicities. The thesis investigates how public spaces are reclaimed by the practice of leisure or by forcible reclamation, protests and sit-ins due to the lack of citizen participatory mechanisms in governance of public space. The thesis details findings and methodological development relating to multiculturalism and integration, governance, social justice, and leisure in a post-war city in the Global South. Mapping and questionnaires allow understanding of micro-spaces of the seafront and links to city-wide and beyond territories. Interviews, on-site observations -walks, photo analysis and sketches note typologies, narratives of leisure and the diversity of activity. Netography highlights nationalities' engagement with memory. Desk research and interviews note a lack of citizen participatory mechanisms.

Beirut's seafront is the only large-scale, free, fully accessible open space in Greater Beirut (Khalili, 2015; Beirut Zone 10, 2018). Beirut has 1m2 of green open space per person (compared to 40m2/of public space per person recommended by the World Health Organisation). A history of privatising public spaces transformed Beirut's seafront into high-end resorts predominantly catering to the rich; Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, endured a brutal sectarian war (1975-1990). Initially settled by migrants and refugees in the 18th century, it currently accommodates large numbers of Palestinians, Syrians and migrant workers from Ethiopia, Sudan and other countries,

The thesis emphasises the need for integration across different scales to be able to respond to diversity in a divided context and recognise difference in social and cultural values concerning recreation and socialising across seascape typologies.

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Beirut's sea is full of love, renewal, diversity, and light.
An endless blue, each of us has a share in it.
Its blueness resembles the sky's civilisation, and the meek glances of its' white birds are like that of good neighbours.
Ghadah Al-Samman

1. Introduction

It is the 21st century; cities worldwide are experiencing high migration, the threat of wars, and concern regarding global inequalities, against a global backdrop of climate change and a pandemic. Beirut, capital city of Lebanon, is no exception. The city is a politically volatile context with ongoing social divisions relating to city spaces (Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012; Bollens, 2013), and is an insightful location to explore how multiculturality is experienced in open public spaces n a diverse, underdeveloped and divided context.

This research draws our attention to the growing gap between how diversity and multiculturalism in public spaces is dealt with in the cities of the global north and the global south; pointing out the nuances of studying multiculturality in different contexts. Multiculturalism refers to how people from diverse cultures experience and negotiate everyday situations {Citation}It highlights how the issue is dealt with from a non-western, formerly colonised vantage point. This research shows (1) how sociability, leisure and multiculture are intrinsically connected; (2) how people practice leisure and sociability is rooted in long-term culture, norms and nostalgia for days gone. (3) The way public spaces are governed in the global south is a social justice concern in the city, and (4) how people use public spaces to claim their rights, a concern that is increasingly also discussed with relevance to Global North contexts.

This thesis is about the extent to which the seafront areas of Beirut are accessible and used by people from migrant communities and whether these can be meaningfully described as integrative and inclusive leisure spaces. It is also concerned with the lived experience of leisure and how different groups practice and voice leisure on Beirut's seafront public spaces. Decades of negligence, nepotism and a penchant for favouring privatisation and high-end real estate development over public spaces by the Lebanese state have resulted in intermittent public access to Beirut's seafront. The seafront provides specific affordance to different communities across its topographic levels that mirror the country's multifaceted religious, class and sectarian divides.

1.1 Significance and scope

The research focuses on the relationship between three key thematic areas: urban multiculturism, landscape architecture, and governance.

Open public spaces are essential for multiculturalism and integration (Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Wise and Noble, 2016). Public spaces could be positive sites of multicultural encounter, and the difference across "the other" is recognised and respected (Sennett, 1992; Sandercock, 2000, 2003). However, others do not share this positive outlook and maintain that encounters

across difference in public spaces may not be meaningful or sustainable (Amin, 2002, 2013; Valentine, 2008). Territoriality is a socio-behavioural construct where communities exhibit ownership of space and objects (Brown et al., 2005). In politically divided contexts that have been impacted by conflict, spaces, boundaries and territories are constantly navigated and negotiated in everyday life. This negotiation could go beyond claiming objects found in public spaces, such as benches and umbrellas (Watson, 2006; Wimmer, 2008; Mehta, 2013). Territorial behaviour could include a sense of belonging and comradery across social groups: Sophie Watson perfectly describes how people co-exist in leisure and sociable spaces, noting that this presence is highly nuanced and not straightforward:

"This is neither a simple issue nor one to which a universal solution can be found. Moments of tranquillity or harmony can easily erupt into moments of antagonism and violence. Love and hate, empathy and antipathy coexist in ambiguous and ambivalent tension. Requiring attention, then, are the conditions under which violent and negative emotions can erupt to the detriment of others. Each part of a city is distinct from each other part and is different at different times of the day and night, as well as across the different months and years, depending on the wider socio-political context" (Watson, 2006; p.2).

Open seafront spaces are similar to open public spaces but have added health value (Völker and Kistemann, 2013, 2015). Urban blue spaces are comparatively under-researched. As coastlines are finite, they are prone to develop into housing, leisure and commerce due to their high land value; their ethical, cultural and biodiversity values are often overlooked (Kozlovsky and Grobman, 2017). As planners, we need to recognise that seafront landscapes essentially enrich the user experience and need protection in some instances from development advances. Sensory and experiential qualities of seaside locations are vital to integrate into discussions of this form of public space. Anna Ryan reflected on the sea qualities in a geographic study based on culture entitled *Where Land Meets Sea* (2012), noting that an essential phenomenological dimension of the coastline that we need to recognise is its 'unceasing mobility: dynamics of light, sound, presence, absence, surface, depth and texture". All elements bring s spirit in close contact with its natural surroundings and underpin the ethical (our obligation to conserve public spaces for future generations) and cultural value of these landscapes. The research examines how migrant and national identities inform patterns of visiting and socialising on the seafront, using spatial analysis across multiple scales.

Public spaces in the divided global south are places where social injustices are both revealed and have the potential to be addressed/mitigated. These understandings inform a social justice agenda about blue infrastructure and what this means in terms of planning and landscape design in Beirut. Here, urban inhabitants occupy spaces to express discontent with public policy (Low & Iveson, 2016; Gaffikin et al., 2010). However, in these contexts, citizen participation and consultation processes are almost non-existent (Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache, 2015; Fawaz and Moumtaz, 2017), given Beirut's ever-expanding diversity and multiethnicity "participation" thus becomes ever more contested in the sense of "whose city is this". Little thought is given to addressing traditional power hierarchies in urban planning. But there is a desperate need not only to address effective citizen participation but also to recognise that infrastructure is a cultural asset and policymakers have an ethical value to preserve it for future generations. Urban planning in this context lacks legitimacy and could marginalise overlooked voices needing representation.

By combining a socio-geographical understanding with landscape architecture, the research aims to add contextual and experiential evidence to the current broader understanding of integration, multiculturalism and boundaries in contested cities as temporal and scalar. The thesis examines

planning and governance frameworks to understand reclamation of seafront public spaces by activists. The thesis frames historical urban planning practices in Beirut to understand current citizen reclamation efforts of public spaces. It also develops methodological approaches to studying the complexity and intricacies that often exist in urban public spaces, which are sometimes assumed to be integrated and homogenised. This research also documented the patterns of use of public spaces at historical turning points within the period of the fieldwork, including:

- On October 17th 2019 (**Thawra**), the Lebanese cabinet announced tax measures to address an economic crisis. Thousands of protesters immediately took to the streets and public spaces of towns and cities across Lebanon. Protestors called for accountability, social justice, economic reform and the resignation of politicians.
- Covid-19 as of March 2020 (**Pandemic**), 468 million cases of the disease were confirmed. The disease claimed the life of over 6 million globally. In Lebanon, from 3 January 2020 to 2 May 2022, there have been 1,096,955 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 10,387 deaths reported to WHO. As of 24 April 2022, 5,602,400 vaccine doses have been administered. During the pandemic, Lebanon went into a lockdown banning outdoor exercise on the seafront.
- On 4 August 2020 (**Port explosion**), the Port of Beirut in the capital city exploded due to the negligent storage of large amounts of ammonium nitrate. This state's negligence caused massive loss of life. Around 218 deaths and 7,000 injuries were reported in addition to around US$15 billion in property damage. The explosion left around 300,000 people homeless.

The research results hope to inform further studies and impact projects that could be potentially relevant to other cities in the Middle East with high refugee populations.

1.2 Research questions and objectives

The research objectives and questions are (Figure 1-1):

1. To investigate the extent of diversity and integration with respect to patterns of users and uses of the seafront in comparison to the population demographics of Beirut.
   a. The extent to which seafront users are diverse in relation to home residence location and neighbourhoods of residence in the city.
   b. To what extent is it accurate to describe Beirut's seafront as a shared space in relation to temporal and spatial differences in use across the varied seafront spaces?
2. To understand how communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability are experienced and voiced by diverse users.
   a. What are individual and collective leisure histories and preferences?
   b. How does social uses and the typologies of place inform multicultural identities?
3. To record and evaluate the history and current situation of governance policies and grass-root activism on the seafront.
   a. What actions have been taken to encourage citizen participation in the Lebanese planning system?
   b. What are the effective actions taken by actors to contest the seafront and to what extent are they able to influence local planning
   c. To what extent are urban actors focused on supporting social integration?

Research Questions

O1
The extent of diversity & integration?

O2
Experience of diversity, narrative that reflects conviviality, encounters and the multiculturality in the city?

O3
What is the scope and limitation of policy, governance and activism on Beirut's seafront for upkeep, maintenance and contesting the space?

Analytical Framework

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

INTEGRATION & MULTICULTURE

GOVERNANCE

Using the follwing mixed methods

Questionnairs & Spatial Mapping

On Site Observations, Sketches & Diagrams

On site Interviews

Desk Review

Stakeholder Interviews

Figure 1-1 Diagrammatic depiction of research framework and research tools

1.3 Thesis structure

This thesis has three principal parts:

Part 1: Questions, Approaches and Methods

Chapter 1: Introduction
The introduction starts off by significance and scope, research questions and objectives; it also includes a section on key terminology used. The introduction frames the research gaps and the novelty of this thesis. It moves on to provide the context of Beirut, describing city growth as a superdiverse and divided city that has witnessed a civil war, an invasion, ongoing threats of war, as well as providing an overview of current demographics and geography. The introduction provides an overview of the four case studies used in the thesis to illustrate multiculturalism and social integration on different typologies of spaces along Beirut's seafront. This chapter includes a section on my positionality as a researcher.

Chapter 2: Literature Review
This chapter frames existing literature related to multiculturality, social integration and conviviality, with a focus on the seafront and contemporary approaches within urban planning and governance in cities of the Global South. The themes and their interrelations are explored.

Chapter 3: Methodology
This chapter defines the methodological approach and philosophical and theoretical frameworks. The chapter explains quantitative and qualitative methods used as well as the ethical considerations associated with this research. The chapter concludes by discussing positionality, reflexivity and research limitations, including the impact of the pandemic on fieldwork. The chapter introduces the case study sites in more detail.

Part 2 Fieldwork results exploring multiculturalism and integration on Beirut's seafront

Chapter 4: Public Space Practices Across Beirut's Waterfront
The focus of this chapter is the quantitative data extracted from the survey carried out across the four case studies. The findings explore the first research question, relating to how integration and segregation, concerning patterns of users and uses of the seafront reflect the population diversity of and their potential for curating sociability. These themes are then explored in chapters 5 and 6 from a qualitative perspective.

Chapter 5: Communal Histories and Narratives of Leisure and Diversity
This chapter explores communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability. The experience and voices of diverse users are heard, using leisure as an entry point to interrogate social activity and its relation to themes gleaned through analysis of social integration; leisure as escapism, leisure as negotiated, and leisure as related to memories and ongoing memory making.

Chapter 6: The scope and limitation of policy, governance and activism on Beirut's seafront
This chapter explains the history and methods of governance, planning, and policy of Beirut's seafront public spaces. It focuses on the Lebanese government policy towards public spaces in the capital and citizen response to decades of lack of access and good quality public spaces in the city. The chapter also aims to explain the dynamics of immigration, cultural diversity, and intergroup coexistence at different topographic levels of the seafront. The chapter also summarises the three critical events outlined above and how this impacted the research and the seafront.

Part 3 – Reflections, Future Research and Conclusion

Chapter 7: Discussion
This chapter analyses all research questions, bringing the findings together to theorise about multiculturalism, social integration, planning and governance in the global south. Here, spatialities (transects and transverse analysis) are highlighted across seafront levels to understand leisure affordances provided by typologies for different communities.

Chapter 8: Conclusion
In this final chapter, research findings are summarised by developing a theory about recreational seafront spaces in post-conflict/high migration cities. The chapter also addresses impact by discussing the implications for planners and landscape architects, urban public authorities and non-governmental organisations. It offers some perspectives on how the themes of this research might be developed further.

I conclude with some final brief reflections and future research.

1.4 Key terminology, with specific reference to use in the Lebanese context

1.4.1 Terms relating to public spaces

Typology
The study of urban form or typology concerns understanding the elements that make up the landscape, building types, and streetscapes (Scheer, 2019). In its entirety, typology includes an

understanding of the use of space by users over time. Typologies are best understood through observation, images, diagrams, drawings and sketches (Dee, 2001).

Scale
Lynch (1972) defined urban design as encompassing various concerns across different spatial scales. Scale, in landscape typologies, refers to an awareness above and below the scale of which one works on, e.g the Corniche, and also the relationships of the case studies as part of a whole (city and country) and the whole in relation to the case studies (Carmona, Matthew *et al.*, 2010). Scale, in maps or plans, is the **ratio** between the size of the object as depicted by the map or plan and its actual size in the real world (Guide to using maps and scales, no date). The micro-scale in this dissertation refers to human scale and is the primary focus of the conversations and face to face encounters. The analysis of space and time connects micro-meso-macro scale.

Open Public Space
Open public space is property open to public use. By definition, public spaces, are " all areas that are open and accessible to all members of the public in a society, in principle though not necessarily in practice " (Orum and Neal, 2009 p.1). Public space is land owned by the state but is used by a community as a whole (Madanipour, 1999). This thesis is concerned with outdoor public spaces and not indoor public spaces, e.g meeting halls. The Lebanese state distrusts people using public spaces freely. The state sees public spaces as potentially destabilising because they have the potential to bring people together in political debate and democratic practice. (Habermas, 1992).

Here we can distinguish between:

Formal public space is a space that has been designed to bring people together purposefully. There are many examples of open public space (e.g parks, plazas, streets, sidewalks, piazzas and corniches). Open public spaces are areas where people are able to meet outdoors for a variety of activities and recreation. In present times, public spaces could now include cyberspaces and Internet (Orum and Neal, 2009).

Informal public space are the informal spaces excluded from the planned spaces in a city. These could be informal, interstitial spaces 'left-over space' (Lehmann, 2020). According to Addas and Rishbeth (2018), these in the Arab world, as in Lebanon are "small incidental areas that are informally appropriated for recreation: roadside verges, roundabouts and pavements. These are commonly used for sitting out, eating and playing, and can be argued to provide a corrective to inefficient land use and irrational design of public spaces" (p194).

Urban Greenspace
Urban Greenspace is publicly accessible land mostly having a soft or vegetated character (Dunnett et al., 2002). These spaces are formally designed and designated with a purpose e.g. parks, urban squares, play and recreational areas. A report by the World Health Organisation, claims Beirut has 1 m2 of green open space per person in administrative Beirut- a low figure, when compared to the value of 40m2/of public space per person, recommended for healthy urban living by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (The Civil Campaign for the protection of Dalieh, undated).
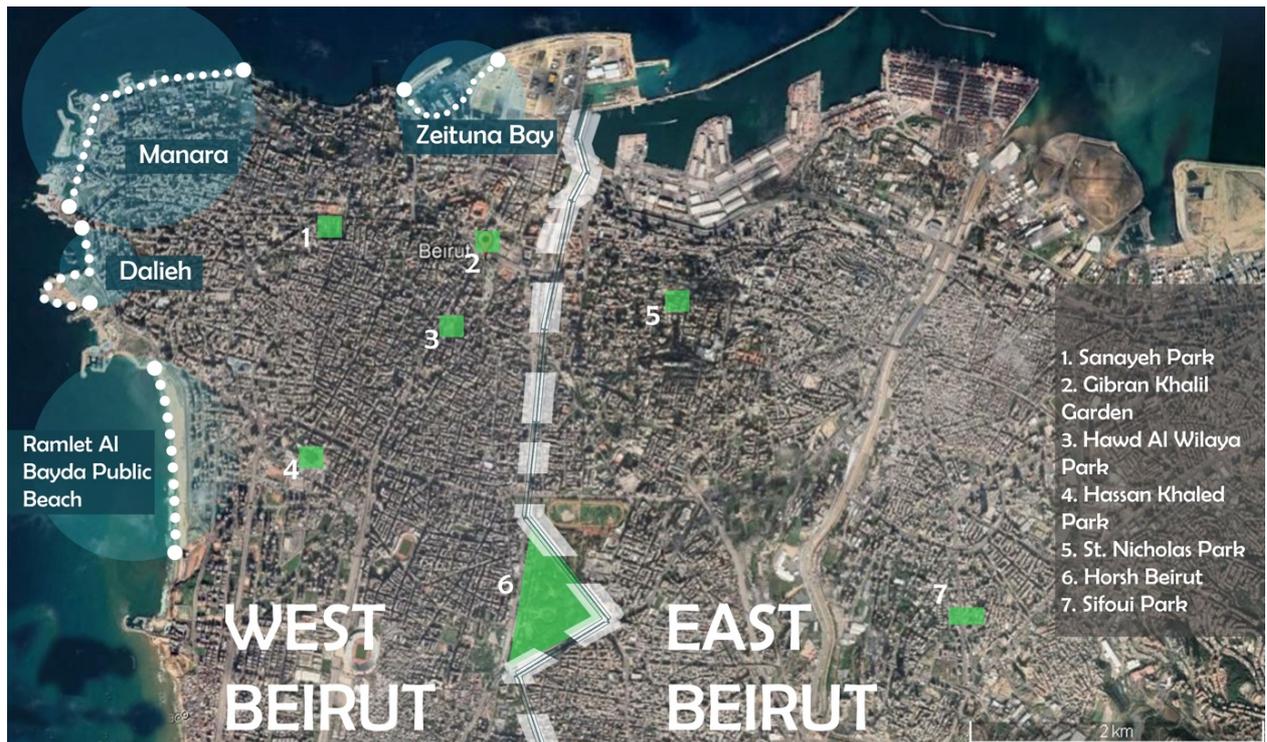
Figure 1-2. Sidewalks, empty parking lots, and green spots in the city are largely used. The seafront remains the only formal open space in the city that brings everyone together.

Urban Blue Space

Urban blue space is all surface waters within a city. The introduction of the term "blue" as a colour, was meant to further add to landscape debates on environmental health, recreation and wellbeing (Völker and Kistemann, 2013, 2015). Water is any recreational space where the water has a significant presence, in this case, the sea wraps around the city of Beirut bringing together a diverse set of neighbourhoods. The sea is a common resource for everyone, current debates have arisen on appropriating maritime spaces because the sea has been appropriated by political elites and is no longer part of the urban lived experience (Armiero, 2011).

The work looks at scales (national, regional, neighbourhood) and topographic levels (water edge, public walkways and street level) of open urban blue spaces on Beirut's seafront. Beirut's seafront provides different typologies (horizontal walkway, limestone headland, reclaimed marina, sandy shoreline) of formal, seafront, open public spaces.

1.4.2   Terms relating to social relationships

Multiculture

Everyday multiculture refers to how people from diverse cultures experience and negotiate everyday situations- and how relations of power and the wider discourses of politics interplay through all of these fields (Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Wise and Noble, 2016). Social integration is a multidimensional concept and social phenomenon. This research mainly focuses on the spatial dimension which enables an understanding of social integration relating to inclusivity of access and use (see the work of Aelbrecht et al 2021).

Integration
In urban and migration studies, integration is commonly explored in spaces of necessity (schools, workplaces, housing) and locations most noticeably being adapted by new populations (shops, streets, places of worship) or focuses on residential demographic patterns (Hall, 2015; Kim, 2015).

Conviviality
From Latin "convivere," meaning to live together. Conviviality has longer roots in sociology and anthropology; it is Gilroy's application of the notion to the cohabitation of multicultural populations (Neal *et al.*, 2019); it is also defined as the sense of social belonging and liveliness in a space (Mady, 2012; Valluvan, 2016).

Superdiversity
The term superdiversity, coined by Vertovec (2007), referred to increasing migration from new countries giving rise to new conjunctions and considerations. It is a concept that has emerged alongside conviviality but is more concerned with rapidly changing populations (Neal *et al.*, 2019) rather than social interaction and difference.

This thesis looks at multiculturalism, integration and conviviality across different seafront landscape typologies in a superdiverse context that is primarily due to high migration.

1.4.3   Terms relating to understanding 'non-necessary' activities

Recreation & Leisure
Leisure is an integral part of Arab culture largely associated with the sea (Hazbun, 2008; Delpal, 2014; Addas and Rishbeth, 2018), however, with globalisation and a neoliberal approach to the provision of public space, the practice of leisure on blue public space over years in Lebanon has changed from a deeply intertwined and symbiotic relation where public holidays used to be communally celebrated to a more individualistic and modern association. Another type of space popular in modern times is a global space that does not relate to local identity e.g shopping malls, clothing chain and coffee shops that dominates part of Lebanon's urban landscape (Mady, 2015, Deeb and Harb, 2007); thus Beirut's largely privatised coastline.

Recreation is intentional, it is taking time out to engage in recreation or sport activities. Leisure is non-intentional and more nuanced. Leisure is culturally grounded in Mediterranean cities (Deeb and Harb, 2007; Hazbun, 2008; Khalili, 2016). In more recent years, research on leisure in the Global North started to address this from a migrant and inclusivity framework (Byrne and Wolch, 2009; Berasategi Sancho *et al.*, 2022) who note that research on migrant leisure in the Global South remains scant (Iwasaki, 2007).

1.4.4   Terms relating to stakeholders and urban change

Governance
UN-Habitat defines 'governance' as the many ways that institutions (i.e., local authorities) and individuals "organize the day-to-day management of a city, and the processes used for effectively realizing the short-term and long-term agenda of a city's development (UN-Habitat, no date). Another definition by Carole Rakodi that considers various actors involved in governance is "the interactive relationships between and within government and civil society actors in cities. It includes the overlapping domains of political and administrative processes of decision-making and is also about how government organisations react to the needs and demands of urban actors, both organised and unorganised"(Rakodi, 2004 , p.1)

Activism

Activism represents a strategy adopted by an individual or group of people aimed at forming techniques and processes for resistance. Activism can manifest in the form of social movements, NGOs, civic society groups, academics as well as political parties. Activism can manifest as social movements, civil society groups and political parties, the work of activists could be at as the organizing of specific forms of protest, applying pressure to receive social and civil rights on governments through lawful procedures, or violent acts(Harris and Schwedler, 2016; Makhzoumi and Al-Sabbagh, 2018)

1.5 Beirut

Beirut, the capital city of Lebanon, covers an area of approximately 19 square kilometres with a population of 361,000.

1.5.1   Geographic context

Beirut sits on a peninsula which extends westward in the Mediterranean Sea. The city is bounded by the Lebanon Mountains, which gives it a triangular form. The city also lies on top of the two hills of the neighbourhoods Achrafieh and Mousaytbeh. The city is bound by the Mediterranean Sea to the north and west and by the Beirut River to the east. The city's southern border runs across a straight line from the southern Ramlet El-Bayda public beach to the southern Pine Forest and then ends northeast south of the National Museum, before connecting to the Beirut River.

To understand public spaces as spaces that bring people together, it is important to understand the context of the city of Beirut as a city marred by civil war, deep religious and political conflicts and an unstable regional context. These factors affected the city and spatially defined it. Lebanon's fifteen years of civil war (1975-1990) resulted with a ravaged country and the capital, Beirut, split with the infamous active "Green Line"- a spatial and psychological demarcation line formerly known as the Damascus Road. This constituted the boundary that separated East from West and Christian from Muslim sectors of the city and the fighting factions from each other. The road derived its new name from the wild vegetation growing on the unused road, which grew denser as the road continued to be unused. This physical separation was a violent process involving sieges on several neighbourhoods by warring militias. Ultimately, the historic city centre, the open and mixed area, became no-man's land, and the city was divided, with what remained undeveloped public seafront, becoming an integral part of West Beirut (See Figure 1-2). At the time, the Muslim population of East Beirut decreased from forty to five per cent and Lebanese populations were displaced along sectarian lines further limiting mixity within neighbourhoods.
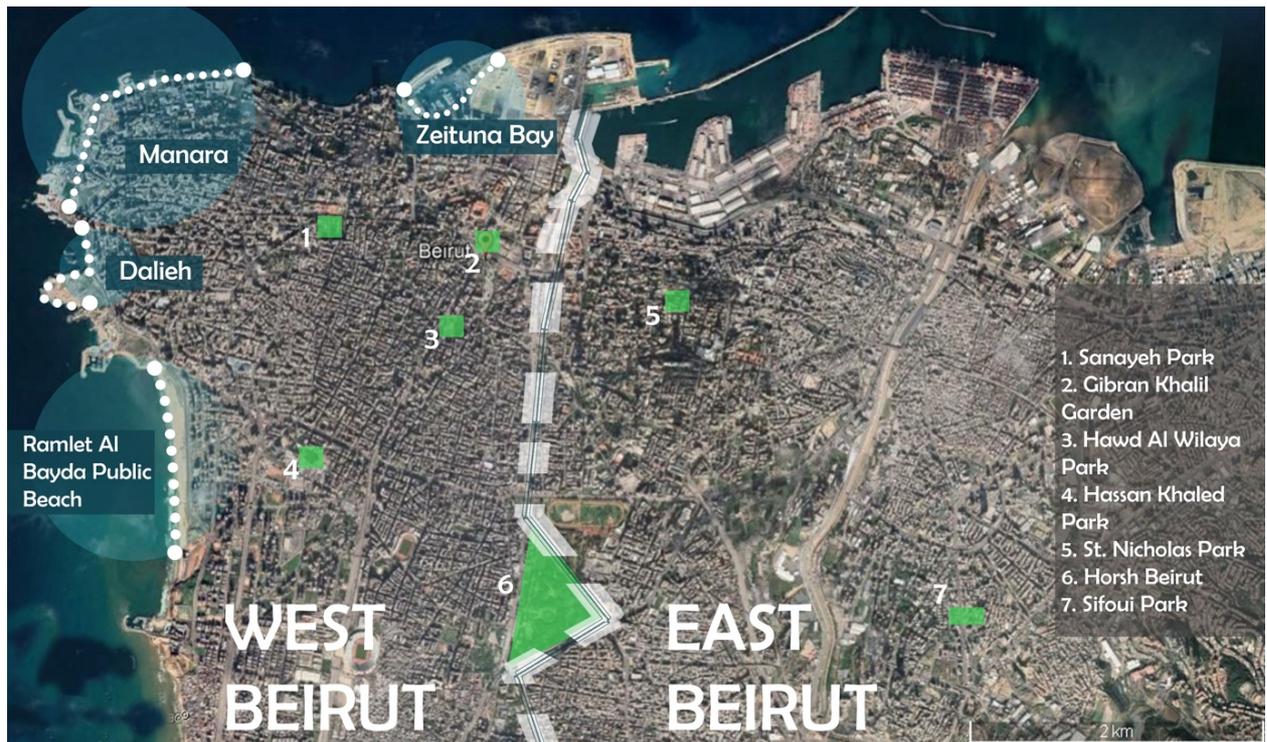
Figure 1-2: Beirut Divided, its remaining public gardens (green), and proposed study sites (on the seafront)
Adapted from source: google maps

1.5.2   Migration and urban development over time

Beirut is a city originally settled by diverse refugees and migrants and this trend continues to this day. The initial settlement originated when refugees, arriving from Mount Lebanon in the 1800s, were later joined by newcomers from surrounding areas. In 1840, under Ottoman Rule, Beirut housed 5000 people and was not a centre for the Ottoman Wilayat or governorate. It was only the arrival of refugees from the Christian/Druze wars of Jebel and Syria (circa 1850) that led Beirut to become an economic and political centre. Trade with Europe brought the city prosperity and resulted with physical expansion outside its old walls. This spurred investment in major infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Beirut Damascus Road. This road established Beirut's trade links to Mount Lebanon and Syria, as early as 1863. This opened the city for new immigrants increasing its population from about 10,000 in 1840 to 80,000 by 1880. By the end of 19th century, the city already comprised of its current neighbourhoods of Saifi, Bachoura, Mina El-Hosn, and Zuqaq El-Blat. (Lebanese Arabic Institute, 2018)

Beirut gained increased global and regional prominence in the 1860's when the French built the Beirut port. Here, it is important to understand that the original population of Beirut since the Ottoman period consisted largely of Sunni Muslims and a minority of Greek Orthodox Christians. As the city's economy flourished and the city grew in 1850 rural migrants from Mount Lebanon, predominantly Druze, and Syria started arriving to the city in search of employment. The city's diversity also significantly changed in 1860 with the arrival of a massive influx of Maronite Christian refugees fleeing civil strife in Mount Lebanon. However, the notion that Sunnis and Greek Orthodox make up "authentic" Beiruti population is deeply rooted in Lebanese psyche. Maronites and Druze are linked to areas in Mount Lebanon, and most Shi'ites are linked to governorates of the South and Bekaa and predominantly live in the southern

suburbs of Beirut (Lebanese Arabic Institute, 2018). (See also Harb, 2003 for further information on the southern suburbs of Beirut).

Today, Beirut is considerably dense, with an urban population density reaching more than 3,500 individuals per square kilometre. Many housing areas are overcrowded, a key factor being the repeated hosting of intermittent waves of rural-urban migrants and refugees since 1948. Many residents of Beirut, who were not born there but have lived their whole lives in the city are likely to identify and associate themselves with the area they are initially from (and are considered for official electoral purposes) and not where they reside. Beirut is home to three Palestinian camps that house approximately 77,000 Palestinians (Palestinian Employment in Lebanon, Undated). Furthermore, since 2011 and according to UNHCR, Greater Beirut currently holds around 26% of the million Syrian refugees that have fled to the country to escape violence. Against a pre-crisis population of around 2.2 million in Greater Beirut, Lebanon currently has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world.

Mar Elias, Sabra and Chatilla and Burj el Brajneh Palestinian refugee camps are physically distinguished in the city and used to be walled, but have spilt out unto surrounding neighbourhoods [1] Informal settlement is widely spread in the southern and eastern parts of Beirut. These inadequate buildings probably erected in the 1950's due to the Palestinian Nakba and rural-urban migration started off as temporary structures. They then became sanctioned by the Lebanese state by special planning measures that allowed their integration within the city. Further, since 2011, the Syrian crisis 2011 added more strain on Lebanese cities. UNHCR and UNHabitat estimate that around 1.2 million refugees are now in Lebanon. This includes 1.16 million registered Syrian refugees and 45,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria, with around 195,491 living in Beirut. Further, UN data estimates the country hosts 250,000 migrant workers of various ethnicities. Most of them are women from Ethiopia, Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka the (*Abdel Jawad*, 2021). Against a pre-crisis population of around 2.2 million, Lebanon now has the highest number of refugees per capita per square kilometre in the world ("UNHCR Lebanon at a glance," 2022). Against a pre-crisis population of around four million Lebanese, there is approximately one registered Syrian refugee for every three nationals.

The city's master plan was never implemented as a whole. Instead, Beirut grew in an ad hoc manner over the years without the most basic planning tool: a spatial understanding of its demographics and baseline population, having had no national level, statistically robust census since 1932. Many suggest this is due to an underlying need to avoid disrupting 'norms' of power-sharing governance structures at national, regional and local levels. Since the French mandate, and to ease tensions between communities, the constitution of 1926 stipulated equitable representation of communities in public offices. Thus, in agreement between communities and based on the 1932 population census, the President was from the Maronite community, the prime minister from the Sunni Muslim community, and the speaker of the house of commons from the Shi'i Muslim community.
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Planning, however, was never implemented on a national level, with the planning ministry axed in 1977, and its national planning role never fully delegated to another administration, making urban planning an afterthought and left to inept local municipalities (Fawaz, 2017a, 2017b; Fawaz and Moumtaz, 2017).

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1 In the 1950s and the advent of Palestinian refugees to Lebanon 15 temporary camps were established between the years 1948-1950, which are part of the urban landscape today. Originally 15, the number of camps in Lebanon is now 12 since some camps were completely destroyed, others severely damaged during armed conflict in Lebanon.

During the 15 years of civil war (1975-1990) the country's social, economic, political and administrative and operational structures collapsed and the central state lost most of its power. Beirut suffered considerable damage by the war and witnessed large waves of population displacement; Lebanon continuously suffered from Israeli military aggression, intermittently since 1978, with the most recent being in 2006. These repeatedly caused loss of human life, displaced populations and damaged infrastructure facilities. The reconstruction phase (1990-present) focused on large scale reconstruction plans financed by internal and foreign loans. Projects during this phase targeted large infrastructure projects (highways, hospitals…) which also resulted in displaced populations. The post-war reconstruction phase also witnessed attempts at privatizing services like the telephone and electricity, but public policies paid little attention to low-income housing, city planning, and social development (Makdisi, 1997).

The Lebanese economy during the 1970's was characterized by being a strong, politically liberal economy, dependent on remittances and the service sector (Khalaf and Khoury, 1993). The economy at the time was built on remittances from neighbouring countries, income from Lebanese expatriates, and its dominant services sector. Lebanon's economy flourished until the break of the civil war when the informal economy took over, continuing to play an important role since 1975. Lebanon's debt started to grow exponentially when loans were used to finance expensive reconstruction plans, notably Solidere[2], during the post-war reconstruction phase, reaching 35 billion USD[3] in 2006 ("The Economist," 2007).

The Lebanese political system and the country's institutions are designed to entrench religious divisions between communities (Fawaz and Peillen, 2003). In 1990, the Taef Accord, officially ending the civil war between fighting communities, but emphasizing a power sharing system based on religious affiliation: Maronites (the President), Shiites (House Speaker) and Sunnis (Prime Minister). Administratively, Lebanon is made up of six governorates *mohafazats*, subdivided into 26 *caza's*, each headed by a *qaimmaqam*. Municipalities are the smallest administrative unit elected by the local population. They have an elected council headed by a mayor. With some exceptions, a strong centralized state and limited budgets have predominantly hindered municipalities from facilitating regional development and local reconciliation. Municipalities have also, in some instances, proved to be weak concerning tribes, families or religious institutions, which can determine the outcome of municipal elections. Lastly, the extent to which municipalities represent local populations has been problematic, as the system allows voters to vote in their area of origin rather than their area of residence. One vote in the area they were born in as opposed to their area of residence which is challenging since it is likely people vote for whoever the family pledges religious allegiance to and not an electorate with an electoral program. Hence, voting is still largely sectarian and clientelist and not based on merit.

In the context of Lebanon, the tradition of basic service delivery has long been the duty of the state. However, prior to the Civil War confessional groups and local patrons (zu'ama) took up much of the burden of ensuring that their constituencies are receiving basic services. During the 16 years of civil war, the state and its agencies were unable to provide urban and social services (Harik, 2005). As a result, fighting militias and factions filled this gap of service provision, handling essential tasks like providing electricity, road repairs, health and education, among other services for their own sects, as the state was paralyzed (Harik, 2005). This is challenging, as the basis of the sectarian system has become corrupt with rampant nepotism, where each sect serves

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[2] Solidére is a private real estate development company. The acronym stands for The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut City Center. It was formed to rebuild the old core of modern Beirut. The late Rafiq Hariri, a prominent Beiruti Millionaire, elected in 1992 as Prime Minister of Lebanon, was a major shareholder in the company. The company was established and legalized in 1994, under law number 117 of 1991.
[3] This figure does not include the estimated cost of the July 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon estimated at 6.5 billion USD.

its own populace through jobs, clientelism in the public sector, which is the main reason the Lebanese state announced bankruptcy on April 2022.

1.5.3   Public spaces and recreation

During the Ottoman period, Mady (2015) notes the city's public spaces as important modernisation aspects Sahat al Hamidiyah (now Martyrs Square), Sahat al Sur (now Riadh Solh Square), Beirut's seafront, Sanayeh public park and the gardens in down town, were the most popular public spaces in the city. Similar to current modern Cairo, the concept of café culture and leisure prevailed during the 1920s French mandate in Beirut. In the early 1990s, the role of streets was also elevated from transportation into social interconnections. After this, Mady (2015) notes that the republic slowly started to favour privatisation over public spaces, and Beirut's already scarce public spaces started being diluted at the expense of a growing diverse city and population. Mady (2012) historically documents and captures how public spaces further disintegrated during the years of the Civil War:

"During the 1975 war period, with the evacuation of the city centre, social and physical fragmentation along the Damascus Road demarcation line [starting and ending in two public spaces Martyr's square and the pine forest] came the annihilation of public spaces including major squares and transportation hubs and their conversion to militia spaces. This eradication caused a distortion in the socio-cultural Beirutee framework and a huge gap in peoples' everyday public lives." (Mady, 2015, p.37)

The politics of post-civil war reconstruction and urban development created a narrative that actively reduces access to public spaces in their practice and peoples' memories. Public spaces were a cause for worry for the state, as they presented a possibility to bring people together. The first things to reopen after the war were streets, followed by squares and the restoration of public monuments, such as Place de L'Etoile and Martyr's Square but the reintroduction of formal public spaces *was* problematic. Public gardens and the Horsh of Beirut took a much longer time to reopen; these public places were thus excluded from people's daily lives for a long time. For example, Horsh Beirut was closed and inaccessible to the public for 40 years until 2015 (Mady, 2015). The same goes for both Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beaches when decree 169 (1989) allowed construction on Beirut's coastline. Thus Mövenpick was built in 2002 on parts of Dalieh, and Eden Bay in 2017 on parts of Ramlet al Bayda, amidst a large public outcry (Karizat, 2019).

It is the role of Beirut municipality to ensure adequate provision and management of public spaces. Beirut municipality however has long relinquished this role and placed the responsibility of its provision and management on the private sector in a bid to decrease public spending. Accordingly, Beirut's public spaces deteriorated and languished particularly because the private sector, had little incentive to provide this public good.

Recently, the importance of Beirut's decaying public spaces has come back to the fore during Thawra. Lebanese citizens occupying public spaces across cities was not only a joy to see, but constituted a fuel that kept the revolution going. Bou Aoun (2020) describes how demonstrations and protests that have been occurring since 2015 and culminated in the October 17th uprisings reminded people of the importance of absent public spaces in Lebanon. She notes their crucial role in bringing people together to carry change forward. She notes that the most successful spaces occupied by protestors spontaneously in an improvised manner and planned activities were able to reclaim spaces that otherwise became lost. She says: "The best evidence of this is Lebanon's squares that had been emptied of their essence since the end of the Civil War

and that Lebanese citizens' reclaimed in their movement such that entire regions, with their streets, car parks, and interconnected squares, became an endless public area."(Bou Aoun, 2020)

Beirut's public spaces and their occupiers largely represent and reflect different historical periods. Beirut's spaces layer the everyday practices of diverse co-existing societies. These layers are largely historical, Beirut's neighbourhoods all have rich histories regarding inhabitants' origins. Many Lebanese citizens were displaced during the Civil War. These displaced groups integrated themselves in homogenous areas in the city, resulting in a new sectarian redistribution across Beirut. For example, Khandaq al Ghamiq inhabitants became mainly Shiite, Achrafieh's became mainly Christian and Ras Beirut became primarily Sunni. Beirut's suburbs also have similar histories of originally Christian neighbourhoods inhabited by Shiite Muslims from Baalbek and the South, especially during and after the Civil War (Khuri, 1975) as West Beirut became a predominantly Muslim sector.

1.5.4   Beirut's coast

Historically, Lebanon's coast served as a place for the public. In 1915, a law declared that "the sea's shore until the farthest area reached by waves during winter, as well as sand and rocky shores, belong to the public" (Chamseddine, 2015). Beirut's 1954 Master Plan banned construction in Zone 10, the zone consists of seaside plots owned by different families and spreading across Raouche, Dalieh and Ramlet Al-Bayda public beaches. The Minister of Tourism in 1982 was inspired by a site visit to the French Riviera and Ramlet al Bayda public beach was developed similar to the public beach in Nice. However, the Lebanese government entrusted the coast to those families who owned the plots of land and developed it into exclusive resorts and hotels that are unaffordable to a large proportion of the population.

Land use and activities on the coast, specifically north and south of the city, incorporate mixes of industrial, agricultural, and touristic functions, separated from residential neighbourhoods inland by a main coastal highway. From Beirut's commercial port to the north, the seafront is interrupted by industrial zones, commercial facilities, fuel stations, high-end developments and the now almost vacant downtown. Both north and south of the city are beleaguered with private beaches that were built between the '50s till the late '80s. Most of these encroached over the maritime public domain and illegally prohibited the general public from accessing the water's edge.

In a rush to rebuild, urban development policies, enshrined after the Civil War, made it easier for real estate companies to build developments such as resorts and expensive shopping malls at the expense of public space.

1.6 Case Studies
1.6.1   Zeituna Bay – gentrified harbour

Zeituna Bay is a man-made marina that has a wide boardwalk at the water edge at a lower level to the street promenade. Popular for strolling, people sit on the side of the wooden walkway to socialise and feed the fish. Behind is a seating area with grass and a line of restaurants with expensive menus. The street area is one storey up and connects to the historic and commercial heart of Beirut city. Zeituna Bay is publicly accessible, but under private management, and has strict controls on user activities.
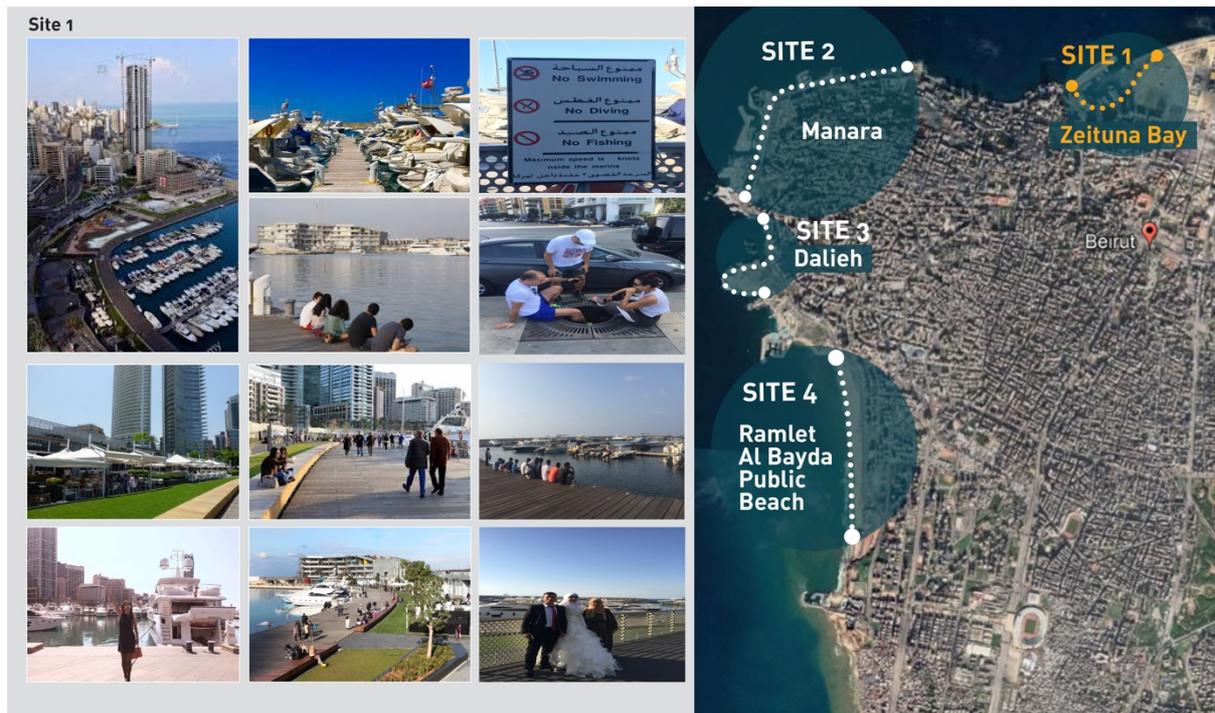
Figure 1-3: Zeituna Bay

1.6.2   Manara – promenade and rocky coast

A Corniche is an Arabic term for a waterfront promenade typology, and in Beirut, this walkway is referred to as the Manara. It stretches for almost 5km, surrounding the city's from Saint George Bay (now known as Zeituna Bay) to Ramlet al Bayda beach. Manara has two distinct levels: the rocky water's edge and the paved street-level walkway. The water's edge is a discontinuous stretch whose access is obstructed by private hotels and beach clubs. There are a limited number of spots where public access has been retained, and where people can have a picnic, fish, play cards and swim, especially at low tide. The street level is a popular walkway and is used both for active recreation and gazing at the sea, though spots are also commonly taken up with social gathering such as birthday parties.

Figure 1-4: Manara

1.6.2   3.6.3 Dalieh – rocky headland

Dalieh is a rocky limestone headland extending into the Mediterranean Sea. It has an untamed and wild character hidden from the street level by thick vegetation despite it being adjacent to an urbanized modern district. A variety of visitors and tourists visit to enjoy the view from the city towards the sea, but also to look at the city's skyline from the lower sea levels (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015a). The natural landmark or 'Pigeons' Rock', located at Beirut's westernmost tip, is a famous Beirut landmark where visitors stop to take pictures and then descend for a swim or boat ride. The cultural heritage of this very different kind of seafront location is increasingly the subject of campaigns for better protection (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015b).

Figure 1-5: Dalieh

Ramlet al Bayda beach is Beirut's last remaining sandy public beach, occupying a 1.5 km stretch. While seemingly well connected with the nearby housing area, there is a significant drop down to the beach with limited pedestrian access. Very few people walk on the elevated street level where there is also a small degraded public garden, though it is popular in the morning with joggers. The beach itself is mostly populated with diverse larger groups, especially during the weekends, playing beach games and swimming, and there are a few commercial concessions. There is a long history of water pollution at the beach, and also perceptions of this area as dirty and littered.

Figure 1-6: Ramlet al Bayda public beach

1.7   Researcher positionality and reflexivity

In my role as a researcher with a relationship to these topics, there are two key dimensions to my positionality, professional and personal. I am intentionally reflective in this introduction, I follow this up in the methodology chapter detailing how being distant from my research affected me and this work. I also include final reflections in the Conclusion chapter.

As an urban planner currently conducting research within the Department of Landscape Architecture, this research sits at the intersection of integration & multiculture, landscape architecture, leisure studies and governance. These fields of study provided theoretical lenses through which I examine my research questions. Through this triangulation, I examine how practices of urban public space in a post-conflict setting can both magnify the potential and limits of physical and social integration and highlight tensions across different layers of class, nationality, religion, and gender. Beirut's seafront, the blue space that wraps the city and the only remaining open public space for the city inhabitants, provided the most suitable space to examine this.

After sixteen years of research and practice in urban planning, I decided to pursue a PhD. I spent most of my professional research years facilitating partnerships across academia, NGOs and urban public authorities. I also worked in planning practice working on proposals and projects in various contexts and on different scales including a country scale- this experience was

invaluable in not only providing structure, experience, commitment and perspective but also providing experience in planning across different scales, zones and typologies. In multiple ways, this background has largely influenced the themes of this research, working across planning and governance, with the addition of new perspectives gained through working with a Department of Landscape Architecture. As a planner, I was interested in creating multidisciplinary partnerships that improve liveability and advance issues of social justice in cities and the PhD also extends this ethical commitment. While the impact element has been compromised due to the pandemic, there are aspects of this research that have the potential to inform partnership, to foster and encourage multicultural encounters, and enhance the everyday practice of public space across different seafront typologies on Beirut's seafront for diverse residents.

On a personal level, the seafront is attached to fond memories growing up. I grew up in Ras Beirut frequenting Manara with family and relatives. The seafront is attached to many memories, riding a tricycle as a child, eating fresh grilled corn, fava beans and cotton candy. Eating from vendors on Manara only happened when I was with older cousins, as my parents, emphasising their middle-classness, prohibited me from buying food from peddlers and described it as "dirty". As an adolescent, I visited AUB beach most summers, sneaking in using my cousin's university ID card. In later years, I took up jogging in the afternoon regularly on Manara, while my mum exclusively jogged during the early hours of the day. As a regular diver, I dived Beirut's shores, exploring wrecks such as Macedonia and SS Lespian lying off the coast of Beirut, and doing recreational deep dives of the AUB reef wall, which can reach up to 150m of depth. I made various friends, through this hobby, who equally love the sea and who liberally shared stories of the sea, fishing and pollution.

I am a middle-class Lebanese professional who started a PhD at forty years of age. As a local undergoing research in my own country, my research experience and work in the area has been informed by both my identity and experiences. The fact that I am a female also means that my approach to fieldwork and talking to diverse people is convivial but also cautionary, given a Lebanese patriarchal society. My professional experience allowed me to live and work in different countries in the Middle East and have first-hand experience of immigration, living overseas in super-diverse contexts such as Dubai and Muscat. I have moved frequently looking for better work opportunities, and my experience was facilitated by the fact that I am privileged through my middle-class, American and now English-educated background; I am aware of this privilege. In academia, the majority of researchers write from a white non-colonised point of view, however, I represent the emerging presence of people working on multiculturalism and migration issues who come from migrant backgrounds in terms of my researcher identity, thus promoting diverse expertise.

2   Literature Review

This research brings together three interrelated fields of scholarship, namely **multiculturalism** (Wise and Velayutham, 2009), **social justice** as embedded in urban change and management of public spaces (Abou Akar, 2018), and **leisure studies**, with a focus on commonly marginalised communities. These fields are not only complex but are also interdisciplinary. Accordingly, the research draws on a wide range of thematic areas, theories and frameworks to provide a basis for exploring research questions, and inform research methodology. The chapter is structured in three sections addressing literature related to: (2.1) multiculturalism (2.2); governance in an urban and divided setting (3.3.); and approaches to inclusive leisure (32.). These themes are discussed to provide an overview of the existing research, to identify existing overlaps and identify potential connections.

2.1 Multicultural Urbanism

Multiculturalism as a concept was coined in the late 20th century early 21st century Multiculturalism is a field of study within sociology building on the work of Simmel (1971), Shutz (1970) and Elias (2000). Multiculturalism is how people from diverse cultures experience and negotiate everyday situations within the interplay of power relations and wider discourses of politics (Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Wise and Noble, 2016). The term is used to describe diversity and difference in society. It is also important to frame and recognise that multiculturalism is a part of a global socio-political movement aimed at the inclusion of marginalised groups e.g African Americans, women, LGBTQ people and people with disabilities (Rishbeth, Ganji and Vodicka, 2018a). Contemporary theories on multiculturalism are focused on the recognition and inclusion of minority groups defined based on ethnicity, nationality, and religion especially as they relate to migrants and refugees (Song, 2010).

Multiculturalism refers to the currently emerging demographic and social patterns regarding superdiversity in everyday life (Vertovec, 2007). Urban change occurring worldwide, often in response to high migration rates, recognises the need for diverse voices to be heard in the city (Amin, 2002; Vertovec, 2007; Neal *et al.*, 2019). Everyday practice and lived experience of multiculturalism and diversity is important, but the mere existence of the term 'superdiversity' coined by Vertovec in (2007) and referring to the increasing migration from new countries is not sufficient to promote and support positive intercultural encounters. There is a need to further understand the specific focus of superdiversity on urban public spaces and the spatial order (the spaces people choose to occupy in time) of diversity to promote and support multiculture in everyday life. In a context of increased multiculturality, migration and diversity in a highly divided context, this micro-level investigation (Neal et al. 2013; Hall 2013, Amin 2002) on how cultural and ethnic differences are negotiated in everyday life across scale, sections and temporality becomes imperative. There is increasing academic interest (Tornaghi and Knierbein, 2014; Darling and Wilson, 2016; Rishbeth, Ganji and Vodicka, 2018a) in the potential for encounter across difference and how this can inform inclusion. Increasingly, the practice of public space is becoming an urban and social lens through which researchers can observe how people from different backgrounds, nationalities and ethnicities share and negotiate space (Mehta, 2013; Rishbeth, Ganji and Vodicka, 2018a). This thesis highlights the merit of spatial analysis of both macro and micro scales of investigation to inform inclusivity. Macro being the national and regional wide scale, while micro being the neighbourhood level scale.

Literature scrutinising the role of public spaces in lessening intergroup prejudices (Amin; 2002, Thrift; 2005) often builds on the social-psychological work of Gordon Allport's (1954) contact theory. This literature suggests that an increase in interpersonal contact between different groups may serve to decrease prejudice and generate positive attitudes across difference. However, this has been criticised as over romanticising daily urban encounters, noting that contact may be stressful for minorities who have experienced histories of exclusion and discrimination (Valentine 2008). Focusing on micro-publics, research indicates the need to exhibit a degree of caution when dealing with everyday encounters as these happen in spaces rich with contextual history, power, and inequality (Watson, 2006). Encounters are more complex than civil encounters and tolerance, which conceals implicit power relations (Valentine, 2010). Wright et al.'s (1997), work on social networks notes that social links created outside one's normal sphere of interactions can produce both positive and negative externalities. Contact theory was further expanded on by Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp (1997) to include indirect intergroup contact such as knowing group members or having friends that can lessen intergroup prejudice. This expanded work while valuable still does not offer means or how specifically is intergroup prejudice lessened both directly and indirectly.

This research serves to expand our understanding of open public spaces in divided contexts and the potential for encounter. It pinpoints when direct and indirect multicultural contact positively or negatively affects intergroup attitudes and behaviours. Researchers, designers and planners should not be over romantic and imagine that everyday encounters will simply make diverse populations come together reducing prejudice between multicultural and ethnic groups.

2.1.1   Social integration in public spaces

Social integration in multicultural contexts is a core concept within this research, as it tackles practical outworkings of forms of socialisation and connectedness across nationality, class and education boundaries (Mehta, 2013; Wessendorf, 2013; Rishbeth, Blachnicka-Ciacek and Darling, 2019). The literature is dominated by macro theoretical approaches to integration, and comparatively few deal with the micro and everyday interactions on how cultural diversity is negotiated daily (Wise and Velayutham, 2009). As argued by Sennett (1992), the rich range of uses of public spaces across scale and sections mean that they are important settings for a multiplicity of encounters, he identifies these as "people in the presence of otherness".

Social theory discusses integration, cohesion, accessibility, temporality without suggesting strategies that can bring these together. Social integration has long been a subject of academic inquiry: within sociology and, more particularly, the work of Emile Durkheim (Dahrendorf, 1995). From this field, emerged terms such as cohesion, social order, social capital diversity and recognition. Another perspective on social integration is from the field of social policy, originating in Europe as an effect of globalisation and rising cultural diversity. Similar to the sociological perspective, urbanists wanted to understand the term given rising social diversity and fears associated with this. However, a conclusive definition of social integration has eluded researchers, similar to other contested terms. In urbanism research, integration is commonly explored in spaces of necessity (schools, workplaces, housing), locations most noticeably being adapted by new populations (shops, streets, places of worship) or focuses on residential demographic patterns (Hall, 2015; Kim, 2015).

Theories of recognition exist (Taylor, 1994) but Noble (2008) suggests focusing on the messy everyday realm to explore "recognition' and what it means (Wise and Velayutham, 2009). Here he notes, that often minorities are sometimes looking for non-recognition as they want to 'fit in'– meaning avoiding discrimination based on their ethnicity or gender. He argues that everyday recognition involves recognizing others just as humans, as this works better than categorising

people according to sub-identities such as age, gender, ethnicity and so forth. Ang (2001), in researching Chinese identity in the West, suggests the mundane intermingling cross-cultural encounters relating to what fish to buy and seasonal vegetables can lead to "an incremental and dialogic construction of lived identities" and is how social co-existence is initialised. Hybrid identities allows newcomers to conceal their minority identity and replaces it with a strategic identity aligned with the dominant culture. Here, we may see lines blur as identities merge within Arabic-speaking populations living in a migratory context who may try and conceal their cultural identities based on the power hierarchy in a specific setting. (Dahrendorf, 1995).

Noble et. Al. (1999), noted identities intermingle in a study of Arabic-speaking youth in Sydney. Since Lebanese youth were the majority and the dominant group, the researchers found that Syrian youth presented themselves as Lebanese in a strategic youth-culture-based hybridity. In cities with a high degree of migration and ethnic diversity, these encounters and practices become interesting to observe in relation to how people may claim space (or not) based on nationality, class, age, gender and personal histories of using the city (Khalili, 2016). Watson's City Publics (2006) explores everyday multiculture in ordinary cities using ethnography. Watson shows us why cities are places of diversity and acceptance while still recognising that cities are also places of fear and threat for some. Watson highlights the importance of public spaces and human contact and argument as opposed to being courteous with migrants in public spaces. Watson argues for encounters in the city that encourage people to engage together even if it was to disagree, rather than just tolerate each other and their right to exist. Here, she also recognises that boundaries are invisible, and difference is negotiated and performed in micro-spaces which reveal very complex and nuanced contradictory relations of inclusion and exclusion.

Social activities are often governed by social and cultural conventions and well as an economic and legal framework that could lead to inclusion and exclusion (Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee, 1998; Staeheli and Thompson, 2010; Papachristou and Rosas-Casals, 2019). Social practices and the coexistence of difference is negotiated and shaped by everyday life, reflecting the society and policy producing them (Lefebvre, 1991; Jacobs, 1998; Madanipour, 2010) In these contexts, it is not only about "us" and "them" but recognising that spatial, economic and environmental divides exist between "insiders" themselves and then with "outsiders" and all of this is temporal. Difference can be visually recognised based on skin colour, clothing items and features. At other times, differences can be latent such as mannerisms, and the practice of public space. In her research in Hackney, Wessendorf (2013) documents migrants' attitudes to mixing and notes that some migrants simply keep to their dominant group and avoid mixing despite the superdiverse nature of the Borough. This thesis argues that incidental sociability, going to a space without having the intention to socialise, puts one in a more open state and this is where encounter across difference is likely to happen. Characteristics of specific typologies of spaces can foster positive encounters, encouraging both physical and social integration. More recently, following the renewed interest in encounter, several scholars (Peterson, 2017; Vertovec, 2007a; Wessendorf, 2013; Wilson, 2011) have sought to understand proximity at different levels and scales.

2.1.2   Intercultural spaces: negotiating territorial behaviour and social boundary making

According to Bollens (2007) "Cities can be critical agents in the development of a multi-ethnic tolerance. They are crucibles of difference, constituting a necessary and stringent test of whether, and how, group identity conflicts can be effectively managed. The city is a test of whether different nationalistic groups can coexist amidst the proximity, interdependency, and shared

geography of the urban sphere" (Bollens 2007, p. 248). Post-conflict is a "conflict situation in which open warfare has come to an end. Such situations remain tense for years or decades and can easily relapse into large-scale violence". In post-conflict areas, war is absent, but that does not mean that there is real peace. Conflict is often multifaceted, its long-term effects includes ethnic and economic inequalities, social exclusion of a segment of society, various forms of social injustice, poverty for a segment of society due to unfair policy and ideological issues to religious differences (Junne, Verkoren and Saito, 2005). While cities have the potential to bridge divides it is also often their historical contexts that undermine a lack of social integration.

Beirut is an example of a highly enclaved city where neighbourhood territories are shaped by civil war divides along ethnic cultural and religious identities, but also by the high flow of refugees and migrant workers from Asia. In this amalgamation of divides and super-diversity then the "where", "how" and "why" of integration becomes particularly important. The increased interest in multiculturalism can be used as a means for integration in post-conflict cities. Multiculturalism here can be interrogated to understand diversity and difference within the migrant and local populations as well as within the contexts, these populations live in (Bollens, 1998; Staeheli, 2008).

Mady and Chettiparamb (2017) recognise the social consequence of ethnicity, race, sect, religion or by extension other differences as constructed in particular contexts by social agents through social processes. The researchers propose a five-way framework that is based on political science and planning theory. The framework is meant to analyse post-conflict cities based on place-based identities that can be formed across various scales such as a national, regional or local scale. Patsy Healey (1997) often encourages local and participatory initiatives to promote integration across difference. In divided societies, participatory planning initiatives are a viable means to counter more entrenched factional identities. Examples of the promotion of such place-based identities in conflict-ridden contexts include the promotion of a regional Northern Ireland or Ulster identity to counteract the division in Northern Ireland. These plans need to take into consideration the different existing identities and should not reinforce existing divisions (Nagle and Clancy, 2012).

This understanding of difference in Beirut, adds to our understanding of rising issues regarding multiculturalism, boundaries, territoriality and segregation now associated with the rise of deeply divided emerging in the US, Europe and the Middle East (Healey, 2006; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett, 2010a; Bollens, 2013; Bou Akar, 2018). In high migratory contexts, cities are places of liberation despite the fact they could be places of fear and threat for some. Public spaces, human contact and argument is often good option as opposed the toleration of others. Hence, city encounters where people engage with others even if to disagree, rather than passing each other with a suppressed tolerance (Tornaghi and Knierbein, 2014).

2.1.3   Convivial a term investigating interactions within multicultural contexts

While the interest in multiculture arose from the long-term consequences of post-colonialism, mass migration, multicultural policies and transnationalism, it was only when Gilroy's (2004) After Empire that the term conviviality was brought to the fore. Conviviality was introduced as "the capacity to live together" and then evolved as a concept increasingly used to look into the multi-ethnic arenas of interaction (Cook et al. 2011, Valluvan, 2016). Therein lies the beauty of the notion in that it does not romanticise everyday lived multiculture as "happy together. Instead, conviviality is rather complex and includes an effort on part of communities to negotiate

and sometimes experience friction (Wise and Noble, 2016). Hence, the ability of this notion to be a practical negotiation between the two extremities and not a binary understanding.

Conviviality has a temporal aspect, meaning it is everyday sustained understanding of these encounters both formal and informal that shape urban encounters, specifically those that are temporal and take place in public spaces at different times of the day as well as during different seasons (Wise & Noble, 2016). Integration and multiculture as a theoretical framework enables researchers to look at physical and categorical boundaries, social behaviour and conviviality to understand social integration and multiculture. (Cook et al. 2011, Valluvan 2016).

Multicultural social encounters are specific and vary from context to context. Social encounters have different intensities, they could be fleeting, long term, they ebb and flow with the rhythm of life (Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Mehta, 2013). Social encounters in high migratory contexts bring to the fore complexities regarding the plurality of ethnicities and cultures. Here the work of Rishbeth et al. (2018), Vertovec (2007) and Hall (2015) are pertinent examples. In migratory context, immigrants and newcomers are sometimes described as leading separate lives using as a means to make difference recognized (Staeheli, 2008) with public spaces having little impact on reducing prejudice between multicultural groups (Valentine 2008). Others see cities as diverse, integrative and multicultural centres exploring how populations share, negotiate and routinely mix in urban public spaces. (Hall, 2015; Jones et al., 2015) sometimes with a focus on the micro publics as a means to support positive intercultural encounters (Amin 2002). Multiculturalism and integration are "everyday practice and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and places of encounter" (Wise & Velayutham, 2009,p.3) across scale, sections and time further problematising and nuancing multiculture and integration in superdiverse and highly divided contexts (Healey, 2006; Mady, 2022). In reality, encounters in urban public spaces are not always convivial instead they are in constantly shifting. Tranquillity can be shattered by moments of violence and there are too many variables such as the city itself, time of day, time of year that impacts this veneer of composure in accepting difference (Watson, 2006). Watson (2006) notes some themes that go against people being convivial in public spaces and these are public private spaces, perceiving danger in strangers, risk, and the importance of marginal spaces (that are not privatised and managed) in the city. She concludes that public spaces in a city will always be temporal and in flux, the difference will always be present in public spaces, still, it is possible to engage across difference with a sense of mutual respect for people who are different and public spaces that are open for them to be so. In researching Beirut's non-conventional public spaces (temporary vacant lots awaiting development and transient activities in parking lots), Mady (2012) concludes the importance of these spaces in providing opportunity for interactions in public life and the unique cultural expression of different identities as tools for social integration

2.1.4 Examining public open spaces in conflict cities

In societies that are coming out of conflict, space becomes a part of a transitional built environment. Spaces in these contexts have persistent and deep-rooted divisions that are translated visually and physically into spaces and their built environments (Murphy and McDowell, 2019). Research in these contexts have pointed to the persistent, rigid and deep-rooted political and cultural nature of 'territorial fixity and division' in many of these city's neighbourhoods such as Belfast, Jerusalem and Beirut (Bollens, 2013; Murphy and McDowell, 2019). These countries are coming out of conflict but are not yet completely at peace. Mady and Chettiparamb (2017) suggest that several episodes of internal and external conflicts resulted in a society splintered along sectarianism that is visible in Beirut's public spaces. Further research by Mady (2015) in Beirut shows how the city's public spaces have been intentionally dismantled by the state over time, she writes of Beirut's public spaces:

"A three-stage dismantling of public spaces could be traced in Beirut. The first trying to replace one set of customs with another imported one. The second trying to erase the mnemonic tools and aesthetic experiences that lead to memories, limiting them to exclusive user groups, or promoting the ugly with its distorted values. Lastly, the third with its neglect of public spaces and the introduction of commodified spaces, which were nevertheless counterbalanced by bottom-up attempts to revive and reclaim public spaces; hence, the interest in the opportunity for social reconciliation through the use of public spaces as a tool" (Mady and Chettiparamb 2017 p.16)

Murphy and McDowell (2019) explore the concept of 'liminality' in post-conflict settings in Ireland and Bilbao. They contend that exploring liminality allows new understandings of the stagnation of conflict. Instead of progressing towards peace, conflict in this instance fails to progress and stagnates into 'in-between-ness'. This state of limbo can be beneficial to those actors involved in the conflict as this allows them to create new roles amidst a changing political landscape. The authors argue of the possibility of identifying environments trapped in liminal space, through physical identifiers, such as imagery, architectural alterations and the use of public spaces for demonstrations. The authors discuss "visual manifestations that speak of a space stuck between a violent past and a future that is still emergent" (Murphy & McDowell 2019, p2). These manifestations become an identifier of a conscious and continuous post-conflict 'framing'.

Fincher and Jacobs in Cities of Difference (1998) note that urban dwellers are often handicapped by structures of racialisation, class, and colonialism and occupy "in-between spaces" where it is possible to negotiate the categorisations they have been associated with such as streets, plazas and open public spaces. Marc Auge also introduced the term "non-space" which is a provision of many spaces that we still are unable to perceive and comprehend due to modernity, Boyer (1996) and Sleigh (2009) spoke of interstitial spaces, the lag time spaces that are of nobody's concern. Public spaces become important observing spaces to understand social integration and exclusion.

2.1.5   Boundaries and territory in post-conflict settings

Public space is characterised by having various forms of boundaries that separate "insiders" from "outsiders,". Boundaries are almost always negotiated through discourse and formalised through public policy (Dixon and Durrheim, 2000). The reproduction, negotiation and resistance of these boundaries determine community members and excluded members of society, as well as which communities deserve protection and whose stories are heard (Rappaport 2000). public space and its boundaries are dynamic with power shifts over time (Carr et al., 1992; Gehl, 1996;).

On the macro scale, bounding and bordering techniques can be used by national actors to operationalise security and stability inter-group conflict environments can have contrary effects in sharpening divisions (Bollens, 2013; Bou Akar, 2018). Bollens (2013) examines Sarajevo, Beirut and Jerusalem, exploring the political geography of ethnic conflict expressed in the demarcation of national boundaries. He argues that the manipulation of urban political, and ethnic geographies by national and international actors aimed at promoting stability and security had contrary effects and contributed to further divisions. Similarly, Bou Akar (2018) in her research on Beirut, shows how the production of space by local authorities are being produced according to planned and imagined geographies of local and regional wars "yet to come". In the long-term, these boundaries planning techniques in divided context inhibit the foundations of peacebuilding needed for long-term stability of these contexts. Research asserts that macro level and quantitative analysis fails to capture integration and engagement that occurs at a micro-scale.

research in divided contexts has shown that positive attitudes toward individuals continue to co-exist with prejudice toward the larger immigrant group. The micro-level thus is crucial to add to our theoretical understanding of sites of encounter and leisure (Matejskova and Leitner, 2011).

People reorganise space and place through boundaries, these boundaries spill or contract based on one's affiliation to a group in political power. Still, it is encounters and co-presence across typologies of space such as streets, open seafront spaces, plazas, rocky headlands that allow mixing and challenging social isolation. Dixon and Durheim (2000) note it is importance for researchers to recognise "how people invest everyday environments with richly symbolic, aesthetic, moral, and, above all, identity-relevant meanings".

Territoriality is more than just expressing ownership of objects. It is a socio-behavioural construct serving to communicate ownership and relationship to objects and space relative to other individuals and groups (Brown et al ., 2005). Territorial behaviour extends beyond the level of the individual and can foster a sense of belonging to social groups (Altman, 1975; Lewis, 1979). In addition, this territoriality also establishes the ability of people to temporarily territorialize and claim space and establish a power hierarchy in the public realm (Mehta, 2013). Territoriality, or territorial behaviour, is a human spatial behaviour that involves permanently or temporarily laying claim to ownership of an area by personalizing it with the use of physical and/or symbolic barriers, markers and artefacts (Hall, 1966).

Boundaries and territories are not static; they are navigated and negotiated in everyday life and public spaces every day (Bollens, 2013). They are dependent on power dynamics that take place on a national level. The city's "separateness" and bounding played a large role in the long-term capacity of Beirut and its dwellers to encourage pluralistic activities and attitudes. Wimmer (2008) distinguished boundary-crossing, blurring and shifting as possible outcomes of the negotiations between national majorities and immigrant minorities. There is a daily negotiation that exist in deeply divided populations. This negotiation can be distinguished between nationals themselves and not only nationals vis-à-vis newcomers or migrants (Wimmer, 2008). For example, in describing modes of socialising outdoors in Jeddah, Addas and Rishbeth (2018) describe how different nationalities occupy spaces and demarcate "all nationalities tend to gather primarily in family and friendship groups, with seating arrangements segregation by gender in Saudi groups. Appropriation of a spot for a longer period of time often involves a range of props bought from home: portable chairs and tables, cards, a ball or food, sometimes involving cooking in situ" (Addas and Rishbeth, 2018, p.944) all of which constitute markers and using artefacts to clearly identify group territory.

2.2 Urban Change, Social Movements and Justice in the city

This section introduces ideas of a just city and outlines connections between social justice and planning for public open space. In recognizing diversity in public spaces, researchers highlight that people's behaviours reveal implicit power relations across planning and resources (Healey, 2006). These approaches include the role of governance, and the extent to which local government adopts citizen participatory strategies to address urban social problems and improve liveability in cities for everyone, the extent to which people are able to influence policy in order to better their daily lives.

In looking at an influential researcher, the work of Jane Jacobs observing everyday lives is especially pertinent, "Cities of difference" (Jacobs, 1998) 21/04/2023 13:27:00. Jacobs took an interdisciplinary interest in the fact that our understanding of urban space is how people interact

in streets, how they use it and their attitudes towards it, and she celebrated diversity and complexity in the city, spurring an interest in the topic and the production of a myriad of interdisciplinary research on public spaces. Jacobs also had a positive approach to diversity in streets as a vehicle to enable co-presence and where proximity across difference is acknowledged. Both approaches were criticized for lacking criticality regarding disagreements and violence that take place across difference (Watson, 2006).

The city as a site for multicultural connection as relating to social justice was celebrated by Young (1990). Young however, looked at the city from a contemporary political, feminist and public policy theorist, as opposed to Jacobs, an urbanist. Young argued for policies that are based on the fact that urban life is diverse and differentiated, and as such socially inclusive and just outcomes can only be achieved once we create inclusive spaces for all, spaces that cater for a diverse set of individuals with different opinions and objectives. This diversity is quite apparent in urban cityscapes where social and class divisions are made more complex by migration, increased mixed ethnicities, diversity, and low security (Wong et al. 2014). Young celebrated and embraced the diverse city from a theoretical perspective and her argument did not examine specific micro spaces. Young argued for theories of justice, including impartiality, formal equality, that policymakers assume a homogenous public but "politics of difference" need to be adopted to recognise and affirm different existing groups in society.

Research and theory development relating to public spaces has increasingly addressed diversity. Sandercock (2003) addressed this from a planning perspective and sought to apply this understanding within a specific professional field and processes of decision-making. Though not specifically discussing urban design or the built environment, she focuses on calling for new planning theory that adequately accounts for the world's increasingly multicultural cities and their diverse, often marginalized, inhabitants. She emphasises the need for their stories to be heard throughout. Sandercock (2003) argues that cities of the future must take the concerns of these groups into consideration. She adheres to the fact that socializing freely in well-managed public spaces encourages the acceptance of others and generates respect toward the shared commons. Public spaces play a central role in urban life, streets, parks, squares, piazzas are an indication of a healthy society and collective wellbeing, the researchers whose work focuses on public spaces agree the literature lacking with regards to how to approach ethnic diversity across planning, design and policy fields, (Sandercock 2003, Healy 2012 and Campbell et al. 2014).

This research aims to fill the gap across planning, landscape design and policy fields regarding diversity in open seafront public spaces. it recognises the city as an equitable public space for all where people can congregate and express their own difference and culture, this should be celebrated. Crucially, it is also the role of the state to formulate policies and design spaces that allows people this freedom to celebrate their differences.

2.2.1   Social equity in the design of open public spaces

As already discussed there are many positive ways in which public open space can support social mixing, and also a range of limitations and difficulties. Public space creates opportunities for mixing, socialising and community building. Public spaces support positive encounters, and well-being and help shape people's identities, although not everyone agrees that this is the case (Amin, 2002; Valentine, 2008). Providing good quality-built environment does not, in itself, achieve social cohesion. There are specific associations between physical and non-physical factors, these are qualities (e.g spaces to sit, the provision of shade, design that affords privacy as well as safety) as perceived by users, that can influence social cohesion. The design of a space determines its outcome. The way public spaces are designed and how people end up using these

provides researchers with a lens to understanding place attachments, uses and behaviours and recognising marginal groups (Dempsey, 2009).

Though often unconsidered, social inequality is often reflected in public space provision. Allocation of rights to public spaces, which includes diversity, and the response to inclusivity of all local cultures has been developed from a landscape perspective by Agyeman (2000), who was instrumental in being explicit about links between human equality and environmental and economic equality. Ageyman (2000) argues that space ought to be focused on shared and hopeful narratives of equity and justice as well as be economical and environmentally just.

Social equity can be supported (or not) by designers, taking streets as a typology. Zavestoski and Agyeman (2015) discuss how streets should be considered symbolic and social spaces. Peoples' mobility, access, and understanding of the relationships that result from complex webs of interconnections and behaviours all constitute missing narratives of streets. (Zavestoski and Agyeman, 2015). Mehta (2015), encourages researchers to consider the "streets as ecology" approach, defining the street, a public space, as ever-expansive opening them up as places of diversity and difference. He notes that a good aim to plan, fund, design and construct a street is to plan for an equitable one. Social equity can be supported or not by designers/planners/managers when they take into consideration the street as both a linear space for movement and a quintessential public space at the same time. Taking the streets of India as example, he highlights numerous activities take place and are differentiated according to the time and space continuum. Space is negotiated between users; despite the fact that laws predetermine uses and are executed by public authorities, the corrupt practices of those in power such as politicians, landlords and local gangs often break the rules to exhibit domination over territory. Thus, in public spaces, the most important rules and regulations are those that are negotiated and enacted by users themselves. Planning a street needs to consider a multiplicity of users such as: pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and loiterers among others. Streets need to be designed in such a way that they are safe, comfortable and convenient (Zavestoski and Agyeman, 2015).

The notion of ensuring public spaces have social equity is not straightforward; it is essential to consider both geographic and temporal contexts carefully. Many public spaces exist in a city, especially those with diverse populations. In post-conflict cities, public spaces are opportunities for contestation by urban inhabitants and are spaces used for occupation purposes by political activists and need to be managed accordingly by urban authorities (Low & Iveson, 2016; Gaffikin et al., 2010). From a governance, perspective is that divisions in perspective, divisions at the national level can be seen in the smaller districts where territory and identity produce their partitions in space (Varshney, 2002). Governance of public spaces by public authorities can and should deliberately deploy urban design as an instrument for the creation of public amenity for the social shaping of space and should be seen as a tool that can be used in "shaping spaces of opportunity" (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006)

Drawing upon the theoretical framework of French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, particularly his distinction between representational space (appropriated and lived space) and representations of space (planned, ordered space), Saksouk-Sasso (2015) argues that that it is the everyday practices, as opposed to the state governance of public space, that determine, produce, and sustain urban public space in the city. She notes that the state, the usual provider of public space, is either disinterested in or openly at war with the city's public spaces in Lebanon. Following a tradition that relies heavily on the privatization of zones earmarked for public use, Beirut has undergone diverse forms of controlling public space. During and after the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), the state condoned the gradual disappearance of coastal lands accessible to the public. The authorities' de facto privatisation of its coastline became legal.

On the macro scale, public spaces become people places when designers, planners and managers know what people do in public space-how they use it and design it accordingly. Spaces are designed with various users in mind, providing opportunities for sociability, privacy, and activities. The provision and management of public space have become increasingly privatised, with developers and property managers taking over this public function (Schmidt and Németh, 2010). Some public spaces now constitute hybrid ownership, management and security systems creating inequality. Inequality in the provision and management of public spaces limits opportunities for social justice in the city and the forms of expressions users imbue on public spaces through their use. Indeed, some argue that public space requires the presence of an active creation to have their claims heard (Schmidt and Németh, 2010)

On the micro-scale social behaviours in public space, such as the street, is ambiguous and ever-changing, and Lefebvre (1991) argues that these can never be fully categorised and provided for several scholars have identified distinct types of social behaviours in public spaces. Here I build on their work to address the knowledge gap and elaborate on different types of sociability across typologies based on the work of Mehta Lofland 1998 and Morill et al., 2005, who classify behaviours and activities on the street such as passive sociability, fleeting sociability and enduring sociability. On this scale, there are few opportunities for the co-existence of diverse populations. Co-existence opportunities become increasingly crucial in recognising and negotiating differences. Examples from Spain and Bosnia showed how co-existence at the micro-scale can engage productively and proactively in creating inter-group coexistence and societal peacebuilding (Bollens, 2007). This thesis largely agrees with (Wessendorf, 2013) that social encounters are sometimes characterised by both avoidances of deeper contact and engagement; civility toward diversity is a strategy to negotiate positive relations and possible tensions (Wessendorf, 2013).

Research by Low and Iveson (2016) highlights that the provision and governance of public spaces often generate conflicts between urban inhabitants and urban public authorities. The authors develop a model for socially just public spaces that could inform analysis of these spaces and interventions for such situations. The model is based on five propositions relating to distributive justice, recognition, interactional justice and encounter, care and repair, and procedural justice. The authors believe the framework, which is grounded in the literature on urban public space and social and spatial justice, is necessary for both critiquing and informing the positions that are taken in public space disputes.

Literature addressing social encounters between design and affordances of public spaces and the potential for positive integration in conflict cities remains primarily limited (Bollens, 2013; Gaffikin et al., 2010). This research adds to our understanding of the importance of thinking about various scales of planning and social justice, down to the social encounters that occur in divided contexts.

2.2.2 Governance and decision-making in the city

UN-Habitat defines 'governance' as the many ways that institutions (i.e., local authorities) and individuals "organise the day-to-day management of a city and the processes used for effectively realising the short-term and long-term agenda of a city's development (UN-Habitat, no date). Another definition by Carole Rakodi that considers various actors involved in governance in the book titled *Urban governance, voice and poverty in the developing world* defines Urban governance as "the interactive relationships between and within government and civil society actors in cities. It includes the overlapping domains of political and administrative processes of decision-making

and is also about how government organisations react to the needs and demands of urban actors, both organised and unorganised" (Rakodi, 2004:68).

Planning theory defines a top-down and a bottom-up approach. As Healy (1996) notes, these approaches are embedded in the history of town and country planning, which has two main tendencies. The first tendency is towards centralisation and de-politicising decision making, leaving this in the hands of technocrats and the implementation of planning standards. On the other end of the spectrum, there is a call for more meaningful participation in decision-making to hold politicians and technocrats accountable for their actions by the public (Healy, 1996). Within this dichotomy, an approach combining both is possible despite the fact that planning remains dominated by standards driven top-bottom approaches and that interest in bottom-up and participatory approaches remains to little effect in practice (Pissourios, 2014). The main critique to classical planning approaches is that these ignore the representation of different groups in the society as a consequence planning process do not operate in a democratic manner (Forester, 1999; Healey, 1997; Sandercock, 1998).

In the early 1990's, there was a shift from government to governance, favouring process over institutions and making governance a priority in democratic cities (Makhzoumi and Al-Sabbagh, 2018). Thus, good governance rose to be a favoured term within this changing governance discourse that refers to enhancing local participation by incorporating local knowledge in decision and policymaking. Good governance and participation became seen as favourable by institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations (Guarneros-Meza, V. and M. Geddes 2010) as this implies decentralization and a democratic process. These two tendencies, which are very much at odds with one another, have been labelled as the top-down and bottom-up approaches to planning (Pissourios, 2014). Debates position issues of democracy and participation in the context of processes of neoliberalisation, Harvey (2005) argues that neoliberalism should not be understood as a bundle of characteristic. Still, as a political project, a process of neoliberalisation 'to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites. Recent debates suggest that the context of neoliberal economic and social policies prevents the possibility of truly democratic participation. Despite these critiques, participation is seen by researchers and international organisations as a central element of 'good governance' (Lombard, 2013).

While policies that encourage quality public spaces and social integration are reasonably well considered in Europe (e.g. intercultural cities EU) (White, 2017), these remain scant in the MENA region. Social integrative policies address a wide range of social issues, such as housing, and employment, driven by the need to achieve social equity (Jeannotte, 2000). Both fields offer a conceptual understanding of social integration. Stilll the concept remains multidimensional, lacking a route to operationalisation and implementation in practice, especially in the MENA region. (Aelbrecht & Stevens 2019).

2.2.3   Public participation in the city

Public participation is a planning tool and the cornerstone of communicative planning theory which rose to the spotlight in the 1950s through the works of John Forester and later in the 1970's through the creation of Patsy Healy. There are many definitions of participation, which is often referred to using a range of terms such as citizen participation, public participation, community involvement or stakeholder involvement (Kamaci, 2014). The most relevant definition in this context is an earlier one developed by Arnstein as "the redistribution of power that enables the have-not's citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" (Arnestein, 1969). Further, even though

participation is contextual, it differs in type, intensity, and extent. This was also referred to in the ladder of participation which shows eight categories of participation ranging from manipulation to citizen control (Arnestein, 1969).

Later, this work was developed by Pretty (1995) to encompass a categorisation based on the whole process and not just from the perspective of those on the receiving end (Cornwall, 2008). The key taking from communicative planning theory that is relevant in this context is the recognition that knowledge has many forms and that planning work is embedded in the day-to-day consensus building practices and has the capacity to challenge or change power dynamics between city inhabitants and administrators (Healy, 1997). Still, this work was criticized on the basis that not all stakeholders have the same interests and level of power in the decision-making process (Hiller, 2003). Contemporary planning theory deems participation as one of the main components of decision making in the planning process. The concept of participation has been thus broadened encouraging more diversified participation in terms of levels, channels and types in the planning process. All in line with advocacy and collaborative planning theory aiming to empowering the public to better planning processes (Davidoff 1965; Arnstein 1969; Healey, 1993).

Participation mechanisms used by local governments by incorporating local knowledge in policy making still vary widely and are contextual (Kamaci, 2014). Often, the level of participation that the public is allowed is linked to the level of decentralization allowed by the policymakers' objectives invariably related to the political, economic and fiscal structure of a country. Participation is seen as favourable by institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations (Guarneros-Meza, V. and M. Geddes, 2010) as this implies decentralization and a democratic process. Still, there are critiques to participation, claiming that participation is largely supported or constrained by different political histories, institutions and cultures (Connelly, 2010). While local governance and participation are desired, still the contextual factors may be detrimental to how participation is understood and implemented at the local level, if at all. (Lombard, 2013).

Many cities, especially in the Middle East and Nortrh Africa (MENA), have not experienced participation and decentralisation but rather experienced commercialisation and privatisation of their public life to the extent that promoted a partitioned social space (Marcuse & Van Kempen, 2002) and were manicured and ordered public spaces are replacing natural and messy urban spaces (Soja, 1996). Still, globalisation and a neoliberal approach to the provision of public space have largely impacted the practice of public space over the years in Lebanon. Post-war reconstruction in Beirut prioritised privatisation rather than public spaces. The city centre was re-planned under the public-private partnership real estate company Solidere (Mady, 2022). Most of the city's public spaces became privatised and encroached upon, while public spaces were left unmanaged to languish. The remaining areas and streets became marked by political signs, monuments, and high securitisation, affecting everyday social practices (Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012).

Still, critiques of good governance and participation exist, with Connelly (2010) highlighting the need to understand supporting and constraining factors within contexts of different political histories, institutions and cultures. When supported, participation provides various individuals and social groups the opportunity to inform, influence, monitor and evaluate public decisions, processes, and actions. When it is not supported, marginalised people such as refugees and migrant workers have no voice in city making. While local governance and participation are desired to achieve equitable public spaces, contextual factors may still be detrimental to how participation is understood and implemented locally (Lombard 2013). This research seeks to

contribute to the debate on different cultures of engagement in specific settings, which entails a contextual understanding of the practice of participation in local urban governance. Understanding the context and observing top-bottom and bottom-up dynamics of public authorities and civil society activists claiming public spaces sheds light, on power dynamics and on who is present and who is not. These dynamics are telling in terms of implicit power and the ability to score wins for specific populations across time.

Designed public spaces provide ways to engage communities and marginalised factions of society and empower them to influence local and central decision-making (Aelbrecht, and Stevens, 2019). The authors argue for the urgency of democratising the planning process to contribute to urban governance that empowers local authorities and stakeholders in the face of privatisation and market-led development. This research broadly aligns with theories that support participatory approaches to the planning, designing and managing public spaces, one that engages local stakeholders, institutions, and the public as active partners working towards sustainable urban futures.

In looking at the future, participation in the development and management of public spaces has resulted in prefigurative practices- defined as "attempts to enact, in the present, utopian or alternative social relations, aspired to in the future" (Leite de Figueirêdo Sales, 2020). Acts of prefigurative activism such as demonstrations, sit-ins, collective appropriation of public spaces, and cultural appropriation are all acts that hope of reorganizing the relationship citizens have with the Lebanese state. All these are prefigurative ways to regain agency and power over what is rightfully public in the city.

2.2.4   The role of activism in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Scholars have demonstrated the persistence of local activism and local identities in the face of globalising politics and cultures. A lack of meaningful participation in local governance leads to a lack of trust and contention in public policy, leading to protest activities and political activism (Sika, 2020). Furthermore, a sense of place provides different groups with incentives to mobilise for collective action and actors, form strategic alliances based on shared interests (Massey, 1991; Martin, 2003). For some, a sense of place at different spatial levels provides a space for mobilisation, identity formation and collective action (Martin, 2003).

This is exemplified across many MENA countries, especially in recent times as public space was used as sites for protest across Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Iraq and Lebanon (Sika, 2020). Despite the transformative changes in people's everyday lives from the wave of Arab uprisings 2010/11), this did not lead to the disruption of the structure of governments (Bayat, 2021). Bayat, a public space theorist working in MENA highlights that people after the uprisings started to openly use public spaces and organise a wide array of protests aimed at material improvements and new cultural and political norms (Bayat, 2021). Indeed, urban public space is an arena and theatre of contentions where conflicts of varying intensity involving urban inhabitants and urban authorities are played out. When people are deprived of participation process including electoral power to change things, they are likely to resort to collective pressure to bear down on authorities to undertake structural change. However, for those urban subjects who are not so visible in the public sphere such as migrant workers, refugees and "informal people" who structurally lack intuitional power of disruption the "street" becomes the ultimate arena to communicate discontent (Bayat, 2013).

In this context, the passive use of public space is allowed by the state through walking, driving,

watching, or in other ways that the state approves of. The active use of public spaces for congregating, protests or reclamation of rights is seen as looked at unfavourably by officials, who see themselves as the sole authority in control of public order. Political fears play out in the militarization of mundane public spaces, with road closures, pavement bollards and armed security manifesting a top-down perception of threat (Graham, 2011). Authorities also crack down on street vendors who proactively spread their businesses in alleyways and public spaces; squatters who take over public parks, lands, or sidewalks; youth and street children who exercise their right to public spaces, and protestors who march in the streets (Bayat, 2013; *Beirut municipality announces crackdown on pan-handling,*" 2022; "Beirut Municipality removes unlicensed structures at Ramlet al-Baida, no date.).

In MENA, post revolutions brought around a sense of national renewal, hope, freedom, and together with constant uncertainty, sectarian strife, and further societal divisions (Bayat, 2013). Still the urban disadvantaged find a way to make their struggles seen in their daily lives. They do so by occupying space, by encroachments, by organising protests and sit ins and ignoring urban regulations. Activists in these contexts, utilise constant pressure across a variety of social justice issues such as women's rights, labour rights, and rights to public space to achieve participatory rights and occupy a firm place in public discourse, preventing retrenchment and ensuring that marginalized voices remain louder than in pre-revolutionary days (Harb, 2018; Bou Aoun, 2020).

2.2.5   The role of stakeholders in instigating change and specific mechanisms

Different stakeholders have a range of roles in instigating change in a particular context. The interrelationships between political structures, actors and practices in particular contexts are varied and have different outcomes with respect to effective governance. Often, the actions of governments depend on the goals and demands of political actors, the resources they are able to lend to the political system, the power relationships between them, and the strategies and tactics they adopt (Bou Aoun, 2020; Harb, 2018). Social exclusion and spatial segregation have undermined the ability of the marginalised (e.g the poor, refugees, and women) to make effective claims on the political system. In post-war contexts, political and financial instability led to a fundamentally weak role for the state in terms of the built environment, with local public space improvements or reclamations mostly resulting from the involvement of well-networked NGOs (including overseas finance) or highly motivated local activists (Harb, 2018) often collaborating with academic institutions.

Post-war cities continue to be governed by public authorities according to sectarian and political boundaries (Bou Akar, 2018; Mady, 2022). Scholars have shown that less influential state actors (e.g. policemen, municipal agents) regularly engage in the production of informality, and often turn a blind eye to informal practices by low-income city dwellers (Heyman and Smart, 1999; Fawaz, 2009). In research on planning and the public good, Fawaz (2017) argues that planners have a role in conserving the public good, "more than wrestling to balance the rights of private property owners and the common good, planners in Lebanon ultimately contribute to the consolidation of a particular understanding of the landscape (as propertied), the prioritization of the exchange value of land or its role as a future asset at the expense of common uses"(Fawaz and Moumtaz, 2017, p. 347)

Landscape architects are responsible for the spatial organisation of outdoor spaces to meet human needs, as well as for working with the landscape to protect and enhance natural environments and processes (Dee, 2001). Open public spaces in the Global North are seen as directly contributing to better health and wellbeing (Dempsey, 2009; Völker and Kistemann, 2013; Rishbeth, Blachnicka-Ciacek and Darling, 2019). However, they may be inaccessible to

lower-income populations and minority populations (RWJF, 2010) and are seen as a threat to governments and as a vehicle that brings people together in resistance (Bou Aoun, 2020) in the global south. Some argued that global economic changes mean that urban public space is considered to be a profitable commodity (citation). Elite businesses in partnership with city governments have re-ordered the change in land-use of public space through the production of new forms of public space catering for the rich, such as Beirut's Zeituna Bay bringing together those in society who can afford to consume (Koning, 2009; Carmona, 2010). In a post-war city, this highlights a potential role for landscape architects to highlight the notion of inclusion and shared belonging for both nationals affected by a history of conflict and current sectarian divisions and for many migrants and refugees whose (non) presence and participation in public life is further affected by legal and economic exclusions.

Rishbeth et. Al (2017) address the "need for intentional cultural competency in urban design' (Rishbeth et al, 2018, p. 36) to be supported by a deeper understanding of difference. Hence, the central role planners and designers can play as those with responsibility for producing and managing co-existence in a shared space (Healy, 1997); this requires a deeper understanding of contexts to interpret common culture. Professionally, urban design practice has shown a detachment from socio-political contexts and the experiences of minorities, which requires a deeper understating and analysis of ethnically diverse places (Rishbeth et al, 2017). These notions are not fully developed nor practised in the Global North and far less so in the Global South. Still, urban designers and landscape architects have the potential to shape and craft people's experiences of space; and it is important to investigate its capabilities as a tool to achieve the kinds of socially and physically integrative spaces that will allow for the realisation of that potential (Dempsey, 2009).

In MENA bridging divides across various populations in placemaking is an issue, public spaces may act as plausible mediums. Makhzoumi and Al-Sabbagh (2018) argue that public spaces are imperative as these provide enabling spaces; initiate bonding and bridge communication and provide spaces to strategise power-shifting. The coordinated activities of urban dwellers has been recognized as an important feature in urban development by a number of urban theorists (Castells, 1983; Douglass and Friedmann, 1998). The significance of collective (rather than individual) action was popularized by Putman's (1993) study of Italy and his analysis of the role of social capital within economic development. For urban theorists, the ongoing role of social movements in influencing the governance of cities has long been recognized, as has the significant role of socially motivated agents such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Lebanon has a vibrant and dynamic NGO sector. Its development is traced back to the late nineteenth century. During the country's civil war (1975–1990) and with a shattered public bureaucracy, NGOs assumed primary responsibility for most of service provision (AbouAssi 2006, 2013). Nongovernmental organisations actively engage in public affairs, influencing or being engaged with public policy, whether from inside or outside the state apparatus (AbouAssi 2014; Najam 2000). While the NGOs' role in public affairs vary between service delivery and lobbying and advocacy, their political, economic and social contexts impact the nature of the role and the relationship with government and other stakeholders.

2.3 Inclusive Leisure & Urban spaces

The above sections framed multicultural cities and how these are governed, highlighting the complexity of how populations and actors make use of public space. This research also focuses on recreational space in a multicultural post-war city and the significance we can derive to theorise about social justice in this city, this entails an understanding from leisure practices that are highlighted in contexts with high migration.

2.3.1   Leisure as cultural and differentiated

The experience of leisure and nature is often influenced by social identities, their prior experience of nature, and the heritage culture of individuals and communities (Buijs et al., 2009). This research contributes to an emerging but largely under-researched area around leisure practices by marginalised groups and migrant communities.

Leisure practices of migrants are scant and under-researched to date (Iwasaki, 2007; Mata-Codesal, Peperkamp and Tiesler, 2015). Migrant communities (both established and newcomers) often face constraints to outdoor leisure that include lack of time, limited income, lack of transportation, fear and discrimination (Lovelock *et al.*, 2011). Fears included those of the unknown, experiencing untamed landscapes, getting lost (Lovelock et al., 2011), and, for women, fear of sexual assault (Freysinger *et al.*, 2013). Based on fieldwork in New Zealand, Lovelock and al (2011) found that newcomers preferred family-oriented activities, conducted in well-appointed, proximal urban parks or forests, especially valuing amenities which accommodated large groups.

Belonging carries emotional, cognitive, social, as well as physical and geographical dimensions (Mata-Codesal, Peperkamp and Tiesler, 2015). The presence of the marginalised in outdoor leisure public spaces is oftentimes an assertion of their rights to be in and of the place towards 'locals'. Rojek (2009) notes that leisure and leisure studies have become an arena for intensive identity work in modern times. Through embodied leisure practice, those who are marginalised not only are seen in the place where they happen to live, but they also become of that place. This self-awareness, integration and attachment develop during interaction with (public) places, thus, space is (re)appropriated through bodily engagement with it (Mata-Codesal, Peperkamp and Tiesler, 2015).

Survival mechanisms that refugees have been enacting prior to their arrival to host countries are developed based on collective efforts and large networks which extend beyond family units. The potential of leisure and social mingling in the everyday lives of refugees contributes to survival and self-reliance aspirations. While leisure activities cannot entirely satisfy refugees' needs, they contribute to be building opportunities and networks by which refugees seek to secure their own stability and sustainability (Carpi *et al.*, 2021). In her 'A (home)land with a sea', Vathi shows the temporal dynamics of migration in relation to leisure. She presents a case study of Kosovan-origin migrants and their teenage offspring living in London who spend their holidays in Albanian touristic seaside resorts. The idea of return visits back home is complicated by challenging simple ideas of homeland and motivations for these visits.(Mata-Codesal, Peperkamp and Tiesler, 2015)

2.3.2   Seafront and public open space in MENA Region

Redevelopment of urban waterfronts worldwide is often associated with gentrification processes, have been implemented in port cities experiencing post-industrial transitions since the mid-twentieth century (Marshall, 2001). Many case studies highlight cities that faced considerable challenges in their waterfront developments such as Amsterdam, Boston and Genoa and others. These cities now represent the contemporary emergent context of waterfront development such as Bilbao, Havanas, Las palmas de Gran Canaria. Marshall (2001) contends waterfront cities changed at such a rate that researchers are facing a contemporary crisis of public space due to the fact that researchers are unclear about what people require of seafront public spaces. His

argument necessitates for a new and overall based approaches on new theoretical perspectives as well as comparative analysis rooted in sufficiently in-depth and broadly comparative case studies. Research by Pereira, (2015) also shows the importance of the seafront in providing a space for wellbeing and relaxation. 3.4 km2 of Lisbon's eastern waterfront was converted from an industrial, commercial and working-class residence area into a high-end residential, office, leisure and consumption complex now called Parque das Nações. Parque das Nações was designed as a space where residents, workers and visitors could experience everyday life in a stress less and informal manner: its public spaces were planned to be used as relaxing, breathing spaces in the heart of a modern and busy metropolis.

The positive relationship between landscape and health and well-being has already been addressed in several studies (Dempsey, 2009; Jorgensen et al., 2017). Green spaces have proven to encourage physical activity, positively contribute to mental and psychological wellbeing and facilitate restoration and social encounters. In some cases, greenspace exposure has been reported to reduce health inequalities associated with deprivation (Dempsey, 2009). While 'green space' have received more attention from researchers, , blue spaces also play an integral role in positively affecting people's health and well-being Völker and Kistemann, 2015, 2013). Seascapes in particular have a distinct effect on the human perception of movement and time, given its fluidity, movement and intensity (Ryan, 2012; Brown and Humberstone, 2015).

The sea has always been an important leisure destination in Arab culture (Hazbun, 2008; Assaf, 2013; Delpal, 2014; Addas and Rishbeth, 2018) and Corniches are among the specific typologies of recreational outdoor spaces which are common within both the Levant and Gulf states. Corniches provide a relatively accessible linear space that offers access to extensive recreational zone on the water edge, fulfilling both a socializing function and close contact with nature. Water edges provide rugged typologies for people to engage in various activities closer to the sea. In another example, which points out to the importance of understanding micro spaces and their effects on co-existence across difference. A paper by Assaf (2013) entitled "The Corniche of Abu Dhabi: Public Space and Intimacies in the Open Air" she describes the Corniche of Abu Dhabi which is one of the main places to go out or take a stroll in the capital of the United Arab Emirates. The Corniche has multiple uses such as jogging, swimming, picnicking throughout the week and at different times of day. It is a place where a diversity of users share an urban space mirroring the social, ethnic and economic makeup of city inhabitants. The Corniche similar to other seafront cities such as Jeddah, Limassol and Istanbul is an open public space on Abu Dhabi's seafront, it is a promenade lined with trees, benches and sports equipment. She describes Abu Dhabi as a city where class and ethnic hierarchies prevail in daily interactions, and where the shaping of suitable territories allows for the co-presence of the various groups inhabiting the city. She concludes that the occupation of space by different city inhabitants on the Corniche produces a kind of intimacy which regulates interactions with others, both on an individual and collective level through the day-to-day practice of sports, or socializing with family or friends. This intimacy in the open air is one of the ways city-dwellers can appropriate, co-exist and integrate within an urban space in Abu Dhabi.

The design of public spaces is contextual and is responsive to human need such as social, recreation, work, health and fitness as well as for aesthetic, cultural and environmental purposes (Aelbrecht & Stevens 2019). The typology and the governance of these recreational spaces such as seafronts, parks and squares produce an effect on human use and experience, as well as social justice in the city. A landscape that has witnessed conflict is also likely to have spaces that are contested by multiple groups that could benefit from better urban design and policy measures as was shown by Gaffikin et al., 2010 who focused their empirical work on Nicosia and Belfast).

2.3.3   Leisure as representative of class in the Middle East

The practice of leisure is an act of reclamation exhibiting elements of resistance aimed at challenging economic, legal and social stereotypes. Khalili (2016) draws on two years of ethnographic research carried out on Beirut's Corniche with Palestinian women in her book 'The politics of pleasure: Promenading on the Corniche and beachgoing'. She emphasizes that "moments of pleasure are caesuras in the massive apparatus of power – welded from strands of work, neoliberal practice, nationalist certitudes and political exclusion – which binds these women. These acts of pleasure cannot easily be categorised as 'resistance' but they should not facilely be considered reinforcements of hegemonic control either. They are momentary and ephemeral recognitions of ordinary life lived in hard times, attempts at clawing back an instant of joy from the drudgery of the everyday, and a surrender to the enjoyment of conviviality in public and urban spaces. If they are at all political, they are so because such conviviality is ever harder to sustain in the calamity of hopelessness that characterises so much politics today" (Khalili, 2016, p.583).

Leisure is an integral part of Arab culture and it is often associated with the sea (Hazbun, 2008; Delpal, 2014; Addas and Rishbeth, 2018). The lines of Delpal's work (2014) is rare in its focus on Beirut's leisure on the Corniche and its socio-economic temporal uses, an interesting finding is the lack of social integration (though the research does not delve into the typology of space. The state's long history of privatising Beirut's waterfront (Zone 10 N/A) (discussed in detail in Chapter 6), resulted in a significantly growing gap between the upper-middle and lower-middle classes, both economically and culturally.

The practice of leisure in itself for all city inhabitants has also become a class-defining act (Harb and Deeb, 2013) that can be observed across seafront zones and typologies. Thus, leisure by the sea itself becomes a marker of class meaning one has free time to "spend" in leisurely pursuits and in relation to consumption, Thorston Veblen's ([1899] 1994) Similar to de Koning (2009) description of Cairene society (relating to or characteristic of the Egyptian capital Cairo or its inhabitants), some of the private cosmopolitan settings of Beirut waterfront provide places of the social enclosure, both physically and symbolically, segregating upper-middle-class individuals from the majority lower- and working-class populations (Koning, 2009). This research further explores the conceptualisation of leisure as "waste," linking the ability to waste time and money in specific physical settings with wealth (Deeb and Harb, 2007)

When conflated with class, spending time 'doing nothing can be perceived as idleness rather than leisure. As for leisure for migrants, domestic workers, and other marginalised segments of society, very little research has been done on leisure and leisurely practices in a superdiverse and divided post-conflict setting.

2.3.4   Leisure and migration

Different cultures, gender, ethnicities, and ages attribute different meanings to what a public space is and how it is practised (Jacobs, 1998). Indeed, there is a growing academic critique of the impact of migration on public spaces in a range of contexts (Aelbrecht and Stevens, 2019; Hou, 2010; Kim, 2015; Wise and Velayutham, 2009).

Memory and nostalgia can be essential factors in leisure experiences for migrant groups and individuals. Nostalgia actively triggers views and experiences of outdoor landscapes are described in some studies across a range of different landscape types (Rishbeth and Finney, 2006; Mady,

2015); the experience of outdoors reminding people of how public place is practised, and they replicate this proactively in new contexts. Boym (2001) suggests Nostalgia is "a sentiment of loss and displacement". Feelings of nostalgia remind people of places and times they had known in the past; it alters the concept of time. This replication could be described as being part of the positive experience, providing a sense of enjoyment, argues Mady (2015). However, this communal repetition of the practice of public space over time builds memories but, more importantly, offers habits and values. These openly shared habits in public spaces lead to acknowledgement, if not acceptance; they bring forth the possibility of being open to exploring and learning about "others" despite differences. Culturally, traditions and habits anchored in the past are used as benchmarks to direct present life (Bollens, 2012), and everyday habits and practices displayed out in the open could establish "a shared basis to formulate memories, which are important in reconciling differences and supporting a convivial urban life at present" (Mady, 2015).

However, the sites of interest are focused mainly on a Westernised conception, and there is considerable room for research addressing "otherness" from the perspective of the global south differentiated against an English-speaking, culturally Christian norm (Addas and Rishbeth, 2018). Scholarship on how people, especially migrants, use space in the global south explicitly addresses the use of space; the activities users engage in, their perceptions of space and how this is produced and altered over time remains limited. Further, with globalisation and the rise of the neoliberal state, the design, provision and maintenance of public space have become less of a priority in city council priorities which often contract out their services (Dempsey, Smith and Burton, 2014), especially in the global south (Mady, 2015). Accordingly, the new rhetoric for urban development is to provide attractive, luxurious, clean, safe and 'controlled' spaces that are no longer equitable and accessible. Indeed many cities in the Arab world rose to the occasion providing public spaces littered with luxurious offerings providing a homogenous setting with the more significant majority of its inhabitants can't afford (Elsheshtawy, 2008; Koning, 2009)

2.4 Summary of critical links in the theoretical framework

This thesis contributes to the literature on multi-culture and integration across scales and levels. The thesis questions if Beirut's seafront is a space where city dwellers meet and exercise spatial practices. How is this public space negotiated for different activities, at other times of the day and by whom? This interrogation adds to our theoretical understanding of multi-culture and social integration in settings that are not only diverse but have also undergone episodes of conflict, including a civil war.

This chapter combined literature across integration and multiculturalism, urban planning and landscape architecture. Multicultural urbanism provided a frame to look at social integration, conviviality, open public spaces and boundaries across scales and levels in high migratory contexts that have experienced conflict. This allowed the recognition of different typologies of public spaces that provide essential co-existence negotiating spaces in deeply divided contexts. This frame allowed the exploration of co-existence in post-war contexts to promote integration and understanding and discourage discrimination in the social hierarchy. The macro and micro understanding of shared spaces, including social and territorial boundaries, are thus crucial to our understanding of public open spaces as a cultural resource, drawing on the historic, transformative insights of place that allow for fluidity and multiple meanings.
Urban studies provided a framework to look at socially just cities and equity and how this translates into the governance, decision making and public participation in post-conflict cities, highlighting the importance of activism in this context as a key to reclaiming open public spaces

that are an entry point for justice and equity in the city. Landscape architecture provided a lens to question leisure across typology, highlighting the seafront as a space to interrogate leisure across class and ethnicity in a post-conflict, highly migratory context. It looked at how a multiplicity of users, especially those absent from the public, such as migrants and refugees, experience leisure on the seafront in a post-conflict setting in the middle east.
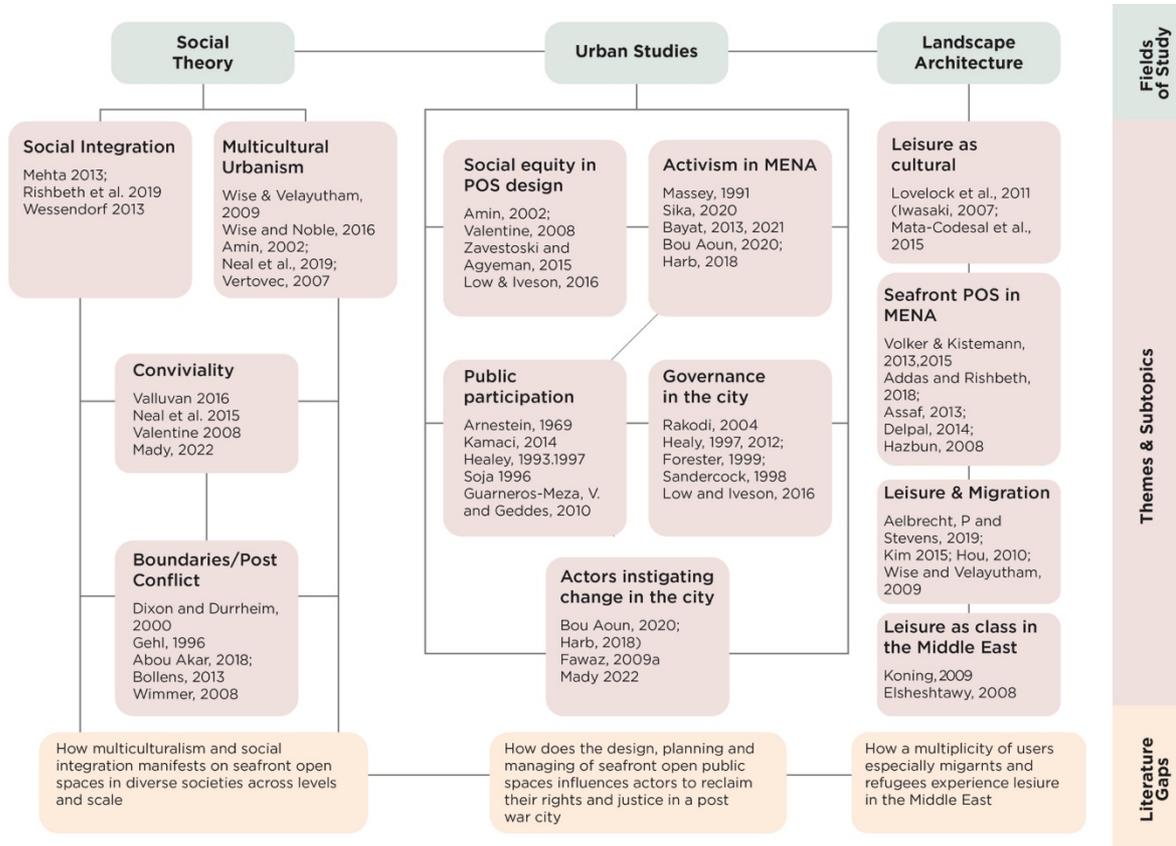
Figure 2-1: Map of the key literature

Using this broad theoretical framework from three disciplines raised methodological challenges. The research aims to understand multiculturalism across scale, typologies and specific site levels which requires a quantitative approach to understand co-presence. Leisure in post-conflict settings and leisure affordances to marginalised segments of society, as well as planning, urban change and movements, required a time-dependent understanding of the history of development and the consequent reclamation of the seafront; this required a more in-depth qualitative approach while also the fundamental research needed to take into consideration more recent historical events within the period of the fieldwork namely: Thawra, Pandemic, and the Port explosion.

3 Methodology

This chapter builds on the previous two chapters, which introduced the rationale for the research questions and the context of Beirut and laid the conceptual framework of this thesis through an overview of relevant literature. The foundations established in the past two chapters informed the choice of methods used in the research. First, the study investigates if seafront open public spaces in Beirut serve as a conduit to multicultural integration within the city across various scales. Second, the research aims to understand macro-micro spaces across city scales to provide a more detailed understanding of integration dynamics. Third, the research aimed to investigate planning histories of development in the city to understand neoliberal urban governance and policies that exacerbate socio-spatial inequality. This three-pronged approach aimed to combine multicultural integration across scales and landscape typologies with the practice of public space by users and an understanding of planning histories that define the originality of this research.

3.1 Introduction

The thesis has three overarching goals. First, to develop literature on multicultural integration in global south cities across scales challenging the relationship between people and public spaces. This contributes to the ongoing debates that public spaces can be both integrative and multicultural, encompassing multicultural identities and where these spaces are territorial, lacking in diversity and contribute to marginalisation. The second overarching goal is to add a spatial dimension to the history of governance across Beirut's seafront and how these shaped the government's neoliberal approach to privatise seafront public spaces and to understand the role of activist groups as the outcomes for public space quality and user experience. The third goal is to contribute new understandings to support better provision and management of recreation spaces across particular seafront typologies and differences within these public shared spaces in Beirut.

This chapter first discusses the research aims and objectives of the literature review. The second section is the philosophical orientation, including critical theories used, their relational ontology and how these framed the research methodologically. The third section presents the mixed methods approach and the choice of qualitative and quantitative methods. Also shown here are a justification and the application of each research method about research questions with an overview of the fieldwork process. The fourth section presents the fieldwork process and phases, case study research approach, selection criteria and introductions for each case. The fifth section offers ethical decision-making integral to the research design and fieldwork. The sixth covers reflections on the methodology and methods and my positionality as a researcher conducting fieldwork in my home city.

3.2 Methods used in exploring diversity in place and user experience

Methods employed to understand reasonably complex issues related to public spaces in cities are often developed as specialisms within given conceptual fields. Methods are often used to address a complexity found in city public spaces, the interrelationships between people and spaces in a city and how people relate to space, spatial form, place, urban governance, and spatial strategies. The literature often focuses on the specific qualities of a bounded space rather than addressing spatial attributes across a range of scales. This research aims to bridge these weaknesses by using

cross-disciplinary methods to look at public space, multiculturalism and recreational practices in the city of Beirut using theoretical frameworks and methods derived from landscape architecture, sociology, urban planning and design, as well as governance.

Methods in literature primarily focus on the Global North, and this thesis contributes to adding to this literature from the perspective of the Global South. Not only this, but the work also aims to shed light on multiculturalism in public spaces, which currently represents a global challenge given threats of war and increased migration worldwide. Additionally, literature on planning histories and participatory citizen practices (Kashima, 2000) almost exclusively focuses on these ontologies. Still, it overlooks the spatial and integrative aspects across different public space typologies and in relation to the city. Finally, the literature suggests the discipline may benefit from new ways of investigating, analysing and applying this knowledge in the global south context, deriving lessons learned for the Global North.

A coherent body of academic discourse has long addressed issues of rights to the city, integration, multiculturalism and recreational practices (Harvey, 2009; Young, 1990; Lefebvre, n.d.; Soja, 2011), especially those in divided and highly enclaved cities (Bollens, 2007, 2013; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett, 2010b). Reading this literature brings to the fore issues of multiculturalism and integration (Vertovec, 2007; Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett, 2010b) primarily informed and framed my research framework and provided a lens through which to identify case studies for research. Researchers working on public space in the global south in divided contexts still have a long way to go to overcome methodological and conceptual problems due to the lack of interdisciplinarity across fields of study. This research integrates fields of spatial form and typology, social process and the governance context for planning and urban design processes.

For Massey (2005), space can be equated with land and sea and the earth that stretches around us; this makes space a surface differentiated but continuous as part of a whole. She also argues that space has many narratives; it is not made up of a single story that we as researchers impose. Instead a space has a multiplicity of trajectories with its own particular history and, indeed, future. She also argues for the differentiation of space and place, whose symbolism has been endlessly politically argued. She notes that place is the sphere of everyday, the real and valued practice. She also argues that place has been politically contested through the withdrawal of difference. We assume a homogenous sense of place, but in reality, the truth is far from this. She argues, "local exclusivities sit uneasily against the support of the vulnerable struggling to defend their patch. While place is claimed or rejected in these arguments in a startling variety of ways, there is often shared undergirding assumptions: of place as closed, coherent, integrated as authentic, as "home", a secure retreat; of space as somehow originally regionalised as always-already divided up". Massey underlines that as researchers, we develop ways of incorporating and understanding spatiality based on our experience and ways of being in the world. But space is multiplicit and we as researchers must deal with this constitutive complexity. Massey argues from a political and philosophical point of view. She argues for a reimagination of space that (1) is the product of interrelations, (2) allows for plurality and the coexistence of distinct trajectories, and (3) is always under construction; a simultaneity of stories so far.

Massey (2005) argues three main propositions regarding space. First, space is the outcome of interrelations; it is 'constituted through interactions'; second, space is an arena of 'coexisting heterogeneity', reflecting and changing the multiplicities and pluralities of contemporary society; and third, space is forever a work in progress, continuously being remade with boundaries and territory constantly being negotiated. With these premises in mind, a mixed method approach to data collection was chosen:

- Spatial mapping to capture the extent of multiculturalism and integration within the city across different scales;
- Quantitative methods to explore space as an arena for co-existence, simply to understand if the heterogeneity in society is reflected in user presence in public spaces;
- Qualitative methods to further interrogate space as an outcome of interrelations and interactions;
  - On-site observation
  - In-depth interviews with users to discern any power hierarchy of interactions in public space across the four case studies.
  - Interviews with stakeholders about how space is negotiated between state and citizens from a governance perspective through examining historic governance spatial boundaries across sections of case studies

Themes used to study public spaces in cities derive from the fields of human geography, sociology, anthropology, urban design and planning and landscape architecture. Researchers specialising in these disciplines use various quantitative and qualitative methods in their research. The changing multiplicities and pluralities and people's relation to space involve, more often than not, traditional qualitative research techniques such as interviews, focus groups or written accounts. Urban design and planning methods use scale, spatial and physical form, often utilising drawing, mapping, sketching and photography (Dee, 2001). Research was undertaken by Hall (2015), who pursued an ethnographic mapping approach across the compendium of micro-, meso- and macro-urban spaces to understand the restrictions and circuits of urban migration in super-diverse streets to understand how accelerated migration and urban 'super-diversity' transform the contemporary global city, and how planning authorities need to be connected to the visible and invisible dimensions of migrants and their livelihoods. Understanding governance contexts predominantly employs further qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews with professionals and officials often investigating process and power dynamics over time and comparative case study investigations to discern patterns and commonalities (Bollens, 2007; Bou Akar, 2018; Bunce, 2020).

3.3 Philosophical and Theoretical Framework

Philosophy provides both natural and social sciences with the general principles of theoretical thinking. It is the ontology that guides the research and informs theories and chosen methods to address research aims, objectives and posed questions. It is about the provision of a method for both cognition and perspective, combined with self-awareness of the researcher which is then used to obtain knowledge and understand reality (Moon and Blackman, 2014). Critical realism and urban assemblages were two key frameworks steering the methodology and theory.

3.3.1 Critical Realism

Critical Realism was found to be a useful framing for developing this research because it acknowledges the fact that social phenomenon is complex and is in fact dependent on our interpretive understanding as researchers. Critical realism provides both natural and social sciences with a theoretical framework (Moon and Blackman, 2014); as an ontology has been used to frame studies on political science, governance, landscape and urban planning (Næss, 2015).

Critical Realism is interested in uncovering and interpreting underlying unobservable causal factors that cause events, such as the lack of social justice in the city. Critical Realism favours a broad range of qualitative and quantitative research methods and an interdisciplinary study. Critical Realism also encourages the underlying factors that caused a reality; these may also be subject to interpretation. (Moon and Blackman, 2014). The reason why this ontology informed this research is that Realists believe that social science can refine and improve knowledge about the real world over time and can make claims about reality that are justified while still being historical, contingent, and ever-changing. Another reason this ontology informed the research is that Critical Realism favours a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods to understanding this reality (Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett, 2013).

The Critical Realist assumes that one reality exists but can never be understood perfectly because of "basically flawed human intellectual mechanisms and the fundamentally intractable nature of phenomena" and as such "claims about reality must be subjected to the widest possible critical examination" to help in understanding reality as closely as possible (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The ontology is primarily based on the writings of Bhaskar (Bhaskar, 1975, 1978) and others (Sayer, 1992; Lawson, 1997; Archer *et al.*, 1998). Critical Realism is a philosophically-informed combination of science and social science meant to inform our investigations to understand further the nature of causation, agency, structure, and relations, and the implicit or explicit ontologies researchers operate within. The relevance of Critical Realism to this research is the assumption that events may be caused by the complex interaction of several undetected mechanisms. Thus events we are observing are likely to be brought to the surface by information about non-observable mechanisms and entities or histories (Zachariadis, Scott and Barrett, 2013). To increase understanding of events, Critical Realists explore unobservable mechanisms and how these could have worked to explain the caused phenomenon, it has less to do with regularity and more to do with the complexity of society and how the same causal event may have different outcomes and is dependent on our interpretive understanding. Critical Realism uses different methodological approaches from different philosophical positions by taking "a critical stance towards the necessity and validity of current social arrangements" without following "the extant paradigms' assumptions at face value" (Mingers, 2001, p. 248)

Critical Realism is a meta-theoretical framework. It is also used to underpin social and cultural dynamics (Kashima, 2000; Souza, 2014). In critical realism, the temporal or historical dimension of societies is essential, hence critical realism presupposes the need to understand the causation of cultural interrelations, the temporality of events and how these have changed over time. Critical realism informs the work of Bourdieu, Young and Fraser as it relates to social justice in the city (Lovell, 2007), hence the relevance of this framework for this research. According to critical realism, knowledge development involves a general deeper understanding, where theoretical and empirical ideas are drawn from and informed by existing knowledge produced and worked for within the social activity of science. Critical Reality proposes that our knowledge of reality is stratified, differentiated and transformative. That is to say, natural and social objects and interactions exist, but our knowledge about them is also a social construct (Souza, 2014). Critical Realism encourages choosing quantitative and qualitative approaches to understanding social justice in a post-war city that is ever-changing. A quantitative approach allowed an understanding at a particular point in time. While the qualitative approach allowed both a historical understanding that was coupled with an in-depth understanding of the possible causes that led to the lack of multiculturalism and integration in Beirut.

3.3.2   Emergent Urban Assemblages

Urban assemblages offer a way of approaching and representing relations between multiple actors that have different perspectives, who are in space and sometimes absent. Urban assemblages and Actor Network Theory (ANT) provides the theoretical framework for this thesis where it offers a framework to unequal relations of power vis-a-vis resources and actors, as these are packed and unpacked and looked at with detail over time (Jacobs, 2012), it also encourages deconstructing space in relation to its surroundings.

Urban assemblage theory explores how an actor-network perspective influences the way we look at cities and the questions we ask of ourselves. According to urban assemblage theory, a city is made of multiple partially localised assemblages built of heterogeneous networks, spaces, and practices. Urban assemblages tie up urban assemblages theory together with Actor-Network Theory (ANT) since an actor-network perspective conceives a sociotechnical process as enactments. Farías et al. (2009) note that 'assemblage' can offer urbanists an 'alternative ontology for the city', where the emphasis is on understanding how assemblages are being made and unmade in particular sites and practices, dissecting these according to networks and histories.

A large body of work discusses the different ways of understanding how cities are networked and how relationships influence the trajectory of city development. The notion of assemblages was derived from the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and developed in the actor-network theory (ANT) of Bruno Latour, it constitutes a shared sense regarding the objects researchers are curious about relationality, generalised symmetry and associations (Farías, Bender and Portales, 2009). It is not a theory, instead a mode of thought which understands the city "as an object which is relentlessly being assembled … a multiplicity of processes … a difficult and decentred object … [and] an improbable ontological achievement" (p. 2).

In his book review, Shelton states that Farias (2009) argues "for constructing a new understanding of the constitution of "the urban". Such a distaste for decades of urban theory is echoed in the first section of the book, "Towards a flat ontology?", which attempts to disrupt conventional spatial ontologies of the city as a bounded unit, reiterating the so-called "scale debates" in geography in the mid-2000s" (Shelton, 2013, p.575). Through actor-network theory, spatiality is a process by which both the object/agent and the space in which the former is embedded. ANT encourages researchers to deconstruct spaces beyond a bounded spatial ontology and look further into horizontal and vertical linkages. Space is not given in the order of things, rather, ANT encourages us to think of space as spaces of continuity and the different spaces that allow this continuity (Tironi, 2009). This ontology informed aspects of the methodological approach, specifically looking at scale and levels. ANT encouraged the use of on-site observation, sketches, and diagrammatic depictions to look at spaces from different scales and levels to deconstruct multiculturalism and social integration from a spatial perspective. It informed the choice of in-depth interviews to understand the historic governance of urban seafront public spaces and the current multiplicity of actors involved in their claims and reclamation.

3.4 Methodological Framework

The design of the research was informed by the research questions, the context in which the research took place, existing scholarship in related fields and my positionality as a researcher conducting research in my hometown. Given the philosophical approach of this thesis, my background across politics, planning and landscape architecture, research design used mixed methods to tackle the research questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. Mixed methods and a case study mixed methods approach were also chosen as a methodology due to the

multidisciplinary nature of the research questions and to capture the richness of place experience alongside a rigour of analysis. A detailed spatial analysis is beyond the scope of this thesis, as the first research question pertains to understanding the level of integration across country, regional and neighborhood scales only. The research aims to qualitatively understand macro-micro spaces across these scales to provide a better understanding of integration dynamics.

As such, the three main research objectives, as derived from gaps in the literature, are to determine: (See Figure 3-1 for a Diagrammatic Depiction):

4. To investigate the extent of diversity and integration with respect to patterns of users and uses of the seafront in comparison to the population demographics of Beirut.
5. To understand how communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability are experienced and voiced by diverse users.
6. To record and evaluate the history and current situation of governance policies and grass-root activism on the seafront over recent history and in light of October 17, 2020 uprising.
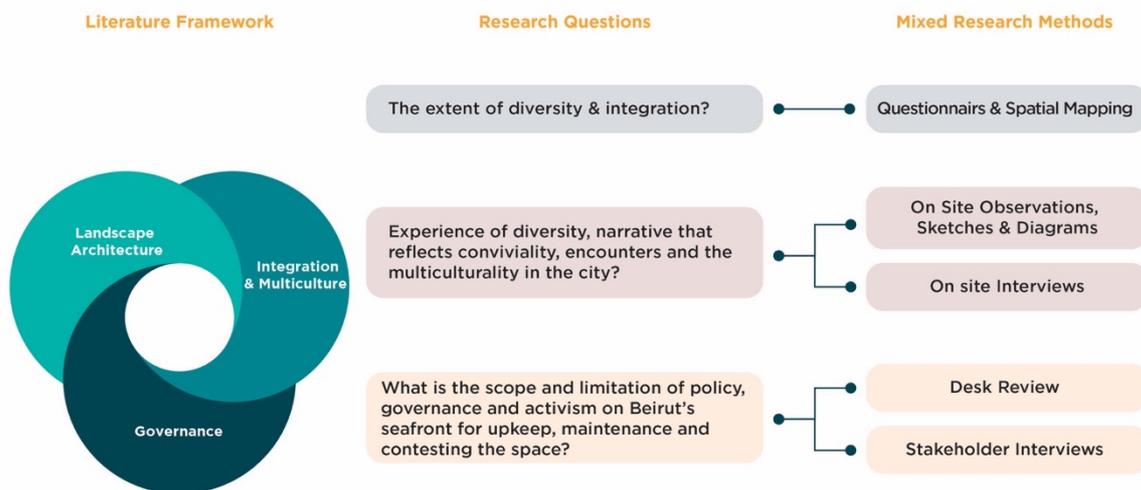
Figure 3-1: Diagrammatic depiction of thematic areas and research tools

3.5 Introducing Beirut's Seafront Case-studies

Beirut's coastline is highly diverse, and cannot be treated as a monolithic typology. Along the coast, four distinct areas which have public access were chosen to inform the research questions. The chosen cases argue that Beirut's seafront is an exemplar place typology that provides insight on co-existence across it multicultural population.

The case studies provide (1) important comparison sites (presented in Chapter 4) which interact in different ways across different scales of the city and country context; this allows us to understand that spaces are products of interrelations and users' perceptions in line with critical realism and ANT's notion of deconstructing space. (2) spaces are used in different ways by diverse people and therefore can be used to understand the variety of memories and experiences of leisure, escape, relaxation, and socialising (chapter 5) allowing for plurality and the coexistence of distinct trajectories and (3) highlight the important ways in which the political and social history and dynamics of the city can be made tangible through place change and management

(Chapter 6). relating to critical realism, reality is always under construction and different actors shape it.

The case studies are Zeituna Bay, Manara, Dalieh and Ramlet el Bayda public beach. The cases were chosen as they offer different typologies of pedestrian stretch, rock, sandy beach, designed marina and promenade. Another reason these cases were picked was to shed light on different user profiles and the activities users engage in at different times of the day based on place typologies. The cases have different local contexts, as the areas are adjacently connected to range from high rises to commercial spaces. The sites were chosen as they are located within the boundaries of Beirut city, mirroring its neighbourhood social fabric and being under the jurisdiction of Beirut Municipality.

Beirut's seafront public spaces have been the sites of much contestation in both the media and academic circles in Beirut. The illegal occupation of the city's seafront has been a subject of much debate since 2014, with activists holding protests calling for the protection of Dalieh and the removal of the latest beach tourist facility and accommodation, Eden Bay, in 2018. This 20,000 m² resort was developed against an enormous public outcry from practitioners, academics and activists calling for it to be stopped given its violation of zoning and building regulations. These dynamics informed the research question on governance, policies and actors on the seafront.

Based on my experience and understanding of my hometown, Beirut's seafront offers a space of leisure and respite for diverse users. The seafront functions as the primary recreational space in the city, and it is not hyperbole to claim it is the *only* large-scale, free, fully accessible open space in Greater Beirut (See Figure 3-2).
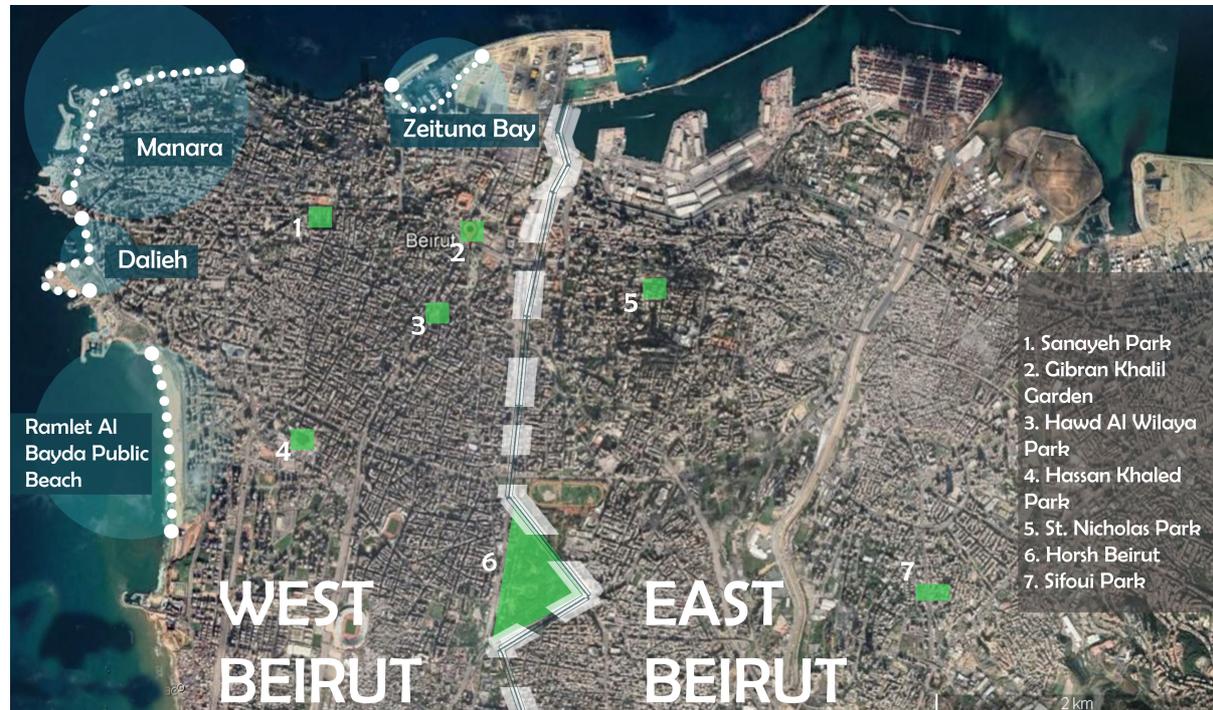
Figure 3-2: Beirut Divided, its remaining public gardens(green), and proposed study sites (on the seafront)

3.6 Case studies

The four case studies on Beirut's seafront were chosen primarily because the coast is the last remaining free stretch of public space in Beirut- its views, the sea, and its contribution to health

and wellbeing are unmatched in the city. Further, the coast provided an opportunity to interrogate the notion of integration since it physically envelops the city's diverse areas and neighbourhoods. Another reason for choosing these four case studies was the different landscape typologies each provided; an artificial marina, a pedestrian corniche, a natural limestone headland and a sandy beach. These typologies provided further richness regarding co-existence on different scales and levels. More detail will be given in the methodology chapter about this process.
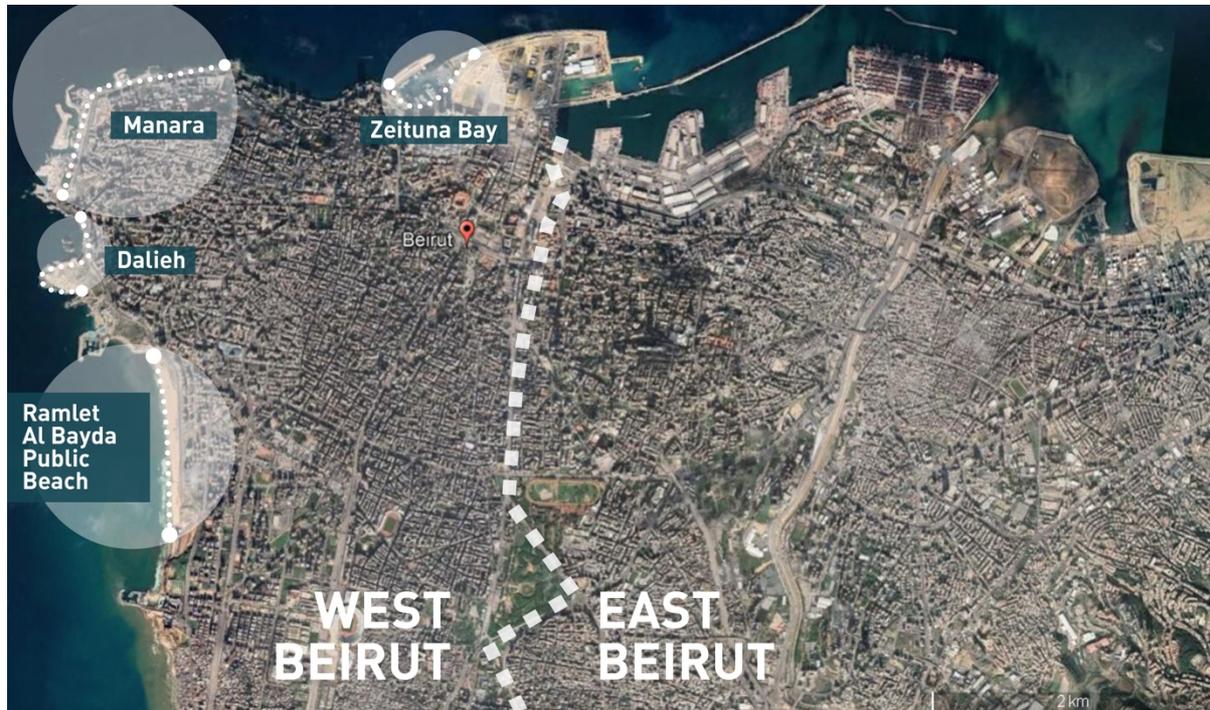
Figure 3-3: The four chosen case studies on Beirut's

3.6.1   Zeituna Bay

Zeituna bay also has three distinct levels, the marina and public walkway on the water edge, the restaurants, while located on the same level, are still different, and the highest street level as can be seen in Figure 3-4. The marina, where affluent yachts are moored, includes a wooden public walkway right on the water's edge and a line of affluent restaurants at a setback. Over ten restaurants and a few retail outlets stretch along Beirut Marina, from the site's western limit to the Yacht Club building on the east. Given the water edge typology with the up-market restaurants overlooking the marina, people feel safe, and it is bustling during the night until 1 am. The public walkway on the water's edge is wide and made of wood. People like to sit on the side of the wooden walkway to feed the fish, though fishing in the marina is prohibited. The floor extends into a slightly raised wooden seating area alongside the sidewalk, with irregular openings leading into the grass and the restaurants beyond.
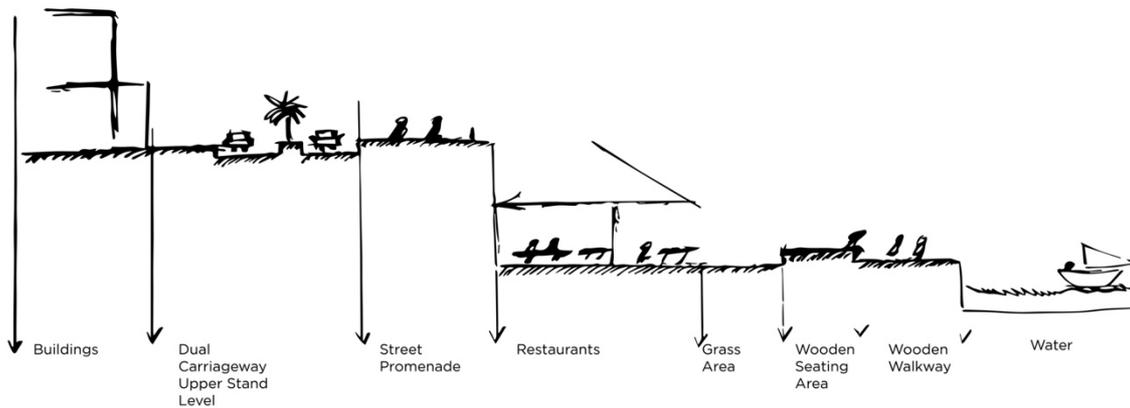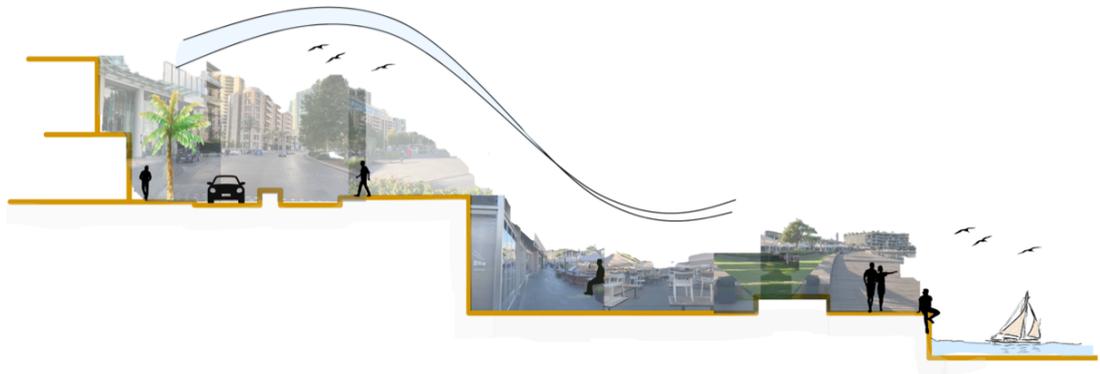
Figure 3-4: Section-Zeituna Bay (sketch done to proportion)

The design itself feels transposed; Zeituna Bay stands out in design as one proceeds north towards the saint Georges club and the start of Manara, which has no design features. From a design perspective, the marina is well connected to the tall towers on the opposite street level, with high-end commercial activities on their ground floor; these provide additional lighting and safety. However, they do not garner a busy flurry of activity and many people.

The second level, above the restaurants, is the street level, connecting the site to the opposite street-level high-rise buildings and into Beirut's urban centre. The landscape design for the entry plaza, quayside and corniche sidewalk create open-air terraces in the form of a 'stone beach' over the restaurants and shops. On the street level, people use the sidewalk for sitting, take pictures and engage in sports activities given the broad slate urban benches, the water features and plant

hedges, all of which provide ample seating and lying down spaces. The street level is also wide on Zeituna bay. With its minimalist design littered with plants and water elements, it is used by joggers, private fitness trainers, cyclists, and those who have just parked to visit the restaurants located under the street level on the marina.

Figure -3-5: Zeituna Bay

From a governance perspective, Zaituna Bay is owned and managed by Beirut Waterfront Development Company, a 50-50 joint venture between Solidere and Stow Development Company. Access to the project is through the seaside promenade to the north, the planned Rafic Hariri Wahat waterside city park to the east, and the Beirut corniche to the south. A 400-space underground public car park was built by Solidere below the corniche. The space is privately managed and as such, is not a public space, even though most people perceive it to be public. It is managed and monitored by private security at all times with specific activities that are banned, such as smoking shisha (water pipe), dog walking, walking on the grass, and fishing. After Thawra, and many occupations and protests on Zeituna Bay, the company released a communique stating the public walkway is indeed public. This is turn spurred a change in people's behaviour on Zeituna Bay where they reclaimed the space and started sitting on the grass areas, having breakfast and bringing in food, fishing and walking pets.

3.6.2   Manara

The Corniche is a linear public space available for Beirut residents, stretching along 4.8 kilometres encircling the city's promontory from the Saint George Bay on the northern coast of the city, into the continuous Avenue de Paris and Avenue du General De Gaulle all the way to Ramlet el Bayda. The stretch is commonly referred to as the Manara, Ain el Mreisseh refers to the start of the stretch next to the Ain el Mreisseh Mosque known as Al Daouk Mosque where the stretch is approximately 34 meters wide, as opposed to approximately ten meters wide for the rest of the stretch as seen in (Figure 3-6).

Figure 3-6: Ain el Mreisseh wider stretch in front of the al Daouk mosque

There are two distinct levels on Manara; the rocky water edge and the street-level pedestrian walkway as can be seen in Figure 3-7 . The first 'level' is the water edge, rocky smaller headlands along the seafront surrounding the entire city. This is a discontinuous stretch whose access is obstructed by private hotels and beach clubs interrupting its natural flow. The typology of Manara is very specific; it is public but private developments such as the AUB beach, Jal el Baher fishermen marina, Ain el Mreisseh fishermen Marina, Riviera and other hotels that have privatised along the beach itself render this mostly private with some public spots that people have access to and where they can have a picnic, spend a day and swim. People use the smaller stretches they can access through stone stairways, makeshift ropes or ladders they have installed along the beach. This water edge on Ain el Mreisseh provides a small stretch walkway primarily used by fishermen.
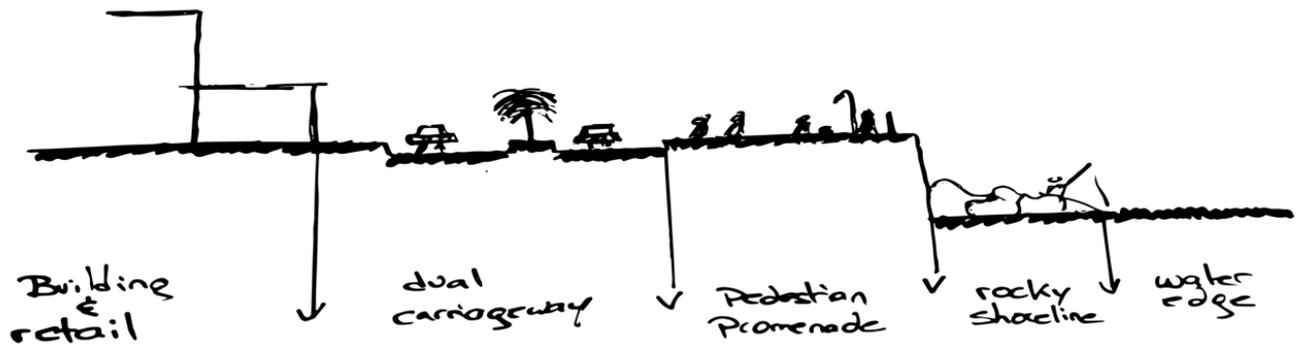
Figure 3-7: Section of Corniche Manara (sketch done to proportion)

The second level of Manara is a public walkway, which is continuous. This is a popular walkway in the city, though the benches are poorly maintained, and the date palms provide very little shade in the hotter months. The walkway is wide, and the stretch is well-lit; it has very good connectivity to the opposite urban edge, with a string of commercial activities providing additional safety and lighting. The opposite urban edge is always busy, which makes it feel safer for those who are walking/jogging at different times of the day, from early morning – to late evening. Manara is always busy and has a sense of safety even after midnight as it was well-lit and often busy. The Corniche includes urban and landscape landmarks such as the Saint George Hotel, the lighthouse [old and new] and the Ferris wheel.
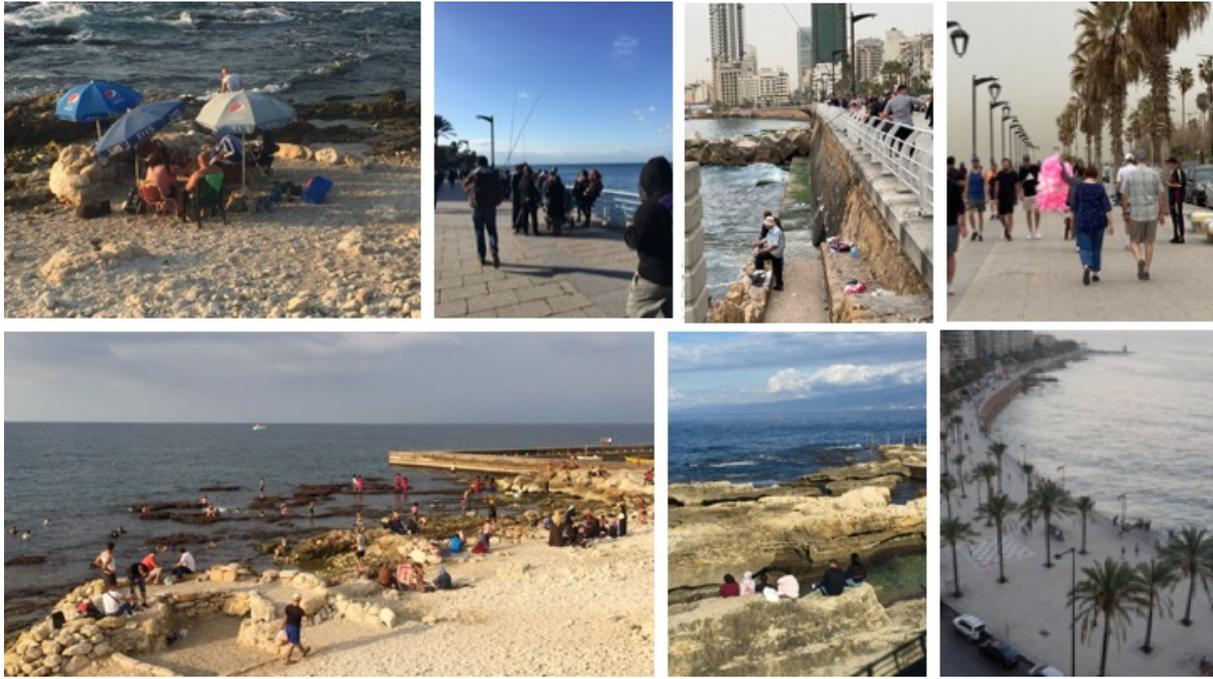
Figure 3-8: Ain el Mreisseh/ Manara

The corniche is managed by the municipality of Beirut. It is not well-maintained, benches are old, a few mosaic benches have been installed by a bank's private initiative, open water drainage holes, and minimum landscaping. The municipality provides security on the Corniche, but there doesn't seem to be a schedule for when police cyclists are available to provide protection and patrol around. They, however, can be easily distinguished with their blue uniforms that is distinguishable from other municipality officers and can be seen cycling along the corniche.

3.6.3   Dalieh

Dalieh, the natural limestone and rocky headland, extends into the Mediterranean Sea, offering an untamed and wild character hidden from the street level due to vegetation despite the fact it is located adjacent to an urbanised modern district. It makes for a stark contrast against all the other sites. Dalieh has three distinct levels, the water edge, the limestone headland, and the street level overlooking Pigeon Rock as seen in Figure 3-9.

Buildings Dual
        Carriageway Promenade Limestone Headland Water Edge
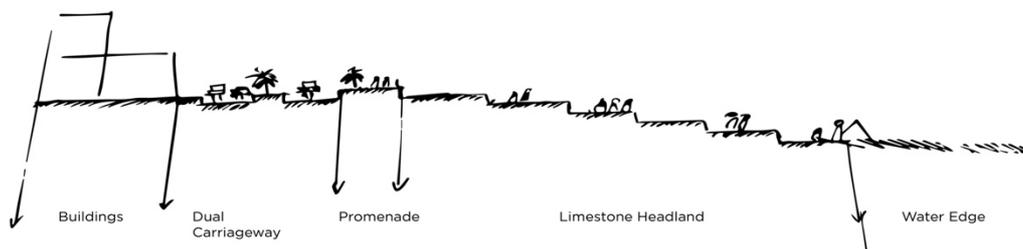
Figure 3-9: Section Dalieh (sketch done to proportion)

Dalieh cannot be dissociated from the two monumental rock formations of Raouche, the natural landmark or 'Pigeons' Rock' located at Beirut's westernmost tip (See Figure 3-10). Visitors flock to Dalieh to swim, enjoy a boat ride, spend the day with friends and family, and have a picnic and fish. Boat rides are advertised by men who sit on the street level with pictures to entice tourists and locals to descend to Dalieh for boat rides. People visiting the headland need to go through unpaved, rocky and winding roads that, in some places, can be pretty steep down to the hinterland, Three main pedestrian access points from the street level lead o Dalieh. It is a meeting place for a wide variety of visitors and tourists, who flock to enjoy the view from the city towards the sea, but also from the sea towards the city's skyline. Dalieh is the place where Beirut's residents used to elaborately celebrate feasts and holidays. It has always been a place for swimming, promenading and fishing that is engraved in the memory of the city and its inhabitants.

Figure 3-10: Pigeon Rock as seen from Dalieh and the above street level (last image by Dr. Mona Fawaz taken in Spring 2020)

From a governance perspective, Dalieh is a heritage and historical landscape of ecological and social significance. From a governance perspective, Dalieh is left unmanaged. Those who live on Dalieh maintain it to the extent possible amidst rampant degradation. Two territories are distinguished, the fishermen's port and the Itani family territory. You can find a shack selling water, soft drinks and confectionery. In front of the shack is a chicken coop where chickens roam freely, a dog is tied to its far end, and the Itani family and those who work with them gather under a tree next to the shack and sit there daily. The headland is rather large to cover by foot and pretty rough for a car. Visitors often park and then walk down through the limestone to the coves or pools; it is a reasonable distance to cover between the many pools and coves on the site, especially in the heat. Similar to Zeituna bay (though the sites are opposites in terms of

typology), Dalieh is quieter during the week with fewer visitors but is rather busy on weekends with an eclectic mix of people.

Figure 3-11: Dalieh various typologies and pools

There are three main coves/pools. The first grotto and the one next to pigeon rock is called al Nafze grotto. It's a spot used by altitude divers to dive. Next to the Nafze grotto are a series of shallow pools that are busy at the weekends called Tlat Berak (three pools) al Hammeer (the donkeys), and al-Qadi (the judge), Adel Latif pool is used throughout the week, it is the one closest to the fishermen cove. Shat Falastin (Palestine) and al Wahesh pool (the monsters pool) are used mainly by Beirut families on the weekend, located to the southeast of the fishermen's marina and the furthest from Pigeon Rock.

3.6.4   Ramlet al Bayda Public Beach

Ramlet al Bayda beach is the last remaining sandy public beach in Beirut, occupying a 1.5 km stretch and providing a distinct typology of public space in the city. Ramlet al Bayda has three distinct levels, the sandy beach, the public sidewalk on the street level, and the elevated opposite street, which houses high-end residential towers. This elevation created a schism, a disconnect between the public beach and the affluent towers on the street level on the opposite side. The beach is connected through two entry points, one in the middle of the stretch, which is the main beach entrance where one can access the sandy beach through two stairways to the left and right, and another on the furthest southern point where there is no railing as seen in Figure 3-12. The beach and the public walkway are the most populated. Very few people walk on the elevated street level that has a small degraded public garden.
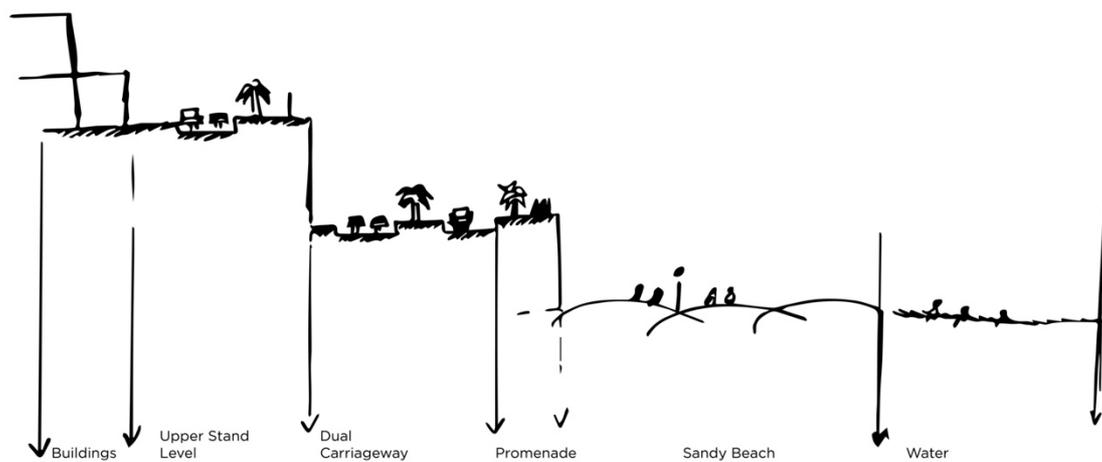
Figure 3-12: Section Ramlet al Bayda

The beach provides a space for visitors to swim, fish, bring their food and spend the entire day, engage in sports activities, spend time with extended family and friends, and a children's playground with dilapidated and rusty swings. Joggers predominantly use the public walkway during the early mornings and evenings. The buildings on the northwest side of the Ramlet al Bayda provide shade in the morning, making this a popular walking spot, although the stretch is shorter than Manara at approximately 1.5 km. Spatially, Ramlet al Bayda public beach has distinct grouping characteristics. The NGO Operation Big Blue dominates the shack's entrance and immediate surroundings and umbrellas. A few other groups sit close to the beach, usually old lifeguards who still have the habit of hanging out on the beach. A few occupy the areas close to the shack and sea, and younger groups are predominantly unemployed, and sitand consume alcohol during the day. Also, very distinct sports groups on Ramlet dominate the scene and occupy the level closest to the wall and away from the sea. The oldest have claimed the wall with their names written on it, each with a designated hanger, a few plastic chairs, and some chaise longue organised against the wall. They perform regular maintenance to their spot, ensuring the sewer is closed off and installing nets etc. a younger group also similarly organised occupies the space next to them with a volleyball net. The only difference is that these men are more youthful in their 20s and 30s and seem to have picked up the habit from the older group.

65

Ramlet al Bayda has environmental severe challenges of water pollution, litter and cleanliness, and perception of safety. There is an open sewer that is open from the wall that cuts through the sand, and drains into the sea. The public beach lacks connectivity to the opposite street level, so people do not feel safe using this walkway during the evening, unlike Ain el Mreisseh. The sidewalk is not wide, and the elevated street opposite only adds to the feeling of disconnectedness of the site, which doesn't make it a popular walking destination at different times of the day, especially at night.
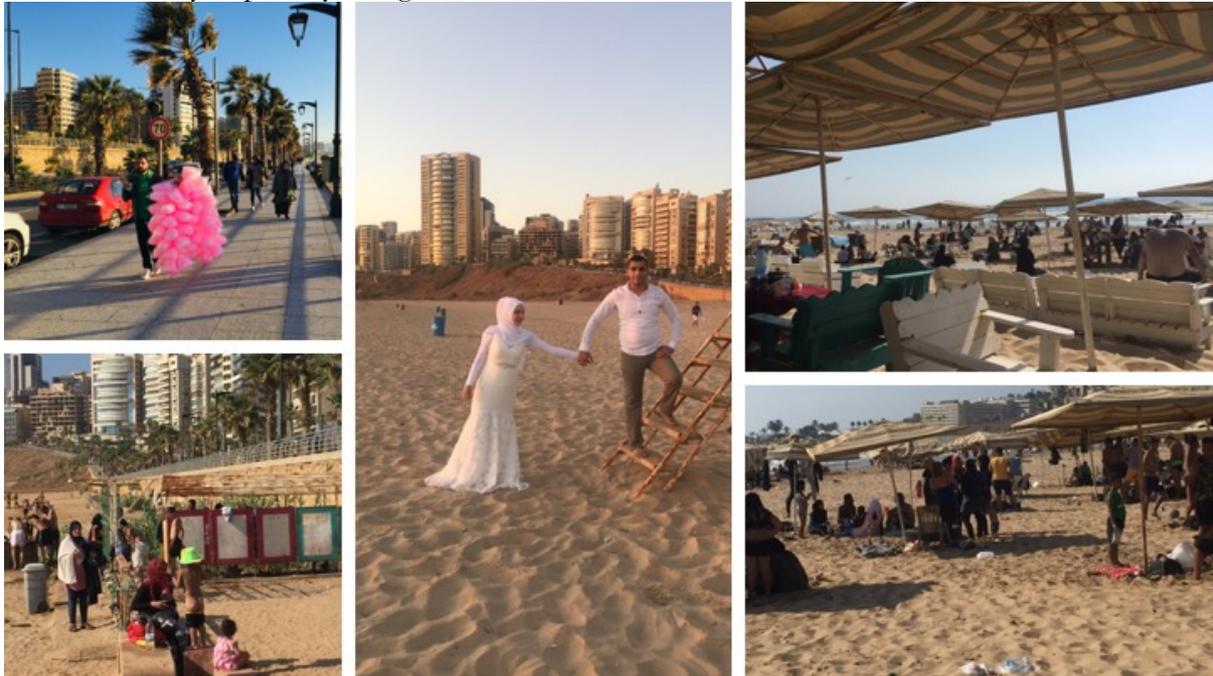
Figure 3-13: the different levels of Ramlet al Bayda

From a governance perspective, Ramlet is under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Beirut. However, the sandy beach itself is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of public works, who has engaged the NGO Operation Big Blue, to manage it. The municipality provides guards at the entrance of the stairway leading to the sandy beach, as well as lifeguards, who are not always present during the week. Operation Big Blue, the NGO that the Ministry of public works has subcontracted, claims complete managerial jurisdiction of the public beach. They have a shack that sells water, fast food and confectionery. They rent out chairs and tables for beachgoers at 20,000 LL—12,000 LL for chairs (before the 2019 economic crisis). Beachgoers complain about this as they see this as unfair and think the beach should be a low-cost destination.

3.7 Timeline of the methods used.

The fieldwork process was based on the selected methods and their ability to respond to the research aims and objectives, their appropriateness for the Beirut context, the types of knowledge sought and that they can capture the social reality as it is viewed. It should be noted that research was also an iterative process in that it was the findings of the two distinct phases that informed the process. The findings from the survey, the qualitative mini stories, the ethnographic observation, sections and the photo repository informed the qualitative interviews with users and with various researchers and activists, academics and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and government officials. Fieldwork was initially designed to take place over two phases. The first occurred in July-September 2019. The second phase, which encompassed the on-site and stakeholder interviews, was supposed to take place over the summer of 2020. The timeline of the thesis (Figure 3-14) was adapted due to COVID-19.

Instead, writing up, collating information and conducting spatial, qualitative and quantitative analysis with the data collected during the summer of 2019 happened throughout fall-summer 2020. It is envisioned that the remaining qualitative interviews will take place during summer 2021 to be incorporated shortly after. Where possible, I attended scheduled events on the sites, such as elderly stretching classes every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 530 am on Manara, diving events, and fishermen meetings.

Throughout, fieldwork diaries and meticulous notes were kept detailing the evolving methodological process, including observations, experiences and responses to situations, interpretations and reflections.

Figure 3-14: Timeline and activity schedule

3.8 Overview of the methods used

As discussed earlier, and developing within the philosophical approaches of Critical Realism and Urban Assemblages, a range of methods and types of data collection were used to provide a rich basis for analysis. Here each is introduced in turn. Given that ontologies used favour a mix of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, this thesis opted to generate data through questionnaires and spatial mapping, ethnographic observation, walks and hand drawn sketches, on-site interviews, desk review, stakeholder interviews, and netography to investigate the case-studies, user experiences and typologies on the seafront. Each question was scrutinised in terms of what it was meant to accomplish regarding the method chosen to investigate each particular question.

3.8.1 Questionnaires

3.8.1.1 Purpose and precedents

Questionnaires gather essential information on demographics, practice patterns, knowledge, experience, attitudes, and behaviours that observation may otherwise not capture (Cohen, 1988; Creswell, J, 2014). Questionnaires may be used as a research strategy in quantitative and qualitative studies and may provide initial data for hypothesis testing or inform subsequent study design. The advantages of questionnaire-based studies include obtaining data within a short time frame, relatively low cost, and results based on 'real-world' observations. Disadvantages include obtaining an adequate response rate, the possibility of data skewing due to non-responders, and difficulty determining the significance of data. Specifically, there is precedence where research on open public spaces used questionnaires (Buijs, Elands and Langers, 2009; Schipperijn *et al.*, 2010; Kloek *et al.*, 2015).

The questionnaire was administered on-site and took roughly seven minutes to complete. The aim was not to gather a statistically significant sample (in part due to the complexity of analytical categories) but provide a large enough selection to offer a representation of indicative visitor demographics and spatial distribution.

3.8.1.2 Design

The questionnaire provided answers to the initial question of integration on multiple scales in the city. It provided initial data for hypothesis testing and informed the subsequent on-site interviews. The questionnaire captured a larger sample of users, the activities they engage in, the amount of time spent in a public space and the relation of these variables to gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status (See Appendix 1 for questionnaire). Another reason was discerning users, the types of activities they engaged with across the sites, during different times of the day and correlated relationships of time spent, and activities done on-site to gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The questionnaire was conducted using a sampling framework on different days, times of day, and locations across the case studies asking every 4th passer-by to answer the questionnaire.

3.8.1.3 Process and adaptations

The questions were short, with an approximate 7-minute response time, allowing many responses to be captured (Appendix 1). The questions recorded user diversity by nationality, gender, age, monthly income and place of residence alongside a straightforward record of activities, social context and motivation for visiting. The surveyed respondents were between the ages of 18-25 up to over 70.

The questionnaires were administered in July-September 2019, meaning the weather was sunny and pleasant, allowing people to spend time in public spaces during the summer holidays. Additionally, the school term had also not yet started, making the case studies one of the most popular destinations for a break for the family after work and during weekends. Due to the case studies' different typologies, the following sampling method was adopted.

 Manara and Zeituna Bay, Dalieh street level and Ramlet Al Bayda Public Beach street level, I chose every 4th person that passed me. At the same time, I had geographically pinpointed three different standing positions. Similarly, I chose three locations on the water level of Manara,

Zeituna Bay, and Ramlet Al Bayda Public Beach. However, as an adaptation measure, for both Ramlet Al Bayda Public Beach and in Dalieh on the water level, I had to walk around both sites to be able to find users, and this is due to the topographical nature of both sites and their scales, it was impossible to stand and wait for every 4th person to cross my path. This became apparent due to the time I would spend on Dalieh to fill out a form, as I visited several times during the week with hardly anyone on the rocky beach. Hence the methodology was adapted for these two sites.

3.8.1.4 Description of the data set

	Under 25	25-45	45-70	Over 70	Female	Male	Lebanese	Syrian	Palestinian	Bangladeshi	Iraqi	Egyptian	Ethiopian	Other
Manara	7	61	49	3	44	76	99	11	6	0	0	1	1	2
Ramlet	18	69	34	1	49	73	72	26	6	2	5	2	2	7
Dalieh	10	51	18	0	12	67	48	22	5	1	1	1	1	0
Zeituna Bay	20	80	20	0	58	62	91	12	5	2	1	2	1	6

Table 3-1: Respondents Profiles

In total, 441 questionnaires were administered across the four sites: 120 in Ayn el Mreisseh/Manara, 122 in Ramlet Al Bayda Public Beach, 79 in Dalieh, and 120 in Zeituna Bay (See Table 3-1). The survey was conducted using a sampling framework on different days, times, and locations across the case study, keeping a balance between days of the week and weekend as well as other times of the day.

Sampling was random but allowed for capturing diversity across age, gender and nationality, as can be spatially seen across the four sites (See Table 3-1: Respondents Profiles). The survey was administered before the October 17th 2019, uprising (Thawra) and the Covid-19 pandemic. As such does not consider the change in activities people engaged in public spaces across the case studies, as described in Chapter 5.

3.8.2   On-site observations -walks, photo analysis and sketches

I used ethnographic observation and walks (Pierce and Lawhon, 2015) to understand typologies along the chosen case studies spatially and in relation to the city, neighbourhood and street levels (Dovey, Ristic and Pafka, 2017).

Renowned planners such as William Whyte (1980) and Jacobs (1961) have long used observation as a spatial analytical tool. Urban designers, including Gehl (2011) and Lynch (1960), also used it. World-renowned writers also used observation to study urban social movements, including Castells (1983). These influential bodies of work illustrate how an ethnographic approach to observation can be used to unpack people-place relations. Of particular importance here is a body of observational ethnographic research that places importance on the lived experience and the materiality of public spaces, which is otherwise lacking in the literature. The impetus is to highlight how interactions of geographic and social contexts can inform the actions and preferences of users of public spaces. Also, opting for ethnographic observation ensured

that no one was marginalised. Given observations were done at three levels: city, street and public space.

It also allowed for an in-depth understanding of the institutions, laws, and norms that govern the city Field (Kim, 2015) to envision or co-create a just, more inclusive and sustainable public space for the people.

Photography and images have been referred to in visual ethnography as observational visual recording. It has become a topic of contemporary discussion in the literature as it illustrates how social researchers have used semi-covert research techniques to produce unself-conscious images of their informants. (Lynch, 1972). Images did not record subjects up close but focused on capturing larger crowds engaged in different activities see Figure 3-15 to record and compare these across typologies of the case studies. Photos were imported into Nvivo and coded according to emerging themes from the questionnaire in the first instance and interviews in the second.

Figure 3-15: Photographs showing users engaged in different activities across the case-studies

Hand-drawn sketches contributed to the development of ideas during the thinking process and for analysing the form of the open space from the perspective of landscape architects (See Figure 3-16; Figure 3-17; Figure 3-18; Figure 3-19). Looking at sections to draw them allowed the differentiation of the typologies of places of the sites and topographic levels. This allowed the nuance across different typologies and integration levels of the sites to come through. Despite the different typologies of the case studies, all four have three levels of integration. First, there is the level of integration of the site with the Mediterranean Sea. Second, the level of integration of the site with the street level and third, the level of integration of the whole site with its surrounding neighbourhoods. Sections were used to explore existing streetscapes and the relation of this streetscape to its surroundings at both the neighbourhood and city levels. (Dee, 2001; Bower, Stephanie, 2016). In line with Dee's (2001) work, the physical dimensions and relationships between the space and its surrounding streetscape were noted, and the relationship between the landscape elements, furniture, and edges of the spaces was reflected upon.
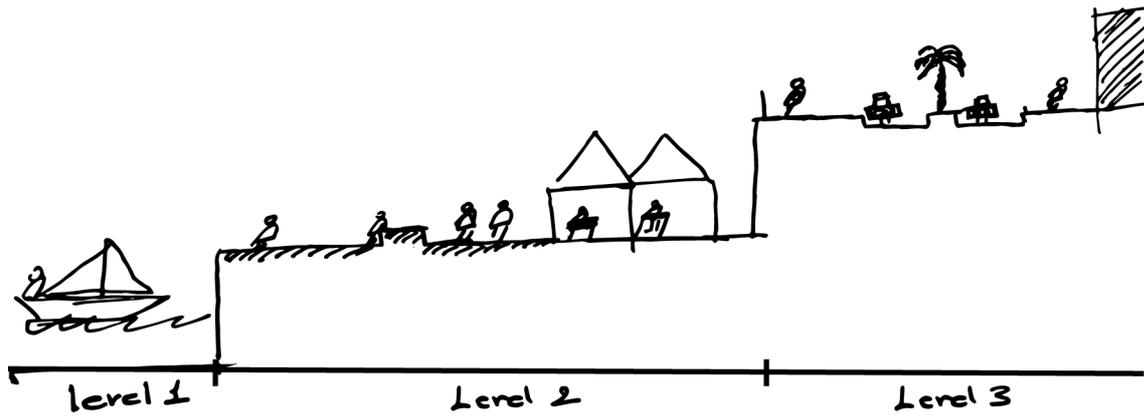
Figure 3-16: Zeituna Bay section sketch
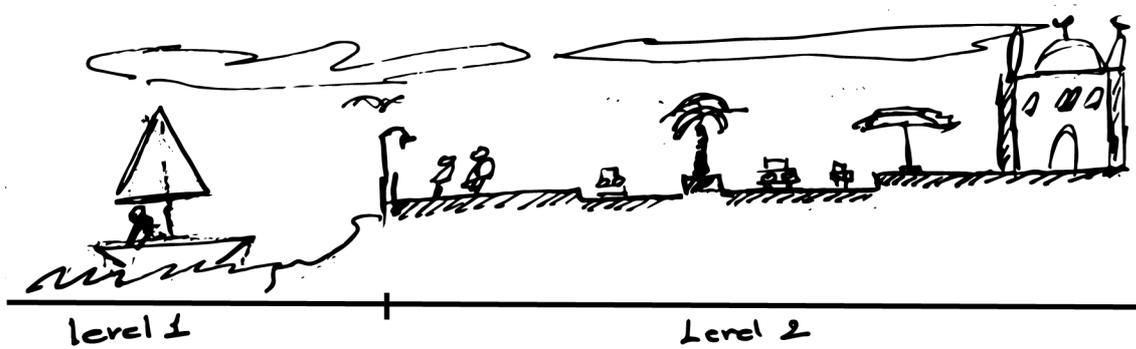
Figure 3-17: Manara section sketch
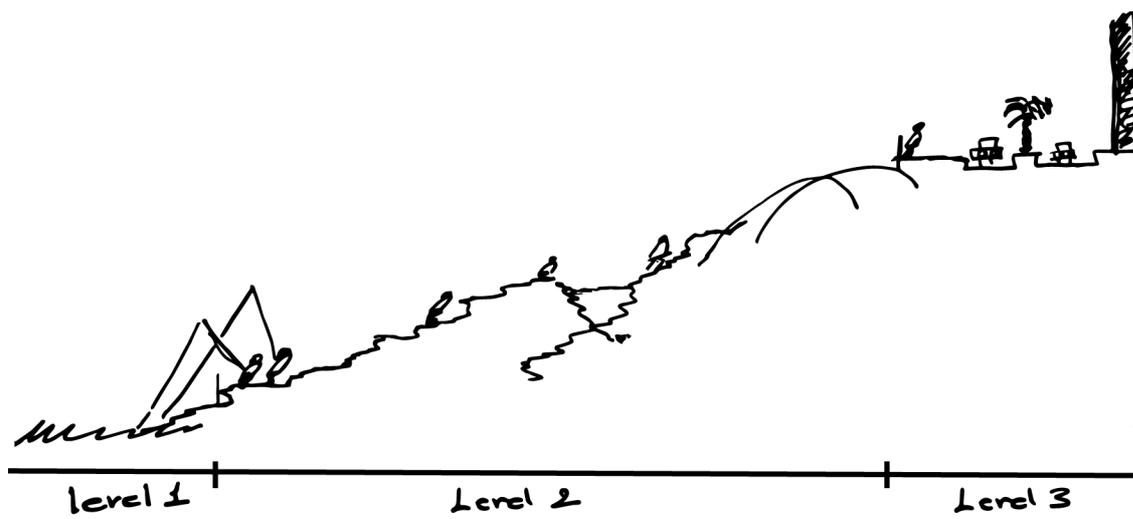
Figure 3-18 Dalieh section sketch
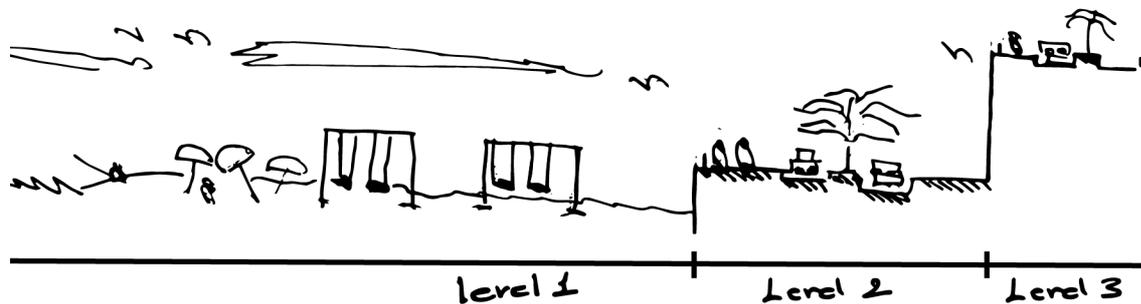
Figure 3-19:Ramlet Al Bayda Public Beach section sketch

Walking is a method employed mainly by urban geographers. While it is not commonly reported in contemporary scholarship, the practice of walking is an essential mode of geographical examination (Wylie, 2005; Murphy, 2011; Pierce and Lawhon, 2015). (Pierce and Lawhon, 2015) define "observational walking for urban research as a self-conscious, reflective project of wandering around to understand better an area's physical context, social context, and the spatial practices of its residents". Effectively observational walks allowed a key opportunity that enabled comparisons of cross-typologies of the chosen case studies. It also allowed for observing the spatial and temporal scales of case studies' intended and unintended uses.

3.8.3   On site Interviews

3.8.3.1 Purpose and precedents
Interviews are an important qualitative methodological research tool used in divided and contested cities (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett, 2010b; Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012; Bollens, 2013). I used on-site interviews to investigate user experience and gain an in-depth understanding of users, practices, preferences, narratives of leisure as well as to determine the inter-communal spatial relations and how this plays out or negotiated similar to studies by Al-Madani (2022) and Lovelock et al., (2011). On-site semi-structured interviews are important in order to understand users and social dynamics and provide interviewees to take the conversation in a direction of their choosing (Kim, 2015). Another reason for using on site interviews is to discern interviewees interaction with the site and other users, as attested by the work of Al-Madani (2022), Lovelock et al., (2011), (Hall, 2015) and Rishbeth et al., (2018).

3.8.3.2 Design

The interview protocol was originally done in English. I translated the questions into spoken Arabic and did my best to word questions precisely and appropriately (See Appendix 2). This was done to reduce potential misunderstandings, ensure accurate information retrieval and also make sure the interviewee knew I was local to draw upon this shared language as a social construct. Initially, fifteen semi-structured interviews were scheduled in each of the four case studies with a wide range of representation to highlight the different users and space use. Fieldwork took place over 1.5 months during August and September 2021. Due to the more limited timeframe and site accessibility issues, I opted to conduct interviews on corniche al Manara and Ramlet al Bayda only. Twenty-one in-depth interviews were conducted in total

across Manara and Ramlet al Bayda public beach. I chose a random sample to interview, bearing in mind gender balance.

3.8.3.3 Process and adaptations

However, COVID-19 and the inability to visit the sites for over a year meant the second fieldwork phase was considerably shorter. Also, Lebanon at the time was going through a severe financial crisis, this meant that not everyone in public spaces was open to being interviewed and I faced many hesitations to recruit participants in-situ and beyond. Users of public space at the time, were exhausted and not very open to having conversations due to major electric outages, a failing currency and a large-scale loss of income and jobs.

3.8.3.4 Description of the data set

I chose different times of the day for the interviews and attempted to interview a diversified set of users engaging in different activities, such as running, gazing into the horizon, walking, sitting on benches and spending time with larger family groups. This provided me with contrasting site typologies and diversity based on earlier questionnaire results. It was difficult to speak to females who were in groups, males present in the group usually interjected.

Interviewee	Location	Gender	Nationality	Age Band
Interviewee 1	Manara	Male	Lebanese	25-18
Interviewee 2	Manara	Male	Lebanese	35-25
Interviewee 3	Manara	Female	Lebanese	50-40
Interviewee 4	Manara /wateredge	Male	Lebanese	51-40
Interviewee 5	Manara /wateredge	Male/Female	Syrian	35-25
Interviewee 6	Manara /wateredge	Female	Syrian	36-25
Interviewee 7	Manara	Female	Lebanese	55-45
Interviewee 8	Manara	Male	Lebanese	56-45
Interviewee 9	Manara	Female	Lebanese	25-18
Interviewee 10	Manara	Female	Lebanese	25-18
Interviewee 11	Manara	Male/Female	Sudanese	45-35
Interviewee 12	Manara /wateredge	Male	Syrian	50-40
Interviewee 13	Ramlet/wateredge	Female	Lebanese	50-40
Interviewee 14	Ramlet	Male	Lebanese	45-35
Interviewee 15	Ramlet	Female	Lebanese	35-25
Interviewee 16	Ramlet/wateredge	Male/Female	Syrian	45-35
Interviewee 17	Ramlet/wateredge	Female	Syrian	55-45
Interviewee 18	Ramlet/wateredge	Male/Female	Palestinian	35-25
Interviewee 19	Ramlet	Female	Lebanese	25-18
Interviewee 20	Ramlet	Female	Lebanese	50-40
Interviewee 21	Ramlet	Female	Lebanese	25-18

Table 3-2: Description of the interview data set

The themes were gleaned with the research question in mind, bearing in mind that since the interviews were done in situ, interviewees were given the necessity to think and reflect on the state of being outside (Finney and Rishbeth, 2006) and what leisure next to the sea might mean to them. the primarily recruitment was to aim to gain a balance of Lebanese and non-Lebanese respondents. Within this I aimed to achieve a spread of gender and age. I confirmed non-Lebanese users verbally before commencing the interview. I ensured a degree of heterogeneity

and diversity within interviews to represent groups that may otherwise be marginalised, such as different cultural groups and women. Interviews were conducted in Arabic. Interviews were not recorded to avoid interviewee discomfort, instead detailed research notes in the same language as the interview immediately after. These notes were then translated and transcribed, and coded using Nvivo software. There are of course, complexities of language and specific concepts and words that have more than one meaning in another language. This is especially problematic when working with qualitative research subject to interpretation. This would require accuracy in interpreting the data within the cultural context but equally important is the ability of a researcher to convey the message of the participant's (Al-Amer *et al.*, 2016). The language complexity came about during interview coding when words used did not correspond to their literal meanings but had an undercurrent which may be picked up by a local but not a foreigner.

3.8.4   Desk Review & Netography

The purpose of the desk review was to collect literature, maps, images, policy reports on the seafront in line with precedents such as Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache (2015) and Zone 10 published by AUB's Issam Fares Institute for public policy and international affairs (no date). This task was done across all four zones. The desk review collected maps, imagery and various reports about the seafront. It also served to preliminary identify stakeholders for the next research phase. The aim was to understand the history of the development of each site and collate a stakeholder map regarding public institutions and nongovernmental organisations involved in each site and the activities these have organised over the years. Stakeholder analysis mapped the actors, and their drivers and prepared a list for the next phase of stakeholder interviews.

Netography is a branch of ethnography that analyses the behaviour of individuals on the Internet to provide valuable insights. The idea of applying ethnographic techniques to the study of Internet interactions became popular in the 1990s when it became clear that interesting social formations were beginning to emerge in what we then had come to call 'cyberspace'—field (Hine, 2008). Netography involves the researcher "participating, overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research"(Hine, 2008, p. 4). Netography was used due to the inability to conduct field visits. Online information was collected during COVID-19 using Facebook and Instagram, focusing on accounts posting pictures from Beirut's seafront. I followed at least five significant platforms regularly posting older photos from the seafront. These posts garnered a high level of interaction from users. Emerging themes from posts to these photos were collected. As an active participant, I posted older photos I was sourcing myself on Twitter to elicit user responses. The message content and responses were systematically analysed, and emerging themes were collected. Hine (2005) notes that applying an ethnographic sensibility to understanding online interactions has become a well-established practice. The resulting analysis stressed the viability of online experiences, such that the Internet can constitute both a space and a place. It can also be used as a tool to collect information relating to a particular research field.

3.8.5   Stakeholder Interviews

3.8.5.1 Purpose and precedents

These interviews determined, to the extent possible, local narratives of how and when coalitions between stakeholders occur, the effectiveness of these, and implications for policy, governance, activism and the users of Beirut's seafront.

Identification and analysis techniques of stakeholders are varied and used in various fields such as businesses and higher education (Kettunen, 2015) but remain an effective analytical tool which, when used in an integrative manner, frames issues that are solvable in ways that are technically feasible and politically acceptable to advance the common good (Bryson, 2007). The stakeholder interviews served to investigate the effectiveness of various actors involved in managing, protecting and making claims on the seafront; in-depth semi-structured interviews were used with government institutions, NGOs and activists in line with research by Fawaz (2017) and Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache (2015).

3.8.5.2 Design

The discussion guide had four versions for academics, public office officials, private developers and activists; the same questions were tailored to each stakeholder but about their work and outputs. The discussion guide had six questions and took about an hour to complete (See Appendix 3). Questions were asked about the individuals/organisations' remit about the Beirut seafront; partnerships pursued to accomplish this remit, their views on multiculturalism and integration of seafront users, changes that have occurred over time and how policy impacted these changes; support for marginalised groups to facilitate the use of seafront public spaces and how can they do better in their respective fields of work regarding Beirut's public seafront.

3.8.5.3 Process and Adaptations

The initial research planned ten stakeholder interviews, but as these were conducted during the lockdown and some have agreed to be interviewed online, these rose to seventeen. It was also intended that stakeholders include more government representatives and those working in public offices, such as the mayor of Beirut, the general manager of the ministry of public works, and private sector developers and activists; however, the tense political situation prevented scheduling these as public officials, and private developers were wary of scheduling interviews amidst public anger and at times when activists were being prosecuted.

3.8.5.4 Description of the data set

The final list (Figure 3-20) included the municipality of Beirut, the Governor of Beirut, the Association of Lebanese Architects, and NGO representatives such as the civil campaign to protect the Dalieh of Raouche and Nahnoo, as well as some academics. Since stakeholders were a mix of public office holders, private landscape design offices, NGO and academics, they consented for their names to appear in the thesis. The activist was anonymised due to safety reasons.

Interviewee Name	Post held at the Time of Interview
Abir Saksouk Sasso	Architect, urban planner, co-director at Public Works Studio.
Ali Darwish	Independent Development and Environmental Services Professional. Founder of Green Line
Cynthia Abou Aoun	Architect, consultant, and public space activist
Farah Baba	
Ibrahim Halawi	Former Minister of Tourism
Iffat Idriss Chatilla	President. Operation Big Blue Association - OBBA. 2010
Jawad Sbeiti	Founder of Beirut by Bike
Marwan Abboud	Governor of Beirut
Mohammad Ayoub	President of Nahnoo
Mohammed Kabbani	Former Beirut MP
Mona Fawaz	Professor in Urban Studies and Planning at the American University of Beirut. She recently co-founded the Beirut Urban Lab
Moughir Sinjaba	Member of the municipality of the city of Beirut
Nahida Khalil	Political, social, environmental and trade union activist
Nayla Al Akl	Associate Dean of Student Affairs at American University of Beirut. American University of Beirut Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Ramzi Farhat	Urban Designer Urban Studies and Planning at the American University of Beirut
RN	Activist
Vladimir Djurovic	President · Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture

Figure 3-20: Final Stakeholder Interview List

3.8.6   Analysis
3.8.7   Spatial Mapping

3.8.7.1 Purpose and precedents

The spatial mapping constituted the first part of the questionnaire. The reason questionnaires were used for mapping in this instance was to capture a larger sample to capture the extent of multiculturalism and integration within the city across different scales of the four case studies vis-à-vis the surrounding neighbourhoods, regions and the country itself. The mapping was carried out similarly to Hall (2015). Given Lebanon's post-war divided context, mapping aimed to understand multiculturalism across scale, to shed light on how the symbolic spaces in the city aim to connect people and to understand the effects of migration on the contemporary city.

3.8.7.2 Design

The first question related to the extent of integration of the seafront vis-à-vis the city, neighbourhood, and street. It related to the importance of diversity on the seafront and aimed to determine whether or not users of these spaces were representative of areas in the city. This question relies on experiential and visual inquiry similar to the methodology adopted to explore migrants' perceptions and experiences of urban greenspaces (Hall, 2015; Kim, 2015). Users were asked from which neighbourhood of the city they come from, which served to map users spatially at two different scales: the city and the whole country.

3.8.7.3 Process and Adaptations
This mapping was adapted from a study based which mapped out migratory patterns on a diverse street to show where people originated from, based on the premise that the road

provides a perspective of the city at a specific time (Hall, 2015). This provided a snapshot of issues of migration and urban migration patterns in the city, correlating this to the spatial complexity of data collected on the micro-scale using the remaining questions on the questionnaire and ethnographic observation. Data was analysed using an excel spreadsheet to understand integration across scales quantitatively.

3.8.7.4 Description of the data set

The data set for the mapping constituted the same number of respondents to the questionnaire.

Not all groups are similarly concentrated in the city, as this is a highly dense and enclaved city with designated neighbourhoods that provide housing for lower-income categories. The mapping was used to visualise inequalities and hierarchy across neighbourhoods in Beirut, relating to ethnicity, nationality, and income bracket to space (Hall, 2015).

It is also noteworthy that I was administering the questionnaire at the time. However, the questionnaire was primarily quantitative, mostly with multiple choice answers. Qualitative information was also gathered in two ways. The first was a few open-answer questions (and the second was through 'additional comments, which were captured in note form during the administration of the questionnaire. Although this was not intended, the questionnaire also resulted in 200 'mini-stories'. These mini stories were used as qualitative data coded and analysed in Nvivo based on the emerging coding themes.

3.8.8 Quantitative Analysis

Questionnaire responses were imported and recorded on an excel sheet, the tool used to conduct the quantitative analysis for this research. Analysis was conducted across case studies, and some variables across case studies were combined, such as gender, socio-economic status, nationality and age. These were analysed across case studies to understand disparities.

The question about mapping was also imported and recorded into excel. Responses were grouped first according to the Beirut district users lived in and then Lebanon's districts. The numbers were then translated into maps where higher numbers of visitors showed a higher concentration of a specific colour. The gradient showed the density where the most visitors to a particular public place came from across the city's neighbourhoods and country districts.

3.8.9. Qualitative analysis

Interview transcripts were imported into Nvivo, which was used as a tool to identify patterns within the identified themes that cut across all data sources and conceptual frameworks. The data inputted in Nvivo was organised and analysed hierarchically at multiple levels, from specific to generalisations (Creswell, J, 2014). Emerging themes were assembled according to the theoretical framework and thematically organised, and findings were written up while identifying appropriate supporting statements from interviews.

After each site visit, field notes were recorded and reflected upon. Themes and codes were generated as I read transcripts bearing in mind fieldwork notes and earlier thinking processes I had done before commencing fieldwork. Data were thematically coded under the following

broad themes: physical attributes of space, narratives of leisure, issues of class, gender, multiculturalism and integration. Within these themes, codes were generated. The coding was done with research questions in mind, thinking through the themes that seemed important, continually referred to by respondents or piqued research interest. This resulted in qualitative data that was analysed using Nvivo. The coding, processing and analysis was a cyclical procedure; according to (Saldana, 2016), and in line with critical realism, codes are significant phrases that make meaning; they are a trigger that makes something else happen. This results in a rigorous, analytical and evocative frame of thinking which produces interpretation. Coding is not just labelling; it is a thinking process that leads you to link and interpret, especially when responses are loaded with meaning. Coding is simply one way of analysing data. It certainly is not the only way; coding was chosen because of its ability to qualitatively analyse language-based material and visual data. Data included field notes, interview transcripts, informal conversations, images, and netography (Saldana, 2016). Coding has been aptly described by (Charmaz, 2011) as the link between data collection and the interpretation of the data. According to Madden (2010), another reason for choosing to code is because it is primarily an interpretive act, to summarise, distil or condense data and not merely reduce it - because it adds to our understanding of the story and because the act of choosing the codes is a somewhat analytical process a researcher engages with over time (See Appendix 4 for the list of codes). The data for this chapter was then accentuated with in-depth interviews on two sites of Manara and Ramlet al Bayda during summer of 2021 due to the inability to travel during 2020 due to Covid-19.

I tried to the extent possible not to be biased with preconceptions and judgment. I approached the research with a novel and genuine inquisitiveness. The study itself was a step back from urban planning and development work I had done over years in practice. This was an opportunity to grow as a researcher and be mindful of beliefs, preconceptions and experiences I may have about the field.

3.9 Collaboratory pilot impact project

This thesis planned to implement findings together with an NGO in Beirut that is open to collaboration to apply principles and activities that can take place in open public spaces. Due to COVID-19 implications, the collaborative pilot project was not implemented. The research still aims to gain funding to allow for follow-up research.

3.10 Research Ethics and integrity

3.10.1 Key concerns and challenges

An ethics application form was submitted for approval to the Landscape Architecture ethics committee. The ethics form included a field risk assessment form which included relevant measures for natural conditions and exposure, methods-related risks such as conducting interviews in secluded areas, security (e.g. theft), political stability & terrorism in Lebanon and Foreign Office advice and working in rugged terrain. The ethics application included a consent form and information sheet given to all participants, except the survey, which included verbal consent, given that no sensitive information was collected. During fieldwork, a conscious decision was made to dress appropriately and be patient. Emphasis was placed on a sensibility to culture and intuitive empathy, listening and observing closely rather than making assumptions or imposing preconceived ideas and notions about situations I may have as a local. These are considered tenets of good ethnography that were enacted and reflected upon throughout.

3.10.2 Key decisions and risk mitigation

Despite pre-fieldwork preparations, numerous ethical and moral dilemmas were encountered; these were difficult to anticipate and therefore were not planned. First, on Zeituna Bay, I experienced minor difficulty getting participants to stop and participate in the survey. A conscious decision was made to dress better and a bit more stylishly than the other sites and speak in English, and this worked well as participants affiliated with me more (Tanu and Dales, 2016). They still, however, did not engage in more extended conversations as users of the other sites did. The site entrances are closed in the early morning, and these are only open at 6 am; this means the site is less busy than the other site in the early morning, and I would start my fieldwork after 7 am. Another difficulty was personal harassment on site, and although this was not encountered much, I was still harassed by men while conducting fieldwork. I did avoid particular groups of men whom I was aware I could be approached, especially around Dalieh, given the secluded nature of the area and its terrain. Another difficulty encountered was witnessing physical violence on-site in the form of racism. While as ethnographic researchers, we are trained to keep professional detachment from site and subjects, still, when faced with an act of physical violence against a Syrian refugee on Ramlet Al Bayda public beach, I did call the police. I was subsequently seen as an antagonist by users on the beach who were rooting for the Lebanese aggressor.

The last difficulty encountered in the field was simply the inability to conduct research for over a year in 2020 due to COVID-19. Instead, I used this year to complete what I could of writing, incorporating netography, and conducting some of the stakeholder interviews online.

5.10.3 Ethics as embedded and ongoing

I obtained informed consent from all participants. None of those who participated was under 18 years old. Thus, parental consent was not required. The research purpose and aims were explained to participants, and they were given a chance to enquire about the meaning of the research, its implications, and how data will be used and stored. All participants were made aware of a process for withdrawing from the research if desired.

3.11   Positionality, Reflexivity and Limitations

My positionality largely influenced fieldwork as a researcher trained as an urban planner with fifteen years of practical work experience conducting research across the Middle East. I am Lebanese, which positioned me as an insider to Lebanese who made knowing remarks about foreigners and the presence of refugees knowing that I would be able to pick up on this. The fact that I am studying abroad also gave me a vantage point that people did want to be interviewed and be heard in the hopes that my work did influence the quality and access to better public spaces in Beirut. This was important to users who did want to be interviewed. The fact that I am a female made it easy to approach families, including women and children, but also made me a susceptible harassment target for groups of men or individual incidences where men caught me unawares.

My role was not just an impartial observer but also a participant in Beirut's open space and social dynamics, even to some extent when physically remote. Beirut is a city I witnessed go through a civil war, a period of recovery, and as of October 2019, the most severe economic crisis in the world since the 1850's (*Lebanon Sinking into One of the Most Severe Global Crises Episodes, amidst Deliberate Inaction*, 2021). [4] When I started my PHD in 2018, I did not anticipate the difficulties this research would be subject to and the many contextual changes that took place. While

conducting research, collecting and analysing data, and writing up findings and conclusions, my positionality as a researcher was in constant fluidity (Adu-Ampong and Adams, 2020), similar to the philosophical framework of this thesis which underlines that reality and space is in constant flux and ever-changing. Similar to a sea that ebbs and falls, hold memories, the city's tribulations, as well as its forward and backwards movements.

It is important to think critically about the role and positionality of the researcher as the 'observer'. I know my positionality when wandering around cities, looking at buildings, and striking up not-so-innocent chats with shopkeepers and security personnel passers-by. I look at buildings; I observe how people use space during different times of the day. Also, I am an active participant in the city I am examining. I use Ayn el Mreisseh Manara corniche, Ramlet al Bayda Public Beach Dalieh and Zeituna bay. I use these sites frequently depending on what I am doing during the day, as these spots offer me time for respite during a busy day. I am an avid jogger, and if I go for a jog during the day or night, I will use Ayn el Mreisseh Manara corniche. If I am after a cup of coffee or a quick lunch with family, I will opt for Zeituna Bay or Manara. If I want to spend some time on my own with my thoughts, I will go to Dalieh, and if I want to start random conversations with people, then Ramlet al Bayda public beach is my go-to place. As such, this practice allows me also to situate myself by participating in user activities in the city I am examining (Manohar *et al.*, 2017; Adu-Ampong and Adams, 2020).

I experienced a heavy emotional attachment to the country during the October 17th uprisings (Thawra) and COVID-19 in 2019, the August 4th 2020 explosion and the subsequent and continuing dire economic situation in Lebanon.

On October 17th, I participated in the morning in a peaceful protest while scheduled to leave for the UK on the same evening. It would be a little under two years when I could come back. October 17th was a turning point; the face of Beirut and Lebanon, as I know, it started to fade away. Access to public spaces remained a critical entry point in the protests; it was seen as an essential demand for protesters who organised sit-ins, breakfasts, human chains of peace and more violent demonstrations along Beirut's seafront on Zeituna Bay, Eden Bay, and Manara.

The COVID-19 pandemic had practical and theoretical impacts on the research. Due to the need to reschedule some of the 'core' fieldwork (on-site interviews) and comply with constantly changing travel restrictions, I could not conduct the last research phase. It was also a time which shifted user patterns and perceptions of the value of the seafront. During Lebanon's lockdown, outdoor exercise was banned, and people were not allowed on the seafront. This was a significant disappointment for seafront users as this space constitutes a vital breathing outlet for the city residents and close friends who communicated their feelings of suffocation to me.

The August 4th 2020, Beirut port blast (while I was resident in the UK) was an anxiety-inducing event. I was concerned for my family and friends. I was then troubled about the case studies and how this event could change my research and findings. The subsequent economic crisis later that year transformed public spaces on Beirut's seafront- the seafront provided both a formal and informal outlet for leisure and escapism for people. Overcrowded during all times, people simply had nowhere else to go for affordable leisure and respite. Although the port blast did not incur physical damages to the site, the sheer increase in the volume of use after the economic crisis resulted in rapid depreciation of the overall quality of the corniche.

I finally travelled back to Beirut in June 2021. I essentially spent the following period in shock, responding to the situation of my family, my friends, the streets, and Beirut's seafront public spaces. Beirut's seafront spaces were so worn, dirty and overcrowded. The seafront mirrored the

state of the country- every spot was occupied at all the different times of the day and throughout the night due to electric outages. The city had plunged into almost complete darkness, and people had nowhere to go. Everyone needed breathing space, and Beirut's seafront provided this.

The dire economic situation and massive loss of jobs (The Lebanese pound lost 90% of its worth in late 2019) meant people had time on their hands and needed a space to spend time which for many people was the seafront. Here as a landscape architect/planner, I was conflicted. While it is generally positive to see a seafront space well used, as a Lebanese planner and researcher, I was also angry. I was angry at a useless, corrupt and criminal state but also at people for still not tolerating others. These feelings faded as time passed, and I focused on the seafront, which gave me a sense of "we are all in it together".

The methodological framing using Critical Realism and Urban Assemblages allowed examining research questions with a sense of understanding that reality is in constant flux, and so are the cities and the users we study- there could be other realities and other causation relationships. These two frameworks often recommend the use of mixed methods, which influenced the choice of research methods in this research. The interdisciplinary research questions used qualitative and quantitative methods to understand complex questions in a multifaceted context. The following three chapters focus on the three research questions in this thesis: (1) the extent of multiculturalism and integration using quantitative methods and mapping through the data collected from the questionnaire; (2) To understand how communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability are experienced and voiced by diverse users using qualitative in-depth interviews, observation, walks, photo analysis, sketches; (3) To record and evaluate the history and current situation of governance policies and grass-root activism on the seafront over recent history and in light of October 17, 2020 uprising using qualitative methods of a desk review and stakeholder interviews.

The following three chapters of this thesis present the data analysis as they relate to the three research questions in this thesis and their respective data sets produced from the research adopted.

4. Spatial integration and segregation across Beirut's seafront

This chapter presents the findings relating to the first research question of this thesis- to investigate integration and segregation concerning patterns of users and uses of the seafront as to whether these reflect the population diversity of Beirut. I draw on the mapping and quantitative analysis to understand Beirut as an ethnically integrative city and whether its historical spatial and religious divisions are currently reflected in its public spaces. Integration refers to the co-presence of the multiple ethnicities currently comprising the city's population in its public spaces. Lebanon's divided context is important as it provides insights into identities, practices, presence and stratification on a country, city neighbourhood, and site levels on multi-scalar levels. The findings are meant to give a lens to look at integration, a dynamic that is not static, especially in a city like Beirut, whose geospatial boundaries are fluid, everchanging and contested daily.

The following is the analysis of the 441 survey questions asked across the four case studies of Manara (120), Ramlet al Bayda Public Beach (122), Dalieh (79) and Zeituna Bay (120). This captured snapshot highlights the demographic profile of those visiting the place, noting activities they engaged in and the duration of their stay in this place. In addition to collating demographic information to assess co-presence, I recorded preferences and usage patterns of the seafront. Though this section primarily reports on quantitative findings of the survey, I also contextualise and interpret results through qualitative data gathered using respondent conversations made while doing the study, and through my observations recorded in my field journal.
Chapter 5 then provides contextual evidence through narratives of leisure voiced by users to frame spatial and leisure practices on the seafront.

This chapter is structured by themes: temporality of user patterns, patterns of use and activity, user profiles and integration and visitor patterns, and the relation of study sites to the city. Themes are discussed by site except in section 4.3 where socio-economic profiling is compared across all sites.

4.1 The temporality of user patterns for each site

It is important to start understanding each case study site by mundane ways in which it is used, the mix of activities and reasons for visiting, and patterns of use in the case study sites. The city grew more fragmented since the civil. War, as did peoples' memory of it. Seafront public spaces seem to fade in our collective historical and recent memory. Each area is brought alive through data relating to these patterns over a day, weeks, or years. A temporal lens is used to understand the social dynamics. Demographic changes resulted in dramatic changes to the city as we know it, including our memory of it- the most recent being the August 4, 2020 blast in the port of Beirut. These events often cause further politico-religious divides, which over time translates into new neighbourhood schisms, which translates into prosaic temporality of place use.

4.1.1 Manara

Time and temporality are essential to frame and understand Manara, commonly known as the Corniche of Beirut; this is a 4 km stretch extending from Zeituna Bay to Raouche. The long walkway is the oldest, most populated, and most transient stretch. This is where city residents

congregate to jog, swim or run in the morning when a sense of health and well-being brings them together; people can have a quick lunch and walk at noon and groups of friends and family take a stroll early evening. The promenade's direct access to the sea is intermittently obstructed by high-end resorts, hotels and tourism developments targeted towards the wealthier echelons of Lebanese society and non-Lebanese tourists. These developments broadly restrict access of the average everyday Lebanese and lower income groups to the beach, creating two different zones; safe for a few spots where users have fitted makeshift ladders to access the few open rocky areas along the coast. Benches, though poorly maintained, offer long views as users sit and look out over the foreshore and across the sea.

Manara's diverse users will practice different activities if they occupy the street level or the beach section. The use of space changes like a movie frame throughout the day. During the week, leisure activity on the Manara starts as early as 5:00 am and as the sun rises over the sea. Users occupy two levels, the street level, where they can use the length of the walkway for jogging, running, walking and practice physical exercises while enjoying the proximity to the sea. During this time, users use the rocky shoreline for swimming or fishing, more commonly at weekends when people have more time to spare. The survey covered various sets of users: swimmers and fishermen on the shoreline and those participating in health, well-being and various leisurely activities on the street level.

More into the daily pattern of use, morning users of Manara are bound together by a sense of health and wellbeing that brings them together to this space to jog, walk, exercise, play palette or engage in group exercises. There is a sense of belonging and familiarity among these users as many know each other from years of dedication to their well-being exercised in this place. This sense of comradery fades as the day progresses into noon when the health-conscious users are replaced by a more significant number of people wanting to have a temporary respite and restoration from the busyness of the city, this could be a quick lunch break, a quick walk, or just take a break with a friend during a busy day. The sense of togetherness and belonging further dissipates and a sense of segregated group solidarity and larger crowds overtakes the narrow walkway as family groups congregate in the early evening and groups of men occupy benches to either walk or spend time together or play cards, smoke shisha, among other activities.

In contrast to the other case-studies, Manara is busiest during the week, with many preferring to visit the site then. This is reflected in respondents' preferences (100 respondents preferred to visit during the weekday while 63 preferred weekends (Figure 4-1). This weekday preference I reflected by busyness, particularly on the street level promenade, while in contrast, the rocky beach spots which are naturally more crowded during the weekend especially Sundays in summer, the day off for the majority of Syrian refugees and migrant workers as well as Lebanese. The majority who do visit during the week stated they do so because it is slightly less crowded during the week than the weekend. I gleaned from questionnaire respondents that the time of visit doesn't matter, usually this response relates to their current lifestyle; this means they do have some control over their time and work is flexible or on the other end of the spectrum that they are unemployed so it did not matter, (43 respondents) didn't have a preference between weekends and weekdays.
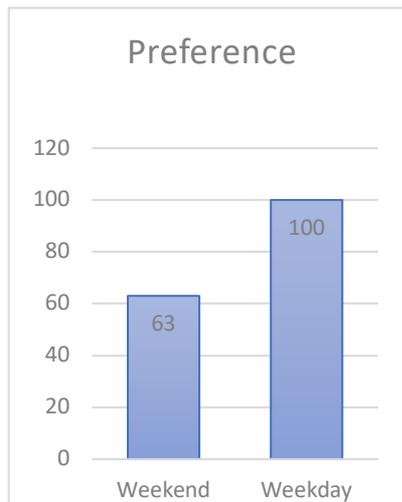
Figure 4-1: Visitor preference
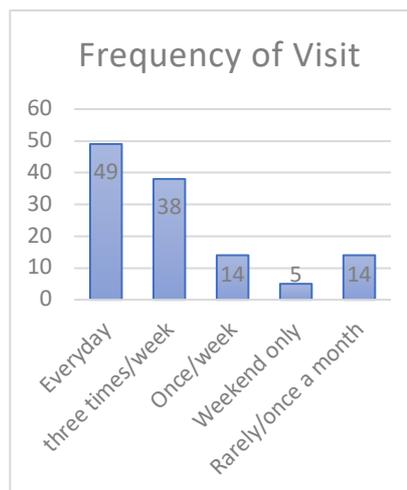
Figure 4-2: Frequency of Visit

More in detail, as seen in Figure 4-2, contrary to all other cases the majority of respondents stated that they visit Manara every day, followed by those who visit three times a week. Only five respondents said they *only* visited at the weekends. In unpacking the data, out of the 14 who visited once a month, only five of these were walking on the stretch; the other users were on the rocky AUB water edge beach and Jal el Bahr with six out of fourteen living in the southern suburbs of Beirut (an area characterised by low-income residents from the Muslim Shiite community as well as Syrians and Palestinians). Those occupying the lower rocky stretches are predominantly male and lower income; quite a few have time on their hands, are unemployed and would want to make the most of the day while hanging out with friends. Women do not generally spend time in this particular area of the shoreline apart from visiting with larger family members often refugees on weekends.

As shown in Figure 4-3, most respondents visiting Manara spend one hour or more in the area. The most common activity is to jog and walk along the walkway rather than remaining in one spot. Those who spend half a day or the whole day mostly occupy the rocky beach, predominantly middle-low income men who have come to spend time with friends participating in sports activities such as volleyball, basketball, swimming and playing cards. Those who are fishing also tend to spend longer time on the stretch or the water edge. Although not specifically included in the sample, those visiting private beaches, hotels and developments is also likely to spend a long time to make the most of the day.
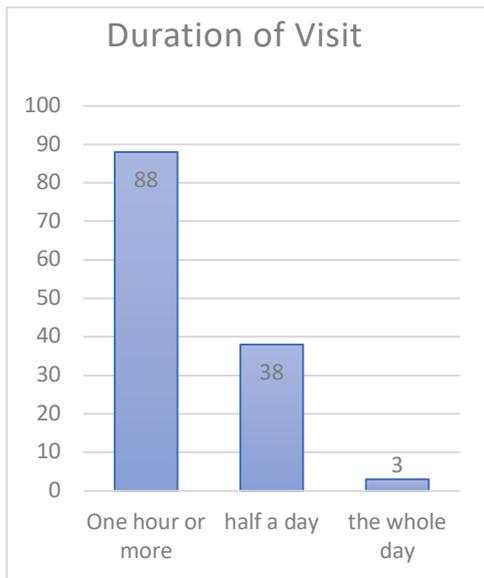
Figure 4-3: Duration of Visit
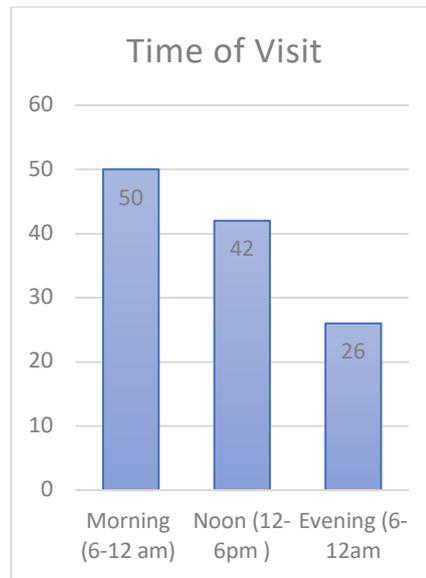
Figure 4-4: Time of visit

Ain el Mreisseh, the larger area in front of the al Amin mosque, just before it stretches into a promenade towards the east, is very crowded. Figure 4-4 shows that of the questionnaire respondents, 50 visited in the morning, 42 visited during noon, and 26 visited during the early evening. The site is always busy into the night, predominantly with groups of men playing cards or backgammon and a smaller number of families strolling. The site is occupied by couples, loiters, sex workers and a few fishermen during the latest hours of the night just before daybreak. The walkway is well-lit when the street lights are on and has better connectivity with smaller pathways linking it to the city area opposite.

Lastly, a note on seasonality. Manara tends to be busier during Beirut's pleasant spring and especially during the hot and humid summer months, where groups of people can always be seen swimming and diving on the few accessible rocky beaches. On the rocky beach itself, there are dozens of hotels and tourist development preventing access to the beach. The American University of Beirut's main campus is opposite the stretch and is one of the main reasons people park in the vicinity to visit the campus. AUB rents part of the rocky beach as its summer beach from the Lebanese government. This functions as a private access beach for AUB during the summer months (September-July) and has awnings on the street level preventing non-paying users from street-level access. Once the awnings are removed in September, the beach becomes public again, awnings are removed, and people on the street level gain access to a larger plot of the beach for a few months. Many other developments on the rocky beach prevent direct access to the beach; some of these are the Riviera Hotel, Summerland, The Central Military Club, Dbaibo café, the Ain el Mreisseh and Jal el Baher fishermen marina, the Military port, the Movenpick Hotel among many others. The street level remains busy during the colder months. However, many would still engage in morning exercise since the winters in Beirut are quite mild. Still, the stretch is used less frequently during rainy days, and the space crowds up quickly during the sporadic sunny days throughout winter.

4.1.2   Ramlet al Bayda public beach

Ramlet al Bayda public beach is the last remaining sandy public beach in Beirut. It is a place where historically people from across the city and beyond visit to connect to the sea and the water. However, the user profile has changed over the years.

There are three distinct zones on Ramlet al Bayda. Two street-level promenades (cascading above each other) and a sandy beach attract different users engaging in different activities. The upper zone promenade at the level of the high residential buildings is less popular than the second street-level promenade near the sea. The street level closest to the sea is popular and is occupied by those who predominantly use it to walk or jog during the day until early evening. The third zone is the sandy beach that is used by family groups and for various sports and activities. Those who use the promenade in the early morning into early afternoon are predominantly those living in the site vicinity and are bound by a sense of health and wellbeing, similar to Manara. By noon, these users drop off and are replaced by those having a lunch break or a quick walk from nearby offices and those sipping coffee while sitting in their cars or the few available benches to enjoy the sea expanse. By early evening, dynamics start to change, and the second level of the beach starts to fill up by the male groups who regularly congregate after work for a quick swim, a game of volleyball or backgammon. Here, different groups become noticeable on the beach as those who know each other will huddle in different groups together that an outsider would find hard to spontaneously join. It is these same groups that occupy the beach on the weekend and are then joined by many smaller groups of Syrian refugee families who visit from all over the country for some respite and quality time with family on the public seafront beach. Groups mostly remain segregated and have little interaction with each other. Given the low maintenance of the beach by public authorities from the 1980s onward, this space has become stigmatized as a lower-income public space that was rife with drug users. The public beach nowadays is busiest on weekends with families and groups who participate in various sports activities. There are a few tourist visitors.

The street level walkway along the beach is fairly busy during the week, and the beach less busy during the week and busier on the weekend. Respondents indicated they preferred to visit on a weekday rather on a weekend (Figure 4-5).

Figure 4-5: Preferred day to visit
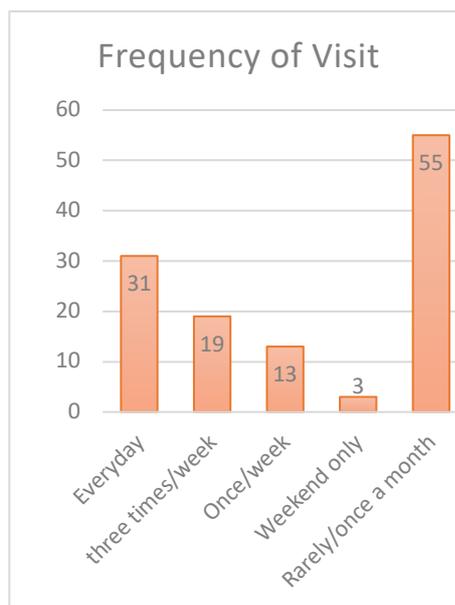
Figure 4-6: Frequency of visit

As seen in Figure 4-6, many respondents said they visit Ramlet al Bayda rarely or once a month only, followed by those who visit a week thrice and those who visit once a week. Further, those who visited rarely were mostly found on the beach or at the beach entrances, indicating they are likely to be lower-income families who have come to spend the whole day with their families, as opposed to those who frequently jog for an hour or so along the promenade during different times of the day. Respondents visiting Ramlet daily seeking to spend one hour or more; were those who engaged in walking and jogging along the seafront walkway (Fig 4-7).

Duration of Stay

Category	Value
One hour or more	68
half a day	45
the whole day	9
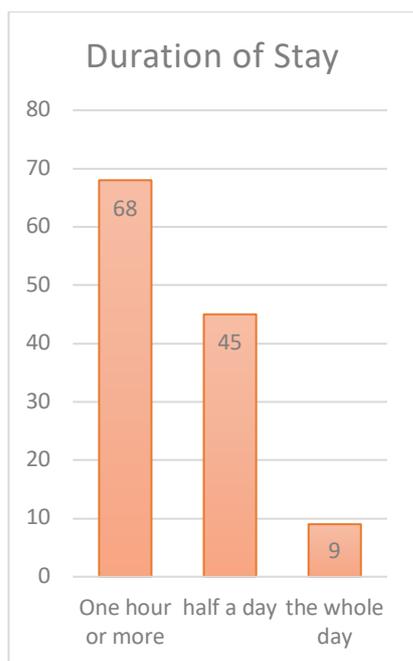
Figure 4-7: Duration of stay

Time of visit

Category	Value
Morning (6-12 am)	44
Noon (12-6pm)	45
Evening (6-12am	33
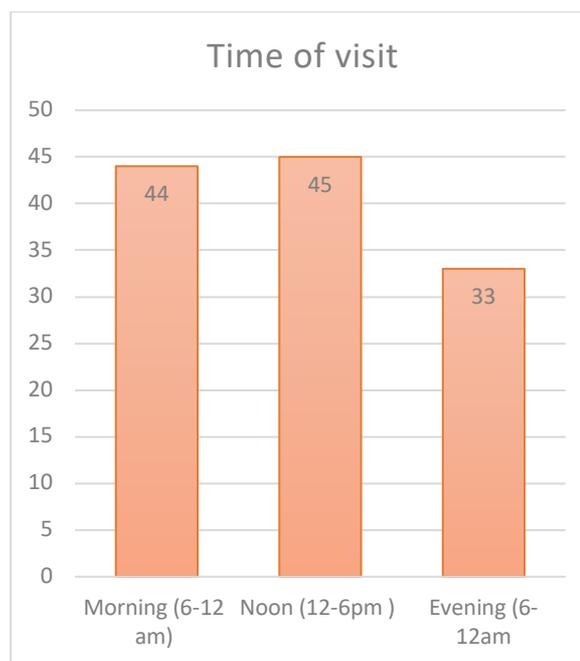
Figure 4-8: Time of Visit

The typology of the place and the fact that the beach has little physical connection to its surroundings means it has a segregated feel. This is accentuated by the fact that it is not always lit during the evenings with a few pedestrian crossings. Most respondents visited at noon (45) and in the morning (44), and the lowest number of respondents, especially females, visited early evening. The beach is not typically used during the evening except for a few people fishing and a few couples: During the evening, you will find small groups of men on the beach, adversely impacting the number of women who would feel safe visiting the site during this time. Also, during the evenings, the street level is usually lined with cars of couples wanting privacy provided by the dark and secluded location. Most teams sit in the privacy of their vehicles or opt to have a walk. In the mid-1980s area had a reputation for drug users and prostitution during the night; however, as far as current observation has shown, there is not enough evidence to attest to this. A small number of respondents spent the whole day on the public beach (9). Many were working, and a few were from a lower income category or migrant workers who spend their money on transport to come to the beach and would like to make the most of their time.

The space is highly frequented during the spring and summer months and is considerably less crowded during the fall and winter months. During winter, the NGO that manages the beach

itself, operation Big Blue, removes most of the urban furniture, so the beach becomes quite bare. During colder months, those who use the space to exercise still do so. Still, beachgoers and sports enthusiasts become pretty limited in the time they spend their timeon the sandy and wet beach, with use becoming limited to the occasional good weather day. It is common to see a few low-income families use the ill-maintained and rusted children's play area found at the beach entrance during a day out.

4.1.3   Dalieh

In Beirut, Dalieh refers to a vast terrain that extends from the city's emblematic Pigeon Rock, better known in Arabic as Sakhret el-Raouche, and slopes gently towards the sea. Dalieh's typology is quite environmentally unique, with coastal cliffs on the landside and rock islands, protruding limestone terraces and natural pool enclaves. The limestone headland extends into the sea and is not fully visible at different angles of the street level.

People predominantly congregate on Dalieh during weekends, and it is then that the secluded headland is reasonably busy. The headland is not occupied during the week, given its landscape character and almost complete disconnection from the pavement promenade. Dalieh's visitors during the week come to socialise informally with friends or engage in fishing, fish and generally hang out with friends. Most groups on Dalieh know each other, and there is a familial sense to the place during the week. This familiarity changes during the weekend when Dalieh fills out with highly diverse communities of Lebanese, Syrian, Kurds, and Palestinian groups of people seeking refuge from crowded living conditions predominantly in Beirut's dense suburbs. Most respondents said they preferred to come to Dalieh on the weekend instead of weekday. I conducted the questionnaire in two zones in Dalieh: the street level overlooking the headland and pigeon rock, where tourists predominantly stop to take pictures of the iconic limestone rocks at sea, have a quick stroll and leave. The second zone is the actual headland which takes you down to Dalieh and pigeon rock. These users venture further down either are familiar with the area or are tourists or day visitors invited by those operating boat trips. Both sets of users were included in the questionnaire.
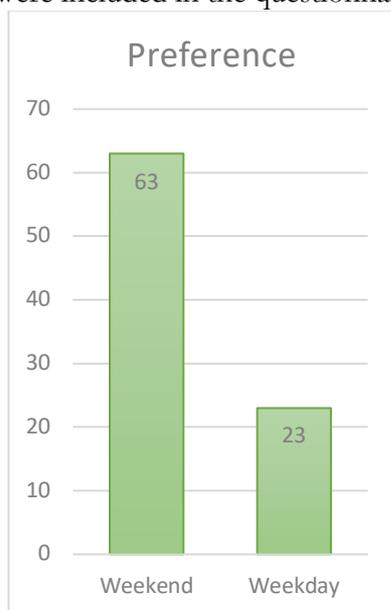
Figure 4-9: Proffered day to visit
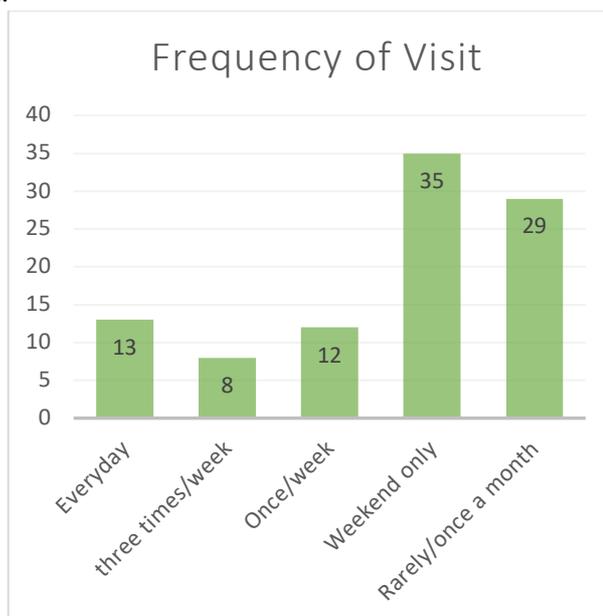
Figure 4-10: Frequency of visit

As seen in   Figure 4-10, most respondents stated that they visit Dalieh weekends only and are likely to frequent the place every weekend closely followed by those who visit rarely or once a month likely because they cannot afford to visit so often. The rest of the respondents varied between visiting three times a week, once a week and respondents who visited every day.

According to Figure 4-11, it's rare but not uncommon that people make short visits to Dalieh to meet up with friends or sit in the sun. The majority of respondents visiting Dalieh spend half the day or a full day on the rocky headland; this is likely related to the fact that most come to swim, fish and spend time with family and friends and all of these activities require time.
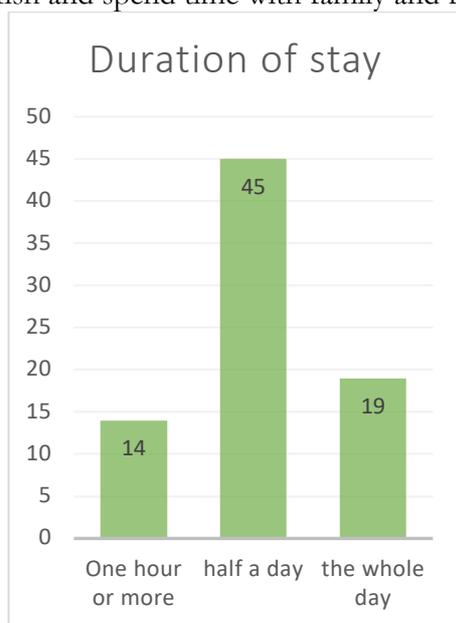
Figure 4-11: Duration of Stay
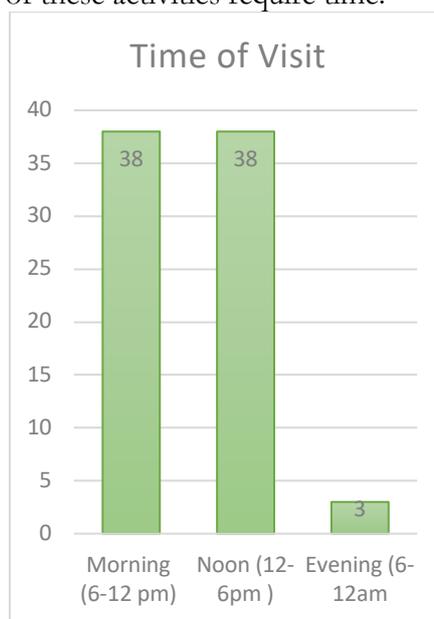
Figure 4-12: Time of Visit

Daily rhythms of use are also distinct from other locations, with a marked preference for use during daylight hours, and markedly low use in evenings. This is due to the secluded nature of the headland, perceptions of safety and the lack of facilities. Dalieh is not well-lit beyond the fishermen's port. The rocky and untamed typology of the headland does not make it popular with joggers or walkers. Most Dalieh users during the week are almost exclusively men who congregate in small groups or fish. It is only at the weekends when the headland is occupied by families, mostly Syrians and other nationalities. One pattern of use fundamental to understanding Dalieh is the working schedule of the fishermen at the Marina, who set out in their boats at 3-5 am and usually return around midday. It has no public amenities and is not well lit. Hence, the majority of respondents visited at high noon, early evening and the morning, with only a few visiting during the evenings, except for fishermen working on the Marina. They usually set out to fish between 3-5 am and return to the marina, usually around midday around noon.

The attraction of spending time on Dalieh is seasonal. During the colder winter months, one would only be able to find a few fishermen on site, those who operate boats, and a run-down kiosk, who benefit from occasional tourists. Sometimes nature lovers are attracted to the headland during the winter months to enjoy the experience of being near a rougher sea and the crashing waves. During winter, it is unlikely to see the crowds and groups from different multicultural communities. However, on the 21st of March every year, Kurdish community members gather in Dalieh, transforming the site with thousands of users setting up food kiosks,

a music stage and dance all day carrying their national flags since this is a large public space that is accessible around Beirut.

4.1.4   Zeituna Bay

People predominantly visit Zeituna Bay Beirut's affluent reclaimed Marina during weekends, with the restaurants and the wooden public walkway generally busy these days. There are two distinct user groups at Zeituna Bay. The first group of users are those who predominantly use the walkway on the street and the marina itself. These visitors use the space to walk or jog at anytime of the day until late in the evening. This is possible as the place is predominantly well-lit and well-connected to the adjacent area of Minet El Host ,which hosts residential towers, affluent hotels and boutiques. The second group is those who are visiting to eat in restaurants. These have not been targeted while conducting the questionnaire. However, some were included while walking to or from the restaurants as this group is also likely to use the marina public walkway and have come for a stroll or enjoy the scenery after a meal.

The marina walk is unexpectedly quiet throughout the week. More respondents said they preferred to visit on a weekday (94) rather on a weekday (55) as it is less busy during the week, or said the day didn't matter. It largely depends on when they are free (29).
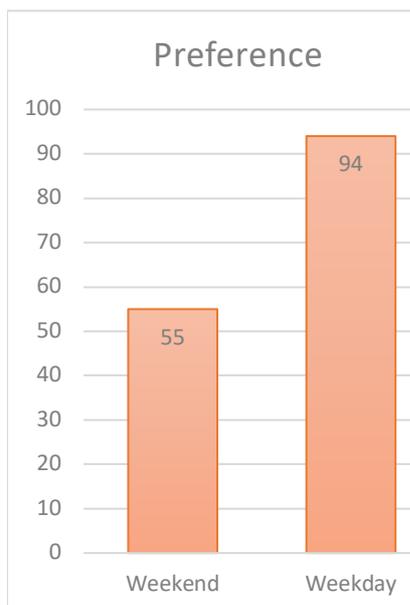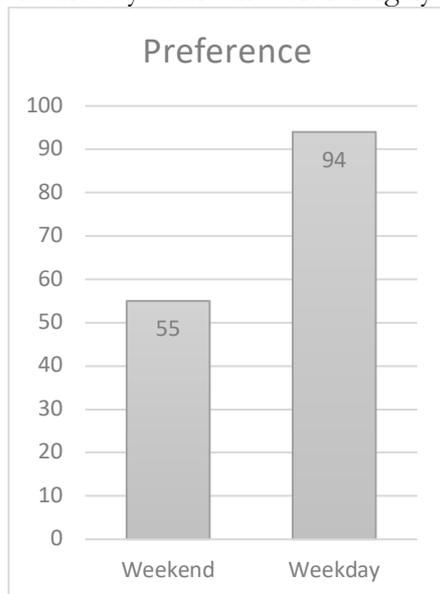

Figure 4-13:Preferred Day to visit
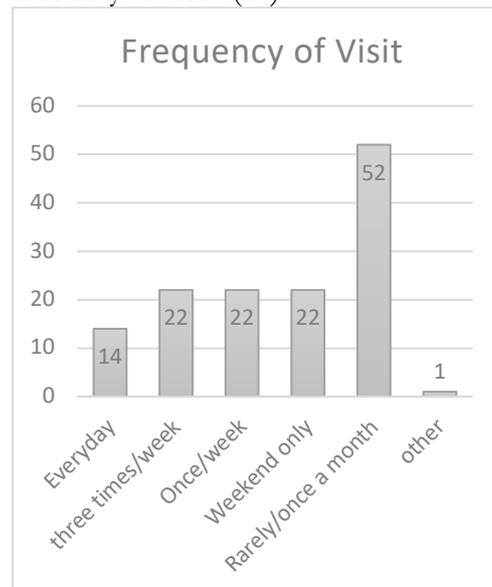
Figure 4-14: Frequency of Visit

As seen in Figure 4-14, most respondents said they visit Zeituna Bay rarely or once a month only, and an equal number of visitors visited three times a week, once a week and on the weekend only. Those who rarely visited, did so on the weekend for a stroll on the wooden walkway as they were from lower income groups who could only go for an outing on a Sunday and would not be able to afford the high-end restaurants on site.

Compared to both Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda, most people visiting Zeituna Bay spend one hour or more, and these are likely to be the ones walking on the wooden public walkway (Fig 4-15). The number of people visiting the area for half a day or the entire day is meager. Those who did spend half or a whole day did so for a specific reason. For example, one family owned a boat, and they were there to spend the day on it. Another example is a Syrian refugee who enjoys

reading and would spend the entire day sitting and reading on the wooden deck and another Lebanese who worked at the restaurant and had to be there all day for work; he happened to be taking a break when he agreed to fill out the questionnaire.

Contrary to all the other case-studies, Zeituna Bay is the only time where people mostly visit after sunset. This is most likely related to the typology of the place, its compactness and its aesthetically pleasing design. The site is well equipped with social amenities including restaurants, it is well lit and has private security 24/7, and the site is well connected to its surrounding district Minet Al Hosn. This means the majority of users visited during the evening (45), in the morning (39) and the lowest number of visitors (36) visited noon time. In general, the site, is not typically busy during the day and almost deserted in the early morning as joggers prefer the longer stretch of the Corniche. The site is very busy after 5 pm and especially on a weekend, as restaurant goers and strollers take over the space.

4.2 Pattern of Use & Activities

The typology and morphology of the space is a significant factor in determining patterns of use and range of activities. The intentions of designers is important, as designers can manipulate function of space and increase the probability of particular behaviours in environments, such as creating comfortable settings, providing urban furniture where people can sit and socialise, creating human-scale visually attractive environments, providing safe spaces and ease of movement and connectivity which encourages social mixing and spaces that are available to all (Carmona, Matthew *et al.*, 2010). However, socially-responsive design principles of public spaces are not a priority on the Beirut municipality agenda. In most case study sites, users are not able to influence and contribute to the design of their own spaces and how they are used. The exception is Zeituna Bay, where the marina walkway was commissioned by Solidere and designed by Steven Holl Architects, L.E.F.T and Nabil Gholam Architecture in 2014 and is privately managed.

4.2.1   Manara

There are two levels of visitors to the Manara: those walking the horizontal stretch on the street level and those who congregate in groups to use the rocky beach spots they can access. As seen in Figure 4-16 and Figure 4-15.
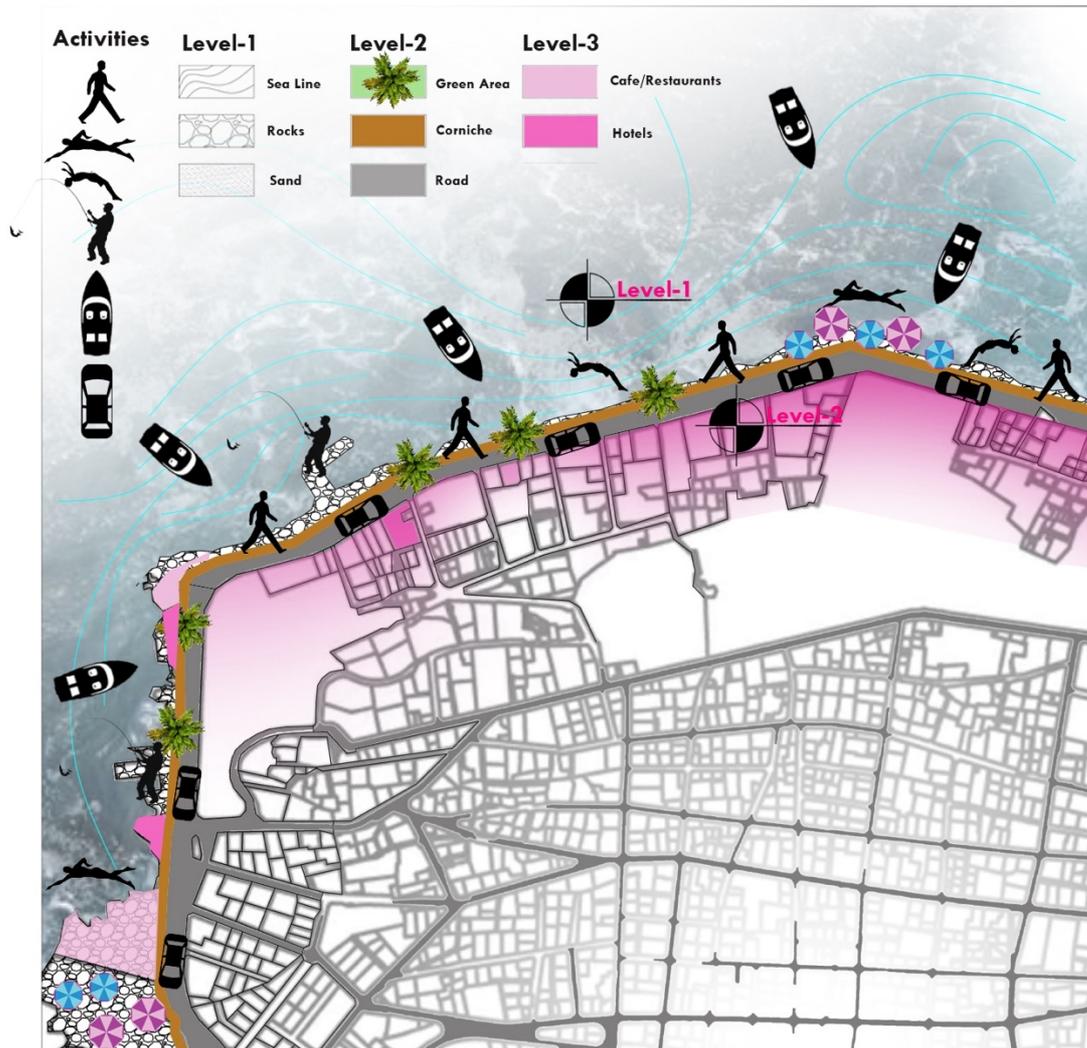
Figure 4-15: Activities across levels
Plan by Layla elAmine

most users visit the promenade to exercise, another popular activity has a quick stop to look at the sea, have a quick coffee, observe people and spend time with family and friends, all to break the monotony of a day. In the morning, the walkway is teeming with joggers, and every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, a group of elderly citizens for stretching exercises promptly at 530 am. Often you see people greet each other, while some huddle in smaller groups, especially on the Ain El Mreisseh wider area, for a quick game of palette, morning coffee and breakfast before the start of the busy day. However, the majority come for an hour or more during the day to jog or walk briskly.

There are also groups of men on the street level who play cards and backgammon. They sit huddled together in groups on the street level and play a game, usually as of Friday early evening. These groups congregate just off Ain el Mreisseh; they will bring chairs and use the benches and typically do so early evening late into the night; these groups are those who come to the Manara to spend time with friends. A few joggers and some users would bring food with them to have a quick picnic, and since it's a public space, users on Manara are allowed to walk their dogs as opposed to Zeituna Bay, for example, where they are prohibited from doing so. A less popular

activity during the week of the summer months is swimming on the rocky stretches the sea level; swimming is a lot more popular on the weekend since it's an activity that needs more time. There are specific spots where people swim next to the AUB beach and next to Jal el Baher Marina, mostly occupied on weekends. These spots are accessible by makeshift ladders, and people occupy these spots in groups. These groups of men are likely to have known each other for a long time and are predominantly residents of the same neighbourhood, such as the nearby Khandak al Ghamiq in the area of Bachoura. Groups who know each other seem to sit together, primarily men, sometimes greetings are exchanged with nearby groups, props such as chairs may be borrowed, food may be shared, and sometimes backs are tuned with minimal interaction. Territoriality and it is primarily men. I had only seen two other tourist females come down to the sea level, and it was only after they had seen me use the ladder. There are a few who just sit, fish and this usually takes place on the stretch in Ain el Mreisseh up to just before the AUB beac. Youuu will see the stretch lined with a group of fishermen who know each other and are likely to be from the Ain el Mreisseh fishermen port. Some sell their catch on the street level immediately to passers-by.
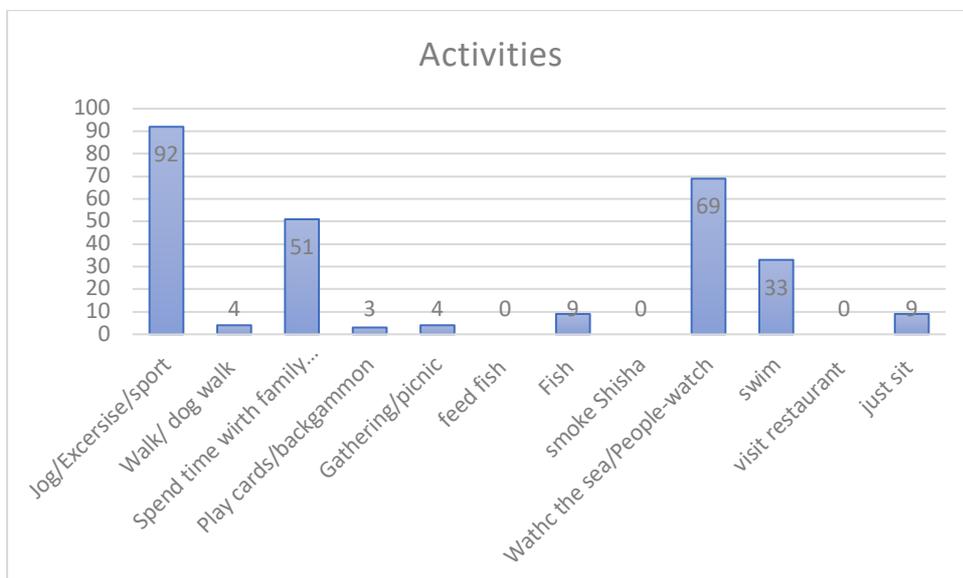
Figure 4-16: Activities users engaged in

4.2.2   Ramlet al Bayda public beach

As seen in Figure 4-18, the majority of respondents on Ramlet visit the public beach to look at the sea or people and spend time with family and friends. One would be able to spot these groups scattered on the public beach; each group huddled in smaller groups; some bring chairs along with them, some hire chairs and would congregate under a ragged umbrella provided by Operation Big Blue- an NGO outsourced to manage the public beach by the Ministry of Public Works.
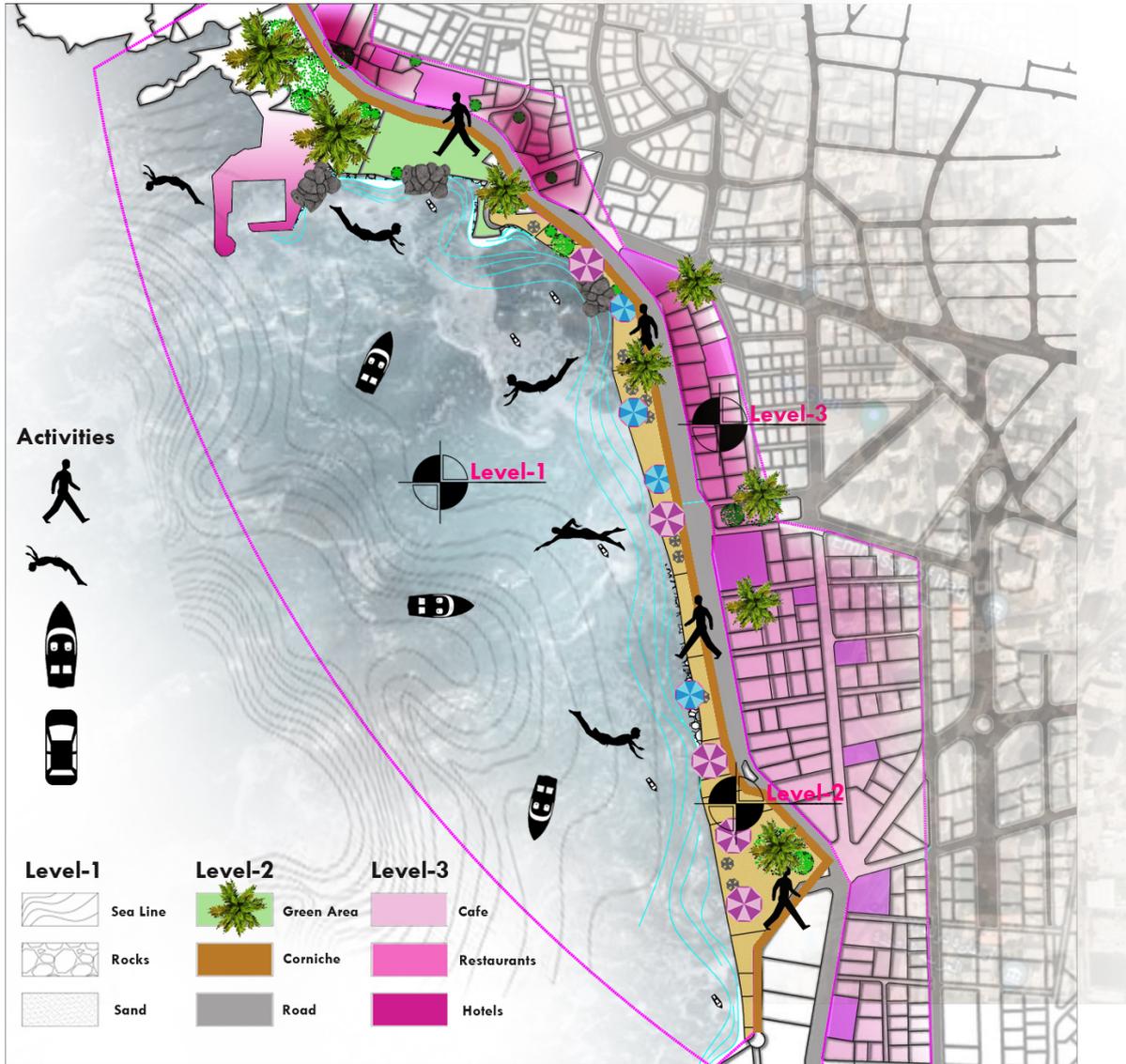
Figure 4-17 Activities across levels
Plan by Layla elAmine

Other groups exclusively come to play sports and hang out with friends; they are located closer to the wall where volleyball courts have been set up informally. Those who just sit, smoke shisha, play cards and backgammon are likely to belong to these groups who have come to spend time with friends and family. There are (67) respondents who came to jog, and most of these engage in exercise on the asphalted walkway rather than on the beach itself. Only (44) respondents went to the public beach to swim, some came exclusively to swim, and some belonged to the groups mentioned above while spending time with family and friends will go for a swim. Many respondents did say that the water is too polluted to swim, pointing out to the open sewer feeding directly into the sea. Out of the 122 respondents, only (22) had brought some snacks with them and intended to stay for the day. Significantly few people engage in fishing on the sandy beach (1), and usually, they do so during the early hours of the evenings and have a friend with them to socialise. Racial discrimination in public spaces occurs based on visible signs. Lebanese could identify Syrians due to different practices of public spaces. Syrians may opt to visit with the extended family, bring food and play loud music using rented speakers.

Activities

Activity	Value
Jog/Excersise/sport	67
Walk/ dog walk	0
Spend time wirth...	74
Play cards/backgammon	2
Gathering/picnic	22
Fish	1
smoke Shisha	10
Wathc the sea/People-...	79
swim	44
just sit	19
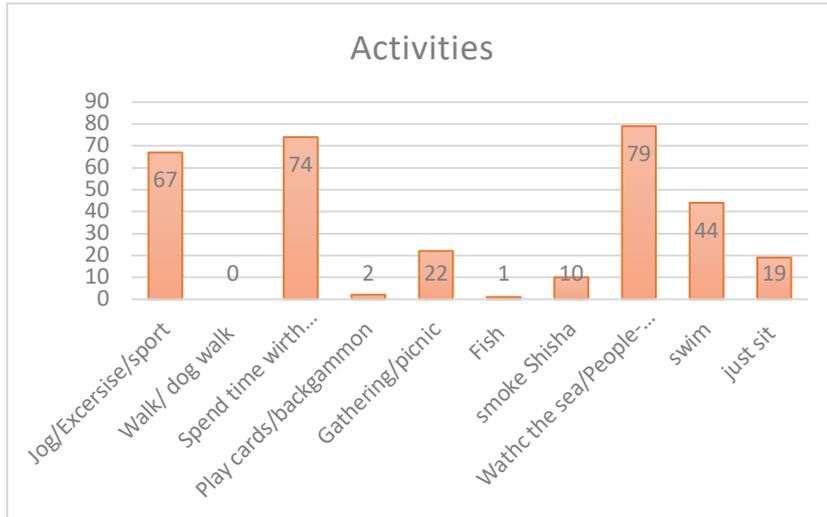
Figure 4-18:Activities users engaged in on Ramlet al Bayda public beach.

4.2.3   Dalieh

As seen in Figure 4-20, most of respondents on Dalieh visit the public space to swim and spend time with family and friends usually congregating around the shallow pools or sitting in groups across the headland's levels as seen in Figure 4-19.
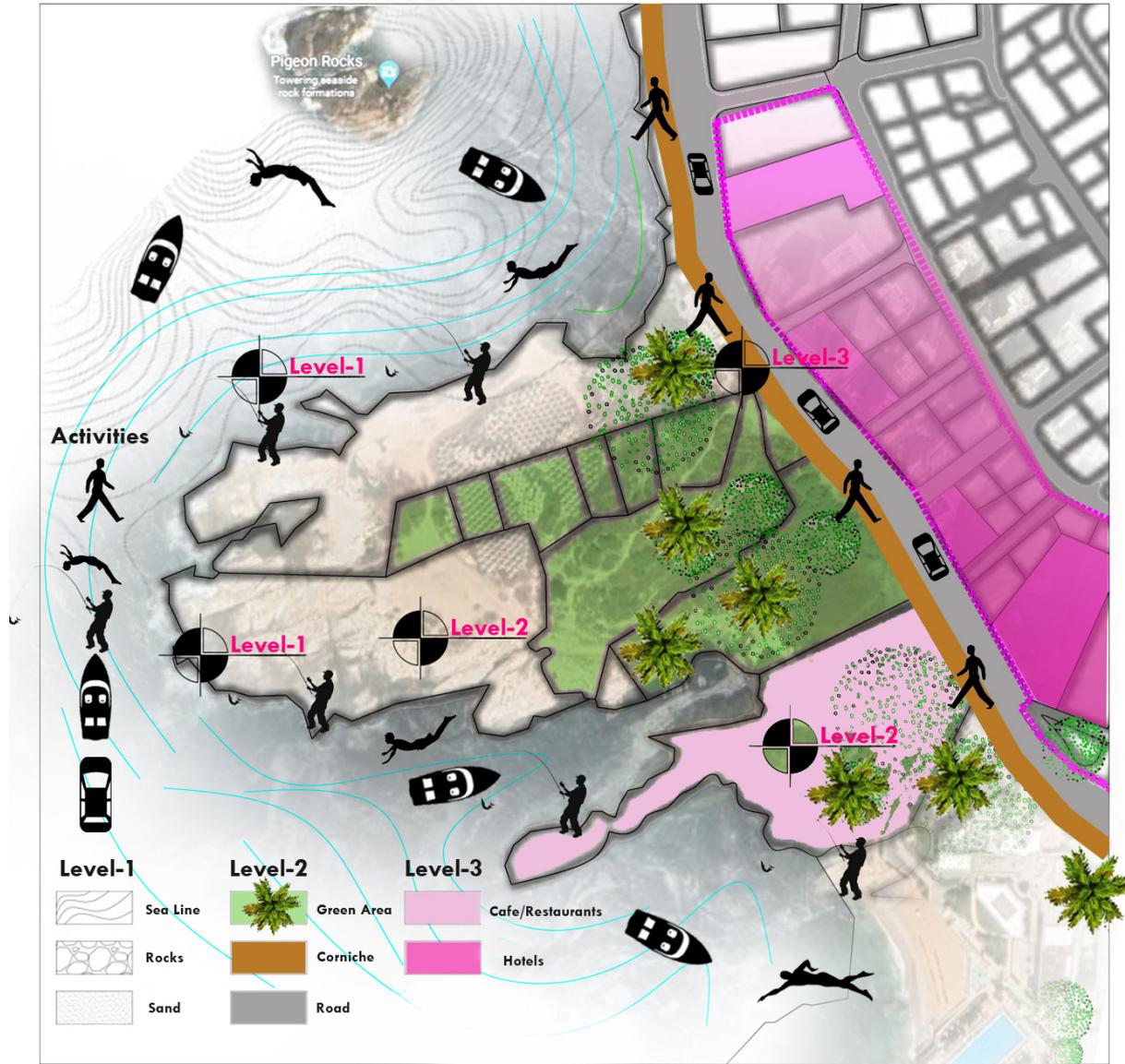
Figure 4-19: Activities across levels
Plan by Layla elAmine

Some bring chairs along with them, especially as some would be having a picnic and intend to stay for the day. Due to the lack of amenities on Dalieh, the area tends to be littered after the weekend as there are no waste buckets on site. The majority are also likely to engage with looking at the sea or people. Those who fish tend to focus exclusively on this activity and usually socialise with fellow fishermen on the edges of the headland. In contrast, those who smoke shisha and sit are likely to have come to spend time with friends and family. Lastly, only one respondent on Dalieh engaged in exercise.
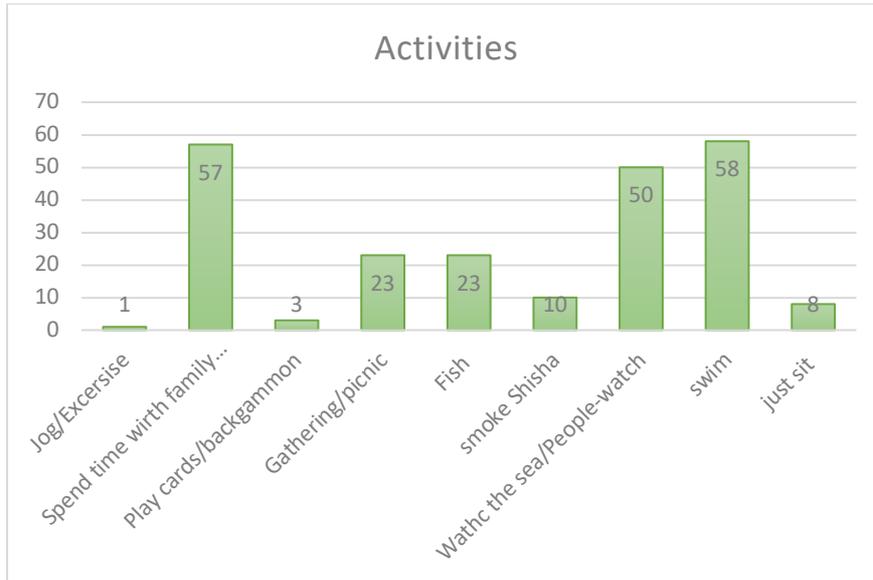
Figure 4-20:Activities users engaged in on Dalieh.

4.2.4   Zeituna Bay

As seen in Figure 4-22 and Figure 4-21, the majority of respondents on Zeituna Bay visit the lower level to spend time with family and friends; this activity was followed by those who took a stroll or walked a dog. Those walking dogs are very few on the street level as dogs are not allowed on the public marina walk prior to the October 17th uprisings. The third most popular activity is watching the sea and engaging in physical exercise, jogging or cycling. Those who jogged predominantly did so on the street level; the few who used the marina walk would also pass through the Saint Georges's hotel exit and join their street counterparts to their longer Corniche or Biel jog. Other activities users engaged in were visiting restaurants, feeding the fish, just sitting, Smoke shisha and those on the site for "other" on the street level. One simply was there for a parking spot; she was attending a conference nearby. Another was a Syrian refugee who was there with his bride on the street level, and they wanted to celebrate and take some photos against a picturesque backdrop to send to their families.
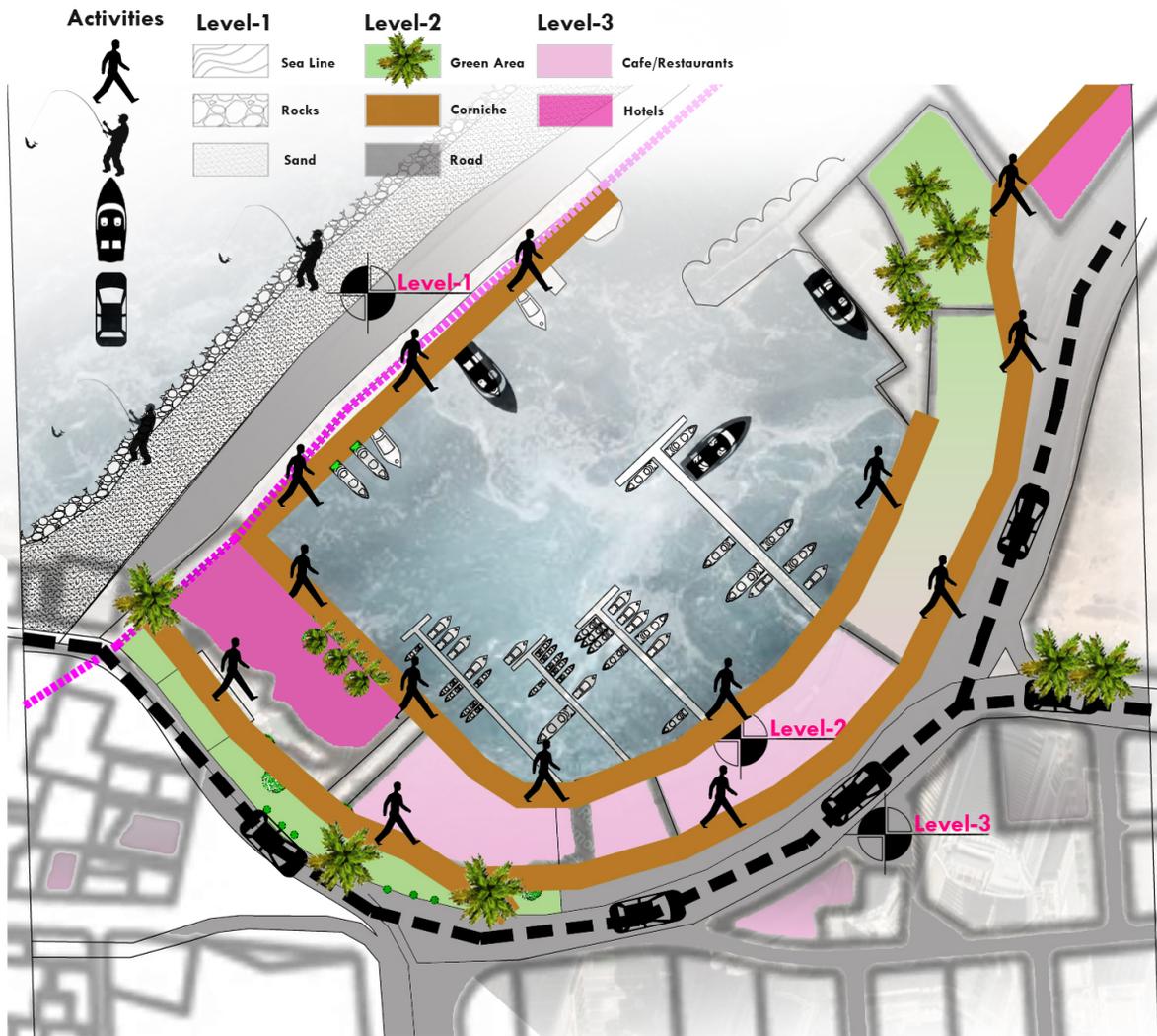
Figure 4-21: Activities on Zeituna Bay
Plan by Layla elAmine

Contrary to the four cases, Zeituna Bay is a site where not all practice of public space is celebrated; rather it is restricted. The site is privately managed, which means loitering, having a picnic, fishing, sitting on the grass, and smoking shisha (outside a restaurant) are activities that are not allowed on the marina walk. As a researcher, standing and asking questions, I was approached several times by security personnel who asked what I was doing; some instructed that I should seek permission from their head office to speak to any users inside restaurants. However, these users were beyond the scope of this research.
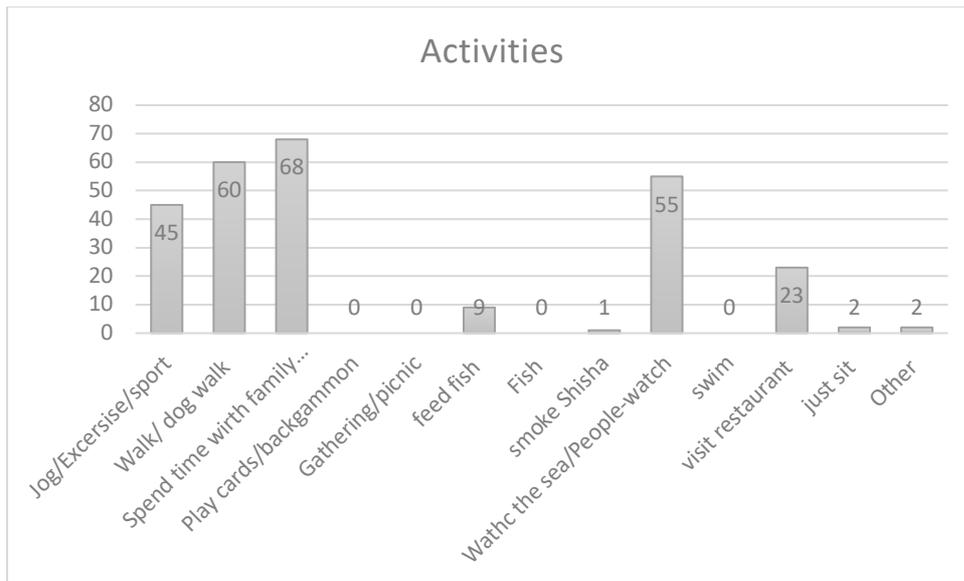
Figure 4-22: Activities users engaged in on Zeituna Bay

Activities vary across the sites depending on the typology, specific qualities and affordances. For example, swimming and fishing are practiced on Manara, Ramlet al Bayda public beach and Dalieh but not on Zeituna Bay's artificial marina. It is also interesting to note here, through observation, that activities on Zeituna Bay changed during this research.   With private security on site 24, hours activities on the Marina were strictly enforced, banning sitting on the grass, smoking shisha, playing music, fishing and littering. However, these activities and their enforcement were revised due to the October 17th uprisings and the appropriation of several public spaces, including the privately managed Zeituna Bay. While the occupation of civic spaces was happening in several cities, people in Zeituna Bay specifically started fishing and having picnics in a clear confrontation of prescribed use of space. In response, Solidere issued a circular acknowledging the 'publicness' of the marinas seafront wooden deck. After this, security personnel were more lenient about activities on the marina. These new activities may be short-lived as boundaries of 'publicness' were contested and shifted in favour of users. The physical setting management practice and the 'ethos' of this space as an exclusive high-status location has some effect on class distinctions and patterns of use across the high-end restaurants and the public walkway within site.

Zeituna Bay is highly seasonal and a lot busier during the summer months when tourists Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, and various multi-ethnic communities living in Lebanon visit the popular destination because of its aesthetically pleasing designed quality, landscaping and the seaming less incorporated long seating benches along the curved cornice. Short-term visitors from the site vicinity visit for their morning exercise, with the site getting busier from the early afternoon till the late evening during the summer months. Because the area is well lit with round-the-clock security, the private space with amenities and restaurants are open late, which spills over the public walkway- the site is quite convivial during late hours with users occupying the open private restaurants and those having a stroll. The site has much less traffic during winter months because most restaurants have outdoor seating areas, and although these have awnings and outdoor radiators provided, still overall, the site is much less frequented during this time.

4.3 Demographics of site users

In urban planning and design practice, attention is always given to the demography and population characteristics and being attentive to who, or not, is visiting a site is an essential aspect of supporting a just city. The last population census was conducted in 1931; demographic data on Beirut is scarce. The latest estimation is 361,000 and around 2 million for metropolitan Beirut [5]. Further, assuming the population of Beirut is similar to that of Lebanon. There is an almost equal split between both genders with a relatively youthful population with around 70% of the population between the ages of 15-64. [6] Population figures for Beirut, notes the ethnically diverse nature of the population without providing accurate numbers. Prospects of a just and equitable city with social integration and full citizen rights in Lebanon for multicultural ethnicities require serious work, including law amendments. There is a real need to critique further the complex cultural configuration of Beirut's various races, religions, cultural orientation, education, socio-economic status, and civic status, such as refugees and migrant workers, as well as women who require special attention in the design, provision and accessibility of public spaces in Beirut. The data in this thesis is crucial to answering research questions and is meant to offer insight into public space, how it is used, and by whom to reflect on compounded inequalities and patterns of discrimination.

4.3.1   Manara
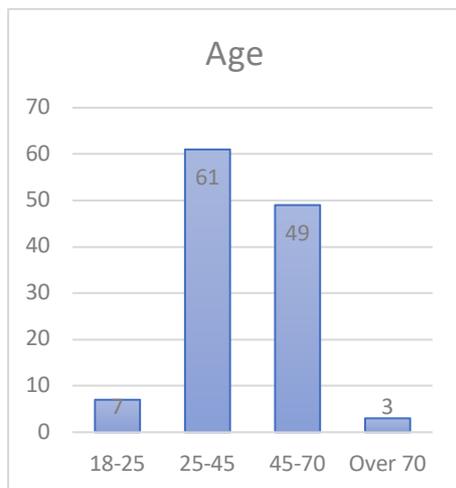
Figure 4-23: Age
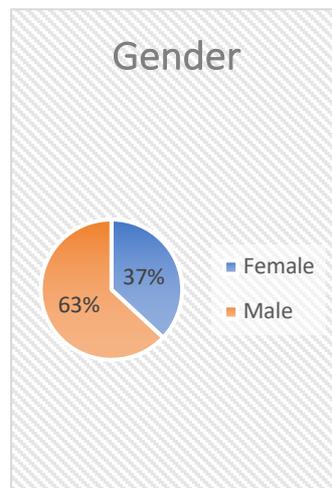
Figure 4-24: Gender

According to Figure 4-23, most respondents are between 24-45 years of age, reflecting the country's youthful population. Some were between 47-70, and 7 were between 18- 25, while only a few of the respondents were above 70 years old. The case may be that the higher average age

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[5] https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/beirut-population
[6] https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/lebanon/#people-and-society

prefers this stretch as opposed to Zeituna Bay as there seems to be a slightly older demographic on Manara and fewer under 25's.

As shown inFigure 4-24, overall, Manara has more male than female users, though the observations show distinctions between the promenade and the shoreline. The street level is relatively safe, well-lit and connected to the opposite street level. Manara is very popular for joggers in the morning, and females feel safe going to the area on their own during the day, at weekends and at different times. However, one may find fewer female users late at night as it is common for single men and groups of men to occupy the space.

As shown in Figure 4-25, The majority of respondents on Manara were Lebanese, followed by Syrians, Palestinians and a minority of other nationalities such as Egyptian and Ethiopian and others, including a professor visiting from Jordan and a Philippine visiting with her friends. I did not aim to generate specific data through observation but suffice to notice it is almost impossible to identify different ethnicities on this busy stretch. It is only when Syrians would use the space to celebrate a wedding or congregate in a larger family gathering playing loud music or swimming with clothing that a visual distinction can be made due to the differences in the practice of the public. The Lebanese perception that Syrians dominate public spaces isn't generally articulated regarding Marara (though this also reflects a lower percentage of Syrians using this stretch of the coast).
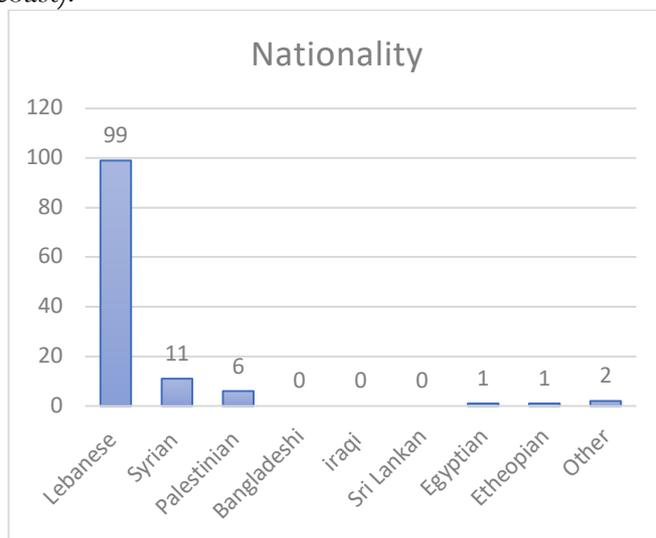
Figure 4-25: Nationality
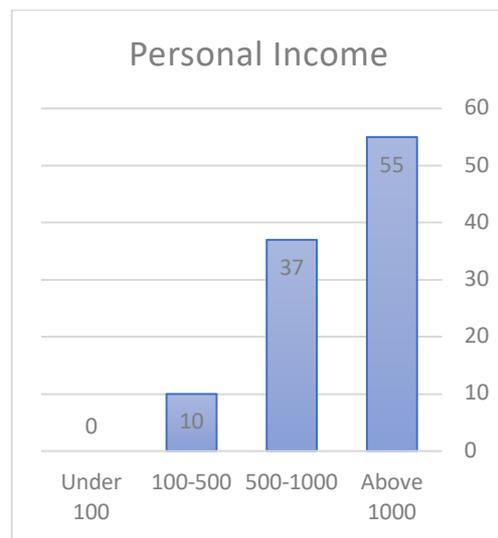
Figure 4-26: Personal Income

As seen in Figure 4-26, similar to Zeituna Bay, the largest number of people visiting Manara said they earn a good income and are likely to work in secure professional employment. A lower number earned a less manageable level, such as shop workers, and a small number earned below minimum wages such as taxi drivers and cleaners.

It is important to note, that these numbers do not currently reflect reality because as of October 2019, a financial shock, significantly compounded by a public health lockdown due to COVID, has led to a severe economic crash in April 2019 – the Lebanese pound depreciating over 70% against the dollar, meaning over than half the Lebanese population is now mostly living under the poverty line with their income losing its value.

4.3.2   Ramlet al Bayda public beach

Most respondents were between 24-45 years of age, and users of the beach reflect the country's youthful population as shown in figure Figure 4-27. Some were between 47-70, and only a few were under 25; one respondent was above 70 years old.
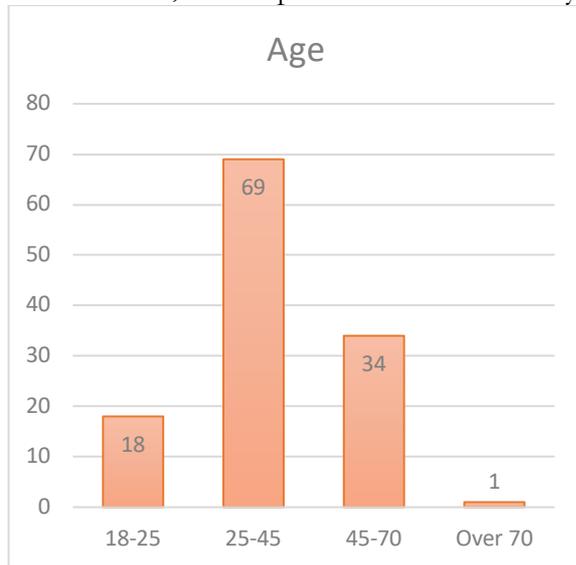
Figure 4-27: Age
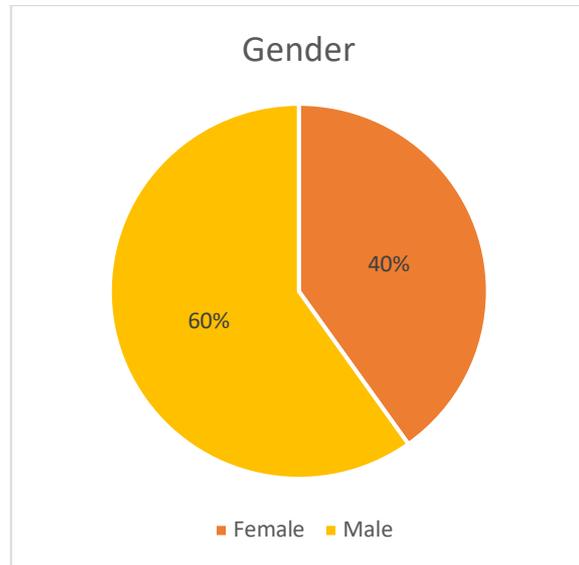
Figure 4-28: Gender

Ramlet is fairly well gender-balanced during the daytime, and especially in the weekend as observed, this is likely due to the fact that it is a family oriented public space. However, it should also be noted that the fact that these interviews were not administered after 7 pm, when the site is male dominated. Females are comfortable jogging on the sidewalk on their own or in pairs; women on the sandy beach however were with family, friends, or a partner, almost never alone.

The majority of respondents on Ramlet were Lebanese, followed by Syrians, Palestinians and a minority of other nationalities such as Bangladeshi, Iraqi, Egyptian and Ethiopian. Others represented were people on vacation from a range of home countries, including a couple from Mexico who were on vacation. During the week, Ramlet is mostly populated by Lebanese while on the weekend you are more likely to spot Syrian families and a few migrant workers.
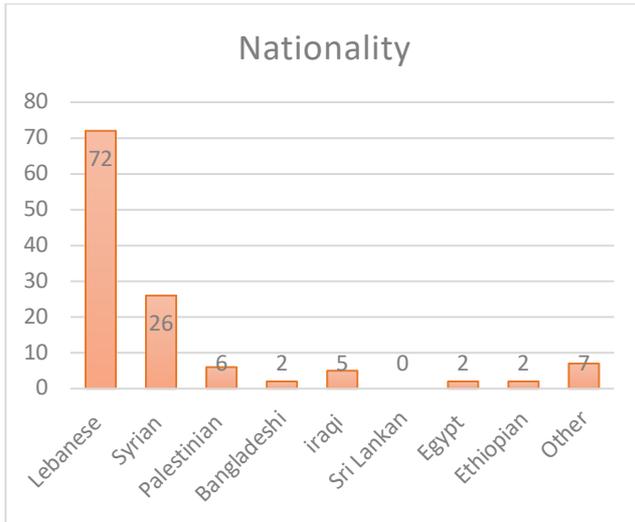
Figure 4-29: Nationality

Figure 4-30: Personal Income

As seen in Figure 4-30, most of Ramlet al Bayda public beach respondents earned a manageable level of income, with slightly lower numbers making a good level of income and a few earning less than the minimum wage. Those who spend half a day or the whole day are middle-income families both Lebanese and Syrians, and have come to swim and spend time with family and friends.

4.3.3   Dalieh

Most of the questionnaire respondents at Dalieh were between 24-45 years of age, reflecting the country's youthful population, while none of the respondents were above 70 years old as shown in Figure 4-31.
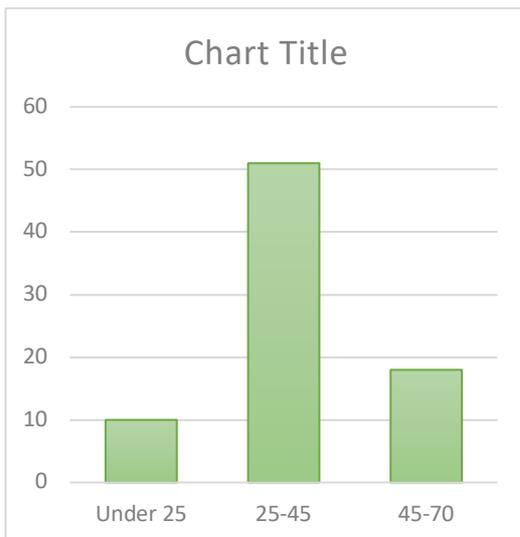
Figure 4-31: Age
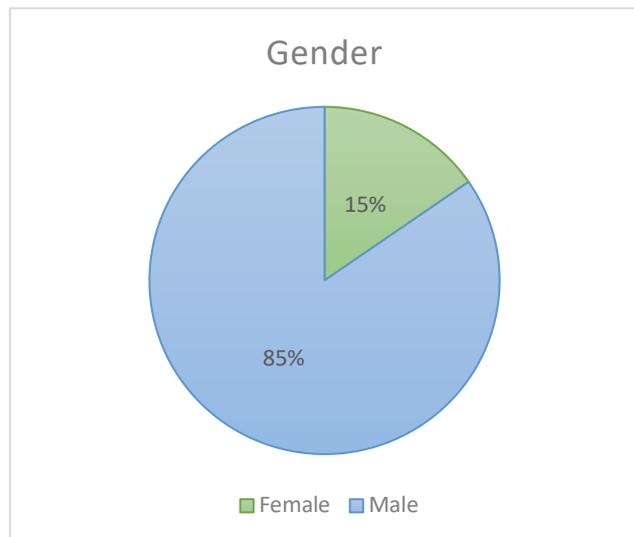
Figure 4-32: Gender

Dalieh is predominantly a male territory, as is shown in Figure 4-32; this is likely due to the secluded, rocky nature of the space and the lack of lighting in the area. None of the female respondents was in Dalieh on their own; women were always in groups of at least two and predominantly with their whole families on the weekend.

The majority of respondents on Dalieh were Lebanese, followed by Syrians, Palestinians and a minority of other nationalities such as Bangladeshi, Iraqi, Egyptian and Ethiopian. During the week, Dalieh is mainly populated by Lebanese, while the site is much busier on the weekend. Syrians visit Dalieh in larger groups and families and will bring food and play music on the headland.
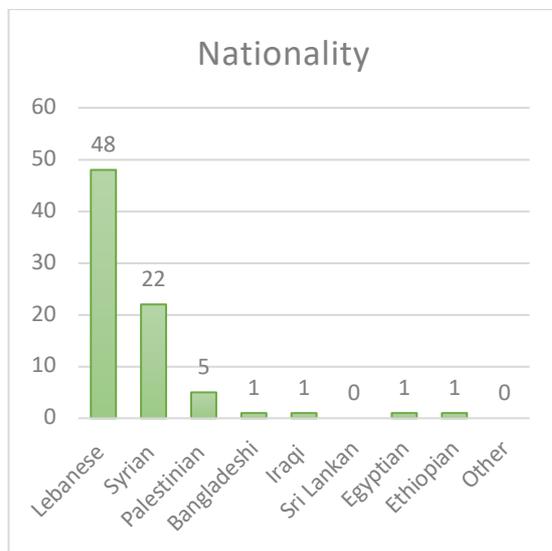
Figure 4-33: Nationality
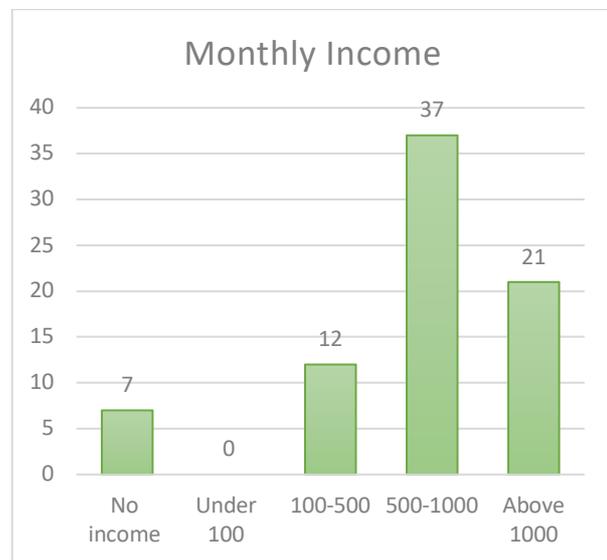
Figure 4-34: Monthly personal income

As seen in Figure 4-34 the majority of respondents visiting Dalieh are predominantly from lower to middle level income socio-economic groups, with a few earning a manageable level of income and less than the lower wage; most commented they were unemployed and came to fish or spend time with friends just to waste time because they felt hopeless.

4.3.4   Zeituna Bay

According to Figure 4-35, and similar to all the case studies the majority of respondents are between 24-45 years of age, reflecting the youthful population of the country, fewer were between 47-70 and under 25, while none of the respondents was above 70 years old.
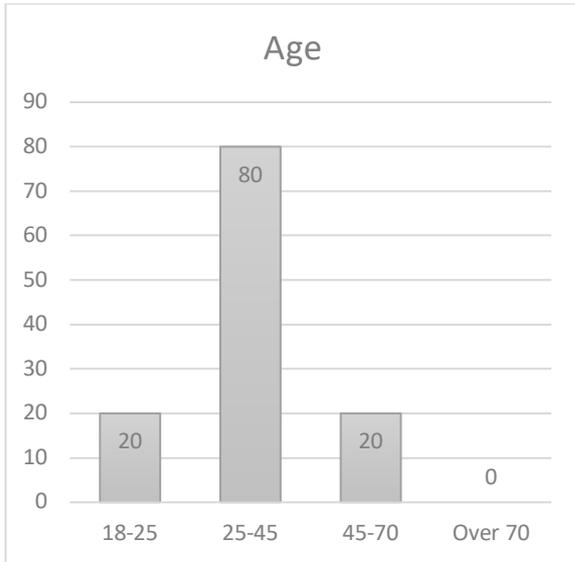
Figure 4-35: Age
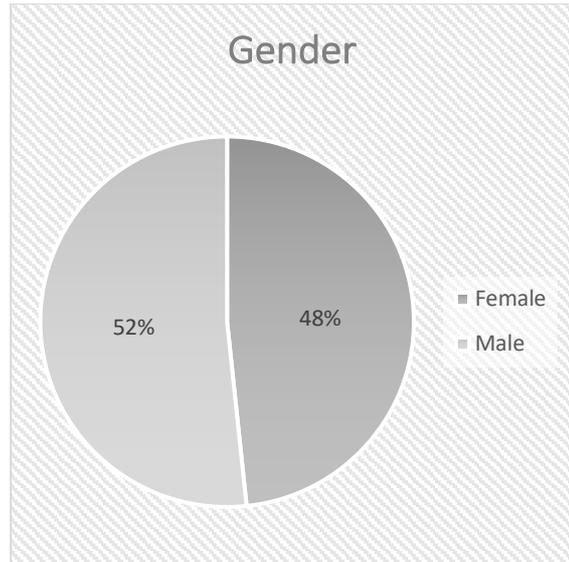
Figure 4-36: Gender

Zeituna Bay has an equal gender balance of the four sites. This is likely due to the fact that it is a safe with security personnel present around the clock on site, well-lit, connected family-oriented public space with 24-hour private security. Females are very comfortable jogging on the sidewalk on their own, in pairs, or on the Marina with their children, partners, family, friends or on their own.

As indicated by Figure 4-37, the majority of respondents on Zeituna Bay were Lebanese followed by a very low number of Syrians, Palestinians and a minority of other nationalities such as Bangladeshi, Iraqi, Egyptian, and Ethiopian. You could also see the most foreign tourists including Swedish, French and Jordanian.
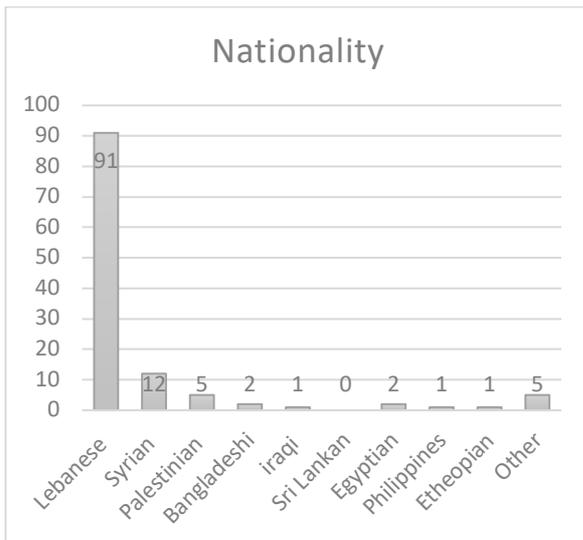
Figure 4-37: Nationality
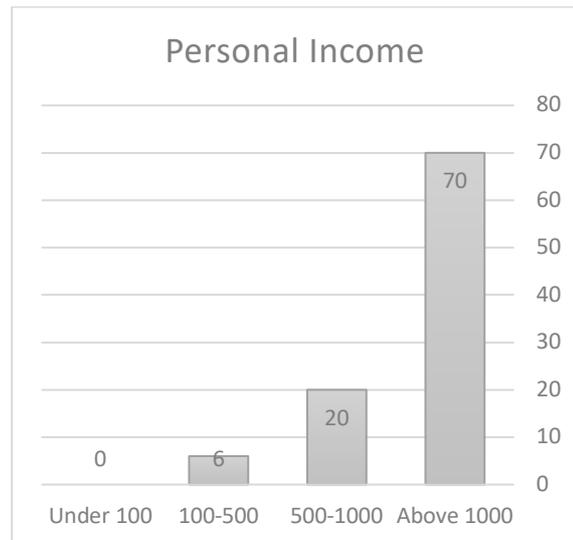
Figure 4-38: Monthly personal income

As seen in Figure 4-38, those who visit Zeituna Bay are from middle- upper income bracket while those from lower income bracket visit during the weekend for a stroll on the marina walk.

4.3.5   Across case-study sites
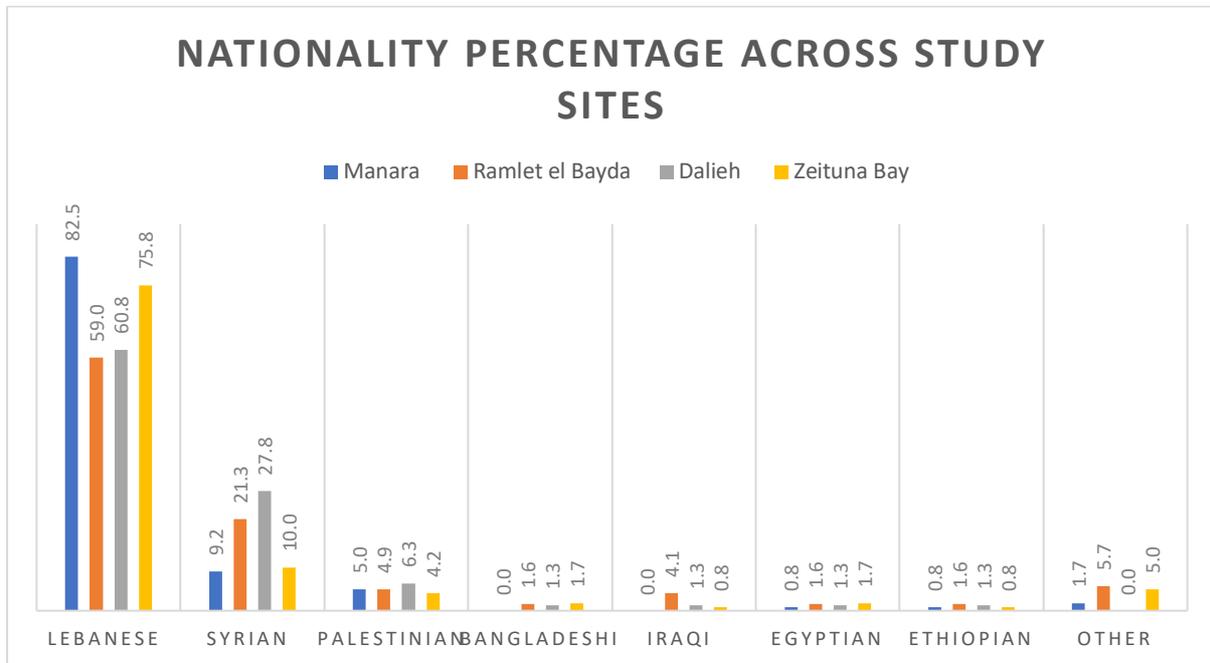
Figure 4-39: Nationality percentage across Case-study sites
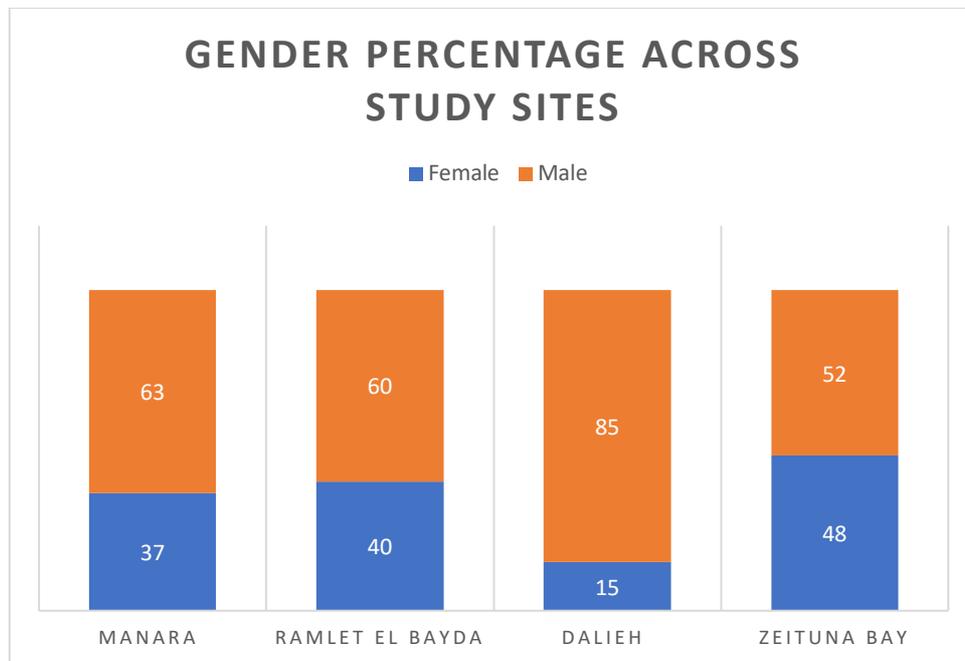
Figure 4-40: Gender percentage across Case-study sites

It is important to also note nationality and gender across the case study sites (See Figure 4-39 and Figure 4-40). A very large number of respondents commented public spaces are now mostly occupied by Syrian refugees and the numbers do not clearly reflect this, although from observation, the number of multi-ethnic visitors to seafront public sites is much larger on weekends especially as of Sunday afternoon. The data also showed that out of the four case study sites, it was Ramlet al Bayda and Zeituna Bay, both on the opposite end of the spectrums of a designed and managed space and open public space that is not intended nor managed that had visitors from diverse nationalities and ethnic backgrounds since both areas were considered a 'destination' by users. The amount of excessive use and unusual traffic leaves spaces quite dirty and unkempt. Also, while many females do use the seafront public spaces at different times and feel safe doing so, there is a deficient number of females visiting Dalieh due to the excluded nature of the area; a very low number of females visit Manara and Ramlet al Bayda as of early evenings as the space becomes increasingly occupied by male groups and since safety is not an issue on Zeituna Bay, females are always present alone, in smaller groups or larger groups through different times of the day.
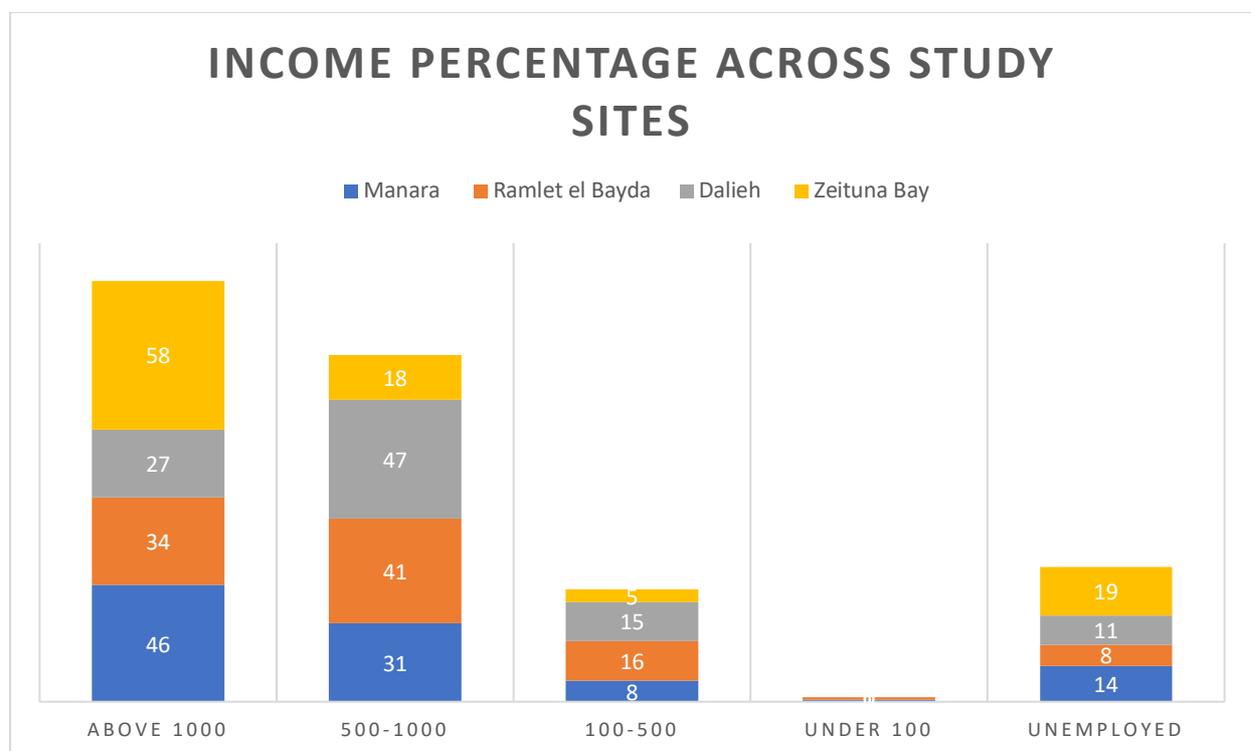
Figure 4-41: Income percentage across case study sites

4.4 Integration and Visitor Patterns

Beirut has one of the most complex cultural configurations in the world. With a rich history the city is home to inhabitants of different religions, ethnicities and sub ethnicities, cultural orientations, socio-economic status and civic statuses. Diversity and mixity are important in cities, maintaining mixed areas is important because it is "through a legible past we may understand the evolution of the present" (Lynch, 1972). Beirut's neighbourhoods predominantly host different people, but the prevailing tendency is for people of similar ethnicities and backgrounds to aggregate together in residential neighbourhoods due to existing familial and cultural networks that bring them together. So although the city itself is a mixed socio-cultural mosaic, there are still delineating lines between neighbourhoods although they may be close in

physical proximity (Bou Akar, 2018). The same logic applies to peripheral regional spaces, as these have been transformed through local urban planning practices, typical of divided cities, into homogenous neighbourhoods demarcated by sectarian frontiers (Bou Akar, 2012; Bollens, 2013). This phenomenon is replicated to some extent on Beirut's seafront public spaces, where we, as local researchers, struggle with a denial to understand and face demographic distribution and its implications. Similar to the geo-spatial divisions in the country, while public spaces can bring people together, these also highlight political tensions and sectarian territorialisation which is used to reflect the geopolitics of the civil war (1975-1990), the sectarian, political, nationality and class divides that exist in Beirut.

To put the questionnaire into perspective, the below maps shows the estimated number of Lebanese and Syrian population number across Beirut's districts and in the southern suburbs of Beirut. [7]
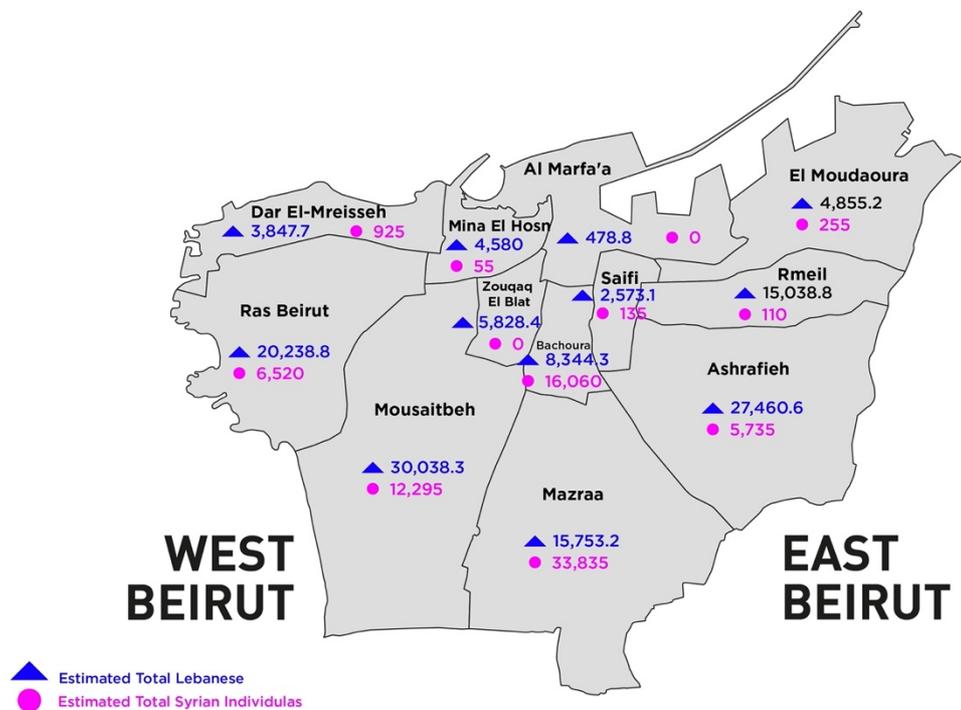
Figure 4-42 Estimated number of Syrians and Lebanese in Beirut's neighbourhoods as estimated based on footnote 7.

[7] Numbers are from 2018. The estimated numbers of individuals is based on the occupancy rates and estimated household number of nationalities. The average household size of Lebanese was at 4.5 and estimated number of Syrian households at five. Vacancy rates and figures were provided by the the Beirut Urban Lab while figures for the number of Syrian refugees in Beirut and southern suburbs were from UNHCR.
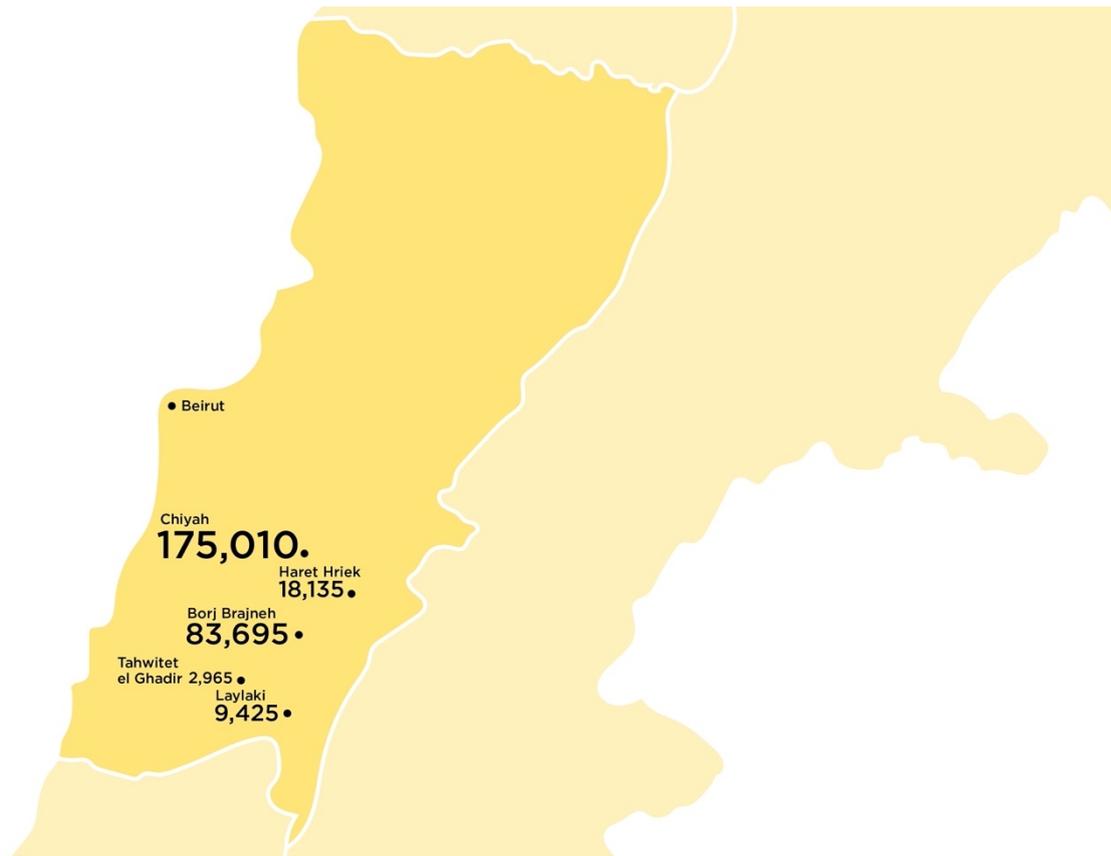
Figure 4-43: Estimated number of Syrian individuals in the southern suburbs of Beirut as estimated based on footnote 7.

4.4.1   Manara

In terms of visitors, Manara has a low level of integration at city and country levels. Manara is not a destination, it is more a place that people predominantly living in the city and its suburbs go to for health and well-being, to socialise and a change of scenery. As Figure 4-44 shows the majority of users were from the southern suburbs of Beirut, the stigmatized Shiite Hizb'allah stronghold and misery belt around Beirut (Harb, 2003). Still, the southern suburbs of Beirut, similar to Beirut's neighborhood, although dominated by Shittes is mixed and has a diversity of inhabitants as it provides housing to many lower income groups especially Syrian refugees. While specific restrictions apply in the suburbs, such as a ban on drinking alcohol and censorship on advertisements and media outlets, the suburbs are still a sought-after place for various commercial activities that Beirut dwellers often utilise (Harb, 2007). Other visitors on the regional level were also from the poorer suburbs of Sin el Fil, Choeifat, Aramoun, Hadath and Tayyoune, originally Christian areas that have transformed to provide mid-low-income housing to Muslim Shiites in the first instance and other Lebanese factions as well as migrant workers and Palestinian and Syrian refugees. Since Manara has intermittent access to the sea due to luxury hotels that have illegally been developed since the 1950's, predominantly Syrian users have found spots that they have reclaimed and which they use as public; Users sit in smaller groups of family and friends groups at the edge of the water and have a picnic, play music and predominantly transform the place into a vibrant, bustling public space.

Lebanon Governorates	Area of Residence	Count
Southern Suburbs	Ain el Remmaneh	1
	Tayyoune	2
	Southern Suburbs	28
	Burj el Barajneh Palestinian Camp	1
Mount Lebanon	Aley	2
	Aramoun	2
	Barja	1
	Beit Shaar	1
	Chouefiat	4
	Chouf	1
	Dbayye	1
	Dora	1
	Hadath	5
	Mansourieh	2
	Sin el Fil	1
	Zalka	1
Bekaa	Zahle	1
South Lebanon	Saida	1
		56
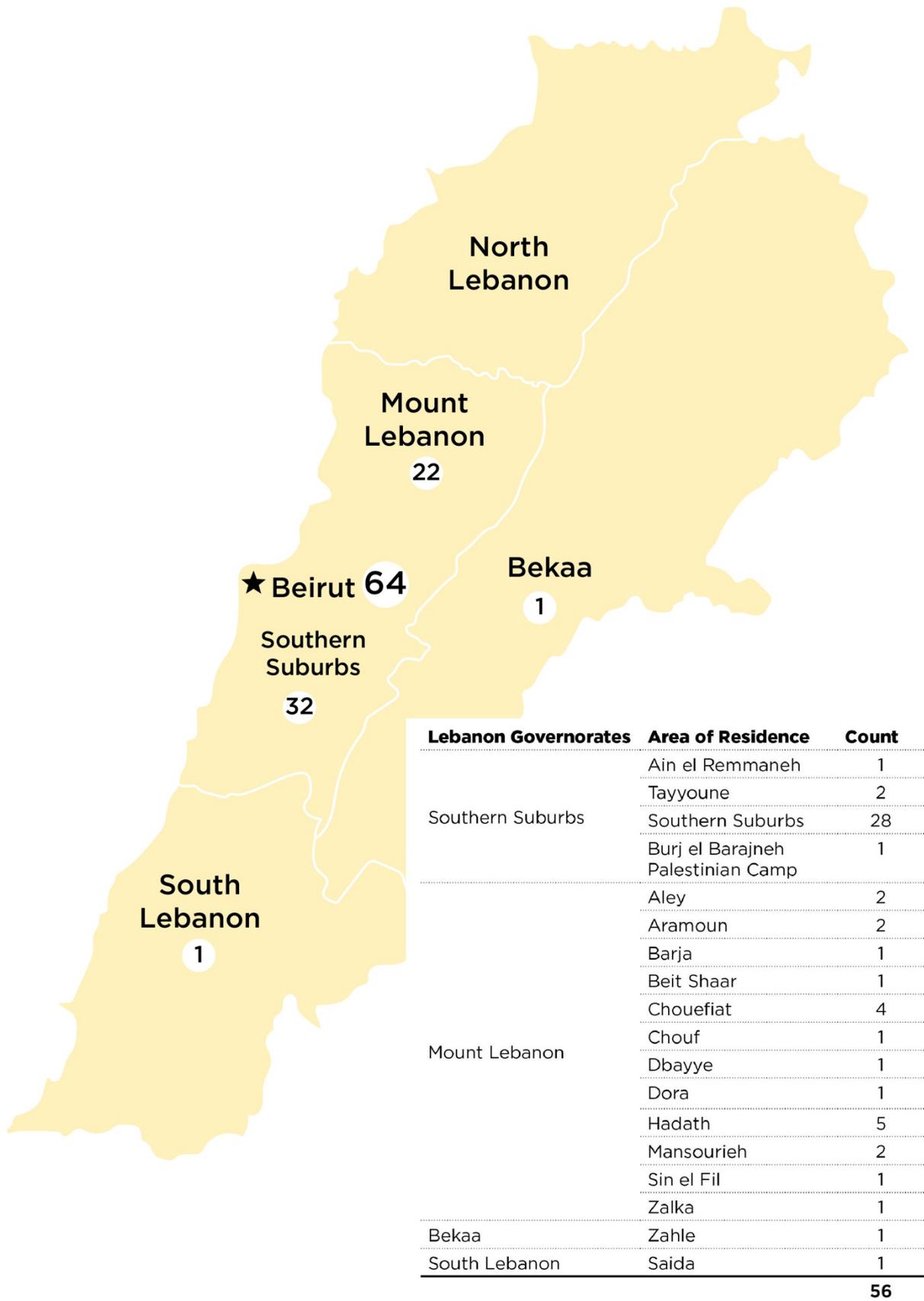
Figure 4-44: Visitors at country and regional levels as spatially represented in Governorates

high	above 100%
medium high	75-50
medium	25-50
medium low	10-25
Low	under 10%
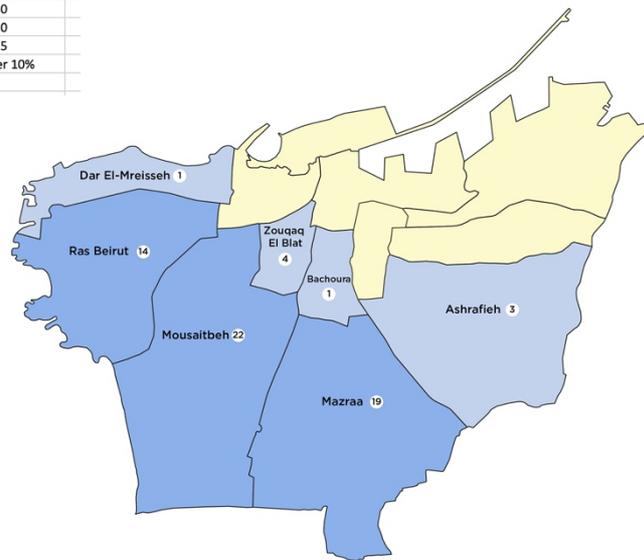
Figure 4-45: Visitor patterns at city neighbourhood level

At the city neighborhood level, the majority of users are middle class to higher class predominantly from the Muslim Sunni communities from Msaitbeh, Mazraa, and Ras Beirut a few visitors came from Achrafieh, a mid-high-class Christian neighborhood. Similar to the other case-sites, Manara is a resource for visitors from the suburbs but had a low number of refugees and migrant workers visiting, since this is not a destination, it lacks privacy and is not visually pleasing, the survey recorded 6 Palestinians who visited daily during the week; 11 Syrians who lived in the southern suburbs of Beirut, and 6 Palestinians who resided in Mazraa, it is likely they lived in the nearby Sabra and Chatilla refugee camp but would avoid saying this outright to avoid stigmatisation; the survey recorded 1 migrant worker originally from Ethiopia who lived in the eastern low income suburb of Sin el Fil.

4.4.2   Ramlet al Bayda public beach

Ramlet has a good level of integration at the regional city and country levels. Because this is the very last remaining sandy beach in Beirut, Ramlet al Bayda is a destination and people come to visit from all over the country as is seen in Figure 4-46, people have come to visit and spend the day from the Beqaa, Baalbek, Batroun the South of Lebanon. Visitors to Ramlet who came from closer regions did not signify a specific population but were quite diverse with visitors from the predominantly Christian regions of Zahle, Keserouan, Jouneih, Druz areas of Metn, Aley, Doha el Hoss, Aramoun, and the Muslim regions of Baalbeck, and Bekaa. Ramlet al Bayda is quite diverse with people visiting form the city but is a major public space for those visiting from the suburbs suh as the Southern suburbs of Beirut Choueifat, Burj Hammoud, Burj el Barajneh Palestinian Camp that has a high concentration of Syrian refugees among other areas as shown in Figure 4-46. Ramlet al Bayda also has groups of Lebanese men who congregate and play sports during the week in the afternoons, while it is notably busier in the weekends when the

sandy beach becomes more diverse with larger Syrian family groups, wedding celebrations, music and general merriment.

Lebanon Governorates	Area of Residence	Count
Eastern Suburbs	Burj Hammoud	3
	Airport Road	3
	Bir Abd	1
	Bir Hassan	3
	Burj el Barajneh	6
	Burj el Barajneh Camp	2
	Chatilla Refugee Camp	1
	Dahiye	3
	Dahieh Maamoura	2
Southern Suburbs	Gallery Semaaan	1
	Ghobeiri	1
	Haret Hreik	3
	Hay el Sellom	4
	Jnah	12
	Malab al Baladi	1
	Mreijeh	2
	Tahwitet el Ghadir	1
	UNESCO	1
	Aley	2
	Aramoun	2
	Baabda	2
	Barja	1
	Barouk	1
	Bchamoun	1
	Brummana	1
	Choueifat	1
Mount Lebanon	Doha al Hoss	1
	Furn el Chebbak	1
	Hadath	1
	Jal el Dib	1
	Jounieh	1
	Kesrouan	1
	Meten	1
	Sin el Fil	1
	Baalbeck	1
	Bekaa	3
Bekaa	Chtoura	1
	Irsal	1
	Rashayya	1
	Zahle	2
North Lebanon	Batroun	1
South Lebanon	South	3
		82

Figure 4-46: Level of integration on regional and country levels

high	above 45%
medium high	35-45
medium	25-35
medium low	10-25
Low	under 10%

Dar El-Mreisseh 1

Saifi 1

Ras Beirut 14

Ashrafieh 1

Mousaitbeh 8

Mar Elias Camp 1

Mazraa 14

SITE 1

Manara

SITE 4

Zeituna Bay

SITE 3
Dalieh

SITE 2
Ramlet
Al Bayda
Public
Beach
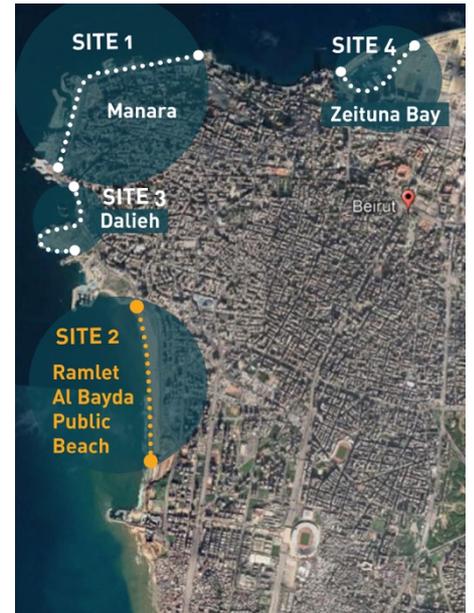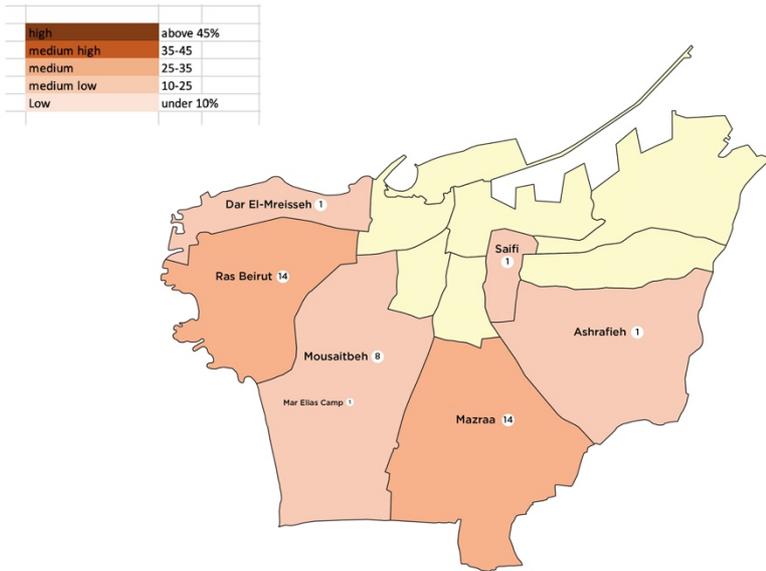
Beirut

Figure 4-47: Visitor patterns on city neighbourhood level

According to visitor numbers this is one of the most socially integrated case-sites. Visitors have come to Ramlet from almost all areas of Beirut; while the concentration was still from Muslim Sunni middle income city neighborhoods. The site also had large number of visitors from the southern suburbs of Beirut. Syrians visiting Ramlet all lived in lower income areas, such as the southern suburbs, Burj el Barajneh refugee camp and Mar Elias camp, some were from more remote areas that provide low to mid income housing such as Aley and Bchamoun, as well as more remote regions in the country such as the Bekaa Valley. Palestinians were similar mostly living and commuting from the southern suburbs of Beirut, and Burj el Brajneh and Chatilla camps, migrant workers from Bangladesh from Baabda.

4.4.3   Dalieh

Dalieh is a headland, as you see the typology is very different; as an archaeologically, ecological and heritage site that is rich in Beirut memory communities are known to celebrate their national holidays on Dalieh, go with the family to spend a day and enjoy the sea and the surrounding area.

Dalieh has a very low level of social integration at regional and country level. In looking at the numbers, Dalieh had no visitors from other regions in Lebanon and most of its visitors originated from the city neighborhoods and its surrounding suburbs. Most of the visitors to Dalieh were Syrian living in the predominant lower income areas of the southern suburbs of Beirut, Sabra and Chatilla refugee camp, Dora, Sin el Fil, Hadath and Tayyoune and some remote areas in Hammana, and Dekwaneh.

Lebanon Governorates	Area of Residence	Count
Eastern Suburbs	Burj Hammoud	1
Southern Suburbs	Bir Hassan	2
	Burj el Barajneh	4
	Burj el Barajneh Camp	1
	Chiyah	6
	Dahiye	1
	Ghobeiri	2
	Haret Hreik	1
	Jnah	4
	Khalde	2
	Sabra & Chatilla	2
	Tayyoune	3
	Tahwitet el Ghadir	1
Mount Lebanon	Aramoun	1
	Dekwaneh	3
	Dora	1
	Fanar	1
	Hamana	1
	Hadath	3
	Metn	3
	Sin el Fil	2
		45
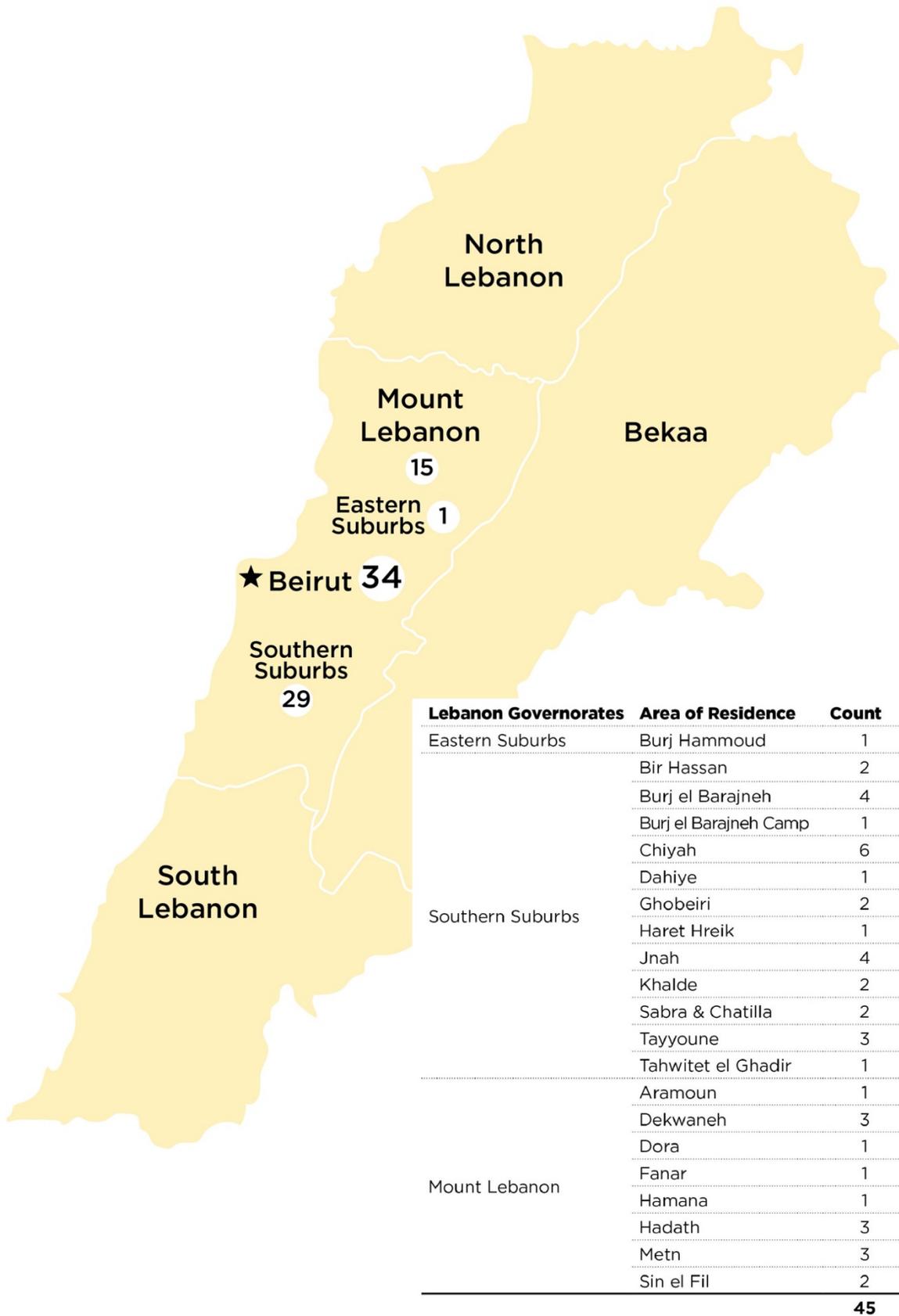
Figure 4-48: Level of integration on regional and country levels

114

Dalieh has a low level of social integration at the city. The majority are Lebanese visiting the area at the city level are predominantly middle-class Sunni Muslim communities, whose parents took them to Dalieh when they were younger. The area is very quiet during the week but is transformed into a heaving public space during weekends when Syrian refugees and migrant workers visit to spend half or a full day engaging in a full range of different activities. Dalieh is also seasonal as it is notably busier in the summer. Users of Dalieh engage in spending time with family, playing cards, fishing, swimming, smoking shisha and having picnics. Similar to Manara Lebanese users in the questionnaire expressed their relation to the space as "our area", we've been coming here since the 1980's, the Lebanese also made the weekend distinction "we don't come on Sunday ..EVERYONE is here " the area is not ours anymore.."
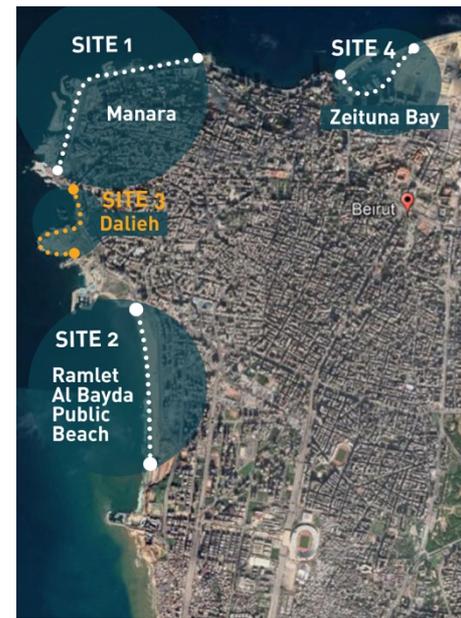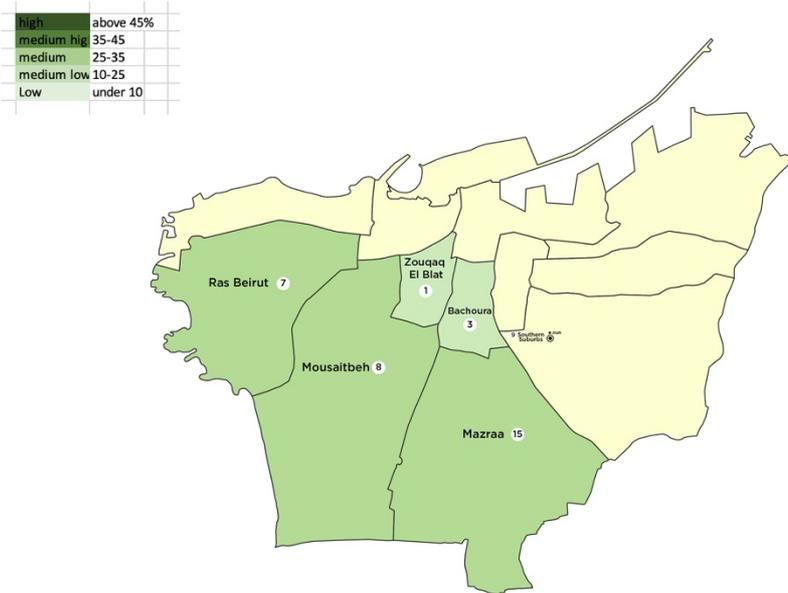
Figure 4-49: Visitor patterns on city neighborhood level

4.4.4 Zeituna Bay

On the country and regional level, Zeituna Bay similar to Ramlet public beach has a high level of social integration. This has become the destination for everyone especially during the early evening of the hot summer months. Zeituna Bay is an aesthetically pleasing site and everyone flocks to the marina because it is the place to be. Many visitors have come from all the regionals of Lebanon such as Tripoli, Bekaa, the South of Lebanon and of course from Syria as well. The site has less visitors from the southern suburbs of Beirut than any other site. Those visiting Zeituna Bay from the suburbs are from the southern suburbs or Bour Hammoud located in the eastern suburb of Beirut. We also see many visitors from more remote areas such middle income

housing areas of Aramoun, Doha el Hoss, Bchamoun, Broumana, Mansouriye. We also see visitors from predominantly Christian areas of Jounieh, Zouk, Dbayeh, Antelias, Rabieh and Monte Verde.

North Lebanon 4

Bekaa 2

Syria 1

Mount Lebanon 45

Eastern Suburbs 1

★ **Beirut** 51

Southern Suburbs 14

South Lebanon 2

Lebanon Governorates	Area of Residence	Count
Eastern Surburbs	Bourj Hammoud	1
	Airport Road	1
	Bir Hassan	1
	Burj el Barajneh/ Rassoul	1
Southern Surburbs	Hay el Sellom	1
	Haret Hreik	4
	Khalde	1
	Sarba	1
	Jnah	4
	Ain Saadeh	3
	Antelias	1
	Aramoun	3
	Aley	3
	Baabda	3
	Barja	1
	Bchamoun	2
	Broumana	2
	Bsalim	1
	Bsous	1
	Bhamdoun	1
	Choueifat	1
	Dbayeh	1
	Dekwaneh	2
	Doha al Hoss	1
	Furn el Chebbak	1
Mount Lebanon	Hadath	1
	Hazmieh	1
	Jal el Dib	1
	Jeser al Basha	1
	Jdeideh	1
	Jounieh	3
	Kfar Yassine	1
	Mansouriye	1
	Monte Verde	1
	New Shaileh	1
	Rabieh	1
	Rabwe	1
	Sad El Bouchrieh	1
	Sin el Fil	1
	Tayyoune	1
	Zouk	1
Bekaa	Bekaa-Shebaa	1
	Bednayel Bekaa	1
North Lebanon	Tripoli	4
South Lebanon	Bint Jbeil	1
	Nabatieh	1
Syria	Syria	1
		69

Figure 4-50: Level of integration on regional and country
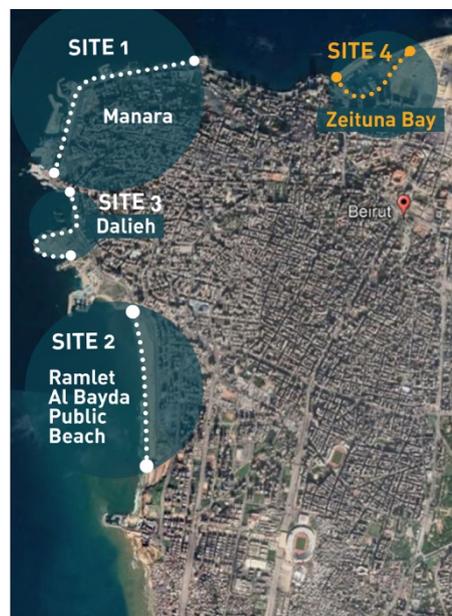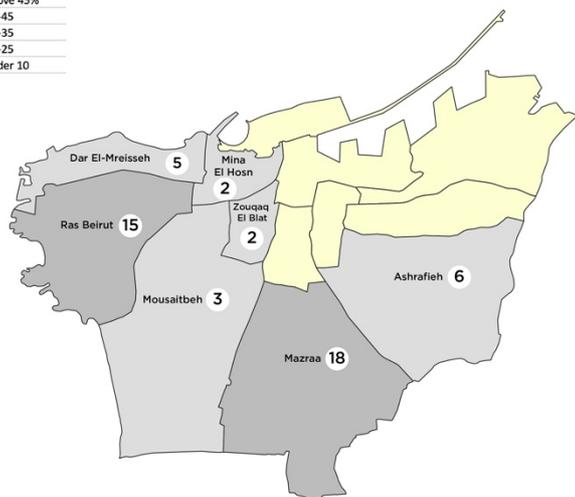
Figure 4-51: Visitor patterns on city neighbourhood levels

On the neighborhood level, the area has a good level of integration, which is locating of so people of diverse backgrounds all being present in a particular site, at both country and city levels. Those visiting the area at the city neighborhood level are predominantly low to middle class to Sunni Muslim communities. Compared to other areas it had many visitors from outside the city since it is "the place to go to" according to a questionnaire respondent. The 12 Syrians lived predominantly in the southern suburbs of Beirut the misery belt that surrounds Beirut. Those visiting from Bangladesh and Ethiopia lived in Tripoli and the low-income area of Furn el chabbak; these visitors may only visit on the weekends which is their one day off work.

4.5 Relation to movement in the City

In a dense city like Beirut pedestrian movement facilitates physical integration as well as becomes a conduit for economic, social and cultural exchanges and transactions. Cars on the other hand prohibit this interaction with one's surroundings as you are moving from point A to point B. Interestingly, over the years Beirut has drastically changed from a walkable city that used to encourage walking and mobility through integrated neighbourhoods and a network of public squares and spaces to city that is not so easy to walk around in or navigate due to planning that does not encourage mobility and a more militarised, constricted city (Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012). Accordingly, the car became the most preferred mode of transport over the years as the city transformed into a concrete jungle, as users we became less interested in living our city and experiencing our public spaces and more concerned with the daily struggles of getting to work, making ends meet and socialising in private spaces. Specifically, our relationship with seafront public spaces has changed over the years, while we had a relationship with the sea during the 60's and 70's visiting Ramlet, Dalieh and Manara dipping our feet in the water, swimming and

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celebrating public holidays with family and friends on Dalieh this changed over the years. Touristic developments along the seafront, meant city inhabitants access to the sea was revoked over time and their access was now limited to paying to access a private beach, which changed the way as locals practice the public, we stopped going in larger groups to celebrate through social groups and started doing so by visiting restaurants and cafes and walking along the Corniche; our relationship with the sea slowly started disappearing safe for those who still visit Ramlet and Dalieh, reminiscing their relationship with the sea through family members and history.

4.5.1   Manara

While the promenade plays a good connecting role horizontally linking the city from north to south as well as perpendicularly as it provides physical integration to the site across various city neighbourhoods. It could provide better connectivity, pedestrian crossings, and landscaping to better link to the opposite street level. Similar to other cases, and because the car is still the major mode of transport in Beirut, people find it easier to drive to their destination to derive maximum enjoyment while running other errands in and around the city. Hence, the majority of Manara visitors use their own cars to reach the destination, and this is largely due to the fact that this is a horizontal stretch with an ample availability of parking spots. As indicated in Figure 4-53 out of the 120 respondents on Manara, (66) used their own car to visit the public space, (19) walked, (17) used a car share, (14) used a motorcycle, (3) used a bus or public transport, and only (1) used an alternative mode of transport in this case cycled.

As is shown in Figure 4-53, the majority of respondents did not visit other public spaces in the city of Beirut, underscoring the unique qualities of this stretch of seafront. Out of the (44) respondents (13) mentioned that they visit other seafront public spaces such as Manara, Ain el Mreisseh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach. Other places mentioned they visited Sanayeh Public Garden(15), Horsh of Beirut(12), frequented Hassan Khaled public garden (1) . Interestingly others who sited they visited other public spaces in the city did not seem to understand what "public" meant as they mentioned visited Hamra Street (1), AUB running track (1) and golf club (1) as public spaces they liked to visit. Many indicated that they really liked Manara as it has memories for them coming here with their families as children. Also, many commented that they do not visit Horsh as frequently due to the presence of Syrian refugees, "the Horsh I don't go anymore it is now filled with foreigners".
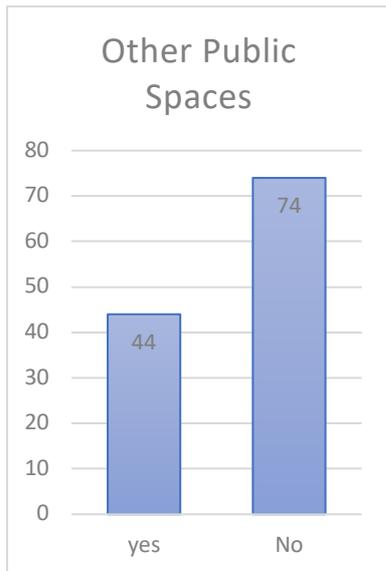
Figure 4-53: Visitors to other public spaces in the city
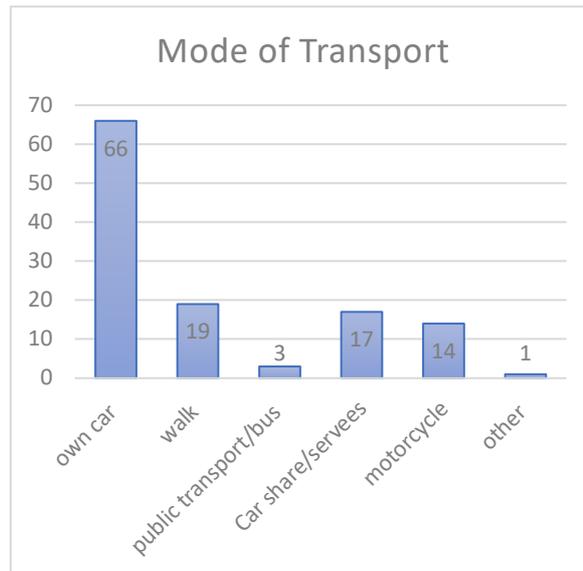
Figure 4-52: Mode of transport used to visit public space

4.5.2 Ramlet al Bayda public beach

Figure 4-50 shows the majority of respondents did not visit other public spaces in the city of Beirut . Out of the 48 respondents, 26 visited other seafront public spaces such as Manara ‚Ain el Mreisseh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach which only points out to the popularity of Beirut's seafront. The remainder with some overlaps, (13) mentioned they visited Sanayeh Public Garden, (10) Horsh of Beirut, (1) Sassine public garden, (1) Waqf el Roum, and (1) said they visited the delipidated garden adjacent to Ramlet al Baida. This may well indicate that seafront public spaces are more popular than green public spaces in the city. Additionally, those who used to visit other public gardens in the city noted that they do not do so because they perceive them to be too busy and that these spaces are not "ours" anymore in clear reference to the presence of Syrian refugees.

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The majority of Ramlet visitors use their own cars to reach the destination, and this is mainly due to the lack of connectivity of the area, the availability of parking spots and the fact that a lot of users access the site to have coffee or a break whilst sitting in their cars (these users are not included in the scope of this research). Most of those who walked live close by, while lower income groups either use a moped or public transport and have no access to their own car.

4.5.3   Dalieh

As Figure 4-56 shows, the majority of respondents did not visit other public spaces in the city of Beirut, while some did. Out of the 22 respondents 6 mentioned that they visit other seafront public spaces such as Manara, Ain el Mreisseh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach which only points out to the popularity of Beirut's seafront. The remaining respondents 4 mentioned they visited Sanayeh Public Garden, 4 Horsh of Beirut, 3 Sioufi public garden, 2 Hassan Khaled public garden and 2 downtown Beirut, which may indicate that seafront public spaces are more popular than green public spaces in the city. Additionally, those who did not visit other public areas in the city noted that they do not do so because they perceive them to be highly populated with Syrian refugees. Many used sarcastic remarks to note this, for example "there are no public spaces left and those that remain are for the Syrians". Another reason was because they perceived that there are no adequate public spaces in Beirut "a public garden but has no amenities and coffee shops" attesting to the poor quality and quantity of public spaces in the city.
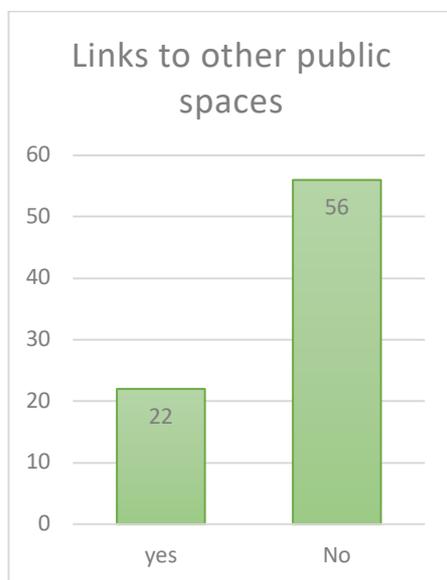
Figure 4-56: Visitors to other public spaces in the city
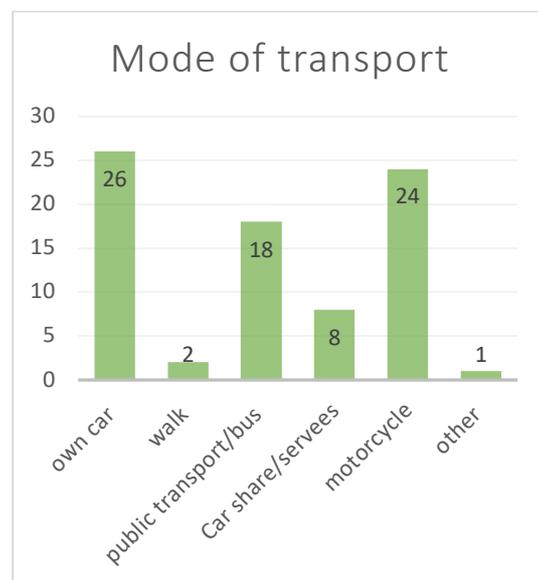
Figure 4-57: Mode of transport used to visit public space

The majority of Dalieh visitors use cars or mopeds to reach the unpaved headland. Fishermen and those coming in with their families mostly use cars to transport and store fishing equipment, swimming gear or food for picnics.

4.5.4   Zeituna Bay

As Figure 4-58, indicates the majority of respondents did not visit other public spaces in the city of Beirut. Out of the (44) respondents (16) mentioned that they visit other seafront public spaces such as Manara, Ain el Mreisseh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach which only points out to the popularity of Beirut's seafront. The remainder of users (11) mentioned downtown Beirut, (9) said they visited Sanayeh Public Garden, (4) Horsh of Beirut, 1 Sioufi public garden, 2 St. Nicholas, and (1) classified the American University of Beirut as public space. A few respondents mentioned they prefer Zeituna Bay and do not visit other public spaces including the Corniche because they get harassed "It is clean here, ma fi 'toltish"- Arabic for name calling. Very few users, compared to the other 4 cases, mentioned they don't visit Sanayeh public garden as there are a lot of Syrian refugees and "there are no manners". This may well indicate that seafront public spaces are more popular than green public spaces in the city.
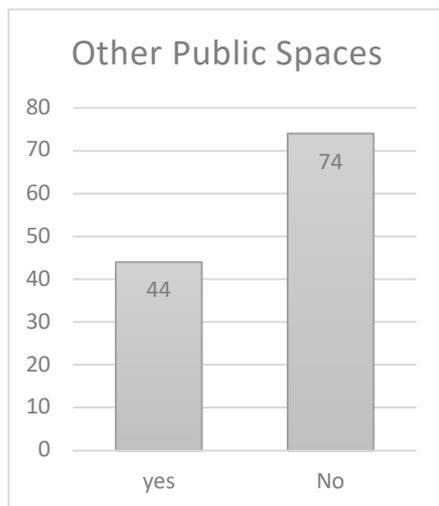
Figure 4-58: Links to other public spaces
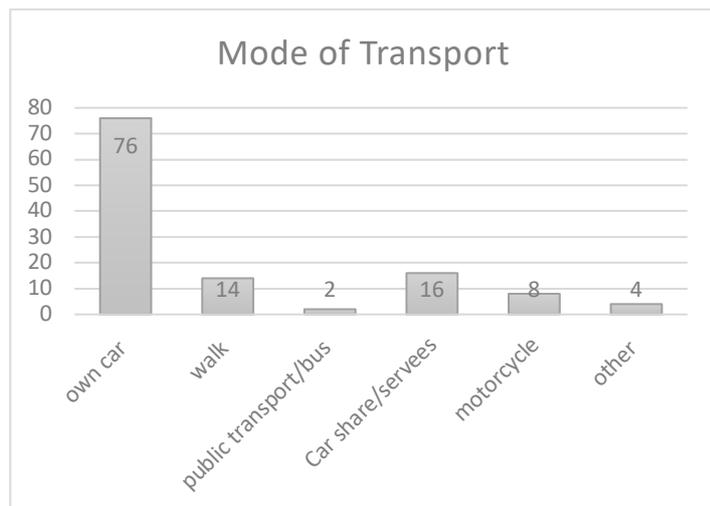
Figure 4-59: Mode of transport used to visit public space

As indicated in Figure 4-59, out of the 120 respondents, the majority of Zeituna Bay visitors use their own cars to reach the destination and this is largely due to the availability of parking spots on the street level and the fact users can afford the paid parking, (16) used a car share, (14) walked, (8) used a motorcycle, (2) used a bus or public transport, and only (4) used an alternative mode of transport in this case a bicycle. There are notably more Syrians on Dalieh who engage in the same activities as their counterparts, the majority of Dalieh users spend half or a full day in the area, almost all Syrians and other nationalities used public transport/bus to get to the location. In Dalieh all Syrian, migrant workers visit on the weekends on their day off work and note that they come to the place because it's a change of scenery, its free and the "only place we can take the kids to", "we are foreigners we relax here". They mostly sit and watch their kids play.

4.5.5 Across case-study

Table 1 offers a detailed breakdown of the randomly sampled questionnaire respondents. It is helpful to cross-refer this with the Beirut city and southern suburbs **Error! Reference source not found.** for a spatial understanding of the data.

	Zeituna Bay	Manara	Dalieh	Ramlet	Likelihood of visiting seafront sites	Biased preference for site visiting
Percentage of visitors who walked to the site (very local)	12%	15%	2%	18%		
Beirut neighbourhoods represented in seafront survey						
Mina el Hosn	2	0	0	0	Low	
Dar Ain el Mreisseh	5	1	0	1		Yes
Ras Beirut	15	14	7	14	High	Yes
Mousaitbeh	3	22	8	9	High	Yes
Zouqaq el Blat	2	4	1	0		
Bachoura	0	1	3	0		
Mazraa	18	19	15	15	High	
Saifi	0	0	0	1	Low	
Achrafieh	6	3	0	1		Yes
Total	51	64	34	41		
Percentage of Beirut respondents(%)	43%	53%	43%	33%		
Visitors from outside of Beirut						
Southern Suburbs	14	32	29	47	High	Yes
Elsewhere in Lebanon	55	24	16	35	High	Yes
Percentage of respondents from outside Beirut neighbourhoods	57%	47%	57%	67%	High	

Table 1 Visitors to study sites from Beirut proper neighbourhoods

There is a low level of visitors who walk to seafront locations, mostly between 10-20%, and as low as 2% for visitors to Dalieh (Table 1). Seafront spaces function as local recreational provisions and are also city-wide and critical national-scale resources. Around 50% of visitors live outside the city boundaries, rising to 67% for Ramlet public beach, located on the southern edge of the city. the detailed neighbourhood breakdown notes patterns of people preferring to visit the most local seafront space. For example, residents of Ras Beirut are more likely to visit

nearby seafront locations of Manara and Zeituna Bay. However, they are unlikely to visit Dalieh's headland, which is also nearby. Clearly, 'proximity preference' needs to be considered, but it does not fully explain demographic differences between the users of the seafront locations.
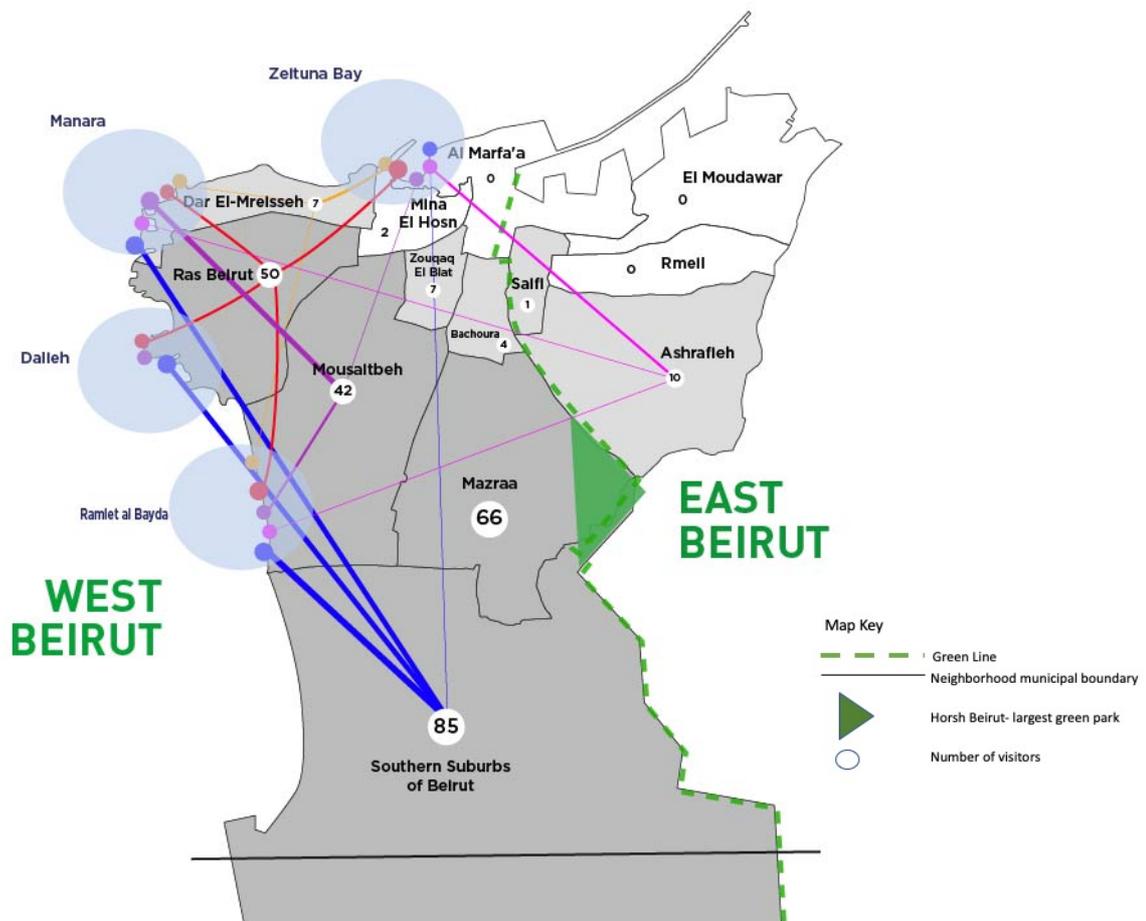
Figure 4-60: User visit patterns from Beirut neighbourhoods across study site

The second point to note is highly relevant to an understanding of territoriality in Beirut and the ongoing impact of civil war divisions (as indicated in the green line between 'Christian' East and 'Muslim' West Beirut shown in Figure 4-60 This is important in terms of intersectional Lebanese identities, as a purely nationality-based analysis cannot examine whether these neighbourhood affiliations still make a difference (Hanf, 2007; Yassin, 2008). Data of 'visits' across all sites (total numbers and grey shading on Figure 4-60 show that there is an apparent underrepresentation of residents from 'East Beirut' areas across all the sites and that the city's historic green line division may still be reflected in leisure choices thirty years later.

5. Communal histories and narratives of leisure and diversity

This chapter seeks to understand how communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability are experienced and voiced by diverse users. User experiences and perceptions of the seafront spaces are examined to interrogate themes of social integration, leisure as escapism, leisure as negotiated, and leisure as loss.

Data which informed discussions within this chapter included mini-stories, interview transcripts, visuals (photography) and online analysis of visual material (netography). Data for this chapter was first collected through questionnaire respondents during filling this out on-site during the summer of 2019; initial analysis was conducted then. As it was not possible to conduct on-site fieldwork in 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic, instead I used netography, engaging with online user-generated material (contemporary and historic). When a return to Beirut was possible, these various insights were supplemented by twenty-one in-depth interviews conducted across two sites of Manara and Ramlet al Bayda during the summer of 2021. The number of interviews was reduced to two sites due to lack of time and inability to stay in Lebanon for longer periods due to an economic crisis accompanied by worsening living conditions including dire electricity and fuel shortages.

Previous research undertaken on Beirut's seafront mostly addresses urban planning, zoning and regulations including private encroachments as well as rights to communal public space with the wider implications of this on the country as a whole (Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012; Saksouk-Sasso, 2015b; Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache, 2015). A few studies focus on the field of leisure (Deeb and Harb, 2007; Delpal, 2014) in specific urban contexts; these do not address landscapes and typologies nor migrant and refugee leisure narratives. The city's diverse population's health and wellness, relaxation preferences and the perception of others across different typologies remain under-researched. The thesis interrogates these themes at crucial times in Lebanon's history after October 19th uprisings, COVID-19 and August 4th port explosion. The chapter highlights the positive effects of urban blue open spaces for the health and wellness of city dwellers (Völker and Kistemann, 2013, 2015) and the significance of these to more marginalised members of society that may not have multiple leisure and wellbeing opportunities.

A word about transliteration and translation.

I have relied on a transliteration from Arabic to English also known as *Arabish* (Arabic plus English). This is a colloquial method of writing Arabic using English letters and numbers to denote letters that do not exist in Arabic. This language became a popular phenomenon with the introduction of technology between the mid-1990s to early 2000s. It is generally mixed with English and particularly popular in informal settings: when communicating with friends and family via text messaging or chatting and on social media platforms (Al Hajjaj, 2012).

The following letters are not found in the English language; *Arabish* has an English letter equivalent or a number equivalent found in Table 5-1.

Arabic letter	Name of the letter	English letter equivalent	Numeral equivalent
أ ء	Alif and Hamza	A	2
ع	Ayn	A or e	3
غ	Ghayn	gh	3
خ	khaa	kh	5
ط	Taa	T (sharp)	6
ح	Haa	H (sharp)	7
ق	Qaaf	q	8
ص	Saad	S (sharp)	9
ض	Dhaad	dh	9'

Table 5-1: Arabish Transliteration System

The following identifiers have been used:

Q = Questionnaire

SI=Stakeholder Interview

OI=On-site interview

M=Manara; R=Ramlet (not relevant to the stakeholder interviews)

M = Male; F=Female

L =Lebanese; S=Syrian; P=Palestinian

5.1 The social dimension of Leisure

5.1.1 Expressions of health and wellness as intrinsic to seafront leisure

There is activity throughout different times of the day on the Corniche. People come together in the morning through a sense of health and wellness. Fleeting encounters are the norm as people wave to each other in recognition along the promenade (Wise and Velayutham, 2009). By noon serious health enthusiasts are replaced by amateur joggers and smaller groups taking lunch breaks. During summer, early afternoon is also when the beach level starts populating. By early evening, across all seasons, is when groups of people, families, groups of men and couples occupy different levels.

The users of Manara can be perceived as highly diverse; the place has a different 'feel' across different times of the day based on a diverse set of users engaging in various activities; mornings are reserved for people from the city neighbourhoods as well as from the nearby southern suburbs of Beirut. Manara is a joy to see in the morning; people have a sense of familiarity and exchange greetings. The use of space is diversified in the morning with various kinds of sports such as beach tennis, stretching groups, jogging, walking, football, swimming, fishing, cyclists, and other groups having their early morning coffee on the stretch.

A Lebanese woman who is a landscape architect and also a frequent seafront user described this from her point of view "You see the serious health-oriented people in the morning, this is the most inclusive time of the day when there is a larger common intention. In the morning, you don't look at the socio-economic status and you can even differentiate those who come at 5 am who are more serious and the amateurs who arrive at 7 am. There is a sense of comradery, you know we nod to each other in encouragement and there is the view, the energy, everyone knows everyone else they have been there for ages, it's the same people. There is a beautiful sense of early morning on the corniche life that you don't see any other time else, also there is no density in the morning, you are able to see people moving, this is when I see this the most" [SI, F, L]

Findings in the field of leisure studies indicate that involvement in leisure activities can have several positive benefits on physical health, mental health, life satisfaction, and psychological growth for adults (Peters, 2010; Hurly and Walker, 2019; Berasategi Sancho *et al.*, 2022). This chapter focuses on leisure practices in seafront public space, noting the specific benefits of this particular landscape. Seafront spaces provide many water-based recreational opportunities, including fishing, boating, and scenic walkways (Curtis, 2003; Hazbun, 2008). For many regular visitors to Beirut's seafront spaces, the health gains are an important part of the value they place on their activities, many of which are activities that specifically include physical fitness. The sea, the horizon and the sound of crashing waves all have a positive effect on users' well-being.

Many use the space to walk, relax, to participate in group sports activities, ride bicycles, play handball, and participate in stretching activities. A group of Lebanese users on Ramlet al Bayda public beach have been occupying a particular spot for years *"we cordoned this area off as ours, we have been coming here for 30 years, we get together to play volleyball, football, backgammon, we have our own well to shower after we swim…we meet almost every day to play a game it is important for our wellbeing" [Q: R, M, L]*. Watching the sea, walking along the corniche, sitting on the bench and watching the horizon seemed to have a positive effect on people's health and moods, One Syrian refugee who walks regularly on Ramlet noted the positive effects walking had on his long-term illness *"I have diabetes, it's for health benefits that I come and walk here" [Q: R, M, S]* . Another Syrian refugee sitting with a group also noted the positive effects of the sea on his mental well-being *"I remember once I was very upset I didn't even want to go out, I wasn't expecting to even have a good time and we went to Zeituna Bay send a few hours I fed the fish, I took them some bread I really felt a lot better after. I was so happy with the views, the place is so nice"* [SI: M, M, S] And another who noted the positive effects of being in nature said *"we wanted to see the sea, take pictures and be just be happy; I like nature and the beach." [Q: Z, M, S]*. And another refugee on Ramlet who noted, *"we recharge when we come here, the salt water is also quite healing, it heals all diseases so we come and swim, sit have lunch etc, there is no electricity so we might as well, we change our mood and have a breath of fresh air.." [Q: R, M, S]*. The space also provides health benefits for the elderly who come to breathe the fresh sea air, as one who was being pushed in a wheelchair noted *"I like to come here and look at the sea I'm old I cannot walk anymore, the fresh air does me good"*[Q: M, F, L] . A Lebanese woman taking a stroll with her children notes the benefits of the typology of Manara as a stretch where the family can engage in many activities *"I came for a kazdoura (stroll) ana bint el mantqā (daughter of the area) I come here a lot, and we love it me and my kids, we were at palace café we had some juice and shisha (and then strolled down to Manara, I walk, I sit, the kids have their bicycles…Manara is my favourite because I can do so many things it's a horizontal stretch always moving, Ramlet, for example, is only a beach here we have more choices, the view is better, on Ramlet you go down to the water level, here you are on the street level, and that gives you a panoramic and long view of the sea also it is good energy we escape from home, we escape from thinking and our daily lives, …the space is important for my wellbeing- I come here to relax and to stop thinking" [OI: M, F, L]*. And another Lebanese woman who preferred the sandy beach typology given the positive mental well-being she derives from being in close proximity to the sea *"I come here to absorb positive energy rāhā nafsiye (relax my spirit), I feel that my vision can extend into the horizon, some decisions I can take on the beach, I work as a baby sitter I wanted to meditate, I come here I want to sit and listen to the sea I want to feel the sand beneath my feet, sea is so wide and welcoming, the sound of the waves, the view, I prefer Ramlet to any other part of the corniche because of the proximity to the sea, I prefer to feel the sand and to come down to the beach, the other parts like Manara/corniche are crowded I don't like crowds, so I come here." [OI: R, F, L]*

Many use these spaces to take part in informal sports, mostly in friendship groups; this provides a space for friendships as well as for health and wellbeing. Some of the players are former athletes, so the activity also provides good training for some. People stressed the importance of these spaces for their overall physical health, wellness and mental well-being. The oldest and

eldest group on Ramlet al Bayda is a group of people sit next to the wall on the sandy beach of Ramlet al Bayda. They have a strategically placed ladder that connects to the street level and have access to a water well they use. The group dominates the area, and it would be tough for a female to occupy this space. I have spent some time there, and they did ask what I was doing and struck up conversations to mark the territory as "theirs". A group of 50 and above men gather and play backgammon, smoke shisha, play volleyball, and swim. Here, you see groups of men who have known each other for a very long time and congregate over sports, backgammon or playing cards. As one 50-year-old former sports player explained before a volleyball game was about to start on Ramlet al Bayda public beach, *"We have known each other since the civil war, we are of different sects and social classes, we would come and play volleyball, as you can see we have set up our area complete with wall to hang personal belongings, fresh water well, makeshift volleyball playground. We spend our afternoons here and Saturday afternoon- we tend to spend Sundays with our families". [Q: R ,M, L]*

5.1.2   Different patterns of socialising with friends

Many come to seafront spaces for social purposes. The area offers integration opportunities for those seeking to spend mundane time with friends, more meaningful friendships that cut across religion and class, and newcomers seeking to emulate locals in their public space practices and seeking to build new company in the county. Socialising for the Lebanese could happen during the week and at weekends depending on what they did for a living and their available free time. Other nationalities, such as Syrian and Palestinian refugees and migrant workers, primarily socialised on their day off work during the weekend.

Lebanese visitors to Manara were more likely to visit during the week when this area provides spaces of integration with people's daily lives. Appropriating a spot for more extended periods of time involved bringing props from homes such as food, chairs, umbrellas, tables and backgammon. While the morning is mainly reserved for walkers and sports enthusiasts, a few groups congregate for morning coffee, while the afternoons can increase in groups of friends, families and children.

Beirut's seafront offers a space for mundane time with friends; these are important as many may not have the luxury of space to meet up with friends in their own homes, and sometimes it may be because this space offers an accessible option for people to meet at various hours of the day, even odd ones, such as early morning coffees. These users tend to work in and around the city; they are either people who have finished their work shifts and are headed home to sleep or those who are about to start their day. Manara serves as a socially integrative meeting point as the place is relatively well connected and accessible to opposite coffee shops in the city and its surroundings. A Lebanese nurse who had just finished her evening shift was sitting on a bench on Ramlet al Bayda at 6 am; the space provides meeting space to see her friend and have a coffee before returning home. It breaks the monotony of her day and relaxes her after the end of a long work shift *"I am sitting and waiting for someone to join me, we won't stay long. We just want to have our Nescafe from uncle Deek (on Manara) he will bring it here to Ramlet al Bayda, and then I'll go home I have to go back to work at night, and I come here at the end of my shift; I work as a nurse I come to Ramlet because the typology it is closer to the sea I can feel the sand beneath my feet I come here to socialise with my friend and because the place allows me to relax; it means I take positive energy from the sea and I relax. I live in Bir Hassan, so its close by, but I like the sea, the sea in winter is so romantic, it is adorable and majestic to see the waves crashing during the winter. You feel you are so small."[OI:R, F, L]*

Other meetings that offer further social integration opportunities tend to be special meet-ups with friends who are only friends in that space. A group has been meeting on Manara every morning for the past eight years, the smaller group is made of a 50-year-old woman and two

men. The Lebanese woman works in a fashion house and is getting ready to start her day, while the men have just finished their evening shift working at airport customs. The woman lives in Ras Beirut, while the men live in the southern suburbs of Beirut and use this space to avoid familial expectations, acquaintances, and ideology. One of the men explained the importance of the pace about this social time with friends next to the sea *"We met here eight years ago, around 6-8 years ago, we know each other from here we got to talking because of a fisherman who was here, Abu Mohamad (the singing guy) is also always here, he sings, we met because of a fisherman he was fishing, and we were talking to him and that is how I met we started congregating, we are a big group around 10-12 people. We came here because it is close to my work; we got used to this spot"* [OI: M, M, L] He explained that the group of friends came together from different areas in Beirut, as this space allows them to cut across class and regional politics; this space allows you to make friends from different sects and affiliations contrary to one's own neighbourhood that is likely to be from the same sect and affiliation, he explains *"The other friend, I live in Dahiye (southern suburbs of Beirut) I come from there and the third is from Barbour , we have another friend he comes down from Faraya, you see they are mrattabin (presentable), Khawaja (an honorific title, used across the Middle East to denote ones perception of somebody else's' superiority)"* [OI: M, M, L]. This statement was likely directed to me to imply that the group is religiously diverse in terms of class and religion. Seafront public spaces provide a neutral space for people to form friendships they wouldn't usually in their daily lives. It offers a space that is theirs alone.

For newcomers to the city, the seafront also provides an important outdoor meeting point to openly socialise and build meaningful friendships in a foreign country, hoping for further social integration. A Syrian refugee living in Lebanon since 1995 explains the importance of AUB beach for socialising with friends. He says *"We first came to Ramlet in 1995. When I arrived, I came with friends, we didn't have phones we had a camera we took some pictures it was summertime and I remembered feeling good there. Now I frequent Beirut seafront for different purposes, mostly to socialise with friends. Today I'm here with my friends; we caught some fish and got ready to eat. We came early to look at those playing beach tennis; I enjoy that we have fishing gear, we talk, we swim, play beach tennis, it depends, we always decide a day before we come to AUB beach"* [OI: M, M, S]

5.1.3   Negative perceptions of intercultural spaces through discussion of crowding

A commonly expressed view from Lebanese seafront visitors, both through the questionnaires and in interviews, was a dislike of the seafront being crowded. Additional comments often implied that crowding was related to the presence of too many non-Lebanese visitors. Many questionnaire respondents said they preferred to visit seafront public spaces on weekdays because they do not wish to be in the same place as "other nationalities' predominantly alluding to Syrian refugees, though in some instances also included people from the Palestinian refugee community[8]. When questionnaire respondents were asked about their perception of public spaces and change over time only Lebanese respondents mentioned how other nationalities and their presence in public spaces was a nuisance.

5.1.3.1 Lebanese residents

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[8] The Syrian crisis has been ongoing in Lebanon since 2011 which means it is still fresh in people's memory and the reason they allude to Syrian refugees in the first instance. Palestinian refugees however, have been present in Lebanon since the Nakba in 1948.Although they have been mandated to live in designated camps, their protracted presence in the country has made this more normal despite the fact they also do not have any legal rights in the country such as the right to work and to own property.

One Lebanese visitor to Ramlet in the early morning reflected " I think the area changed a lot a lot of people used to come here now it is mostly Syrians before COVID-19 it was more crowded ..now there are more Syrians… well they are living better than the Lebanese in our own country" [Q: R, M, L]. Another Lebanese jogger early on a weekday morning on Ramlet al Bayda blamed Syrians with the deteriorating quality of the space and prevalence of garbage, noting "I barely see any change in the space it is mostly deteriorating, and that is because of politics I still see garbage but also I noticed that there have been some garbage containers and sorters installed, but I don't see a real change in peoples behaviours some people are mrattabin (presentable) and others are not- I guess it is in one's culture, the Syrians for example…" [OI:R, M, L]. Another Lebanese living in the area of Ramlet al Bayda also noted the increase in crowds in the past two years and had a negative perception of this. "Ramlet al Bayda has changed, its become more crowded especially during the weekend, it is more crowded than usual. I do not like to meet new people when I go in general anywhere and it is is not my intention to make friends if I go to the seafront" [OI: R, F, L]

A middle-aged Lebanese woman, taking a stroll with her husband remarked "To be honest- Many Syrians come here –more than Lebanese and to some extent, I have started to feel like an outsider. (not in a discriminatory way) but it is what it feels like now"[OI: M, F, L]. From the questionnaire, a fair number of Lebanese respondents said they avoided seafront public spaces during the weekends as it is crowded with Syrians, and they preferred not to be in the same area. An indicative comment was, "I don't come at weekends it is too crowded, too busy, and a lot of Syrians are here." [Q:M, M, L]

5.1.3.2 Non-Lebanese residents

Some Syrians had a more positive perception of crowds. Some Syrian couples in their mid 20's, sitting on some rocks on Manaras beachfront explained *"We came here on the weekend because it is nice, you see people, we are here to enjoy the place, to siphon down energy, we work all the time, so we needed nghayer jaw (a change of scenery) and a change of nafsiyé (calming the spirit)" [OI: R, F, L].* And another Syrian refugee who noted he liked to see the crowds on Ramlet because it reminded him of public spaces in Syria and the crowds occupying it. *"I visit because I like to see people",* and *"mostly I come on Sunday because it is busy I see people and it makes me happy"* [Q: ZB, M, S]

Generally, Syrians seemed less concerned with nationalities around them and were more interested in the physical attribute of the space, positive crowd perception, spending time with family, and the fact that seafront public spaces are free of charge. This may be due to how Syrians experience and practice public spaces in their own country that is distinguished for crowded open markets and outdoor spaces used for picnics, family gatherings, weddings and special occasions among others.

Lebanese respondents often seem to prefer seafront spaces as less ethnically diverse and less busy, there is also evidence that people from migrant communities have experienced 'unwelcome' and direct racism and hostility while using these leisure spaces. Syrian refugees are painfully aware of their refugee status in the country, some typologies of space on the seafront make them feel more welcome. They talked about this openly. The Syrian couples sitting on the Manara rocks explained *"Everyone is different in 2012 it was better some Lebanese are racist …they are unwelcoming they make us feel unwelcome through the looks they give us …they look at us with contempt you can tell from the look in their eyes, , we are down to earth people…"* [OI: M,,M, S] A Syrian man working as a part-time tailor was sitting reading a novel on Zaytuna Bay, the managed space on Beirut seafront *"it's nicer in the weekend; it is relaxing, European, this is where I feel relaxed in Beirut, there is nature and urbanity around me, I like to sit here and not along the cornice, I feel more welcome"* [Q: ZB, M, S]. A

Syrian refugee in Lebanon since 1995 stopped going to the beachfront specifically to AUB beach during the weekend due to the harassment and racism they experience *"we don't go on Saturday and Sunday it is too crowded and people are nafs el fekra (are the same). …some people are racist, they eat and litter; they do not pick up their trash or throw trash on us.."* [OI: M, M, S]

Sometimes the avoidance of crowds is simply a desire for peace and quiet and not always carrying anti-foreigner undertones. In the early morning of a weekday during July, I spoke to a woman who had pulled a chair close to the crashing waves and wanted to listen to the sound of the sea. Like many Lebanese, she had a negative perception of crowds and explained that she comes to Ramlet al Bayda either early morning or in the evening to avoid crowds. She explained *"The other parts like corniche el Manara are crowded I don't like crowds so I come during the weekday in the morning, I also visit late at night, to sit calmly on the beach- I don't swim through the water is polluted. When I come here I tend to have positive energy throughout the day, I am relaxed and I call it relative happiness or temporary happiness if you will".* [OI: R, F, L]

5.1.4   Leisure as gendered

There is a noticeable lack of gender balance in Beirut's seafront public spaces. There are ways that all-male groups occupy space which deters female users from specific parts of the seafront spaces, especially the edge of the water. Some examples indicate specific problems of harassment, but these could have been isolated and were not so commonly discussed. There is also a specific association of the poor with Muslim religious conservative ideology, which favours conservative female clothing to overtly define morality and modesty, such as wearing a traditional abaya that is wide and formless, which would discourage females from using spaces and deter the wearing of swimming customs. Culture and norms about Muslim religious dress code could be also a factor that prevents women in public spaces from feeling at ease and being careful about what they wear; this ca can happen between different genders or members of the same gender.

Because the edge of water across Manara, Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda is dominated by men, females don't feel welcome and are too self-conscious to wear a swimming suit. Females seemed to prefer to come with families and friends, especially on Ramlet, Dalieh and Manara edges of the sea. It was only on Manara that some females felt it socially acceptable to wear swimming suits, which may be related to the typology of the area being an inviting sandy beach. Females occupied Manara and Zeituna Bay walkways with ease since the typology did not dictate wearing a swimming suit. Also, both areas have good connectivity to the street level and a well-lit typology as opposed to the disconnected nature of Ramlet, the secluded nature of Dalieh and the rocky sea edges of Manara, with Zeituna Bay having an additional layer of private security. This ease of occupying Manara for females starts to fade during the later hours of the evenings into the early hours of the morning, when the pedestrian street level walkway across all the case studies can be perceived as a place to hook up, meet people and socialise more freely than in one's environment and this has been researched by others such as (Khalili, 2016; Merabet, 2014)

Harassment is also another reason females feel safer when accompanied by their families. The woman waiting for her friend to bring coffee on a quite early weekday associated safety with being accompanied in the public space *"It sometimes feels unsafe, and it doesn't occur to me to come here alone as I come here with my friends or family"* [OI: R, F, L]. A man sitting with his family on the edge of the water on Manara also explained that harassment is an underlying issue but maybe also related to unfamiliar surroundings associated with specific seafront spots *" The problems we have here is with toltish girls (harassment), we usually don't say anything unless we want to draw a line. When we used to visit before Ramlet, we were more familiar with our surroundings, and it was all people we knew now (on*

Manara) it is a different story; we started using this spot recently as the water is cleaner, now our relatives and our neighbours come with us, so we know each other now, but mostly we keep to ourselves" [OI:M, M, P)

A 23-year-old who lived on Ramlet al Bayda explains the reason she doesn't often use the street-level walkway is due to a lack of a sense of safety and harassment, noting that this also affects her choice of clothing. *"We usually walk and sometimes we sit on a bench. But I do not feel safe. Last time for example, I was here with my cousins, and we were spooked out by men who were harassing us in a bad way. We were frightened and had to walk fast. We thought they would hurt us. Especially since the country is no longer that safe. With robberies and poverty. I think about what I wear when I come here unless I have a man with me"*[OI: R, F, L]

The water's edge is associated with lower-class users, and a more conservative Muslim religious ideology can sometimes dominate. This is also a factor in the lack of female users as well as the conservative dress code. Females are likely to dress conservatively to avoid drawing male and unwanted attention. A Syrian refugee remarked *"We are all humans, we should all accept each other. As you can see everyone is here on the beach, it is very diverse and we have as much right to come to the beach as anyone else ... I wish people would dress more conservatively (she said looking disapprovingly at a woman wearing a swimming costume), I would appreciate if people dressed hasab el share3 (according to Shari'a law)".* Now, pointing at the woman's bikini top, and saying *"is this nice for example, do we need to see this?! I wish people would wear a bit more clothes, there are private beaches for this so we don't have to see this ...but everyone is free to do what they like we should not judge".*

Figure 5-1: Public space as gendered highlighting male dominance on Beirut's seafront spaces

5.1.5 Leisure as escape

Interviews found that almost everyone enjoys the scenic qualities of the seafront: the sea views out to the horizon and associated being in close proximity to the sea with general feelings of being relaxed, inducing positivity, and as a form of escapism. Escapism can be characterized by the temporary dissociation of one's self; thus engaging in leisure activities could be an individual experiencing an escape from self or physical surroundings (Morris and Orton-Johnson, 2022).

This form of escapism meant people used the seafront either to escape from their own self and thoughts or escape their physical surroundings. This section explores some nuances about what 'escape to the seafront' means for different residents of Beirut and Lebanon.

5.1.5.1 Lebanese Residents

For Lebanese residents, escapism is related to escape their own thoughts and self. they associate seafront public spaces with relaxation, possibly meeting friends by chance and watching others engage in different activities across public spaces as well as escaping their living realities.

A Lebanese lady taking a stroll with her two children stopped to talk to me as she was waiting for a taxi to pick her up; she explained that visiting the seafront is a form of escaping her physical reality because she lives in a crowded neighbourhood, this space offers various typologies of spaces in one visit as well as opportunities to people watch and run into friends-providing an escape from daily routines. Originally a Beirut resident she moved to the southern suburbs and the seafront allows her an escape from her reality and a reconnection to her old daily routines and acquaintances *"The sea makes me relax; the waves are so calming it immediately makes me feel better. I come here with my friends as well as my children, I could go to other spots on the Beirut seafront but I really prefer Manara (due to its variety)- the kids get their bicycles and I cycle with them too. There are different people on Manra there are more diversity and more age groups, my kids can also play football here because we live in Dahiye (the crowded Southern suburbs of Beirut) …. but we are originally from Beirut. I see people on Manara I don't expect to see; I run into old friends, and neighbours, but because it is a walkway, it a quick hello usually, we don't necessarily sit and catch up, I enjoy watching people swimming or someone dancing I enjoy hearing music, I enjoy watching people cycling, fi jaw and fi harakeh.."* [OI: M, F, L]

Others felt the seafront helps them escape the hustle and bustle of their daily lives and helps them connect on a more spiritual level to escape their own thoughts and relax. The lady who had pulled a chair next to the sea on a weekday explained, *"I come here to absorb positive energy raha nafsiye (relaxing my soul). I feel that my vision can extend into the horizon, some decisions I can take on the beach. Today I wanted to meditate. I come here to sit and listen to the sea, I feel the sand beneath my feet."* [OI: R, F, L] A 23-year-old lived on Ramlet al Bayda, she had come with her younger sister and cousin for s stroll. She explained *"we were looking to escape the traffic, and the cars and the noise, especially that my cousin came from abroad. We find strolling on Ramlet calming and soothing- we wanted to escape"* [OI:R, F, L].

The man with the group of friends who have been meeting on Manara for 30 years in the morning also explained that the space allows him his freedom from family obligations. For them not only does the space allow them the freedom to choose friends from outside their living context, but it also allows them to be free from family obligations. For this man, he wanted to be free from the prescribed had of family obligations *"I come here to look at the horizon the world (around can go to hell), fiha tokhrab I just want to come here see my friends and look at the horizon….look …just look at the sea 3ala Mad el Nathar (extending into the horizon,) yesterday I came back home at 3 am all the household was there my uncle needed hospital everyone was there they want me to pay for the hospital I paid, and I came straight here….if I don't come here I will go crazy this is the space where I can be free."* [OI: M, M, L]

5.1.5.2 Non-Lebanese residents

Refugees and migrant workers mentioned the phrase 'change of scenery' repeatedly. In Arabic, *taghyir jaw* translates into a change of atmosphere, however in this context atmosphere means scene, and surroundings, this is more likely related to living arrangements and the reason why it was mentioned a lot by Syrian refugees. In Beirut, Syrian refugees are likely to live in highly

dense low-income neighbourhoods where the average extended household living in one apartment is eight. Another reason for choosing to use the word change of scenery is because it is a change from the usual surroundings, an activity one does on their own or with the whole family where there is enough physical space for different activities and pursuits. One Palestinian refugee noted, *"I get to spend time by the sea; the camp is too crowded"* [Q: M, M, P]. Another Palestinian refugee said *"we come here taghyir jaw"* on Manara sitting with his extended family on the rocky seafront next to Riviera Hotel/Beach resort, he continued *"we are here to change the ambiance, we work all week and this is our day off, and this is the closest to us from Bourj el Brajneh (refugee camp). We come here to swim, socialise, spend time together as a family, eat we bring our shishas and our food and spend the whole day. You relax, your nafsiye changes, teghyir jaw we enjoy our time here, we come with our relatives, the beach is nice, we breathe in fresh air, I was born Palestinian, I have lived here all my life, yes, we spend all our summers here in the open space."* [OI: M, M, P]

A Sudanese couple fishing on Manara and reluctant to talk to be before they got a nod from the Lebanese guy who 'provided his blessing for them to access the space' taught them how to fish said *"I come here to ghayer jaw that is all. It is better than sitting at home, we (my wife and I) live in Zokak el Blat. She works in an office cleaning, and I do cleaning work at a restaurant. We come here because it is a change of scenery … we see people playing music, there is an ambience (fi jaw) sometimes people have celebrations here, and that is nice- but we don't mingle we watch and listen from the side we tend to keep to ourselves"* [OI: M, M, S]

While Beirut is always a busy, crowded city, there are periods of time when the reality of living in Beirut is harsher. When I travelled back to Beirut in June 2021 after the October 17th, COVID-19 and August 4th explosion and the protracted worsening economic conditions. Beirut's seafront public spaces were worn, dirty and overcrowded. The seafront had become the city's only outlet- every spot occupied at all the different times of the day and throughout the night because of the lack of electric supply- the city had plunged into almost complete darkness. Street and traffic lights were not even functional. The dire economic situation and massive scale loss of jobs meant people had time on their hands and needed a space to spend time. Leisure became much more important in these extreme times. Everyone across all nationalities agreed that they were coming to the seafront to escape. Escape meant different things; here escape meant leaving behind a conservative Muslim religious identity associated with being a Shiite from the Southern Suburbs of Beirut. A young Lebanese man had come to AUB beach with his friends to escape the harsh reality of the economic situation and mentioned, *"The eclectic supply was cut off at noon, we are friends, there is no work so we came here nihna wlad mintaqa wahda (we are kids from the same area), personally I came here to escape my reality, where I am from, my mintaqah (area); I am from Rihab where it is not much it is a popular area, you understand, so to escape I come here, the water in clean and clear, 3amoud el jama'aa (AUB beach) it is 'designed' that is we prefer to come here"* [OI: M, M, L]. The group of three Lebanese friends on Manara noted *"Now people come because there is no fuel, people are coming here a lot more that is one negative change or is it positive I don't know ..people come here to escape their reality …you see people sleeping here there is no electricity there is nothing …..this is our escape. For me I come here I put my chair and nothing else exists".* [OI: M, M, L]

5.2 Leisure as compromised

5.2.1 Intercultural spaces: negotiating territorial behaviour and social boundary making

Leisure in Beirut is almost always negotiated across users since the negotiation of territoriality and boundaries determine who is classified as an outsider or an insider in society. Understanding intercultural space dynamics and how these are negotiated sheds light on the narratives of sociability as experienced and voiced by diverse users and the extent of societal divisions. Divisions are apparent through discrimination practices and tensions across intersectional identities such as nationality, religion, class and neighbourhoods.

Negotiation dynamics can be observed in spaces that are not managed and do not have security personnel, such as Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda and the edge of the water on Manara. This section explores some instances where Lebanese and non-Lebanese interactions form spatial gatekeeping. It is difficult to discern how extensive this practice is, especially concerning larger seafront areas compared to specific fishing spots. spaces that are not highly managed. There seems to be an agreed-upon invisible boundary for keeping the peace across different nationality groups as well as within the same nationalities across intersectional identities.

Observation pointed to illusory boundaries resulting in friction and racism, which could rarely break into a physical fight between different nationalities. Friction and fights occur due to differences in nationality, harassment of a female companion, drinking alcohol, politics or neighbourhood affiliation.

An example of direct racism is policing access to leisure based on nationality. On Sunday, September 29th, I witnessed a couple hire a boat ride from a boat operator on Dalieh. They descended the limestone steps and got into the boat; the couple were young, in their 20s. The guy was wearing jeans the girl wore jeans and a tight revealing red top. Upon their return, they had an altercation with the boat owner; the couple said they had paid the captain downstairs and paid the boat operator again. The Syrian stood no chance; the boat operator towered over him and threatened him quite loudly and aggressively that he should know where he is standing, that he should know his place (Khalik 3aref qiyasak w hajmak hon bihay el mantaqa, el captain tale3 yshoufak, bas 3rouf hajmak hon!). This translates into a demeaning remark that the Syrian refugee ought to be aware of the weight he carries in this area means that he is relatively insignificant. I approached the young couple after things had settled down, and the young man said Lebanese people take advantage of them and charged them a higher fare; he put his head down in dismay and said, *"they say we come to Lebanon and take your jobs and money, it is the other way around, we are robbed every day"* [Observation notes].

Another example of discrimination is based on intersectional identities, especially regarding differences in religious practice. The younger generation congregates on Beirut's seafront in different-sized informal groupings. They hang out on the seafront from the older generations groups that are apparent on Manara, specifically around AUB beach, Ramlet al Bayda and Dalieh. Younger groups tend to loiter to spend their time, especially after the economic crisis. Most of these groups tend to consume alcohol which is a problem for more pious users. Those consuming alcohol may cause some friction in their surroundings. More religious users do not appreciate alcohol consumption in public spaces due to their own practices and beliefs. They sometimes attribute this to health and safety concerns related to the remains of glass shards on rocks where children could injure themselves.

It is also likely that discriminatory practices related to territorial behaviour have increased since 2019 and the economic crisis. A young group of twenty-year-olds hang out on the AUB beach almost every day during summer. They have become more aware of deep societal divisions in public spaces related to intersectional identities that become apparent through practices in public spaces such as drinking and visible political affiliations, such as tattoos. They even remember

days when people used to get along nostalgically. It all comes down to *"it was so much nicer before, the people were nicer, not like now everyone had some (wed), empathy/sympathy towards another now it is each to his own, there are more political parties and more divisions. We as a patriarchal society, so we follow the family jaw el beit. We are bound by this; we were born Haraket Amal. It is not like we have a choice. In public spaces, before we were all Lebanese now you can't be independent; now it is about ma7soubiyat (who do I politically support) and areas you live in …who supports whom (political parties). we see problems in public spaces if there is drinking (it means you may support Haraket Amal because they are more liberal about drinking and not strict in religious practice as opposed to other Muslim-dominated religious parties such as Hezbollah where drinking is strictly forbidden), also because of tattoos, you see many tattoos are political, so a tattoo related to Imam Hussein or the battle of Karbala is a visible sign for a Shiite. a lot of changes have occurred in public spaces in the past two years now it is a lot more crowded fi daghet (there is pressure on public spaces), there are no positives it is only negative changes"* [OI:M, M, L] . The crisis has also meant there are less security personnel around public spaces. A Syrian lady on Ramlet al Bayda remarked that the absence of the state results in the lack of safety and sometimes friction in public spaces related to different beliefs and cultural practice, she said *"before the Lebanese Security Forces (LSF) used to be here ...now there is no one for safety, you know there are always fighting all the time with knives and everything it is about harassment mostly about women, very rarely it is about politics, , and almost always because people are drunk"* [OI: R, F, S]

More territorial practices that translated into distinct spatial territories across nationalities are clear on Dalieh. For example, Lebanese users make sure they police the space, through territoriality and giving Syrians instructions. The Lebanese constantly ask Syrian users not to litter and also self-appoint themselves to police the space if things get too loud when boys get too rowdy, if they break the glass on the rocks, or negatively criticise littering. Spatially the Lebanese keep an eye on things by monitoring the entrances of the coves/pools. on Sundays, Syrians mostly concentrate around shallow pools while the Lebanese maintain a presence on the pools located right next to the fishermen's marina. Lebanese can discern foreigners based on dialect. They also sometimes attribute Syrian refugee status to persons swimming in clothes (likely because they cannot afford swimming gear). On Dalieh, Lebanese fishermen offer Syrians boat rides, coffee, gazel el banet (candy floss) and have erected shacks also provide water, snacks etc . Syrians practice public space differently, they come together as families or larger groups or in contrast; they are a very large group of younger men generally loud, very inquisitive, and rowdy. They are also more likely to bring large speakers that blast loud music on Sundays. Syrians usually have a picnic, bring their own food and generally exist in the public space as a large family with relatives or neighbours. The Lebanese come or meet a small group of friends, mostly guys. Spatial distinction across nationalities occupying different levels of the space was clear on Ramlet al Bayda to two elderly Syrian ladies met on Ramlet al Bayda this year and became friends since they are from the same Syrian village *" not everyone in Beirut is here [on the edge of the water], no my neighbours in Salim slam, for example, they do not go to Ramlet al Bayda they don't to, they don't like going to public spaces, they prefer the private beaches whereas I do. [Lebanon is famous for its beaches. I don't understand why [Lebanese] don't enjoy the beach, Syrians come here, Palestinians come here, Lebanese maybe they come at night? I don't see them though, they also walk they walk on the street level, but they do not come down to the beach, I haven't seen them do that,no they don't come down to the sea"* [OI: R, F, S]. These spatial boundaries are apparent to different users. The Syrian couples eating sunflower seeds on the Manara water edge thought that spatial segregation is apparent across different levels. They said *" not everyone is here those who can afford to go to restaurants do not come down here only the poor come here also by here we mean the beach…. the people on the walkway up on the street level are different, the rich don't come here …maybe on the walkway but not here* (edge of the water) [OI: M, M, S]."

Boundaries are also apparent on Manara in terms of users who occupy different levels at different times. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, Manara is highly temporal, different groups occupy the space across different times of the day. In the early hours of the morning, Manara is

largely occupied by health enthusiasts. These groups occupy different spaces, and many have been visiting for decades and know each other very well. Some are mixed sectarian groups and proudly speak about this in public. They clearly state that they are of mixed sects and that they don't care about politics and their political leader (Zaim). Still, these groups exhibit territoriality towards each other to exert their power over the territory, especially for newcomer groups. You can see them engaging in different group sports activities throughout the early morning hours.

Boundary making can also be distinguished among Lebanese wanting to convey a specific identity. Many Lebanese respondents always stated they were from Beirut at the start of the interview, although as the interview progressed, some turned out to live in the southern suburbs of Beirut. Here it was clear that research participants wished to convey a specific identity associated with specific neighbourhoods. Those who stated they were original Beirut residents were referring to the fact they belonged to the original few Beirut families that can be identified by name and who viewed the diversity of Beirut in recent years as outsiders. On the other hand, those not from Beirut wished to dispel a poor, Shiite, Islamist, and informal cultural identity because of the stigmatisation (Harb, 2003) associated with being from the southern suburbs of Beirut stated they were from Beirut. In this instance, they wanted to convey a specific cultural identity connected to being from the capital, religiously open, middle-class (Koning, 2009); they always started out by saying they were from Beirut.
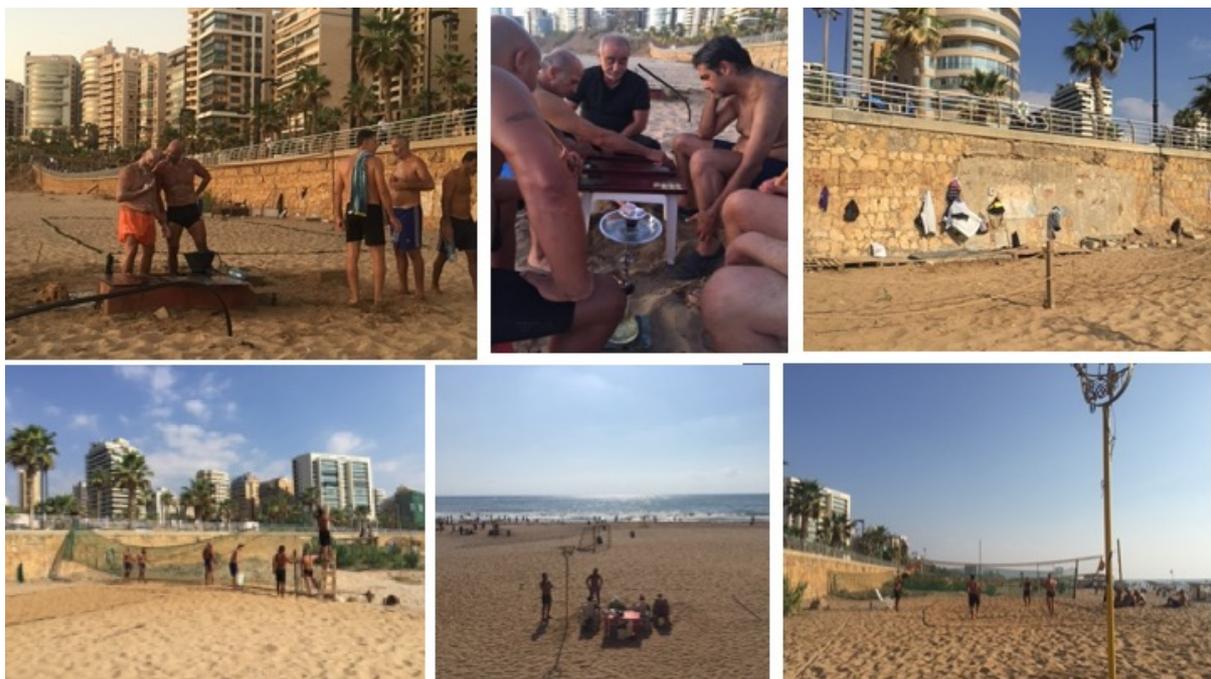
Figure 5-2: Different groups occupying spaces on Ramlet al Bayda public beach

In it is unclear how common this practice of policing public space is, but a few interviewees referred to having a "Lebanese entry point" to public space; the Lebanese person who introduced them to the public space is sometimes present at the same time they are there as a form of protection. A Sudanese and his wife spend time on Manara fishing and smoking shisha; It seems likely the couple adopted specific cultural habits to fit in local culture. The couple would not talk to me before a nod of approval from the Lebanese guy who 'provided his blessing for them to access the space'. He was the guy who taught them how to fish and established himself as the gatekeeper; fishing was their entry point to spend more time in the public space. He explained, *"I come on Sunday because I do not have work then, there is fresh air, I come here to fish I learned this here from Abu Khalil, (he pointed, he is standing there if you want to ask him*

questions), we also smoke shisha that we are preparing now it's a habit we picked up here…not in Sudan….I am new to fishing, he taught me how to fish three months ago. Before I learned fishing, I used to come for a stroll on Zeituna bay or Manara but since I learned how to fish, we now come and spend time here it is much nicer" [OI: M, M, S].

A Syrian refugee who has been living in Lebanon for over 10 years and works as a plumber describes intergroup and cultural barriers as well as the need to have a Lebanese connection to the space *"I am with my friends, three guys and someone from Beirut he is older he taught us about these spaces. I've been here since 1995, I met him from work so we became friends, he is 62 years old, from Zouqaq el Blat. I learned how to fish from a guy, from the Chehab family (original Beiruti family) he is a fisherman, so we go fishing very early, sometimes on Dalieh, we play Palette etc. when we are on 3amoud el jam3a (AUB beach) it is busy and the people are not right (mazboutin). Some specific people look at me as if I'm from outer space. The look says it all really, we are locals so this is our space and we feel this from the looks. We tend to come here early in the morning, we swim, and we take a corner. We usually fish, clean, and fry the fish on the spot. We clean the spot and leave afterwards. Some people don't clean around them, and this pisses me off. We are here because we want to swim; we don't stay long before it gets busy"* [OI: M, M, S].

All these dynamics impact how people experience seafront open public spaces in Beirut. The general lack of state presence highly impacts the quality of the spaces on Beirut's seafront that are in dire need of maintenance. Further, the lack of state presence generally allowed groups and gangs to exude dominance in specific spaces. This does not make everyone feel safe and welcome and harms diversity and safety in micro spaces along the different levels of the seafront.

5.2.2 Leisure and the absent role of the state in the management of public spaces

In terms of the physical attributes of the space and landscape design users were asked about the absent role of the state and what could have been done better regarding the provision and maintenance of seafront public spaces. Respondents noted the low investment and maintenance of seafront public spaces and had suggestions on what to improve. Some also had a few nuanced ideas suggesting that more investment and design does not always mean more inclusive spaces.

The majority of respondents noted the absent role of the state regarding its role of providing, maintaining and managing seafront public spaces. Respondents were often keen to suggest creative ways to improve the spaces. They noted design and maintenance ideas that do not necessarily cost much to implement. The Lebanese woman strolling with her children on Manara said *"If I could change one thing it would be cleaner and more spots to sit maybe more benches? Just some spots to sit, I wish we could preserve what we have ….it is just not clean, once I left just because of the smell of pee on the sidewalk, it was too much"*. The Sudanese couple on Manara who were fishing thought that more shade was needed *"I think if they plant shady trees like that one (pointing to a large shady tree) it would be good everyone sits under it for shade. Also, clean public toilets, you know the situation in Lebanon…the toilets have to be clean so we use them there are some under the tree, but we don't use them as they are too dirty! they need cleaning (he shook his head rather disappointingly) and said shu badna n2oul or nehke (meaning there is nothing to be said). Some benches would also be good. Everyone comes here this is a place for all of us"*. [OI: M, f, L]

While many noted the absent role of the state in the provision and maintenance of seafront public spaces, a few respondents reflected also on the role of the state that privatised the seafront, providing a nuanced understanding that not all designed spaces cater for all and this absent role could mean further privatisation and less spaces that are open to the public.

The Palestinian man sitting with his family on the rocks clarified that maybe the lack of state intervention is a good thing, assuaging his fears about the further privatisation of public space *"there is no state intervention- it is a good space it is for free, if the state intervenes, well in Lebanon nothing is public and nothing is for free anymore. We came during lockdown twice no one said anything, but it wasn't this crowded. It is free, I would like it to stay like this maybe if they just break down the rock into sand it would be better. We could also benefit from a few kiosks selling refreshments, tents for shade, red cross for health and safety, and toilets and it would be grand"* [OI: M, M, P].

The Syrian couples on Manara stated that there is state intervention but for all the wrong reasons, they wanted the spaces better designed and managed, but not further policed. " *[after Covid] there is more policing of public space, they ask us to leave, not to smoke shisha, not to litter, but we still like it. if we could rent chairs, sittings beddings, toilets, changing rooms and fresh water supply so we can quickly clean, or shower would be great. Not everyone who is here can afford to go to restaurants down there. Only the poor come here, by here we mean the beach"* [OI: M, M, S]. . The Lebanese woman listening to the waves on Ramlet hoped seafront public spaces could be more managed to make these safer for all users. She explained her pint of view *"Guys get drunk and fight, they swim in their underwear on the beach and it is not right. There are younger girls and families and kids"* She thought *" the corniche is fine but people on Ramlet are left to their own devices. Corniche is cleaner, better managed and safer. Ramlet would require, public toilets, security and a no alcohol policy, as well as more security for drug users. People should not be littering if the beach is cleaned up and sewers [left exposed by the municipality] are not dumped here anyone would come but they just zabbalouha (spoiling it with garbage)"* [OI: R, F, L] . A young lady taking a stroll with her father on Ramlet al Bayda public beach touched upon the long history of privatising public spaces by the state rather than protecting these. She said *"the public and private sector is a major issue in Lebanon. For example, let's take the Coral beach, and all the cafes and the beaches which were snatched from the public- these are our rights including the space, the beach and the seafront itself. This is the right of the people. Most of the cafes and the tall buildings are all illegal and against zoning regulations"* She remarked how public spaces where at the forefront of October 19th uprisings *"during Thawra (revolution) many protests happened in the area (Ramlet al Bayda) when people invaded and broke into these private places and vandalized them in order to show their discontent with public policy"* [OI: R, F, L]

5.3 Leisure as related to memories of the seafront in previous decades or ongoing memory building in the present time.

Issues related to memory and place were evident for Lebanese respondents as they tended to have more memories associated with this specific seafront. Beirut's seafront has a strong link in people's memories related to families, time, and activities users engaged in when they were younger. Lebanese respondents more commonly invoked childhood memories. Other nationalities especially migrant workers and refugees, focused on ongoing memory building related to space characteristics, the horizon, the sea and the views.

5.3.1 Lebanese residents

A Lebanese man in his sixties walks on Manara with a small radio and a microphone. He sings to anyone who likes to listen. He says he used to live close to Manara, but due to the lack of income, he had to move to the city suburbs. He explains that Manara has a special place in his memories, and he comes to this space to relive his childhood and better days *"I used to live on Ain el Mresisseh and used to come here all the time. I relive my memories through singing- that is why I sing here. When I was an adolescent, I visited to watch the sea. I used to walk up to pigeon rock… everywhere really, that is why I am always here…. You know why I like it here it is pure, it is a pure place."* [OI:"M, M, L]. A fisherman, has worked on Dalieh most of his life; he heads the fishermen association on Dalieh.

He and his family live on al Malla in Ras Beirut, and they used to spend most of their time on the weekends in Dalieh where his father taught them how to swim and fish. He recalls with fondness that he was born in Dalieh *"I was born here; I enjoy coming here as you see we meet up, get together and have a barbeque, this is our area"* and *"I've been doing this since the 80's I love the sea, and this is an open space I get the family here and when I fish I do so alone"*. [Q: D, M,L]

The nurse on Ramlet had fond memories on the seafront, she said "I have memories here from when I was 10 years old. I used to come with my parents, brothers and sisters- we would play football, swim, play with the swings and take a stroll. We used to go to the south too, so we did not come here often, which means that when we did, it was such a treat. Sunsets are beautiful here! - I visit with my brother a lot and sometimes I visit alone, and other times with friends it depends, sometimes I want to be alone and at other times I want company – I sit with the sea you see" [OI: R, F, L]

Not all the Lebanese associated the seafront with good memories. Some didn't have enough memories that celebrate Beirut's seafront because of a strict upbringing. More religiously conservative Lebanese would have experienced a traditional upbringing where they may have only been allowed out with the family on weekends. Beirut's seafront may have been associated with being too open and cosmopolitan and not the image some would have liked to associate their families with. The Lebanese lady was with her children on Manara waiting for a taxi and explained that since as a child, her dad had been too strict. The seafront was off limits. This has caused her to react *"I do not have many memories here as child my father was very strict he didn't take us out a lot , he always said it was too crowded so I did the opposite now I really like bringing my kids here"*. [OI: M, F, L]

Others had more problematic memories of the war years or of being arrested by a militia back in the 1980's. The man sitting with his friends on Manara on an early morning recalls *"I have very good memories here, and also bad ones. Once Haraket Amal (Amal movement) arrested me and gave me a beating in the 80's I was here, not so fond of that one- it was around 1983 or around that time"* [OI: M, M, L].

5.5.2 Non-Lebanese residents

The Syrian couples on Manara's water edge said they did not have memories of this specific location but they do enjoy being outdoors *"I am so happy with the views; the place is so nice. We sometimes come with our parents and relatives but they are in Bekaa, so it is a trip for them we have to arrange it. we get our shisha our sunflower seeds and spend the day …"* [OI:M, M/F, S]. Sometimes the experiential qualities of being near the sea provides a bridge between different locations. Syrian couple taking a stroll explained that being next to the sea reminds them of their home in Syria which is also by the sea, they said *"we like to come here for a change of scenery, we are originally from Latakia and we like to see the sea, and walk by the see. It reminds us of home"* [Q: M, M/F, S]

For other refugees, they are engaged in ongoing memory making and relating this landscape to familiar landscapes they enjoyed before the Syrian war. Here, the sea is playing an important part in bringing people together and making connections in a land that is not their own and where they do not feel welcome, but reminds them of home because they are connecting to a similar landscape. A group of Syrians on Ramlet water edge explained, *"We are from Haske in Syria originally, the sea brings us together, we have come into the habit of coming here every two weeks during the summer. Its the sense of place we are also fishermen, we work in Dalieh at the Itani's next to the coves, we do this during the winter and summer where we go out to fish early in the morning at around 4 am but we have a relationship with the sea and it has brought us together"* [OI: R, M/F,S]

Over time, newcomers become less 'new' by gaining memories of their new home and practicing public spaces like they do back howm. Two veiled Syrian women sitting on the water edge explained that it was the sea that brought them together *"we are from Haske, in Syria; we have lived in Lebanon for eight years. We met here on Ramlet al Bayda, and we became friends. We spoke and realised we were both Syrians and then realised we were from the same village, so we exchanged numbers and we became friends. We arrange outings for the kids together on Ramlet al Bayda when we can; we also take them to Horsh Beirut and Sanayeh public garden when we can"* [OI: R, F, S]

5.5.3 Digital archives representing leisure practices: netography and social media-netography

I explored nostalgia and memories by analysing collective responses to imagery posted on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook by accounts documenting older pictures of the seafront. This analysis showed the following findings organised chronologically. In the 1950s, analysis has shown Lebanese had a closer relationship with the sea and Beirut's seafront across all the study sites. This was deduced from all pictures posted on social media that were celebrated with positive interactions celebrating the design, cultural identity, popular activities and nostalgia. For example, people remarked they had forgotten the fact that Manara, during the 1960s had uninterrupted access to the sea safe for a few cafes and the fact that the horizontal stretch was lined with Tamarix, a tree famed for resistance to saline soils, salt sprays and harsh winds. They are most commonly planted and seen on Mediterranean promenades providing much needed shade. During the 1980's the Tamarix A complete lack of maintenance followed by a KSA palm tree bestowment in later years, resulted with the Tamarix being cut down and replaced with palm trees that do not provide the large span of shade.

Figure 5-3: Photos denoting historic photos of Beirut's seafront public spaces collected from social media while undergoing netography

Almost all posts on Facebook about Zeituna Bay tend to hold the space in loving memory the way it was as is shown in the picture above, before the private Marina was built. Zeituna Bay was more commonly referred to as St. Georges Bay. Peoples' memories invoked about the place include strolling on the bay, issues of safety, Lebanese spending Eid and other public holidays on the seafront for a few days, peddlers selling ice cream, and Kaak (a Lebanese brioche covered

with sesame seeds that is served with thyme or cheese). People also shared memories about sitting in cafes across the street level to smoke Shisha (water pipe) and visit a "Fawwal" to have a traditional breakfast (traditional local restaurants serving a typical Lebanese breakfast of fava beans and chickpeas).

5.4 Reactions to polluted and littered places in leisure contexts

Respondents noted that littering and pollution are problems that stains Beirut's seafront. People had notable reactions to litter and pollution, role of other people and the role of state. seafront

Littering is an issue across most of the seafront cases, except the highly managed Zeituna Bay. Almost everyone noted the lack of cleanliness, garbage, and litter that mars the Beirut seafront across all of its levels, including the sea. The majority of interviews attributed the lack of cleanliness to the absence of the Lebanese government. Few respondents attributed this to the presence of foreigners and the sheer increase in the number of users of the seafront since the economic crisis. A lady sitting on a bench on Manara with her two children noted that even people around her talked about the dismal lack of cleanliness on the seafront and how this negatively affects the place. She said "*You also see people from abroad, foreigners, they talk about garbage and how dirty this space is, we see Arabs too, there are people who don't like it and that is ok. The garbage is definitely a negative change there is so much of it now it is much dirtier, [the space] was cleaner three to four years ago, Raouche and Manara were not like this and this saddens us Lebanese.* She retorted that if there are some changes to be made to the seafront that cleanliness would score high on her priority list, noting "*If I could change one thing it would be cleaner and more spots to sit maybe more benches? Just some spots to sit, I wish we could preserve what we have ….it is just not clean, once I left just because of the smell of pee on the sidewalk, it was just too much*" [OI: M, F, L]

Pollution was also noticed by many across all nationalities. A Palestinian man with his family sitting on the Manara water edge noted the high level of sea pollution which affects the water they swim in, however does not entirely deter them due to the lack of accessible seafront leisure opportunities. "*I worked on Ramlet al Bayda a few years ago and that is where I took my family, the water was clean, 4-5 years ago, but we now come to the Manara because the water is cleaner. There is a huge sewer on Ramlet, the water here is much cleaner to swim, we would prefer to go to Khalde but again now transport is an issue. Manara is good for the kids with the layers of rock that naturally form shallow pools that way we don't have to worry about the kids, it is safer, we bring our food but we clean after ourselves when we leave we leave it spotless I hope others would too*". [OI: M, M, P]

The younger generation who are generally more aware of climate emergencies also noted that it is peoples public space practices that are not taking this into consideration negatively impacting the quality of public spaces. A younger Lebanese said "*The people are making it look bad because they have been neglecting the environment and throwing trash all over- try to keep it clean. If only people keep it clean and neat. Unfortunately, the Lebanese people are selfish and think about themselves.*" [Q: M, M, L]

A Syrian lady on Ramlet al Bayda public beach also noted the lack of cleanliness due to the absent state, noting the state should "*make it cheaper and remove the litter, also some amenities, cleaner would be good, everyone has the right to the sea: refugees and non-refugees*" [OI: R, F, S]. Another Lebanese on Ramlet noted that some areas are cleaner than others stating " Corniche is cleaner and more managed; it is safer" she also noted that peoples practices are in part to blame, noting "*People should not also be littering if Ramlet is cleaned up and sewers are not dumped here anyone would come but they are littering a lot the mal3ab baladi and horsh for example zabbalouha (the people made it dirty) [OI: R, F, L].* A Lebanese young man jogging in the early hours of the morning noted that the lack of cleanliness negatively affected tourists and resulted in some distaste towards the place on his part

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"I dislike that it is dirty you see bottles on the ground such as beer and vodka as well as food was thrown on the ground. I think this ruins the place. Maybe people are dirty, maybe they forget. I don't understand why people litter. This is a place where everyone comes to visit; I see people from Europe and America ….." [OI: R, M, L] . Sudanese couple fishing on Manara noted the lack of cleanliness of public toilets they are consequently unable to use. They said the spaces needs clean public toilets *"we need public toilets; clean ones you know the situation in Lebanon...well they have to be clean for us to be able to use them there are some toilets up front. Still, we don't use them. They are too dirty!"[OI: M, M/F, S]*

Some interviewees and questionnaire respondents blamed the litter on Syrians, noting their belief that the lack of cleanliness resulted from outsiders.

"And then there are the Syrians - they are a category on their own it is not a nice sight. They are littering a lot. I think all of Lebanon comes here; it is a nice landmark. Everyone has to have come here at least once in their life" [OI: M, M, L]. A few Syrians not only noted the lack of cleanliness but also did not like the fact that they were to be blamed for this predicament simply because they are viewed as "outsiders". A Syrian living in Lebanon for years noted that spaces are "Mzabbal. (it is full of garbage)" He said that "most people blame the Syrians for the trash and litter. Some Lebanese are worst, and some Syrians are much worse, but it is always the outsiders' fault. The density of people using the space causes litter; before, it was cleaner and better. The electricity also people now all went to be on the beach there is some air and people are now coming to the beach on late at night all nationalities are now here…we should all make an extra effort to keep it clean" [OI: M, M, S]. He noted it is the lack of management of public spaces that results in unclean spaces and that the state should exert a bit more effort in keeping spaces clean, especially the open sewers on Ramlet al Bayda public beach.

A group of Lebanese in Manara took the self-initiative clean their own space. The man said, "We come here because it is close to my work; we got used to this spot; you see, we come here to clean the space. I come earliest around six, and I have a bottle of Dettol and bleach- I clean the railings, the space and the floor, and we put our chairs and our umbrellas, and we sit for around 2 hours until it is 8 when it is time to go to work- I work at a fashion house in Ain el Mreisseh". [OI: M, M, L]

5.5 Chapter contribution and final notes

Beirut's seafront is diverse; its users relate to the seafront in different ways, which is evident in how they voice their leisure practice across health and wellbeing, different patterns of socialising, how leisure is expressed as an escape and how intercultural identities can co-exist,,,,, across levels and religious and cultural territories. Despite the possible lack of social integration across different levels and sites, the predominant peaceful co-presence of diverse users representing different genders, nationalities and classes is essential for multiculturalism. Understanding how newcomers voice leisure practices are vital and add to our understanding of leisure practice. It is important to recognise and acknowledge this diversity in the city. It is also essential for newcomers to the city to engage in the process of ongoing memory-making so they can transition to becoming less 'new' by creating new memories of their new home.

Beirut's post-war context has been attributed to a weak state regarding urban planning and policies that engage the public in the city's development; it has become apparent in recent years that stakeholders are also playing a vital role in safeguarding the city's seafront public spaces.

6. The scope and limitation of policy, governance and activism on Beirut's seafront

Beirut's seafront has long been an issue of contestation with the state. Literature on multiculturalism in public open spaces (POS) does not often focus on the contextual history of the place as well as how spaces have been approached by government policy. Therefore, it is essential to respond to Sandercock's (1998) argument that understanding the history and methods of governance, planning, and policy is imperative to understand the dynamics of immigration, cultural diversity, and intergroup coexistence at local levels (Sandercock, 1998). This is especially important as occupations of public space have re-emerged as an essential means for their politicisation. This chapter aims to fill a gap contributing to theorising about the governance of public spaces in a post-war context in the global south. It adds a contextual understanding of the history and current situation of state-led policies and grass-root activism on the seafront.

In this chapter, I first outline key (non-public) stakeholders involved in the governance of POS. Second, I look at each of the four case study areas to give a unique insight into a critical public-private-state dynamic which, though specific to the case study, also has wider resonances regarding POS in Lebanon. Thirdly, I look at key events within the research timeframe that had significant implications for the use and dynamics of seafront spaces and draw out how these have challenged and reflected some of the existing narratives regarding these locations.

By the end of this chapter, the reader will understand how law amendments have served private interests and political figures over the years, the lack of citizen participation in POS policies, and that lawful and consistent activism scores small wins regarding the inclusivity of POS. The extent to which policies by public authorities disregard people's leisure and well-being needs as civil rights. In relation to chapters 4 and 5, this understanding allows us to contextualise further, frame and understand the reasons users across the four study areas of Corniche, Ramlet al Bayda public beach, Dalieh and Zeituna Bay use different topographic levels within the spaces, spending more time in some than others, and temporarily engaging in different activities.

Due to Covid-19, the topics of this chapter were initially investigated through a desk review using data that was first collected from observation, informal conversations and through netography. It was only when I was able to return to Beirut in 2020 that I managed to conduct the remaining fieldwork and integrate stakeholder interviews into the analysis.

Low and Iveson's (2016) 'just city' framework is one means by which we can interrogate (from both a planning and a landscape architecture perspective) the relation between urban inhabitants, stakeholders and urban authorities, unpack claims, privileges and the interests served by different actors, and understand how these relate to the production and protection of specific spaces. The authors note that contemporary politics of public spaces are dominated by conflict, noting activists' reclamation of public spaces in the past few years. The authors propose a framework meant to provide more just public space through a process that seeks to redistribute resources, recognise difference, foster encounter/interaction, establish an ethic of care and ensure procedural fairness. (Low and Iveson, 2016). Accordingly, observing the dynamics of public authorities and civil society activists over time allows us to see how the persistence of groups and the propagation of information can play a critical role in re-appropriating and safeguarding public spaces. The case studies in this chapter point out injustices that require to be addressed on

Beirut's seafront that need to be understood according to Low and Iveson's framework. At times, the case studies offer a typology that could foster understanding between communities and as sites that could generate conflict. The cases point out to:

- Encounters and interactional justice: Ayn el Mreisseh and Manara, where the space typology encourages encounters across diverse users.
- Public space care and repair: Ramlet al Bayda; Ramlet shows signs of care and repair where all age groups are welcome. This is facilitated by their accompanying larger family groups allowed by the space typology.
- Distributive justice: Zeituna Bay; has to do with how wealth is distributed in public spaces. This case shows how accessibility to a portion of a population is unjust.
- Procedural Justice: Dalieh exemplifies where negotiations of public spaces were unfairly distributed by the government who sought to privatise Dalieh and does not support the continuity of this public space.

The findings will show that when different groups mobilise for collective action, actors form strategic alliances based on their shared interest (Martin, 2003), creating change in the long run.

Here it is important to note the key terms for this chapter. Policy and governance are interrelated. Governance relates to who has power, how stakeholders can be heard and how decisions are made, and policy is the output of governance. It is a principle of action adopted or proposed by governments, organisations or individuals. According to UN-Habitat, a policy for public space is a high-level strategy for local governments to achieve sustainable human development by recognising that public space is a catalyst for cities' development to enhance citizens' quality of life by ensuring the values of equity, public participation, accessibility, transparency, efficiency, fairness, and accountability (Kinyanjui, 2020). Governance here refers to how public authorities govern and manage spaces through the existing power-sharing system and how stakeholders make their voices heard. Activism can be viewed through demonstrations and protests that stir up opposition to a specific policy to hopefully mould public opinion over decades or pressure governments to provide social services. Activism can take many forms, such as large-scale protests, small movements, road blockages, mobilisation and information on social media(Harris and Schwedler, 2016).

6.1 Beirut's governance history

Beirut is an icon of a war-destroyed city. Fifteen years of civil war (1975-1990) left the country physically and institutionally ravaged. The years that followed since the Taef Accord in 1991 were years of internal peace[9]. However, since 1978, Lebanon has continuously suffered from intermittent Israeli military aggressions, the most recent being in 2006. Beirut is an extreme case of a war-torn context, especially from an urban planning perspective. The governance power-sharing landscape that emerged since the peace accord signed in the Saudi city of Taef is based on constituent power sharing, which means public officials are assigned to their roles based on their religious affiliation rather than competencies. This system dictates that the President needs to be Christian, Prime Minister Sunni and House Speaker Shiite. This power-sharing system is enshrined in religion and based on the last census done in 1932. At the time, the percentage of

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[9] The settlement officially ending the civil war in 1990 between fighting communities, known as the Taef Accord, further emphasised a distribution of power based on religious affiliation: Maronites (the President), Shiites (the House Speaker) and Sunnis (the Prime Minister). Administratively Lebanon is made up of six governorates mohafazats subdivided into 26 caza'scazas, each headed by a qaimmaqam.

the religious constituencies reflected this power-sharing system granting greater representation for the Christians. But demographics have changed, and many agree that this is an outdated system requiring urgent change to reflect a separation of state and religion. Currently, the ethnic background of the Lebanese is divided as 83 % Arab, 4 % Armenian, and 13 % other. Eighteen religious sects are recognized; however, conflicting figures confuse the percentile distribution by religion and sect. Cautiously reporting, Lebanon comprises 56 % Muslims and 39 % Christians with a remaining 5 % Druze (AbouAssi, 2015).

Over the years, this power-sharing political system has entirely spilt into public institutions and their operational system. Planning in Beirut must be analysed and understood as a tool that reshapes urban realities and public spaces in the city through governance, how they are being serviced, by whom and why are these not prioritised in such a congested city. Here it is important to note that planning and the provision of public spaces in the city are in the hands of various political actors, state and non-state institutions, as well as other influential private stakeholders (Jayyusi et al., 2008) each serving their own religious authority and communities at the expense of the public good.

Urban governance at city and local levels sheds light on issues of ethnic coexistence, interaction, and multiculturalism in our current contemporary world. In Lebanon, public policy has consistently failed to provide a minimum number of quality public spaces in Beirut (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015b) deemed adequate by the World Health Organisation[10] for its increasingly urban and diverse population. Beirut's history of governance of seafront public spaces has consistently favoured private interests over public interest, meaning the seafront has been privately developed in violation of the Beirut Master Plan, Maritime zoning regulation and building regulations (this is elaborated upon in section 6.2). Many seafront plots had some deeds "appear" in the land registry and were then resold to private investors seeking to develop tourism projects. While title deeds for these projects exist, still how these existed and were sold and passed remains murky (*The civil campaign to protect the Dalieh of Raouche*, no date). As such, the public's access to seafront public spaces along Beirut is often hampered by propertied landscapes that separate the sea from its public users. Beirut's seafront public promenade and beach have been turned into a 'club membership' with primarily affluent Lebanese residents, predominantly living in Beirut, who are required to pay entry, as well as elite overseas tourists. Over the years, Beirut residents, even those who visit the seafront esplanade, gradually lost the close relationship they had with the sea, which involved sea rituals, bathing, swimming, and community celebrations, among others.

Most of Beirut's diverse population lives in dense and deprived neighbourhoods in the city, especially in its suburbs (Fawaz and Peillen, 2003). The suburbs are often referred to as the misery belt around Beirut (Harb, 2003). It is estimated that around 2 million live in Beirut's suburbs compared to Municipal Beirut, which houses approximately 361,000. Residential spatial distribution based on sectarian affiliation is not new in Lebanon. Samir Khalaf (1993) confirms sectarian segregation in Beirut dates back to around 1860 when the demographic evolution of the city introduced a lack of balance between Christians and Muslims. Recent work by Bou Akar confirms spatial segregation of neighbourhoods by planning authorities Bou Akar (2018).

The provision of public space is not a priority for local and national planning authorities, perceived as an opportunity to improve the health and well-being of an increasing and diverse population. In the Lebanese context, where planning has a history of being used as a tool to

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[10] According to a recent report by the World Health Organisation, Beirut has with 1 m² of green open space per person in administrative Beirut, a lowly figure when compared to the value of 40m²/of public space per person recommended for healthy urban living by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (The Civil Campaign for the protection of Dalieh, undated).

exacerbate further spatial, societal and political divisions (Bou Akar, 2018), public space could be a valuable opportunity to bring people together, but Lebanese authorities rarely plan for the collective. In fact, more recent work shows that there are still planning disparities between communities based on service providers such as municipal Beirut and the suburbs and across the former East and West divide (Carmona, 2013; Verdeil, 2018).

Development, expansion and large waves of population displacement largely contributed to the changing landscape of the city of Beirut. The spatial growth of the city had repercussions not only on the diversity of its inhabitants but also on the social and physical integration of public spaces within the city itself- or the lack thereof. The contemporary city now hosts a diversity of inhabitants with varying requirements for public spaces.

Beirut's growth is dissimilar to other post-conflict cities; it is distinctive. Beirut's city centre was almost razed to the ground during the civil war and was reconstructed shortly after the Taef Peace accord was signed. To attract much-needed quick investment to the city, a private company named Solidere was formed by Former Prime Minister Hariri (later assassinated) and was tasked with reconstructing the razed city centre. Solidere took over downtown properties from owners in exchange for company shares after having essentially devalued the owners' property.

The way the reconstruction process was orchestrated after the property took over with much disregard to population needs and building and zoning regulations in downtown Beirut set the stage for future development in the city. Beyond Solidere ,citizens had no say in what was supposed to be a national reconstruction process (Makdisi, 1997). Beirut's historic centre had its own master plan and regulations by Solidere. According to Solidere's website, POS was an integral part of the company policy, sixty landscaped and open spaces comprising a large park, gardens, squares, pedestrian areas, quaysides and seafront promenades, streets aligned with trees, shrubs and seasonal plants, all creating a pleasant and distinctive urban character, were planned and a few were designed. The city was reconstructed over the years with priority given to commerce, and due to exorbitant real-estate prices in the newly reconstructed centre combined with the country's political instability, the area remains architecturally to this day eye-pleasing but la largely unoccupied mixed-use city centre. Further, the historic centre in more recent years has highly militarized security (Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh, 2012), with most of the gardens and public spaces largely inaccessible.

Most recently, during the national uprisings of 17 October 2019, protesters demanded a call to reclaim public spaces in the city of Beirut. Protesters stormed and occupied the privately owned and policed Zeituna Bay, and Ramlet Al Bayda, the last remaining public beach constantly threatened with privatisation.

6.2 Laws governing seafront public spaces

During the French Mandate (1923-1946), French experts drew up masterplans for Beirut such as Rene Danger plan (1933) and Michel Echochard (1944). These plans provided general urban development schemes which were never approved or implemented. Since independence (1943), successive governments have considered planning the city as the cornerstone of development, and as such the city growth was not "unplanned". IRFED's Team (1959-64) drafted a national strategy to balance Beirut's growth. In (1961-64) Michel Ecochard drafted the most notable master plan of Beirut and its suburbs. Echochard's vision was guided by a highway grid, which had steered most of Beirut's actual urban network (Figure 6-2). Dar AlHandasah and Institut

d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Ile de France (1983-86 and 1991) drafted another assessment in 1991 for a national masterplan. After the end of the civil war in 1990, the Government concentrated its post-war recovery and reconstruction efforts on physical infrastructure and large-scale projects rather than on socio-economic recovery and development. Two national plans were developed to this end, the National Emergency Reconstruction Plan (NERP) and the Plan Horizon 2000, managed by the Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR). A large component of Plan Horizon 2000 was embodied in the urban regeneration of Beirut's central district through a privately set company known with the acronym "Solidere". No masterplan as a whole was ever drawn up nor implemented as the state favoured a piecemeal approach to planning facilitated by exceptional decrees and political interference in urban planning always in favour of private development (Leenders, 2012). (See Figure 6-3 for exceptional law amendments regarding Beirut's seafront). For example, planning was deferred to the private sector as in 1991, Solidere, together with private engineering consultancy Dar AlHandasah, completed and implemented a new plan for the city centre (Beirut Central District), which was completely been rebuilt, according to its own zoning, codes etc different to the rest of the city.
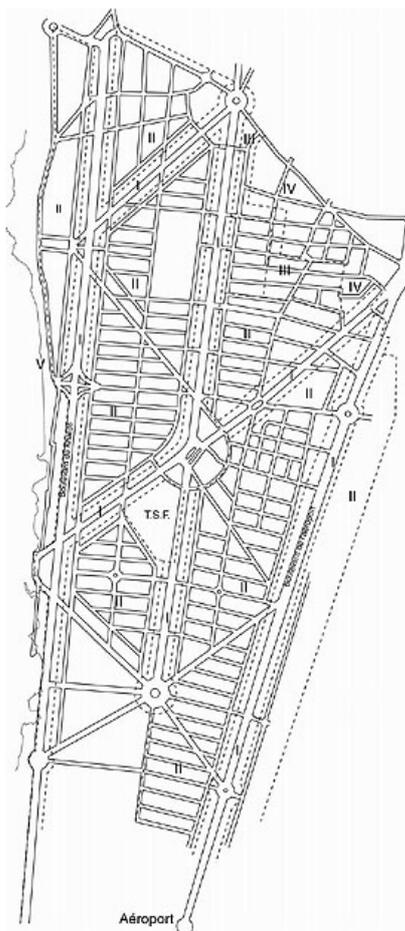
Figure 6-1: Michel Ecochard's Beirut Master plan with Beiruts seafront to the left.
Source: www.worldviewcities.org

Formative legal texts enshrine the public nature of the coast and consider the seashore an inalienable public domain. These are: the Beirut Master plan (1943), building regulations (1940),

the maritime public domain zoning law and Resolution S144/1925. These texts prohibit building on this alienable public domain and does not allow private ownership of the seafront's public domain. However, the law has been used as a planning tool by politicians to advance the interest of a few affluent businessmen and contractors. Laws governing seafront public spaces have been amended over the years by politicians in parliament by a sequence of exceptional legal and administrative decrees and have favoured private investment and have now produced an intermittently propertied landscape (Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache, 2015; The civil campaign to protect the Dalieh of Raouche, no date). Private ownership of public land was consolidated in the hands of a few individuals and companies under dubious land ownership titles. This facilitated the development of the private resorts along Beirut's public seafront. Similar to the case of Solidere, and given a local political structure favouring property investor over state institutions, it is no surprise that state regulations and property systems protect and encourage private investment practices.

A EDEN BAY RESORT
B GRANDE CAFE EL MARE
C BEIT WARD
D MOVENPICK HOTEL
E CAFE
F BAY ROCK
G PETIT CAFE
H FALAMANKI
I DBAIBO CAFE
J SPORTING
K LONG BEACH
L RAWDA CAFE
M MILITARY CLUB
N MARINA PALACE CAFE
O HASSAN CAFE
P RIVIERA HOTEL
Q FISHERMEN PORT
R AUB BEACH
S SEASALT
T PAILOTTE
U ZEITUNG BAY
V SOLIDERE WATERFRONT DISTRICT
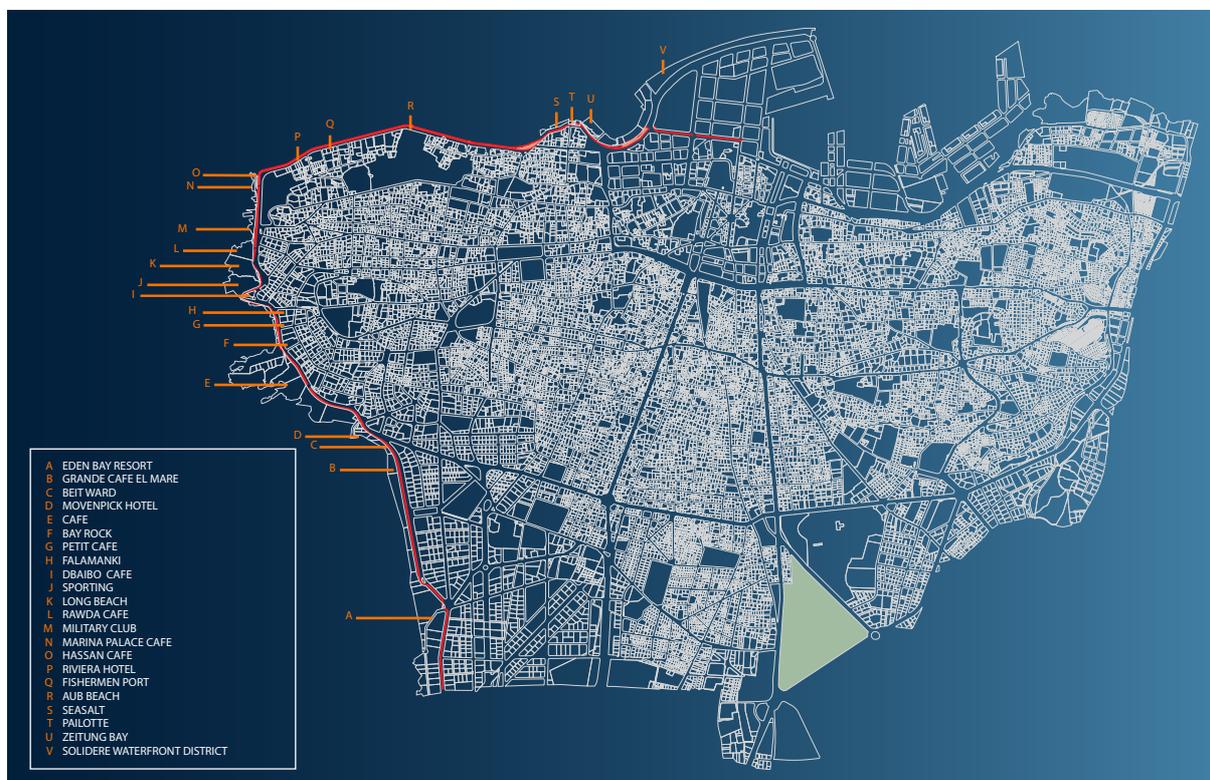
Figure 6-2: Beirut's privatised coastline
Source: Base map from Beirut Urban Lab

For example, Decree 4810/1966 (See Figure 6-3 for amendments) was meant to regulate public works on the seafront but had some serious negative implications on safeguarding public spaces, for example, Zeituna Bay and Eden Bay are the two most recent examples were this decree allowed the exploitation of Beirut's seafront for private interests. Given the decree specifies that seafront public space is safeguarded for public use; these are free of charge and may not be used for private interests unless the project is in public in nature and is for touristic or industrial purposes, which provided projects like Zeituna Bay and Eden Bay resort with a loophole to be able to develop establishments so close to the sea.

6.3 Contemporary History of private development of seafront public spaces

Urban and building regulations protected Beirut's seafront for decades, making Beirut's seafront public spaces and the communal space the city's main asset. Modern building restrictions historically banned construction along the entire city coast (decree 6285/1954). Order 144, issued in 1925, defines public property (al-Amlak al-'Oumoumiyyah) and categorises the sea as inalienable public domain. At the same time, the 1954 Beirut Master Plan prohibits construction of any kind on Beirut's seafront (Chamseddine, 2015). However, as of the mid 1960's, pressure by real estate developers and property owners mounted, resulting in laws and decrees such as 4810/1966 that reversed the initial legislation protecting maritime commons, see Figure 6-3 (Figure 6-3:. These legal changes allowed for the privatisation of areas that are otherwise considered maritime public property. Regulatory changes as well as a combination of legal and ad-hoc exceptions typically introduced by influential members of the political class have intensified the private exploitation of the city's coast, leading Beirut to gradually lose its seashore's openness and continuity: public access is cut-off in innumerable locations while over half the seafront boulevard is visually and physically blocked from the sea (Zone 10, no date).

During the post-war era, this private ownership was consolidated in the hands of a few individuals and companies, facilitating hence the process of its development in the form of private resorts. Successive governments have discussed and attempted to pass a law to settle illegalities on seafront public spaces, but this was never passed. This law was attempted in 1996 by the Hariri government and in 1999 by the Hoss government but was never passed as investors lobbied politicians (Zbib, 2012).

Approximately 900,000 m^2 of seafront public property has been privatised and appropriated (see Figure 6-2) in the following manner:

- Exceptional decrees and Legislation, most notably 4810/1966 4810/1978 3543/1980
- Theft of public land (The official French 1926 cadastral map was never found at the official land registry in Beirut (The Civil Campaign to Protect the Dalieh of Raouche, N.D)- the case of both Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach detailed in 6.5.3 and 6.5.4.
- Commissioning designers and contractors to develop private and exclusive tourism projects

There is no citizen consultation nor participation in the urban planning process in Lebanon (see also section 6.4.3). Involving citizens could be a step that leads to more transparency and accountability between the central administration, municipalities and all public agencies involved. But shrouding the governance process in secrecy just allows the status quo of public authorities to shift the responsibility "to the other" without any tangible actions being taken toward the active participation of citizens. According to architect Serge Yazigi and legal researcher Sébastien Lamy " except for the requirement to obtain an advisory opinion from the municipal council, the law imposes no consultative mechanism when a plan is developed, nor are there any public information campaigns" (Legal Agenda; 2018)

Year		Description
1925		Order 144/S Definition, Temporary Delineation, and Occupation of Public Property • Declares "public domain" as inalienable: cannot be sold, cannot be traded, cannot be built at any time. • Divides public domain into: 1. Maritime public domain (not parcelized into lots, farthest point on which winter waves break in addition to rocks, sand, and gravel). 2. Maritime lots that are: i) privately held, or ii) owned by the municipality, or iii) owned by the State (government or republic). • Under Act 17, people who own property adjoining the domain are entitled to apply for a license to use the beach and sea for private purposes. The license, which is renewable on a yearly basis, can be revoked at any time by the president. It cannot be transferred to a third party.
1926		Establishment of the Land Registry • The boundaries of the maritime public domain are first defined consistently with 144/S. Property records indicate that legal contestations private landlords and eventually allowed the division of the sea front into single properties with deeds.
1955		Law of 29/11/1955: Retrieving the Government's and Municipalities' Leased Properties • Government and municipalities have the right to fully or partially retrieve their leased properties through a decision from the concerned minister in the aim of executing a project of public interest.
1966		Decree No 4810: Conditional use of the Maritime Public Domain • Allows any resort owner to use three times the surface area of the resort plot to construct a marina, provided the marina builder owns all the plots of land the marina would be connected to. By principle, the maritime public domain remains for public use. Any future development would need to respect the right of public access to the beach and the continuity of the coastline. The law defines conditions for granting authorization.
		Decree No 4811: Amendment to Zone 10 Revokes the principle of an unbuilt coast by dividing Zone 10 into 6 sections and allowing temporary developments in 10-I, 10-II, and 10-IV.
		Law 21, 3/29/66, Article 1 and Decree No 15598, 9/21/70: Establishment and Management of Public Beaches Falls Under the Jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism
1978		Decree No 1300: Amendment to Decree No 4810 • Allows the occupation of Maritime Public Domain for tourist purposes even if the investor does not own an adjacent lot to the designated area.
1980		Decree No 3543: Amendment to Decree No 4810 • Occupancy is allowed along the coast.
1982		Decree No 4918: Amendment to Decree No 4811 • Extends construction on Zone 10 by introducing exceptions that permit construction on lots that exceed 20,000 sq.m in zones defined by the 1966 masterplan. • 25% of the lot surface area is conceded as municipal public land.
1989		Decree 169: Amendment to 4810 & 4918 (consequently 4811) Cancels the requirement of allocating 25% of a lot to municipal public land if development is allowed under decree 4918 of 1982.
1990		Article 30 of Law 14: Dissolution of all Illegal Occupancy Permits on Maritime Public Domain
1991		SOLIDERE Master Plan • Includes regulations of Beirut's Seafront in this area and the establishment of a large public coastal park.
1992		Decree No 2522: Definition of Annual Fees Paid for the Legalized Occupation of Maritime Public Domain
1995		Law 402: Extends to Hotels Exceptional Benefits Exempting them from a Number of Constraints Imposed by Law 148/83 (Building Law) • Allows the increase of built up ratio by 20% and FAR by 60% for lots above 20,000 m2
2002		Decree No 7464: Amendment of Decree 4810 and Abrogation of Decree No 650 • Allows for doubling of exploitation factors for lots equal or larger than 20,000sq.m
		Law 444/ Code of Environment • Recognizes citizens' right of free and open access to the seashore and their right to live in a healthy environment and mandates public authorities and citizens to respect principles of environmental respect such as the protection of the coast and the aquatic environment from all sources of pollution, the preservation of biodiversity, the adoption of clean technologies, and others. • Introduces the principles of Environmental Impact Assessment prior to project approval, the Environmental Management Plan (EMP), and other tools to be adopted in the organization of development in the natural and built environments.
2008		Decree No 689: Barcelona Convention • Adoption of the protocol of Barcelona Convention to protect the Mediterranean Sea from pollution.
2017		Municipality of Beirut decided to put Ramlet el baida beach under study

Figure 6-3: The law amendments that facilitated the privatisation of the maritime public domain

Source: Adapted from Issam Fares Institute "Zone 10"

6.4 Stakeholders

Urban governance brings together a large number of actors who prioritise tools, procedures and temporalities, they often have conflicting and rather strict mandates, and they take advantage of these loopholes to pin actions on one another. This section sheds light on the conflicts that are generated involving urban actors and authorities, critically interrogating authorities and activists' actions and the interests that are being served. This section also brings together voices and material gained through stakeholder interviews.

6.4.1   Academic

Specific seafront focus is complemented by a range of Lebanese academics contributing to scholarship and informing practice more broadly on POS dynamics in Beirut including public space, streets, cultural buildings and youth activism (Mady, 2012, 2018; Fawaz, 2017a; Harb, 2018). There are many outcomes of a vibrant and motivated academic community who are directly working on POS in the city (and also in some cases, located near the seafront spaces).

Nayla al-Akl former assistant professor of Landscape architecture and current Dean of Students at the American University of Beirut, is an advocate of public spaces in Beirut and a frequent Corniche user. Her research plays an important role is recognising how the public positively impacts health and wellbeing *"I work with social sustainability, which includes wellbeing, mental health; there is an important role blue and water-scapes have in promoting wellbeing. I also believe the landscape plays an important role in social inclusion and an attractors to people; I am interested in exploring this further"* (Stakeholder interview, January 2019). Another initiative that discusses the importance of public spaces is The Beirut Urban Lab and the Issam Fares Public Institute at the American University of Beirut, which has published multiple reports on the sanctity of seafront public space, such as the publication entitled Zone 10. The Beirut Urban Lab and affiliate researchers have a consistent and influential presence on social media, specifically on Twitter and use this platform effectively to spread information about social justice issues in the city, public spaces being one of them, and in engaging the general public in events, lectures and reports that are being made available online. Mona Fawaz, Professor of Urban Planning at American University of Beirut, Co-Founder of the Beirut Urban Lab, author of many reports on social justice and activist recalls, *"it was in 2000 when I was working with Isabelle Peillen and we heard a story that Hariri had bought Ramlet al Bayda public beach….and we started looking into the land registry and found out that indeed most of the coast has been privatised and had private title deeds, so we started to think about the right to the coast, the mixity that happens on the coast- when you are a professor there are many causes to get involved in, and I wanted to be involved in issues that made an echo, where you are not alone and where you can be involved with people out there so I got involved in the coast because I thought I would be useful and there was a need to establish property claims in formulating ways to make claims on property even though it had privatised…."* Academics are aware that the Beirut seafront encompasses a diverse set of users and is crucial to the health and well-being of its users; They are concerned with the social integration that happens on the seafront. Beirut has an active academic community, many of whom are activists who work to protect the seafront.

6.4.2   Non-Governmental Organisations

Non-governmental organisations have always had an enduring role in Lebanon since the days of the civil war. In Lebanon, as in many other Global South countries, they go some way to fulfil the void that is left by the state (AbouAssi, 2015). There are several NGOs that work directly or indirectly for the protection of the seafront as a public space. Public Works, the Coalition for the

protection of Dalieh, Green Line and Legal Agenda are the most notable and whose work combines urban planning and the supporting legislative framework for urban planning.

Public Works Studio is a group of architects and designers working on various urban issues in Lebanon, such as housing and public spaces. The studio has also been an active part of the civil coalition of Dalieh, producing timely research on the ecological, historic, social practice and cultural heritage, and archaeological layers in Dalieh as well as organising an open design competition in March 2015 to elicit creative, sustainable an environmentally sensitive design proposals for the protection of Dalieh. Abir Saksouk Sasso and her partner Nadine Bekdache both Co-founders of Public Works Studio, have both been vocal activists for the protection of Lebanon's seafront publishing timely research about this topic (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015b; Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache, 2015)

Another advocacy campaign that succeeded in opening and protecting a central green public space in the city was led by Nahnoo. The NGO has had a long track record of protecting and actively seeking to open unused public spaces in Beirut, such as Horsh Beirut (Mady, 2018). Beirut has only a few public gardens, and the city's largest public park, Horsh Beirut, was closed to the public for twenty-five years. Horsh opened in 2017 after an activist campaign led by Nahnoo, which started in 2010 advocating the importance of this green public space for community cohesion. After seven years of consistent campaigning, Horsh Beirut is currently open with significant restrictions and assigned use of space.

Nahnoo advocates for public spaces because it believes in an inclusive society. In a country where differences are respected, and citizens are treated equally, Nahnoo identified public spaces as a venue for different social strata and sectarian groups to meet, intermingle, exchange ideas and get to know each other, even identify with each other "because for us inclusivity means to bring people together to meet, to challenge stereotypes about others…urban, and social and psychological, heritage brings us together, we approach these subjects [public space and heritage] to build a national identity, and we use public spaces in general and the shoreline in particular" (Stakeholder Interview, January 2020)

And while Nahnoo's programs are substantial, the NGO works for the collective use of seafront public spaces and do not have specific programs for multiculturalism and integration; however, they do prioritise working with marginalised communities. For example, NAHNOO clarifies, *"We only work with marginalised people, AUB doesn't always invite us we are not elite, we work more with the Lebanese University (LU), our volunteers are from LU, we only work in Ain el Remmaneh , Tariq el Jdideh , Dahiye, we talk about people who are marginalised because we are marginalised… our volunteers are Syrians, Palestinians, Iraqi and Yemenis, we don't focus on nationalities because we believe we are inherently inclusive."*(Stakeholder Interview, January 2020)

It is also important to recognise NGOs that do not have specific programs on public space but do focus on issues of racism and inclusivity and organise protests or activities that take place on Beirut's seafront. Some of these organisations are the Anti-Racism Movement (ARM), Kafa Women's Violence & Exploitation, Alef, Act for Human Rights and Refugees as Partners. For example, the Anti-racism movement (ARM) in Lebanon organised a march on Woman's Day. Farah Baba, advocacy and communications officer (ARM), clarifies, *"we don't work on the seafront specifically. However, in 2019 we did organise a women's day protest; the protest endpoint was the corniche. I remember the baffled looks from passers-by on the Corniche questioning why there was a migrant worker protest. While many people were curious, some remarked that it was interesting from an economic and gender point of view as migrant workers are a crucial part of the Lebanese economy.* Farah noted that some comments were not so kind regarding the diversity of women present on the seafront, she said: *"it was Sunday we*

heard comments like "ma na2is illa the migrant workers to come here on a Sunday" (all that we need is for a migrant worker to show up here [in public spaces] on a Sunday) (Stakeholder Interview, September 2021). Farah continues *"pre-emptively you expect what people will say because skin colour is an identifier so you anticipate what you could reply. But many users simply started engaging with migrant workers and talking about public spaces. They realised public spaces are sacred to migrant workers in their own countries and their right to public spaces has been denied in their own country, especially since migrant workers in Lebanon are not even allowed into some private establishments. This is how ARM first started, when a migrant worker was kicked out of Sporting Club on the Manara"* (Stakeholder interview, September 2021)

6.4.3   Public Authorities

This section highlights that most public authorities have some jurisdiction over the protection of POS. Lebanese authorities tend to prefer the privatisation of public maritime property. Moreover, many authorities act for the benefit of their specific constituents, which are sometimes at odds with the public good. Hence, authorities tend to issue contradicting decisions regarding POS, which results in degraded and unmaintained public spaces throughout the city. The urban planning process also does not provide the public with any input regarding the city they inhabit, which undermines the voice of the people as well as social justice in the city. Figure 6-4 highlights the public offices with jurisdiction over POS.
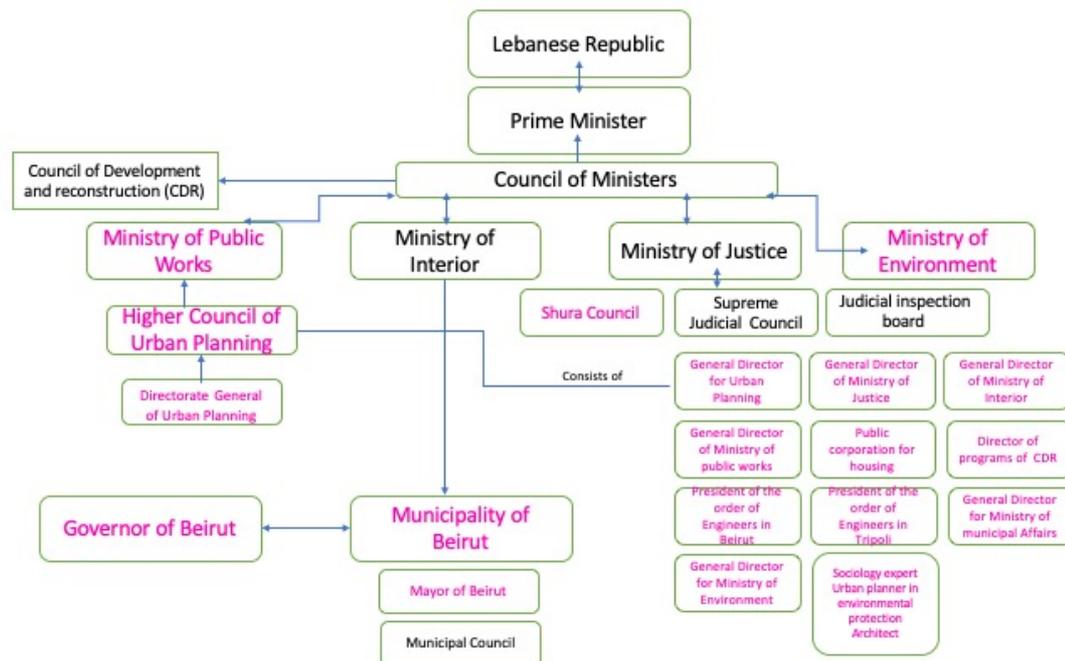
Figure 6-4: Adapted by author from "the Legislative Framework For Urban Planning: No voice for the people" by Public Works studio available from The Legal Agenda. Colored entities are those who have jurisdiction over public space.

6.4.3.1 Ministry of public works and transport

The ministry of public works and transport houses the Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGU). The mandate of the Ministry of Public Works includes the implementation of the legislation and regulations related to transport and marine public properties; the maintenance of primary roads and the railway right-of-way, as well as the public maritime domain, including its ports and marine terminals, as per Law no. 2141993 (UNHabitat, 2013). The ministry has the jurisdiction to enact on any request to "exploit" Public Maritime Domain on Beirut's seafront,

and it was the ministry of public works that engaged the NGO Operation Big Blue for the maintenance and operation of Ramlet al Bayda public beach.

6.4.3.2 Directorate General of Urban Planning

The DGU is a key public planning actor; it is a well-structured public administration, within the Ministry of Public Works, with a clear mandate, covering a wide range of planning and building domains and matters. The DGU, the central planning actor on the local level, is keen and open to adopting new planning approaches. Still, the DGU faces difficulty controlling planning processes due to a rigid structure and a dated mandate. The administration is responsible for developing urban regulations and coordinating urban planning activities. The DGU is also involved in protecting archaeological and cultural heritage sites, such as Dalieh. There is no alignment of procedures and mechanisms for collaboration with other key planning actors such as the municipality. The DGU clashes with municipalities due to conflict in the political representation (UNHabitat, 2013).

The Directorate General of Urbanism (DGU) is headed by a Director General and comprises two divisions: The Central Administration and the Regional Offices. Complementary to its main function, the DGU reports to a Higher Council of Urban Planning (HCU) headed by the Director General. The HCU remains the clearing and approving body for any master plan before its submittal to the Council of Ministers. The DGU a key player in halting any future building development on Beirut's seafront. It may reject any request to grant exceptional building exploitation through law 402 and can equally propose entirely new legislation and zoning for zone 10 of Beirut, protecting it as a public common (UNHabitat, 2013).

6.4.3.3 Ministry of Environment

One of the few ministries that is active in intervening on the seafront. When the ministry was formed in 1981 it did not have a mandate nor an environmental law, so similar to urban planning, the protection of the environment is made up by a series of ad hoc legislations improvised on a need's basis. Most relevant, The Ministry of Environment is responsible for the establishment, protection and management of naturally protected sites, such as the case of Dalieh, where it did draft law for the protection of Dalieh that was not passed in parliament at the time of writing. The Ministry of Environment also played a leading role in the design competition led by the Civil Coalition for the protection of Dalieh (See section 6.5.3). The MOE can propose the recognition of a site as a "Nature Reserve" or as a "Natural Site to be Protected". Additionally, the Ministry can rally and lobby other Ministries to adopt its proposal to protect Beirut's seafront since it can be classified as a cultural, heritage and environmental site (UNHabitat, 2013; The Civil Campaign to Protect the dalieh of raouche, N.D).

6.4.3.4 Ministry of Tourism

Ministry of Tourism is a Lebanese Governmental body that was founded in 1930's as a division of the Ministry of National Economy. The ministry operates to promote tourism and handle tourism professions. It handles all the private companies which are involved in tourism sector. Ministry of tourism is responsible for designing and running tourism investment projects and fulfils the requirements of these projects. Most notably, in 1982, the Ministry of Tourism announced that Ramlet al Bayda is a public beach. This decision was driven by Minister Ibrahim

Halawi at the time, who clarifies during an interview that this decision was based on some site visits in Cannes at the time when he became conscious of the fact that the beaches were accessible and free of charge. He recalls he shut down Sporting Club because the Ministry had recorded building irregularities and something stuck with him at the time "*At the time I considered establishing some masabeh sha3biyye (public beaches) Shafik al-Wazzan the Prime Minister, Amin el Gemayel the President were on board too- so we wanted to have public beaches in Dbayeh, Byblos, Saida, Ghazieh. It was a complete national project and I started with Ramlet al Bayda proclaiming it public and got a freshwater connection, built cabins, a children's playground and we got life guards round the clock- and that was how Ramlet al Bayda public beach came into existence*" he continued that he even collected donations since public money was scarce '*We did this out of nothing, we had no public budget, some people donated cabins, others umbrellas, we got more than what we needed people always help…*". Minister Halawi still believes that public beaches are more important than ever to provide a much-needed communal space that caters to everyone:

"now [Ramlet al Bayda] caters to the poor, before it also catered to the middle class, because it was well equipped, the open sandy beach is a much better experience than the private establishments, I wanted it every one to enjoy it, I still beseech the Mayor to devote some attention to take [the beach] and its management seriously. The beach is very important to many"

Up to the present day, Minister Halawi considers establishing public beaches as *"My achievement …. the beach was kept open and I made it more functional."* (Stakeholder interview, August 2021)

6.4.3.5 Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)

Reporting to the Council of Ministers (COM), the CDR is a public institution whose mandate is to establish "the general framework for urban planning" in Lebanon and to submit it to the COM for approval. In 2002, The CDR issued a National Physical Master Plan for the Lebanese Territories. It proposed a unified set of land use categories covering the entire territory and in it, delineated the Raouche area as a zone to be protected due to ecological and patrimonial importance. Five years later, the COM approved the Master Plan through Decree 2366 dated 20/06/2009. The Master Plan is a reference document for several administrations, including the DGUP and ministries. It should be referred to it when making decisions related to urban development and environmental heritage conservation. However, it seems likely that it is either not consulted or is given low status in decision-making (UNHabitat, 2013).

6.4.3.6 Shura Council

The Lebanese State Shura Council, established by Law No. 10434 of 14 June 1975 (Statute of the State Council), is currently the only administrative jurisdiction in Lebanon. While the last amendments to the Statute of the State Council, by Act No. 227 of 31 May 2000, provide for the establishment of first-level administrative tribunals in each of the six provinces (*mohafazas*) of Lebanon, this reform has yet to be implemented. The Shura council has issued some decisions to protect public spaces including one for the protection of Ramlet al Bayda public beach, it is an important governing body to pressure the judiciary into protecting POS (Karame, 2017).

While the municipality of Beirut has jurisdiction over all matters of public interest and work in its boundaries. This includes setting and balancing the budget, collecting fees and taxes, managing properties, and establishing or maintaining a range of public utilities and infrastructure such as health, sanitation, water, lighting, local transportation, streets and gardens. However, many of these functions are subject to various degrees of supervision by the district commissioner (*qa'im maqam*), governor (*muhafiz*) or minister of interior (*wazir al-dakhiliyya*). Furthermore, a lack of adequate administrative and fiscal capacity characterises many municipalities. Such dynamics are a function of the laws governing public employment, municipal taxes and fees, and the transfer of municipal funds from the central government. The Governor of Beirut (*Mohafez*) shares administrative responsibilities with the Municipal Council and its President. The council of 24 members holds the decision-making capacity and is locally elected every 6 years. The Governor is appointed by the national cabinet, can remain in his post up to 10 years, and holds the executive capacity: all decisions, national, regional, and local, fall under his jurisdiction. This includes all permits (construction, demolition, access, etc.) and the adoption of zoning plans. Accordingly, the Mohafez carries significant weight when protecting natural and heritage sites endangered by private development. The Mayor of Beirut, Head of the Municipal Council and representing the legislative power in Beirut at the time of writing was Jamal Itani (Public W Studio 2018b; UNHabitat, 2013).

While the remit of these roles is very broad, it is informative to understand to what extent the public realm, and specifically the seafront, is seen as a personal interest or corporate responsibility. Due in part to the ongoing series of crises impacting Beirut during the process of this research, it was challenging to gain the comprehensive involvement of Municipality representatives. However, the current Governor, Judge Marwan Abboud, did agree to a short interview. During the interview, Judge Abboud noted that *"Beirut's seafront is the only space where people meet, whether they are rich or poor it is the only public space in Beirut without any restrictions, we have to bear in mind that the poor cannot go to other public spaces as most of these are closed this is the only remaining open place"*. Judge Abboud believes in minimal intervention on Manara criticising the Municipality's expansion project launched by the Municipality on January 30, 2019. He stated, *"I am aware that Beirut's seafront has been ravaged and developed by private developers. Some perceive that private developers present a good way of doing things. I am against kiosks and the project to expand it by the municipality. I find this a threat, and it is best to be kept in its simplest of forms to the people rather than have a commercial project that has been parachuted from above"*. (Stakeholder Interview, September 2021). Judge Abboud was appointed on June 2020 and has so far not legislatively acted on the improvement of the quality and access to public space in Beirut.

The Municipality makes decisions about the creation, reactivation and maintenance of public spaces in Beirut. According to tradition, the mayor should be a Sunni Muslim and the governor a Greek Orthodox. The municipal division of power in Beirut is a particular case in Lebanon since both the mayor and the governor have seats on the Municipal Council. Therefore, the governor of Beirut holds both executive and legislative power. Moreover, the governor is involved in the urban planning process, as the governor signs all construction licences. At the same time, in other cities in Lebanon, the head of the municipality fulfils this role. The 'Beirut is Amazing' campaign launched by the Mayor relies on partnerships with the private sector, wherein companies 'adopt' such spaces, renovating and administrating them. For example, Sanayeh Garden experienced a massive renovation project funded and led by the Azadea Foundation, a Beirut-based charitable arm of a major fashion retail company. Many survey respondents believe public services cannot manage and maintain public spaces. Respondents visit Sanayeh for an outing for children but do not stay for an extended period as they perceive it to be busy and somewhere concerned that *"Sanayeh public garden is now filled with Syrians though, it is not clean anymore, and there are people with no manners."*

The Municipality of Beirut is primarily responsible for the organisation and management of the city in coordination with other government departments. It also has full authority to approve or disapprove any building permit.

According to the Municipal Law (legislative decree no. 118/77): "The municipality is a local administration exercising, within its territorial scope, the powers entrusted to it by the law. The municipality shall enjoy legal personality and financial and administrative independence"(UNHabitat, 2013, p.25). Municipalities in Lebanon[11] are administratively decentralised units; they are elected directly by their constituencies and have a president and a council. They can raise their own budgets from service charges to their constituents and other international avenues for twining and development aid. Legislative decree no 118/77 and the municipal laws authorise municipalities to play a leading role in the local planning processes. According to the Municipal Law (Article 49), they can, in collaboration with the DGU, draft their master or detailed plans, designs as well as regulations, and land parcellation (UNHabitat, 2013). To do this, municipalities commission a experts to undertake studies that are later submitted to the Higher Council for Urban Planning. However, the municipality of Beirut has historically been unable and unwilling to lead this process claiming regulatory, financial, administrative, technical and political decision-making as major setbacks of its inability to effectively take out its remits, especially that on public spaces. The Municipality of Beirut is primarily responsible for the organisation and management of the city in coordination with other government departments (UNHabitat, 2013). For example, the municipality of Beirut has full authority to approve or disapprove any building permit for a project in Dalieh, following Article 13 of the Lebanese Building Law. The Municipal Council can also opt for the acquisition of Dalieh lands through a process of expropriation (*The civil campaign to protect the Dalieh of Raouche, no date)*. In 2017 and after media and public attention, the municipality of Beirut finally conceded to place Ramlet al Bayda under study, effectively halting all development on site for two years (BouAoun, July, 2017).

6.5 History of Activism and public space reclamation across 4 case-studies

While the incremental appropriation of Beirut's shoreline by private developers has happened over many decades, this encroachment on public space was not been high on the activists' agendas. It was in recent times, as activists, NGO's and media outlets started to discuss POS on social media, that this issue started gaining importance in the public arena.

In this section, I explore how the four case study areas within this research highlight four issues in particular: privatisation of the maritime public domain, pollution, heritage value and gentrification. The case studies provide a vantage point through which to view the history of activism on Beirut's seafront public spaces and to explore how the different actors negotiate space. While the locations are the same as those discussed in chapters 4 and 5, here we turn our attention to actors, actions and power dynamics that govern public spaces. The ongoing narratives of these case studies, including the impact of recent events, demonstrate that through consistent activism it is possible to able to challenge the enactment of the law which does not always act in the public interest.

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[11] The number of municipalities (1,030 in total) in Lebanon is relatively large when compared to the country's surface area and demography.

There are many NGOs, academics, activists working for the protection of Beirut's public spaces such as Public Works Studio, the Civil Coalition for the Protection of Dalieh, Nahnoo, Green Line, Legal Agenda, Operation Big Blue, Beirut Heritage and the Association of Beirut families. However not all are able to work collectively and collaboratively, as some choose to pursue their interests and agendas alone, each filling a much-needed space. In the past years NGOs have become quite vocal and more legally decisive about the right to public spaces in Beirut, filing lawsuits against private investors and companies encroaching on public space.

6.5.1 Interrupted leisure - Ayn el Mreisseh/Manara

The public practice of freely using the beach on the Corniche has been threatened by the private nature of property ownership. As outlined in section 6.3 the privatisation and encroachment on public domain was enabled by the state by facilitating the privatisation of the beach, shifting ownership to the private sector. The state hoped privatisation would offset some of the costs associated with the development and management of public spaces. The outcome has been that, through cutting off many connections of the waterfront to the city (See Figure 6-5) the close relationship between city inhabitants and the sea has been partially severed.

Figure 6-5: Images from social media depicting the lesser privatised Corniche during 1950-1970's and the relatiosnhip people had across the spatial levels

The Lebanese law classifies seafront property as public, it cannot be sold or owned. The law defines seafront public property "as and where the highest waves hit during the winter months including sandy, pebbled and rocky beaches". This law was ratified over the years granting exceptions and building permits (Decree 4810/1966 and Decree 2522/1992) allowing public property to be sold and developed for touristic purposes (Decree 4810/1966 and Decree 2522/1992). Consequently, the slow privatisation of Manara began as of the early 1950's with tourist developments occupying the seafront stretch resulting with the intermittent public access of Beirut's Corniche, physically and visually. Over the years, Beirut's maritime public domain is largely interrupted by high end touristic developments severing the public promenade

horizontally as well as vertically separating entire sections from the city and both the promenade and the sea. Many cafes and hotels obtained permits to construct along the promenade. These permits were for temporary structures and many exceeded the built-up area obtained in the original permit and managed to keep their construction as permanent structures throughout the years. Most notable examples are the American University of Beirut, the Summerland hotel, The Movenpick, Chatilla Café, Aajram Beach, the Riviera Hotel, The Military Club, Café Dbaibo, among many others (Zbib, 2012). A blind eye has been turned to most of these transgressions on the Corniche. Figure 6-6 shows examples where developments entirely block access to the sea for everyday users. Zbib (2012) in his investigative article in Al Akhbar newspaper points out to 30 illegalities on Beirut's seafront public property that do not have any permits whatsoever, one of which is the Central Military Club.

With the end of the Lebanese civil war in 1990, successive governments announced a law to settle illegalities in the maritime public domain. This usually coincides with public or media outcry regarding the encroachment on seafront public property. Until the time of writing of this thesis, the law to settle illegalities had not been passed in parliament. This is even though the state is set to benefit from passing such a law given the financial gain in taxes associated with developers wanting to settle their illegal properties. For example, On January 20, 2020 LBCI group aired a two-day program entitled "Encroachments on seafront public property and what it means for government income loss". The program shed light on the encroachments along seafront public properties listing these along with the affluent politicians/elite who owned these. The program highlighted a report about the illegal development on the seafront issued by the Ministry of Public Works, having the full intention to fine those who have no building permits, needed to adjust permits for their appropriate built-up areas, and it seemed the government was set on collecting its overdue taxes. However, after the Beirut August 4th blast, the General Manager of the Ministry of Public Works has been held in custody, and the issue has been suspended up to the time of writing this thesis.

One example that highlights the severity of private encroachments on the maritime public domain and the people's distrust of government intentions from a landscape architect's point of view can be exemplified by a landscape expansion project announced by the Mayor of Beirut in early 2019. The project hoped to include cycling lanes, new street lighting, refreshment kiosks on the street level and a public piazza on the sea level, as well as trees and greenery lining the street level public walkway (See Figure -6-7). The mayor of Beirut stated in a newspaper article the project "would take the corniche to the next level; it will develop the existing footprint and will not involve building out over the sea. Strict policies and guidelines would prevent environmental harm" (The Daily Star, 2019).

Figure -6-7: The Beirut Waterfront-Corniche Project
Images supplied by Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture

Vladimir Djurovic, an internationally acclaimed Lebanese based landscape architect was responsible for the design of the project. Himself an advocate of public spaces having designed the Samir Kassir public space and Hariri memorial garden, he believes "*the biggest problem that we have is the slowly disappearing and shrinking corniche. The horizontal strip has lost most of its vertical and physical connections to the different city neighbourhoods. Our proposed design aimed to slow things down, we wanted to slow down traffic and pedestrianise the area on weekends. However, the real problem is how systematically privatisation has encroached on the corniche making it smaller and smaller ....The issue is we need public policy that strictly enforces all the encroachments and illegal private developments acknowledging that this is a unique public space that caters to all*" (Stakeholder interview, October 2021). The design brief from the landscape architects' office proposed:

To give the sea back to the people. It reformulates and reinforces the connections to the adjacent urban fabric. It also defines a new relationship between the promenade and the sea itself, one that is more permeable, allowing a greater proximity and accessibility to the water. A recessed edge along the water brings people closer to the sea, providing ample seating areas and unobstructed open views to the Mediterranean from the promenade. A series of large public spaces will punctuate the Corniche's length, offering different ways of experiencing the sea, with ample space for a wide range of gatherings and cultural events to unfold.

Interestingly, the municipality proposed some tunnels linking some buildings and developments directly to the sea under the street level, however, the design office declined as the tunnels were likely to be private as opposed to public walkways linking the opposite street level to the sea. The design office even took steps themselves to involve citizens in the project and organised a public hearing with the Order of Engineers and Architects "we wanted to add an expansion to the Corniche that protruded close to the water level, re-establishing the lost relationship people had with the sea ….we felt there may be resistance from the people; there is a gigantic distrust between the people and government; people do not trust their [the government's] intentions, and I believe there would have been much resistance from the people living in the area….the municipality did have the financial means but the time was not appropriate the Thawra [October 17th Uprisings] took place, and everything came to a halt with regards to spending and priorities" (Djurovic, 2021).

Government policy to privatise the maritime public domain was meant to recuperate some of its costs in the development and management of public spaces. But even with private sector involvement in the partial provision of public service, corruption impairs implementation. While the municipality of Beirut may look at the private sector as a partner clarifies Moughir Sinjaba, a current member of the Beirut Municipal Council "the private sector should be a partner working with the municipality; we can use public-private partnerships (PPS) or build operate and transfer (BOT) schemes to preserve municipal money and for city projects to become profitable" (Stakeholder interview, August 2021). However, the private sector sometimes struggles to deal with the burdens of operating in public spaces when they are laden with service provision responsibility in a sectarian-driven administration. For example, Beirut by Bike was founded in 1998 in cooperation with Solidere. With Solidere's support, this small business expanded renting bikes and managing "Car Free Sundays" on the Waterfront area and Ain el Mreisseh. Jawad Sbeity, Founder of Beirut by Bike, explains that from his perspective, the municipality offloaded their responsibility of service provision on his establishment as it proposed the company provide their own lighting during the evening for safety purposes and develop bike lanes. Beirut by Bike

proposed a cycling route from Ain el Mreisseh to downtown Beirut to Hamra. However, in practicality this proposition quickly became a regional sectarian issue. Jawad Sbeity, Founder of Beirut by Bike clarifies *"The municipality said, we have to cater to different sects/city regions if you are going to implement a bike route from Ain el Mreisseh to Down Town To Hamra, then you also have to consider one from Ain el Mreisseh to Achrafieh and another from Ain el Mreisseh to Bechara el Khoury to join these….the cost of a bike lane is expensive I cannot possibly cater to all of this ..this is ridiculous"* (Stakeholder interview, September 2021)

This section illustrates how there is a general lack of public participation in POS in Lebanon. There are no mechanisms for active citizen participation. There is also a lack of access to information across all public offices, despite the fact that public offices the law upholds citizens right to information. Public offices act in contradiction to each other, many government offices such as the municipality and Ministry of public works approves the provision of building licenses, temporary public works licences (that facilitates encroachment) and titles for deeds close to the seafront contradicting maritime zoning regulations.

6.5.2   Pollution on Ramlet al Bayda public beach

Ramlet al Bayda public beach is about intercultural environmental justice. Another proposition to advance social justice in the city is the ethic of caring for a public space is repair, small acts of organising clean ups, adding fresh coats of paint contribute to a sense of well-being and allow for forms of justice and speak of tolerance towards others. (Low and Iveson, 2016). On this last remaining sandy beach, users swim amidst open sewers and rising pollution levels. The most recent report published in June 2021, by the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS), Ramlet al Bayda was deemed a high-risk area unsuitable for swimming due to harmful bacteria and faecal remains. (National Council for Scientific Research, 2021). Ramlet al Bayda is a multicultural site that caters to many nationalities, ethnicities and economic classes, who have environmental rights to a clean, well-equipped, environmentally friendly and fully public beach. Despite its dilapidated and highly polluted state, high number of users and beachgoers still use the beach, especially during the summer months of 2021. As the financial crisis hit, the more extensive strata of Lebanese society were left in financially dire conditions, which led most people to seafront public spaces, especially Ramlet al Bayda public beach. The public beach is managed by an NGO, but in this case, private-public interests were not aligned, and there is no near sustainable solution for users.

Ramlet al Bayda translates into "white sand" in Arabic – is the last remaining sandy expanse on Beirut's seafront. The site has been at the forefront of much controversy over the past few years. The municipality of Beirut has done very little to close off open sewers that have been polluting the site for almost a decade. Indeed some claim that the municipality was hoping the open sewers would deter beachgoers from using the site [12] Users of Ramlet al Bayda public beach are aware of the high level of pollution on site, many who restrict their activities to walking rather than swimming *"I walk here, I don't swim its dirty"* (Interview with user on Ramlet, October 2019). and others "we don't swim here though as it [the water] is not clean" (Interview with user on Ramlet, October, 2019). The majority of users are from lower socio-economic status but they use the beach because there are little to no alternatives in Beirut, one user notes *"I don't like crowds so I come here, I come to sit calmly on the beach and listen to the sound of the waves, I do not swim though the water is polluted, when I come here I tend to have positive energy throughout the day, I am relaxed I call it relative happiness or temporary happiness if you will…sometimes I just feel I need to get out of the house so I come here"* (Interview with user on Ramlet, July, 2021). And another who was aware of equal rights to access seafront public space explained *"The beach should be cheaper, if they would remove the litter that would be good, also some amenities, cleaner would be good, everyone has the right to the sea refugees and non-refugees"* Interview with user on Ramlet, September, 2021)

Ramlet al Bayda public beach is under management from Operation Big Blue Association, an NGO aiming to protect and maintain the public space. This NGO started out as a turtle

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[12] https://news.trust.org/item/20170606134831-oq808?view=print

conservation program to protect turtle nests on the sandy shore and proceeded to manage the public space. Operation Big Blue Association (OBBA) is a non-sectarian, not for profit and nongovernmental Environmental organisation working mainly on the conservation of coastal and aquatic biodiversity as well as the integrated and sustainable development of the Lebanese waters.

The NGO makes income from beach users through hire of umbrellas, chairs and loungers. Beachgoers however think rentals are overpriced as some said "we even came here because it is public but we paid 70,000 LL for the umbrella which you can see is in tatters and the chairs, we paid 100,000LL they will give us the deposit of 30,000 back end of the day" Interview with user on Ramlet, September, 2021) and another who noted *"I paid, 70,000 LL in chair rentals, we pay 100,000 LL and 30,000 will be returned as a deposit it is a public beach it should be free, I do not understand it is all naseb wa ihtiyal [robbery and cheating] there used to be lifeguards, it was better before really- now there is nothing everyone is free to come here it is a place for us all Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese but really this place is for the poor"* Interview with user on Ramlet, September, 2021. For founder Iffat Chatilla *"The beach is not for the poor alone, we are here to cater to the different people, the sea is important, there was no garbage [before 2020] we used to clean and people stopped littering, but now we are back to square one as we don't have labour nor volunteers".* (Stakeholder interview, August 2021) Regarding excessive littering and pollution OBBA organises beach clean-ups, recently asked environmentalist Ziad Abi Shaker to install recycling bins, and spreading awareness. The strategy is to ban everything on the beach until it is clean and then gradually re-introduce it again. *"At the first instance will ban everything no watermelon, no sunflower seeds, …when people see us cleaning they usually follow suit"* (Stakeholder interview, August 2021) . The founder also spoke of how the team started and their aims *"we started as clean-ups to save the neighbourhood sea sites, however for sustainability purposes we expanded and set up other elements such as the blue police, we have a research centre, we did scientific research, we also worked on policies affecting the seafront a strategy for public beaches.."* she describes the strategy as integrated and long term including " *.. a road map to ban plastic in Lebanon this was regional and international; we also had a turtle protection programme".* (Stakeholder interview, August 2021)
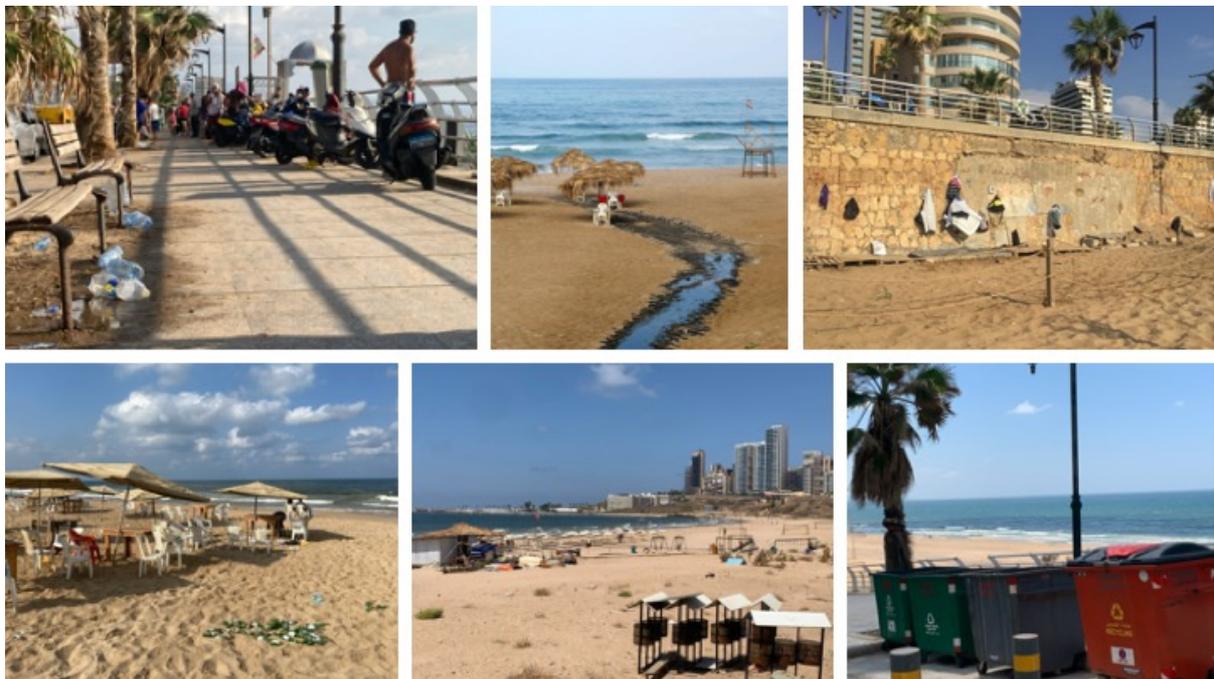
Figure 6-8: Open sewers and closed off parts of Ramlet al Bayda public beach

This is a success story of how a campaign was able to protect a seafront heritage site and have a say about its use and preservation. In particular, it highlights the role of procedural justice, the ethos suggested by Low and Iveson (2016)that people may perceive spaces to be just if they were involved in the decision-making process that shapes their use.

The Civil Coalition for the Protection of Dalieh launched a campaign in 2013 advocating for the preservation and enhancement of the role of Dalieh as an open-access shared space for all city dwellers and visitors. Dalieh is a headland that descends into the sea, the vegetated and sloped qualities of the headland, meaning it is not easily accessible from the street level. Prior to the campaign, large cement blocks deposited by the Ministry of Public Works claiming to enlarge the port of Dalieh, now act as a space inhibitor leaving the historic headland to slowly languish. (see Figure 6-1). Currently, Dalieh is land owned by a few private investors through allegedly illegal deeds and land purchases by real estate companies. Historical and contemporary property records and maps (such as the French Plan Danger de Beyrouth) show that property boundaries in Dalieh have been modified to encroach on the maritime public domain, in contravention of the law. Research claims plots on Dalieh have been illegally sold in preparation for their development (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015b). Up until present day, 75 families whose livelihoods depend on the place still live on Dalieh and in large due to the campaign's efforts, there has been no further private development in the area.

Figure 6-9: Historic images of Dalieh from online sources depicting the heritage site in the 1950's as a socially inclusive and vibrant space

The coalition is made up of individuals and non-governmental organisations who share a solid commitment to the preservation of Beirut's shared spaces, and ecological and cultural diversity as the pillars of the city's liveability. NGO's include as Nahnoo, Greenline, Cedars for Care, Legal Agenda, Dictaphone Group and most notably, public works an NGO that is active in the sectors of public space and housing. The campaign was launched in November 2013 through a petition published on social media. This evolved into a campaign under the slogan "Lift your construction site off our Raouche". The campaign worked on sending official letters to relevant ministries, organising activities in Dalieh, preparing legal and environmental research and producing slogans, visuals and videos to promote this space. They also archived old photographs of the site, published press releases and filed lawsuits, compiling it all in an online booklet, among other interventions.(Dalieh booklet, n.d.) There has been talk of several design offices being commissioned to develop a design for a projected development in Dalieh. However, this has not been made public. (Dalieh booklet, n.d.)

The campaign was also successful in proposing alternative designs by students and academics through holding a design charrette in 2014 (Shakran, 2018)The design competition opened a public debate engaging a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including the governor, the municipality of Beirut and the Higher Council for Urban Planning, and the Ministry of Environment. The Jury composed of well-known academics and urban designers, evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of each submission according to the competition criteria of: sensitivity to urban context; reaffirming the historical identity of Dalieh as a space for the public; functionality, flexibility, and economic feasibility; ecological and environmental sustainability; institutional framework addressing property and managerial/administrative concerns; innovation and creativity; and clarity and completeness of the submission. Three winning entries were selected and a public hearing was held at the Order of Engineers and Architects to discuss these. (Jadaliyya, n.d.)

The Civil Coalition for the Protection of Dalieh filed a lawsuit in 2013 at the high administrative court known as the Shura Council against Decree 169/1989, which removed state protection from Zone 10 of Beirut's master plan (Zone 10 is the last stretch of undeveloped coast in Beirut encompassing Dalieh) to reinstate this protection. The campaign also held several meetings with the Ministry of Environment in 2014 and announced a draft decree to categorise Dalieh as a natural protected area. This means construction on the site would be strictly regulated by the ministry and subject to an environmental impact assessment. The Ministry still reserves the right to decline any project based on the study's results. In a sense, the case study points to several successes in activism and plans to extrapolate this to protecting other public spaces in Lebanon. Abir Saksouk-Sasso, activist and Co-founder of Public Works Studio, explains this trajectory *"I started out as an individual; I was working on the Dalieh campaign, and I was working as an active participant because I had already researched Dalieh, this provides you with a passion for taking this work though; also I am someone who used to go to Dalieh and Ramlet as a kid. The campaign developed and did what it had to do, and I started working through public works; while many organisations work on the seafront, we are expanding this research to encompass all public land in Lebanon, how the state has historically dealt with this through privatisation to make money to settle its deficits, especially during this economic crisis".*
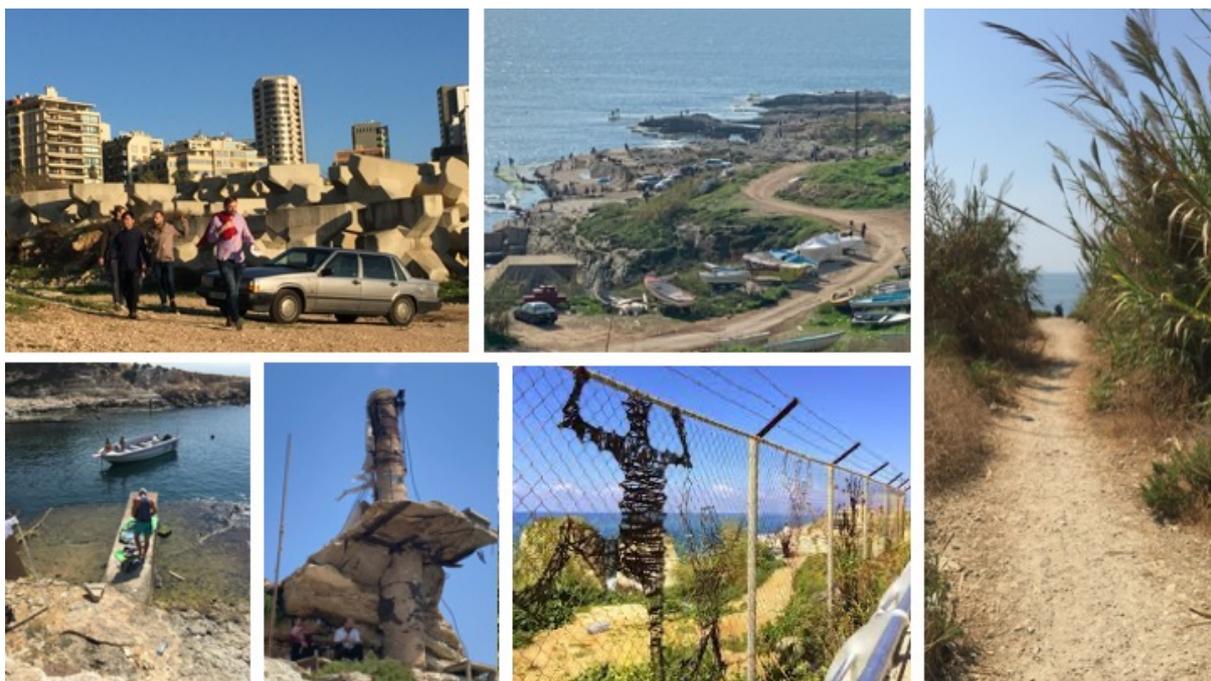
Figure 6-10: How access to Dalieh is obstructed by lack of maintenance, difficulty of getting to the site and scarce amenities

The case of St. Georges illustrates how commercialisation and gentrification radically transformed a formerly open public space into an upscale, highly regulated semi-private space whose commercial establishments primarily cater to the rich. It's a case that highlights "distributive justice" as Low and Iveson (2016), where the highly policed space and the lack of affordability automatically generates exclusion for the more significant segment of society whose presence is restricted. While the private sector can invest large sums of money resulting in well-designed spaces, still the space has lost a lot of its "publicness" as its commercialisation and privatisation lead to a gentrified, highly regulated space.

St. Georges bay, as it is formerly known, was mostly a public space safe for a small hotel with an open bay. The landmark hotel in Beirut built by French architect in the 1920s. The hotel was made even more famous during the civil war as a bar which became a popular destination for journalists, agents, and politicians. Today the hotel is a skeleton of its old self with only the pool and restaurant area in operation. On the building, there is a stop sign standing in defiance against Solidere, the real estate company who had a feud with the owner. The hotel is within Solidere's mandate and the owner was never given a permit to rebuild the hotel which was burned and looted back in 1975. By applying this pressure, Solidere had hoped it would acquire the hotel and annex it to Zeituna Bay (formerly and historically known as the St. Georges bay) but the owner never succumbed and never sold the hotel and its shares as it was a family legacy. The St. George Hotel did lose its historic bay to Solidere and the Zaituna Bay in its decades-long battle. A new corniche built by Solidere that extends north east of the hotel before the port has been in use the past few years, providing another linear space for sports and fishing enthusiasts.

In one of fate's unexplainable ironies, the explosion that took Hariri's life in 2005 happened right in front of the St Georges Hotel, causing further damage to the already husk of a structure that was being renovated at the time. The hotel never recovered and it is only in 2002 that the municipality of Beirut finally granted the owner a license to rebuild the hotel, after it had gone almost bankrupt in the decades-long battle. Up to the time of writing, although there is an entrance from the public walkway into the hotel premises, visitors and users are not allowed back in, further alienating the public domain. The space is privately managed, although the wooden walkway that lies on the lower level of the bay is in fact, public. Despite this, it is managed and monitored by private security at all times with banned activities such as shisha, dog walking, walking and sitting on grass, and fishing (See Figure 6-12).

Zeituna Bay has three distinct sections to it: the marina walks and the restaurants on the lower level of the harbour and the upper sidewalk on the street level. The marina walk has the most diverse set of users, especially during the weekends when lower income groups tend to have a day off work. During the weekends, the wooden public walkway transforms into a very diverse walk with Lebanese, Syrians and migrant workers engaging in various activities such as walking, taking pictures, and drinking coffee, but they do not stay long. Here you find reasonable middle-high incomes dining at upscale restaurants and Syrian refugees having their takeaway coffee on the pier or feeding the fish alongside migrant workers. Users are aware of these existing class divisions as well as the disparity between the highly designed space and the rest of the seafront, one Lebanese who commented: *"Usually we visit during the week as there are fewer crowds. Also, it is classier here than the rest of the seafront-it's a shame but its true"* (interview with user, September 2019). A few Syrians were not present on Zeituna Bay for leisure but for work, a male noted, *"I'm here to work I rarely notice my surroundings anymore "* (Questionanire, September 2019) and another noted the gentrified space tighter security which makes him feel more welcome *"its nicer in the weekend; it*

is relaxing, has a European feel to it; this is where I feel relaxed in Beirut, there is nature and urbanity around me, I like to sit here not along the corniche, I feel more welcome here…" (Interview with user, September 2019)

Figure 6-11:The publicness of Zeituna Bay during the 1950's depicting the intimate nature of the relationship people had with the Bay before its privatisation

Images by Rasem Rushdi
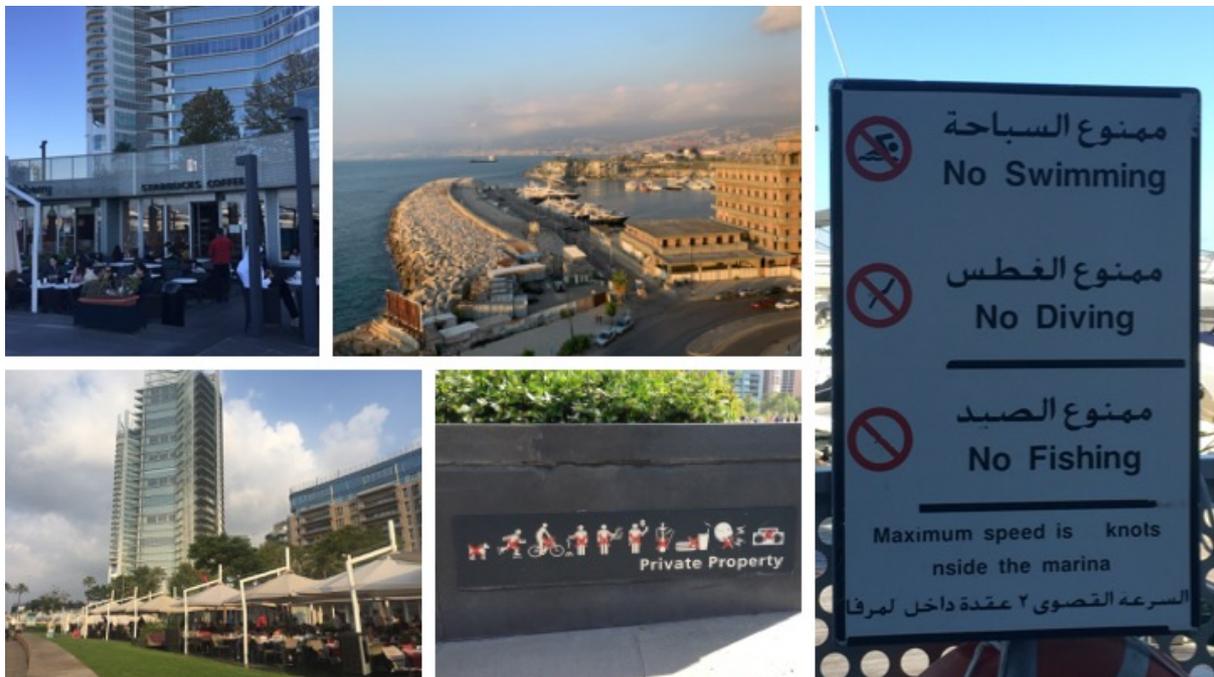
Figure 6-12: Highly regulated space of Zeituna Bay and the infamous St. Georges Hotel with the sign "Stop Solidere"

6.6 'Living through history' – recent disruptive events

6.6.1   October 17th mass protests (Thawra)

On October 17th, 2019 hundreds of thousands of citizens took to the streets in cities around Lebanon calling for a change in the political system and representation under the weight of a growing economic crisis deeply rooted in corrupt public practices (Khayat, 2020). On October 17th, in Beirut but due to return to the UK that evening, I participated in a peaceful protest with my family and friends in the neighbourhood of Hamra in Ras Beirut (where I live). It would be a little under two years when I would be able to come back to Beirut. October 19th 2019 was a turning point, the face of Beirut and Lebanon as I know it started to change. While not the key focus point, access to public spaces and resources, including seafront public spaces remained an integral point within the protests demands. It was not only an important demand but also strategic venue for protesters who organised sit ins, breakfasts, forming human chains of peace and occasionally more violent protests along Beirut's seafront on Zeituna Bay, Eden Bay, and Manara (See Figure 6-13).

Protesters, citizens and activists started to push against the traditional normative use of public spaces such as social, recreational and health to creating spaces for revolutions, dialogue, debate and gathering across urban sites across Beirut's public spaces, including abandoned cultural buildings and seafront public spaces. (Bou Aoun, 2020). Protestors shrouded parking meters along the seafront and sprayed the phrase "we are not paying" in clear defiance of the states' neoliberal policy, favouring private investments in large-scale tourism projects rather than safeguarding the accessibility of seafront public spaces. Cynthia Bou Aoun, architect and public space activist, recalls, *"I got involved on the seafront because it is entirely highjacked by real estate development, tourism, business tycoons it is completely insane, most of our border is on the seafront but if I live in Beirut I cannot go to the beach".* Since the October 19, 2019 uprisings in Lebanon, protestors have more than once stormed Zeituna Bay occupying the wooden decking of the marina in protest to their right to occupy this space as public property and the illegal acquisition of seafront public property. The actions protestors were taking were not haphazard but calculated steps to reclaim public space. Protestors organised an open breakfast day, asking people to bring their breakfast and occupy the wooden marina deck. Sarcastically protesters also planned to host an open-air screening of "V for Vendetta," a 2005 thriller in which a vigilante attempts to bring down a fascist government, in an apparent reference to how protestors perceive the Lebanese government. An activist and a member of a protest group who were responsible for the road blockages in October 17th, 2019 had a primary role in the protests on Zeituna Bay and she explained *"Zeituna bay happened when we were blocking roads…. we did the breakfast, we removed the placards prohibiting activities (music, picnics, ...) and that was it…. we decided to stay and camp on Zeituna bay.... a lawyer had given us advise, if LSF (Lebanese Security Forces) don't kick you out it is a win because you reclaimed the space, if they do kick you out and the LSF arrives on site you will be fined they will have to write a reason why on the fine, for example camping on public property and then we can file a lawsuit because they [LSF} admitted it is public land". In this instance, the LSF did not fine the protesters but the management of Zeituna Bay did release a circular admitting to the "publicness" of the wooden public walkway, which essentially meant everyone is free to practice the space without prohibitions and since then people were able to fish, sit on the grass, play music and bring their dogs"* (Stakeholder Interview, September 2021).

This meant the formerly tightly gentrified space started to be more diverse and inclusive in terms of people visiting and activities allowed on the public walkway. In response to the occupation Zeituna Bay management released a statement acknowledging the "publicness" of the wooden walkway, resulting with another small win for protestors and public space activists in Lebanon.

Figure 6-13: image taken in Downtown Beirut after October 17th 2019 uprisings and the public call for a peaceful breakfast on Zeituna Bay on November 10th 2019

6.6.2   Covid-19

During Covid 19 outbreak in March 2020, many cities worldwide used public spaces as a COVID well-being strategy, even if some uses were temporarily curtailed. Lebanese authorities prohibited the use of public spaces, especially Beirut's seafront. Police cleared the place or users, including a ban on different users and patrols. While the Beirut municipality was concerned about social distancing on the promenade, everyday users of seafront public spaces were upset and angry (including my mother).

During Lebanon's lockdown, outdoor exercise was banned, and people were not allowed on the seafront. This was a considerable disappointment for seafront users as this space constitutes a very important breathing outlet for the city residents. Close friends communicated their feelings of suffocation to me, especially my mother, a regular morning corniche user. In March 2020, the police completely cleared the landmark stretch of all its users. (Naharnet Newsdesk, 2020). The municipal police continued to implement a ban on joggers, strollers, swimmers and fishermen; the ISF patrolled the horizontal stretch throughout the day to ensure no one was using the space. An academic in planning and design at the American University of Beirut reflected on poor decision-making. They said, *"Pandemic-wise, I don't understand why supermarkets would be open from a medical point of view and why would walking on the street be allowed while walking on the Corniche is forbidden I think the government response was ad hoc and haphazard. But in general, I don't think it was a good policy"* (Interview with stakeholder, January 2021). As summer approached, the city's private resorts on Beirut's seafront were allowed to open, but this was not the case for the public beaches and seafront spaces.

The pandemic and the ensuing ban on seafront public spaces only highlighted the critical shortage of public spaces in the city and their detrimental value to people's health and well-being.

6.6.3   The immediate impact of the August 4th Beirut blast and the ongoing financial crisis

On 4 August 2020, a powerful explosion in Beirut's port devastated the city, with thousands of people injured and dozens dead. A substantial amount of the city's urban, social and architectural fabric and heritage was destroyed (Harrouk, 2020).

The economic crisis that unfolded in August 2019, altered POS practices on Beirut's seafront. Based on observation in June 2021, Beirut's seafront spaces were dilapidated, worn, dark and overcrowded. The city had plunged into almost complete darkness with a failing state electric supply combined with the heat of the summer months, people occupied the seafront at all times. The country was experiencing an economic crisis with the Lebanese Pound losing 70% of its value to the US dollar. The dire economic situation and massive scale loss of jobs meant people needed a space: the seafront. A municipal police member remarked *"we will not tell people what to do anymore, it is their right ..there is no water no electricity, we cannot take even this away* [hanging out on seafront POS] *from them"* (informal conversation, June 2020)

Summer 2021 highlighted more than ever the importance of seafront public spaces to a multiplicity and diversity of people of different classes, nationalities, ethnicity and genders. Seafront public spaces became the only space where people could breathe.

This chapter highlighted the history of the history and methods of governance, planning, and policy in Lebanon to understand the lack of quality public spaces in the city. It emphasised the lack of public participatory mechanisms in the planning process which leads to the marginalisation of Lebanese citizens in the planning process and completely fails to recognise the cultural diversity and intergroup co-existence that is visible across seafront public space. Key stakeholders served to highlight the lack of public will to protect POS favouring the privatisation of seafront spaces. Conflict, protests, spreading information, and producing research over access to public spaces has featured prominently in the Lebanese public sphere, especially in recent years and proved to be instrumental in reclaiming public access to some spaces.

This chapter concludes the analysis in this thesis and will link these in the following discussion chapter.

7. Integration and multiculturalism in post-war seafront public spaces

This discussion chapter brings together the research findings of both quantitative and qualitative methods used and the analysis in chapters for, five and six to add to our understanding of integration, multiculturalism and leisure in post-war contexts by acknowledging scale and temporality affordances to a multiplicity of users. This chapter also looks into the actions taken by a multiplicity of actors to appropriate and contest the seafront, recognizing the frames of placemaking and insurgent public space. I argue about the importance of a nuanced understanding of scales such as transverse, transection and temporality. There is also a need to contextualize findings in pluralistic ways.

The chapter is structured in a way to answer research questions. The first question this thesis sought to answer was the extent of integration and segregation with respect to patterns of users and uses of the seafront reflects the population diversity of the country and the city of Beirut. To understand how communal histories and narratives of leisure, respite and sociability are experienced and voiced by diverse users. Finally, the chapter will discuss and evaluate the history and current situation of governance policies and grass-root activism on Beirut's seafront, in light of the most recent country developments.

7.1 Introduction to scale, sections and sociability

Beirut's seafront acts as an interstitial space between the city and the sea. Coastal cities largely resemble the sea that surrounds them, there is an ebb and flow of new people. The case-sites depict edges that portray the edge of the sea and the edge of the city. In this "in-between" space, the sea acts as a metaphor for the unclaimed, unintended, and stateless. While the city of Beirut acts as a metaphor for the order, policing, segregation and appropriation of public space. The corniche thus becomes an interstitial space on the one hand. On the other, a place which has iconic meaning for residents. While some of the case-study sites are linear in nature (although often used in non-linear ways), others are more destinations. Beirut's seafront is also a space where a diversity of people make claims, where appropriation and reclamation of property get played out and where a super diverse city population escape, engages in leisure acts, demarcates boundaries and forms different connections and identities away from everyday life. Here, the city's sociability plays out in numerous spaces, and the street is one of the most important. Throughout history, no other spatial typology has fulfilled the role of public space better than the street, in this case, Beirut's transverse- the corniche.

In order to explore more carefully the nuances of social-spatial typologies, I use the terms 'transection' and 'transverse' and interpret these over different scales. These terms are defined as follows. Transection is a perpendicular line cutting across the site. In these contexts, it means at right angles to the sea edge. Transverse means extending across the sites, parallel to the sea edge

(See Figure 7-2).
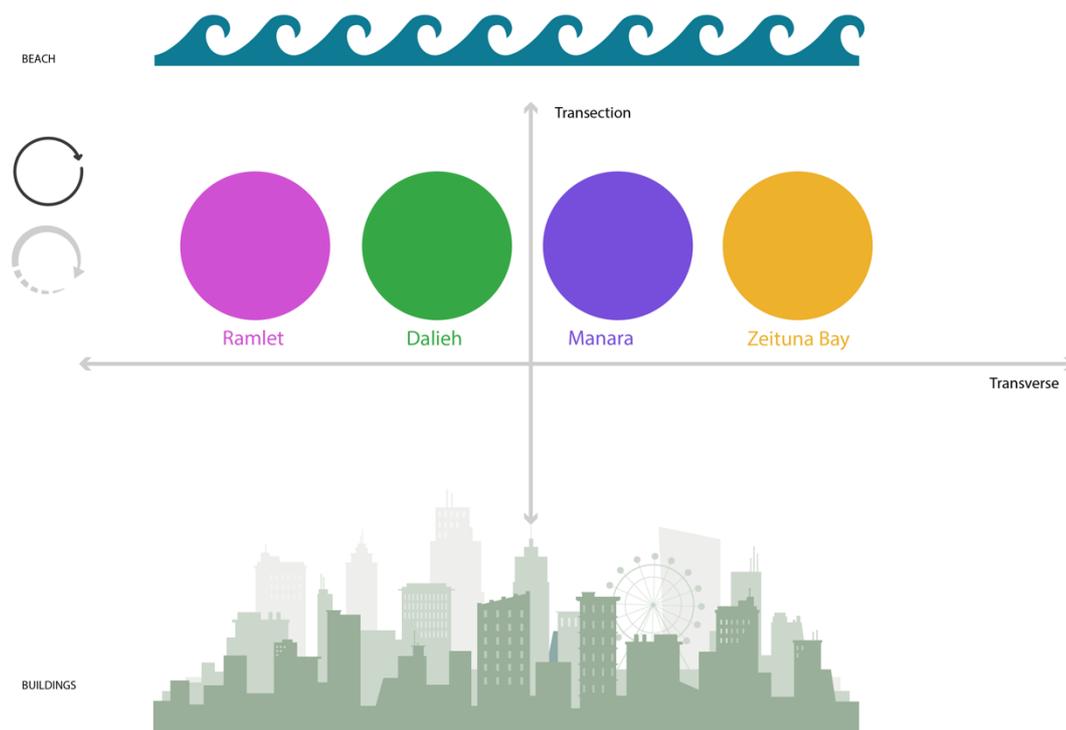
Figure 7-1: schematic diagram explaining the transverse and transection

 this research explores some more specific applications of sociability (Jacobs, 1961; Lefebvre, 1991). Mehta (2013) defines degrees of sociability that form a basis for typological classification of social behaviours- here I distinguish between incidental and intended sociability. Incidental sociability is spending time in a place not specifically to engage in a pre-arranged way with friends or family but being present and having a sense of mutual respect between users and respect for the space. Intended sociability, is going to a public space with a group in order to hang out or pre-arranging to meet a group of your friends with an intention to be social in that particular space, This type of sociability are rather limited to that space and will not extend beyond the space itself.

7.2 Spatial, economic, social and environmental equity

Ageyman (2000) and Zavestoski and Agyeman (2015) highlight the importance of shared and hopeful narratives of equity and justice for spaces to be economical and environmentally just. There is an evident lack of spatial equity on Beirut's seafront based on the findings from chapters 4 and 6. A good portion of public =spaces have been developed and maintained exclusively for higher-income categories, inequitable land use is highlighted in spaces used by lower-income categories that are not properly designed and maintained. Planners and designers have a responsibility to design spaces for "co-existence" (Healey, 2006). While everyone is free to use public spaces, spatial divisions on Beirut's seafront physically translated into users mostly finding and sticking to their own groups across the transverse and transections.

Not everyone feels welcome, and the transverse corniche walkway is more desegregated by nationality across its transverse and transection. The Lebanese are more likely to enjoy; moving along' to Manara promenade, while refugees and migrant workers prefer to congregate and hang out at the water's edge.

Racism and unease with Syrian presence in the city as well as a discomfort some Lebanese experience within their own national groups plays out in the leisure spaces in the city. There is element of self-segregation to how different groups appropriate different spaces.
Engrained social dynamics in Beirut's seafront public space make it challenging for everyone to feel welcome. Spatially, people occupy different spaces. By analysing both transverse and transections of the sites, it is possible to identify differential use of these areas.. Space has an intended use by design. When spaces are left to languish, they become interstitial sites of spatial and temporal transitions (Peng and Park, 2013); users determine their nature. I also refer to different degrees of sociability, varying from the lowermost form of co-existence to fully-fledged friendship that extends beyond the space and time. Ageyman (2000) argues that hopeful narratives are needed to create just spaces and this research highlights that the simple intention of being social and being present in an interstitial space can create a narrative that extends beyond the conventional, hence the importance of these spaces. People of diverse nationalities, ethnicity, gender and class need to feel they have equal rights within public spaces. In a context where they do not, this transverse interstitial space is able to embody a safe space across different sections as a means to promote sociability across diversity. Seafront users are unable to connect across the very basic co-existence level of sociability, even though it is the seafront is the only remaining, open, free-of-charge public space that brings people together and is so important for city residents and beyond. As the space was developed, maintained and endured without equity, interventions could focus on the transverse, bringing people together across sections at specific times to promote social equity.

There is a notable lack of economic equity on Beirut's seafront. Lebanese authorities have opted for the privatization and commodification of the seafront since the 1950s. The historic close relationship the city and its residents had with the seafront has been visually, physically, and mentally obstructed. Beirut's seafront does not cater to the superdiverse nature of the population but is geared to cater to higher-income classes. The Lebanese government essentially plans for high-income classes providing hotels, private beach clubs and yacht clubs while ignoring the needs of a very large low-income population. The high-rise buildings provide premium sea views obliterating the need for the rich to engage in any form of sociability. The superdiverse nature of the population is not equitably catered for, and not all nationalities feel welcome in using public spaces. refugees and migrant workers are many in Beirut but largely absent from the public realm. There is a clear need for the seafront to be socially integrated, a quality inherent to public spaces.

Beirut's seafront has a lack of social equity. Lebanese society is quite stratified across class and occupation within its communities (Hanf, 2007), in addition to the discrimination that exists vis-à-vis other nationalities. Ethnic minorities in Lebanon feel marginalised everywhere, public spaces included. In a divided space such as Lebanon, the state itself exacerbates social equity as it exhibits prejudice against its citizens. The state exhibits partiality against its citizens. For example, On October 17th 2020, the state exhibited uninhibited violence against protesters who occupied public spaces demanding their rights to access these. In some instances, people were prevented from demonstrating in public spaces despite their lawful right to do so, the Lebanese state sent out a clear message to protestors asking for fundamental rights, including rights to public spaces, that this type of subordination would not be tolerated. On the other hand, protests held in support of the state and its current political elite were left in peace. In doing so, the state itself becomes a partisan actor contributing to the lack of justice and equity among its population, creating further divisions across political affiliations. To mend these societal schisms, social initiatives could encourage the development of shared and hopeful narratives to pave the way for future social equity. Beirut's reclaimed Zeituna Bay lost the opportunity to restore significant, shared meanings to an urban place. The redevelopment erased previous collective

memories and practices, as part of an urban renewal strategy. This was likely necessary to meet the city's competitiveness agenda. Currently, the space is used for an upscale farmers market for respite and leisure but on the other hand, the space is also used by youth for informal gatherings, the area is exceptionally busy with people sitting in terraces and on the floor and also standing with drinks in their hands during events taking place in the evening. In sum, although unintended, the area may have gained new meaning through the mixity of users and the diversity of activities pursued there, which is what the hopes are for Beirut's seafront public spaces.

Beirut's seafront has a clear lack of environmental equity. Environmental inequality can be seen at the waters's edge of all the case-studies thus mostly impacting the poor and especially refugees and migrant workers who tend to occupy this area more than others. The clear littering, open sewers, and physical degradation is mostly apparent at this topograohic level. While the privately-held property is well managed, maintained and clean, public property on the seafront is left to languish. Pollution and environmental degradation are rife on Beirut's seafront from the open sewer on Ramlet al Bayda public beach to the lack of maintenance on the corniche. All sites across the transverse need maintenance except for Zeituna Bay which is kept clean and tidy due to its quasi-private nature and site security. This need for cleanliness and general maintenance was further exacerbated after the 2019 economic crash. The intensity of use has dramatically increased and there is a limit for an outdoor space to work well Beirut's seafront has crossed that threshold in terms of density and capacity.
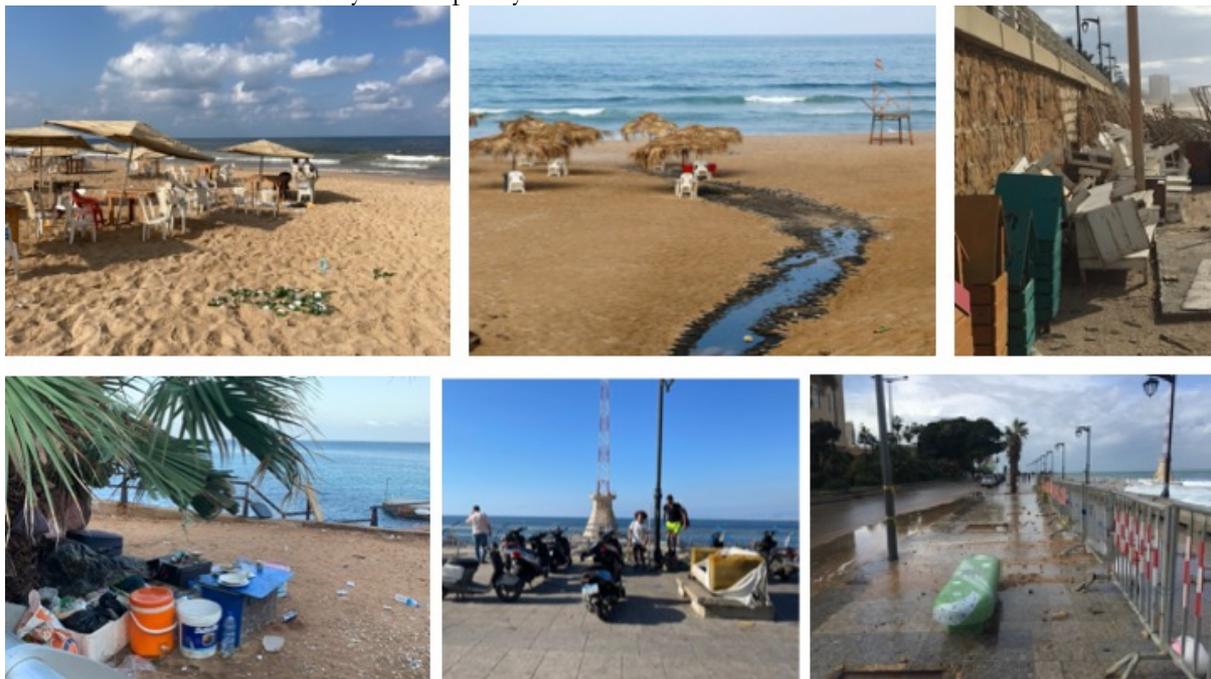
Figure 7-2: environmental dilapidation on Beirut's seafront
A: Litter on Ramlet al Bayda; B: Pollution and open sewer on Ramlet al Bayda; C: Lack of collective care D: lack of state care in cleaning public spaces on Manara; E: a couch is seen in Manara at the height of the economic crisis when people spent a lot of time on the seafront; F: Storm damage that was cleaned shortly thereafter

7.3 Typology and scale in understanding multicultural encounters

According to Dee (2001) landscape fabric explored at different scales helps us identify qualities considered desirable in designed places. By understanding country, city district and site holistically and in terms of history, use and physical connections we can reinforce the concept that integration can exist at different planning levels. As planners and landscape architects, it is

important to be mindful of design qualities, design scales, users and management of spaces as well as the wider planning contexts. This research adds to our understanding of sociability at different scales using mixed methods to help us understand the variety of urban spaces of encounters across scales- their larger historical and geographic context, their city district context and the micro context.

Cities are more livable when their design contributes to the health and well-being of their dwellers. The understanding scale helps us understand population physical and social integration at country, city and neighbourhood/site levels. Temporality adds to our understanding of how distinct districts were influenced by history, dwellers, zoning, planning and their relation with the city as a whole. Scale is also relative, it is the sum of parts (sections) that makes a landscape, and each section is experienced differently.

Beirut is a segregated city whose divisions spill into the city regions and neighborhoods. Beirut is also a historically high migration city. In a superdiverse context where diversity or the plurality of ethnicities and cultures is constantly increasing, seafront public spaces may be the only remaining open and free spaces; and seem like a shared space for everybody. However, this research has shown that temporality, typology and scale bring a new perspective of multicultural encounters that take place in a divided post-war currently tense context. These divisions translate into aspects of territoriality in the city's public spaces, that diminish the opportunity of these to be leisure spaces for all.

As mentioned earlier there are different forms of sociability that happen at different scales and at different times and seasons. Harvey (2006) noted a separation between social classes both in spatial contexts and in vertical segregations; every model of space is tied to a moral order-streets, neighbourhoods, and homes are shaped by social constructs, and I extend this broad approach to look at transverse and transactional analysis as this is a relevant approach for seafront locations.

The differentiation between transverse and transection socio-spatial analysis will be examined across three scales, from larger area analysis to smaller 'within site' analysis.

- The first scale integration at country and city level examines the coastal transverse and the relation of the study sites across the coast, their relationship to each other and how this relates to the transection at the city level. (See Figure 7-3).
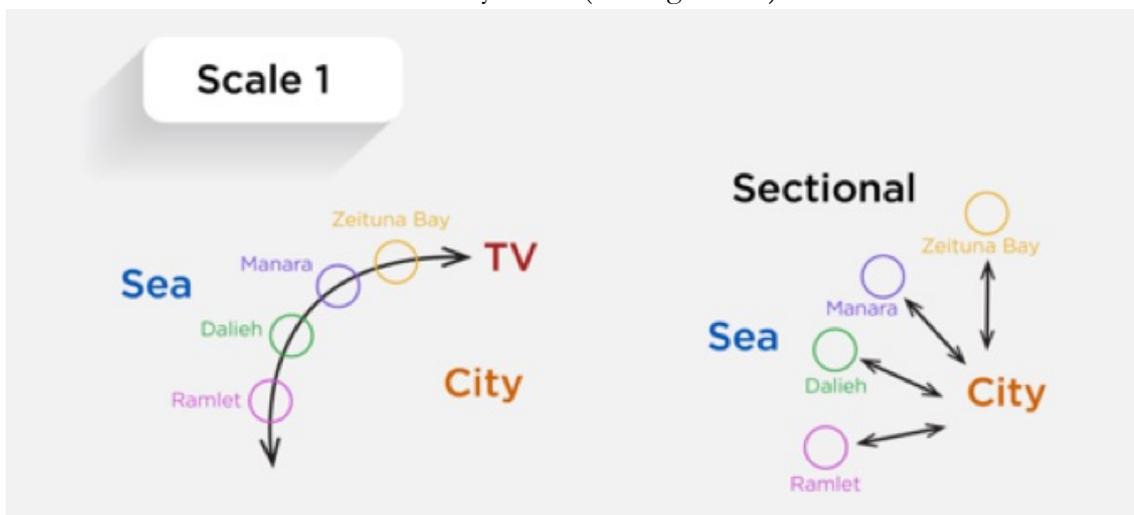
Figure 7-3: Scale 1: integration at country and city level

The second scale integration at the seafront level, examines the transverse and transection differentiations, examining what integration means within sites themselves, and with relation to changes over time. 'transection' refers to lines perpendicular to the water edge noting vertical changes, meaning the relation of the study sites to the water edge, the street pedestrian level, the car carriageway and the buildings opposite the sites marking the edge of the city (see Figure 7-3). I also highlight different zones within sites themselves based on different typologies. The water edge refers to the edge of the water across all the four sites, this can be the wooden public promenade on Zeituna Bay, the rocky beach and parts of Manara that are accessible to the public, the limestone headland of Dalieh which extends into the sea, and the sandy beach of Ramlet al Bayda. The corniche refers to the horizontal public walkway that is on the street level across all the sites which varies in width. There is a dual carriageway at the edge of the pedestrian corniche which links to the first level of the buildings the opposite level. (See Figure 7-4)
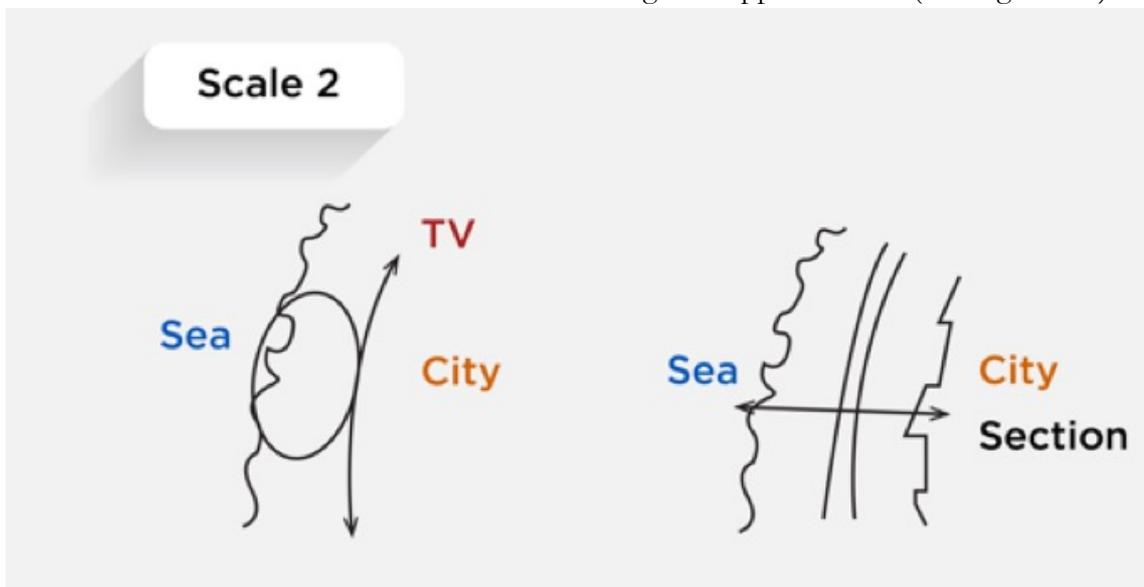
Figure 7-4: Scale 2: integration at seafront level

- The third scale is multidirectional and examines who is directly interacting on the seafront. this scale looks at integration that happens across the micro areas. The micro interactions and affordances that are referred include: water edge, public corniche or street walkway, street/dual carriageway. (See Figure 7-5)
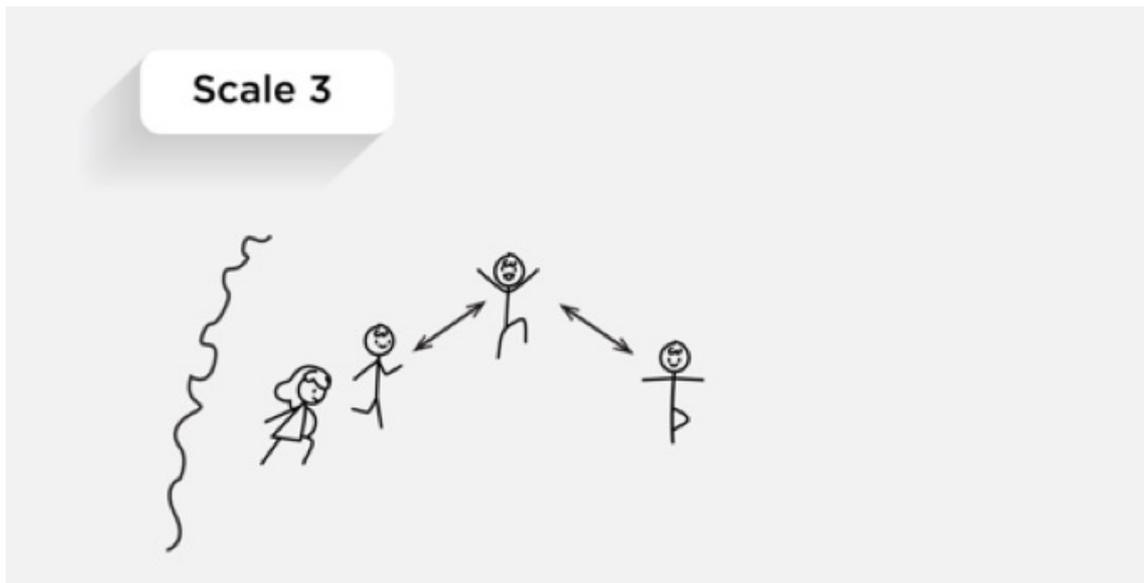
Figure 7-5: Scale 3: micro scale interactions

I am proposing "urban sociability" as a term to investigate the different intensities of sociability. Sociability scales could start with the least invasive such as co-existence and co-presence, conviviality, incidental and intentional interactions and meaningful friendships. Urban public space supports the negotiations of everyday multiculturalism and diversity (Mehta, 2013) with micro publics acting as a means to support positive intercultural encounters (Amin 2002), with different intensities of contact (Mehta, 2013) to classify the range of relationships that could exist in a public space. Negotiation of diversity in and through public space is an essential component of living with a difference (Watson, 2009; Wilson, 2011; Powell and Rishbeth, 2012). Urban encounters are inevitable in the city, it is recommended city inhabitants be able to negotiate this co-existence well. In these contexts, interpersonal skills of negotiation, empathy, patience and being reasonable are often good attributes to have while negotiating co-existence in cities (Darling and Wilson, 2016). This research shows there are different degrees of sociability that can be discerned across the transverse and transections. While more recent research by (Rishbeth, Blachnicka-Ciacek and Darling, 2019) highlighted barriers often faced by refugees regarding information, legibility and gaining the cultural capital and confidence to venture out. This research adds that interactions with the "other" and the experience of place have different intensities that are directly affected by scale and temporality. Scale one and two are not about sociability across difference it is simply about co-existence of different nationalities. Sociability on the third scale is about positive and negative encounters that take place between people of different nationality, classes, genders and age groups which are then differentiated according to incidental and intentional encounters.

7.3.1   Scale 1 Integration between the city and sea

While the results of the survey are not statistically significant, the total survey number was large. Therefore, it is possible to gain some meaningful insight into the extent of diversity on the seafront and the extent to which seafront public spaces are more integrated within a city-scale analysis. The population of Beirut is currently estimated 76% Lebanese residents, 23% Syrian refugees based on occupancy rates. Beirut houses approximately 200,000 migrant workers. So if residents were equally participating in seafront leisure, the randomised sample of users answering the questionnaire should reflect this split. The seafront overall is predominantly a 'Lebanese

space', but this bias is proportionate to most estimates of Lebanese-migrant population demographics in Beirut and Lebanon overall. All four case studies' results indicated a higher number of Lebanese visitors than refugee and migrant visitors, with an average split of 70/30.

7.3.1.1. The transection- who visits seafront spaces in general and how this relates to city neighbourhoods and territorial aspects of Beirut

These the highest number of multi-ethnic nationalities and Syrian refugees and other nationalities were present on Ramlet al Bayda and Zeituna Bay's water edge on weekends. Further, the quantitative data also showed that the most prolonged time Syrian refugees and other minority nationalities spent much time in public spaces that afforded them more privacy, such as the water edge of Ramlet al Bayda and Dalieh.

Highly relevant to an understanding of territoriality in Beirut and the ongoing impact of civil war divisions (as indicated in the green line between 'Christian' East and 'Muslim' West Beirut. This is important in terms of intersectional Lebanese identities, as a purely nationality-based analysis cannot examine whether these neighbourhood affiliations still make a difference (Hanf, 2007; Yassin, 2008). Visitor data show a clear underrepresentation of residents from 'East Beirut' areas across all the sites and that the city's historic green line division may still be reflected in leisure choices thirty years later.

Despite walking and physical activity in open spaces is important to people's wellbeing (Dempsey, 2009; Jorgensen, Dobson and Heatherington, 2017), there is still a low level of visitors who walk to seafront locations, mostly between 10-20%, and as low as 2% for visitors to Dalieh. So, despite the fact these seafront spaces do function as local recreational provision, they are all primarily city-wide resources and, indeed critical national-scale resources. Around 50% of visitors live outside the city boundaries, rising to 66% for Ramlet public beach.

There is an urgent need for intentionality in integrating social justice and environmental sustainability through designed spaces (Agyeman *et al.*, 2016; Rishbeth, Ganji and Vodicka, 2018a). The quasi-private nature, highly designed space, expensive restaurants and security presence on Zeituna Bay produce a sense of safety for many Lebanese and non-Lebanese users, however in some cases-this high-end, cosmopolitan, modernly designed space as related to by (Koning, 2009) could alienate many poorer segments of society who may not feel comfortable "fitting in", thus some may limit their presence to a shorter period.

7.3.1.2 The transverse- how people who do visit the seafront are distributed/choose between the 4 sites

Activities vary across the transverse sites depending on the typology, specific qualities and affordances of each. Lower-income Lebanese, refugees and migrant workers seem to prefer the water edge across all the study sites (except Zeituna Bay). Differentiation here across the different groups happens based on the practice of public space, while Lebanese dominate these spaces having known each other for a more extended period. Migrants often face constraints to outdoor leisure spaces as well as fears of discovering new places (Lovelock *et al.*, 2011), still, in this charged and divided contexts, refugees and migrants find safety in larger groups, cook and share food, and play music.

People from all national groups in the full range of activities next to the water such as swimming, snorkelling and fishing. Lebanese can discriminate against other groups based on people swimming in their clothes, as it is likely refugees and migrants may not be able to afford

swimwear. The water edge (except Zeituna Bay) remained a barrier for females of all nationalities, given the dominance of male groups, their presence was predominantly limited to groups of friends, families or couples.

Those earning the highest income were on the water edge of Zeituna Bay. In contrast, the water edge of Ramlet al Bayda and Dalieh primarily catered to the unemployed and lowest income levels across all nationalities. The horizontal corniche remained the transversal connector across all sites, across nationality, income, gender and age groups. The site is largely integrated with the city and other case-study sites; it is also the only space that is physically connected to the city that transects the dual carriageway. It is also the only space where users use the site horizontally and vertically to transect to get to their water site. It is the only space where there is inter-class integration and is quite diverse across different seasons and times.

In terms of the future of Beirut's seafront public spaces, the corniche, albeit with some design and expansion plans has a very large integrating potential to accommodate different uses and users using social and cultural interventions.

7.3.2 Scale 2 Integration within and between the varied sub-spaces of the different case studies

In terms of both quantitative and qualitative data, integration happens at different scales and needs to be considered concerning temporal dynamics. Social integration happens in specific zones at specific times of the day and seasons. There are different levels of sociability within different case sites and across sections within the sites themselves.

Researchers note the importance of a micro-level investigation in the context of increased multiculturalism, migration and diversity (Neal et al. 2013; Hall 2013, Amin 2002) however, a micro investigation is not sufficient. Looking at scales of integration within topographic levels of the sites allows for a more nuanced understanding of multiculture and how it plays out in public spaces spatially

The water edge across all the cases predominantly caters to lower-income segments of society while the street level walkway is more integrated. The corniche is the strip that extends horizontally about 11 km from the new Waterfront next to Zeituna Bay down to the edge of the city and Ramlet al Bayda. As a transaction, the corniche extends from ain el mreisseh to the first line of buildings and varies in width from 100 to 400 meters and includes a dual carriageway with a median strip, a wide sidewalk and the rocky/sandy coastline that extends into the water edge. The horizontal promenade caters to a diversity of users, while the water edge both rocky and sandy cater to lower-income members of society predominantly during summer afternoons and weekends. Ramlet al Bayda, the last remaining public beach tends to be integrated during the morning on the corniche section. However, one can also find a diversity of users on the beach during the downtime of the week when the beach is quiet. During summer weekends, the water edge/beach on Ramlet al Bayda is superdiverse with various nationalities, ethnicities, gender and age groups occupying the sandy beach. During this season, one can also find tourists on the beach. Dalieh, the rocky headland that extends into the water edge is connected through the corniche on its street level to Manara with the same dimensions. This section of the corniche is diverse catering to tourists and different nationalities throughout the day who stroll and take pictures in front of pigeon rock. However, there are notable differences concerning vertical levels (sectional).

In addition to levels across topography, temporality is also imperative to look at when understanding landscapes, as time deeply alters the way space is organised and used. Further, our own perceptions as researchers is also altered over time based on our own experience and judgement of spaces, places and people. The sea seems to be the factor that draws people together. The corniche walkway across all case studies is physically and socially integrated and caters to a diversity of people from diverse backgrounds and income levels across seasons and at different times of the day.

The weekends are when we see the highest levels of diversity across all levels and case studies especially on the water edge of Zeituna Bay for shorter periods on and Ramlet al Bayda public beach and Dalieh for longer periods. The water edge in Dalieh mostly caters to lower-income users during the weekend and a few tourists who descend to the headland to rent boat rides. Zeituna Bay the half-moon port that extends from the water edge to a series of restaurants at the same level the sea level is characterized by a 200 meters wooden walkway that is right on the edge of the marina and a 100 wooden seating level which also serves as a barrier to the restaurants. Zeituna bay is connected to the street level through a series of staircases (See Figures 7-3 & 7-4). The public wooden walkway on Zeituna Bay's water edge tends to be busy and superdiverse during the summer afternoons and weekends. Zeituna Bay's corniche also tends to be quite integrally during the morning and early afternoons and evenings. The site, however, is tranquil during the winter months and the week.

As discussed in the literature, peoples' mobility, access to spaces is an indicator of sociability and often tell stories about the spaces being visited and the interconnected streets (Zavestoski and Agyeman, 2015). Mobility is also important for refugee and migrants to access leisure spaces in a new country. Here, it is also important to note that some integration happens concerning mobility. People moving in cars horizontally across the dual carriageway can only afford to interact at faster speeds. Pedestrians have a much higher level of integration and engagement of the senses when they engage with the transverse corniche. There is also a specific affordance for car integration as those sometimes intentionally get a coffee, stop and engage across the corniche either sat in the car or getting out and physically interacting with their surroundings for a short period. This research also adds to our understanding of leisure and post-conflict and high migration urban environments where the lower-income categories, including Lebanese, Syrian refugees and migrant workers tend to have fewer transportation choices. Lower-income users visit the seafront using a shared cab, a smaller motorcycle or a walk. These modes of transport can be found parked all along the corniche, already allowing for space discrimination. For example, it would be difficult for someone to consider going to the AUB beach and Ramlet al Bayda public beach given all the motorcycles that are parked outside and which of some are associated with lower-income neighbourhoods.

Further, in a diverse city, groups can be seen huddled together spatially from the street level. Spaces are negotiated daily between national groups and other minorities such as refugees and migrants. There is a hierarchy to interactions as Palestinians fare better than Syrians who are better off than other migrant worker nationalities such as Egyptian, Sudanese and Bangladeshi, among other nationalities with national Lebanese groups.

The different forms of interaction and overlays that do happen, for example, on Manara and on Zeituna Bay's wooden walkway, however, are significant and bring hope as can be seen in Figure 7-6.

Figure 7-6 Hopeful interactions on the walkways
A Youth playing on Zeituna Bay's walkway, sparking interest from passers-by; B: A fisherman hauling fish which encourages people to ask about types of fish being caught etc..C: diverse families on Zeituna Bay who strike up random conversations as kids start playing together. D: Fishermen who speak and exchange tips on with a veiled woman participating with her husband.

7.3.3   Scale 3 Inter-group encounter and interaction

In this section, issues of proximity and encounter within the sites are addressed, looking at how the context of a 'post-war, high migration' city requires a specific analysis of ease and unease, of openness and wariness.

The divisions that mar the city of Beirut are ever-shifting, and people, over time change their behaviour in public spaces to accommodate these divides. A superdiverse city originating from immigrants, Beirut is a city that witnessed a civil war between Muslims and Christians in the 1980s. During the 1990s the country came to be divided based on political affiliation, which is tied to a more significant geopolitical division in the region (See introduction section   ). Further, war, forced migration and immigration in more recent years have made Beirut

superdiverse and a place where Syrians (who were long been part of the workforce) have been joined by their larger extended families since the Syrian war in 2011. They have been joined by workers from countries like Sri Lanka, Egypt, the Philippines, Ethiopia, Sudan and Bangladesh, who have also come to work in the country. Encounters and coexistence in the post-war context of Beirut has always interested researchers (Hanf, 2007; Mady, 2012; Bollens, 2013) as post-war contexts are often charged with historical divisions and a need for contextualisation. Both negative and positive encounters take place on Beirut's seafront. The latter both intentional and incidental, have the potential to foster further social integration on Beirut seafront.

Multiculture refers to how people from diverse cultures experience and negotiate everyday situations; it is about how relations of power and the wider discourses of politics interplay through all of these (Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Hage, 2000). Urban spaces in highly divided cities remain understudied as spaces that foster pluralism and interaction (Bollens, 2013) . This thesis adds to both our understanding of multiculturality and conviviality by looking at different intensity encounters across different seascape typologies. It highlights these encounters in a high migration, highly divided post-war city. Encounters in divided cities bring to the fore further complexities and entanglements that extends beyond the literature on conviviality and multicultural encounters (Wise and Velayutham, 2009). Conviviality that is marked by diversity in a segregated city is context-dependent, and in Beirut the intersectionality of class, nationality, ethnicity and gender are added to by the importance given to sect and political party affiliation. Beirut's seafront is a spatiotemporal integrated space in terms of multicultural dynamics and intercultural interactions that occur between users. However, Beirut's spatial divisions are mirrored in the city's public spaces and expected patterns emerge. Social integration takes place at different times of the day in different intensities based on the typology of the space. Analysis at the scale of interactions within a site surfaces some informative narratives of the seafront spaces as sites of various interactions and transgressions where stereotypes can be both confirmed and subverted.

The everyday recognition of multiculturalism involves recognising a human identity rather than focusing on specific intersectionalities such as age, gender, and nationality (Noble, 2009), even though people may make claims unto space using these intersectional identities (Watson, 2006; Khalili, 2016)Class is by far the most profound segregating factor across all these divisions (Traboulsi, 2005; Hanf, 2007). The country has one of the largest wealth disparities in the world, the entire wealth is controlled by a few political elite families (Assouad, 2021); Friction and altercations in public spaces could break out between Lebanese groups based on class, political affiliation and differences in political opinions; one of the reasons Lebanese tend to steer away from discussing politics in public, which points out to deep societal rifts and an inability to accept other people's opinions.

The qualitative data showed different degrees of sociability across different nationalities and cultures on the seafront similar to other research done by (Rishbeth et al., 2018). People describe both positive and negative, incidental and intentional encounters on Beirut's seafront. Positive incidental interactions take place when people from different nationalities may exchange lighters, coal (for the shisha), a chair and any other prop likely to be used on a seafront public space. Most of these positive intercultural interactions that happen on the seafront remain on the seafront and do not extend into everyday life. However, similar to (Ganji and Rishbeth, 2022), this does not mean they are not positive as conviviality works against stereotypes, for example, a convivial conversation can take place between people of different nationalities and may lead to people questioning their preconceived ideas about the "other" and this is important as it allows people to connect on a human level. Beirut's transverse Corniche across the seafront as a whole

is an integrated space place away from city dynamics where people of different nationalities try and reach out to others through a similar practice of public space.

Leisure practices differ across cultures. Neal et al. (2015) who note that leisure and sociability in public open spaces are culturally embedded, shaped by collective values and histories developed in the country of origin and that the way people use space is not universal but highly linked to cultural practice. Specifically, encounters provoke a sense of introspection about our own practices and identity and how we perceive others (Szytniewski and Spierings, 2014). In these situations, people either spatially group with the familiar forming or could choose to interact with "others" who are not familiar (Szytniewski and Spierings, 2014). There are different types of incidental positive encounters. Some are fleeting and momentary, not extending beyond the convivial smile and hello. Incidental encounters predominantly happen on the horizontal Corniche el Manara and Ain el Mreisseh. The majority of these positive encounters happen in the morning when everyone is brought together through a sense of health and wellbeing. Other incidental encounters may start as fleeting encounters but then extend into more meaningful friendships as some interviewees noted in chapter 5. However, friendships are more likely to form between those of the same nationality. Distinctive, nuanced practices in such a superdiverse and divided context can act as positive interlocutors and cultural conduits. For example, people may gravitate toward each other if they are doing similar activities in leisure spaces or public spaces such as cooking, fishing or socialising in larger groups, as indicated in chapter 5. For example, groups of people cooking food are more likely to ask each other for ingredients, or those smoking shishas are more likely to ask for lighters or coal and initiate a conversation.

At the same time, it is a differentiator much similar to visual discrimination and may result in friction among different nationalities. For example, it is easy for Syrians to recognise each other on the water edge different slight practices such as playing music, eating sunflower seeds and forming bigger groups. Syrians describe that these practices are a positive indication or a means to strike up a conversation turning an incidental positive encounter into more meaningful friendships; Lebanese on the other hand, may take the opportunity to marginalise what they perceive as "the other". This is also why refugees and migrants are taking up fishing to connect with their Lebanese counterparts through an activity they may not have practised in their own country but can be used to create a positive, intentional encounter.

Encounters can be used to "critically attend to the many complexities, contestations, and contradictions of contemporary urbanism with a specific attention to difference" (Darling and Wilson, 2016, p. 2). Spatial and identity policies at the national level translate into the awareness of others. This awareness translates into each individual going through assessing their perceptions of "others' which are then translated at different socio-spatial levels of encounters(Szytniewski and Spierings, 2014).   Intentional positive encounters may sometimes extend into friendships beyond the space itself. Still, it is rare and mostly only happens between people of the same nationality, especially Syrian refugees (See section 5.4.2). Intentional positive encounters happen when people are open to experiencing them, and these extend into place-based friendships. For example, there are a few groups of men who gather to play cards or backgammon during the early hours of the evening on the corniche. positive incidental encounters on the corniche have formed between people living in the same neighbourhood and have extended onto public spaces after multiple encounters. Some positive incidental encounters on the corniche developed into a "Spatio-temporal friendship"- meaning a friendship that does not extend beyond that particular space and time (see section 5.2.1). These relationships offer a space of escapism from stereotypical roles assigned in Lebanese society. Here Lebanese can

weave and form different identities which, at least in part, manage to transcend class, gender and political affiliations.

Leisure in public spaces is sometimes related to expressing one's identity, this can be expressed by clothes, dialect, and actions such as playing loud music or visiting in larger groups(Peters, 2010). This expression of identity in larger public spaces such as the seafront could lead people to mind their own business and for people to gravitate towards others of their own ethnic background to feel at ease (Peters, 2010). Positive, intentional encounters on Beirut's seafront mostly occur within the same national groups and of a similar class. People socialising on Beirut's seafront experience different levels of feeling at ease underlined by nationality, class, and gender. Integration is predominantly experienced within people of the same nationality; however, even within Lebanese-only groups, segregation and discrimination can also occur based on class, political affiliation or sect. Further, from observation, it is common for physical fights to break out between Lebanese and other ethnicities, mainly Syrians. Refugees generally feel they are under the microscope and being judged in public spaces. They tend to keep to themselves and visit in groups. Interactions between non-Lebanese tend to be firmer friendships and are likely to extend beyond space into everyday life based on the concept we are all refugees or lower-income groups and we are in this together (see section 5.4.2). Other positive, intentional encounters and friendships form on the typology of space, a link that remains largely unresearched, that encourages one to spend a long time in, such as a sandy beach or a rocky headland during the hot summer months. Examples of such typologies are Ramlet al Bayda sandy beach, Dalieh and the rocky patches on Manara especially AUB beach, it is the sea that brings everyone together in this space and creates a sense of equity.

Difference is negotiated in everyday life on a micro level (Neal et al. 2013; Hall 2013, Amin 2002). It is important to understand the reality of cultural difference in superdiverse contexts in everyday life (Vertovec, 2007) but also in a non-egalitarian and divided context. There are limits to 'un-panicked multiculturalism' in public spaces (Rishbeth and Rogaly, 2018), there is what Massey refers to as "geography of power" which needs to be maneuvered. Experiencing egalitarian access and confidently being present on the different typologies on Beirut's seafront is not something all users experience. Negative reactive encounters entrenched in racism are rare do happen, these occur when someone transgresses the unspoken class and nationality barriers. For example, Lebanese could make "an example" of a Syrian refugee and have a confrontation just to loudly establish the power order in the space.

Providing a quality-built environment often makes newcomers feel more at ease in new surroundings. These spaces offer safety, safe places for people to form identities as well as provide physical attributes such as shade, and places to sit, which overall is equitable to users of open spaces (Dempsey, 2009). In this divided context and where there is a clear lack of design qualities, it was noticeable that migrants and refugees feel the need to have some sort of safety and protection on Beirut's seafront public spaces, specifically from a Lebanese connection, to feel they can safely use the public space. This is another form of positive convivial encounter which, over the years, may extend into a form of friendship. But in earlier days, it gives the Lebanese the upper hand in the relationship (See section 5.3.1).

Highly managed spaces are safer but also are low affordances or unwelcoming. For example, Ramlet al Bayda, Dalieh and the edge of the water at Manara can become occupied by larger groups sitting in a specific area, often all Lebanese. It would be difficult for newcomers from any nationality and gender to find a comfortable spot around these groups. Accordingly, refugees and migrant workers also tend to come in groups of at least two or more to the water edge so

that they feel safe.   the only space where physical fights did not seem to happen was Zeituna Bay and that is due to the presence of private security at all times. In contrast, physical fights could occur on the water's edge of Ramlet, Dalieh and Manara. Due to security presence, sociability becomes curated and remains superficial and short-lived as people do not spend much time on Zeituna Bay's water edge wooden walkway. The site, however does encourage the acceptance of others and generates respect towards the shared commons (Sandercock, 2003)

Class is a major segregating demographic factor that is often overlooked amidst the more prominent divisions in the country (see findings of section 4.4). Class segregation can be seen on the different levels of the case studies. Zeituna Bay is a helpful example of physical class segregation. At the same time, the wooden public walkway on the yacht bay level and the street levels generally function as places where different groups are integrated, where all different classes use the space at different intensities during different times of the day. They are spaces where people are integrated during the weekend but with little interaction between people of a different classes. The restaurants at Zeituna Bay remain for the use of upper-middle and upper classes exclusively as they are unlikely to be afforded by lower and lower-middle classes.

Social divisions stipulate how women use public spaces. Class is an important social segregating factor specifically related to women that are present across the different typologies, especially in the Global South (Koning, 2009; Renard, 2011). Women do not feel safe and comfortable on some of the Beirut seafront levels, again noting sectional/vertical differences. It is rare to spot women wearing swimsuits and occupying space with ease on the water edge, especially in spaces where it is busy and has been already claimed by groups of men, such as Ramlet al Bayda public beach, AUB beach, the rocky beach spaces on Manara and Dalieh. These divisions are related to class as these spaces are likely to be occupied by conservative Muslim groups which stipulate a conservative dress code and being present with family members (see section 5.1.4). Another reason for women's unease in seafront public spaces is harassment. Public harassment in this context, similar to Karatchi and Riyadh, sometimes serves the purpose of surveillance for keeping women "in check" and limiting their public freedoms (Renard, 2011; Ali, 2012).

The public walkway is a more accepting space, with much higher levels of tolerance towards the presence of women in the space. This may be because the typology of the place does not entail a revealing dress code; females visit in groups of friends or families and sometimes alone. Migrant female workers, however, visit in pairs on the promenade during late afternoons, at weekends, they are likely to visit with a small group of friends, as they are more comfortable in numbers. In the early morning hours or during a sunny summer weekday or weekend, females feel safe to occupy any level. Still, as the day progresses into nighttime, females tend to keep to the street level where they feel safer and are not trespassing on anyone's boundaries. Interestingly, after August 4th and the financial crisis, females started occupying the street level of corniche al Manara during late evening hours more comfortably despite the fact there was no light.

Figure 7-7: A group of women comfortably occupying Manara's sidewalk during Sumer 2021

Divisions within the same zone can also take place not based on class but on politics. Politics is a major dividing issue in Lebanon given the political history of the country. Here political visible marking act as a "transgression of place" in a space that is supposed to be neutral (Dixon, Levine and McAuley, 2006). Here people associate specific meanings to a space and their expectations of conduct, demeanour, dress, code and politics(Dixon, Levine and McAuley, 2006). For example, Within the same zone based on collective political identity, political tattoos worn by men of the same sect and religion on AUB beach create new modes of inclusion or exclusion based on political party affiliation where groups sit and remain segregated based on this invisible boundary. It is not uncommon for fights to break out if these invisible boundaries are transgressed, the issue often is a difference in political affiliation and opinion.

I also had an impact on the research based on my own position as a 'relatively privileged' researcher. I was shown my power hierarchy several times on Ramlet and AUB public beach when I was asked by Lebanese not to interfere when I called the police after they beat up a Syrian refugee young adult. I was also referred to as a "informant" or Aamil on AUB beach so I understand that my presence is seen as foreign and that I also do not hold any power in that space as a traitor (Aamil) in this context that "blood can be spilt". In another incident on AUB beach, I was interviewing a young adult when his friends started being curious about who I am and what am I doing here? Trying to gain the upper hand in the power hierarchy. My response is that my mother is from the Southern village of Tibnine, the birthplace of Shiite House Speaker Nahbi Berri (to which these young adults recognised), this kept them at bay and established a power hierarchy where I am safe.

7.4 Seascapes and their relationship to city edge leisure affordances

From a historical netography analysis within this research, the relationship the Lebanese had with their public spaces has changed over time. Researcher from the Beirut Heritage Group, an active Facebook forum, Ziad Itani largely documents the historic uses of Ramlet al Bayda and Dalieh on social media. It is apparent during the 1950s, Beirut's seafront had a different practice of public space, people had a very close relationship with the sea. The sea used to provide a meeting point for all the prominent Beirut families during Eid and public holidays, they would spend the entire weekend on the beach in tents. Looking at past images and people's interactions

with these images makes them relive these moments; it evokes a sense of nostalgia with the past and the close relationship Lebanese had with the sea. The sea evokes feelings of nostalgia and brings up these memories associated with the sea. Nostalgia has a remarkable capacity for creating an image, a longing for experiences, sensations, tastes, sounds and smells (Boym, 2001); hence the importance of restoring visual elements that used to exist on the seafront but were erased by neoliberal aspirations which resulted in severing this relationship with the sea. The sea invokes memories from vacations and associations from one's homeland, often accompanied by nostalgia and loss of what the space 'used to be' for those who had childhood memories on Beirut's seafront. Nostalgia and the change of the sensory experience people had with the sea do have an ability to bring people together in the sense of remembrance, if not patriotism. Comments on social media regarding historical images on the seafront evoke a spirit of remembrance and nostalgia, bringing people together across gender, class and nationality. Comments opposing the state's neoliberal policies also could bring people together in the sense of social injustice that had been perpetrated by a state that has forgotten its role of protecting and uniting its populace.

Seascapes are landscapes that bring people together, with blue space among people's most preferred places for health benefits and finding qualities of restoration and relaxation (Völker and Kistemann, 2013, 2015). Very little has been done on the practice of leisure and sociability across typologies of public spaces, specific seascapes in the global south (Delpal, 2014). According to (Soenen, 2006) social identity is derived mainly from lifestyles- it is important to note that identities are plural and dynamic. This creates the opportunity to establish linkages across groups in open public spaces. Thus, leisurely activities undertaken in public space become opportunities for people to claim social positionality by displaying different practices of public space.

Based on Saskia Sassen's argument, globalisation has led to cities of haves and have-nots- where materiality spatially defines disperses populations. Similarly, Beirut's already divided context now has new layers of divisions its inhabitants have to manoeuvre. At the same time, leisure is an integral part of Lebanese culture primarily associated with the Mediterranean Sea (Deeb and Harb, 2007; Hazbun, 2008). Globalisation has largely affected the practice of public space in the Global South. The practice of public space no longer recognises and celebrates elaborate festivities that used to take place over entire weeks on Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beaches during the sixties and seventies. This practice was exacerbated by the state's neoliberal approach to privatising Beirut's waterfront, which resulted in a significantly growing gap between the upper-middle and middle classes, both economically and culturally. Like de Koning's (2009) description of Cairene society in Egypt, the private cosmopolitan settings of the Beirut waterfront provide places of social closure, both physically and symbolically, segregating upper-middle-class individuals from the majority lower- and working-class populations. Thus, this research amplifies that the practice of leisure in itself became a class-defining act. Where you choose to spend time, whom you spend time with, and the activity you engage in depends on your destination, time of the visit and the activity one engages in. Beirut's seafront brings together those of a single class status across specific sections and levels and excludes others. These spatial divisions, increasingly cements particular (westernized) identities and ways of thinking among this privileged group and acts to deepen the symbolic exclusion of the lower classes.

When Public open spaces are next to the sea there is an added equality dynamic of cultural access to the sea. Similar to de Koning's (2009) analysis of Cairene society's social associations of traditional Egyptian culture and Islamism have become intertwined with class-specific, cosmopolitan norms. There are specific class associations across levels and typologies of seafront

spaces. Here the typology of the seafront is important as the space allows for specific liberal dress affordances that is related to class. There are specific social meanings associated with people using the water edge as poorer, and those who use the corniche on the street level who are financially better off. Users on the corniche physically need to "look down" on activities being undertaken on the lower levels they associate with lower-class-specific practices. There are very powerful and symbolic boundaries on Beirut's seafront. For example, on the Manara walkway, passes made at women will often be met with "glares" as middle-class women would perceive this as someone overstepping their class mark. A class-specific, neoliberal logic is similarly applied in class and gender; the lack of females wearing swimming costumes on the water edge indicates a lower-class practice compared to those on the street level.

The same "glares" can be distinguished within the same site. On Zeituna bay where a homogeneous middle-classness can be collectively emphasized across restaurant users creating a lucid boundary and a physical exclusionary of the lower classes using the lower deck, Zeituna Bay restaurant users may "glare" at some practices on its wooden walkway such as posing to take pictures behind the yachts or sitting down on the wooden deck to share food or feed fish. They may also not want to take a stroll on the weekends when is very busy and may prefer to leave the space hurriedly to deepen this exclusion symbolically. They also refused to partake in research when I was perceived to be of a lower class; it was only when I dressed more smartly that restaurant users stopped to have a quick chat. Divisions can also be physical. This detachment from a place can also be seen by those who live in the affluent towers on the opposite street level. They wear expensive sports clothes and will use the corniche for a quick jog, maybe ending in Starbucks on Zeituna Bay. They use the space to see and be seen, retreating to their towers and also looking down on all the corniche and water edge users.

Findings indicate that the typology of place has a profound effect on the interactions that happen between different users. Spaces that are not policed, private and close to the sea tend to predominantly foster a sense of conviviality. These spaces are host to music, general merriment, convivial multicultural interactions (if superficial), and sports activities. There are several fishermen, divers and free divers who also come to the beach to teach their children how to swim and because their parents used to bring them to the beach to fish or to learn how to swim and thus they have very vivid memories along the Beirut seafront. However, the states' neoliberal approach to seafront developments resulted in a class reconfiguration. Whereby the corniche, Dalieh, St. Georges Bay (now known as Zeituna Bay and Ramlet al Bayda) used to be sites for picnics, families, spending the weekend by the sea and making food by the sea have been replaced by busy lifestyle of a modern globalised times. Thus, the relationship Beirut's dwellers had with the sea and the way they practice it also has become more incidental and detached. The leisurely time used to be spent at sea was replaced by a stroll at different times of the day. This type of detachment created an identity and a middle to upper-class perception. Thus, the typology of space and how people use the space created a discriminatory perception and users classify each other according to social behaviour. The current superdiverse nature of the seafront is translating into different norms and practices that take place on the different levels and zones such as weddings, picnics, loud music, larger groups. These novel and fairly new practices in leisure patterns can increase social tensions . The reconfigurations that had already taken place in Lebanese society have, in turn, transformed particular cultural meanings and norms, to underscore these new symbolic strategies of inclusion and exclusion. (Noble, 2009)

Seascapes are important, Brown (2015) notes that despite neoliberal aspirations to privatise seafronts the sea remains a blank public space- it could not be owned and is looked on as an empty, non-territorial domain. The sea in the context of Beirut and the city's history the sea has transformed from historically being a place of leisure, respite and recreation free for all into a

physically, visually and socially segregated space. In this context, I argue that a renewed focus on the sea as an element of social capital and a representative of social equity as an element to bring people together. The sea physically and visually should no longer be subject to the state's neoliberal conquests but ought to be preserved for present generations, times and the future. The sea in the city of Beirut is ever-present, is rife with historical meaning for the Lebanese and needs to be socially protected. The long history of privatising the sea made it inaccessible physically, visually and in our collective memory. While it is important for the future of seafront public spaces to have more visual and physical connectivity to the city and beyond, it is still equally important to revive the historic relationship people had with the sea, to bridge societal divides.

In this context, researchers should pay attention to the landscape and typologies of places as well as specific affordances of the seafront in order to understand multiculturalism, citizen participation and leisure practices. Seafront public spaces play a key role in bringing a wide range of users together across many divides in activities of leisure, sociability and escapism for various nationalities that exist on the seafront. As with different public spaces, there is a direct relation with the typology of space and the intensity of the interactions these generate, all of which contribute to negotiating difference. Being alone in a public space is a social behaviour regardless of what one expects regarding degrees of sociability. The incidental sociability such as being in the space among diversity, convivial gestures across such as a wave, a smile, borrowing props are all opportunities to bridge divides.

7.5 Prefigurative Activism and the future

The qualitative interviews for the governance and participatory planning aimed to record and evaluate the history and current situation of governance and prefigurative activism on the seafront. Through a combination of oral accounts and desk research, it was possible to understand better the extent of the effectiveness of the planning system and the extent of the effectiveness of actions taken by different actors to reclaim, contest and influence changes relating to seafront spaces in Beirut. In this section I specifically relate these to the typology of leisure spaces in a post-war context and where there are levels of precarity common to many Global South countries.

Divisions could be overcome through solidarity; a bond people share based on shared experience (Scholz, 2008). Lebanese, Palestinians and Syrians all have a shared history of war in their own countries. However, the pressures of living in a city such as Beirut means that for the most part, rather than this shared experience bringing them closer together in solidarity, their lived experience in the country has brought them further apart. Bollens (2013) describes that conflict cities may introduce processes of their own to intensify inter-group conflict; in these cities, national and religious conflict is worked out and modulated in many ways, including in urban Public Open Spaces. In the past years, social justice issues and demonstrations have been gaining importance in Beirut. Specifically, those pertaining to equality of access to public spaces (Editors, 2018; Bou Aoun, 2020). However, up to present day, people are still unable of coming together based on a shared history of war with Palestinians and Syrians, displaced by wars in their own countries, the state, people, political parties and the city instead not only reproduced divisions but created further modes of inclusion and exclusion.

On October 17th 2019, people collectively across the country occupied streets, public and cultural spaces and blocked roads in clear defiance state policies asking for better standards of

living. It was a remarkable point in time when people occupied public spaces and came together in an act of solidarity and hope bridging nationwide divides relating to regions, religion and politics. organising hope' is a useful lens by which to discuss activism in this context as this was an act of prefigurative practice on October 17th 2019. Defined as attempts to enact, in the present, utopian or alternative social relations, aspired to in the future, (Leite de Figueirêdo Sales, 2020) prefigurative practices is a distinguishing feature of contemporary activism, it involves "taking the political personally –trying to create ideal practices within one's own activist group" (Saunders, 2013). What happened on October 17th, 2019 in Lebanon was what Ana Cecilia Dinerstein qualifies as "the art of organizing hope" (Dinerstein, 2014, p.1). Perhaps what was remarkable about October 17th is that Lebanese united across divisions, on that day it seemed to many that there was no class, religion, or politics. Despite the fact that this solidarity did not last and divisions became apparent afterwards, still that day was an indicator for people's efforts of producing through choices the desired reality they were committed to creating. October 17th was an open-ended strategy for producing social change in the present as the "mini form here and now" of a better society in the future (Maeckelbergh, 2011).

These practices come into reality thanks to deliberated and agentive choices and efforts against the status quo made by activists to bring about values and the principles they are fighting for. It is important to note here the way in which social and collective agency is expressed, how protest is organised or dis-organised, and how the affordances of the seafront spaces offer some potential for reclaiming quality of life, voice, dissent, organising, in the city. Even though this did not last for long, still spaces that do bring people together across divisions present valuable opportunities. Opportunities to bridge divide of creating equitable public spaces for all, not privileging one socio-economic segments of society over the other. Equitable development should occur across all of the transverse and transection of the seafront, including a rehabilitation. The corniche across all study areas could benefit from physical connections to the city and the water edge, to allow for more physical and social mixing and fluidity. The transverse corniche in Beirut creates a space of relative safety that brings people together in the same space across social, economic and political divides and this is very important in such a polarized context. The space itself has the qualities of being able to present a space of safety for all, from a collective trauma of war and the constant threat of war for Lebanese as well as other nationalities. The transverse has all the physical qualities of bridging divides, users could be brought together in an activity that reminds them of a shared experience of war and conflict could create a platform for mutual respect across difference and nationalities.

7.5.1   Lack active and effective citizen participation in urban planning policy

Protests are not the only method people use as a formalised way to participate on Beirut's seafront, which is a major resource for city inhabitants but equally to the residents of the suburbs and beyond. According to the qualitative data, there is a clear lack of mechanisms or processes for active citizen participation in urban placemaking as well as a total lack of transparency regarding the public good. The main critique to classical planning approaches is that these ignore the representation of different groups in the society as a consequence planning process do not operate in a democratic manner (Forester, 1999; Healey, 1997; Sandercock, 1998). This mechanism is entirely missing in the urban planning process in Lebanon especially at the level of municipalities where citizens should be able to influence urban public policy (Saksouk-Sasso and Bekdache, 2015; Fawaz, 2017a; Fawaz and Moumtaz, 2017). According to Saksouk-Sasso (2015) in Lebanon, plans and regulations serve a social purpose in dealing with urbanization and environmental issues that have a daily effect on people's lives. Bou Akar (2018) ; 2012) argues that in recent years, it has become clear that regulations and plans have now become political planning tool for extending political gain and control over resources including land. This

research emphasizes that Beirut's seafront spaces are no exception to this threat, and are in urgent need of meaningful participatory and co-production mechanisms to involve users in planning, design and management processes. Public space constitutes a center for civil society, a space where public opinion forms to counterbalance political power.

Bou Aoun, (2020) states that public spaces, in their socio-political definition, have the potential to play a fundamental role in strengthening democracy because they regulate and facilitate social interaction. Qualitative data, netography and a literature review showed that the relationship between urban actors, urban inhabitants, and public authorities are temporal, with power shifts occurring over time. This power-shifting relationship is embodied and physically translated in the access to quality and quantity of public spaces in the city. Local authorities in Beirut do not prioritise seafront public spaces but instead focus on the private development of these spaces. This shifts the economic responsibility of maintenance to the private sector but has much larger negative repercussions on social public goods. This practice has rendered Beirut's seafront as a private-public domain over the years that caters to wealthy Lebanese and tourists. This neoliberal approach to public space is an apparent attempt by Lebanese authorities and local councils to shift responsibilities and create controllable and manageable public spaces. Lebanese authorities have shelved the use of master plans, zoning and detailed plans that need to be approved by municipalities- the local authority. Informing residents and heavily involving them before issuing a detailed plan is a key part of any urban planning process. The lack of citizen participation in the re-design plans of Manara is a telling example (see section 6.5.1) Participation process would allow for transparency in the negotiations between the central administration, the experts, and the municipal councils, and should allow and correspond to citizens' actual needs. Users of seafront spaces have ideas regarding enhancing the physical attributes of the space and landscape on Beirut's seafront public spaces, such as landscaping, planting design, urban furniture among other interventions.

Planning in MENA for recreation on seafront public spaces needs to be a serious strategy consideration. The seafront in a nation-wide resource that is crucial for the health and wellbeing of citizens. In terms of leisure, the seafront provides specific affordances to communities that are otherwise marginalised and presents significant co-existence and socialising opportunities. The lack of political will has resulted in very little change- the administrative structure, the power-sharing system and outdated laws mean that very little change can be done to re-enshrine the "publicness of Beirut's seafront. Seafront public spaces have been socially reclaimed by the people, through everyday use, protests and forcible occupation. When people occupy public space it is a "spatial translation of the people's political role in participating in decision-making"(Fawaz, 2017b; Bou Aoun, 2020). The occupation of public space is a direct translation of the lack of participatory mechanisms and a transparent co-design process for people to have a say in the design of their cities. Meaningful collaborative initiatives such as design charrettes aimed at bridging the gap between local authorities and users could pave the way for more meaningful engagement in the production, maintenance and care of public spaces.

7.5.2   Lack of quality managed public spaces

Research has shown that good quality-built environments is able to achieve some form of superficial social cohesion, in the very least it is able to foster a respect for the space itself. According to Lefebvre space is never just a physical pace, it is in fact an actively produced space by its users. Work by Lynch (1960) and Jacobs (1961) argued that urban environments shape our behaviour, knowledge and how we feel and act in these spaces. More recently Rishbeth (2017) argued about a lack of critical understanding of the multiple patters of socialising which spills

into a possible lack of cultural competency in urban design. Healy (1997) argues that it is the planners and designer's responsibility to manage "co-existence" in a designed space. I argue that the notable lack of well quality designed seafront public spaces in Beirut are further contributing to lack of equity and divisions across the diverse society.

According to Sennett (1992), public spaces bring people together through designed landscapes, intended typologies and common neighbourhoods. While the case studies lack design and landscaping (except for Zeituna Bay), people use the spaces according to their intended typologies and based on cultural identities superimposed on the space. Design and a good quality-built environment could partially support the diversity of people from different cultures and how they prefer to socialise on Beirut's seafront. User interviews have shown that most of the marginalised and lower-income users of the seafront spaces stated that they would appreciate more free access spaces, more designed landscape elements, urban furniture and respectful policing. The lack of designed landscape elements is pronounced on Beirut's seafront, except on Zeituna Bay. Netography showed that historically the corniche was lined with the water-resistant Tamarix tree, which provided otherwise much-needed shade. This worked better regarding spatial quality and environmental considerations at the time. The current Corniche would enormously benefit from designed landscape elements and plant design. Urban furniture could be incorporated along the different sites to encourage the use of the sea while providing suitable spaces for people to congregate. Free modular furniture, umbrellas and chairs could be provided on sites closer to the sea such as corniche water edge, Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach.

For Lebanese who occupy the seafront levels, such as the rocky Manara levels, AUB beach, Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach a sense of friendliness and neighborhood connections brings them together. For example, the AUB beach was intended as a typology for people to come and spend the day engaging in sports, sunbathing and swimming. This summer when the beach did not open due to COVID-19, the beach was busier than usual predominantly those who occupy the beach live in the same neighborhoods in Zokak el Blat and the nearby Khandaq al Ghamiq/Bechara el Khoury.

This research has shown that the case of Zeituna Bay shows that a well-designed managed public space generates at least respect for the urban commons and discourages friction in public spaces. The design can foster positive fleeting encounters across its levels, contrary to the other case-study sites. But still, there are social, political and economic divisions exist within that case study which is evident on the street level, restaurant level and the wooden public walkway. This lack of equity across the sectors, as well as the case studies, translates directly into the public sphere, where lower-income people believe they can use the public walkway for a small period of time without drawing attention to their presence. In terms of generating high-quality design and management, designers could engage users in storytelling and developing user narratives of leisure and the practice of public space could be a way to foster equity and justice. It would be necessary for people to understand the importance of these public spaces in bringing people together and what these spaces mean to all the different users to foster human understanding.

7.5.3   The role of civil society and the impact of multiple crises in Lebanon

Desk research and stakeholder interviews have shown the predominantly positive role of Activist stakeholders from varying sectors in reclaiming public spaces and spreading information on rights to public spaces. The most crucial role is spreading correct information about rights to public space. This role is being fulfilled by Academics, NGO's and activists, each with a different reach to different stakeholders. There is a role being fulfilled by academics in dispelling any

myths about the nature of public spaces, their ownership, and their history, such as the coalition for the protection of Dalieh and publications by Issam Fares public institute and the Urban Lab both at the American University of Beirut. All these play a very important role play in spreading information on various social media platforms regarding citizen rights to public spaces.

The research has shown when NGO's work transparently, consistently, delivering promises over time is a positive step towards reclamation of seafront spaces. The fact that most of the NGO's and academics work separately without any coordination, sometimes undermines their effectiveness. Many seem to be working with the aim of protecting the seafront such as Issam Fares Institute of public policy at the American University of Beirut, The Dalieh Civil campaign, Operation Big Blue, Public Works and Nahnoo among others. There seem to be very little coordination as this front and sometimes it is competition the fact that independent organizations are also unable to come and work together facing the state for a greater public good, is rather discouraging. With this wide array of organizations, many also do not deliver on their objectives to protect public spaces through a multitude of activities such as design competitions and producing high quality research that is spread across different channels such as the work of Operation Big Blue on Ramlet al Bayda public beach, who fall short on their promise of rehabilitating the public beach to better standard. Due to this lack of cooperation, it also seems that the audience for each entity is rather different and remains limited due to the lack of integrated and effective communication that bridges this gap across audiences to reach the largest segment of society. However, this research has shown that the objectives of cleaning and raising environmental awareness on Ramlet al Bayda public beach conducted by Operation Big Blue is still in need of refinement and is yet to produce measurable results and outcomes. The beach is still in need of cleaning, safety measures, bringing the people who use the beach together and raising awareness on how to positively reclaim the space as a whole and not as a piecemeal landscape.

Despite all of this, these public campaigns were able to catalyse citizen awareness which in turn led to people demanding their rights to public space and can re-appropriate it from the state, which succumbs to public/media outcries and consistent lawful pressure. In past recent years, the public and non-governmental organisations have done much to re-claim the public domain. However, one of the most critical gains regarding open access to public spaces was achieved by the populist October 17 uprisings ie Thawra is the Lebanese citizens' reclamation of public space. The October uprising challenged Lebanese authorities and their approach to public spaces occupying (sometimes forcibly) public spaces such as Zeituna Bay, Manara and refusing to pay parking meters on Beirut's seafront. These acts sparked a change in peoples behaviors activating a sense of social responsibility to protect, occupy and re-claim public spaces. During the October 17 uprisings, the public sphere became the active scene for the revolutionaries to meet and create a network, the space itself became one of the key components for producing the revolution and bridging gaps.

After, October 17th uprisings, August 4th explosion, COVID- 19 and the economic crash that took place in 2020. Currently, Ramlet al Bayda is a zone under study which means it cannot be further developed, development activity on Dalieh has ceased, the project for Manara's expansion has been halted (primarily due to the financial crisis more than reclamation), Zeituna Bay has released a circular emphasizing the public nature of its wooden dock, hence the change of the practices on this public space.

The October 17th uprisings really brought Beirut's seafront to the fore in the public eye again. The message here was very clear- a mass reclamation of seafront public spaces and a rise against

the historic neoliberal privatization of the seafront. Beirut's seafront reclaimed its role and a physical connector as many would go for a stroll on the corniche after the protests, jogging with flags and painted faces. The role of the corniche as a city network and as a space to hold informal messages was accentuated especially with the image of the south/North human chain spread on social media- that was very powerful. The image represented connection that was ever present with the space to the city and the country itself and that became the corniches identity even if for a short while. Another transformation took place during COVID-19 and given the ban on the corniche it strictly became a neighborhood place where people who lived close by could go for a quick stroll, the space regained its neighborly feel and connection. The last transformation took place after the economic crisis in 2019, whereas the number of users on seafront public spaces at all times, of the day has been unprecedented. Beirut's seafront literally became the only space where people are going to for respite and leisure. The intensity of use has largely increased and the sheer amount of people on the corniche takes away from the experience of being in a large expansive area on the seafront. There is certainly a limit as to what makes an outdoor space work well and Beirut's seafront has well crossed that threshold it terms of density and capacity. The future of Beirut's seafront is in urgent need of a design intervention to accommodate the enormous increase in public space usage.

The analysis of this research adds to understandings of how multiculture and integration is experienced in leisure spaces in post-war contexts in the Global South. Exploring the relationship between sociability and designed space has been important. Looking at the seafront locations across different scales has allowed a specific critique of the value of interstitial spaces, the connection between an edge of the sea and an edge of the city, and the value for this as specific landscapes that have social affordance. Examining these in both transection and transverse directions informed a framework to look at relationships between the city, neighbourhoods and sites, and all of these in relation to the expanse of the sea. By relating qualitative findings with spatial analysis, the scope also included some of the ways integration is supported (or not) in the varied sub-spaces of the different case studies. These findings add to developing theory on gender and class as they relate to leisure and the practice of public space, with an additional and context-appropriate focus on understandings of leisure practices of refugees and migrant workers in host countries in the MENA. In this chapter prefigurative activism has been applied as a theoretical framework to understand uprisings and social movements, suggesting this is especially relevant to the Lebanese context where there is a lack of citizen participatory mechanisms in urban planning.

8. Conclusion

The research reported in this thesis has explored multiculturalism, leisure, sociability, and governance on seafront open public spaces in a superdiverse and divided context.
This concluding chapter is organised in three parts, the first of which (8.1) starts with a research overview of the findings, next I highlight how these informed the three areas from the literature review. "multiculturalism (Wise and Velayutham, 2009), social justice as embedded in urban change and management of public space (Bou Akar, 2018), and leisure studies". Next (8.2) highlights this thesis's original contribution to knowledge. The third part (8.3) explores the impact of the research, including the ways research findings can be used to enhance landscape design, sociability, urban planning and governance, both in Beirut and more broadly in the MENA region and Global South contexts. The last section (8.4) discusses the scope for further development.

8.1 Research Overview

The research provides further empirical evidence on integration, place and social commonalities developed within the socio-spatial relations between people and their built environment over time. The research interrogates themes of integration & multiculture, landscape architecture and governance within the fields of landscape architecture, planning and sociology. This triangulation provided a lens through which the practices of urban public space in a post-conflict setting are examined to magnify physical and social integration and highlight positive and negative social encounters across different layers of class, nationality, religion and gender at different scales.

8.1.1 Multiculturalism

This research reasserts that its main contribution is that confirms that space matters in achieving social integration, and in doing so, that social integration has a spatial dimension, challenging work from human geography (e.g., Amin (2002) on 'micro publics'). This research also addresses a gap in the literature on multiculturalism and integration regarding a lack of critical understanding of diverse socializing patterns in conflict and non-Westernised contexts. The findings indicate that integration happens in different ways across various scales and timeframes, conceptualising these as integral factors regarding negative and positive socialising in diverse and political, socially and structurally divided contexts. It also highlights that even though some spaces are less integrated, they still provide a space for the co-existence of intercultural identities. This in itself is positive for multiculturalism. This research proposes qualitative and quantitative methods to explore integration, leisure and sociability issues. Doing so allows the exploration of multi-culture and integration across various scales: country, city region and neighbourhoods allowing for theorising about multiculturalism on a macro scale and a more nuanced understanding of integration at the micro-scale in a post-war city.

The quantitative analysis resulted in mapping that showed multiculturalism at country, city and neighbourhood scales. The qualitative analysis delved deeper into the micro spaces highlighting the importance of scale and temporality in understanding co-existence and sociability in divided contexts. The qualitative findings show that the Beirut seafront is a primary integrating space for everyone, even though integration happens at different scales, zones and times. Still, this space remains a space for all and offers enormous opportunities for co-existence that can be built upon for further integration. The morning remains a space that brings people together across the whole transverse in a collective goal of health and wellbeing. The inspection of the transection across the different sites offers more clarity regarding nationality, class and genders. During mid-week, the water edge remains a place for predominant lower classes, men participating in various

sports activities, swimming and sunbathing with a timid presence for women on the water edge. During the weekend, this is slightly different across sections and zones of the traverse on the water edge, where this becomes more family-oriented. With larger groups of refugees, migrant workers are joined with their extended families picnicking, playing music, dancing, and swimming among other activities. The street transverse, the corniche remains an integrated space for all across different times of the day across scale and zones.

8.1.2 Social justice as embedded in urban change and management of public spaces

Overpassing fundamental public rights, such as the right to public spaces, essentially undermines planning laws so much that other public rights are obliterated over time. This results in less public understanding of peoples' rights to public space and their rights as active citizens in the city. In such contexts, activism This research contributes to a better understanding of the potential integrative role of public spaces in divided cities in the Middle East and the importance of the reclamation of public space by activists as an entry point to social justice in the city.

Another originality aspect is integrating policy dynamics, testing how recommendations might be made to improve the integration of Beirut's seafront public spaces. Notably, this scope includes initiatives within and between municipal and activist organisations, with specific attention to outcomes for social integration and community cohesion. Lastly, this research hopes to meaningfully create an impact that could potentially be relevant to other Middle Eastern cities with high refugee populations.

8.1.3 Leisure Studies

This research also added to our understanding of leisure practices of refugees and migrants in the host country, a largely under-researched body of literature. This research improved our understanding of leisure, planning and governance in a post-war conflict.

The cases explored Beirut's seafront as an exemplar place typology that provides an insight/glimpse into a form of Beirut living where co-existence across multicultural populations is possible and essential to promote further integration. The only remaining free seafront in Beirut offers everyone a space for leisure and respite. Beirut's population and beyond have found a place to use the space across scale and time to maximise or minimise the time spent across diversity. The quantitative analysis did not fully reflect the diversity at country and city level, mainly indicating that, at times refugees and migrant workers are not present in everyday life.

8.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The originality of this work is related to combining a socio-geographical understanding with landscape architecture. By being an urban planner, this work is underpinned by an understanding that urban planning and design tools provide public spaces and promote social cohesion. This study supports the rationale that incidental social interaction between people may support integration within the city. Still, the objectives focus on the detail of this and the relevance of scale and temporality in place experience in divided contexts. While specific to seafront experiences, the spatial and temporal qualities are still applicable to guide best practice for other

typologies of urban public open space that would scale up the potential for integrative and inclusive policies in Middle Eastern cities.

This research adds contextual and experiential evidence to the current broader understanding of integration in high-migratory cities as diverse and multicultural populations far from homogeneous and should be investigated to inform inclusive public space design. The impact of migration on public spaces in various contexts (Bou Akar, 2018; Fawaz, 2017) has been of interest in the past few years, but few cases go beyond Western depictions of a cosmopolitan metropolis.

This research documents space and sociability at monumental points in time, namely during the October 17th 2019 uprisings, COVID-19 restrictions of space, the August 4th Beirut port blast and the economic crash of 2019, all a backdrop for this research adding to its significance of documenting research on public space during these monumental moments in time. This research develops methodological approaches to studying the complexity and intricacies that often exist in urban public spaces, which are sometimes assumed to be integrated and homogenised— offering mixed methods as an adequate tool to interrogate this.

8.3 Impact

8.3.1 Contribution to intercultural competency in planning and design

This thesis offers some guidance on how we should promote intercultural competency in planning and design practice which is a set of knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that enables individuals and government agencies to act in an interculturally competent manner.

The importance of context	Intercultural competency is very much rooted in the context. An intricate understanding of multiculturalism in public spaces even when it is not visible in society and attitudes towards it needs to be attained	For example, it is important for different nationalities to celebrate their holidays on seafront public spaces inviting locals to join in
Meaningful engagement	Meaningful engagement including co-production techniques for the design of seafront public spaces with all stakeholders benefitting from the project is imperative	Government officials specifically the municipality of Beirut should champion town hall meeting inviting users of public spaces to implement some design interventions on some of Beirut's seafront public spaces that aim to bring people together across levels and scales. It is important to start a citizen engagement process in planning and design.

Empathy	Empathy needs to be guiding principle in planning and design. Empathy is recognising the human in the other aiming to foster better understanding of needs in public spaces.	Town hall meetings need to also aim at bringing different cultures and users of public space together to hold sessions on littering., picnics, playing music to encourage the understanding of the practice of public space and raise awareness.
Flexibility and adaptability	Planning and design of public spaces need to be flexible to diverse user needs and in response to cultural changes in leisure patterns.	It is important that planning and design especially in the context of Lebanon is kept flexible and can be reviewed based on needs to this end small interventions along the seafront are recommended

8.3.2 Contribution to landscape & planning practice

What does this mean for the future of seafront public spaces in Beirut? Urban design professionals, public officials, activists and users could come together in various design activities to design a vital space for collective health and wellbeing. It means the space could benefit from co-production from undergoing design charrettes with those who use the water edge seafront the most. The corniche could benefit from an overall expansion to accommodate increasing uses. Beirut's waterfront could benefit from better city-wide connectivity to act as a public space accessible for all.

Further, there is a huge benefit to creating a network to physically connect the different zones and sections, to create a series of public spaces on the seafront rather than segregated public spaces. Physical connectivity will also translate into better social and leisure connectivity for the different users encouraging more convivial practices. This is likely also to create a sense of respect and ownership of public spaces. Beirut's seafront could benefit from landscaping, benches, security, management, fresh water, electric supply, and electricity.

Beirut's seafront has a lack of design and maintenance. The space does not respond well to the diverse ways people use spaces and does not support specific leisure and cultural practices. Beirut's seafront also lacks good pedestrian connectivity as well as city-wide mobility.

8.3.2.1 Design scale

This research benefits the practice of open public space by landscape architects. There is a need for intentional cultural competency in urban design, which can be supported by a deeper understanding of different fields(Rishbeth, Ganji and Vodicka, 2018a). Suitable open public spaces must be well designed, offering various socialisation opportunities at different scales.

Beirut's seafront painfully highlights the lack of design and landscaping in one of the most heaving used areas in the whole city. Of all case studies, Zeituna Bay is the only space that offers a well-designed space with good amenities and a high level of social integration on its water edge. Design interventions along the corniche could focus on widening the corniche to accommodate increased human traffic. Landscaping to provide good shade, private areas and integration across the transverse and transection to offer spots for social integration could be considered.

Further physical linkages of the city and the Beirut seafront should be considered, and much-needed micro connectors across the case studies connecting the different transections: Opposite street level, carriageway, corniche and water edge. Ample connectors across the transverse to the water edge are also much needed, as are connectors from the water edge to the sea. The research is practical in that it offers specific interventions that can be easily implemented across the transverse and transection of the corniche to bring people together, creating positive incidental and intended sociability. Design charettes and co-production workshops on placemaking across strategically chosen intersections on the transverse and transection could serve for further integration.

8.3.2.2 Planning scales and governance

The city's top priority is the people's free access to well-designed, equitable, well-equipped and environmental spaces, especially during these times as the city continues to experience shocks. This research encourages public authorities to implement proper strategic planning procedures instead of ad hoc solutions to immediate problems. In this case, a high-level policy recommendation is to re-establish a Ministry of Planning. Another primary policy recommendation is for the central administration of Statistics to implement a census releasing demographic data across country, regions and city levels (granular). Re-establish the role municipalities play in local planning aligned with a Ministry of Planning's strategic plans with appropriate budgets, local planning zones and building regulations. All institutions should work transparently according to the rule of law rather than nepotism "waste" or plan unequally across regions.

Further, meaningful population engagement in planning and design decisions needs to be urgently implemented to gain a semblance of trust between planning authorities and the city's citizens and beyond. This should be a commitment that is demonstrated over time to regain a semblance of citizen trust due to Lebanese authorities' blatant negligence, especially regarding the August 4th Beirut port blast. City plans are best discussed in public hearings, and design charettes provide a mechanism for active citizen participation in decision-making, especially in re-designing a Beirut seafront- users' views should be the first consideration.

8.3.3 Contribution to Non-governmental organisations

Public space is high on the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 11 Target 7 states, "Sustainable Development Goals, (- By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities." (*Public Spaces for All | UN-Habitat*, no date)

Non-governmental organisations working on the seafront are a handful. Historically, NGOs have filled in the state's role across many sectors. This is not necessarily a good development as the state continues to shrike its duties. Accordingly, NGOs are also prone to competition, and many have different capacities and capabilities that vary according to funding levels. NGOs

working on protecting the seafront of Beirut could benefit from working more transparently and cooperatively across academia, the public sector and with activists. They tend to work in silos without considering the public benefit of working together toward the public good. NGOs also need to gain people's trust. Most interventions are not strategic, such as beach clean-ups, design competitions, and spreading information. Events could be strategic targeting and the overall goal of protecting and activating integration and sociability across multicultural on Beirut's seafront, recognising the primary role Beirut seafront has in bringing people together.

There is a huge benefit for social programs that target inclusion across difference that could be implemented with NGO's. The most marginalised such as Syrian, Palestinian and migrant workers are still absent from public space and could benefit from inclusive social programs and activities. The marginalised also includes gender, as there is a notable lack of gender balance across specific spaces also means that programs targeting safety and empowerment for women and girls would add a great benefit. Inclusion activities could specifically target women's requirement for safety and use across all levels of public space. Everyone should feel welcome in public spaces and gender is not different, women and girls should feel comfortable in getting an equitable access to the sea and the sea edge which in turn helps with everyday wellbeing.

Given the financial crisis and the lack of prioritising public investment in public spaces, interventions need not cost much. Academic funding focused on the global south can be utilized to form partnerships between academics, NGO and possible public authorities. Small term interventions can be done in collaboration with concerned NGO's even concerned individuals who are already working on improving the quality and management of seafront public spaces to capitalise on existing networks.

8.3.4 Contribution to Activism

Beirut's seafront has always been where people voiced their complaints, protested and announced political programs. Beirut Madinati, Mouwatinoun wa Mouwatinat fi Dawla (MMFD), American University of Beirut (AUB), Anti-Racism Movement (ARM), KAFA and many others have run political campaigns on the corniche, have held photo exhibitions, organised campaigns against underage marriage, organised protests against racism and many more. The corniche remains the transverse, which brings issues about social justice in the city to the city's public spaces. After the October 17th, 2019, uprisings, the corniche was increasingly used as a starting point for the lack of fundamental public rights, among them the rights to public spaces. The corniche witnessed peaceful and violent protests that erupted, attempting to reclaim the corniche as a public space. This proved effective as Ramelt Al Bayda was put under study, halting development for a few years, and Zeituna Bay announced the "publicness" of its wooden walkways. These actions directly responded to various protest and reclamation activities such as a peaceful human chain, a breakfast on the corniche Zeituyna bay, a forceful camp on Zeituna Bay and a protest that turned violent against Lancaster Eden Bay. Concentrated effort coupled with media attention tends to score small wins in Lebanon. Strategic events could be planned along the seafront to reclaim access, limit development and prioritise the management and upgrade of the Corniche as a space for all.

8.4 Scope for further development

In terms of impact in academia and beyond.

My presentations in research symposia and conferences, including the 18th IMISCOE Annual Conference (Khayat 2020, Khayat 2021a and Khayat 2021b, as well as forthcoming confirmed publications (Khayat and Rishbeth 2023a, Khayat and Rishbeth 2023b) as well as participating in a GCRF funded project in Lebanon led by Dr Clare Rishbeth in 2019 all, contributed to the development of my research and the quality of the knowledge gained, by enhancing credibility thorough peer review through the different phases of this research. This also contributed to my growth as a professional researcher engaging with contemporary academic discussions on public space and migration. These presentations and publications focused on different aspects of my research, engaging with topics around multiculturalism, exploring the notions of research in conflict settings, and experiences of everyday leisure spaces and their design. These topics were exchanged with interdisciplinary audiences, offering an opportunity for a multidisciplinary perspective on knowledge.

I hope to gain additional funding for follow on research implemented through funded projects could be aimed at development, climate change, multiculturalism and equity, gender and feminist theory.. I would hope to implement a funded project based on thesis findings in collaboration with a UK based University, Lebanon based university and a Lebanese NGO such as Public Works to implement design and leisure activity interventions on Beirut's seafront that contribute to theory on multicultutralism, integration and leisure in divided contexts. This project is tentatively planned during 2022-2023.

I hope to further explore and research to investigate the multiculturality and sociability of specific marginalised groups' access to seafront public space and open public space in Beirut. Marginalised groups include women, refugees, and migrant workers.

Finally, this thesis is the result of who I am as a researcher, urban planning practitioner, and human; it lies at the core of my interests in how diverse people use spaces differently and in my fundamental belief in making cities more just. In the hope of making this space more integrative and inclusive to all communities living in Beirut,

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10. Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

1. Where do you live?

_____

2. How did you travel here today?
☐ Own Car
☐ Walk
☐ Public transport/bus
☐ Car Share /Servees
☐ Motorcycle
☐ Other _____

3. How often do you come here?
☐ Every day
☐ Three times
☐ Once a week
☐ Weekend only
☐ Rarely/once a month
Are you more likely to come on a weekend or weekday,
why?_____

_____

_____

4. What is the reason you came here today?
☐ Jog/ exercise
☐ Walk/ dog walk
☐ Meet family/socialize
☐ Play Cards
☐ Gathering/picnic
☐ Fishing
☐ watching the sea/people watching
☐ do you get any other benefit from coming here?

_____

☐ What activity do you do the most when here?

_____

5. How long are you planning on staying here today?
☐ one hour or more   ☐ half a day   ☐ the whole day

6. What time of the day did you come here?
☐ Morning (6-12 pm)   ☐ Noon (12-6pm)   ☐ Evening (6-12am)

7. Who are you here with today?

_____

8. Is there any other outdoor place you spend more time in other than the seafront in Beirut or near your home?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Please give names _____ and typologies of places?
_____

   9.   What do you do for a living?

_____
_____

Age	Gender	Nationality	Socio-econ

(monthly income)

☐ Under 25   ☐ Female ☐ Lebanese   ☐ Above 1000 usd

☐ 25-45   ☐ Male   ☐ Syrian   ☐

500-1000 usd

☐ 45-70   ☐ Palestinian   ☐ 100-500 usd

☐ Over 70   ☐ Bangladesh ☐ under 100 usd

                                  ☐ Sri Lankan

                                  ☐ Other _____

Appendix 2- User interview discussion guide
Narratives of Leisure

Do you specifically like coming to this place? How does the place make you feel? Do you feel you are obliged to engage in an activity when you are on the seafront? Are you comfortable in doing nothing when you are [specific location] ? Do you prefer being on the seafront than a public space/garden such as Horsh? Why? I'm interested in your experience and your own thinking about spending time outdoors on the seafront?

Health and wellness
What are the benefits you derive from coming to this place? Which activity do you specifically do? (prompts: jogging, cycling, paddle, volleyball, football or relaxation by sunbathing, playing cards, fishing, feeding the fish…) how does this activity make you feel? Do you believe the seafront is vital for people's wellbeing? How so?

Seasonality
How often do you come here? How long do you often stay during one visit? Why? Would you like to spend more time here? Do you prefer coming to this space during the week or the weekend? Why? Do you like being amongst crowds? If yes/no why? Do you also have any seasonal preference and in being on Beirut's seafront public spaces?

Memory, place and Nostalgia
Beirut's seafront public places have long been held in loving memory for the city residents and beyond from the iconic pigeon rock to Ramlet al Bayda public beach and Dalieh where many festivals are held such as Orb3et Ayoub and Nowruz. Does this place hold special meaning for you? Do you have specific memories of this place when you were younger? Do you remember specific activities or days where came to this place and celebrated a specific occasion family? What were celebrating and what activities did you used to enjoy here?

Class, Multiculturalism and integration
Beirut's seafront offers a very diverse set of typologies of space for people which equally attracts a diverse set of users during different times and days of the week. there is a substantial amount of research on the benefits for mental health on spending time in the outdoors.
How do you perceive Beirut's seafront users? Who do you think they are?
Do you see the seafront as an integrated space that brings people together or a segregated space? Do you think [You] use the corniche as a public space? Do you think there are any barriers for you to do so? Are there any particular ways in which you notice diverse patterns of behavior? Can you think of any strategies to make Beirut's seafront more multicultural, inclusive and integrated within the city (national, regional, neighborhood scale)? Do you believe Beirut's seafront public spaces provides meeting points for refugees and non-refugees? Do you believe meaningful contact and friendships can occur in these places?

Physical attributes of space & Landscape
Beirut's seafront offers a varied typology for its users from a horizontal street level walkway, to the limestone headland of Dalieh, the sandy beach of Ramlet al- Bayda to the highly managed and designed Zeituna Bay. There are many disparities in terms of design (or lack of) and management of these spaces. Do you think space design affects patterns of use and behaviour (good access, parking space, benches, trees.) ? What do you think these spaces uniquely offers to

users? What do you think are problems in terms of the physical attributes of the place for [specific case-study] users? What would solving these problems look like?

Temporality and Reclaiming space
Do you perceive Beirut's seafront has changed over time? Could you tell me in your own words how this has changed? describe one positive change? And one negative change? Do you perceive these spaces and their use to have changed during the October 19th protest and Covid? What has been surprising regarding Beirut's seafront public spaces in the last year? Would you have done prioritized or acted differently regarding seafront public spaces?

Encroaching developers
Since the 1950's the state has adopted a privatization stance towards Beirut's public spaces where mainly high-end tourism projects that do not cater for the average Lebanese dominate the city's seafront and obstruct access to the seafront. Do you agree with this policy to privatize the city's seafront? Did you know that safe open public spaces is a basic human right? Do you think people have the right to a free well maintained and designed seafront public spaces? Do you think the city and its inhabitants would benefit from this? How so?

Appendix 3 Stakeholder discussion guide
Introduction: basic information about the research + consent from

Academic

> Hello, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I'm speaking to you today as an academic/expert but also as a user of the Beirut seafront- a vital public space that offers many affordances to Beirut's diverse population.

> 1. Organisational remit

Do you do any research on Beirut seafront? – why did you get involved in the first place? what has happened since you got involved? how do you see your role change in the future?

> 2. Your partners

Who do you currently work in partnership with? Do you have any plans to work with others in the future to fulfill your remit? Who is more difficult or impossible for you to work with (prompt: NGO, public office, Private sector)? Who do you think would be beneficial to work with but haven't worked with yet?

3. POS as a resource for multiculturalism and integration for more marginalized groups
Beirut's seafront offers a very diverse set of typologies of space for people which equally attracts a diverse set of users during different times and days of the week. *there is a substantial amount of research on the benefits for mental health on spending time in the outdoors.*
How do you perceive Beirut's seafront users? Who do you think they are?
Do you believe the seafront is vital for people's wellbeing?

4. Policy and temporality
From your research, how do you perceive Beirut's seafront has changed over time? Could you describe one positive change? And one negative change? How do you see Beirut Municipality policy impacts the way people use the Beirut seafront? How do you see recent events affect the use of the space (prompt: relating to the protest and Covid-19)? What has been surprising the use of the space in the last year? What would you have done or prioritized or acted differently regarding seafront public spaces?

5. Support for marginalized groups

> Does your research directly aim to understand refugee and migrant workers need for space? Do you think refugees and migrant workers use the corniche as a public space? Do you think there are any barriers for them to do so? Does your research recommend any strategies to make Beirut's seafront more multicultural, inclusive and integrated within the city (national, regional, neighborhood scale)?

> Does your research provide information about public spaces in Beirut and who is this information available to and how it is distributed?

6. Do better

In your expert opinion as an urban planner/landscape architect, what problems are most important to address on Beirut's seafront? what would solving these problems look like? In what ways does the design affects patterns of use and behavior (good access, parking space, benches.) ? What do you think this space uniquely offers to users? What do you think are problems for corniche users? What would solving these problems look like?

Public office

Hello, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I'm speaking to you today as the custodian and manager of the Beirut seafront- a vital space with many touristic developments and stretches of public space that offers many affordances and potential for activities to Beirut's diverse population.

1. Organisational remit

What is the role of your organization regarding managing seafront sites, specifically Zaytuna Bay, the corniche, Dalieh and Ramlet al Bayda public beach? – when did you get involved in managing these spaces? what has happened since you got involved? how do you see your role change in the future?

2. Your partners

Who do you currently work in partnership with? Do you have any plans to work with others in the future to fulfill your remit? Who is more difficult or impossible for you to work with (prompt: NGO, academia, Private sector)? Who do you think would be beneficial to work with but haven't worked with yet?

3. POS as a resource for multiculturalism and integration for more marginalized groups
Beirut's seafront offers a very diverse set of typologies of space for people which equally attracts a diverse set of users during different times and days of the week. *there is a substantial amount of research on the benefits for mental health on spending time in the outdoors.*
How do you perceive Beirut's seafront users? Who do you think they are?
Do you believe the seafront is vital for people's wellbeing?

4. Policy and temporality
From your organizational perspective, how do you perceive Beirut's seafront has changed over time? Could you describe one positive change? And one negative change? How do your policies impact the way people use the Beirut seafront? What have you learned regarding policies that affect this space (prompt: relating to the protest and Covid)? What has been surprising in the last year? Would you have done prioritized or acted differently regarding seafront public spaces?

5. Support for marginalized groups

Does the municipality/governor support refugees, migrant workers or other marginalized group in your work? How does your organization aim to understand refugee needs? Do you think refugees and migrant workers use the corniche as a public

space? Do you think there are any barriers for them to do so? Do you think Beirut's seafront could benefit from being multicultural, inclusive and integrated?
What type of information do you provide about public spaces in Beirut and who is this information available to and how it is distributed?

6. Do better
What problems are most important to address on Beirut's seafront? what would solving these problems look like?
In what ways does the design affects patterns of use and behavior (good access, parking space, benches, hotels,) ? What do you think this space uniquely offers to users? What do you think are problems for corniche users? What would solving these problems look like?
Private Sector
Hello, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I'm speaking to you today as a private investor touristic development on Beirut's seafront one who owns and manages one of these projects historically favored as a strategy to attract tourism to our busy city.

1. Organisational remit
Beirut's seafront has had a long history of development, what is the role of your organization on seafront sites? – why did you get involved in the first place? what has happened since you got involved? how do you see your role change in the future?

2. Who are your partners
Who do you currently work in partnership with? Do you have any plans to work with others in the future to fulfill your remit? Who is more difficult or impossible for you to work with (prompt: NGO, public office, academia)? Who do you think would be beneficial to work with but haven't worked with yet?

3. POS as a resource for multiculturalism and integration for more marginalized groups
Beirut's seafront offers a very diverse set of touristic developments, typologies of space for people which equally attracts a diverse set of users. *there is a substantial amount of research on the benefits for mental health on spending time in seafront spaces.*
How do you perceive Beirut's seafront users? Who do you think they are?
Do you believe the seafront is vital for people's wellbeing?

4. Policy and temporality
From your organizational perspective, how do you perceive Beirut's seafront has changed over time? Could you describe one positive change? And one negative change? How do policies impact the way people use the Beirut seafront? What have you learned regarding policies that affect this space (prompt: relating to the protest and Covid)? What has been surprising in the last year? Would you have done prioritized or acted differently regarding seafront public spaces?

5. Support for marginalized groups
Do you have specific programs recruitment schemes for refugees and migrant workers?
How does your organization aim to understand refugee needs? Do you think refugees

and migrant workers use the corniche as a public spaces? Do you think there are any barriers for them to do so?

Do you have any strategies to make Beirut's seafront more multicultural, inclusive and integrated? What types of support does your organization offer to the refugees?

What type of information do you provide about public spaces in Beirut and who is this information available to and how it is distributed?

6. Do better

What problems are most important to address? what would solving these problems look like? In what ways does the design affects patterns of use and behavior (good access, parking space, benches.) ? What do you think this space uniquely offers to users? What do you think are problems for corniche users? What would solving these problems look like?

NGO

Hello, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I'm speaking to you today as a custodian of public spaces as an NGO who works on refugee and migrant rights/protect public spaces.

1. Organisational remit

What is the role of your organization on seafront sites? – why did you get involved in the first place? what has happened since you got involved? how do you see your role change in the future?

2. Who are your partners

Who do you currently work in partnership with? Do you have any plans to work with others in the future to fulfill your remit? Who is more difficult or impossible for you to work with (prompt: NGO, public office, Private sector)? Who do you think would be beneficial to work with but haven't worked with yet?

3. POS as a resource for multiculturalism and integration for more marginalized groups

Beirut's seafront offers a very diverse set of typologies of space for people which equally attracts a diverse set of users during different times and days of the week. *there is a substantial amount of research on the benefits for mental health on spending time in the outdoors.*

How do you perceive Beirut's seafront users? Who do you think they are?

Do you believe the seafront is vital for people's wellbeing?

4. Policy and temporality

From your organizational perspective, how do you perceive Beirut's seafront has changed over time? Could you describe one positive chage? And one negative change? How do policies impact the way people use the Beirut seafront? What have you learned regarding policies that affect this space (prompt: relating to the protest and Covid)? What has been surprising in the last year? Would you have done prioritized or acted differently regarding seafront public spaces?

5. Support for marginalized groups

    Do you support refugees, migrant workers or other marginalized group in your work?
    How does your organization aim to understand refugee needs? Do you think refugees
    and migrant workers use the corniche as a public spaces? D oyou think there are any
    barriers for them to do so?
    Do you have any strategies to make Beirut's seafront more multicultural, inclusive and
    integrated? What types of support does your organization offer to the refugees?
    What type of information do you provide about public spaces in Beirut and who is this
    information available to and how it is distributed?

6. Do better

What problems are most important to address? what would solving these problems look like? In what ways
does the design affects patterns of use and behavior (good access, parking space, benches.) ?
What do you think this space uniquely offers to users? What do you think are problems for
corniche users? What would solving these problems look like?

Appendix 4 Codes

Name	Description	Files	References
Accessibility	Accessibility of public spaces	14	17
Activity	Activities respondents engaged in	1	1
After work Break	Why they were present in a public space	4	17
Backgammon	Activities engaged in	0	0
Boating	Activities engaged in	23	23
Bicycle	Activities engaged in	3	5
Cards	Activities engaged in	0	0
Coffee	Activities engaged in	2	6
Feed fish	Activities engaged in	1	2
Fish	Activities engaged in	17	25
Food and Drink	Activities engaged in	3	3
Friends & Family	Activities engaged in	26	68
People watch	Activities engaged in	1	5
Read	Activities engaged in	1	1
Restaurants	Activities engaged in	2	3
Sit	Activities engaged in	19	22
Smoke Shisha	Activities engaged in	3	4
Socialise	Activities engaged in	25	25
Sports	Activities engaged in	66	89
Sunbathe	Activities engaged in	17	17
Swim	Activities engaged in	26	35
Take photos	Activities engaged in	6	7
Walk	Activities engaged in	3	26
Walk dog	Activities engaged in	2	3
Activty Choices	Why did they choose to partake in this activity	47	50
Amenities	Physical degradation of the environment	49	49
Awareness	Awareness of people around them and activities others engaged in	2	3
Beirutis	A term refereed to by original Beirut residents	10	13
Blue	The color blue as an indication of space	16	16
Breathe	Why they came to the public space	3	5
Calm	How the space made them feel	3	8
Celebration-Special Event	Special events	65	66
Change of atmosphere	Why they came to the public space	7	8
Change of scenery	Why they came to the public space	14	50
City	Users described the city	3	8
Civil society	Stakeholders	2	2
Class	When users referred to class	6	8
Clean Environment	Why they came to the public space	3	3
Crowds	How they viewed crowding	3	6
+ perception		74	80
- Perception		6	36

Day	Which day they visited the space	2	3
Everyday	Why they came to the public space	3	8
Neutral	Why they came to the public space	4	48
not working	Why they came to the public space	4	32
Sunday	Why they came to the public space	74	85
Weekday	Why they came to the public space	21	124
Weekend	Why they came to the public space	29	131
Environmental degradation	Physical attributes of place	1	1
Escapism	Why they came to the public space	4	10
Favorite Quotes		0	0
Feel better	Why they came to the public space	5	6
Foreigners	What they noticed in public spaces	12	20
Free	How the space made them feel	3	18
Friend's family	Why did they come to public spaces-specific quotes	7	45
Gender	Quotes about gender	12	15
General Frustrations	Quotes about general frustrations	1	1
Great Qoutes		2	4
Habit	When users spoke about their habits in POS	3	3
Health & Wellness	When users spoke about health and wellness	3	36
Horizon	When users spoke about the sea and the horizon	5	10
Integration	When users spoke about social integration	9	9
Landmark	When users spoke about landmarks	4	4
Lebanese	When users spoke about being Lebanese	10	10
Litter	When users spoke about Litter and pollution	1	1
Management of space	When users spoke about management	3	3
Memory	When users spoke about	3	6
Migrant workers	When users spoke about migrant workers	1	1
Mood	When users spoke about their mood	1	1
Morning	Morning routines	2	2
Nationality	When they mentioned nationality	8	9
Nightlife	When users spoke about night activity	1	2
Partnerships	When stakeholders mentioned partnerships	1	1
Place of Work	When users spoke about place of work (nearby)	4	17
Planning-policy	When stakeholders mentioned planning policy	1	1
Positive energy	When users spoke about positive energy	1	1
Reclamation	When stakeholders mentioned reclamation	0	0
Relax	When users spoke about relaxing	5	35
Religion	When users spoke about religion	12	15

Safety	When users spoke about safety	4	6
School	When users spoke about school	1	1
Sea	When users spoke about the sea	100	136
Seasons	When users spoke about seasonality	95	95
Socialise	When users spoke about socialising	15	15
Spirituality	When users spoke about spirituality	3	7
Stereotype	When users spoke about stereotyping others	3	20
Stress	When users spoke about stress	3	7
Sun Vitamin D Iodine	When users spoke about benefits of the sea	11	22
Syrian	When users spoke about Syrian refugees	12	13
Territoriality	When users spoke about territoriality	8	11
Time	When users spoke about time (wasting time)/no time	5	45
Tourist	When users spoke about tourists	15	20
Typology	When users spoke about space typology	1	1
modern-European		1	1
Open Space		4	22
public garden		2	23
Rocky		37	39
Sandy		3	5
Seafront		5	6
Sretch		0	0
Unemployed	When users spoke about being unemployed	5	7
Water	When users spoke about water and being around water	16	16
Weather	When users spoke about the weather	78	78