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**Driving Factors to Protest and Implications on Social Capital: the
case of Gondar city 2016-18**

By

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**DRIVING FACTORS TO PROTEST AND IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL CAPITAL:
THE CASE OF GONDAR CITY 2016-18**

**By
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List of acronyms

ACLED=====Armed Conflict Location and Event Database

ADP=====Amhara Democratic party

CSA=====Central Statistical Agency

EHRP===== Ethiopian Human Right Project

EPLF===== Eritrean People's Liberation Front

EPRDF=====Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front

FGD=====Focus Group Discussion

HWR= =====Human Right Watch

OLF===== Oromo Liberation Front

TPLF===== Tigrean People Liberation Front

WAIC===== Wolkayt Amhara Identity Committee

Abstract

This paper scrutinizes the driving factors of the 2016-18 Gondar city protest and its implication on social capital. Conflicts are ubiquitous in every society. Violent protests are one form of conflicts. Recently, Ethiopia has been wracked by multitudes of protests in Amhara national regional state and Oromia national regional state. Following an attempt to arrest leaders of Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee, a protest was broke out in Gondar city on July, 2016. This incident is only accredited as a triggering cause for the eruption of the protest. Thus, the main objective of this thesis is to explore the major driving causes of the protest and its implications on the social capital. To this end, the researcher employed a qualitative research methodology. Accordingly, interviews and Focus group discussions bestow the primary data. Document analysis and image analysis endeavor to supplement the primary data. Purposeful sampling was used in order to select two sub-cities and 15 informants from bureaus and associations. Besides, Snowball sampling was used to select 7 elders and 7 protest mobilizers, facilitators and participants. In general, 29 individuals were participated in the study. The collected data was analyzed thematically. Thereupon, the finding of the study unfolds that the juxtaposition of political factors, economic factors and local good governance factors ensued a grievance on the people and incited the protest. The protest was violent and some strikes signaled an attempt to instrumentalize ethnic identity. In this regard, the study uncovers, the protest brought different implications on the in-group social capital within Amharas and inter-group social capital between Amharas and Tigrrians. The protest strengthened the bonding social capital which extends up to consolidation of Amhara nationalism and abated the bridging social capital between Amharas and Tigriyans. The study also discovers ways that the bridging social capital can be rejuvenated with an integrated effort and work by the people, government and political elites. In order to halt the likelihood of revitalization of this kind of violent protest in the near future, the Amhara political elite, the Tigriyan political elite and the federal government should work together and discuss on table to settle disputes peacefully.

Key words: Protest, Grievance, Violence, Instrumentalization, Bonding Social Capital, Bridging Social Capital, Rejuvenation

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Nowadays social movements turn out to be the most popular area to conduct researches for many social scientists, most importantly for sociologists. As far as social reality is concerned, which is extremely contested, social movement can be taken as one means of constructing reality (Anne, 1997). Under the broad canvas of social movement, protests in the modern world are one form of a social movement. Michael Lipsky (1968) insisted that political protest has a long history and enjoys a crucial place in the course of political action and development. Scholars like John Dalton (2004) envisage protest as an instrument employed by the “disenfranchised and the politically frustrated” to pressurize the government. Whereas, scholars like Inglehart (1990) and Norris (2002) claim that contemporary protest has become another kind of “conventional politics” by other means used by individuals and groups who have active participation in politics. Nowadays, multitudes of countries are wrecked by protests. In the modern world, protests are considered as an invaluable cause for creating democratic orders for which no modern state can claim that their current institutional arrangements have not been intact by protests or civil war (Diaz, 2017).

Protests operate through a collective rage against certain issues that they are structured around (Schrodt, 2012). Generally speaking, protests can be defined as the sum of and collective and individual actions to put pressure on a target’s decision and thereby bring about some desired change (Opp, 2009); whereby protesters are taken as activists committed to advancing vital social or political goals (Levine and Nierras, 2007). There are different explanations regarding the cause of protests. Scholar like Ted Gurr stipulates that the rise of protests is more based on collectively experienced grievances and discontents (Gurr, 1970). According to Ortiz and colleagues, in the period 2006-2013, protests were more widely common in higher income countries in Europe and North America (304 protests), which was mainly as a result of disappointment with the impacts and mismanagement of an economic crisis, followed by Latin

America and the Caribbean (141 protests), East Asia and the Pacific (83 protests) and Sub-Saharan Africa (78 protests).

As Collier and Hoeffler (1998) pointed, a violent conflict imposes a detrimental and destructive situation towards the wellbeing of the society by undermining the social, political and economic status of the society. Henceforth, when a conflict touches the very essence of the wellbeing of a society, it brings multitudes of implication on the interaction, solidarity and cohesion of individuals and groups within a given society. Forthwith, it can be asserted that, protest as one form of violent conflict, has also its own consequences and implications on the wellbeing of individuals and communities on their interaction, solidarity and cohesion. Thus, the issue of interactions, solidarity and cohesion between or among groups propels towards the concept of social capital. Although the term 'social capital' is used around the starting of 20th century, it took a longer time to become a component of more extensive sociological discourse (Gudmundsson & Mikiewicz, 2012). Robert Putnam conceives social capital as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995:67). The oft-cited definition is the one given by Pierre Bourdieu equating social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1985: 248). Generally speaking, social capital can be envisaged as "glue that holds society together" which embraces a well-functioning social order by forming togetherness out of common values and norms (Serageldin and Grootaert, 2000).

Some scholars tried to form a relationship between a violent conflict and social capital. For instance, Colletta and Cullen (2000) ponder that, a violent conflict deteriorates social capital and the social cohesion in a community which subsequently separate community members through undermining mutual trust and action, and ultimately results elimination of values and norms. Whereas McDougal and Banjade (2015) claim that some conflicts may bring constructive changes by strengthening social trust and cohesion. For the purpose of this paper, the researcher conceives social capital as a strong social life bond among and between individuals belonging to one identity group or beyond that.

As far as Ethiopia is concerned, historically Ethiopia has been frequently experienced protests and rebellions. The aborted coup d'état of 1960 is considered as the pioneer in challenging the existing political order which embarked on a decade of political protest against monarchical absolutism that did not halt until the more earth shattering change of 1974 (Gebru, 2009). In addition, the 1960s Ethiopian Student Movement, peasant rebellions in Gojjam, Tigray and Bale, urban uprising of the 1974 revolution and the anti-Dergue regime struggle of TPLF, EPLF and OLF are remarkable state of affairs in Ethiopia's history of social movements. Under Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Revolutionary Front (EPRDF) regime, the widely known protests incited on November 1, 2005 after the EPRDF and opposition parties failed to reach in to consensus on election results (Ariola, 2009). Then after, the most crucial protest in Ethiopia erupted in Oromia regional state in April 2014 by opposing the "Addis Ababa Integrated Regional Development Plan" (hereafter Master Plan) for it was claimed by the protesters as its implementation inflicts expelling of millions of farmers from their land (EHRP, 2016).

Later in July 2016, a lethal clash between federal security forces and Gondar city residents ensued following the attempt to arrest three Wolkayt Amhara Identity Committee (WAIC) leaders which was later coalesced into another ruinous anti-government protest in Amhara regional state (ACLED, 2017). As some scholars (Melkamu, 2018, Misganaw, 2018; 2021; Tewodros, 2020) insisted, the protests in these regions were borne out due to formerly accumulated grievances and resentments. In the first two weeks of July, several individuals not less than dozen were killed in a protest at Gondar city and Bahir Dar city following an incursion by strongly armed federal security forces (Human Rights Watch, 2016). As a matter of fact, in the time of the protest, issues beyond the Wolkayt case have been heard from the protestors like, unequal access to resources, unfair political representation in the country, TPLF's pseudo political and historical narration of "Amhara oppressor", TPLF's involvement in the Amhara political issues and administration and many others issues (Solomon, 2019). Although Wolkayt identity question became a flashpoint to the protest; it can't be presented as a single cause.

As far as social life in Ethiopia is concerned, Poluha (2004) pointed that an individual's life is strongly dependent on his/her surrounding neighbors and friends. This scholar insist that, in Ethiopia, individuals do not escape from living a social life called *Mahiberawi nuro* (Social life) which is attained via membership in numerous social associations like religious groups,

solidarity groups, funeral associations, work groups etc. Likewise, Getachew (1996) insisted that informal social institutions like *Idirs*, *Mahabers* and *Iqubs* create a social world for Ethiopians embraced with shared values, traditions and experiences. And they are generally established as a response to harsh socio-economic problems. In Gondar city, historically many communities such as Christians, Muslims, Felashas, Amharas, Tigrrians, Qimants and others have been living in the city for long period of time (Solomon, 2006). These communities in the city have their social life interaction in the city. As it is mentioned previously, conflict brings a detrimental situation to individuals and communities, importantly on their social solidarity. Basically, the protest in Gondar city consumed many lives, resulted destruction of governmental and private properties and displaced many people (Human Rights Watch, 2016). As to the focus of the researcher, the 2016 Gondar city protest brought enormous implication on social capital, a concept taken by the researcher as a strong social life bond between individuals and groups. Specifically, the implication on bonding social capital (in-group social ties within the protesters) and bridging social capital (out-group ties between Amharas and Tigriyans) will be the focus. Thereupon, to better understand the concept of protests, the study will commence conferring a comprehensive and luminous understanding of protests. Ultimately, to better understand the causes for the 2016 Gondar city protest, grievance-deprivation conceptual framework is employed. Basically, this study predominantly scrutinizes the reality and scenarios occurred before the current war in Tigray regional state is broke out. Accordingly, the thesis only emphasizes on assessing the problems in that time framework.

1.2. Statement of the Research Problem

The rule of the EPRDF became highly questioned due to the nationwide protests in the country throughout 2016 (Betsegaw, 2019). Protests were catastrophic most importantly in the Oromia and Amhara regions. In many protests in Amhara regional cities, for instance, like in Bahir Dar, Debre Markos, Dessie, Debre Tabor, Woldiya, etc., the protesters echoed the issue of democracy and human and democratic rights such as: unequal access to resources; poor governance; the quest for historical and legal right over Welqayt and Raya lands and other human and democratic rights issues (Human Rights Watch, 2017; ACLED, 2017; Misganaw, 2018). Hence, it is difficult to provide one most important reason behind the protests in these cities, although the immediate cause was the attempt to arrest leaders and members of WAIC, notably Colonel

Demeke Zewdu and his colleagues (Tamu, 2019). According to the WAIC, in the time Ethiopia established a new ethnic federal system, Wolkait which is currently an administrative district in Tigray that borders Amhara, was snatched out of Gondar's control by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) through force in 1992 (Getinet, 2018).

There are some studies conducted in the area of mass protest. To begin with the seminal, a study by Ortiz et al. (2013) titled "world protests 2006-2013" analyzed 843 protests occurred between January 2006 and July 2013 in 87 countries, with a combined population of over 90% of world population. Accordingly, the study revealed four major causes for protests. Failures of political representation and political systems (visible in 376 protests), unfair distribution of resources and economic injustice (visible in 488 protests), global injustice (visible in 311 protests), suppression of rights (visible in 302 protests) are identified as the major factors behind protests throughout the world. Because the study is holistic, it basically fails to assess the violent nature, dynamics, differences and consequences of protests from country to country. Torsten Mix (2014) conducted a study titled "Lethal Repression of Peaceful Protest in Africa. Why Do (non-)Accountable and Military Regimes Shoot". The study emphasizes on why African governments start to kill protesters. Thus in its findings, the study concludes, regimes that equip military officials with prominent positions in the government are prone to initiate lethal repression, and vertical accountability (akin to democratic responsiveness), lowers the likelihood of repression. Basically, the study focuses on actor analysis, i.e., how the government reacts towards peaceful protesters. Hence, the study lacks to give an insight on the major causes and implications of the protest.

Moreover, a study by Getnet Shenkute (2018) titled "Framing of the 2016 Amhara Uprising by Local and International Media: EBC and VOA Radio in Focus" emphasized on how the local and international media framed the Amhara Uprising that was a popular anti-government movement from 8 July to 30 September 2016. As a result, by using qualitative methods, the study concluded that EBC radio by predominantly using "anti-peace and development forces" frame and VOA by using "Ethnic Tension" frame both played a crucial role throughout the protest. Therefore, the study presents only the role of media in a protest. It doesn't give an insight on why there is protest, to what extent the protest was violent and its implications on social capital. Furthermore, a research conducted by Thea Emilie (2018), "Down Down

Woyane!: a Qualitative Study of Qeerroo Movement in Ethiopia using Political Process Theory” concluded that Qeerroo created a movement that contributed to a major shift within the EPRDF. This study focuses only on the role of the Oromo Qeerroo youth movement in struggling the existing political order. Moreover, Betsegaw (2019) conducted a research paper titled “The Role of Social Media in the Mobilization of Social Movement in Ethiopia”. While employing qualitative research method, the study presents the role of social media in the mobilizations of social movements. Accordingly, this study revealed that the contents created on social media facilitate social movements since they are emotion triggering.

As far as the study area is concerned, a study conducted by Tamu (2019) titled “The Rise of Popular Protests in Gondar and implications since 2016”, by using qualitative method, the study claimed that, a grievance by the people of Gondar caused by historical, economic and marginalization of Amhara people by the ruling regime is the main cause behind the protest. The research also asserts that the protest has negative and positive implications. Positively, “the strengthened solidarity between Amhara and Oromo people, the raise of Amhara nationalism, political reforms at local and national level, releasing political prisoners”; negatively, “displacement of Tigriyans from Gondar, high tension between TPLF and ADP political parties and lawlessness in the city administration” are presented as the protest’s implications. In this research, the following gaps can be identified. Firstly, the research in its findings exclusively attribute grievance to the whole cause of the protest, which is too difficult to provide a single cause for which the researcher subsequently failed to examine from other dimensions like relative deprivation sentiments, elite competition and structural factors. Secondly, the research thematically fails to scrutinize the protest’s implication and consequences on both the intra group social life bond and the inter group social life bond or the social capital in general. Another study conducted by Solomon (2019) titled “the causes of political protests and its consequences on socio-political conditions in Amhara regional state: the case of Woldiya town”, while using mixed methodology, insisted that, ethnic political system by creating other economic and political problems is accounted for the main cause behind the protest. As a result, “political freedom and sacking of officials, procedural changes; non institutional outcomes, politicization of ethnicity and path dependent reforms, displacement, mob decision, exclusion, hatred and violent behaviors” are considered as the protest’s implication on socio- political conditions. In this research, ethnic political system is presented as the single and main cause of the protest.

Henceforth, this research has a gap to consider ethnic political system per se as the main cause behind the protest given the fact that there exist other countries with ethnic based political systems but aren't tormented by protest exclusively as a result of their ethnic based political system. Secondly, thematically speaking, the study fails to examine the protest's relation to the social capital.

All in all, the protest in Gondar city by itself has its own peculiar characteristics. The protest in the city was a pioneer and paved the way for the Amhara protest in general. In the very beginning, the protest in Gondar city was targeted against a government. But in due course, the protest transcended in to some actions that touch wellbeing, solidarity and cohesion of the Amhara and Tigriyan ethnic groups. Eventually, some protest actions signaled an attempt to give the protest an ethnic nature. Some protest actions were occurred that might bring an implication on the solidarity and cohesion between them, i.e, bridging social capital. On the other hand, there were groups who collectively struggled and suffered during the protest time and those who were supporting the cause of the protest. During the protest time, many individuals who supported the cause of the protest participated in numerous ways such as demonstrating, boycotting, preparing slogans and messages, distributing information, leading the protest via social media etc. These individuals have been frequently engaged in interactions and communications for the common cause and goal throughout the protest time. Thus, the protest also enabled to gather individuals who have common cause communicating one another to achieve their common goal. Accordingly, the protest also might have a different implication on the solidarity and cohesion within the group,i.e, the bonding social capital. To wrap up, the driving factors behind the 2016 Gondar city protest and its implication on social capital both the intra group and the bridging social capital should be examined thoroughly. In an attempt to fill the void, this thesis asks what are the driving factors and implications on social capital behind the 2016-18 Gondar city protest.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective of the Study

This thesis explores and analyzes the major causes for the 2016-18 Gondar city protest and its implication on the social capital.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

Specific Objectives of this thesis is to:

- ❖ Explore the major factors behind the 2016 Gondar city protest.
- ❖ Scrutinize the implication of the protest on social capital.
- ❖ To investigate how the social capital can be rejuvenated.

1.4. Research Questions

This thesis answers the following research questions:

1. What are the major causes behind the 2016 Gondar city protest?
2. What are the protest's implications on social capital?
3. How can be the social capital rejuvenated?

1.5. Significance of the Study

As the issue is sensitive and thoroughly unexamined agenda, by giving a clear and adequate insight on the nature, dynamics and consequence of the protest under the study area, it will fill the existing gap in the area and it will serve as a reference for those who will conduct a study on the study area. Besides to this, it will be an organized historical documentation. Most importantly, as the issue is unsettled state of affair and some kind of 'ticking bomb' which might be revitalized, it will serve as an input for policy makers.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study has a boundary both geographically and conceptually. Geographically, the study is limited to Gondar city administration, which is the town of North Gondar zone. Thus, the study does not include *kebeles*, *weredas* and other towns under North Gondar zone. It only includes sub-cities and *kebeles* that are under the jurisdiction of Gondar city administration. Conceptually, it is delaminated to the notion of protests, which are basically anti-government protest; and the concept of social capital (bonding social capital and bridging social capital) which is taken as a strong social life bond between or among individuals and groups by the researcher. When the

study refers to the 2016 Gondar city protest, it is delaminated to the protest that erupted in July 2016 and terminated in 2018.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

This study has embraced certain limitations that should be addressed by future studies. The first one is the issue of samples, which is taken from Gondar city only. Thus, future studies ought to scrutinize a study on the thematic area based on a wider sample and a different place. The second one is the study hasn't scrutinized the protest's implication on political conditions, economic conditions and other social affair issues. Hence, future studies can get a focus and desire on these areas. Lastly, as the study of social capital in the country level and local level is extremely scanty, empirical studies and literature might lacks.

1.8. Positionality of the Researcher

As far as the social science field of study is concerned, it is widely accepted that reality is a socially constructed and contested concept. As a result, despite claims and desires of ensuring objectivity, everyone tries to understand and analyze things based up on his/her perspective. As a matter of fact, human beings' different ways of looking, speculating and analyzing things and issues is what makes reality contested. Moreover, the qualitative research method opens the door for subjectivity in terms of understanding, interpreting and analyzing data. This is basically due to the fact that the qualitative research method ultimately endeavors in order to explore the perception of individuals and groups towards the issue concerned in the research. Succinctly speaking, researchers who opt for the qualitative research method need to have to control and minimize the subjectivity in their displaying, interpreting and analyzing ways of a certain collected data. Thus, the researcher of this study would like to reveal his positionality on certain issues and ways employed so as to eliminate the expected biases towards the issue under study as follows: First and foremost, it is the researcher's duty to preach about peaceful ways of managing and settling conflicts and contradictions. Basically, the political elites, social media activists and mainstream medias have been played their role in giving the Gondar city protest a violent nature. Forthwith, some of these stakeholders of the protest have been giving false information and exaggerate things. Hence, the researcher strongly believes that it is immensely crucial for the researcher to get an access to the genuine, legible and adequate information and facts about the issue under the study. Most importantly, the researcher is enormously committed

enough to triangulate the ideas, perceptions and experiences of individuals and from different data sources.

1.9. Organization of the Study

The paper has five chapters. Chapter one includes, background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitation of the study, delimitation/scope of the study and the like. Chapter two includes review of related literature. Chapter three includes the methodological aspect such as, research method, data collection and analysis method, sampling size and sampling technique, as well as budget plan, time schedule and ethical considerations in research. Chapter four will include data presentation, analysis, interpretation and findings. Finally, chapter five provides conclusions and the way forward.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literatures

2.1. Conceptualizing protests

The study of protest has burgeoned from a downgraded and doomed study area of social psychology in the 1960s to a popular study area of sociology where sociologists deemed protest to be an undemocratic incursion into politics (Oliver et al., 2003). In the beginning, protests were equated with upsetting a well operating democracy (Crozier et al., 1975). Later on, they were conceived as “direct and non-institutionalized mode of political participation” (Barnes et al., 1979: 42) and now they are envisaged as a popular way of political participation (Christensen, 2013) and an invaluable cause for the creation of democratic orders (Diaz, 2017). Protests have been given multitudes of definition by many scholars. To begin with the oldest systematic definition, Michael Lipsky (1968) insists, protest is a state of affairs for which the powerless groups consider it as political resource. Lipsky in his assessment of different protest movements in US from 1960 onwards, concluded the following as shared features of these protests. “They were engaged in by relatively powerless groups; and they depended for success not upon direct utilization of power, but upon activating other groups to enter the political arena. Because protest is successful to the extent that other parties are activated to political involvement, it is one of the few strategies in which even politically impoverished groups can aspire to engage” (Lipsky 1968:1).

Furthermore, Rulph Turner (1969) gives us another organized definition of protests. This scholar stipulates “an act of protest includes the following elements: the action expresses a grievance, a conviction of wrong or injustice; the protestors are unable to correct the condition directly by their own efforts; the action is intended to draw attention to the grievances; the action is further meant to provoke ameliorative steps by some target group; and the protesters depend upon some combination of sympathy and fear to move the target group in their behalf” (Turner, 1969:816). Protests are further defined as “a collective, public action by a nongovernmental actor who expresses criticism or dissent and articulates a societal or political demand”(Rucht, Hocke, and Ohlemacher, 1992:4). Whereas for others protests are “sites of contestation in which bodies,

symbols, identities, practices, and discourses are used to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized power relations”(Taylor and van Dyke, 2004: 268).

The recent definition for which the researcher found it as comprehensive is Karl Dieter Opp’s definition of protests as “a joint or collective action of individuals aimed at achieving their goal or goals by influencing decisions of a target” (Opp, 2009:38). Opp gave a comprehensive definition by immersing a “target” in the definition. Opp clearly depicted that there is always a target that a protest aimed to influence. According to this definition, protests vary based on their aim and the target aimed to be influenced. Regarding the targets protests aimed to influence, Ekiert and Kubik (1998) illuminate that a protest’s target can be an individual, a group of people, an organization or institution that the protesters deemed as the cause of their outrage or grievance. All these examples of protest’s definition speak that there is no a universally agreed single definition of protests. In their very nature, protests might strive to achieve different goals. Thus, protests may have political, economic, social, cultural etc. goals. Thus, protests differ from place to place in their goals. This subsequently glimpses that the definition of protests also vary from a study to study. Accordingly, in this study, it is necessitated that the definition of protests adhered to be contextualized. Henceforth, the researcher opted to add the term “political” in Opp’s conception of protests in order to make Opp’s definition more specific and imply that the protest in Gondar city was aimed against influencing the government.

2.2. Idiosyncrasy of protests

With variety of definitions given to the concept of protests, nearly all definitions share commonalities regarding certain characteristics of protests. Most definitions admitted that protests are a kind of opposition to something. And this opposition is not brought without any reason which implies the existence of some kind of discomfort in the protesters. In addition, this opposition has a subject to be carried out that entails the existence of large group of individuals showing their opposition to a certain cause. In short, in the academic discourse, there are some attributes given by many scholars to the nature of protests that differentiate them from other types of social moments. Forthwith, some features of protests are the following.

2.2.1 Collective Identity: Fuel of Protests

By their very nature, protests encompass a challenge to existing order, policies or practices. Protesters express their opposition by executing collective or joint action. This collective action may arise from peaceful demonstration to the manipulation of violence to promote a cause of action. But this collective action necessitates a shared identity which is mainly brought by the aim of the protest. Regarding this issue, Karl Dieter Opp (2009) gives us how a collective identity is built. Opp enumerates, “a collective identity exists, by definition, if there is a group (i.e. individuals with at least one common goal) with common beliefs, with common normative convictions, that is connected by social relationships (i.e. there is a social network) and by emotional bonds.” (Opp, 2009: 210). Thus, protesters are tied by a common goal, belief and stance to a certain issue in which they stand for. Succinctly speaking, Opp conception of collective identity is all about sharing common goals and stance to the issue concerned the protesters. Collective identity can also be grasped as the sum of common characteristic, collective awareness of an existing problem, and resistance against the prevailing system (Choup, 2008). This implies that collective identity is the foundational basis for executing collective action.

Alberto Melluci (1995) conceived collective identity as a process of “constructing” the schemes to carry out an action. He insists, this process embraces three conceptual understandings of collective identity. The first one is “cognitive definitions concerning the ends, means, and field of action defined within a language that is shared by a portion or the whole of a society or that is specific to the group; incorporated in a given set of rituals, practices, cultural artifacts; framed in different ways but they always allow some kind of calculation between ends and means, investments and rewards”; Secondly, “a network of active relationships between the actors, who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions”; thirdly, “a certain degree of emotional investment, which enables individuals to feel like part of a common unity, is required in the definition of a collective identity” (Melluci, 1995:44-45).

In short, the conception of collective identity implies self associating to a protest group. As a matter of fact, it is a mere fact that in case of political protests, protesters may have different personal identities in terms of their sex, religion, profession etc. Hence, a collective identity must be formed that can transcend all these personal differences. Usually, in most protest movements,

collective identity imposes collective emotions to a group surpassing individual interests, which has enormous influence on the action to be carried out collectively (Mellucy, 1995). Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013) envisaged anger as a typical example of protest emotion. It is also stated that it is thorny to contemplate protests estranged from anger for which a group's anger is conceived as a crucial stimulant to participate in protest (Van Zomeren et al. 2004). At this point, Ralph Turner (1969) emphasizes that "to be credible as a protest, indications of the use of riots for self-aggrandizement, the settlement of private feuds, or enjoyment of violence and destruction must be subordinated to naive anger and desperation (Turner, 1969:819). Generally speaking, a protest that has a solid collective identity is successful in directing individuals to act according to what the group demands (Opp, 2009).

A protest action becomes nonexistent without a collective identity. This is due to the fact that a protest action is not carried out at individual level exclusively. Rather it demands a collective or joint effort and devotion of the whole group members. In fact, an individual might carry out variety of protest actions like striking property, preparing slogans, but this act must go only in accordance with the best interest of the whole group. At this point, Ralph Turner (1968) emphasizes that the use of protests for a self, the settlement of private feuds, or enjoyment of violence and destruction must be subordinated to naive anger and desperation. This is only achieved when there is a shared, consented, and recognized plan of action by the whole group. All in all, as machinery needs fuel to operate, protests also rely on collective identity for their operations.

2.2.2. Instantaneous Mobilization

With collective identity one vital attribute of protests, a protest will endeavor to mobilize the members in order to carry out collective actions. During the 1950s, the mobilization and creation of collective behavior was in the form of face to face "circular reactions" where "the responses of each individual reproducing the stimuli coming from his neighbor" (Blumer, 1951: 170). Opp (2009) further strengthened this claim by contemplating that, variety of networks embedded in social relationships grant back-up for individuals to participate in protest actions. Usually, many individuals are probably to participate when they found protesters familiar to them (Opp & Gern, 1993). As far as mobilization of protests is concerned, Klandermans (1984) accentuates that mobilization has two processes. The first one is "consensus mobilization" which is about

collective understanding of who, why and how someone should act. The second one is “action mobilization” which encompasses four steps of “sympathizing” to the cause, “knowing” the forthcoming action, “wanting” to engage in the actions and being “able” to partake in those actions.

One thing that should be emphasized is that, protest mobilizes multitudes of actors like individuals, groups and organizations. This issue of mobilization of variety of actors is emphasized by the work of Michael Lipsky (1965) insisting, protest leaders ought to cherish and form alliances with organizations tactically and strategically to involve a third party in the conflict, so that they can maximize the opportunity to achieve their goals. To buttress this tenet, Della Porta and Diani (2006) elucidate, “in order to succeed, protest must produce positive stimuli, winning the sympathies of those who have more resources to invest in the arenas where decisions are taken” (Porta and Diani, 2006:167).

Recently, the mobilization nature of protests has been changed. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2003: 72) speculated that, “protest rarely happens with a defined beginning and a definite end. The processes of mobilization and demobilization are complex, interdependent and happen simultaneously”. Nowadays, the advancement of new information and communication technologies contributed a lot in shaping the mobilization nature of protests in today’s world. The issue of cyber activism currently enjoys a pivotal role in the mobilization of protests. As Jaroslaw Chodak (2016) vindicates, the internet has dramatically altered two elements of protests mobilization: cost of participation and the need of co-presence, that makes the cost of participation insignificant and allow multitudes of individuals to join collective action swiftly without spending too much time. Briefly speaking, what can be induced from the above points is that, the nature of mobilization of protests become spontaneous recently.

The mobilization takes place contingently, in a sense that we don’t see the exact time a protest mobilizes individuals. In other words, we don’t observe the accurate time when individuals have decided to participate in a protest actions. As it is mentioned earlier, protesters communicate one another through multitudes of informal social networks and social media platforms. Thus, we can’t able to identify the pioneer and the new members of a protest movement. Forthwith, it is difficult to identify new participants of a protest from the former ones. This indicates that protest

mobilizes individuals in the most accidental and unplanned way. We don't even know who is buying the claims raised by the protesters in the street. Thus, individuals' membership to a protest movement can be carried out by any time without further requirement and procedure.. By the same token, it is difficult to know the beginning and end of some violent actions of protests. When a protest action will commence and end. Basically, this nature of protests will make the magnitude of the violent action to be carried out and the breadth of destruction protests bestow enormously unpredictable.

2.2.3. Violent Collective Actions

So far, it is declared that protests need collective identity of the group protesting and mobilization of individuals to carry out collective actions. Because protests are aimed at influencing the decision of a target, modes of exerting pressure have different manifestations. As far as collective action is concerned, William Gamson (1992) while scrutinizing to understand the social psychology of collective action, he insists that there are three components behind the collective actions of protesters that shape the protesters' mindset in their protests actions. The first one is "injustice" which is about moral resentments to fight unjust wrong doings. The second one is "agency" that equates with the mentality that "we" are capable enough and should have to change harmful conditions by carrying out collective actions. The third one is identity which is equivalent with self defining and identification as "we" comparing with the opponents. This collective action can be expressed in different forms through time.

John Dalton (1988) ponders, in the beginning collective actions are expressed in terms of signing petitions and conducting lawful demonstrations, then after by strategies like boycotting, and then indirect actions like unofficial strikes and finally by violent actions such as physical damage and personal injuries. This clearly depicts that a collective protest action finally will be defined by violent nature. Basically, an individual's decision to participate in collective action exclusively rests up on the perceived participation of others in which the information is initially transferred via social networks (Granovetter (1978) cited in Breuer, 2012). With the same token, an individual's decision to accept the risks for being linked to protests by joining a large group of people provides motivational sentiments for others (ibid).

As it is mentioned before, political protest movements mobilize variety of actors in order to achieve their goals and strengthen the magnitude the protest is operating (Lipsky, 1965). On the other side, the government will be obliged to react to the protest actions. At this point, the violent nature of protests commences due to the dynamics the protest is facing. Most of the time, a protest movement becomes violent in the time a security apparatus of a government conduct counter demonstrations which results spars between demonstrators and security or police officials (Della Porta and Diani, 2006). Besides, some stakeholders that participate in protest movements opt for manipulations of violence in which the leaders of these stakeholders may simulate publicly that they follow peaceful ways although they tacitly persuade their members that their violent action is justified and necessary (Jovanovic, Schroter and Renn, 2014). Della Porta and Diani (2006) argued that, first and foremost protest actions have strong concerns of building support. To this end, these actions should be acknowledged in the wider public sphere in the first place. Thus, these actions should be newsworthy to be broadcasted in the mass media so as to reach the public. Hence, protests use violent tactics to attract media coverage for media is considered as a third party in a conflict. In fact, media is the most popular instrument to frame public sensitivity (Jasper, 1998).

Della Porta and Diani (2006) accentuate that, the manipulation of violence bestows two intertwined aims for protesters, i.e., symbolic aim and instrumental aim. Henceforth, they assert that violence serves as an emblematic sign for resistance to an oppressive order and a tool that helps to win struggle and procure media attention. As the protest becomes entrenched to different participants, the use of violence becomes normal, augmented and radicalized (Kepplinger (2009) cited from Jovanovic, Schroter and Renn, 2014). Kepplinger meticulously mulls over that violence perpetrators do not conceive their actions as an illegal and depraved act, rather as a justified and legitimate action because they deem that they are under such kind of situation where there are no other best alternatives. Consequently, through time protesters will be in a position to perceive their radical actions as legitimate ones by accusing the opponent for promoting oppression, injustices and other misdemeanors (ibid).

As far as the use of violence in protests is concerned, it should be noted that violence is the most crucial element that ultimately shapes the dynamics and nature of protests. As Sydney Tarrow (1994) emphasizes, violence dictates a situation where “relations between challengers and

authorities from a confused, many-sided game into a bipolar one in which people are forced to choose sides, allies defect, bystanders retreat and the state's repressive apparatus swings into action" (Tarrow 1994: 104). Thereupon, what can be inferred from this is that, use of violence will be multiplied by use of violence which results multitudes of casualties, destructions and sufferings. To put it differently, violence can be envisaged as the most grandiose *modus operandi* for protests. Succinctly speaking, it can be concluded that as a brake directs the movement of a car, so do violence directs the nature and consequences of protests.

2.3. Causes of Protests

As far as the driving causes of protests are concerned, scholars have been thoroughly engaged on debates. Those scholars persistently endeavored to give a systematically analyzed answers for why do people protest in the first place. Their initial center of focus have been the general overview of social movements which encompasses movements like protests, riots, rebellions, uprisings, social unrests and the like. Afterwards, through time they have succumbed their attention to deal with protests specifically. As it is presented before, the definition of protests by itself has been redefined and modified by numerous scholars through time. It is the same with the conceived driving factors behind the protests. Since the 1960's multitudes of assumptions by different scholars have been given for the question, what are the driving causes behind protests? Broadly speaking, the major analytical perspectives towards this question are Grievance-Deprivation, Resource Mobilization, Framing, Political Process/Opportunity/ and Political Disenchantment.

2.3.1. Grievance- Deprivation Sentiments

The pioneer in terms of giving a systematic analysis on the causes of social movements and protests is Grievance theory, which was initially formulated in the 1960's and later on strengthened in the 1970s emphasizing on psychological factors that drive people to participate in social movement activities (Grasso and Giugni, 2016). Basically, Ted Gurr's "why men Rebel?" (1970), is considered as the masterpiece and foundational basis for Grievance-deprivation theory (Dalton et al., 2005). To give a short glimpse of this theory, when people feel some kind of discomfort, dissatisfaction or grievance due to an existing or changing social condition, they will be psychologically forced to use violence actions like protests and rebellions

to address their discomforts, dissatisfaction and grievances (Gurr, 1970). Klandermans (1997) further strengthened this idea by claiming, in every protest action grievances are the central hub which can be caused by feelings of inequality, injustice, relative deprivation of goods and services, psychological and moral resentment towards some kind of existing social conditions and the like. Most importantly, material deprivation or negative material conditions are the prime driving factors behind protests actions (Gurr, 1970; Piven and Cloward, 1977; Useem, 1998).

In other words, when individuals have unmet material expectations, through time they will develop feelings of frustration, outrage, resentment and other negative feelings that drive them to discharge these feelings in the form of protest action. Thus, as Opp (1988) ponders, multitudes of negative psychological emotions are derived from material deprivation which impels individuals to challenge an existing political order. The most entertained lens in grievance theory is the relative deprivation perspective. This theory stresses a compared feeling of deprivation with one's past or other groups' status as the major factor behind protests (Folger, 1986; Foster and Matheson, 1999; Van Zomeren et al. 2008). Succinctly speaking, it can be concluded that, grievance theory conceives protest as an instrument to alleviate unattained individual and societal material expectation escorted with dissatisfaction, outrage and grievances. Much will be discussed on the Grievance-Deprivation theory in the theoretical framework part of the study.

2.3.2. Resource Mobilization

The resource mobilization theory was founded in the time of academic seminal debate where scholars like McCarthy and Zald (1977) immensely criticized classical theories like deprivation theory and Olson's theory of collective action. This tenet firmly undermines the grievance theories' central argument of grievance as the chief driving factor for protest action by insisting that grievance and dissatisfaction do not suffice to engage in protest actions rather third party stakeholders like political entrepreneurs and organizations are crucial in encoding what the discontent is and transcend it in to political action (Roller and Wessels, 1996). Moreover, McCarthy and Zald (1977), who coined the term 'resource mobilization', rejected Olson's collective action theory assumption that social movements are made up of individuals pursuing their self-interest, rather they claim that individuals and people should get incentives and rewards in order to participate in protests. Subsequently, they argued that a protest's success rely on its capability of mobilization of resources (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). In essence, the central premise

of this perspective is that grievances are not sufficient for the rise of protests given the fact that grievances are intrinsic and found in every society, amid there is no protest in every society. Thus, there must be an entity of leaders or organizers of protests capable of mobilizing resources both tangible and intangible from potential supporters which will drive individuals to participate in protest actions (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Jenkins, 1983; McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988).

The term "resources" in the theory's framework refer to things like knowledge, solidarity, legitimacy, money, media, labor, social status, support from elites, etc (Jenkins, 1983; McCarthy & Zald, 1988; Phongpaichit & Baker, 1999). These scholars persistently argued that available resource lays foundational basis to facilitate protest activities. Forthwith, Resource Mobilization mainly accentuates on rational calculation of costs, rewards and incentives that create and manage people's motivation to become participant of a struggle (Jenkins, 1983). This scholar further strengthened this tenet by claiming that if it is needed to motivate people to engage in protests, it is a must that they should have access to essential resources. Thus, he claims that availability of resources and external financial supports are extremely invaluable in the creation of protests.

Moreover, McCarthy and Zald (1977) contemplate that the strategic and central task of a social movement is "mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers, achieving change in targets" (McCarthy and Zald, 1977:1217). Furthermore, Dalton et-al. (2005) concluded that a more open and rich society offers more conducive environments for contentious state of affair which subsequently entertains protests more frequent. To put it differently, the rationale behind this kind of tenet is that when a society has an advanced socio-economic structure, there exist condensed communication structures, frequent social mobility, urbanization, mass education and other factors that can help protest groups to access the resources. In other words, when there is low level of resources, individuals or groups may lack the courage and capacity to launch effective protests and might found themselves exposed to the monopolized violence of the states which in turn decrease the level of protests (Dalton et-al., 2005).

Furthermore, it has been meticulously accentuated that a society that embraces multitudes of NGOs and other civil society organizations produces a fertile ground that allows individuals to

freely partake in some movements in order to express and promote their interests (Putnam, 2000). Succinctly speaking, resource mobilization theory scrutinizes the multitudes of resources ought to be mobilized, the connection of protests with social groups, social protests' dependency on external support to succeed and the strategies used by different social movement actors to mobilize and organize measures and attain goals (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988). In other words, the availability of resources and capability to mobilize these resources is a vital instrument in order to relate discontent with political action (Dalton et-al., 2005). To wrap up, this theory basically invokes the importance of the accessibility of proper resources in the development and success of protests (Melissa & Ian, 2007). Regardless of the assumptions the resource mobilization theory presents, this theory couldn't find itself free from critics.

2.3.3. Framing of Grievances

The frame analysis theory or framing theory is believed to be originated in the early 1960s and was recovered and renewed by the work of Erving Goffman in which he insisted that people understand and organize the world surrounding them based up on how they frame their experiences (Aberue, 2015). This theory is more systematically developed and strengthened by the work of Snow and Benford in the academic arena (Opp, 2009). Scholars like Snow and Benford (1988) with social psychology backgrounds, insisted that in order to analyze the reason for why social movements and protests erupt, a major emphasis should be given to subjective dimensions of cognitive and ideational factors such as symbolization, meaning and interpretation. By and large speaking, this theory confers much importance to the courses of actions and routines through which an individual entertains the ideology of a social movement and how subsequently he supports it and participates (Oliver et al., 2003).

The central premise for this theory is that interpretation is an indispensable instrument that connects strongly felt grievances with movement participation or execution of action while noticing the fact, grievances are interpreted differently by individuals and social movement actors in different times (Snow et-al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988; 1992; Smith, 2020). As a result, social movement actors "often misunderstand or experience considerable doubt or confusion about what it is that is going on and why" (Snow et al., 1986: 466). Snow and Benford (1988) elucidate that social movements give interpretations and meanings for actions, situations and events in such a way that can immensely mobilize potential participants, acquire support

from a large group of people, and outmaneuver opponents of the movement. Thus, protests can be envisaged as “producers of meaning and functioning as signifying agents” (Snow & Benford, 1992: 151). These proponents argue that one of the indispensable assignment of leaders of a social movement is to confer or “frame” a social movement in based up on the core values embraced by people the movement wants to include as participants.

Moreover, Benford and Snow (2000) contemplate that, “collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization” (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). Hence, they ponder that there is a foregoing framing process of ideas, issues and situations for which individuals have prioritized before taking some kind of action or reaction to some situation. This process of framing denotes for “an active, process-derived phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction” (Snow & Benford, 1992: 136). Oliver et-al (2003) presented a situation where the way individuals perceive and frame things might extend up to considering what was formerly regarded as a normal and unfortunate situation as immoral, inexcusable and unjust situation which ultimately alters self-responsibility and blame towards a system failure. For this purpose, proponents of framing theory steadily claim that the process and ways in which individuals define and experience a given objective situation is very critical in our understanding of protests. In short, it can be generalized that framing theory emphasizes on four wide areas: the creation and use of collective action frames; framing processes; opportunities and constraints and the effect of framing on movement outcomes and other processes (Benford and Snow 2000: 612-13).

2.3.4. Political Opportunities and Processes

In this perspective, there are two versions of thoughts but with the same idea to analyze the emergence of protests: Political Opportunity and Political Process. Political opportunity theory is formulated by Eisinger in which he emphasized on the effects of a “political environment” which refers to a situation in which politics takes place, and he calls this context the “structure of political opportunities” (Opp, 2009). The central premise for this thought is that political opportunity structures have an immense impact on political behavior (Eisenger, 1973). This major premise is further supported by Meyer and Minkoff (2004) insisting, the arrangement and operation of political institutions enormously influence the public’s behavior. Eisenger (1973)

accentuates “the manner, in which individuals and groups in the political system behave, then, is not simply a function of the resources they command but of the openings, weakspots, barriers, and resources of the political system itself. There is, in this sense, interaction, or linkage, between the environments, understood in terms of the notion of a structure of political opportunities, and political behavior” (Eisenger, 1973: 2). Moreover, Meyer (2004) expounds that “Protest occurs when there is a space of toleration by a polity and when claimants are neither sufficiently advantaged to obviate the need to use dramatic means to express their interests nor so completely repressed to prevent them from trying to get what they want” (Meyer 2004: 128).

The other precise version of political opportunity structures theory is McAdam’s (1982) “Political Process” model in which he asserts that individuals’ subjective understanding of the existing political structure or order as something that is possible to be challenged offers the rational foundation for protest actions (McAdam, 1982). As a theory, political process elucidate that the emergence of protests strongly relies on available growing political opportunities, the people’s organizational strength and collective definition of their situations as unjust (McAdam, 1982; Foweraker, 1995; Phongpaichit & Baker, 1999). McAdam (1982) speculates that there are three crucial components for movement formation: Insurgent Consciousness (the movement members’ collective sense and feel of an injustice or grievance that can bring motivation for movement organization), Organizational Strength (strong leadership and adequate resources), and Political Opportunities (the existence of a favorable condition that can allow to challenge the existing political system).

Generally speaking, as far as the idea of political opportunity is concerned, different premises and debates have been presented by different scholars. The debate’s central focus is on the open or closed nature of a political system. In this regard, some scholars claim that closed political systems obliges individuals to opt using unconventional political channels and due to this protests are more likely in societies where citizens lack access to an open institutionalized political participation and when the political system is repressive (Kitschelt 1986; Cuzan 1991). Whereas Meyer and Tarrow (1998) argue that open political system hearten the manipulation of protests because protests cost lower and have numerous opportunity for success unlike the higher cost and narrow opportunity in amore closed and repressive systems. In contrast to this, Eisinger (1973) holds that in such kind of situations where there is a political system with a mixture of

closed and open feature or with mid a level openness, protests will get a favorable environment to erupt because in most open societies protests are low due to accessibility of participation via conventional channels and protests are also low in most closed societies due to the tendency to repress public actions in repressive systems.

To wrap up, the political opportunity or process theory argues that the opportunity found in a certain political system shapes the ways how individuals and groups express their own discontents and interests. However, it may or may not determine the ways or channels in which individuals and groups opt to attain their goals. In today's world, we can observe the eruption of protests in both of societies where there is open political system and closed political system. Thus, it is a clear that protests erupt in many societies regardless of the open or closed nature of the political system they have. This subsequently implies that analysis of protests necessitate much beyond a sole factor of open or closed nature of political systems or structures.

2.3.5. Political Disenchantment

Another academic insight presented to analyze the eruption of protests is the perspective of political disenchantment. The central point of this perspective is the cause of protests is accounted for being politically dissatisfied (Inglehart, 1997; Norris; 1999; Dalton, 2004; Stoker, 2010). Hence, the major claim by these scholars is that a performance of a political system to respond and address the questions and demands of citizens is very critical in the development of protests in a sense that when citizens feel that the political system is inept and incapable of responding to their questions and demands, people will lose their trust on the system and subsequently engage in protest actions so as to get their questions responded. Russel Dalton (2004) insisted that when citizens conceive politicians as distrustful, have skeptical feeling towards democratic institutions, and disillusioned regarding the democratic process, they will opt to protest in order to challenge the system. Henceforth, Dalton concludes that “citizens with higher levels of trust are more likely to vote and be active in political campaigns, while they tend to be less active in protests” (Dalton, 2004: 173-177). To put it differently, Stoker (2010) contemplated that political disenchantment feeling develops when citizens lose confidence that they are no longer able to influence decisions of a system and afterward envisage the system incapable of responding. Norris & Inglehart (2018) stressed that when countries are experiencing attrition of trust in political institutions and growing democratic performance dissatisfaction, the

legitimacy of the system becomes questioned. Nonetheless, van Aelst and Walgrave (2001) questioned the linkage between political dissatisfaction and protests actions insisting protests become normalized in today's world.

As it is discussed above, one thing that should be clear is that no theory or perspective is per se solidly sufficient to explain the causes of protests. This is due to the fact that protests erupt in different societies that possess variety of cultures, economic structures, political structures, socio-demographic statuses and the like. This signifies that political protests erupt for different reasons in different societies. Thus, a particular theory might explain the causes of a protest in a certain country and at the same time it might also fails to analyze the causes of a protest in another country. But undoubtedly speaking, directly or indirectly there is a sense of grievance or some kind resentments in every protests. Protesters do not protest without reason or cause. There are some discontent feelings that push them to protest. As a matter of fact, the source, cause, nature, authenticity and the type of the resentments, discontents and grievances might vary from place to place. Whether the grievances and discontents genuinely exist or framed and perceived, protesters still endeavor to discharge some kind of discomfort. As a result, it can be concluded that no protest erupt without imposing discomfort and grievance feeling in the psychological make of protesters.

2.4. Conceptualizing Social Capital

As the same with other concepts in social sciences, social capital also has no single universally agreed definition in the social science academic arena. Many definitions are given to social capital by many scholars. As Putnam (2000) recounts, the term social capital has been subjected for sixth time coining differently by different academic scholars and practitioners over the twentieth century. The initial use of the word was by Lyda Hanifan in 1916 in the time she wrote a school report claiming social capital (equated with social intercourse consisting of sympathy, good will and fellowship among individuals) is essential to make schools successful (Aghajanian, 2016).

The most predominant theoretical contributions are bestowed by three scholars' works: Bourdiue (1986), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1995). Pierre Bourdieu (1986) is known to be the pioneer in giving social capital a more systematic definition in the academic arena. He regards social

capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1986: 248). Afterwards, James Coleman defined social capital as “variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors whether persons or corporate actors within the structure” (Coleman, 1988:98). And unlike Bourdieu, he strongly insists that the formation of social capital is not a deliberate act rather it is a spontaneous process resulted from different actions intended for other purposes. In other words, individuals and groups do not manage to create social capital per se on purpose (Coleman, 1988). Later on, Robert Putnam equated social capital to “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam et al, 1994:35) which is in fact the most frequently cited definition.

All the above entertained definitions of social capital directly or indirectly concur that social capital is created out of a relationship or attachment of individuals with certain group in their social life. As a result, this kind of membership grants some kind of benefits for individuals. Unlike the two (Bourdieu & Coleman), Robert Putnam in his other works offers another comprehensive conception of social capital. He advanced a step by introducing the idea of “bonding social capital” and “Bridging social capital”. Hence, he endeavors to classify social capital in two types. For this reason, he conceives bridging social capital as “open networks that are outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages” and bonding social capital as “inward looking networks that tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups” (Putnam, 2000:28). In other words, bridging social capital ties individuals from diverse backgrounds collectively. In this regard, Pelling and High (2005) ponder that bridging social capital depicts social relationships and associations formed among people with diverse social identities but having common goals and interest. Essentially, it portrays bonds that connect individuals, communities or groups that may have differences in terms of socio-economic background, race, class, religion etc. (Claridge, 2018). Whereas bonding social capital strengthens the unity, togetherness and identity of individuals with the same backgrounds. It is some kind of tie with in a group where there is resemblance in terms of identity and characteristics (Putnam, 2000). In this line of explanation, it can be asserted that bonding social capital is the collection of networks which encompasses great magnitude of interactions among

members by which interconnectedness of individuals is mostly brought by the feeling of being known each other like family members, neighbors, friends etc. (Claridge, 2018).

Apart from the above prominent scholars, many scholars defined social capital according to their perspectives. Baker (1990) perceives social capital as a resource that helps individuals to attain their interests, which is brought by the relationship formed in social structures. Thus, an individual will be granted a social capital whenever he creates some kind of relationship in a social structure. Whereas Burt (2005) describes social capital as the collection of friends, colleagues and the overall communications in a society which enable an individual to obtain opportunities in order to utilize his human and financial capital. As a result, social capital can be perceived as some kind of state of affair where individuals get the opportunity to guarantee their benefits due to their attachment or affiliation to a certain group or network (Sobel, 2002). Moreover, World Bank (2000: no pagination) considers social capital as “the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions.”

Generally speaking, regarding the conception of social capital, Alejandro Portes (1998) affirms that social capital might not be distributed equally among members and social groups and membership in a group might necessitate compliance of individuals to the group norms and duties that can lessen individual freedom and autonomy which he calls it negative social capital. Moreover, Leenders and Gabbay (1999) assert that a social capital might also be a social liability in such kind of situations where criminal gang activities are encouraged by intra-group relations. Basically, as Putnam (1993) cogitated, a strong social capital will result advanced flow of information which can upgrade knowledge and sophistication, increased institutional efficiency, successful collective action and the like. Whereas Colleta and Cullen (2000) argue that the absence of social capital that bridge cleavages enhances the propensity for social fragmentation, oppression and exclusion and violent behaviors and acts. To wrap up, amid the multitudes of definition of social capital, for the purpose of this paper, the study will base on Putnam’s definition of social capital as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”. Forthwith, the study conceives social capital as a strong social life bond created among individuals and groups which resulted from their frequent interactions in their social life.

2.5. The Dimensions of Social Capital

Social capital can be expressed and manifested in some forms. This can be in other word called dimensions of social capital. Dimension implies the ways social capital manifest itself. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) are accredited for the foundation of these dimensions or components of social capital which provides a comprehensive framework for the conception of social capital. These dimensions are known as Structural, cognitive and relational dimensions.

The structural component denotes to the available network of access to people and resources in which individuals can rely on and entertain their interests. It basically suggests to the nature of the social system and the whole set of connections in which relations can be manifested (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Uphoff and Wijayaratna (2000) emphasized that the structural dimension of social capital signifies the patterns of bonds and interactions among people. As a result, this component opens the doors for co-operation and grants participations to individuals (Diani, 2007). Therefore, it provides some kind of podium for individuals and groups to exchange information, knowledge and other mutual benefits (Ansari, Munir, and Gregg, 2012). In short, the structural dimension of social capital indicates the web of connections, interactions and affiliations that drive individuals to stand for the mutual benefit and engage in cooperation.

The cognitive dimension of social capital implies those resources that enable individuals and groups to have a mutual system of meaning, interpretation and representation (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). It is about the existence of shared languages and codes which lays down the foundational basis for communication among individuals (Gooderham, 2007). In other words, it indicates the presence of shared languages and narratives and common understandings embraced in individuals and groups in their view of social life around them (Tomlinson, 2012). Shortly speaking, the cognitive dimension of social capital implies a shared interpretation of reality, values and goals by individuals within the network of connections.

The relational dimension of social capital depicts individuals' personal and emotional affiliations with one another who are embraced by the web of connections (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). This dimension shows us the nature and qualities of inter personal relationships manifested in terms of friendship, trust, respect and obligations (Gooderham, 2007). Nahapiet and Goshal (1998) emphasized that identity and identification, trustworthiness, shared norms and sanctions,

expectations and obligations are the vital indicators of relational dimension of social capital. All in all, these dimensions of social capital enable us to have a comprehensive and analytical understanding of social capital.

2.6. Pillars of Social Capital

Once social capital is defined and dimensions are analyzed, the next step for the researchers is that how can be social capital assessed or evaluated, so that the quality or the strength of a social capital prevailing in a certain society can be concluded. Henceforth, by employing indicators or elements which are inferred from the basic concept of social capital, it can be analyzed whether a social capital in a certain society is existing, strengthened or weaken. Recently, a paper presented by a research team at World Bank titled “Analyzing Social Capital in Context: A Guide to Using Qualitative Methods and Data” presents six dimensions or pillars of social capital to be focused in conducting researches about social capital. In this line, Dudwick et al. (2006) enlists the following as six dimensions of social capital: groups and networks, trust and solidarity, collective action and co-operation, information flow and communication, social cohesion and inclusion and empowerment and political action.

Moreover, Akram et al. (2016) elucidate that social capital can be evaluated by examining the extent of interconnectedness, trust and common shared visions, quality and nature of these connections. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, the researcher will focus on the existence and functioning of groups or networks, solidarity and trust, flow of information, and co-operation to scrutinize the 2016-2018 Gondar city protest implications on the social capital. Forthwith, the presence and extent of these pillars of social capital indicate a strengthened social capital and the absence or lack of these pillars implies a weakened social capital. The following is a brief explanation about the dimensions or indicators of social capital which is entirely depends up on the World Bank’s research team document.

I. Groups and Networks

This relates with the structural dimension of social capital. As it is discussed previously, the foremost foundational basis for social capital is the existence of web of networks and groups where the interaction among individuals is manifested. The web of networks and groups show us how individuals interact and communicate one another. It also depicts how individuals can

achieve their interests and benefits from their membership via using these networks and groups. It also portrays the extent of individuals' participation in many kinds of networks and social organizations and the degree of their contributions they receive and give. Networks can be formal or informal networks. Informal networks are those kinds of networks where information and resources are exchanged in the most spontaneous and unregulated ways within the community. Whereas networks can be some kind of associations with defined structures, rules, and roles managing the cooperation in order to achieve the common goal. Hence, the presence of a well functioning network of connections and group interaction can indicate a strong social capital or good quality of social capital.

II. Trust and Solidarity

This dimension basically relates with the relational dimension of social capital which focuses on the extent of trust and solidarity among the overall members of the network of connections or the community. As Putnam (2000) meticulously contemplated, social capital exists most importantly when there is trust in the interaction, communication and relationship of members of the group. Gambetta (1988: 219) insists, "Trusting a person means believing that when offered the chance, he/she is not likely to behave in a way that damages us". Therefore, trust and solidarity is manifested in terms of closeness in the relationship and reliance on members to get support. As a result, higher extent of mutual trust among members in the community indicates a strong or good social capital.

III. Collective Action and Co-operation

This dimension indicates whether and how members of the group or community are engaging in work with others in the community so as to achieve the mutual benefit and also it shows how the members are working together to respond to a harmful condition or crisis. It also depicts what members will face if they fail to participate on activities imposed by the community. As a result, members' collective participation on what the group or community expects, will imply a good or strong social capital and the opposite implies a weakened social capital.

IV. Information Flow and Communication

This dimension deals with whether members of the community get access to information regarding issues vital to the group in general and individuals in particular from their networks of connection. It also encapsulates whether and how members of the community are receiving and sharing information one another. Besides, it focuses on whether and how members are communicating in the group. Therefore, a regular flow of information and communication among members in the network implies a good social capital in relation with this dimension and the opposite implies a weakened social capital.

V. Social Cohesion and Inclusion

This dimension explores whether and how inclusive the networks and groups are. This indicator will tell us whether the social bonds and networks include or exclude members in the community in terms of providing services. This can be revealed via community events like weddings, funerals and other community ceremonies that enhance solidarity, social cohesion communication and sense of collective consciousness in the community. Henceforth, a social bond or community which is inclusive of various members in its functioning signifies a strong and good social capital.

VI. Empowerment and political action

This dimension explores whether community members have the sense of satisfaction, personal efficacy, and capacity to influence both local community events and broader political outcomes. Contextually, empowerment and political action also occurs within a community's formal and informal networks and associations in terms of exerting influence in time of sharing responsibilities, executing activities and making decisions regarding some issues. Accordingly, the presence of individuals' sense of capability to exert influence in the community's operation indicates a good social capital.

All in all, these dimensions are vital indicators of social capital in a certain area. Usually these dimensions as indicators of social capital overlap each other. Basically, the presence and the magnitude of their presence indicate the quality of the social capital existing in the area. One thing that should be underlined is that all these dimensions might not exist altogether with the same magnitudes. Usually, the presence and the extent of a particular dimension shown in a

community, most probably will lead to the presence of the other dimension and vice versa. Generally speaking, emphasizing on these dimensions will help us to better understand the status of a social capital in a given community. Accordingly, this paper gives due emphasis on most of these dimensions in time of scrutinizing the protest's implication on the social capital.

2.7. Bonding Social Capital and Bridging Social Capital

Social capital can exist among or between individuals, groups or communities. Thus, social can be classified as Bonding, Bridging and linking social capital. For the purpose of the study, bonding social capital and bridging social capital are the main focus of this section. Robert Putnam (2000) is regarded as the one who contributed a lot for a luminous explanation and distinction between bonding social capital and bridging social capital. He conceives bonding social capital as “inward looking networks that tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups” and Bridging social capital as “outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages” (Putnam, 2000: 22). In other words, bonding social capital gather “together people who are like one another in important respects (ethnicity, race, religion, age, gender, social class, and so on)” (Putnam, 2002: 11) whereas bridging “bring together people who are unlike one another” (Putnam, 2002: 11).

Specifically, bonding social capital indicates a dense of strong ties and connections between individuals or peoples who know each other closely like families, neighbors, friends etc. (Wakefield & Poland, 2005). Accordingly, the connection or interaction created out of individuals having similarity in terms of socio economic background or any other identity engenders high degree of homogeneity to the group identity, functioning and structure (Putnam, 2002; Field, 2003). Essentially, bonding social capital plays a crucial role in the interaction of individuals in terms of creating shared identities; strengthening in group reciprocity and personal trust; providing emotional imminence or affiliation and giving support and aid in times of crisis (Putnam, 2000; Murphy, 2007). Hence, most of the time bonding social capital is protective that reinforce exclusive identity and have closed membership, which frequently results the formation of associations like self-help groups (Putnam, 2000; Van Oorshot et-al, 2006). Forthwith, Putnam (2000) insist that bonding social capital prompts greatly enhanced solidarity within a group structure and enable the mobilization of individuals for a common purpose.

On the other side, bridging social capital are those kind of networks or connections that prevail among individuals or groups who have differences each other in certain ways (Putnam, 2000). Notably, it is an outward looking which is inclusive and has an open membership which tightens differences and gaps prevailing in communities (van Oorschot et al., 2006). Accordingly, bridging social capital, “by connecting persons and other social ‘sites’ with distinct traits, bridging ties often constitute bridges across roles, status differences, material and symbolic interests, space, norms, and even worldviews.” (De Souza Briggs, 2003: 2). As the diversity defines this heterogeneous connection, the connection grants individuals access to new information and ideas exterior to their instantaneous network of friends and relations (Putnam, 2000; Field, 2003). Thereupon, bridging social capital lets different individuals to know one another; facilitates flow of information and idea and mobilizes community resources and ultimately results solving of common problems (Wakefield & Poland, 2005).

Generally speaking, while bonding connections regard the group’s members as similar and having shared values and norms, bridging connections acknowledges certain differences in the group’s members (Westlund & Gawell, 2012). To wrap up, “bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity; Bridging networks, by contrast are better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion.” (Putnam, 2000:22). Henceforth, it can be asserted that, bonding social capital helps to maintain survivality, while bridging social capital enable to go beyond in achieving development or growth (De Souza Briggs, 2003). But as bonding social capital has a negative attribute of excluding outsiders (Kilpatrick, Field & Falk, 2003), so do bridging social capital has a threat of homogenizing instead of respecting minority differences (Arneil, 2006).

2.8. Conflict and Social Capital

By and large, both conflict and social capital are embedded in the society. In other words, conflicts and social capital do not exist outside of a society. As Colletta and Cullen (2000) argue conflicts do have a potential to demolish social capital. These scholars ponder that conflicts in a society most of the time have violent nature which result casualties, sufferings, destruction of materials and displacement of peoples. As a result, the social life bond too will be exposed to demolition because conflict enhances social tension and decrease trust which ultimately minimizes cooperation among individuals. In addition, Cassar et-al. (2013) ruminate that conflict

imperils the social capital embraced by individuals through imposing a blight of mistrust among them. Accordingly, when a conflict erupts in a society people begin to see many aspects of life skeptically so as to not be the victim of that conflict. This will lead them to be worrisome of their interaction with one another.

Moreover Keho (2009) after analyzing the social capital in time of conflict in Cote d' Ivoire, concludes that conflict wanes social capital through deepening social cleavages among communities; imposing interpersonal and communal group mistrust and destroying norms and values. But it enhanced the in group social capital. Similarly, Gilligan et al. (2014) claimed that a violent conflict will oblige individuals to rely one another on the threat they have faced, which will result a strengthened social capital among individuals with same social background (Bonding social capital) and might weaken out group social capital (bridging social capital). Thus, it can be concluded that the relationship between conflict and social capital is complicated.

As far as the relationship between conflict and social capital is concerned, the researcher of this study believes that the context, the nature and the type of the conflict may result different outcomes regarding their relationship. As a matter of fact, political protest is one form of conflict. Unfortunately, as to the knowledge of the researcher, the existing literature both globally and regionally, has a gap to scrutinize the relationship between political protests and social capital. The researcher of this paper firmly believe that political protests as one kind of conflict should be analyzed in relation with social capital.

2.9. The Quandary with the Concept of Social Capital

Like other social science concepts, social capital also has its own conceptual problems and ambiguities. Sobel (2002) notifies that most of the time social capital has been exposed for tautological statements in a sense that the outcomes of social capital are being equated with social capital itself. He demonstrates that conceptual confusion is unfolded to envisage social capital simultaneously as infrastructures that create social capital like associational membership and social networks, and as outcomes from it like as trust solidarity and co-operation. The other conceptual critique comes from scholars from economics claiming it is difficult to consider social capital as a capital for it does not fulfill other capitals' (human and physical capital) characteristics like depreciation with use, transferability, deliberate loss in the present or future

investment (Arrow, 2000 and Ostrom, 2000). In short, social capital can be considered as belonging to the most debatable concepts in the academics. It is a broad concept defined and regarded differently by many scholars.

2.10. Conceptual Framework of the Study

2.10.1. Grievance-Relative Deprivation Perspective

Some scholars meticulously argued that individuals engage in protest activities in order to discharge their grievances which are brought by feelings of injustice, relative deprivation and frustration (Gurr, 1970; Berkowitz, 1972; Crosby, 1976; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984; Stewart, 2008). To buttress this tenet, Klandermans (1997) insisted, grievances which are some kind of perception in which people consider themselves as they have been deprived of equality and currently believe they are facing illegitimate inequality with feeling of moral resentment to a certain state of affair, are the main drivers for protest action. Moreover, Ted Gurr (2000) strongly claims that grievances are the consequences of being repressed, having lost historical autonomy and being collectively disadvantaged. Gurr accentuates, “the extent of their material, political, and cultural disadvantages; the historical loss of political autonomy; and the extent to which force has been used to establish and maintain their subordinate status” are the decisive incentives pushing individuals to carry out protest actions (Gurr, 2000: 73). Whereas Paul Collier and Hoeffler (2004) stipulate that grievances are a product of ethnic or religious hatred, political repression, political exclusion and economic inequality. To this end, these kinds of feelings are not always resolved in a direct and official channel of participation but frequently it is observed that they are discharged via indirect channels like social movements or protests (McVeigh, 1995). Simon and Klandermans (2001) cited in LeFebvre and Armstrong (2018), fortify the grievance assumption by claiming, when the grievance of individuals is ascribed towards an external body such as political leadership, institutional organization, law enforcement and the like, individuals’ inclination to protest becomes imminent.

The most widely known view of grievance perspective is the one presented by Frances Stewart (2008) in which the scholar posited that the most dangerous situation that create grievances and subsequently lead individuals for violent actions is inequality in terms of socio-economic, political and cultural status among individuals which is called horizontal inequality. Generally

speaking, grievance sentiment is a feeling borne out of deprivation feelings. Most of the time, instead of focusing on objective circumstances, this deprivation feeling arises from individuals' and groups' subjective judgment of their own conditions in relation with others' perceived conditions (Tropp and Wright, 1999). This kind of feeling brings a relative deprivation sentiment. Generally speaking, amid the diverse thoughts within Relative deprivation perspective, this theory basically asserts that when people make comparisons about their current conditions with other groups or themselves at different point of time and believe that they are worse off, they will develop resentful and angry feelings and endeavor to address this problem through protest actions (Gurr, 1970; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984; Smith et-al, 2012).

In the most frequently cited work in the relative deprivation camp, “why men Rebel” (1970) by Ted Gurr relative deprivation is defined as “tension that develops from a discrepancy between the ‘ought’ and the ‘is’ ” (Gurr, 1970:23). This definition implies that when individuals deemed themselves that they are entitled to get some kind of goods, services or any kind of advantage and in reality their current condition is not in line with what they think, the feeling of relative deprivation will develop. The reference point for this entitlement is other individuals or groups or individuals' own past status quo. Accordingly, this kind of feeling accompanied by wrath, anger and resentment will alter in to grievance. And this grievance will be discharged through violent actions like protests. Hence, for Gurr, the presence of individuals, who believe they are deprived, enhances the likelihood of protest actions. But at the same time he underlines that “the potential for collective violence varies strongly with the intensity and scope of relative deprivation among members of a collectivity” (Gurr, 1970: 24).

Crosby (1976) insisted that relative deprivation occurs when individuals want something and feel entitled to attain it, but failed to attain it and do not consider the failure to attain these wants as their own fault while claiming that other individuals attained these wants. In other words, when individuals' expectation of entitlement of goods and services is thwarted, they will have outrage behavior and strive to rectify the perceived inequality (Walker and Smith, 2002). Essentially, it can be asserted that the most important feature of relative deprivation assumption is that when people believe that they should have to be entitled more while comparing with they have, irrespective of the advantages and benefits they have, they will feel and experience deprivation sentiments (Smith and Pettigrew, 2012). Accordingly, when relative deprivation occurs,

individuals will begin experiencing resentment called grievances which serve as an incentive for violent actions (Bartusevicius and van Leeuwen, 2020). Regarding the condition in which deprivation might occur, Gurr (1970) elucidates that relative deprivation occurs may be in terms of physical goods, values and power. In other words, when individuals believe that they are entitled to attain these physical goods, values or power but failed to entertain them and make a judgment that they are disadvantaged when they compare themselves with other groups, relative deprivation sentiment will be entrenched among these individuals.

Succinctly speaking, relative deprivation feeling will born when people compare their current quality of life with others' standard of life, past status or with a perceived expectation and subsequently found themselves as victim of inequality or injustice (Grasso et-al, 2019). One thing that has to be emphasized here is only individual relative deprivation sentiment doesn't suffice for a protest action; rather it has to be linked with other groups' feelings. In other words, individual grievance should manifest itself collectively. In this regard, Foster and Matheson (1995) stressed that when a group experience is pertinent to personal experience, in a sense that when individuals personally feel being deprived and at the same time belong to a resource poor group, the likelihood of protest action will be enhanced. This point was previously noted by Runciman (1966) pondering, group relative deprivation feelings ought to link with only group serving behaviors like collective actions in order to execute protest actions. With the same token, it can be asserted that the sum of individuals' perceived deprivation which is brought by a psychological process of making judgment in comparison with others leads individuals to engage in a violent protest (Regan and Norton, 2005).

Smith et-al. (2012) cited in Pettigrew (2015) emphasized that experiencing of relative deprivation feeling should pass through three psychological processes: making a cognitive comparison, a judgment that one's group is disadvantaged and finally an unfair view of this disadvantage and a consequent resentment. To wrap up, relative deprivation theory do not assert that deprivation feeling only brings protests, rather it acknowledges other factors for the eruption of protests like the social structure, individual and collective perception of discontent and system blame for the perceived inequality or sense of system illegitimacy (Sayles, 1984). All in all, as Smith and Pettigrew (2012) elucidate, the concept of Relative Deprivation is unique from earlier theories and as the same time exhaustive with two points. The first one is relative deprivation is

comparative in a sense that there is always people's self comparisons with other groups and own past and desired status. The second one is relative deprivation always violates expectation meaning because the comparisons are always made by employing principles about what "ought to be" or some kind of entitlement, the actual condition mismatches the expectation.

2.10.2. Conflict and social capital

The relationship between conflict and social capital is somehow ambiguous. Their relationship varies across the nature, form, kind and actors of which the conflict is embraced with. As some researches indicate there are those kinds of situations where conflict is found to be contributing for the strengthening of the social capital. Whereas some researches revealed that conflict weakens a social capital. As it is mentioned before, it is the violent nature of the conflict that is accounted for the harsh consequences of conflicts. As Collier and Hoeffler (1999) elucidate, when a conflict is erupted due to exclusion, inequality, and indignity feelings and concomitantly accompanied with the manipulation of ethnic, religious or other differences, it becomes more violent towards communities. Thus, they conclude, ethnic conflict imposes a detrimental and destructive situation towards the wellbeing of the society by undermining the social, political and economic status of the society.

Moreover, Miedema (2010) contemplate, when ethnic conflict erupts in an ethnically polarized society, members of the ethnic group tend to associate themselves mainly with their ethnic group, while minimizing inter ethnic social capital; this subsequently creates incentives for elites to entertain some radical strategies like violence and insurgency in order to attain their interests. Accordingly, she concludes in her study that, when a violent conflict is erupted between ethnic groups, the relationship between these ethnic groups at all levels of the society such as: the individual level, local level and the polity as whole ruptures. Colleta and Cullen (2000) in their case study of Rwanda concluded that the political and economic elite regularly instrumentalized and employed identity to mobilize individuals so as to attain their own interests which resulted an altered social capital, undermined social cohesion and fragmented society.

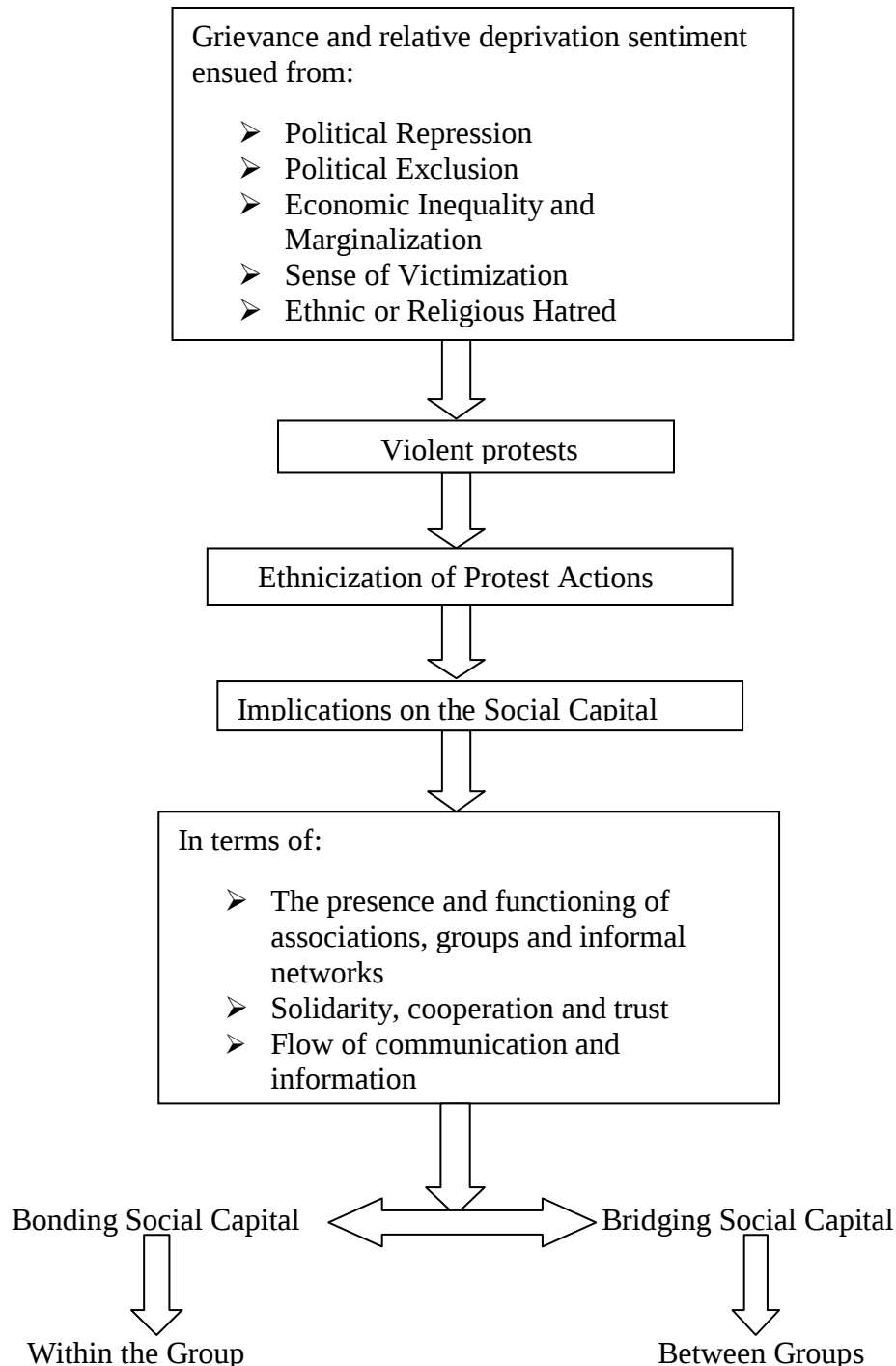
Furthermore, Abiy (2016) pointed that the 2006 violence erupted in Jimma ensued a turbulent disruption of the inter-religious social capital between Muslims and Christians that had been built for centuries. Basically the religious nature of the conflict enlarged the damage on the social

capital by concealing ethnic solidarity ties. The study concluded that the effects of the conflict on the social capital were more inimical than the physical injuries. Predominantly, the conflict inflicted damage on traditional practices that underpinned the social life bond between Muslims and Christians such as: vanishing of joint celebration of religious holidays; the deterioration of other social activities like Debo, Jarsumma and attending of weddings and mourning. Accordingly, the vacuum created by the ruptured inter-religious social capital opened the door for the intra-religious social capital to step in. All these examples indicate that any violent conflict might take another form. A conflict between individuals might transcend in to group conflict; a conflict among political elites might transform in to inter ethnic conflict; a conflict with an institution might alter to a conflict against institution members. Moreover, a protest against a government might change in to a conflict against the people the government officials represented.

One thing that should be underlined here is so long as violence entrepreneurs exist, they play a crucial role in cladding a conflict numerous faces. When a conflict touches the very essence of the wellbeing of a society, it brings multitudes of implication on the interaction, solidarity and cohesion of individuals and groups within a given society. If a conflict erupts in heterogeneous society and that conflict touches more than one ethnic group, it might have different consequences on the intra ethnic social capital (bonding social capital) and inter ethnic social capital (Bridging social capital).

In the very beginning, the protest in Gondar city was targeted against a government. But in due course, the protest transcended in to some actions that touch wellbeing, solidarity and cohesion of the Amhara and Tigriyan ethnic groups. Eventually, some protest actions signaled an attempt to give the protest an ethnic nature that could have resulted devastating destruction. Astoundingly, the two ethnic groups didn't go in to conflicts one another. But realistically speaking, some protest actions were occurred that might bring an implication on the solidarity and cohesion between them, i.e, bridging social capital. On the other hand, there were groups who collectively struggled and suffered during the protest time and those who were supporting the cause of the protest. During the protest time, many individuals who supported the cause of the protest participated in numerous ways such as demonstrating, boycotting, preparing slogans and messages, distributing information, leading the protest via social media etc. These

individuals have been frequently engaged in interactions and communications for the common cause and goal throughout the protest time. Thus, the protest also enabled to gather individuals who have common cause communicating one another to achieve their common goal. Accordingly, the protest also might have a different implication on the solidarity and cohesion within the group, i.e., the bonding social capital.



Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

The research employed a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative approach is an inquiry that emphasizes on the way how people interpret the experiences and perception regarding the social reality surrounding them (Mohajan, 2018). As a result, it can be conceived that the central characteristic of qualitative research is that it scrutinizes the way people grasp their own life experiences in their own mind and words (Cropley, 2015). Thus, the main concern of qualitative inquiry is to figure out how people create their understandings and view of the social world around them (Creswell, 2003).

3.2. Research Design

A research design is some kind of blueprint for the research inquiry in order to get the answers for the problem the study endeavors for (Ranjit, 2011). The objective of this study was to explore the driving factors behind the 2016 Gondar city protest and implications on the social capital. Thus, it doesn't seek to give a final conclusive answer to the research questions, rather it explores. Accordingly, this study followed an exploratory design. Basically, exploratory research design is conducted when an existing phenomena is not known adequately and has unclearly defined problem (Saunders et-al., 2009).

3.3. Sources of Data

Both primary data and secondary data were employed in the study. Primary data were collected from interviews and Focus Group Discussions. Whereas secondary data was acquired from books, journals, research papers, reports, conference papers, images and videos. Nearly all of study's data was collected before the current war in Tigray regional state is broke out and it was aimed to assess realities and scenarios occurred before the current war in Tigray region.

3.4. Sampling Techniques

The researcher employed non-probability sampling techniques. From the different non-probability sampling methods, purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were used to gather the necessary data. Totally 29 individuals were participated in the research.

3.4.1. Purposeful Sampling

Purposive sampling is a strategy in which the researcher deliberately chooses participants or phenomenon for their deemed information or knowledge they have. Thus, the researcher deliberately chose individuals who have essential information. Accordingly, key informants and some interviewees had been selected based on the individuals' experience and closeness they had with the protest and based on the role they play in the city's social life affairs. Two sub-cities were purposefully selected due to two reasons: due to being a central place of the protest where demonstrations and strikes were carried out frequently and because of the existence of sizeable Tigriyans and amharas residents in these sub cities. The two sub cities are "Abajale sub city (comprising Kebele 04, 05, 11 &12) and Arada sub city (Kebele 07, 08, 09 & 10).

3.4.2. Snowball Sampling

Snowball sampling is one way of selecting a sample by using networks. It starts with taking few individuals for the required information and asking these individuals to further select other individuals who can provide the acquired information and taking them as part of the sample (Kumar, 2011). This respondent-led technique was employed in order to select individuals who were protest mobilizers and facilitators and it was also employed in order to select elders and some social life network and association leaders. Informants from government and political activists assisted the researcher to find elders, social life network leaders and protester mobilizers, participants and facilitators.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

The research predominantly employed primary data collection methods. Interviews and focus group discussion were used as primary data collection methods. In addition, document analysis and content analysis were also used to collect the necessary information.

3.5.1. Interview

Semi structured and unstructured interviews (in-depth interview) were conducted. The semi structured interview was conducted with key informants. Thereupon, regarding the key informant interview, two individuals from the Gondar city police department bureau, one from Gondar city higher court, one from Amhara Democratic Party (later called Amhara Prosperity Party), two from Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee, one from Amhara youth association, one protest mobilizer and one social media activist were selected. The key informant interview was basically conducted in order to understand the driving factors behind the protest and its general

outcomes to social conditions. The unstructured interview (in-depth interview) was also conducted with two individuals who serve in the two sub cities' "*Mahberawi Frdbet*", previously known as "*Mahiberawi Shengo*" (Social Court) and simultaneously active participant in their respective social life association (*Senebte* and *Mahiber*); one older Tigriyan resident from social association and three from youth associations. This in-depth interview was conducted in order to profoundly understand the social life connections in the city in relation with the protest.

3.5.2. Focus Group Discussions

The study further employed Focus group discussion (FGD) as one of the research tools for data collection. This was done in order to augment, confirm and triangulate the information that was acquired from interviews. Basically, two focus group discussions were conducted. The first FGD is consisted of seven individuals who were notable mobilizers, facilitators and participant of the protest and were formerly arrested and released. This discussion was conducted in order to overwhelmingly understand the protest's implication on the bonding social capital. The second FGD consist 7 individuals comprised of three leaders of social life associations in the two sub-cities and four Tigriyans who are distinguished senior residents in the two Sub-cities. Most importantly, issues regarding the bridging social capital and the protest's implication on their social life bond were discussed thoroughly. The researcher was engaged as facilitator and the discussion was carried out in the form of in-depth discussion.

3.5.3. Document Analysis

The researcher further carefully analyzed documents, books, reports, research materials, videos, journals and other written materials in various format about the problem that the study endeavor to address.

3.5.4. Content Analysis

In this method of data collection, the researcher meticulously analyzed photos and pictures that were captured during demonstrations time which were written in Amharic and English in the time of demonstrations. Some of those photos were obtained from the respondents and some from websites.

3.6. Data Analysis Technique

The study has employed a qualitative method of data analysis. The data collected through numerous instruments have been transcribed by the researcher. The transcribed data was

organized through coding and classifying them by theme and context. To put it differently, the data was analyzed by identifying key themes and issues in each context. To ensure trustworthiness of the study, triangulation was used. Accordingly, Inductive generalization was used. Hence inferring from the data generated from the samples, the researcher tried to arrive at generalization on the specific area.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

Research ethics is one of the most important elements of a research that guarantees a particular study's credibility and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2003). Accordingly, the researcher has been lingered to the ethical considerations in time of conducting a research throughout the whole process of the study. Therefore, the researcher has been communicated with the participants based on their consent and comfort. Besides, the privacy and confidentiality of the participants was respected and ensured. Ultimately, the study is managed to be free from plagiarism of other works.

3.9. Description about the study area

The city of Gondar is situated in North-western parts of Ethiopia, Amhara Regional State. It is located at 12°03'N latitude and 37°028' which is 727 km from Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, and 120 km from Bahir Dar, the capital city of Amhara National Regional State. Gondar has a total area of 192.3 km² with undulating mountainous topography. According to the 2007 National Population and Housing Census, Gondar consists of a total of 50, 817 housing units. Gondar is the center of political and economic activities of the North Amhara region and it is main city of the North Gondar Zone. The city administration of Gondar is composed of 20 kebeles According to the Central Statistics Agency (CSA), population projection (2013), the population of Gondar was estimated to be 323,875 by 2015 and to be increased to 360,600 in 2017. The city earns a significant amount of money from hotel and tourism. The major ethnic group of the town is the Amhara (CSA, 2007).

3.10. Rationales for Selecting the Study Area

There are some rationales for selecting the study area. The first one is the paucity of comprehensive studies conducted on the 2016-18 Gondar city protest and its implications on social capital, which will be a new experience and finding. Hence, it fills the scanty empirical

study on the thematic area. Secondly, the 2016 Gondar city protest was the epicenter for Amhara protest and the foundational basis for the widely erupted Amhara city protests. Thirdly, Gondar as among the oldest cities in the country has a historical diversified demography and social life bond. Last but not least is the researcher's familiarity with the people under study. Familiarity enables the researcher to better understand the perception, experience and information of the research participants.

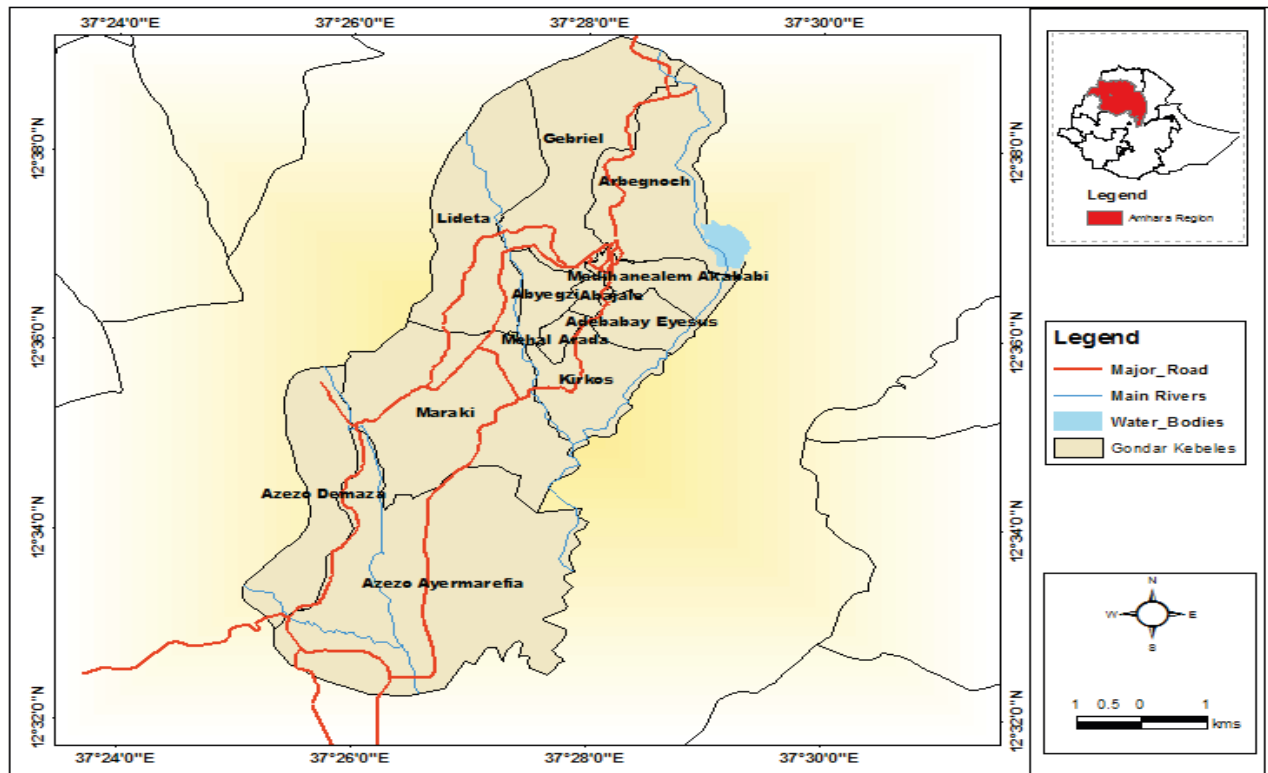


Figure 3.1: Map of the Study Area
Source: City profile Gondar, prepared by Gondar University

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Presentation

This section of the study deals with the main findings the research intends to reveal. To this end, data and information was collected from interviews, Focus Group Discussions and image contents. In addition, other studies, documents and books also bestowed the secondary data. Accordingly, the collected data is presented and analyzed systematically. In accordance with the objectives of the study, the data is broadly analyzed in to three thematic areas with each having several specific themes. Thereupon, this section is broadly classified in to three: driving factors behind the 2016-18 Gondar city protest, Implication of the protest on the social capital and ways to rejuvenate the social capital.

4.1. Major Driving Factors behind the 2016-18 Gondar City Protest

As Ted Gurr (1970) meticulously insisted, individuals will be psychologically forced to use violence actions like protests to address their discomforts, dissatisfaction and grievances created out of an existing or changing social condition. Correspondingly, the 2016-18 Gondar city protest was erupted due to accumulated grievances that have multitudes of manifestations. Accordingly, the juxtaposition of Political factors, Economic factors and Local good governance factors are predominantly accounted for the eruption of the 2016-18 Gondar city protest.

4.1.1. Political Factors

Political factors basically imply issues or claims relating with the government and the political system of the country. These political factors can be expressed in variety of aspects or manifestations. One of the informants (KI3)¹ unequivocally insisted that “*I don’t like to call the 2016 Gondar city incident as a protest, rather as a people’s struggle against a tyranny political system*”. Therefore, it can be asserted that the protest was some kind of a struggle against addressing some misdemeanors imposed by a perceived despotic government. These atrocities can take different manifestations and faces.

4.1.1.1. Claim over Lack of Democratic Governance

One of the informants (KI3) divulged that:

¹ Key Informant 3, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city’s police office

I can frankly tell you that individuals have been denied to enjoy their human and democratic rights freely. It is difficult to freely express your ideas especially when there is a political agenda. When individuals began to express their ideas, especially when there is a large audience, they would be labeled as anti-peace forces, chauvinists, old system seekers, terrorists, anti-democratic forces etc. and when they are detained, they would face severe human right violations.”.

This response props up towards the absence of enjoyment of human and democratic rights, which are one of the fundamental principle of modern democracy. Another informant (KI4)² noted that

After some period from the protest, when we examine the file record of political affiliated prisoners, most of the prisoners were detained without evidences and long term frequent appointments without getting verdict. If you remember after EPRDF conducted “Tehadso” (Renewal), the first measurement they took was release of political prisoners. Why did they do that? Because they knew it was wrong.

This response signifies that the political space or arena was narrow and sacrificing for these kinds of individuals who are active and interested in politics. Besides, apart from damaging the democratic principles of “inclusive participation”, it also indicates that the justice system hasn’t been free and impartial since individuals with anti-government views have been arrested and detained without a proper and legal procedure. This point was further noted by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s June 18, 2018 parliament speech, stating:

We as a country and a people have been experiencing detentions and torture of individuals for ages. Does the constitution say torture legally arrested individuals and throw away them in to dark house? Torturing, throwing individuals in to dark house and handicapping are terrorist actions executed by us. For these misdemeanors, I and the party EPRDF have apologized officially the people. From now on, we will not arrest individuals and then investigate them like before; rather we shall investigate them and then arrest them. (translated into English by the researcher)

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJnC2aX4jP8>

The premiere’s speech indicates two interrelated points. The first one is lack of enjoyment of human rights by the side of individuals. The second one is absence of free, fair and impartial justice system. The issue of lack of democratic governance is further emphasized by one of the informants (KI1) enunciating “*after the Tehadso Gemgema as a party we recognized this kind of*

² Key Informant 4, interviewed on 08/10/2020, from the city’s police bureau

violent, persistent and inclusive, even the one which religious fathers showed their opposition form of protest implies the government was losing legitimacy because it was depicted as undemocratic in the minds of the protests”.



Photo I: Banners used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: received from an informant

The above image indicates that the protesters were appalled by the lack of rule of law in the country. Hence, they echoed their voice demanding rule of law in the country. Besides, the protesters echoed that the ruling government has entrenched lack of freedom, justice and democratic system throughout the country. Therefore, lack of democratic governance was one of the driving factors behind the protest.

4.1.1.2. Claim over Unfair and Bogus Political Representation

Moreover, one the informants (KI6)³ contends that

There have been two claims regarding the political representation of the Amhara in the country. The first one is the Amhara people is not proportionally represented in line with its population size for it is believed the Amhara people is undercounted. The second one is although the Amhara is represented by some individuals, these individuals do not strive for the interest of the Amhara people, and hence, they do not genuinely represent Amhara. How do these kinds of politicians represent Amhara while entertaining and recognizing the Amhara oppressor political narration? Even some veteran ANDM leaders officially being heard saying the Amhara chauvinist is creating a problem for our work. These individuals were TPLF’s puppets”.

This response resonates around a perceived lack of fair and genuine representation of the Amhara people in the country’s political system. In addition, it implies, the problem is created due to TPLF’s supremacy in the federal government and its intervention in the Amhara regional politics. The protesters in Gondar city, as Amharas, feel as they are deprived of fair and genuine

³ Key Informant 6, interviewed on 13/10/2020, social media activist

political representation in the country. This lack of fair and genuine representation resentment envisage the representatives as reckless to endeavor towards the realization of the interest of the Amhara people. The above informant's argument has been further stressed by Chuchu Alebachew's (ex-veteran politician of former Amhara National Democratic Movement) book entitled “ዳገት ያበረታው የአማራው ፍኖት”⁴ contending:

ብቁ የሆኑ የሀገር መሪዎችን በማፍራት በኩል ከራሱ አልፎ ለሀገር ይተርፍ የነበረው የአማራ ህዝብ የ1983 አ/ም መንግስታዊ ለውጥ ተከትሎ በመጣው የዘር ፖለቲካ አይደለም ለሀገር የሚተርፍ መሪ ማግኘት ቀርቶ እራሱን የሚመራ መሪ እንኳን ማግኘት እየቸገረው መጣ። በሚያሳዝን ሁኔታ የአማራ ህዝብና መሬት የአመራር ደሀ ሆነ።

The English version is equivalent with “the Amhara people, who were able to produce competent leaders for the country beyond itself, became leaderless for itself due to the race politics installed in the country following the 1991 regime change. Unfortunately, the people of Amhara and the land became poor in leadership.”(Translated by the researcher).



Photo II: banner used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: received from an informant

Photo II, literally says “Stop TPLF’s supremacy!” and entails some kind of grievance towards TPLF’s political movement and operation. Thus, it is believed that in the political system where TPLF dominates, the issue of representation will be conducted in line with the best interest of TPLF. The issue of unfair and bogus representation was further mentioned by informant KI1⁴, purporting:

⁴ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party

The people perceive the federal government as exclusively run by the will of TPLF and they consider us TPLF slaves and instruments to oppress the Amhara people. As a party, we know that the people have prior accumulated development, economic and political questions. But, the people persistently in the different public podiums told us you don't represent the Amhara people. In short, the people frequently expressed their feeling as they are not genuinely represented politically.

Thus, though there are representatives of the Amhara people in the country's political system, the people frequently expressed its feeling as these representatives are phony and do not strive for the interest of the Amhara people. In accordance with this, Anwar (2018) and Takele (2019) divulged that ADP has been a crippled party and served as servant and tool of TPLF in order to marginalize the Amhara people through a lukewarm representation. Therefore, resentment created out of claims of unfair and bogus representation have been entertained in different times and enabled to create grievance on the mindset of protesters.

Furthermore, one of the informants (KI6)⁵ noted that

Since TPLF took power, the party has been working to put the Amhara people not having genuine representatives. Even the FDRE constitution was prepared and approved without a candid participation and consent of the Amhara people. The so called Amhara representatives are puppets for they didn't represent the interest of the Amhara people. So, the Amhara people weren't genuinely represented in the writing and approval of the constitution. TPLF has a long hand in the Amhara politics and tacitly have been orchestrating and managing the appointment of some puppet political officials who are loyal to TPLF for a long time.

This view accentuates that there was some kind of mentality in many Amharas in not trusting, accepting and recognizing the region's political officials and representatives of the people. As, these representatives are not trusted and considered as puppets of TPLF, the issue of bogus representation has contributed to the grievance of the protesters.

4.1.1.3. Claim over Repressive Political System

As Grasso et-al. (2017) elucidated, when people compare their current quality of life with others' standard of life, past status or with a perceived expectation and subsequently found themselves as victim of inequality or injustice, relative deprivation feeling will born and grievance prevails. One of the informants (KI2)⁶ pointed that *"we perceive the general political system is structured*

⁵ Key Informant 6, interviewed on 13/10/2020, social media activist

⁶ Key informant 2, interviewed on 7/10/2020, protest mobilizer

aiming to oppress the Amhara people. It is a fact that TPLF was an arbitrary, dictator and dominant in the Ethiopian political system. TPLF has a party manifesto which entertains “Amhara oppressor” political discourse. Thus, most of the country’s policies and laws were drafted, framed and executed in line with the interest of TPLF”. This point advocates that the protest had some kind of motive to address injustices and sufferings that are brought by a pseudo historical narration and political discourse. Accordingly, the protest has shown a strong opposition towards an “Amhara oppressor” historical narration, political discourse and injustices believed to be resulted out of this discourse.



Photo III: Banners used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: accessed from Hornaffairs.com

The slogans in the photo literally speak that **“Being Amhara should be respected!”**, **“The Amhara people are not terrorists!”**, **“Stop mass killing Amhara people!”** This photo enlightens as the Amhara people are facing structural, institutional and political injustices. Besides, it signifies that when an Amhara individual asks for the respect of his/her rights and opposes the government, he/she will be labeled as a terrorist. Besides, the life security of Amhara individual residing out of the region, Amhara individuals’ killings and displacements in other regions were condemned harshly in the demonstration. Therefore, it was believed that the political system has been structured in such a way that inflicted sufferings to the Amhara people. What is more, another interviewee (DI2)⁷ maintains that *“Moreover, look what have been the security agendas of the country. The government frequently stipulated that Amhara chauvinists and old imperial system seekers are the threats and problems for the country’s peace,*

⁷ In depth interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

development and survival. Here the ruling elite have its own definition of chauvinism and old system seeker". This response maintains that the political system was conceived as repressive of the Amhara people. The 'Amhara Oppressor' historical narration is regarded as the origin and foundational basis of for the suffering of the Amhara people in the country. Thus, it was claimed that the people has been suffering in the country in an institutionalized and systematic manner. This kind of political perception subsequently imposed a grievance on the side of the people. This kind of perceived grievance resonates around Paul Collier's (2004) assertion that grievances can be product of ethnic or religious hatred, political repression, political exclusion and economic inequality. This claim is also emphasized by another informant (KI9)⁸:

The repressive political system originates with pseudo conception and understanding of Ethiopian history. They perceive the modern Ethiopian history as Amhara dominated and oppressed Tigrilians and others. Here why the Gojjam peasant rebellion did occur against Gojjam leaders? Why do Bale peasants revolted against oromo administrators? Why did Tigray peasants revolted against Tigrayan local administrators? In short, TPLF has been entertaining detrimental political and historical narration against the Amhara people. They have been governing the country with that kind party manifesto.

In accordance with this response, it can be asserted that TPLF's party manifesto which envisages Amhara as historical oppressor has been conceived as the inception for the atrocities and injustices the Amhara people has been suffering. Accordingly, this TPLF's historical and political narration and discourse can be considered as one of the central claims that shaped the grievances and resentments of the protesters.



⁸ Key informant 9, interviewed on 14/10/2020, protest mobilizer

Photo IV: Banner used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: received from an informant

The picture denotes that the demonstration was also targeted against struggling TPLF's Political and historical discourse which was considered as the masterwork behind many of the atrocities and sufferings of the Amhara people. TPLF has been depicted in the mind of protesters as a butcher group and persistently regarded as the foremost responsible group behind the sufferings of Amharas. Besides, TPLF has been envisaged as anti-Amhara group accompanied with dictator and conspirator behavior that can go beyond extra mile to fulfill its own interest at the expense of Amhara people. In this regard, Yihune (2018) emphasized that TPLF's operations and activities has been gone against the interest of the Amhara people that can harm the Amhara people economically and politically

4.1.1.4. Claim over Loss of Historical Land: Welqayt land and a land seized by Sudanese

Another factor which is also considered as the triggering cause behind the protest is the issue of Welqayt land. There has been a persistent claim for the Welqayt land as Amhara land by individuals and other concerned parties. Among them, the Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee (WAIC) is the crucial one. This Committee frequently requested the government to address the issue. Unfortunately, the government's passiveness to give a timed and legitimate Answer contributed a lot for the eruption of the protest. One of the informants (KI7)⁹ recounted that

We tried so many times to contact the federal government to alleviate the problem with Welqayt land that was taken out Gondar when TPLF hold power and arrange the country along new federalism line. We even went up to Mekelle to discuss this issue. Instead of giving an answer to our question, the government overtly engaged in subversion of the committee and threatening the committee leaders. We came to Gondar city because they pushed us to leave Welqayt. The federal government in which TPLF is the dominant player in the EPRDF, by creating intelligence group which is assigned specifically to weaken the committee continuously endeavored to dismantle the committee".

This response indicates that the quest over Welqayt land and identity has been a long time component of the grievance by the Amhara people. Along this, the inability by the side of the government to give a timely, proper and legitimate response to this question further complicated and exacerbated the problem.

⁹ Key informant 7, interviewed on 14/10/2020, from Welqayt Amhara Identity Commission



PhotoV: Banners used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: received from an informant

This photo literally says **“Welqayt, if I forget you, let my right hand forget her cunning”** and **“Welqayt had been and will be Amhara”**. Thus, the picture purports that there has been a long time strong and persistent claim over Welqayt land and identity as Amhara historical land. Hence, grievance has been created out of a feeling that Amhara people have lost its historical land due to a subtle as well as overt and forceful measurement taken by TPLF. The issue of Welqayt land is further emphasized by Achamyeleh’s “የወሊቃይት ጉዳይ” book (2020) insisting, before 1991, Welqayt has never been part of Tigray’s land, instead it was demarcated with Tekeze river. This scholar asserts, this can be assured by the letters written by former Tigriyan noblemen and kings like Ras Mikael Sehul, Ras Weldesellasie, emperor Yohannes IV and the like in which they frequently stated Tigray’s border is Tekeze river. Another informant (KI8)¹⁰ contended that

We were raised there hearing different stories from elders; prior to 1991 Welqayt has never been an administrative part of Tigray. TPLF didn’t want even at all to hear issues and questions relating to Welqayt land. Amid TPLF’s relentless effort to weaken and demolish the committee, we remained morally strong and persevered to achieve our goal because we know millions of people are behind us. Many people were supporting us in terms of finance, idea and time. This is because we have a genuine question of our people. At last, TPLF, decided to detain every leader of the committee in the name of terrorism. They tried to arrest us and kill us if it was possible in the midnight.

This point shows how the Welqayt issue was becoming complicated and framed the grievances to another level. The government’s hidden attempt to detain the leaders of the WAIC leaders

¹⁰ Key informant 8, interviewed on 14/10/2020, from Welqayt Amhara Identity Commission

hastens the discharging of other collected grievances and resentments altogether with the Welqayt issue via public outrage. One of the informants (KI4)¹¹ noted that

The regional government's Peace and Security Bureau as well as the Gondar city's Police and Security Bureau didn't even know what was going around the city in the time the federal government attempted to arrest leaders of WAIC, notably Colonel Demeke Zewdu. We weren't informed about the operation. It was one sided operation and unlawful act. The committee leaders were unarmed, peaceful and embedded in the society. But a hidden operation accompanied with gunfire in a midnight changes the things absolutely. This attempt to arrest these leaders was absolutely illegal.

This demonstrates that a persistent claim over Welqayt land by the side of Amhara people hasn't been treated and addressed legitimately by the government. On the opposite, the government ostensibly engaged in the subversion, weakening and demolishing of the committee. This clearly illustrates that the government is envisaged as reluctant, unwilling and reckless to give a legitimate response to people's demand. Essentially, a deprivation and grievance sentiment towards Welqayt land was fueled by this unlawful incident to arrest these leaders. Consequently, this incident shaped the outrage of the people to echo their voices. Informant (KI4) added that *"in the very place, the right to peaceful demonstration necessitates permission of a Police or Security Affair Bureau. The first peaceful demonstration in Gondar didn't have permission. Rather it was carried out by its own will of the people because the people were embraced with strong outrage feelings."*



Photo VI: Banners used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: accessed from Tesfanews.net

¹¹ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 08/09/2020, from the city's police bureau

These two slogans denote that **“TPLF is minion of EPLF, not the Welqayt people!!”** and **“Stop killing, arresting and torturing Welqayt Tegede people.”** The slogans indicate that, the people were echoing their voices claiming the government (which is supposedly considered as TPLF dominates it) is suppressing the question raised by the Welqayt people through labeling them as EPLF’s minions. Accordingly, it was claimed that some are killed, arrested and tortured. The message is presented because the WAIC leaders and members were labeled as terrorist individuals who have connections with EPLF by the government. Hence, the people considered TPLF as attempting to reverse the people’s question by demeaning individuals who raise the question of Welqayt land and identity as Amhara labeling them as EPLF’s minion.

Moreover, one of the informants (KI2)¹² insisted that *“in the beginning, we demonstrated to show our support to the commission leaders. Thereby, we criticized the government’s detention and maltreatment of the committee leaders. And later on we began to raise land claims beyond Welqayt land which the Amhara people had lost: the land allegedly given to Sudan.”* This point purports that though it was not in an institutional structure like the Welqayt land issue, there was a grievance feeling in the minds of the protesters regarding the a land administered by Sudanese bordering Gondar which was regarded as historical Amhara land snatched out of Gondar. A land allegedly given to Sudan later on began to be added to the Welqayt issue grievance. Informant (KI6)¹³ further insisted that:

As an Amhara we have so many resentments over some historical lands our people had lost. The Welqayt land is simple for it can get a solution domestically. What is more problematic is the one that was given to another sovereign country, i.e., Sudan. A large portion of Humera and Metema land was given to Sudanese. Our forefathers had lived there and gave their lives to defend the country from external invaders. It has been hereditably an Amhara land in the past. Our Amhara people farmers lost their large farming lands when it was given to Sudan. Many farmers were displaced. Fascinatingly, beyond what they took, sometimes Sudanese farmers encroach in to other lands and launch strikes.

Thus, a grievance created out of historical land loss also has been extended by resentment towards land which is allegedly given to Sudan. Many protesters have been grieved towards the loss of the land and this was echoed during the time of demonstration.

¹² Key informant 2, interviewed on 7/10/2020, protest mobilizer

¹³ Key Informant 6, interviewed on 13/10/2020, social media activist



Photo VII: Banners used in Gondar on 1/August 2016: accessed from Madote.com

4.1.2. Local Good Governance Factors

The other driving factor behind the protest is accredited to local administrative and good governance factors in the city. This mainly relates with the provision of services in governmental institutions in the city and individuals' attainment of this services. One of the interviewee (DI4)¹⁴ *"We are always fed up of the bureaucracies we face when we go to governmental institutions like kebele, sub-city, police office and justice office and the like. From the very beginning, workers in these institutions don't give you a proper and legitimate answer and they don't satisfy your need in the needed time. They take extra time for a simple job which can consume a little time"*. This entails that individuals have some kind of disappointing feeling towards the attainment of some services in the city. Basically, attainment of services is the most important demonstration that ensures individuals are enjoying their rights. Provision of services to citizens is a responsibility for a government. But as the above response implies, individuals in the city have been troubled to get a proper services in some governmental institutions. Individuals envisage the above administrative and service providing institutions as defined by loss of integrity and sense of responsibility. Consequently, they have been conceived as irresponsible, customer rambling and tedious institutions by the eyes of individuals in the city. Thus, this kind of situation imposes disenchantment feelings towards the above institutions. One of the informants (KI9)¹⁵ maintained that *"To demonstrate, once I went to kebele in order to renew my identity card. Unfortunately, because the officer assigned to put signature in my ID was not in the office for*

¹⁴ In depth interviewee 4, interviewed on 15/10/2020, from youth association

¹⁵ Key informant 9, interviewed on 14/10/2020, protest mobilizer

two weeks, I have lost an opportunity to form association to get land. Thus, is that fair to lose this kind of opportunity because of an absentee officer in the kebele”? This response indicates that some government institutions in the city have been some source of resentments for individuals. Individuals once they are deprived of their rights by these kinds of institutions grievance feeling will be developed in the mind of individuals.

Moreover, informant (KI1)¹⁶ insisted “*in different public podiums, we heard the people frequently complaining about issues of poor administration many people claimed that the city is not administered by fit enough and qualified officials, personnel and officers. They regard these officials as they create bureaucratic bottlenecks and having corruptive behaviors*”. This signifies that individuals in the city for a long time have been embraced with different resentment feelings in the city’s administrative offices and bureaus. This structural defect is sometimes attributed to lack of capacity and skill of officers, officials and experts in these institutions. The institutions are perceived to some extent as ineffective and inefficient. A study by Tamu (2019) buttressed this point notifying, meritocracy system has been totally bereft in Gondar town’s public sector whereby employment in public sectors has been executed based on patron-client relationship which subsequently created a situation where uneducated individuals enjoy a better position over the educated ones. In addition one of the informants (KI4)¹⁷

What do you think the reason individuals in time of protests did strike institutions like courts, sub city offices, mayor offices, Kebele offices and the like, and do not strike, schools, hospitals, library centers etc.? It is because relatively, the former kind of institutions imposed resentment feelings more than the later on. Hence, when there is violence, they want to discharge their long accumulated resentments feelings they have towards these institutions in the form of strikes.

This resonates with individuals in the city have been experiencing feelings of lack of good governance in some of the city’s governmental service providing and administrative offices and bureaus. Accordingly, individuals opted to discharge their outrage in striking some institutions that have been sources of their disappointments in prior times.

Furthermore, one of the informants (KI5)¹⁸ noted:

¹⁶ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/2020, from Amhara Prosperity Party

¹⁷ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 08/10/2020, from the city’s police bureau

¹⁸ Key informant 5, interviewed on 11/10/2020, from the city’s court bureau

There have been numerous court cases concerning bribes, embezzlement and corruption cases in government offices and bureaus. Some cases have got verdicts and closed. Some are still under processes. Especially, offices relating with land, transportation, trade, custom and revenues and kebele administration offices have been regarded as those kinds of institutions where corruption takes place at higher stake. Usually in coffee houses, hotels, groceries and other public areas you can hear people complaining and discussing about corruption issue in some offices.

Essentially, some government offices and bureaus created structural defects due to corruption issues. When corruption takes place in these institutions, favoritism will prevail and subsequently individuals will be exposed to unequal treatment. Accordingly, individuals with feelings of being unequally treated lose trusts in these institutions and develop a resentment feeling towards these institutions. The issue of corruption is further stressed by one of the interviewee (DI4)¹⁹ enumerating, *“When you go to some offices like Land Administration and “Mahberat zerf” bureau (land association sector), you will be tired of appointment for an easy issue. They will intentionally shuttle you here and there. When it comes to big issues like land leases, you need to spend extra money for the pocket of officials and officers in order to get the service you want within a short period of time.”* This perception indicates that individuals haven’t had a good image towards some institutions for a long time. Some institutions were even defined by corruption in the perception of individuals. To put it differently, the legitimacy and transparency of some institutions have been questioned. The sense of belongingness to these institutions has been eroded due to the unequal treatment brought by corruption and embezzlement allegedly perceived in these institutions. Accordingly, lack of local good governance has been created that bereft individuals’ equal treatment and access to services.

4.1.3. Economic Factors

Economic factors can be grasped as the influence of some factors regarding the wellbeing of individuals in terms of accessing resources, materials and wealth for their livelihood. Individuals in Gondar city experienced a perceived unfair distribution and access to resources. As one of the informant (KI1)²⁰ pointed, tourism is the major economic activity in the city. Whereas commercial farming and trade is predominantly carried out in places like Humera, Metema, Dansha, Soroqa, Tsegede, Gelabat, Adrqay and the like. Essentially, most of the city dwellers frequently move and back to these places for better jobs and incomes. As one of the interviewees

¹⁹ In depth interviewee 4, interviewed on 15/10/2020, from youth association

²⁰ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party

(DI2),²¹ alleged “*I personally, frequently went to Dansha, Soroqa and Humera for work motives with my friends. And there most major farm lands, products and business centers are taken by Pro-TPLF Tigriyans. Investment opportunities were given to them. These individuals make money based on personal affiliation. Even when they need truck and cargo services, they give the opportunity to their fellows.*” This suggests that there has been a perceived resentment regarding the distribution of resources and availability of equal opportunities in these places. Thus, when these kinds of city dwellers went to these places and engage in some economic activities, they will back to the city with a resentment feeling. This point resounds the claim stressed by Walker and Smith (2002) insisting, when individuals’ expectation of entitlement of goods and services is thwarted, they will have outrage behavior and strive to rectify the perceived inequality. Accordingly, a relative deprivation feeling invokes feelings of injustices. This issue of perceived economic injustice was noted by Dereje (2011) elucidating, Tigriyans predominance in management and leadership positions in the area of salt investment and project in Afar regional state was able to create a political tension over the control of salt production. Besides, Fana (2016) noted that the predominance of Tigrigna-speaking investors and the subsequent ethnicisation of social and business relations assured Tigriyan speaking dominance in land investment and acquisition in Gambella regional state. Moreover, one of the interviewee (DI6)²² reaffirms “*in the city, nearly all jewellery shops have been owned by pro TPLF Tigriyans. Others do not have.*” This response clearly depicts that a relative deprivation feeling has been there in individuals in the city. Individuals could able to develop indignation feelings that they have been deprived of some goods, services and opportunities in comparison with the above kind of individuals in the city due to personal and group affiliation.

Furthermore, informant (KI3)²³ upholds that “*Gondar city has been defined by the existence of severe lack of infrastructural developments in spite of being one of vital tourist destination city in the country. The government gets millions of dollar revenues from Gondar, but it is fascinating that the city does not have a proper vehicle road, sufficient electricity and entertainment and knowledge enhancement centers.*” While the city is among the oldest cities in the country and center of tourists, individuals complain about lack of infrastructural

²¹ In depth Interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

²² In depth interviewee 6, interviewed on 10/10/2020, from youth and community association

²³ Key Informant 3, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city’s police bureau

developments. This lack of infrastructure in the city creates an intense disappointment feeling among individuals, when the revenue from tourism in the city is considered. When individuals think that lack of infrastructure is attributed due to budgetary problems, the resentment becomes more and more strong. To buttress this, informant (KI4)²⁴ reasserts that:

For example, look at the vehicle road way from Azezo to Gondar. It is a bumpy road. The distance from Azezo to Gondar Piazza is 8.5 km, but it takes a 40 minute taxi voyage due to the bad nature of the road. Frequently, we tried to arrest many taxi and Bajaj drivers for boycotting and attempting to increase the transportation fee by their own will. The reason they provided was the road is not comfortable to their vehicle and they were getting paid unfair price when they calculate the oil and time they consume for one short voyage.

First and foremost, lack of infrastructural development can be felt by people's daily life routines. It affects their daily life routines. Lack of transportation and electricity directly affects the wellbeing of individuals in imposing multitudes of hurdles in their daily life routines. Thus, they are very close to create and develop grievance sentiment out of them. Accordingly, lack of infrastructures in the city has been anchored in the grievances of the protest. Moreover, informant (KI3)²⁵ pointed that *"there has been a severe lack of job opportunity, investment and employment for the youth. Many youths in the city spend their time chewing Khat, smoking "Shisha" and with other addictions. So, why don't these kinds of job deprived youths protest if they perceive they can improve their worsen conditions via protest activities?"* Basically, lack of job opportunity is usually considered as one of source of frustration for the youth. When individuals don't have job opportunities, it means they are also deprived of incomes for their livelihoods. Lack of job opportunity created a grievance feeling in the youth that has been waiting a time to be discharged. In line with this, according to Central Statistical Agency (CSA, 2007), in the city, there exist one unemployed individual in every five adults; higher youth unemployment, there is no major industrial base; traditional and ancient farming defines the agriculture, migration from rural areas to the city has been increasing in alarming rate, there exist severe standard of housing, transportation, electric power, water, health and education. Moreover, a study by Maayii and Xen (2020) revealed that onwards 2003 up to 2018, the tourism industry in the city, irrespective of high tourist flow to the city, it has been generating revenue insignificantly. To wrap up,

²⁴ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

²⁵ Key Informant 3, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

perceived unfair resource distribution, lack of infrastructural development, high rate of youth unemployment constituted the economic grievance factor.

4.1.4. The Nature of the Protest

After the unsuccessful attempt to arrest leaders of WAIC, the people became angry and begun to mobilize. One of the informants (KI4)²⁶ noted:

In the beginning, the people begun to peacefully demonstrate in order to show their support for the committee leaders. The peaceful demonstration took another turn when the security force reacted to the demonstrators. The security forces begun to throw tear gases and fire guns to disperse the peaceful demonstrators. In this time, the people became angry and frustrated. Then the demonstrators escorted with outrage engaged in other activities and measurements. Bear in mind the demonstrators were peaceful in that they only hold slogans and banners. Fascinatingly, the security had begun firing towards the people. In this time individuals were killed.

Thus, the protest became violent when the demonstrators begun expressing their anger and resentments in the form of burning tires and destroying governmental properties. In this time another informant (KI3)²⁷ pointed *“As it is said ‘turmoil in market places is conducive to theft’, some individuals and groups with other agendas for economic benefit and profit use this opportunity to attain their interests. In some villages, without any reason, shops begun to be robbed. Most participants in this activity do not have a clue why the people are protesting, rather they were aiming to attain material, and financial benefits in the cover of the protest”*. Consequently, the security force also begun to react more aggressively.

The security forces begun to arrest individuals in large numbers. As informant (KI3)²⁸ pointed even many individuals have been arrested without any tangible evidence. In all these processes, the command was from above, from the federal government. There was a strict top down command that no one couldn't refuse to take any command. One of allegedly protest participant arrested individual (FGD01)²⁹ recounted he was arrested because he had a printing enterprise shop and was detained specifically because some banners and slogans were presumed to be printed in his enterprise. Another individual (FGD03)³⁰ proclaimed he was arrested because he

²⁶ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

²⁷ Key Informant 3, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

²⁸ Key Informant 3, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

²⁹ Focus group discussant 1, discussed on 12/02/21, protest mobilizer

³⁰ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 12/02/21, protest participant

was suspected for encouraging and mobilizing individuals to demonstrate. Eventually, as (KI3 & KI4) disclosed, there was an attempt to give the protest an ethnic nature in due course. They enunciated that ethnic identity was instrumentalized to achieve other interest by some individuals, social media activists, political groups and others. Among them, practically the so called “Fota-lebash” predominantly contributed to give the protest another ethnic nature in executing violent actions in the city. As the two informants (KI3&KI4)³¹ noted, nearly 85 % of the property destruction which occurred in the city during the protest time was carried out by this social group. Social media activists also contributed for the instrumentalization of ethnic identity. In this time, some Tigriyan dwellers were targeted for a strike. There were some individuals whose houses and shops robbed and burned. KI3 stressed that *“If you thoroughly observed the questions and messages transferred during the protest time by demonstrators, it didn’t have this kind of goal.”* Moreover, a study by Tamu (2019) pointed that destruction of properties was one strategy of the protest in Gondar city. More than 400 shops and business centers were burnt down to ashes. Among these, most hotels and shops were owned by Tigriyans. And the study claimed, some protesters also targeted Tigriyans due to an alleged link with TPLF officials and an alleged secret cooperation with security forces to stifle protesting youths. Notwithstanding, one thing that should be underlined is that there was some kind of attempt to give the protest an ethnic nature in due course. In this line, as the social life bond could able to halt some strikes it also failed to manage some targeted strikes. As it is revealed by KI1, K3 & KI4, it may be attributed to: the outrageous participation of “Fota-lebash” which is comprised of destitute individuals who have an alienated social life bond with the common residents of the city (KI5 noted a surprising incident that one of a prosecuted individual allegedly considered as “Fota-lebash” in time of prosecution was asked why he did strike a hotel and he replied “we are in fight”. Unexpectedly, the hotel was owned by an Amhara individual); the anger, outraged and hatred towards TPLF embraced by some protesters who have been victims of different misdemeanors in different times by the regime (perceived as TPLF) targeted allegedly suspected TPLF’s secret minion Tigriyans; the social media based mobilization nature of the protest for which individuals from abroad and out of Gondar were mobilizing the protest whom they don’t know the social fabric and bond of the city; political games by political activists disseminating false information in media in order to enhance sense of victimization. All in all, the protest was

³¹ Key Informant 3 & 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city’s police bureau

violent and has resulted loss of lives, displacement of individuals and destruction of individual and governmental properties.

4.2. Implications of the Protest on Social Capital

4.2.1. Prelude about the Social Capital in Gondar City

4.2.1.1 Gondar as “Salad Bowl”

Residents of Gondar city have been able to form a strong social life bond for long period of time. Historically, different ethnic groups have been able to live in Gondar city harmoniously for a long time. Throughout its history, Gondar has been a home for Christians, Muslims, Felashas, Amharas, Tigrrians, Qimants and Eritreans (Pankhurst, 1969; Solomon, 2006; Muluken, Sisay & Busha, 2018). These ethnic groups have been living in the city tied with marriages. And through time these communities forged a collective identity called “*Gondare*” identity. This “*Gondere*” identity has been able to have some attributes. These attributes have been shared and embraced by the residents, irrespective of their ethnic differences. The “*Gondare*” identity or feeling was created as a result of the prevalence of a longtime solid social life bond among the residents. As one of the interviewee (DI1)³² affirms:

When an individual began to live in Gondar city for a long period of time, through time he will develop and share a Gondere identity. A “*Gondere*” identity is not given to someone because he is from group X, Y or Z, ethnic group rather constructed through time because of living in the city for a long period of time and understanding the social values and norms of the city. Thus, a “*Gondere*” individual is religious, generous, courageous, loyal, “*Gdirdir*”(comes from the word “*Megderder*”) and a one who unflinchingly fights injustices..

“*Megdereder*” is the most widely known typical behavior to a “*Gondare*” individual which denotes a no response or hesitation to accept a certain invitation, support or help provided by someone, while the individual is clandestinely in need of that provided invitation, support or help. One of the discussants (FGD3)³³ proclaimed “*I am psychologically constructed and raised with the cultures, traditions, values and norms in the city. Even when I go to Tigray to visit my families, my families there will say ‘look who is came, that “Gondare” comes to our home!’*”. Thus, this ruminates that “*Gondare*” identity has been psychologically constructed among individuals. It connects the Tigriyan, Qimant and Amharas by cladding them a shared identity.

³² In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

³³ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

Thus, this identity has been able to forge a strong sense of brotherhood, fraternity and sense of belongingness to the city. Moreover, (FGD5)³⁴ divulged *“When I am out of Gondar and enjoying with many other non- “Gondare” friends and a Gondar centered music is playing, they will say ‘you “Gidrdr” Gondare, this music is for you show us your Gondare dance!’”*. Whereas (FGD2)³⁵ recount that:

In the past we don’t even know who is Amhara, Tigre, Qimant, Eritrean? We only say this is Tigre or Eritrean simply because he speaks Tigrigna, not because he came from Tigray or Eritrea. It is the political elite who disturb and divide us. It is a recent phenomena to classify individuals as Tigre, Amhara or Qimant, we can’t be divided, we are one much better than other communities in other places.

Succinctly speaking, the social life bond in Gondar city has been solid for a long time. The bridging social capital stretched up to forging a shared identity in the city. Individuals and groups have not only formed a strong social life bond, but also were able to form a collective “Gondare” identity in the city irrespective of the ethnic differences. In line with this grasp, Yonatan (2008) and Admassu (2010) sturdily pointed that the Amhara people didn’t identify themselves as Amhara, rather in terms of their respective regions as they are “Woleye”, “Gondere” or “Gojame”. This buttress that identifying oneself as “Gondare” has been one mode of self identification or the existence of “Gondare” identity. Specifically, the bridging social capital between Amhara and Tigriyans is strengthened by cultural inheritance and resemblance. One of the interviewees (DI5)³⁶ pointed *“For instance, we have the samereligion, way of life, food culture etc. the same dressing style. Nowadays, in the city it is not known that this is Tigray dressing and that one is Amhara dressing. The dressing style is extremely mixed.*

4.2.2.2. The Pillars of Social Capital in Gondar City

In Gondar city, the residents or people lead their social life communicating one another through multitudes of networks, associations and ceremonies. The people in Gondar city have their own traditions, norms, values and customs which have been transferred through generations. The following are the connections, networks, associations and ceremonies for which the social life bond in Gondar city is fundamentally forged for a long period of time. They can be considered as

³⁴ Focus group discussant 5, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

³⁵ Focus group discussant 2, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

³⁶ In depth interviewee 5, interviewed on 9/02/2021, from social associations

pillars of the social life bond in the city. Basically, they are explored from the interviews and FGDs.

Senbete is an association formed by a group of 20 or 30 Orthodox Christian individuals which has a weekly regular meeting priests' benediction ultimately aiming to bless the life and members and ensure the social security of members. In this association, members are required to pay a regular monthly fee in order to enable the association functioning. Most of collected money from the members will be allocated to purchase different materials, products and facilities such as chairs, tables, dishes, tents, booths and barrels. These facilities will be utilized when the association has its own ceremonies. Besides, member can also use these facilities when they have personal or family related affairs like weddings, funerals and other feast while members are responsibly required to return these materials with responsibilities. All members are required to adhere to the rules and regulations. When the members meet on the regular meeting, they will discuss their personal and family related issues. They will discuss about the personal problem they have faced. Generally, they will discuss about the members life conditions like who is ill, who is grieving and who is in need of the support of the *Senbete*. In these situations, patient members will be visited going to his/her home or hospital, a grieving member will be mourned and consoled, collected money from members will be given to the needy member, execute funerals of the members. In short, *Senbete* is an association that can ensure and maintain the well-being and social security of member individuals irrespective of ethnic backgrounds.

Mahiber This is also an association formed by Orthodox Christian individuals which has a monthly regular meeting and hosted in one of randomly selected member individual's home. It is formed by taking one of the Orthodox religious angels' monthly celebrated day as it is foundational basis. In other words, if the monthly meeting of a certain *Mahiber* is held in date 21, the *Mahiber* is named "*Mariyam Mahiber*", if it is 19, it will be named "*Gabriel Mahiber*". Most of the time *Mahiber* association in Gondar city takes many forms like "*Women's Mahiber*", "*Men's Mahiber*" and "*YegaraMahiber*". When the monthly meeting or ceremony is assigned to be hosted in one of the members' home, the individual will pledge to provide foods and drinks covering the cost by himself or herself. When members meet, they ask one another about the well-being and security of one another. They discuss about problems a member individual has faced. They exchange information regarding what is around them, support needy members of the

Mahiber. The members help one another in terms of material, finance, idea and labor. The main purpose of *Mahiber* is ensuring collective social life and helping each other.

Adrshegn is a unique seventeen day annually celebrated social life ceremony by some group of Orthodox Christian individuals. Usually, “*Adrshegn*” group is formed among individuals in one village, neighbors, relatives, families and friends in the city. This group is formed aiming to celebrate the Orthodox Christian religion’s 16 day fasting period from Nehase (August) 1 up to Nehase (August) 16 in Ethiopian calendar called “*Filseta Tsom*”. The name *Adrshegn* refers to some kind of prayer and wish submitted to Saint Marry asking her to reach the next year fasting period healthy and alive. Literally *Adrshegn* means “Oh saint Marry! Please let me reach the next year fasting period.” In this period, members of the *Adrshegn* group will gather together in one of the members’ home at 6 pm and celebrate each day till August 15 with fasting foods and drinks. Members of the *Adrshegn* group are required to contribute the same amount of money or cash in kind. From the beginning the fasting period up to its end, the members meet regularly on daily basis and discuss about the wellbeing of each member. In the final day of the fasting period, all members are required to present what is called “*Silet*”, which will be written in note books to remind every member in the next year what their “*Silet*” was. *Silet* is some kind of members promised contribution for the next year fasting period by members pledged to pay, if they genuinely believed that their previous year wishes are fulfilled. This *Adrshegn* association is also crucial in creating some kind of Connections, attachments and affiliation among members.

Iqub This association is the most widely known association in Ethiopia which is usually considered as the “traditional bank” of a society. In Gondar, multitudes of *Iqub* associations are found, which are more inclusive and have variety of members in terms of religion, sex, age, ethnic background, educational status unlike the former ones. *Iqub* is basically a traditional saving mechanism where members of the association deposit or pay some amount of money based on the rule and regulation of association in daily, weekly or monthly period and get a money proportional to their deposit through a lottery system. In the city, *Iqub* associations are formed by businessmen, daily laborers, drivers, shopkeepers, merchants and the like. Generally speaking, it provides financial services for their members. In this regard, it also creates a podium or platform for individuals to interact one another and thereby form some kind of social life bond.

Social life ceremonies like wedding and funerals these constitute another form of interactions that create a social life bond among individuals in Gondar city. Wedding and funerals are also broad inclusive social life activities that open a door for individuals with different religions, social status, age sex and the like. When a wedding is prepared by Christians, cautiously and in a special way a food and drink will be provided for Muslim neighbors. Thus, Muslim neighbor are expected to attend the wedding of a Christian neighbor once they are invited. The same happens in case of Muslim household. A Christian neighbor is also invited to attend a Muslim wedding in the same way. In time of funerals, irrespective of the religious differences, neighbors or individuals are expected to console a grieving individual or family by going to his/her home. In General, weddings and funerals are the most vital social life events that enable Muslims and Christians to forge a social life bond.

Abelij It is a kind of strong relationship formed between individuals or families whereby someone pledges a promise during somebody's child Christening ceremony to look after him as a second father. This is carried out by embracing the child and pledging a vow during the baptism time. This kind of relationship is formed between or among orthodox Christian religion believers. It is the most common form of consolidating connection or affiliation among or between individuals or families.

Yemarlij or Yetut Abat: It is another form of relationship or affiliation created by individuals where by somebody asks an older guy (can be a father of that individual) to consider him/her as his/her son for which that individual can get advises, solutions and other supports from this older guy. If that older guy agrees to take him as a father, he will pledge a promise with scooping up a honey by his fingers. Accordingly, an artificial son or daughter and father or mother relationship will be formed.

All in all, the above forms of associations or connections are the backbone for the social life bond and inter group social capital in Gondar city. Nearly all the city residents forge a connection or attachment with one another through at least one of the above networks and associations. Some of them (Senebete, Iqub, Mahiber) are considered as the society's most reliable banks and insurance companies. They are very close to the society and embedded in the society. They will arrive so fast in the time of members' problems. They bring individuals very

closer to one another. One of the discussant (FGD2)³⁷ stressed “*In our mahbers, senbete or Idir, we get not only financial based services unlike modern banks but also we consult and advise one another about personal and family related issues. We can get supports in terms of knowledge, idea, information and labor.*” To wrap up, the above associations and connections are not intra-group links; rather they are bonds creating relations, interdependence and bonds among different ethnic groups. According, the bridging social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans has been forged and ensured by these associations, connections and networks.

4.2.2. Implications of the Protest on the Bonding Social Capital

The protest in Gondar city has so many corollaries on socio-economic and political conditions. Socially, it has extensive implications on the social capital. It differently brought enormous implications on the in group social capital (between individuals who participated in and supported the cause of the protest), i.e, bonding social capital and the bridging social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans. In terms of bonding social capital, it brought a strengthened or enhanced social capital among individuals participated in the protest and individuals who support the cause of the protest. In this regard, Gilligan et al. (2014) noted the possibility that a violent conflict may lead individuals to rely one another on the threat they have faced, which consequently may result a strengthened social capital among individuals with same social background (Bonding social capital) and might weaken out group social capital (bridging social capital). This was shown in some of the pillars of the social capital. Thus, the following are the results of the protest on bonding social capital explored from interviews, discussions and other study materials.

4.2.2.1. Establishment and Expansion of Functional Associations and Informal Networks

One of the consequences of the protest is the creation of groups, informal networks and connections having different goals and purposes. During the protest time and the city was under command post, individuals who were allegedly suspected for directly or indirectly participating in the protest were arrested in huge numbers. Most of the arrested individuals were kept in together in the same places like “Angereb prison”, Police Stations and some temporary detention camps. During their times in these detaining centers, the arrested individuals were able to interact

³⁷ Focus group discussant 2, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

one another persistently and subsequently formed some kind of relationships, connections and friendships. One of the discussants (FGD05)³⁸ noted:

We were at Angereb prison and there we were around 12 prisoners in our cell detained for participating in the protest. We didn't know each other closely before we entered to the prison. We spent together near to one and half year in the prison. Among these three were in critical health problems or conditions due to tuberculosis, kidney stone and constipation and gastric. The four among us were physically suffered with torture. After we were released, considering their need of our support, we opened a bank book and monthly contribute some amount of money to provide some help for their medical treatment cost. This mini association contributed a lot for about 2 years for their betterment of health conditions. And now it turned out to be Iqub association. This current Equb Mahiber has a strong foundational basis created out of our relationship during the custody.

These prisoners were unfamiliar one another before their detention. They barely knew each other. But they spent together about one and half year in the prison. And now they are able to establish their Equb Mahiber formally. This association has been able to create a platform or podium for these individuals to extend their relationship initiated during the prison time. This association guarantees their regular meetings and strengthened their connections and interactions. Moreover, some individuals also were able to create book clubs. This book club was created and founded by social media activists who were facilitating the protest through social media and those who were mobilizing protesters in terms of making slogans and quotes. Discussants (FGD02&FGD06)³⁹ revealed that

During the times of the protest many individuals in the city were communicating through Facebook either by liking, commenting or sharing a post. Thus, many people were able to forge new connections and interaction via a Facebook platform. Many individuals were introduced one another through a Facebook. Basically we were considered as source of information and somehow relatively erudite. Then after, relative peace is preserved in the city, we aspired to change this connection in to another contribution. Because our role has been related with information providing and awareness raising in the time of the protest, we opted a more suitable contribution. There is only one library in the city, "Gondar city public library". Then we agreed and created a book club.

This book club now has around 62 formal members. Members contribute monthly fee of 200 birr regularly and the money is allocated for buying books. But the club has no formal organization.

³⁸ Focus group discussant 5, discussed on 12/02/21, protest facilitator

³⁹ Focus group discussant 2 & 1, discussed on 12/02/21, protest mobilizers

It has no office. Members meet every two week on Sunday. They don't have permanent place to meet. When they meet every two week, a lottery system will be held to award the already bought books to the lucky one. Then that guy should use these books with care and responsibility for he may give the books for other members to read if they request him.

Furthermore, some individuals were also able to form co-operative work associations. One of the interviewee (DI2)⁴⁰ pointed that *"I personally was able to form friendship with some of the protesters, orchestrators and mobilizers of the protest. We were frequently meeting each other during the protest time. Accordingly, we became attached strongly. Then in 2018 we were organized in to six and asked the "Adebabay eyesus sub city administration" to organize and give us a job opportunity. Then through a long process after 4 months they released a budget of 600,000 birr and engage us in cattle raising and diary product co-operative work."* Basically, these individuals were arrested and tortured during the protest time and considered as fighters against injustices by some individuals. Thus, their co-operative work association gathered them to work together for the common good. They raise cattle and produce dairy products. They work for six days in the week. They work hard together with labor division. They spend most of our time together. This consequently enabled them to interact one another on a daily basis.

Most importantly, the most known formal association created after the protest period is "The Gondar City Amhara Youth Association" and the "Gondar City Amhara Student Association" in August, 2018. The Gondar city Amhara youth association was established at city level and later on entrenched up to *kebeles* and villages. The city has 20 *Kebeles* and each *Kebele* chairpersons and leaders of the association are elected by the youths living in their respective *Kebeles*. Every *Kebele's* chairperson is accountable to the city's youth association chairperson. The association has a regular meeting every two week at *Kebele* level and every week at city level. In the meeting, members discuss about issues the city, specially the youth's needs. One of the interviewee (DI4)⁴¹ ruminates *"the two associations were formed in order to strengthen the solidarity among Amhara youths. Specifically, the Amhara youth in the city during the protest time have suffered a lot: being arrested, detained, tortured and even some were killed. Thus, Amhara youths should be united to address these kinds of problems in the city for the future. The*

⁴⁰ In depth Interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

⁴¹ In depth interviewee 4, interviewed on 15/10/2020, from youth association

student's association is one of the extensions of the youth association which aimed to keep students' solidarity close when they are out of the city for their university education.

Furthermore, discussant (FGD05)⁴² proclaimed:

Before the protest we don't have that kind of close interaction one another, we didn't even greet each other, sometimes disrespect one another when we meet at some enjoyment places like hotels, groceries and the like. But after the protest, we learned that it is we who stand for us. We suffered a lot together during the protest times. We were tested by fire. It wasn't for personal reasons we participated in the protest but for the common good. And now current I have formed friendship and attachments with some individuals whom I know them very well during the protest. I have created Equb and Mahiber associations with some of them."

According to (FGD05&FGD07)⁴³, they have established a group called "*RufaelMahiber*" having 10 members. They have a regular monthly meeting. They frequently communicate one another physically or at least via cell phones. They ask one another about their wellbeing and families. They enjoy holidays together.

4.2.2.2.The Strengthening of Solidarity, Cooperation and Trust

Basically, the foundational basis or the rationales behind the creation of the aforementioned networks, associations and groups is the need to strengthen the solidarity and brotherhood sentiments among individuals participated in the protest and supported the cause of the protest. One of the informants (KI1)⁴⁴ a central figure at ADP's Gondar city branch insisted that *"Nowadays, there is a solidarity, caring and helping each other feelings among individuals who directly or indirectly participated in the protest. In the city you can see these guys spending the days together and help each other. When they feel somebody is in extreme need of support, they mobilize the people to collect material and financial supports. The organizers of certain assistance or support even came to us and other governmental offices asking for contributing to their cause."* According to the respondent, they don't only mobilize the resident to contribute to the project. They formally also ask institutions and organizations to help the needy individuals. Most of the time, this kind of support is expressed when someone is in need of some medical treatment but unable to cover medical costs.

⁴² Focus group discussant 5, discussed on 12/02/21, protest facilitator

⁴³ Focus group discussant 5 & 7, discussed on 12/02/21, protest facilitator and participant

⁴⁴ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party

Discussants (FGD01, 04 & 07)⁴⁵ enunciated that, when someone or his family or relative is ill, they visit and help one other. They visit one another having foods, drinks and financial supports. They visit prisoners among themselves or families. They help one another in times of social life activities like baptism, *Senbete*, *Mahber*, weddings, funerals etc. when there are disputes, they try to hold it to themselves and solve it by themselves. In short as they recount “*we enjoy a very cherished solidarity than ever before*”. Overall, brotherhood feelings, fraternity, caring one another feelings are shown in these individuals. One of the interviewee (DI1)⁴⁶ acquainted:

I became surprised nowadays when I see some youths currently active and engaged in their social life after the protest. When they hear that an individual whom they consider him as social or political activist, has family related funeral, wedding or baptism ceremony, they become active and committed enough to participate in the activities in terms of preparing booths, slaughtering cattle, making foods and hosting guests. I witnessed this kind of commitment in the social life by the side of youths in our locality.

This portrays that, when someone is in need of some kind of labor support around his locality, the youth becomes committed enough to facilitate and participate in activities. Thus, the youth is becoming an active in their social life interaction due to a shared sentiment of a past misery.

Moreover, one of the interviewee (DI6)⁴⁷ unveiled that:

One of the purposes for the creation of this association is to strengthen the solidarity among Amharas. At the city level, we have a weekly regular meeting. At *Kebele* level, they have every two week regular meeting. The discussion predominantly focuses on what is needed in their respective *kebeles*. Each *Kebele* cell discusses about the wellbeing of their respective members and their *kebele*. If there are needy and afflicted members, they will be disclosed and every member willingly contributes some amount of money he can.

Moreover according interviewee (DI4)⁴⁸, the student association helps member students in many kinds. It provides stationeries to help the needy students. It presents some links out of the city where member students can get some support and cooperation when they are out of the city. In addition, other than this, the youth association presents some questions, demands and requests to the city administration that can be a policy input so as to ensure the benefit of the youth in the

⁴⁵ Focus group discussant 1,4 &7, discussed on 12/02/21, protest mobilizer, facilitator and participant

⁴⁶ In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

⁴⁷ In depth interviewee 6, interviewed on 10/10/2020, from youth and community association

⁴⁸ In depth interviewee 4, interviewed on 15/10/2020, from youth association

city. Furthermore, as (KI1)⁴⁹ recited “*we believe that one of the 2016 Gondar city protest resulted is a relative solidarity of the Amhara people better than before. This can be expressed in the political life of individuals. Unlike before, in different political podiums large numbers of individuals attend and question plans, policies and objectives we present and the Amhara status quo in general.*” This elucidates that, the social solidarity or brotherhood sentiment of Amhara individuals transcended up to an active participation regarding political issues concerning the Amhara people in the city. Accordingly, individuals endeavor to put pressure on the political elites in the city in order to make sure the solidarity of the people is ensured. When there are political podiums in the city, the youth participate in huge numbers and present its resentments and critiques on the political elites.

In addition, discussants (FGD02, 05 & 06)⁵⁰ emphasized that, in their darkest times, they observed and noted who is loyal to the people and the city. They have a strong reliance one another. At the very least, they believe among them no one is going to hand over them for a third party. Discussant (FGD07) divulged “*we distinguished those loyal and traitors. There were some Amharas who betrayed us and worked for TPLF. The rest of us who stand with the people and loyal to our people suffered together in bad times. And now here we are. We trust one another that somebody among us will not go to cause harm to us.*” This response buttresses the former response that trust has been built solidly among them. Even though some didn’t even know one another before the protest time, they acquainted that they have a strong reliance one another on political issues than individuals they know for a long time. Generally speaking, Putnam (2000) contemplated that when there is trust in the interaction, communication and relationship of members of a group, it indicates the existence of a good social capital.

As some scholars (Misganaw, 2021; Melkamu, 2018) contemplated, the Gondar city protest immensely contributed to unify and strengthen the Amhara people. In this regard, Misganaw (2021) insisted that the sacrifice paid during the 2016 Gondar city protest wrote a remarkable history in terms of creating a solid collective Amhara people’s stance which can be expressed in the subsequent protests in Amhara cities that ended up “a crippled Amhara” narration by TPLF. Moreover, Tewodros (2020) elucidated that the 2016 Gondar city protest can be considered as

⁴⁹ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party

⁵⁰ Focus group discussant 2,5 &6, discussed on 12/02/21, protest mobilizer, facilitator and participant

the origin of consolidation of Amhara nationalism that has transcended a mere embryonic Amhara nationalism movements in to a more organized and invigorated nationalism which has produced influential political parties such as the National Movement of Amhara (NAMA). Moreover, Tezera (2021) contemplated that the July 2016 Gondar crisis marked a turning point for a consolidated Amhara nationalism. Apart from the establishment of political parties like NAMA, it can be manifested in acts of resistance and demonstrations in different times in major towns of the Amhara region (e.g. Gondar, Bahir Dar and Woldeya), providing material support for internally displaced Persons, showing sense of belongingness in terms of providing moral and financial support to soccer clubs like Fasil Kenema and Bahir Dar Kenema football clubs, and the enhanced use of Amhara-centric music in cities, hotels, groceries and the like.

4.2.2.3.Enhanced Communication and Flow of Information

The establishment and expansion of associations and informal networks has resulted in frequent communication between and among member individuals. The created networks and associations that are formed among individuals participated in the protest and supporting the protest, enabled individuals to forge a daily life interactions and social life bond. These interactions and connections brought individuals together to discuss about so many issues. Thus, the other crucial element of the social capital communication and flow of information has been observed in these connections. One of the discussants (FGD03)⁵¹ revealed that *“Apart from the associations we have formed, we communicate one another at cafeterias, hotels, groceries, and other public areas. We frequently enjoy together. When we meet, we discuss a lot and enthusiastically than ever before about latest news, issue and stories concerning the country and our region politics. We all have different sources of information from Facebook activists, pages and groups, youtubers and bloggers.* This ruminates that, a frequent interaction among and between individuals is resulting the flow of information exchange between them. As (FGD 05&07)⁵² meticulously pointed out they discuss about many issues and engage in different debates and arguments over some issues. Besides, apart from exchanging information, they also share different sources of information especially from Facebook activists by saying “just follow Mr. X!”, “like this page!” “Join this group!”. Accordingly, they are also engaged in broadening their sources of information one another. Moreover, when there is a current hot issue in Gondar city,

⁵¹ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on12/02/21, protest participant

⁵² Focus group discussant 5 &7, discussed on12/02/21, protest facilitator and participant

they send information in the form of picture and image to their cherished and reliable friends and popular activists out of Gondar city.

What is more, FGD discussants (FGD01,03&04)⁵³, noted that regarding issues and information concerning the city, they have strong source and flow of information from civil servants, police officers, lawyers, administrators and some political personnel. They have some links with political cabinets. They claim to have secret information sources from ADP politicians and other bureau heads. Discussant (FGD04)⁵⁴ proclaimed that *“When we hear some new information, we call one another and say did you hear this information? And I have this kind of information and what you have? Prior to the protest period we were not such committed, eager and active to assess any information. And now they are very active, alert and committed enough to access new information and exchange one another. Not only information exchange, when they meet in their groups or daily life interaction, they discuss about political and socio-economic issues concerning the country, Amhara people and the city. Discussant (FGD07)⁵⁵ incited that:*

In our *Mahiber*, members have numerous professions. Thus, when we meet, some members provide information in line with their professions, and news they get from their organizations. Lecturers tell us what is going on around the university; Kebele officers present us what is going on about the *kebele* administration specifically about new rules, procedures, opportunities and regulations on the way to be made; Government officials present us information regarding new plans and directions in their bureaus and offices.”

Frequently they engage in arguments in their discussions. In addition, FGD discussant (FGD02&06)⁵⁶ indicated that *“In our book clubs, when we meet in every two week, the guy who won the lottery to get the books, should present some kind of recap of at least 2 books to the attendants of the meeting. Usually, we discuss and debate about many ideas in the area of philosophy, religion, politics, literature and art. In theses we are able to teach one another”* All in all, it can be concluded that flow of information and exchange of knowledge has been endorsed in the different associations and networks in the city. Accordingly, exchange of information and knowledge is another dowry of their social life interaction among them.

⁵³ Focus group discussant 1,3 &4, discussed on12/02/21, protest mobilizer, facilitator and participant

⁵⁴ Focus group discussant 4, discussed on12/02/21, protest participant

⁵⁵ Focus group discussant 7, discussed on12/02/21, protest participant

⁵⁶ Focus group discussant 2&6, discussed on12/02/21, protest mobilizer and participant

Moreover, one of the interviewee (DI2)⁵⁷ pointed that “in the youth association we have been able to communicate regularly and consistently. Once in a month all the *Kebele* cells’ members will be requested to attend the meeting at the city level. We evaluate their weekly meetings with their respective chairpersons. And recently, we have facing some interruption in our meetings. Therefore, this indicates that the formal associations have been able to conduct a regular communication between member individuals. When member individuals attend the programmed meetings, they become connected more and more closely. To buttress this, one of the informants (KI1)⁵⁸ noted that “*many proposals and requests have been frequently submitted and presented to the institution that I serve by some youth and student associations and groups created recently in order to get some kind of meeting halls for their meetings and communications.*” *We frequently co-operated them by giving them a positive response and allow them to use the meeting halls we have. They have been using them frequently and for a long time.*”

All in all, multitudes of formal and informal associations, networks and groups have been created in Gondar city following the different the 2016-18 Gondar city protest. These associations, networks and groups have been created as a result of some kind of interactions during the protest time among the protest participants that can be considered as in group connections. Following the establishment and expansion of these networks, a frequent communication and interaction has been maintained among members. Accordingly, solidarity, co-operation and mutual trust has been strengthened among members. These are the most vital pillars of social capital. Therefore, the protest has contributed for the strengthening of the in group social capital or bonding social capital.

4.3.3. Implications on Bridging Social Capital

No matter how big an umbrella a person has, he can’t claim the rain has never touched him. Once a violent protest is erupted, it will take its own life and course. As Colletta and Cullen (2000) argue violent conflicts do have a potential to demolish a social capital by resulting casualties, sufferings destruction of materials and displacement of peoples. One of the protest’s negative contributions has been manifested in eroding, undermining and weakening the social capital that has been built for decades at least between Amharas and Tigryans. Basically, the protest in the city affected the social capital between the two ethnic groups in certain ways. But it

⁵⁷ In depth Interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

⁵⁸ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party

can't be generalized that the protest has totally dismantled the social capital between the two ethnic groups. As some groups and individuals tried to give the protest an ethnic conflict nature in due course, some violent activities occurred that touched the solidarity between the Amhara and Tigriyans.

4.3.3.1. Eroding the Solidarity and Trust

One of the negative implications of the protest was the erosion of solidarity and trust among some Tigriyan residents and Amhara residents. During the protest time, as it was mentioned before, there was an attempt to give the protest an ethnic nature eventually. There was an attempt to strike some Tigriyan residents. Some Tigriyans were targeted and suffered destruction of properties. Even some were forced to evacuate from their homes. Thus, displacement of some Tigriyan residents was the repulsive outcome of the protest. Informant (KI4)⁵⁹ proclaimed that *“one thing that should be considered as the disgusting image of the protest was our some Tigriyan brothers being victim of the protest and their eventual evacuation from the city.”* Basically, in the time of the protest some Tigriyans were forced off to leave the city. To put it differently, when they leave the city, they are also detaching themselves from the social life bond they have created throughout their life in the city. One of the interviewee (DI1)⁶⁰ revealed that *“I was born in Gondar. I can speak both Amharic and Tigrigna. Before the protest, I speak the Amhara through Amharic and Tigriyan with a Tigrigna. And now when I try to communicate with some Tigriyans in Tigrigna, they will give me a response in Amharic. These kinds of individuals do not feel comfortable to communicate in Tigrigna, but there are also many Tigriyans who communicate one another via Tigrigna.”* This response avers that there exists some kind of threatened and suspicion feelings in the perception of some Tigriyans. These individuals observed and heard about the strikes against some Tigriyans. Thus, they feel some kind of perceived threats around them.

One of the discussant (FGD3)⁶¹ enunciated that:

when I go to some places where crammed with so many individuals and some villages or Kebeles farther away from my Kebele, I don't want to speak in Tigrigna when I talk via cell phones in order to minimize any attention towards me. Because as there are lots of individuals and neighbors who respect and care

⁵⁹ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

⁶⁰ In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

⁶¹ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

about me, there are also some individuals who can't understand the magnitude of the affiliation my life forged with the city and the dwellers. Some individuals consider all Tigrigna speakers as Woyane! I haven't ever felt this kind of feeling before the protest time.

As this response indicates, the development of this feeling is resulted after the protest time. Before the protest, whoever might be throughout the city, there was no a perceived threat for a mere communication in Tigrigna by the side of discussant. This kind of psychological feeling and perception in some individuals implies some kind of eroded trust feeling in some individuals. In addition, discussant (FGD7)⁶² unveiled:

In the past, I was able to discuss freely about many social and political issues with many individuals whom I don't know them like in coffee houses, cafeterias groceries or any other public place. But now I opt to shut my mouth to talk about political affairs with this kind of individuals and even with some of individuals who I know them very well. Currently everybody talks about his own ethnic group. Individuals interpret what you speak in their own interests. They will try to relate it to something that shouldn't be related.

This resonates it is becoming difficult to trust everybody in social life interaction by the side of the discussant. In a social life interaction, trust also can be expressed in the ability to discuss about issues and express one's idea freely with individuals in social life discussions and chats. Furthermore, (DI5)⁶³ incited *“nowadays associations and groups are started to be established that are not inclusive. Sometimes while sitting at home, I hear individuals addressing the village's residents via a loud speaker saying today, there is Amhara association meeting, Amhara students association. Both my parents are Tigriyans. But I was born and raised here and spent my whole life here. I have three sons. And now there emerged individuals who count races. But these kinds of associations do not consider these things”*. Theoretically, when in-group social capital is strengthened, because they are inward looking, they impose exclusionary feelings on the other groups. This kind of psychological feeling or perception relate with feelings of exclusion in a social life interaction. It imposes feelings of being divided and alienated in a social system by the side of this kind of individuals. It brings loss of sense of belongingness that can hamper the perceived solidarity among individuals. In addition, (DI1, FGD2&5)⁶⁴ noted that they need to be very selective to whom they speak with. They believe they can't trust everybody.

⁶² Focus group discussant 7, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁶³ In depth interviewee 5, interviewed on 9/02/2021, from social associations

⁶⁴ In depth interviewee 1, focus group discussant 2 & 5

Thus, some kind of mistrust feelings has been brought. All in all, this issue of trust prop towards Cassar et al. (2013) argument, insisting, violent conflict imperils the social capital embraced by individuals through imposing a blight of mistrust among them and put people in a position to see everything skeptic so as to not be the victim of that conflict.

4.3.3.2. Disruption on Effective Functioning of Groups, Associations and Networks

As it is mentioned before, one of the violent natures of the Gondar city protest is expressed in the displacement of some Tigriyans from the city and destruction of their properties. This situation for some time affected the social life bond between the Amhara and Tigriyans in terms of disturbing the well-functioning of groups, informal networks and associations. One of the interviewee (DI1)⁶⁵ proclaimed that:

When some Tigriyans left the city, in our Senbete two individuals, the first one who was property and finance administrator and the second one who was minutes taker left the city without handover the minutes, reports and the detailed information regarding some properties on their hand. These two individuals haven't ever thought for a second they will leave the city in this type of situation. This situation had created some problems in our Senebete operation. Some members weren't able to get some materials and facilities for carrying out ceremonies like baptism and Wedding. We didn't even able to know what kind of property is on the hand of which member.

Thus, as it is stated by the interviewee, these two individuals left the association where they have been members for more than 20 years. They have been contributing to the association in terms of finance, idea and labor and they were at some critical position in the *Senebte*. Accordingly, an instant position vacuum had been able to create some problems in the well-functioning of the association. This *Senbete* as a network or association couldn't able provide some services for individuals for some period of time. Moreover, some discussants (FGD02, 05&06)⁶⁶ pointed that some *Senbetes* and *Mahibers* where they are members had been closed and hadn't been able to provide some services until the protest became deescalated.

Moreover, an interviewee (DI6)⁶⁷ conveyed that “*there was one tyre shop in our village where some of we the residents and neighbors of the village gather at 6:00 AM always to chat. When we meet we were discussing about so many issues. This shop had been gathering us (around 7*

⁶⁵ In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

⁶⁶ Focus group discussant 2,5&6, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁶⁷ In depth interviewee 6, interviewed on 10/10/2020, from youth and community association

individuals) and has been served as a podium for our daily life interaction for a long time. During the protest time, the owner left the village and city and the shop is now still closed and dysfunctional. And now we don't gather like before. Therefore, according to this interviewee, the shop was able to create some kind of informal network where individuals can interact on their daily life routines. It has been served as a platform or podium where these neighbors can communicate one another and discuss about their social life routines. In this shop, these neighbors unintentionally were able to create an informal group or association that strengthened their neighborhood, brotherhood and fraternity. But now after the shop was ceased to exist, their daily life interaction also became disrupted. In other words, the informal network or group became dispersed or dissolved. This kind of informal groups and networks are the most vastly frequent and dispersed social life pulpits that can create a strong social life bond among individuals.

By the same token, another interviewee (DI2)⁶⁸ divulged that:

There was a hotel in our village where many of our village residents gather. And in that I was a very close friend of the manager, who was son of the owner, and I was deeply involved in social life of the workers in the hotel. The waiters, accountant, manager, chefs were created Mahiber which is celebrated in 19th every month (Gabriel). Though I wasn't formal member of the group I always attended the ceremony. After the hotel faced a strike, which is still dysfunctional, the workers of the hotel straggled to different places. Their Mahiber altogether became ceased.

This also signifies even some formal associations were disintegrated due to the long entrenched consequence of the protest. These kinds of associations are the most widely common associations in the city. They forge connections among individuals. It ties many individuals who are with different backgrounds. Thus, the nonfunctioning of that hotel off that hotel resulted the flattening of that formal association. To add more, one of the informants (KI9)⁶⁹, acquainted that *"I know some trade partnerships that are dissolved due to some Tigriyans left out of the city. I know some trade partnerships that are formed between Amhara individuals and Tigriyan individuals when some of these Tigriyans left the city the partnership also dissolved."* Basically, partnerships are also one kind of groups or associations that can create a strong social life bond among individuals. Thus, when partnerships became dissolved, the interaction, affiliation or

⁶⁸ In depth Interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

⁶⁹ Key informant 9, interviewed on 14/10/2020, protest mobilizer

connection among members also became ceased. All in all, the protest in Gondar city also affected the existence and well-functioning and formal and informal networks, groups and associations. As it is mentioned previously, groups, networks and associations are considered as the most fundamental pillar of social capital.

4.3.3.3. Downgraded Communication and Collective Action

Communication, co-operation and collective actions are strongly related with solidarity and trust. This implies whether and how people interact and work with others in their community. Basically, the violent nature of the protest and some attempts to give an ethnic nature to the protest left some Tigriyans to limit their movement and sit in their homes. One of the interviewee (FGD03)⁷⁰ enunciated:

For some time during the protest and aftermath of the protest, I opted to stay at home advised by some of neighbors and relatives to skip a possible danger in the city. The information we hear from neighbors, especially the news and information that comes from our relatives and families living in Tigray regarding the protest in the city imposed an immense fear on me and my life. Accordingly, I and my wife haven't attended some social life ceremonies like baptism, birthday, wedding, funerals and other regular visits of relatives and friends.

This response indicates communications and interactions have been interrupted in a social life in the side of these individuals until some period. This interruption of communication has resulted a situation to miss some social life ceremonies. When individuals miss social ceremonies repeatedly, implicitly cooperation also becomes under danger. One of the discussant (FGD7)⁷¹ noted that some of his relatives and friends disclosed their resentments towards him due to a frequent failure to attend holiday, baptism ceremony and other feast invitation from them. The discussant incited that *“those groups if they burnt shop they may launch physical attack. During this time, I and my wife only visit very near neighbors and relatives, not to other kebeles or villages”*. This respondent's response implies that this family is almost obliged to cut movement and communication with some of their families and friends in another kebeles.

Furthermore, one of the key informants (KI4)⁷² pointed that *“During the protest it was very tough to control the movement and wrong doing of the so called “Fota Lebash. We didn't even*

⁷⁰ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁷¹ Focus group discussant 7, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁷² Key Informant 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city's police bureau

know their genuine identity and we have some kind of fear that the extent of their destruction may transcend to physical attack. Thus we informally advised and recommended some Tigriyans to sit in their homes. This basically implies that some sort of interruption of communication in the social life of Tigriyans with their friends and relatives was occurred. Accordingly, without a communication, it is difficult to imagine attending of some social life ceremonies. Therefore, in some extent, communication in social life interaction was interrupted. This also leads us to another interruption of co-operation because inability to attend social life ceremonies like *Senbete*, *Mahiber*, funerals and weddings or without attending this social ceremonies, it is difficult to imagine about co-operation. Another interviewee (DI5)⁷³ unveiled that *“when an individual was shot and killed by the security forces and the youth became infuriated during the funerals and some perceived it as Tigray Agazi is killing individuals, I couldn’t attend the funeral. I had a cherished relationship with the victim’s family. But they umbrage me for not consoling them going to their homes.”*

Moreover, interviewee (DI3)⁷⁴ proclaimed that *“before we closed temporarily the weekly meeting of our Senbete when the protest became very violent, one of our Senbete member who was assigned to host the weekly senbete ceremony informed that he couldn’t make preparation and arrangement for the senbete ceremony due to a personal security issue. Then we cancelled the program.* This instance indicates how it was difficult to engage in a regular meeting and communication in some formal associations. One of the informants (KI5)⁷⁵ further noted that *“some hotels and houses that were owned by some allegedly suspected TPLF supporters and secretly work for TPLF haven’t got yet a buyer.”* Some capable individuals and investors do not want and co-operate to buy these hotels and houses. The owners left the city but their property is still there without being sold. This situation is even though a business, the unwillingness to buy the properties implies lack of co-operation though the owners are considered as TPLF’s secret personnels. All in all the attempt to give an ethnic nature to the protest eventually that touches some Tigriyans imposed a blight of fear and mistrust in the side of some Tigriyan who subsequently opted to cut communication and interaction with their social life interaction.

⁷³ In depth interviewee 5, interviewed on 9/02/2021, from social associations

⁷⁴ In depth interviewee 3, interviewed on 10/10/2020, from social associations

⁷⁵ Key informant 5, interviewed on 11/10/2020, from the city’s court bureau

4.3.3.4. Reservations and Exceptions for the Infliction of the Bridging Social Capital

Amid the erosion and infliction of the strong social life bond expressed in the strikes of some individuals, there are some reservations or exceptions that clearly depicted to what extreme and the intensity of the social life bond between Tigriyan and Amhara brothers was forged in the city. To buttress this point, (FGD3)⁷⁶ pointed that *“in the time when those groups of individuals who were engaged in strikes towards Tigriyan homes my neighbors and the kebele’s youth defended those Fota-lebash groups from striking my home. Some youths even physical fought with these individuals in defending my home from a strike.”* Another interviewee (KI4)⁷⁷ noted that:

for instance, the “Alaje hotel” in our kebele was defended by the kebele’s youth a couple of time from burning, but when the owner of that hotel transmitted a false information as his hotel is faced strike to some Tigray medias and activists, the youth became angry for it undermined their effort and co-operation to defend that hotel and after that day when the “FotaLebash” tried to burn and strike that hotel, the youth didn’t defend it and subsequently the hotel was burnt.

These respondents information tell us that still within that kind of violent protest in which an there was an attempt to give the protest an ethnic color, the brotherhood and co-operation feeling among Amharas and Tigriyans was still there. Moreover, a discussant (FGD5)⁷⁸ stated that *“when burning and strikes of Tigriyan homes and shops became frequent and hear our close relative’s home was under strike, we opted to spend two days in our neighbor’s home. Our two children weren’t in the city fortunately; me and my wife were terrified and spent two days in our neighbor’s home.”* According to the discussant, their neighbors were so co-operative that they host them in their home providing variety of foods and sleeping rooms for them. This accentuates that even in hard times there was a caring feeling among them. Furthermore, another discussant (FGD3)⁷⁹ incited that *“when me, my wife and children cut movements and sat in our homes, neighbors helped us to buy products like cereals, vegetables, food oils for us because we weren’t going to market places at that time. They helped us a lot.”* This indicates that amid the blight of fear, mistrust, strikes and anger still the social life bond manifested itself on the other side in terms of brotherhood, fraternity feelings between some Amharas and Tigriyans which resulted co-operation and reliance on neighbor in the darkest times. Furthermore, discussant

⁷⁶ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁷⁷ Key Informant 4, interviewed on 8/10/2020, from the city’s police bureau

⁷⁸ Focus group discussant 5, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁷⁹ Focus group discussant 3, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

(FGD4)⁸⁰ noted that “after we left the city and went to Addis Ababa while my two sons remained in Gondar and we returned to the city in 2019, we found our house and all the properties untouched thanks to the brotherhood sentiment between our sons and the neighbor youth.” Generally speaking, all the above circumstances indicate that though the social life bond between Amharas and Tigriyans in the city was exposed to menace and tested by fire and eroded in some extent, during the protest time, it also showed up in some extent that it defended another more catastrophe and destruction that could happened to Tigriyans.

4.3. Ways to Rejuvenate and Strengthen the Social Capital

All in all, the protest in Gondar city has resulted so many consequences. It touched the social fabric of the society. The protest has ensued some implications on the social life bond of the community. On the one hand, it further enhanced the social life bond among individuals who participated in the protest and supported the cause of the protest, in group or the bonding social capital. On the other hand, it eroded the social life bond between Amhara residents and Tigriyan residents. As it is insisted by some scholars, basically social capital or a strong social life bond is an indispensable tool to preserve peace, harmonious relationship and mitigate the violent nature of conflicts and even decrease the likelihood of the eruption of violent conflict. Most importantly, social life bond is a crucial tool for a successful peace building process. In short, a social capital or social life bond per se should be rejuvenated and strengthened from time to time. Most importantly, the rejuvenation of the social life bond or the bridging social capital between Amharas and Tigriyans needs is immensely critical. Basically, the collected data were aspired to assess the realities and scenarios before the current war in Tigray region is broke out and expanded to the Amhara region. Therefore, it necessary to envisage these ways as they were discovered before the current war is intensified. Thus, the study unfolds that rejuvenation of the bridging social capital can be realized through an integrated effort and work by the government, political elites and the two peoples or communities. Generally speaking, the study discovered the following ways in order to rejuvenate the eroded bridging social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans.

4.3.1. Supporting and Strengthening Indigenous Social and Community Based Associations

⁸⁰ Focus group discussant 4, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

As it is mentioned before, associations, groups, and networks are the foremost fundamental pillars of a social capital. It is through these rostrums that individuals, groups and communities interact and forge social cohesion. Thus, supporting, strengthening and empowering of these community based platforms are one ways of rejuvenating the social capital which is a shared responsibility for both the government and the people. As one of the discussant (FGD6)⁸¹, enunciated, *“today’s youth envisage our Mahiber, Senbete, Equb associations as traditional and only meant for elders. They don’t care about these networks of interaction. They are careless toward these associations. They don’t really understand the value of these associations. We created this kind of association in their today’s age. As we received from our forefathers, today’s youth should also receive from us”*. This ruminates, the very necessity to have a proper understanding of the value of these associations in the first place by the side of the youth and other individuals who don’t have these kinds’ of social life associations. Hence, by considering their advantage, as the associations help individuals by connecting them one another closely, searching solutions together for their problems, the youth’s support of these associations is crucial in terms of membership, participation and idea, labor and material contribution. The engagement and the participation of the youth as the central force that can play a pivotal role in many political, economic and social activities gives an immense weight towards the survival and functioning of these associations. The life span of these associations relies on the willingness, commitment and determination of the youth to support and strengthen them. These associations prevail only when there is a generation or youth to receive them as their own. Therefore, the active membership and participation of the youth in these associations strengthen the well-functioning and survival of these associations. This later creates a platform to endorse interaction and communication among individuals

Moreover, another discussant (FGD1)⁸² incited that:

I know these associations should be free from political interventions and believe that the government shouldn’t intervene in the operation of these associations. For instance, most of the time in the time of public holidays, when our *Senbete* organize feast to feed the poor and beggars, we had frequently faced financial constraints. When we send request of support to some governmental institutions, some will say it is not our business and some say they don’t have budget. We also

⁸¹ Focus group discussant 6, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁸² Focus group discussant 1, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

spend money for some legal advisory services. Why do we spend that? We are not business or profit oriented organizations.

The discussant raised a critical point regarding the government's side to support these associations. Though these associations are intervention free associations, the government's support and assistance when it is requested by the associations is enormously valuable for the rejuvenation of the social capital. It is basically when the existence and functioning of these associations is ensured that Amharas, Tigriyans and others obtain an opportunity to communicate one another. The governmental institutions' need to have a proper comprehension of the advantages, benefits and roles these associations are providing for ensuring the well-being of individuals and communities. These associations are sharing the government's responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of citizens. Thus, the government's co-operative for a more effective functioning and maintenance of these associations. The government's cooperation and supporting of these institutions in terms of finance, material or knowledge is incredibly useful to enable individuals communicate one another. In this regard, a study by Nigatu, Eden and Ansha (2013) unfolded that informal indigenous institutions like *Idir* and *Iqub* aren't well protected and sustained by local formal institutions. They don't have reciprocal relation with formal government institutions and apparatus in their local area. This problem put them in a position prone to breakdown and vanishing.

Furthermore, the government beyond supporting these institutions respondents (DI5, FGD4&6)⁸³ asserted that the government's engagement in the establishment of more and more associations, groups and clubs is very helpful. The respondents purport that the creation of co-operative work associations, entertainment, art and sport clubs or groups facilitate the rejuvenation of the social capital. More specifically one of the informants (KI1)⁸⁴ affirms that, the creation of sporting associations like football projects, hand ball projects, etc. in the name of the city can create a platform to closely connect Tigriyans and Amharas. This view is so critical because when sporting and entertainment kind of groups created which are very difficult for politicization if they are managed properly, gather individuals from different backgrounds and maintain a formal, in somehow institutionalized and regular interaction among members. In short, supporting,

⁸³ In depth interviewee 5, focus group discussant 4 & 6

⁸⁴ Key Informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/20, from Amhara Prosperity Party,

strengthening and empowering social and community based associations is one way to rejuvenate the social capital.

4.3.2. Conducting a Consistent and Regular Public to Public Relation Forums

Another way of rejuvenating the eroded social capital is through executing a consistent and regular public to public relation. Basically public to public relation gathers individual and groups and helps to discuss about problems and the solutions. One of the interviewee (DI1)⁸⁵ pointed that *“It was tried for a few times to conduct a public to public relation podium between Amharas and Tigriyans though it was inconsistent and ineffective. It is through when we gather together to discuss frankly the problems occurred that we can build trust and solidarity and ambush mistrust, hatred, grudge and vengeance feelings. It should be conducted consistently, regularly and genuinely between Amharas and Tigriyans from abroad and here. The government should take the ultimate responsibility.”* A consistent public to public relation will help to bring back the strong social life bond by discussing about what was happened during the protest and what is for the future. Basically, a public to public relation necessitates an integrated willingness, commitment and determination by different stakeholders. But because a government has an institution, power and resource, it should manage the overall process. Thus, the federal government’s leading role in order to execute the relation consistently and genuinely by integrating with the two regional governments is critical. A podium where the two ethnic group individuals can get the chance to express what they feel one another is indispensable. Their feeling has to be disclosed in these podiums.

Moreover, one of the informants (KI5)⁸⁶ divulged that *“It is when a regular, frequent and programmed public to public relation podiums are carried out that Tigriyan and Amhara brothers can get a remorse, apology and forgiving one another. We can’t correct the past. The past is already past. We have a long future. We have historical and blood ties, many things connect us than separate us.”* This signifies that it is when individuals reach into remorse and forgiving feelings that trust can prevails. But it will not be easy task. It takes some time to brain wash the sufferings and traumas one has. But once these kinds of hidden and unexpressed emotions are revealed, it can be possible to lead a strong social life bond. In relation to this, a

⁸⁵ In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

⁸⁶ Key informant 5, interviewed on 11/10/2020, from the city’s court bureau

discussant (FGD2)⁸⁷ contemplated that “*reconciliation must be brought not only between victims and perpetrators but also between politicians and social media activists in the two regions. Kind of TPLF’s manifesto and idea that inflict hatred and division between the two people should be questioned by Tigriyan brothers and abhor this kind of discourses*”. Thus, endorsement of consistent and regular public to public relation between the two ethnic groups creates a possibility for the realization of reconciliation. Revising and modifying the two ethnic groups elites’ political discourses by scrutinizing its implication on the wellbeing of individuals and communities is significant in order to eliminate the thing that dictates hatred and mistrust among them.

A persistent, regular and frequent public to public relation would result in reconciliation in due process. When individuals from the two ethnic groups can get a public forum, they can able to reveal their genuine feelings and concerns one another. An agreement between the political elites in the two respective regions regarding the collective security of the two ethnic groups’ communities is invaluable. A genuine articulation and representation of the interest of Tigriyan and Amhara individuals needs to be ensured by the political elites. Prioritization of the collective security of their peoples is enormously important. All in all, a consistent, frequent and regular public to public relation between the two ethnic groups that can result remorse, apology and forgiving is found to be a critical instrument to rejuvenate the bridging social capital.

4.3.3. Addressing Injustices

Protests by their very nature inflict causalities, strikes and destruction of properties. Specifically the Gondar city protest was violent which resulted erosion of the social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans. The protest resulted victims on both sides. Thus one way of rejuvenating this eroded social capital is addressing the injustices, strikes, sufferings and destructions occurred during the protest. One of the interviewee (DI1)⁸⁸ pointed that:

To bring back the strong social life bond, the government, the federal or regional or the city level, should provide a detailed information about the problem happened during the protest, it should bluntly reveal the destruction brought by the protest. Legitimate, credible and detailed information, should be presented. There are still victims of the protest in the city from both the Amhara and Tigriyan. There are still those who have lost families and relatives. There are

⁸⁷ Focus group discussant 2, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁸⁸ In depth interviewee 1, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from social associations

those whose properties burnt to ashes. There are those individuals who think their brothers were killed by Tigriyan Agazis. The victims of both ethnic groups' pains should be healed. Justice should be served to the victims."

The respondent noted that the need for proper investigation for what was happened during the protest and a subsequent acknowledgement of injustices and provision of justice. This response leads us toward correcting wrong doings for not repeating them in the future. Curing the scars and sores of victims and purging of grudge feelings among individuals is immensely vital that can enable individuals to live together harmoniously again. Serving justice for victims eventually enhance individuals' trust on institutions and one another. Accordingly, people can lead their life as it was in the past and usual. Thereby brotherhood, fraternity and solidarity can flourish among them.

Moreover, discussants (FGD1&FGD2)⁸⁹ append that individuals who left the city out of fear and perceived threat should return to their homes. Discussant (FGD2)⁹⁰ incited that *"though some are returned, there are some displaced individuals who are our long time brothers unreturned and umbraged, and they should return to their homes by dropping their grudge and believing the society with whom they have spent their whole life."* This point is a crucial stride for it can heal the sores and resentment feeling by the side of displaced individuals. A successful returning of the displaced individuals can give an enormous outcome in terms of enhancing trust and solidarity between the two ethnic groups.

4.4.4. Ensuring Inclusive Participation on the City's Administrative Issues

The other way of rejuvenating a bridging social capital is through ensuring all inclusive participation of individuals in variety of the city's administrative and service provision activities. One of the respondents (KI8) insisted that *"in order to strengthen the eroded solidarity between Amharas and Tigriyans, the two groups should be embraced with participation in the city's different projects. They should be given a shared vision to develop the city together, and should get the opportunity to contribute their respective efforts."* In other words, the government should open its door for an all inclusive participation. The city's administration should ensure the participation of both sides either in infrastructural development projects or provision of services and other administrative issues. For instance, participation can be expressed in terms of partaking

⁸⁹ Focus group discussant 1 &2, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁹⁰ Focus group discussant 2, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

in economic development projects, infrastructural development programs, community development programs, housing projects and the like. The city administration should invite Tigriyans, Amharas and others to participate in the city's different projects either by creating job opportunities, or letting them invest in the projects or giving the opportunity to manage the projects.

Moreover, discussants (FGD5, FGD06&07)⁹¹ stressed that the city residents should get the chance to participate in administrative and civil service institutions. A primary opportunity should be given to the residents of the city. Inclusive participation is very critical to strengthen the social cohesion and solidarity of communities. It is through participation that people develop sense of belongingness to the society. Specifically, when the Amharas and Tigriyans are able to participate in the city's numerous projects, they can develop sense of common good and thereby overhaul the eroded solidarity and trust among them. Inclusive participation is one of the pillar or dimension of social capital. Thus, when the Tigriyans and Amharas are able to participate in multitudes of projects aimed for the development of the city, they can able to fortify the brotherhood and fraternity feeling between them. Thus, an effective participation in the city's different development projects bestows sense of belongingness to the city and the society that can create individuals who endeavor for the wellbeing and security of one another and the whole city. Interviewee (DI2)⁹² proclaimed that

Most of the time, administrators came from other places to administer the city residents. And some of these officials and personnel ensconce patron-client relationship in their offices and bureaus. Most of the officials, officers, chiefs and heads of different bureaus in the city are managed by individual who don't know the city and the residents. There are many qualified individuals in different kebeles of the city, but they don't serve the city. They should have to get a chance to serve in the public sector.

A study by Tamu (2019) buttressed this point noting, meritocracy system has been totally bereft in Gondar town's public sector whereby employment in public sectors has been executed based on patron-client relationship which subsequently created a situation where uneducated individuals enjoy a better position over the educated ones. This response elucidate that participation of residents of the city in different administrative institutions is very critical. It is

⁹¹ Focus group discussant 5, 6 &7, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

⁹² In depth interviewee 2, interviewed on 9/10/2020, from youth association

one mode that inclusion is expressed. Otherwise, exclusion will result. Entrenchment of meritocracy system instead of patron-client relationship is important. At the same time providing opportunity to residents is invaluable so as to enhance sense of inclusion. When all individuals get the chance to serve in *Kebeles*, sub cities, bureaus and other governmental institution of the city, they can able to strengthen solidarity and cohesion among them. Moreover, offices and bureaus are major areas where networks, associations and groups of social capital can be created. Thus inclusion and participation beyond developing sense of belongingness to the common good, they can also create podiums and platforms where social capital can be created or strengthened. Forthwith, in order to rejuvenate the eroded social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans, inclusive participation of Amharas and Tigriyans in the city's numerous projects and administrative affairs is tremendously indispensable for rejuvenating the bridging social capital.

4.5.5. Revising Political Discourses and Directions Imposing Ethnic Mistrust, Hatred and Grudge

The eroded social capital between the Amhara and Tigriyans has its root causes over political issues. Thus, political discourses and issues are also expected to play a tremendous role in rejuvenating the social capital. One of the informants (KI9)⁹³ divulged that *“I am always exasperated thinking about what are the main sources behind the mistrust, hatred and grudge feelings developed in the minds of individuals. On the ground, we live together cherished and amiably. But suddenly a group or an individual will stand and say ‘this group has done this to you!’, you should retaliate it. Your forefathers were a victim and you need to correct that.”* Here the respondent raised a good point that grievance and resentment sentiments are usually framed by political elites. The two ethnic groups know each other very well and are tied by marriages, history and culture. For many decades, their forefathers lived harmoniously. And now on behalf of these forefathers individuals and elites emerged to claim about injustices. One thing that should be underlined is that a shared past history wrongdoings is open to interpretation and debates, but it should only serve as a lesson not source of hatred and grudge that gambles on the present time wellbeing of individuals. With different historical narration existing in the country,

⁹³Key informant 9, interviewed on 14/10/2020, protest mobilizer

a past wrong doing shouldn't be a source of current bloodshed among communities. Moreover informant (KI1)⁹⁴ insisted that:

There are some groups' historical narrations and political discourses drive individuals to look one another as enemy; create mistrust, hatred, and vengeance feeling between the Amhara and Tigriyans. A typical example is TPLF'S manifesto depicting the Amhara as oppressor, destroyer of Tigriyan identity and a long time enemy for Tigriyans. It is prepared by very few individuals, and they are defining and giving a verdict a long time historical and current relationship on millions of people. How can a Tigriyan individual who was raised listening Amharas as oppressor and killer of his/her for fathers has a healthy image towards an Amhara individual? Amhara is a generic word it represents millions. When you say Amhara, you don't think about a single individual or certain group of individuals, rather about the whole who claim him/herself as Amhara.

This respondent view is very crucial. It implies the necessity by the side of the government to revise this kind of historical narration and political discourse by evaluating the implications on the brotherhood and fraternity feelings between the two ethnic groups. It indicates the necessity to examine the advantage and disadvantage of this kind of narration towards the well being and harmonious coexistence among communities. Thus, a thorough evaluation of the pros and cons of this kind of historical narrations and political discourses based up on its effect on harmonious relationship between the two communities is tremendously essential. In spite of the controversies over correctness of this narration, the outcomes of the above questions need to be assessed and evaluated. Before this kind of narration is entertained, the Amhara and Tigriyan peoples had lived together harmoniously for many hundred years.

Furthermore, some discussants (FGD2, 4 &5)⁹⁵ pointed that predominantly individuals, groups and parties should stop speculating and disseminating information that endanger the wellbeing of the two ethnic groups; Parties should take responsibilities on what they say; They should stop victim politics game; Social media activities should refrain from spreading mistrust, hatred and grudge between the two ethnic groups; the government should punish these perpetrators. Therefore, the government's maneuver in order to manage and regulate these kinds of situations is very critical. Outmaneuvering and managing individuals and groups who are embedded in the society who strive for the attainment of personal benefit at the expense of peoples is massively helpful to ensure harmonious co-existence of the two ethnic groups.

⁹⁴ Key informant 1, interviewed on 4/10/2020, Amhara Prosperity Party

⁹⁵ Focus group discussant 2,4&5, discussed on 14/02/2021, from social associations

Moreover, respondents (KI7,DI2 & FGD2)⁹⁶ emphasized that the Welqayt issue should get a final resolution or response. It shouldn't be an issue of contest for the future. There should be an agreement over that. They insist, if it is returned to Amhara, Tigriyans should accept and acknowledge it. This response props up towards the necessity to revise and reconsider political narrations, policies and administrative directions. The federal government's proper scrutinizing and analyzing of the contests, disagreements, problems, outcomes and solutions created in relation with these kinds of divergent views and claims over Welqayt needs to reach at ultimate settlement of the issue. Recently, the Amhara regional state president Agegnehu Teshager on July 6, 2021 stated that, currently the Amhara regional state is administering Welqayt Tsegede and if there is any movement to seize Welqayt Tsegede through force, the regional government will pay any sacrifice to abort this kind of movement (Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRU0Oa0T5T4>). In fact, still there is a tension over the Welqayt land that might result devastating consequences on the wellbeing and social bond between Amharas and Tigriyans. Accordingly, the two regional government's peaceful discussion to settle the dispute over the Welqayt case is immensely critical to reinvigorate the bond between the Amharas and Tigriyans. All in all, revision of policies, laws and administrative directions that encompass contest between the two ethnic groups by the two regional governments and the federal government gives an enormous contribution to rejuvenate the social capital between the Amharas and Tigriyans.

⁹⁶ Key informant 7, in depth interviewee 2, focus group discussant 2

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

As it is mentioned earlier this thesis scrutinizes the research problem by predominantly assessing the realities and scenarios occurred before the current war in Tigray region is broke out. As it is insisted by many scholars in the field of peace and conflict studies, conflict is ubiquitous in every society. A violent conflict has different kinds and forms. Violent political protests are one form of violent conflicts. A violent protest erupted in Gondar city in July 2016 following an attempt to arrest Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee leaders. The attempt to detain leaders of this committee is only accounted as a triggering cause behind the eruption of the protest. Thus, the 2016 Gondar city protest was erupted as a result of interrelated major driving factors. Accordingly, the research finding divulges that the juxtaposition of political, economic and local good governance factors underlie the protest. Apparently, these factors framed and constructed the grievances behind the protest. Pithily speaking, claims over lack of democratic governance, bogus and unfair political representation of the Amhara people; repressive political system; and loss of historical lands of Welqayt and a land seized by Sudan constituted the political factors. All these claims were entertained and presented by the protesters in the name of representing the Amhara people. The economic factor encompasses claims over unfair resource distribution, lack of infrastructural development and high rate of youth unemployment in the city. The local good governance factor is comprised of lack of effective service provision and the entrenchment of corruption in the city's bureaus and offices. Concomitantly, these factors created grievance and relative deprivation sentiments on the protesters.

Started with peaceful demonstration, the protest has witnessed numerous violent acts eventually. The amalgamation of the measures taken by the security apparatus and the subsequent reaction of protesters brought about a blight of violence in the city. As the modus operandi of protests, violence was expressed in different forms during the 2016-18 Gondar city protest. The study discovers that strikes and destruction, burning and looting of properties were among the most recurrent violent acts executed during the protest. In due course, irrespective of the causes and goals of the protest, some violent acts signaled an attempt to have ethnic based enactments. Accordingly, the study revealed that the protest encompassed an attempt to instrumentalize

ethnic identity. Some individuals, social media activists, political groups and most predominantly the “*Fota-lebash*” tried to instrumentalize ethnic identity. The major perpetrator of the ethnic based violent acts was an informally organized group called “*Fota-lebash*”.

Basically, the sources of most of the grievances were deemed by the protesters as a result of TPLF’s interests, political games and political narrations. Subsequently, ethnicization of strikes occurred during the protest. In this sense, Tigriyans who were allegedly suspected to secretly working for/with TPLF and some security officials in the city during the protest time were targeted and faced attacks. The bond built between the Amhara and Tigre that was built for decades failed to halt the strikes. Some of the study data showed that, this was due to: most of the strikes were executed by a group called *Fota-lebash* composed of individuals whom their social life is more or less alienated and has a feeble bond with aboriginal residents of the city. Some of the protesters who were victims of unlawful detention, torture and who lost their families in different times by the regime (perceived as by TPLF) embraced an outrage feeling and hatred towards TPLF, tried to target some allegedly suspected pro-TPLF Tigriyans; the protest additionally has been mobilized through social media activists who live in another places and do not comprehend the social fabric and bond of the city.

Considering the violent nature of the protest, it brought enormous implications on social capital between individuals and communities. The protest inflicted consequences differently on the social life bond of individuals. On the one hand, the protest enhanced social capital among individuals who participated in the protest, i.e., the in-group social capital or the bonding social capital. The protest enhanced the bonding social capital which was expressed in terms of the establishment and expansion of formal associations and informal networks; the strengthening of solidarity, co-operation and trust and enhancement of communication and flow of information. This was even extended up to the consolidation of the Amhara nationalism in general. On the contrary, the protest inflicted the erosion of the social capital between the Amhara and Tigre that has been built at least for decades, i.e., inter-group social capital or bridging social capital. This was expressed in terms of the weakening of solidarity and trust; disruption of the effective functioning of associations and informal networks; downgrading of flow of communication and collective action. As a result, the bridging social capital between the Amhara and Tigriyans ruptured.

Generally speaking, as far as social capital is concerned, it has an enormous capacity to mitigate and manage the eruption and consequences of inter-group violent conflicts. As a result, a solidly strengthened social capital is vital in mitigating violent conflicts. Most importantly, the study finding unfolds that the rejuvenation of the eroded bridging social capital is indispensable. Thereupon, the study explores that rejuvenation of the bridging social capital enormously necessitates an integrated effort and work by the government, political elites and the two peoples or communities. Accordingly, certain ways are discovered in order to rejuvenate the bridging social capital. The bridging social capital can be rejuvenated through: supporting, strengthening and empowering the indigenous social associations; conducting a consistent and regular public to public relation forums; addressing injustices, enhancing inclusive participation in the city's numerous projects and activities; revising political discourses and directions imposing ethnic mistrust, hatred and grudge.

5.2. Recommendations

The study has revealed that the 2016-18 Gondar city protest erupted due to accumulated grievances which are created out of inter-related political, economic and local administrative structural factors. The protest ensued different consequences including loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of people. Preeminently, the protest knocked and menaced the social fabric of the society. Discreetly, the protest eroded the bridging social capital between the Amhara and Tigriyan. As a result, the likelihood of revitalization of this kind of violent protest in the near future should be halted. Besides, unrelenting effort needs to be employed for a successful realization of an invigorated bridging social capital between the Amhara and Tigriyan. On top of all these, the current war in north Ethiopia should be culminated. To this end, the researcher renders some recommendations for the following stakeholders as follows.

The Federal Government:-

- The federal government should bring the current war in northern Ethiopia to an end. The current war is resulting massive casualties, displacement of people and destruction of properties in Amhara regional state, Tigray regional state and Afar regional state. The war is becoming severe in that it has mobilized vast majority of individuals in the respective sides.

- TPLF clearly stated that it make the war public war. Hence, the federal government should engage in activities that can detach the war (that TPLF make public war) from public to TPLF. Thus, it should engage in activities and operations that can result detachment of TPLF from Tigray's people.
- The Federal government should examine and investigate situations that make the Tigriyan people stand with TPLF. Accordingly, it should create the situation that can enable Tigriyans stand with vast majority of Ethiopian people.
- The federal government should engage in activities that can narrow the scope of the war in a very limited space. It should be subtle enough to make TPLF operate in a limited space. It should investigate the situations that broaden the scope of the war, i.e., to bring the war out of Tigray in to Amhara and Afar regional states. Thus, it should create a situation that can weaken TPLF and sit for peaceful negotiation.
- The federal government should work relentlessly to settle boarder and identity disputes residing between Amhara regional state and Tigriyan regional state through legal means and by considering peoples' consent and historical scenarios. Besides, it should also work to let the international community understand deeply the nature of the claims and complexity of these boarder and identity disputes.
- As it is revealed by the study, most of the claims and questions echoed during the protest were attributed to the general political system in the country. Hence, in time of the formulation and implementation of the country's overall political, economic, social and development policies, strategies and plans, the federal government should address questions raised regarding the Amhara people during the protest. It should reconsider claims of unfair representation and depictions in the FDRE constitution. It shouldn't be concluded as the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed stated "we will not amend the constitution for the interest of one region". The participation and consent of the Amhara people in the making of the constitution should be revised and reconsidered again. The issue of land that was claimed to be given to Sudanese needs to be reconsidered and should get a legitimate answer.
- The federal government should facilitate and ensure the people's democratic right of free and fair elections of representatives in the two respective regions.

- After the war comes to an end, the federal government should endeavor relentlessly in creating forums and podiums in order to affix the political elites and governing elites of the two regions. Besides, it should engage in an all inclusive political discussion and negotiation, national consensus and reconciliation.

The TPLF:-

- TPLF announced that it will not going to sit for discussion and negotiation unless the preconditions it enlisted are fulfilled. TPLF should understand and realize the current dynamics and nature of the war. The Welqayt issue is the foremost agenda of the entire Amhara people. It is not like it claimed the “Amhara elite” agenda. Thus, by considering the casualties and atrocities the Amhara people, Tigriyan people and other people are suffering because of the war, it should revise its preconditions and drop its stubborn stance and thereby sit for peaceful negotiation.
- TPLF should stop its strategy of making the war people’s war whereby individuals die in massive quantity, peoples are displaced harshly, and properties are immensely destroyed. Rather, it should care about ceasing the war in such a way that cannot permanently damage public to public relation and cohesion of communities after the post war period.
- TPLF should realize and accept the current Ethiopian political situation. Unlike it stated, the dispute and war is not with “Abiy’s regime” and “Amhara expansionist elite”, rather it is with vast majority of Ethiopian population (at least the entire Amhara people and other regional states) stand against TPLF. Accordingly, TPLF should be adhered to the interest of the majority people. There is no what is called “Abiy’s force”, rather Ethiopia’s national defense force which is constituted of different ethnic groups. As TPLF itself confirmed, it annihilated this force harshly. Thus, it should stop its strategy to extend and broaden the scope of the war and thereby form alliances with other groups to control political power.

The Amhara regional government:-

- The regional government should play its role in culminating the current war. By considering the casualties and atrocities the people is suffering because of the war, it should prepare itself to look for another alternatives to settle the dispute. It should

prepare itself for peaceful negotiation in such a way that can ensure the interest of the Amhara people.

- It should endeavor to settle the Welqayt issue through a legal means. Thus, the regional government should work together with the federal government and regional states in order to get a legitimate, proper and legal settlement of the Welqayt dispute.
- The regional government should create region-wide forums and discuss with the people regarding the interest, grievances and resentment of the people. It should address the questions raised during the protest. It should assess and identify the questions responded with the ones that are not addressed. It should put future directions to address the questions raised during the protest based on the consent of the people.
- It should prepare itself to sit for national political discussion and negotiation, national consensus and reconciliation.

The two ethnic groups' political elites:-

- The political elites should strive for peaceful resolution of disagreements and conflicts. They should refrain from further escalating the current war in to another catastrophe. They should play their respective contributions to bring the war in to an end. The two regions' political elites should develop democratic culture of political negotiation and bargaining. They should have a strong stance and solid belief in resolving disputes and disagreements on tables. For their every movement, they should calculate the implications and consequences on the wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- They should always prioritize and endeavor for the genuine interest of their respective represented peoples. They shouldn't amalgamate their group interest with the wider interest of their people. They should candidly represent the interest of their people in their overall functioning.
- The political elites should develop sense of responsibility and accountability. They should have to be adhered to laws and regulations. They should abhor political games and gambling at the expense of the lives of people.

The city administration:-

- The city administration should address the questions raised relating with the city administration. It should give proper responses towards questions of lack of good governance, corruption, lack of infrastructural developments and other institutional and structural defects.
- The city administration should ensure the mutual benefits of all the residents in the city. It should ensure maintenance of peace and order in the city. It should hold accountable violence perpetrators and wrongdoers. It should ensure legal protection for all residents in the city. All inclusive participation of individuals in the city should be entrenched. It should create job opportunities for the youth.
- By considering their enormous contribution for mitigating conflicts and preserving peace, the city administration should support indigenous social institutions in the city. It should create platforms and schemes in order to connect these indigenous social institutions with the formal institutions in the city. It should also effectively engage in forging numerous city based community associations that can enable individuals to interact closely and develop sense of belongingness to the city.

Researchers:-

- By using this study as a springboard, researches had better engage and inquire on violent conflicts and protest thematic areas. Nowadays, violent conflicts and protests are becoming extremely frequent in different parts of Ethiopia. They should be scrutinized thoroughly.
- Studies regarding social capital in Ethiopia are very scant, while Ethiopians have a strong social life bond in their social life. Besides, multitudes of indigenous social institutions are embedded in numerous Ethiopian communities. Thereupon, a research needs to be conducted on this thematic area.

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Appendix 1

Questions for key Informant interviews

For informants from Gondar city police Department Bureau

1. What do you think about the immediate cause of the protest?
2. What do you think about the root causes of the protest?
3. How do you describe the nature of the protest?
4. What do you think about the overall movement and activities of protesters during the protest?
5. What were the questions of the protesters echoed during the protest?
6. Why was certain violent activities had ethnic nature?
7. What was the consequence of the protest on Tigrrians?
8. How do you assess the protest's implication on the social interaction and social life bond between Tigrrians and Amharas?
9. How can be the social bond between Amharas and Tigrrians rejuvenated?

For Amhara Democratic Party official

1. How do you see the outbreak of the 2016 Gondar city protest as a political activist or government official?
2. What do you think about the root causes of the protest?
3. How do you see the grievance of the protesters?
4. How do you assess the nature of the protest?
5. What are the major implications of the protest on the social life bond between Amharas and Tigrrians?
6. What do you think about the implications of the protest on the solidarity of protesters and the general Amhara nationalism?
7. How was the government responded to the questions of the protesters?
8. What do you think about the ways the social life bond can be rejuvenated?

For Youth association leaders and mobilizers

1. What do you think about the main causes of the protest?
2. How do you describe the nature of the protest?
3. How do you explain the participation of the youth on the protest?
4. What are the consequences of the protest on social conditions?
5. What do you think about the negative and positive implications of the protest on the protesters?
6. What is the relationship between the protest and the youth association?

7. How do you describe the contribution of the protest for the creation of the association?
8. What is the goal and function of the association?
9. What are the achievements the youth association achieved so far?
10. How can be the social life bond between Amharas and Tigriyans rejuvenated?

For Justice Bureau official

1. How do you describe the 2016 Gondar city protest as justice office personnel?
 2. What do you think about the major factors that erupt the protest?
 3. What is your perception regarding the motivation that led individuals to participate in the protest?
 4. How do you assess the nature of the protest? To what extent was violent?
 5. How do you describe the damages that the protest has brought on people's lives and individual and governmental protest?
 6. What were the works done in order to serve justice to the people suffered from the protest?
 7. What do you think about the consequences of the protest on the social life bond between Amharas and Tigriyans?
 8. What were the works done in order to serve justice to the people suffered from the protest?
- As an individual serving at justice bureau, how can be the social capital rejuvenated?

For Social Media Activist

1. How do you describe the 2016 Gondar city protest?
 2. What do you think about the factors that erupted the protest?
 3. What do you think about the motivation that led individuals to participate in the protest?
 4. Why was the protest violent?
 5. What was the goal of the protest?
 6. Do you think the protest has achieved its goals?
 7. What are the outcomes of the protest on the social fabric of the society?
- What is the protest's implication on the protesters and Amhara nationalism?

For Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee leaders

1. How do you describe the eruption of the protest?
2. To what extent is the issue of Wlqayt land is accounted for the eruption of the protest?
3. What was the goal of the committee?
4. How was the committee striving to get response concerning the Welqayt land?
5. Why didn't the Welqayt issue get a solution?
6. What were the main challenges of the committee?
7. What should be done to settle the dispute over the Welqayt land?

Guideline Questions for In-depth interviews

For elders (serving at *Mahiberawi frdbet*)

1. How do you describe the social fabric of the Gondar city? What is unique in the city?
2. What are the indigenous social institutions and networks forging a social life bond in the city? In your respective sub-city? Their similarity? Difference?
3. What are the main functions and goals of these associations and networks? Their inclusiveness? Membership criterias?
4. What are the benefits of these associations and networks?
5. What did look like the membership of Tigriyans in these associations before and after the protest in your locality? Participation? Commitment? Responsibility?
6. What are the implications of the protest on these associations and networks? On their functioning, communication and co-operation?
7. What do look like the solidarity and trust between Amharas and Tigriyans in your locality?
8. How can the social life bond rejuvenated between the Amharas and Tigriyans?

For Youth association leaders

1. What are the major causes of the protest?
2. What was the nature of the protest? The youth participation? Motivation of the youth to participate?
3. How do you describe the implications of the protest on social fabric of the city? On the youth? The protesters?
4. How do you describe the youth participation during the protest? In demonstrations? Mobilization? Any other activity?
5. What are the positive contributions of the protest on the protesters' solidarity?
6. How do you describe the relationship between the association and the protest?
7. What is the purpose and function of the association? Inclusiveness? Membership criteria?
8. How do you assess the association's role in strengthening the solidarity of members?

For an older Tigriyan resident

1. How do you describe your social life interaction in your locality? What about other Tigriyans?
2. What do look like your membership and participation in *Mahibers*, *Senbete*, *Iqub* and other networks? Commitment? Responsibility?

3. What are the benefits and advantages these indigenous social associations? Any benefit you get?
4. How do you describe the feeling you had during the time of the protest? Attending ceremonies? Co-operation?
5. How do you describe the protest's implication on the social life interaction between Amharas and Tigriyans? In *Mahiber*, *Senbete*, Any other? What about your interaction in your locality?
6. What are the implications of the protest on the solidarity, trust and communication between the Amharas and Tigriyans?
What do you think about the ways the social life bond between Amharas and Tigriyans can be rejuvenated?

Guideline checklist for Focus Group Discussion 1

1. How do you describe the 2016 Gondar city protest?
2. What was the nature of the protest?
3. How do you describe your experience and relationship with the protest?
4. What do you think about the goal and consequences of the protest?
5. How do you describe the interaction among yourselves before and after the protest?
6. What are the fundamental implications of the protest on your interactions?
7. What are the manifestations for your interaction after the protest?
8. How do you communicate one another?
9. How do you assess the protest's implication on the solidarity, trust and communication among yourselves?
10. What should be done in order to halt the revitalization of this kind of protest in the near future?

Guideline checklist for Focus Group Discussion 2

1. How do you describe the social life interaction and bond in Gondar city before the protest? What about among yourselves?
2. What are the fundamental platforms for your social life interactions?
3. What are the benefits and advantages you get from your social life bond?
4. How do you describe your interactions in social life activities during the time of the protest?
5. How do you describe the overall violent activities during the protest?
6. What were the direct consequences of the violent protest activities on your interactions during the protest?
7. How do you describe your interaction after the protest?
8. How do you describe the protest's implications on the solidarity and trust among yourselves and other Amharas and Tigriyans?
9. What do you think about the ways to rejuvenate the social capital between Amharas and Tigriyans?

Appendix 2

List of Key Informants and Interviewees

NO	CODE	Name of Organization/Occupation	Date
1	KI1	Amhara Prosperity Party	4/10/2020
2	KI2	Youth Association	9/10/2020
3	KI3	Police Department Bureau	8/10/2020
4	KI4	Police Department Bureau	08/10/2020
5	KI5	Court Bureau	11/10/2020
6	KI6	Social Media activist	13/10/2020
7	KI7	Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee	14/10/2020
8	KI8	Welqayt Amhara Identity Committee	14/10/2020
9	KI9	Protest Mobilizer	14/10/2020
10	DI1	Social Association	9/10/2020
11	DI2	Youth Association	9/10/2020
12	DI3	Social Association	10/10/2020
13	DI4	Youth Association	15/10/2020
14	DI5	Social Association	9/02/2021
15	DI6	Youth and Community Association	10/10/2020

List of FGD 01 participants

NO	CODE	Role During the Protest	Kebele	Date
1	FGD01	Protest Mobilizer	04	12/02/21

2	FGD02	protest Mobilizer	12	12/02/21
3	FGD03	Protest Facilitator	05	12/02/21
4	FGD04	protest Participant	11	12/02/21
5	FGD05	protest Facilitator	10	12/02/21
6	FGD06	Protest Participant	05	12/02/21
7	FGD07	Protest Participant	07	12/02/21

List of FGD 02 participants

NO	CODE	Occupation/Position	Kebele	Date
1	FGD1	Social Associations	11	14/02/2021
2	FGD2	Social Associations	04	14/02/2021
3	FGD3	Social Associations	10	14/02/2021
4	FGD4	Social Associations	05	14/02/2021
5	FGD5	Social Associations	04	14/02/2021
6	FGD6	Social Associations	08	14/02/2021
7	FGD7	Social Associations	12	14/02/2021

Declaration

I, Tadiyos Tsegaye declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other University, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Date: _____

Signature: _____