



From Self-Presentation to Representations: Polish Migrants in Scotland across Diaspora and Mainstream Media

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates whether and how migrants' self-presentation on diaspora social media relates to their portrayal in the digital editions of mainstream Scottish newspapers. Drawing on transnationalism, media framing, and anchoring theory, we conceptualize a frame-dependent mechanism of conditional inclusion that travels from these digital editions into online diasporic practice. We begin by presenting the theoretical background and summarizing two prior research phases: (a) analysis of 2024–2025 coverage in the digital editions of the Daily Record, The Herald, and The Scotsman, and (b) analysis of 2024–2025 posts and comments in major Polish Facebook groups in Scotland. Building on these earlier findings, this article traces the interplay between representations of Polish migrants in digital newspaper editions and their social media discussions. Methodologically, we combine qualitative close reading, dictionary-based coding, and a within–fixed-effects lagged panel design linking weekly data from the digital editions to Facebook activity (≈ 30 matched weeks). Results show that policy→services packages—visa rules framed through service continuity and quality—are followed by a measurable rise in functional and hybrid anchoring online (A5). By contrast, policy→order/statistics frames are only weakly and inconsistently associated with symbolic contention (A1). We theorize these interactions as forms of anchoring, distinguishing fear appeals about migrants from practical coordination, and discuss implications for public institutions, newsrooms, and diaspora-support initiatives.

KEYWORDS: Anchoring; Conditional Inclusion; Diaspora Media; Press; Framing.

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INTRODUCTION

Migration research has long recognized that belonging and adaptation are not achieved solely through institutional incorporation, but are continuously negotiated through discourse, representation, and everyday practice. For Polish migrants in the United Kingdom, and particularly in Scotland, these negotiations unfold across multiple media arenas that simultaneously enable self-definition and impose external classifications. This article examines how Polish migrants' self-presentation in diaspora social media intersects with their representation in Scottish mainstream digital newspapers, asking whether and how media frames travel across these communicative fields. Drawing on transnationalism, media framing, and anchoring theory, the study conceptualizes a frame-dependent mechanism of conditional inclusion, whereby policy and service-oriented narratives in the press shape, and are reworked within, migrants' everyday online practices. By combining comparative media analysis with time-lagged panel modeling of Facebook activity, the article contributes a processual account of how public discourse and diasporic self-presentation interact in the ongoing negotiation of "Polishness" in contemporary Scotland.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. *Adaptation as a multi-sited, dialogic process*

Contemporary migration studies increasingly conceptualize adaptation as complex, non-linear, and multi-sited, unfolding across transnational social fields rather than within a bounded national container (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999). Belonging and identity are treated as projects-in-process, negotiated over time and conditioned by positionality and relationality (Antonsich 2010; Meeus, van Heur and Arnaut 2019). This article interrogates a specific mechanism within that broader dynamic: the coupling between migrants' self-presentation in diaspora media and their representation in mainstream media in Scotland.

B. *Media as sites of identity work and symbolic power*

Media operate simultaneously as arenas of identity work and as institutions of symbolic power that classify, frame, and circulate meanings (Bourdieu 1991; Hall et al. 2013; Georgiou 2006; Karim 2003). Polish-language diaspora outlets enable self-definition and visibility, curating collective memory, foregrounding achievements, and normalizing the everyday experience of migration through appeals to pride, nostalgia, and solidarity (Siapera 2010; Hargreaves 2001, **Androutsopoulos 2006, 2010; Brinkerhoff 2009**). By contrast, mainstream media function as external definers (van Dijk, 1991), generating categories, stereotypes, and interpretive frames that structure public perceptions of migrants (Lippmann 1922; Entman, 1993; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Gitlin 1980). This duality—self-presentation versus external representation—creates a dynamic

field of negotiation in which the meanings of “Polishness” and the social positioning of Poles in Scotland are continually co-constructed.

Facebook groups provide an **observational window on practice** that complements legacy media’s text-as-discourse. Platform affordances—**visibility** and **persistence** of posts, **association** via groups, and **low-friction coordination** in comments—make **functional and relational anchoring** legible at scale (e.g., GP registration, school enrolment, benefits/housing procedures). Unlike survey self-reports, Facebook threads capture **behaviourally revealed** routines (checklists, timelines, forms, peer help) and **interactional texture** (low-conflict cohesion vs high-arousal contention). This allows us to test whether mainstream **policy**→**services** frames, once rendered actionable, are followed by **measurable increases in practical coordination** online—linking **representation** to **self-presentation** as enacted in everyday problem-solving.

C. *Diaspora self-presentation: anchoring and performativity*

Research on Polish migration to the UK shows that community newspapers, portals, and social media constitute an infrastructure of belonging: they provide information, recognition, and support while anchoring individuals and groups in new settings (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2015; Ryan and Mulholland 2015; Grzymała-Kazłowska and Ryan, 2022). We understand anchoring as the creation of psychosocial footholds—material, relational, and symbolic—that stabilize life amid mobility and uncertainty. Communicatively, such footholds emerge through performative self-presentation (Goffman 1959; Butler 1997): the curation of topics (culture, family, work), styles (ethos), and affects (pathos—pride, care, indignation) that naturalize particular images of community and negotiate the boundaries of “we.”

D. *Scottish mainstream representation: frames, stereotypes, boundaries*

Parallel literatures on the UK and Scotland document recurrent frames and stereotypes of Polish migrants, ranging from the “industrious EU worker” to the “welfare-dependent migrant” or “vulnerable refugee” (Burrell 2009; Drinkwater and Garapich 2015; Moskal 2016; McGhee Heath and Trevena 2013; Piętko-Nykaza and McGhee 2016; Trevena 2009; White 2011). Framing (Entman 1993) and discourse practices (van Dijk 1991) are tightly coupled with political-economic conjunctures: Brexit and post-2022 geopolitical crises have reweighted emphases toward security, border control, costs, and economic contribution. In this sense, mainstream media co-produce symbolic boundaries (Brubaker 2015; Barth 1969) that differentiate “insiders” from “outsiders” and stratify recognition.

E. *From acculturation typologies to a processual perspective*

Berry’s (1997) acculturation typology—separation, integration, assimilation, marginalization—remains a useful heuristic for articulating relations between migrant orientations and host-society expectations. However, it has been criticized for static and ahistorical categorization (Rudmin 2003; Kunst, Sam and Ulleberg 2013). Rather than abandoning the framework, we re-situate it within a dialogic, processual account in which adaptation is shaped by feedback between self-presentation and external representation: how migrants present themselves can prefigure external frames, while how they are represented conditions the repertoire of viable self-presentations.

F. *Why Scotland matters*

Following EU enlargement in 2004, the United Kingdom experienced major migration inflows in which Poles formed the largest group. Much scholarship, however, concentrates on England and Wales (Burrell 2009; Ciupijus 2025; Drinkwater and Garapich 2015; Ryan et al. 2007, 2008, 2017; Trevena 2009; White 2011). Scotland—despite a substantial Polish community and a distinctive policy discourse on integration—remains comparatively under-examined, with only a few notable studies (Moskal 2016; McGhee, Heath and Trevena 2013; Piętko-Nykaza and McGhee 2015). This gap matters because devolved competences, labor-market profiles, and political narratives can reshape both diaspora self-presentation and mainstream representational logics.

Scotland warrants separate analysis for three interrelated reasons. (1) Demography and settlement patterns. It hosts one of the UK’s largest Polish communities, concentrated in urban and service hubs that underpin NHS and care provision, framing migration through service continuity and workforce risk rather than aggregate inflows. (2) Devolved governance. Health, education, and key social policies are devolved, so UK-level thresholds, sponsor licensing, and ILR pathways are refracted through Scottish service delivery and performance metrics. (3) Research lacuna. Despite important contributions, the evidence base on Scotland remains thin compared with the rich scholarship on England and Wales.

Our comparative press ecology and Facebook panel address this lacuna by tracing frame–practice couplings within Scotland’s editorial and institutional context.

G. *An analytical bridge: linking “auto-” and “re-” presentations*

To examine the relationship between diaspora and mainstream media, we integrate three complementary strands:

- Transnationalism and multi-sitedness—to situate communicative practices across places, scales, and temporalities (Levitt, Glick and Schiller 2004; Portes et al. 1999).
- Anchoring—to analyze how communication creates and maintains footholds of stability (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2015; Ryan and Mulholland 2015; Grzymała-Kazłowska and Ryan 2022).
- Discourse and framing analysis—to compare styles, tones, affects, and categories across media fields (van Dijk 1991; Entman 1993; Hall et al. 2013; Couldry 2012; Silverstone 2007).

Operationally, we distinguish:

- Points of convergence: shared narratives (e.g., economic contribution, social mobility, educational success).
- Interpretive tensions: divergent construals of the same phenomena (e.g., manual labor as advancement vs. degradation).

- Discrepancies: oppositional frames and affects (e.g., proud diaspora “we” vs. problematizing portrayals in the press). This schema treats self-presentation as a resource and claim to recognition, and external representation as an institutional filter that may legitimate, marginalize, or appropriate such claims.

H. *Bridging micro and macro*

At the micro level, diaspora media display anchoring practices: circulation of opportunities and services, community rituals, narratives of success and failure, mnemonic work, and humor—practices that build social capital and a sense of agency (Burrell 2009; Ryan et al. 2007, 2008, 2017; White 2011). At the macro level, Scottish mainstream outlets embed Polish presence within broader political-economic contests, adjusting the boundaries of the political community (McGhee, Heath and Trevena 2013; Moskal 2016; Piętko-Nykaza and McGhee 2015). Analyzing the coupling between these levels shows how diaspora self-presentations provide ready-made storylines for mainstream uptake and how mainstream narratives, in turn, amplify, refract, or undercut those self-definitions.

We propose transnational anchoring as a relational outcome of the interplay between self-presentation and external representation. Anchoring is not only the product of migrants’ stability work; it is also shaped by the public circulation of images that can facilitate, complicate, or negate that stability. “Settlement,” accordingly, need not culminate in a single integrative end-state in Berry’s sense; more often it takes the form of layered belonging, negotiated within an institutional-media field of forces (Berry 1997; Rudmin 2003; Kunst, Sam and Ulleberg, 2013).

This theoretical framework guides our comparative analysis of Polish diaspora media and Scottish mainstream media. It retains Berry’s foundational insights, incorporates processual critiques, and integrates the anchoring perspective with scholarship on diaspora and media (Burrell 2009; Drinkwater and Garapich 2015; Moskal 2016; McGhee, Heath and Trevena, 2013; Piętko-Nykaza and McGhee 2015; Ryan and Mulholland, 2015; Ryan et al. 2007, 2008, 2017; Trevena 2009; White 2011; Grzymała-Kazłowska 2015; Grzymała-Kazłowska and Ryan 2022; Hall et al. 2013; van Dijk 1991; Entman 1993; Couldry 2012; Silverstone 2007). In doing so, it enables us to specify when and under what conditions Polish migrants’ self-presentations align with, contest, or diverge from their representations in the Scottish mainstream.

Building on transnationalism, media framing, and anchoring theory, we conceptualize a frame-dependent mechanism of conditional inclusion that can circulate between legacy media and online diasporic practice. Empirically, we align two corpora—Scottish press and large Polish Facebook groups—and synthesize them in a multidimensional matrix (themes × representations × convergence/tension/divergence), complemented by dictionary-based coding and qualitative calibration.

Against this backdrop, I most frequently addressed by each media type in relation to Poles (e.g., work, education, crime, culture)?

RQ 3. How do the language, tone, and affective intensity of coverage concerning the same group differ across the two media types?

RQ 4. Do Polish diaspora media respond to portrayals of Poles in Scottish media, and if so, in what ways?

EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS: SCOTTISH PRESS AND POLISH DIASPORA FACEBOOK ECOLOGIES

Phase 1: Scottish press ecology (Daily Record, The Herald, The Scotsman, 2024–2025)

Across outlets, coverage coheres around a **regulatory-services-norms triad**. Policy is treated first and foremost as technocratic governance—salary thresholds, sponsor licensing, ILR, and compliance—*read through* the prism of service continuity and quality, especially in health and social care. This framing shifts salience away from raw inflow counts toward frontline performance—staffing levels, rotas, and the perceived resilience of the NHS and the care, construction, and renovation sectors in which migrants are employed.

Crime functions mostly as *episodic punctuation*. In one variant, risk is **technocratised** via dashboards and categories (e.g., “foreign prisoners”), which normalises a risk-governance register. In another, stories are contained through **cooperation/proportionality** frames that emphasise due process and base-rate reasoning. **Culture and memory** appear as **background normalisers**—WWII motifs, everyday and pop-cultural references—that steady identification without steering the agenda. Over time, the narrative drifts from **entry-phase implementation** concerns (EAL, housing enforcement) toward **rule-regime storytelling**, where institutional design, capacity, and rhetorical ethics carry the argumentative weight.

These choices produce **stable narrative couplings**. Policy control is persistently linked to **service risk** (rules → staffing → quality), yielding **de-ethnicised, conditional inclusion** in which migrants are valued while rosters hold. Restrictive architectures paired with antagonistic language amplify **precarity** and elicit **self-censorship**, most visibly in care and higher education. Crime coverage bifurcates into **statistics-led risk** versus **cooperation-led proportionality**, marking outlet-level editorial regimes. A distinctive Daily Record pattern ties **policy to industry via procurement**, translating abstract governance into politically legible supply-chain performance and, again, recoding “Polishness” through organisational outcomes that sustain conditional inclusion.

Phase 2: Diaspora Facebook ecology

Polish Facebook groups operate as **adaptive spaces**—dynamic, relational arenas that stabilise self, community, and belonging. **Anchoring** unfolds in parallel across **symbolic/ideological, relational/affective, cultural-intergenerational, moral, and hybrid/functional** registers.

Political discourse (e.g., the 2025 Polish presidential election) commands the highest engagement and drives **symbolic anchoring** through polarised exchanges and moral binaries (“patriot” vs. “traitor”). Conspiratorial cues supply ready-made explanations, offering ideological closure and sharpening in-group boundaries. **Solidarity and care** threads—help-seeking, advice, charity—mobilise weak-tie social capital and produce **low-conflict, high-cohesion** interaction that builds trust. **Heritage and continuity** (Saturday schools, bilingualism, community events) secure **intergenerational transmission** and forward-looking cohesion amid hybridity. **Collective action** (fundraisers, prosocial appeals) performs **moral anchoring**, grounding identity in reciprocity and shared responsibility. **Selective host engagement** furnishes **hybrid/functional anchoring**: references to the NHS, schools, and local procedures show pragmatic navigation of Scottish institutions, typically mediated by Polish networks.

The **engagement logic** bifurcates: political threads generate **high-intensity, conflictual** interaction (identity policing, moral condemnation), while solidarity/cultural/moral threads foster **supportive, cohesive** interaction (recognition, resource sharing). Crucially, **interaction itself anchors**: heated debates harden symbolic boundaries; micro-affirmations cement trust.

A. Negotiating the Scottish context

Anchoring to Scotland is **selective and domain-specific**. **Institutional anchoring** grows through pragmatic queries about education and public services, building bureaucratic literacy largely via intra-ethnic mediation. **Spatial anchoring** converts abstract geographies into **usable cognitive maps** through crowd-sourced knowledge of neighbourhoods, transport, and housing. **Symbolic-cultural anchoring** is **sparse**—little engagement with Scottish traditions, symbols, or narratives. Persistent **English-proficiency concerns** sustain reliance on Polish intermediaries, reinforcing intra-ethnic anchors and limiting symbolic integration. The result is a pattern of “**light anchors**” into the host society—practical footholds without deep cultural embedding—yielding **strong Polish anchors** alongside **partial Scottish engagement**.

B. Extending anchoring with digital discourse

Facebook behaviour provides **revealed-preference evidence** that complements self-reports. Anchors display **temporal granularity** (strengthen/erode with events; adaptation is reversible), **domain specificity** (stability clusters in functional domains more than symbolic-cultural ones), and **affective/performance dynamics** (anger, pride, nostalgia, empathy, and identity performances anchor on par with material resources).

Diaspora Facebook groups function as digital adaptive spaces where migrants enact **symbolic (ideology), relational (care/solidarity), and pragmatic (institutional/spatial)** anchoring. This extends Berry’s framework by depicting adaptation as **multi-scalar, processual, and platform-mediated**, rather than a simple integration–separation binary.

Phase 3: Press–Facebook interplay: frame–practice couplings

A. Methodological Framework

This study integrates comparative media analysis, computational text analysis, and time-series panel modeling to examine how Polish migrants’ self-presentation in diaspora social media interacts with their representation in Scottish mainstream press. The empirical base consists of two purpose-built corpora assembled in prior research phases. (a) Press corpus: 101 articles from Daily Record, The Herald, and The Scotsman, covering a Contemporary phase (2024–2025); texts were profiled with a harmonized F1–F12 frame taxonomy and quantified using share, article coverage, rate-per-1,000 tokens, and sentence-level co-occurrence networks (Jaccard) to recover narrative packages. (b) Facebook corpus: 852 anonymized posts drawn January–December 2024 and January–June 2025 from four large Polish groups in Scotland (Polacy w Edynburgu, Polacy w Edinburgh, Polacy w Szkocji, Scottish Poles), analyzed via AntConc frequency/association profiling and MAXQDA thematic coding; 10% of the sample was double-coded, yielding Cohen’s $\kappa > 0.8$.

My design is explicitly multi-scalar—linking micro-level digital practices to meso-level media frames and macro-level governance debates—and, where appropriate, aligns weekly press indicators with Facebook activity in a within–fixed-effects lagged panel (≈ 30 matched weeks) to trace frame→practice dynamics over time.

The study treats diaspora Facebook groups and Scottish newspapers as interacting components of a single communication ecology. We operationalize this through two aligned corpora and coding schemes:

Scottish mainstream press (2024–2025). We compiled full-text coverage from three leading outlets and coded press discourse into frames F1–F12. Expanded lexicons captured policy–technocratic registers (visa thresholds, ILR pathways, sponsorship licensing), service/workforce concerns, public-order/statistics terminology, and culture/memory motifs, with particular attention to F1 (policy/technocratic governance), F3 (public order/statistics), and F7 (contribution/services).

Diaspora media—Facebook (2024–2025). We analyzed posts and comments from large, high-traffic Polish Facebook groups active in Scotland, coding content into five anchoring types A1–A5: symbolic/ideological, relational/social, intergenerational/cultural, moral, and hybrid/functional. Custom dictionaries distinguished symbolic-political debates, solidarity/help threads, intergenerational/heritage practices, moral-charitable action, and pragmatic engagement with Scottish institutions.

TABLE 1.

FRAMES BASED ON PRIOR RESEARCH PHASES (PRESS ECOLOGY AND DIASPORA FACEBOOK ECOLOGY)

Code:	Name	Description
Anchoring		

(A)/ Press frames(F)		
A1	Symbolic / Ideological Anchoring	Homeland politics, moral binaries, and conspiratorial cues provide ideological closure that stabilizes belonging via in-group boundary work.
A2	Relational / Social Anchoring	Help-seeking and advice threads mobilize weak-tie support and micro-acts of care that reduce uncertainty and build trust networks.
A3	Intergenerational / Cultural Anchoring	Posts about Saturday schools, bilingualism, and cultural events secure cultural continuity and forward-looking diasporic cohesion.
A4	Moral Anchoring	Fundraisers and prosocial appeals ground identity in shared ethical commitments, reinforcing reciprocity and responsibility.
A5	Hybrid / Functional Anchoring	Pragmatic navigation of Scottish institutions (NHS, schools, procedures) mediated by Polish networks reflects adaptive, selective engagement with the host society.
F1	Policy / Technocratic Governance	Coverage of salary thresholds, sponsorship licensing, inspection/compliance, and ILR pathways, often read through Westminster–Holyrood effects on services.
F2	Industry / Procurement (public contracts, supply chains)	Public procurement and industrial capacity translate migration into stakes around competitiveness, jobs, delivery timelines, and industrial sovereignty.
F3	Public Order and Editorial Regimes	Crime items are framed either via statistical securitisation (dashboards) or via cooperation/proportionality (joint policing and explicit caveats).
F4	Integration and Labour Protection (entry-layer services)	Entry-layer capacity and protections—ESOL/EAL, labour-rights enforcement, interpreting/traffic fixes, and anti-scam efforts—frame integration as institutional tooling.
F5	Housing and Rental Exploitation	Coverage of HMO compliance, overcrowding, rogue landlords, and enforcement of migrants' housing rights.
F6	Status-Driven Vulnerability / Precarity	Status-linked insecurity—fear to speak for visa reasons, exploitation, and risks of homelessness or destitution.
F7	Contribution and Talent / Pillars of the System	Narratives of work ethic and skill across NHS/care, higher education, and sport/coaching present migrants as system-sustaining pillars.
F8	Everyday Culture / Pop	Pop-cultural and quotidian references—gastronomy, brand genealogies, art—domesticate Polishness within Scottish everyday life.
F9	Historical Memory / Symbolic Capital	WWII-inflected memory work (e.g., RAF 303/307), the Polish School of Medicine). Polish Church, etc. supplies a moral–historical warrant for inclusion.
F10	Anti-Racist Civic Mobilisation	Civic counter-mobilisations—protests and coalitions—discipline anti-migrant rhetoric and protect community safety.
F11	Diaspora / Citizenship / Political Presence	Profiles of Polish institutional and political presence—parishes, organisations, elections—signal civic visibility and participation.
F12	Return Migration and Skills Retention	Debates on re-emigration, recognition of qualifications, and keeping skills in Scotland amid global competition for talent.

By treating these two corpora as a single **comparative field**, we could trace convergences, tensions, and divergences in how Polish migration is discursively constructed.

B. Coding, Multidimensional Mapping and Quantitative Modelling

I combined **dictionary-based automated coding** with **qualitative calibration** to create a *multidimensional matrix* (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.
MATRIX OF THEMES AND REPRESENTATIONS WITH CONVERGENCE–TENSION–DIVERGENCE MAPPING

Theme/Domain	Scottish media (frames, examples)	Diaspora media (anchors, examples)	Convergence (points of contact)	Tensions / Divergences
Work & public services (NHS, care, administration)	Strong policy/technocratic register (F1) plus contribution/services (F7): visa changes, thresholds, compliance; parallel narrative on staffing crises and migrants' role in care (NHS, social care).	Functional anchoring (A5) dominates: getting-things-done practices—GP/NHS, schools, offices, benefits; “how to...?” queries, requests for recommendations/addresses; current notices and services. (Often with relational anchoring A2 in help threads.)	Shared “rules → services” storyline: press maps rules and staffing gaps; Facebook supplies practical navigation of institutions (how to register, where to go).	Discursive style diverges: press = structured/expert, system-level; FB = bottom-up/ad hoc, task-level.
Education &	Memory and Polish-heritage	Very active	Convergence:	Emphasis differs:

culture (bilingualism, Saturday schools, heritage)	threads (F9: historical memory/symbolic capital); normalization in everyday urban culture (F8: everyday culture/pop).	intergenerational/cultural anchoring (A3) plus functional A5: questions on weekend Polish schools, bilingualism, children's activities; school announcements and open days.	visibility of Polish culture and concrete family needs (children's education).	press foregrounds symbolism/history (F9), FB foregrounds everyday organization (enrolment, dates, contacts; A3/A5).
Public order & risk (crime/statistics)	Public order/statistics (F3): policing, crime dashboards, and debates on anti-migrant rhetoric/policy effects.	Topic is episodic on FB; appears mainly as symbolic/ideological anchoring (A1) in emotional political commentary; most politics concerns Poland (campaigns, candidates).	Limited contact: both acknowledge tensions/anxieties (e.g., job/status security).	Divergence: press builds norms/rules/order frame (F3); FB tends to polarization/memetics (A1, ad hominem, invective).
Migration policy & public contention	Analyses of Home Office changes (F1) and labor-market/service effects (F7); critiques of anti-migrant rhetoric (F10: anti-racist civic mobilization); recurring "migrants essential to services."	High symbolic/ideological anchoring (A1): debates on Polish elections, mobilization to vote abroad; limited attention to UK reforms as such.	Point of contact: both politicize migration (different political centers).	Directional divergence: press on UK/Scotland (F1/F7/F10); FB on Polish politics in diasporic conditions (A1).
Community life & affects (mutual aid, fundraisers, relations)	Occasional coverage of institutional/NGO support and solidarity/anti-racism (F10); civic presence and community organizations (F11: diaspora/citizenship/political presence).	High-affect interactions: relational anchoring (A2) (mutual aid, advice), moral anchoring (A4) (fundraisers, prosocial appeals); plus everyday announcements (often A2/A5).	Shared axis: well-being of the migrant community.	Style diverges: institutional/mediated (F10/F11) vs. bottom-up/affective (A2/A4); distinct linguistic registers.

Iterative testing on subsamples ensured semantic precision and cross-language validity (English/Polish).

To identify directional relationships between press framing and online anchoring, we constructed a **within-fixed-effects weekly panel**:

- **Press predictors.** Weekly, outlet-demeaned measures of frame salience (e.g., RPK_F1), co-occurrence strength (e.g., Jaccard F1–F7, F1–F3).
- **Facebook outcomes.** Weekly shares of A5 (functional anchors) and A1 (symbolic anchors).
- **Lag structure.** All models use one-week lags to test whether changes in press discourse precede shifts in Facebook anchoring.

Models were estimated using **heteroskedasticity-robust OLS** (see Table 3) to accommodate small-N panels (≈ 30 joint weeks after enhanced date matching).

TABLE 3.
EXAMPLE OF COUPLING BETWEEN POLICY/TECHNOCRATIC FRAME AND HYBRID/FUNCTIONAL ANCHORING: REGRESSION RESULTS

ANCHORING: REGRESSION RESULTS

OLS Regression Results

Dep. Variable:	A5_share	R-squared:	0.407
Model:	OLS	Adj. R-squared:	0.308
Method:	Least Squares	F-statistic:	4.378
Date:	Fri, 19 Sep 2025	Prob (F-statistic):	0.0374
Time:	12:57:01	Log-Likelihood:	27.208
No. Observations:	30	AIC:	30
Df Residuals:	12	BIC:	-46.29
Df Model:	2		
Covariance Type:	HC3		

	coef	std err	z	P> z	[0.025	0.975]
const	0.0233	0.011	2.142	0.032	0.002	0.045
RPK_F1_within_lag1	-0.0003	0.000	-1.121	0.262	-0.001	0.000
Jaccard_F1_F7_within_lag1	0.1010	0.047	2.134	0.033	0.008	0.194

Omnibus:	5.019	Durbin-Watson:	1.379
Prob(Omnibus):	0.081	Jarque-Bera (JB):	2.248
Skew:	0.772	Prob(JB):	0.325
Kurtosis:	4.101	Cond. No.	99.4

C. Key Analytical Procedures

I begin with a **within transformation** to neutralize stable outlet differences (e.g., tabloid vs. quality press). For each predictor we compute within-outlet deviations and then average the resulting series across outlets. Next, we model the **co-occurrence ecology** of press frames using pairwise Jaccard indices (e.g., $F1 \leftrightarrow F7$) to capture how policy talk is braided with service or crime narratives—an operationalization of the hypothesized *rules* → *services* → *anchoring* mechanism. We then conduct a **multidimensional synthesis**, mapping thematic overlaps and disjunctions in a matrix (the multidimensional matrix) to show how identical issues (e.g., NHS staffing) are differently narrated in Polish vs. Scottish media, thereby locating zones of convergence, tension, and divergence. **Analytical validity** is supported by cross-checking dictionary hits against qualitative close reading; **lagged within-FE models** strengthen causal interpretation while remaining correlational. **Limitations** include a small NNN, heuristic language parsing, and possible platform biases, so effects should be read as strong associations rather than deterministic causation. **Ethics**: all Facebook data were anonymized and aggregated; illustrative quotations were paraphrased. The study complies with GDPR and platform rules and foregrounds collective patterns over individual behavior.

D. Methodological Contribution

The design integrates **legacy and digital media** within a single dynamic analytic frame; brings **behaviorally revealed online practices** (beyond self-reports) into adaptation theory; and employs **lagged fixed-effects modeling** to trace how mainstream framing relates to diasporic self-presentation. By embedding qualitative interpretation within computational and statistical scaffolding, the approach illuminates how policy-driven press narratives interact with migrant digital anchoring, co-producing belonging across offline and online public spheres.

RESULTS

Using within-fixed-effects models that partial out stable outlet profiles and impose a one-week press→Facebook lag, we detect an asymmetric but interpretable offline→online coupling. First, there is a consistent, statistically supported linkage for A5 (functional/hybrid anchoring): weeks with stronger F1 (policy/technocracy) braided with F7 (services/contribution) in the Scottish press are followed by higher A5 shares in Polish-language Facebook groups the following week. Substantively, when news intensifies the “rules-as-service-risk” narrative—visa rules articulated through staffing and continuity—diaspora discussion expands in how-to threads on GP/NHS registration, school enrolment, housing/benefits procedures, and voting logistics. This is the empirical footprint of the hypothesized policy → services → functional anchoring mechanism.

By contrast, evidence for A1 (symbolic-ideological anchoring) is at most borderline and unstable. When F1 co-occurs with F3 (public order/statistics), A1 shows only a weak, inconsistent uptick with a one-week lag. This aligns with the dual-ecology diagnosis: public-order/statistical talk in the Scottish press is off-axis relative to the Poland-centric political agenda that structures diaspora Facebook, so temporal and thematic vectors fail to align sufficiently to sustain press-induced symbolic contention online.

The $N=30$ matched weeks guard against short-window artefacts. The within transformation removes level differences between tabloids and quality outlets, isolating a cross-outlet common signal that is predictive for diasporic practice.

Projecting these dynamics onto the multidimensional matrix (themes × representations × convergence/tension/divergence) clarifies where systems speak to each other and where they pass by. Convergence centres on work and public services: the press foregrounds system design, capacity, and compliance ($F1/F7$), while Facebook responds with procedural problem-solving (A5) scaffolded by relational care (A2). This is not convergence by quotation (there is little meta-commentary on particular articles) but by problem field: both arenas lean into the same service bottlenecks and practical consequences, each at its own scale. Tension arises around public order and risk: the press’s norms/rules/order register (F3) implies risk governance and base-rate proportionality, whereas Facebook’s A1 concerns identity protection and homeland politics; affective states (anxiety, status precarity) overlap, but frame semantics do not, producing friction rather than alignment. Divergence reflects distinct political centres (UK/Scotland in the press; Poland on Facebook) and registers (institutional/forensic vs. colloquial/polarizing), explaining the fragility of any $F1/F3 \rightarrow A1$ pathway.

Why does the A5 coupling survive fixed effects and lags while A1 does not? Three mediators make the A5 pathway travel. Task immediacy turns media salience into actionable queries (appointments, forms, entitlements). Network affordances in diaspora groups specialise in rapid weak-tie problem solving (A2), metabolising institutional change into checklists, templates, and trusted heuristics—precisely what A5 requires. And risk-framing compatibility in $F1 \leftrightarrow F7$ recodes migration as workforce continuity, legitimising advice-seeking and know-how sharing—the “permission structure” for A5. The A1 pathway lacks these mediators in Scotland: agendas are misaligned (Poland vs. UK), and symbolic contention has low procedural convertibility—it mobilises identity, not appointments.

Associations remain lagged and correlational. Contemporaneous shocks (e.g., Home Office announcements, homeland electoral cycles) could move both systems. Several design features, however, hedge against trivial confounding: the within-FE specification removes stable outlet heterogeneity; the co-occurrence ecology independently shows robust $F1 \leftrightarrow F7$ braiding but only patchy $F1 \leftrightarrow F3$, mirroring the A5–A1 asymmetry; and the diaspora agenda’s homeland orbit explains why A1 is structurally less responsive to Scottish news even under high affect. Boundary conditions likely include issue salience, institutional shock magnitude, and platform composition (group size, moderation norms): larger or more professionally moderated groups should amplify A5, while smaller politicised clusters may privilege A1.

Returning to the research questions, Scottish mainstream press ascribes system-level, policy-inflected roles to Poles: it depicts migrants as workforce pillars in the NHS and social care and other services (F7), as subjects of visa/compliance regimes (F1), and as bearers of heritage and culture embedded in Scottish memory work (F9). By contrast, Polish-language Facebook foregrounds everyday, agentic roles: parents/caregivers and cultural brokers organising bilingual education (A3), institutional navigators who “get things done” with GP/NHS, schools, benefits, and registrations (A5), and remote voters/commentators engaged with homeland politics (A1). In short, the press emphasises system roles, whereas Facebook highlights problem-solving and care roles, with an added layer of homeland political participation.

Topically, press coverage clusters in migration reform/compliance (F1), services/workforce capacity (F7) with sustained attention to the NHS/care, episodic public order/statistics (F3), and memory/culture (F8/F9)—a mix consonant with UK/Scotland scholarship (Burrell, 2009; Drinkwater & Garapich, 2015; Ryan et al., 2007, 2008, 2017; Trevena, 2009; White, 2011; McGhee, Heath & Trevena, 2013; Moskal, 2016; Piętko-Nykaza & McGhee, 2015). Facebook, in turn, centres on education and family logistics (A3), services/procedures (A5), electoral mobilisation and homeland politics (A1), and mutual aid/fundraisers (A2/A4)—patterns consistent with work on transnational family practices and settlement infrastructures (e.g., Moskal, 2016; Piętko-Nykaza & McGhee, 2015; Ryan et al., 2007, 2008). Both spheres orbit public services and status, but from different vantage points: policy-up in the press versus practice-down on Facebook.

Linguistically, the press adopts an institutional/expert register, with evidence-oriented reporting and public-actor quotations; opinion/advocacy surfaces around anti-migrant rhetoric but remains policy-anchored (F1/F7, and F3 when salient). Facebook employs a colloquial/affective register: A5/A2 threads are low-conflict, high-cohesion (advice, micro-assistance, recognition rituals), whereas A1 threads are high-intensity, conflictual (moral binaries, identity policing). Consequently, identical issues—such as navigating the NHS—are narrated as rules/capacity/costs in the press versus how-to/emotions/user experience on Facebook.

Finally, diaspora Facebook does respond to press portrayals, but indirectly and asymmetrically. Direct meta-commentary on specific articles is rare; instead, topic coupling is evident: in within-fixed-effects models with a one-week PRESS→Facebook lag over N=30 matched weeks, periods with stronger F1 braided with F7 are followed by higher A5 in the subsequent week—a robust offline→online linkage whereby salience around rules → services is converted into procedural problem-solving (GP/NHS, schools, benefits, registrations). For A1, only a borderline, unstable tendency appears when F1 co-occurs with F3, consistent with agenda misalignment (Facebook’s Poland-focused politics versus the press’s UK/Scotland focus).

DISCUSSION

This study set out to explain how representations of Polish migrants in Scottish mainstream news relate to migrants’ self-presentation in Polish-language Facebook groups. Bringing together transnationalism, media framing, and anchoring theory, we show that the link between legacy media and diasporic practice is structured by **conditional inclusion**: migrants are rendered valuable insofar as they stabilize frontline services, and this framing travels downstream into practical, low-conflict coordination online. Using within-fixed-effects models with a one-week PRESS→Facebook lag over N = 30 matched weeks, and a co-occurrence ecology of press frames, we find a robust, asymmetric coupling: **policy/technocracy braided with services (F1↔F7)** precedes growth in **functional/hybrid anchoring (A5)**, whereas the pathway from **policy + public order/statistics (F1↔F3)** to **symbolic-ideological anchoring (A1)** is weak and unstable. Below we interpret these results, situate them in prior scholarship, and return explicitly to RQ1–RQ4.

Conditional inclusion as a media–practice hinge: When legacy outlets narrate migration as *policy architectures rendered through service performance*—visa thresholds, sponsorship licensing, and ILR/compliance articulated via NHS and care continuity—diaspora Facebook responds the following week with a measurable expansion of A5: how-to navigation of GP/NHS registration, school enrolment, housing/benefits procedures, and overseas voting logistics. In other words, public discourse renders rules **actionable**, and migrants translate that salience into **procedural problem-solving** and **bureaucratic literacy**. This is precisely the empirical footprint of the hypothesized **policy → services → functional anchoring** mechanism. The hinge is temporal and directional: press salience precedes online practice, indicating responsiveness to public problem definitions rather than purely endogenous community cycles.

Editorial ecologies and downstream behavior: Fixed-effects estimates reveal stable editorial grammars with distinct downstream consequences. Outlets that consistently materialize policy through services (the **F1↔F7** braid) channel attention toward A5 and, by extension, toward **low-conflict, high-cohesion** coordination (often scaffolded by **A2** relational support). By contrast, packages that entwine policy with public order/statistics (**F1↔F3**) have, at best, a borderline association with **A1**. This asymmetry is intelligible once two contextual facts are acknowledged: first, the co-occurrence ecology shows **frequent F1↔F7 braiding** but **irregular F1↔F3**; second, **diaspora political attention orbits Poland**, so symbolic contention online is not tightly yoked to Scottish news cycles.

Interaction as anchoring: A central contribution is to specify **interaction itself** as an anchoring mechanism with distinct modalities. **A1** organizes *boundary defense*: high-arousal, morally charged exchanges that consolidate in-group identity but are volatile and costly in conflict. **A2/A5** organize *practical coordination*: low-arousal, cumulative work—micro-assistance, checklists, and shared heuristics—that builds weak-tie trust and institutional competence. Which mode dominates depends on the **affordances of frames**. When policy is technocratically domesticated in the language of services (F1↔F7), anchoring tilts toward coordination; when braided with order/statistics (F1↔F3), anchoring tilts—if at all—toward boundary defense.

IMPLICATIONS

Our results extend anchoring theory and clarify how legacy news and diaspora social media co-produce belonging under conditions of **conditional inclusion**. Rather than treating adaptation as categorical end-states (integration vs. separation), we show how **media conduits** channel attention into **distinct anchoring labors**: *boundary defense* (symbolic contention, **A1**) and *practical coordination* (relational support **A2** and functional navigation **A5**). Inclusion emerges not as a static status but as a **contingent practice regime** that waxes when migrants are cast as **pillars of services** and wanes when rule changes threaten **staffing continuity**. Crucially, adaptation is **behaviorally revealed**: what migrants *do* online—checklists, appointments, applications, troubleshooting threads—captures operationalized belonging more directly than aspirations alone.

At the mechanism level, we identify a **selectively permeable** offline→online pipeline. When the Scottish press renders policy as service performance (**F1**↔**F7**), diaspora Facebook subsequently amplifies **A5**: rules become *usable* and are translated into procedures, heuristics, and peer-to-peer help. By contrast, **policy**↔**order/statistics** packages (**F1**↔**F3**) only intermittently energize **A1** and do so weakly when political vectors diverge (UK/Scotland vs. Poland). The balance between **practical coordination** and **boundary defense** is therefore **frame-dependent**: proceduralizable content travels; symbolic contention travels poorly when agendas are misaligned.

PRACTICAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Public institutions (NHS, councils, schools). Time **bilingual, plain-language navigation aids**—checklists, timelines, eligibility trees, forms—to **policy**→**services peaks**; pin them where diaspora groups already coordinate. This channels inevitable attention into **low-friction throughput**, reduces rumor load, and sustains **A5** rather than **A1**.

NGOs and local government. Pre-position **ready-to-use resources** (forms, translations, service maps) and run **moderated live Q&A** during peak weeks; this scaffolds **A5** and strengthens weak-tie efficacy (**A2**) that makes functional anchoring scale.

Newsrooms. When reporting thresholds/licensing/ILR (**F1**) *through services* (**F7**), pair stories with **concrete service pathways** (appointment logistics, waiting-time benchmarks, eligibility). This de-risks policy coverage and nudges downstream engagement toward **coordination** rather than **contention**. For **F3**, couple statistics with **community baselines** and **service signposting** to limit symbolic escalation.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

We advance three claims. **(1) Conditional inclusion, operationalized.** Inclusion is a **frame-dependent bargain** made legible by the **F1**↔**F7** → **A5** pipeline: migrants are valued as long as **rosters hold**, and the bargain tightens or loosens with policy cadence. **(2) Anchoring as interaction.** Anchoring is not merely cognitive; it is an **interactional accomplishment**. **A2/A5** show that micro-coordination and recognition are anchoring mechanisms on par with material resources. **(3) Selective cross-media permeability.** Offline salience transfers when it is **proceduralizable**; **A1** remains fragile where political centers and registers diverge.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Three extensions would consolidate the evidence base: **(1)** causal designs exploiting **policy discontinuities** (e.g., threshold changes) in event-study or IV frameworks; **(2)** **audience-level exposure data** linking article impressions to group-level Facebook behaviors; **(3)** **cross-platform replication** (e.g., WhatsApp, local forums) to assess whether the hinge generalizes beyond Facebook's affordances.

Limitations and ethics

Temporal coverage (**N=30**) is modest for time-series inference; dictionary methods can miss fine semantic nuance; identification is **associational with lags**, not causal; and Facebook groups do not represent the entire diaspora. Ethical safeguards include **weekly aggregation**, **anonymization**, GDPR-compliant handling, adherence to platform terms, and **structural—rather than stigmatizing—interpretation** of group behavior.

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