Rethinking Social Capital for Reducing Poverty among Rural and Urban Communities of Samre Seherti Wereda, South Eastern Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia

This study examined social capital modalities among urban/rural communities, and the link between social capital modalities and antipoverty activist behavior. A total of 250 participants completed multiple social capital and anti-poverty activism measures. The study revealed five important social capital modalities: cohesion, empowerment, networks, trust and cooperation in their order of relative importance. Network was the strongest predictor of antipoverty behavior. The result also reveals participants used a variety of informal networks to improve their livelihoods. These were Idir, Maheber and Work Campaign. Men and women were not equally beneficial from social capital for the reasons attributed to stereotyped thinking, dominating positions of men and masculinity/femininity mind sets of the community. The result shows social capital modalities and demographic variables interact with one another to influence antipoverty behaviors, with recommendations the way how the rural/urban community implements development policies linking social capital to break cycle of poverty through behavioral/cognitive interventions.

Keywords: Social Capital, Trust, Cohesion, Empowerment, Ant-poverty Behavior

Introduction

The concept of social capital is based on the understanding that formal and informal structures serve to meet human needs for achieving mutual goals (Putnam, 1993). Social capital is the shared norms and social interactions embedded in the given structures of society that make possible the coordination of action and achievement of mutual goals of community (Narayan, 1999). Given the nexus of social capital and life chances, the question of poverty reduction becomes critical. Who has more or less of what type of social capital and why? Therefore, this research is to explore the dimensions/facets of social capital linking antipoverty actions among rural/urban dwellers and how gender produces specific patterns of social inequality.

Social capital reinforces socio-emotional bonds where people possess vital resources such as social relations, cooperation, norms, values, trust and networks (Kinyanjui & Khayesi, 2005). These aggregates of resources provide support for the improvement of individuals and to mitigate adverse consequences of exclusion. In what follows, the theory of social capital provides an explanation for the experience of neighborhood (Osterling, 2006). Social capital theory explains

1 social networking and social structures can produce multiple resources to the
2 collective being (James, Schulz & Olphen, 2001). With its orientation towards the
3 economic side of neighborhoods, the theory states the inadequate social capital can
4 be attributed to the socioeconomic characteristics of the neighborhood where it
5 gives way to lower stock of social capital that result in harmful consequences of
6 neighborhood. The theory of social capital acknowledges the importance of social
7 capital elements in the eradication of social problems (Sampson, 2001). To this
8 effect, poverty can be captured by instigating social capital theory. The gender
9 dimension of social capital is also very important. In his critical review, Molyneux
10 (2002) pointed out gender relations are often encoded normatively when women
11 are misrepresented their lived relations and lead policies of questionable merit.
12 The strength of the embedded men's facet of social capital acknowledges
13 reinforcing women's subordinate about access to resources (Kacyem, 1996).
14 Vertical relationships link people of unequal status and complementary interests
15 while horizontal relationships involve people of similar status and interest
16 (Mayoux, 2001). The underlying assumption whether gender subordination
17 embedded in the norms and rules of governing social structures and relationships
18 (Mayoux, 2001) is a continuing problem.

19   A great deal of research regarding social capital heavily relies on Western
20 societies. Studies indicate communities having larger dimensions of social capital
21 appear to be in a strategic position to cope up with vulnerability and poverty
22 (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Conversely, they argued communities with fewer
23 facets of social capital can have the opposite outcome. Likewise, communities
24 empowered with high level social capital are more likely to achieve better
25 outcomes in multiple spheres while communities with low level of social capital
26 seem to have a poor performance in the same sphere (Hakim, Razak & Ismail,
27 2010). Social capital as part of poverty research; Clert, Woolcock, Kindert and
28 Ibanez (2001) focused on the three forms of social capital such as social networks
29 (structural), trust (cognitive) and collective actions (social cohesion). They argued
30 why communities vary in the elements of social capital and the level of social
31 capital seem more likely to encourage welfare development and empowering the
32 local community in poverty reduction. These resources make people live better life
33 and provide support in difficult times, while those without social capital often find
34 themselves excluded; lacking opportunities and suffering a variety of hardships
35 including poverty (Smith, 2007).

36   Given the multi-dimensional nature of social capital, there is little research
37 linking the dimensions of social capital and antipoverty behaviors in Ethiopia. As
38 reported by Spielman, Davis, Negash and Ayele (2011), Todo, Yadate, Matous
39 and Takahashi (2011) and Urbana (2012) provide an insight that social capital
40 serve a means by which Ethiopian smallholder farmers have coped with rural life.
41 Conversely, a study by Tegegne (2011) documented that social networks are
42 valuable means of livelihood security for the urban poor in Ethiopia. Social capital
43 studies in Ethiopia highlights how the local community uses their social
44 connections to improve their productivity and build livelihoods. Given the reality
45 of poverty; understanding the relations on social capital and anti-poverty behavior

1 takes on added importance. Social capital researches in Ethiopia tend to focus
2 exclusively how the poor community uses their social connections to improve their
3 livelihoods (Spielman et al., 2011). Neither the urban nor rural social capital
4 studies in own context do not address the relations of social capital modalities and
5 anti-poverty activism. Therefore, this research is to investigate the link between
6 social capital and antipoverty behavior, and the role of gender and cultural
7 contexts.
8
9
10 **Theoretical Framework of the Study**
11
12 The assumption of social capital emanates from social networks or processes
13 and that they are assets (Putnam, 2000). To be more specific, the presumption
14 refers to the norms of trust and reciprocity that form around social connections of
15 groups of individuals (Putnam, 2000). With such norms in place, the mutual
16 benefits of members of the group and beyond derive from human action. Narayan
17 and Pritchett (1999) argued that social capital results from the shared knowledge
18 and expectations of groups where about patterns of interaction of individuals bring
19 to recurrent activity. The conceptual model is adapted by the present researcher
20 from McDaniel (2004). The model has four components in which the formation of
21 social capital is believed to have significant implications on poverty reduction. The
22 components include (1) environment/affordances, (2) elements of social capital (3)
23 individual outcomes, and (4) collective outcomes. See the model below.
24
25 **Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Social Capital in Reducing Poverty**
26
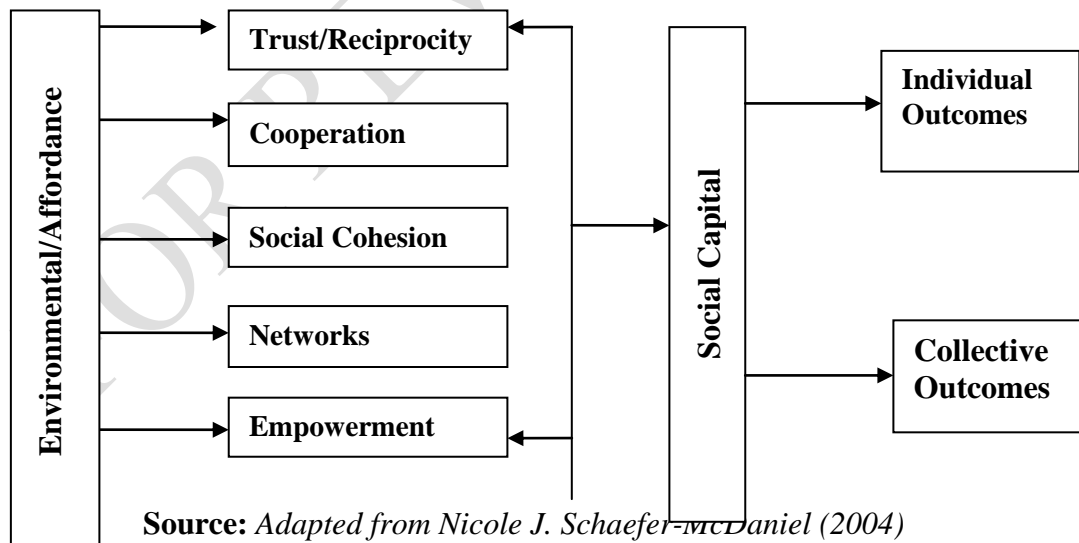
Source: *Adapted from Nicole J. Schaefer-McDaniel (2004)*

42 As can be seen on the above model, there may be mutual reinforcing links
43 among the various elements of social capital and outcomes (individual and
44 collective outcome). The component of the environment induces different
45 modalities of social capital. The resultant effect of such modalities will reinforce

1 either negative or positive consequences of individual outcomes (e.g.,
2 success/failure, improved/poor well being) or collective outcomes (e.g., reduction/
3 increase in poverty, increased/decreased participation in social organization) are
4 few to mention.
5   The benefits of mutualist model like credit cooperatives and village banks have
6 much more stressed in previously reviewed models (for example, Fournier, 1997;
7 Vandenbroucke, 1997; cited in Mayoux, 2001). The Ethiopian government would
8 seem particularly support to mutualist models (for example, micro-finance saving
9 and credit associations, small and micro-industry settings). The preceding
10 explanation partly goes to the wider range of groups and associations to which
11 many rural and urban poor people belong. Yet, within this conceptual model of
12 social capital in reducing poverty, the variations of sociocultural, demographic and
13 psychological attributes with respect to social capital formation are silent social
14 issues in Ethiopia. Therefore, the present research is to investigate the level of
15 social capital modalities and antipoverty activist among the selected groups of
16 community.
17
18
19   **Objectives**
20
21   The present research has the following objectives: (1) to examine the
22 dimensions of social capital predominantly hold by the respondent communities;
23 (2) to examine the relationships of social capital modalities and antipoverty
24 activist behavior; (3) to see the effects of demographic variables on dimensions of
25 social capital; (4) to explore to what extent women and men have benefited from
26 the social capital formation in reducing poverty; (5) to examine whether the
27 communities have sorts of networks that would more likely improve their
28 livelihoods; and (6) to examine the implication of social capital for poverty
29 reduction efforts in their locality and derive lessons from the existence of social
30 capital in communities for poverty reduction strategy.
31
32
33   **Methods**
34
35 **Participants**
36
37   The population of the study was communities of Samre Seherti District, South
38 Eastern Zone of Tigray Region, Ethiopia. According to the administrative structure
39 of the region, Kebele is the smallest administrative unit of a neighborhood while
40 station (Ketena) is the smallest administrative unit within Kebele. To select
41 samples, the research population was divided into residence and kebele. The
42 author used multi-stage random sampling to select stations from each Kebele.
43 Using such multistage random sampling, 5 stations (2 stations from urban and 3
44 stations from the rural) were selected. Then, based on sex (male and female)
45 proportionate samples was drawn from each station. In total, 250 participants were

1   included in the study. For the qualitative data collection, participants were
2   identified using a purposive sampling method designed to maximize the range of
3   relevant roles within the community. Following discussions about the study goals
4   with key responsible bodies in the area, three key informants from each local
5   district (a total of 15 informants) were taken up purposively for interviewing. In
6   addition, 16 participants (8 each from rural and urban local districts) were also
7   used for Focus Group Discussion (FGD).
8   The distribution of respondent samples, across residence, quite seems to be
9   even. One hundred twenty four (49.6%) were from urban areas, 126 (50.4%) were
10 from rural areas. With regard to sex of the participants, 132 (52.8%) were males
11 and 118(47.2%) were females. Age ranges from 20 to 75 years with a mean of
12 32.83 and standard deviation of 10.93. Respondents with age categories between
13 20-39 years were 184 (73.6%), and those respondents between 40-59 years were
14 56 (22.4%). The remaining, 10 (4%) of the total were 60 and above years old. In
15 terms of education level, 112 (44.8%) were those who didn't attend school at all,
16 44 (17.6%) of the participants reported as having a primary school, the remaining
17 participants were of 58 (23.2%) secondary school, and 36 (14.4%) certificate and
18 above. The income level of the participants shows that 120 (48%) were low
19 income, 111 (44.4%) were middle income whereas 19 (7.6%) were from high
20 income. In terms of occupational level, 37 (14.8%) were employed, 52 (20.8%)
21 were unemployed and while 161 (64.4%) were reported as others.
22
23 **Instruments**
24
25   *Dimensions of Social Capital Measures: S*ubscales of social capital, such as
26 networks, trust, cooperation, communication, social cohesion and empowerment,
27 was adapted from the previous study (Allahdadi, 2011; Hakim, Razak & Ismail,
28 2010). Only few items were identical to the original instrument from Allahdadi
29 (2011) and Hakim, Razak and Ismail (2010). A total of 22 items (networks-4
30 items, trust-4 items, cooperation-5 items, communication-3 items, social cohesion-
31 3 items, empowerment-3 items) were developed and considerably modified to fit
32 the Ethiopian context. The respondents were asked to answer the subsequent
33 subscales constructed to gauge their level of social capital. Accordingly, the
34 respondents rated each statement with a five point scales ranging from *never (1),*
35 *seldom (2), sometimes (3), often (4), and always (5)*. Items included in the trust
36 dimension, for example; "I have a mutual level of trust in social network
37 members". Items included in the cohesion dimension, for example; "I possess
38 strong feeling of togetherness that protect me from exclusion". Items included in
39 empowerment cluster, for example, "I have sense of personal efficacy and capacity
40 to influence local community".
41   *Anti-Poverty Activism Measures:* To assess anti-poverty activism, a composite
42 measure of 7 items ($\alpha = 0.90$) was adapted from the work of Hine et al. (2005). All
43 items were identical to the original antipoverty instrument except for little
44 modification. For example, "Telephoning a public official to register a complaint
45 or compliment about present policies related to poverty" was restated as "Writing

1 a letter/reporting to a public official to register a complaint about issues related to
2 poverty; and "Writing a letter/reporting to a public official to register a
3 compliment about issues related to poverty" because the words 'telephoning and
4 policies' were not applicable for rural residence in our context. Besides, complain
5 and compliment is two different actions. From the list of anti-poverty behaviors,
6 the respondents were asked to answer how many times they had engaged in each
7 behavior during over the last 365 days in a five point scale ranging from *1(never),*
8 *2(once), 3(a few times), 4(fairly often) to 5(very often)*.
9   *Interview:* I designed the interview items to stimulate real situations in order
10 to spark community's social capital formation. Thus, semi-structured interview
11 guide was developed and it included, for example; how social capital is understood
12 in your locality, what are the social capital modalities in your locality that have the
13 likelihood in reducing poverty; what are the formal and informal networks that
14 would improve the livelihoods. *Focus Group Discussion:* It was used to
15 supplement and enrich the results of survey questionnaire and interviews (Krueger,
16 1994, 2000). For this purpose, two focus groups of eight people were formed. The
17 FGDs were all about items related to how women and men benefited from the
18 social capital formation in reducing poverty, and how gender variations in the
19 context of social dimension can be seen; what are the horizontal and vertical
20 relations of men and women in social capital formation.
21
22
23 **Data Collection Procedures**
24
25   Sessions were arranged to verify the content validity and the relevance of
26 items in the Ethiopian context. Both measures were discussed with and verified by
27 a panel of experts. The panel suggested revisions to make some questions straight
28 and clear. For example, items that seem to measure two things at a time were
29 restated separately. In addition to the professional ratings of the items and
30 evaluation, exploratory factor analyses were run to check if the scale (s) is/are
31 unidimensional. To verify the instruments, pilot-test was administered to 50
32 samples. Finally, Coronbach's Alpha was calculated (Networks = 0.70, Trust =
33 0.51, Cooperation = 0.64, Communication = 0.75, Social Cohesion = 0.61,
34 Empowerment = 0.68). A composite measure of anti-poverty activism measure
35 was also found to be reliable ($\alpha = 0.84$).
36   Regarding the Focus Group Discussion and interview items, efforts were
37 made to avoid leading questions, double and complex questions and false
38 premises. Another was, colleagues with ample experiences were invited to
39 comment and debrief on the prepared questions. The improved items through
40 piloting and content validity were administered to the sample communities, at the
41 location of respondents. Neither of the participants was declined from
42 participation. The interview and Focus Group Discussions were also assisted by
43 research assistants. Focus groups lasted for an hour, and their responses were
44 audio-taped.
45

1 **Data Analysis**
2
3 The qualitative analysis was guided by the steps in the previous works of Kruger
4 (1994) and Tuckett (2005). Accordingly, the dataset from the interview and focus
5 group discussions was classified on themes, transcribed and presented in a
6 narrative forms through the following steps such as pre-coding, coding,
7 categorizing, themes and write up. Conversely, quantitative analysis was done
8 using different descriptive and inferential statistical models. To mention, factor
9 analysis was used to identify the social capital modalities. Means scores and
10 standard deviations were employed to examine the relative importance of
11 modalities of social capital among communities. Linear correlation was used to see
12 the relationship between social capital modalities and anti-poverty behavior.
13 Multiple regressions were also conducted to see the predictive value of social
14 capital modalities on antipoverty activism behavior. Multivariate Analysis of
15 Variance was applied to see the main and interaction effects of independent
16 variables (sex, age, education, residence, income) on the dimensions/modalities of
17 social capital.
18
19   **Results**
20
21 **Social Capital Modalities for Reducing Poverty**
22
23   The first objective was to systematically examine the social capital
24 modalities/dimensions of the community. An exploratory factor analysis with
25 principal axis (with oblique rotation) showed that the social capital dimension
26 measures have six factors that account for 45.42% of explained variance. The first
27 factor (trust) accounted for 28.99% of the variance, the second factor (cohesion)
28 5.30%, the third factor (cooperation) 4.13%, the forth factor (empowerment) 2.82%, the
29 fifth factor (networks) 2.21% and the last factor (communication) 1.97%.
30   The result further shows that the communication dimension of social capital
31 almost does not exist as only one of the items rather loaded onto it, the other items
32 failing to load. The five modalities of social capital that are characteristics of the
33 community under scrutiny are networks, trust, cohesion, cooperation, and
34 empowerment. These five social capital modalities would be used in the analysis
35 that follows. To examine the comparative importance of each modalities of social
36 capital, the scale scores for each component was computed, where the item scores
37 of each scale was summed up and divided by the total number of items in the
38 scale, and comparison of the mean scores for each dimension was made. Mean
39 scores and standard deviations for the five social capital dimensions were
40 computed (Please see Table 1). The higher the mean score the higher the
41 agreement that the social capital modality is predominantly held by the
42 community. Hence, the highest agreement was with the cohesion (M = 4.43, SD =
43 0. 79) followed by empowerment (M = 4.10, SD = 0.83), networks (M = 3.98, SD
44 = 0. 82), trust (M = 3.95, SD = 0.75 and cooperation (M= 3.85, SD = 0.74. The

relative weight of empowerment and cohesion had higher mean scores as compared to the mean scores of trust and cooperation.

Table 1

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Social Capital Modalities

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Networks	1.00	5.00	3.98	.82
Trust	1.50	5.00	3.95	.75
Cooperation	2.00	5.00	3.85	.74
Cohesion	1.50	5.00	4.43	.79
Empowerment	1.33	5.00	4.10	.83

Alongside with the quantitative analysis, the interview was centered on the explanations of the social capital modalities that move the locus of discussion from considerations of social capital as an individual asset to collective action, which addressed daily needs and real life struggles to uncover best practices for fighting poverty. While the local communities are more likely to experience poverty, they are less likely to access the benefits of social capital either from the formal or informal institutions. "*It is certainly an opportunity to network with the neighborhood and beyond; what resources the neighborhood provides and the forms of social capital I use to survive or to move out of poverty*" said one of the interviewee. Meaning social capital is the resource that we share in the given neighborhoods/community, which has significant implications for poverty reduction. They were also asked to identify the elements of social capital. The author identified some more elements of social capital that fall into the following three themes: structural-networks ties "*Either formal or informal social networks are increasingly significant to nurture mutual help and cooperative efforts in the local community*", cognitive-trust and solidarity "*A mutual level of trust in network members and other agents is fundamental to solve the social problems that we face*", social cohesion "*The tendency of social bonds to exclude or include the members of the community can be demonstrated through community events, such as weddings and holidays, or through activities that increase a sense of collective consciousness*".

The Relationships among Social Capital Modalities and Anti-poverty Activism Behavior

I further examined whether linear relationships among social capital modalities (networks, trust, cooperation, cohesion, empowerment) and anti-poverty activism behavior exist. The researcher was very precautious about multi-collinearity (collinearity) where the larger number of observations (N), which would have the additional virtue of making incidental multicollinearity less likely to occur (Voss, 2004; Farrar & Glauber, 1967). Even there were no indicators of

1 multicollinearity effects simply because there were no perfect correlations among
2 variables. Surprisingly, the analysis suggests evidence that there were statistically
3 significant positive relationships between social capital modalities and anti-
4 poverty activism behavior. The more people are endowed with social capital
5 stocks, the more they will be responsible to fight against poverty (activism
6 behavior). Correlations among these variables are reported in Table 2.
7
8 Table 2
9 *Correlations among Social Capital Modalities and Anti-poverty Activism*

Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Networks	1	.600**	.592**	.448**	.594**	.578**
Trust		1	.607**	.462**	.600**	.523**
Cooperation			1	.374**	.592**	.582**
Cohesion				1	.521**	.303**
Empowerment					1	.542**
Anti-poverty activism behavior						1

10   *** P < 0.01 (2-tailed), *P < 0.05 (2-tailed)*
11
12 **Predictor Variables of Anti-poverty Activism Behavior**
13
14 The social capital modalities were regressed using multiple linear regressions
15 whether they predict anti-poverty behaviors (see Table 3). And also, to exactly
16 know the set of items that predict on the criterion and to interpret the meaning and
17 import the linkages to antipoverty behavior (see Appendix 1). As discussed above,
18 the multicollinearity effects were not observed as a problem. This was further
19 checked by collinearity diagnostics in the regression analysis using coefficient of
20 tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). VIF shows the degree of the
21 variance of the coefficient estimate is being inflated by multicollinearity. As
22 recommended by Williams (2015), a tolerance close to 1 means there is little
23 multicollinearity, whereas a value close to 0 suggests that multicollinearity may be
24 a threat. Allison (1999) further recommends that when the VIF is greater than 2.5
25 and the tolerance is less than 0 .4, the problem of multicollinearity will exist. Thus,
26 the author concludes multicollinearity is not a problem in the model. The five
27 social capital modality variables all together explained 44.2%, F (5, 249) = 40.496,
28 P < 0.01) of variance changes in anti-poverty activism behavior. Of this, network
29 dimensions of social capital is the strongest predictor of anti-poverty behaviors (β
30 = 0.269, P < 0.01) followed by cooperation (β = 0.263, P < 0.01) and
31 empowerment (β = 0.193, P < 0.05). The more people are networked, the more
32 they will be aware of poverty alleviation. In the same expression, the more people
33 are empowered in their locality, the more they will be in the position of anti-
34 poverty activism behavior, responsible in fighting against poverty. However, trust
35 and cohesion has little contribution on anti-poverty activism behavior.

1

2 Table 3

3 *Unstandardized and Standardized Beta Coefficients of Social Capital Modalities*

4

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.253	.328		-.769	.442		
Networks	.334	.083	.269	4.042	.000	.507	1.971
Trust	.162	.092	.119	1.763	.079	.490	2.042
Cooperation	.360	.091	.263	3.974	.000	.512	1.952
Cohesion	-.092	.074	-.071	-1.242	.215	.681	1.468
Empowerment	.237	.084	.193	2.812	.005	.476	2.100

5 *a. Dependent Variable: Anti-poverty activist behavior measures*

6

7 MANOVA Results of Demographic Variables on Social Capital Modalities

8

9 The researcher further carried out multivariate analysis of variance to examine
10 the extent to which demographic variables had effects on social capital modalities,
11 which has significant implication in reducing poverty among local community.
12 Interaction effects can also be extracted from multivariate analysis with which
13 coexisting factors will be taken into account in the momentum of poverty
14 reduction and anti- poverty behavior. In the first place, independent categorical
15 variables were grouped into different levels. For example, education was grouped
16 into four levels such as those who didn't attend school, primary school, secondary
17 school and certificate and above. In the same algorism, occupation was classified
18 into three levels namely employed, unemployed and others. While income level
19 was categorized into three groups: low, middle and high income. Consequently,
20 multivariate analyses of variance were conducted.
21 The multivariate analysis of the independent demographic variables (sex,
22 age, residence, education, occupation, income) on the dependent variables of
23 social capital dimensions (networks, trust, cooperation, cohesion, and
24 empowerment) produced quite interesting results. In the analysis, statistically
25 significant main effect of occupation on networks (F (2, 249) = 2.856, P = .05,
26 η p2/partial eta square/ = 0.024), cooperation (F (2, 249) = 2.63, P = .05, η p2=
27 0.022) and cohesion (F (2, 249) = 4.927, P = 0.008, η p2 = 0.041) were reported.
28 Tukey's Post Hoc tests were also carried out to see the difference among the
29 groups (group break analysis). Mean scores and standard deviations of the
30 respective groups were calculated, and employed respondents had higher stocks of
31 social capital in all dimensions than their unemployed counterparts.
32 In similar multivariate analysis of variance, statistically significant main
33 effects of residence and income level on cohesion dimensions of social capital (F
34 (1, 249) = 3.621, P = .05, η p2 = 0.015) and F (2, 249) = 2.764, P = .05, η p2 =

1 0.023) were respectively reported. In similar pattern, mean scores and standard
2 deviations among the groups were calculated, and rural respondents (M = 4.48, SD
3 = 0.79) were found to be higher with the social stocks of cohesion than urban
4 groups (M = 4.38, SD = 0.79). Furthermore, middle income respondents (M =
5 4.58, SD = 0.68) had the cohesion dimension of social capital more than the other
6 income groups, which has significant implications in its likelihood of poverty
7 reduction. Statistically significant effect of income on trust dimension of social
8 capital F (2, 249) = 5.864, P = 0.003, η p2 = 0.048) were also reported. In the
9 same pattern, means and standard deviation between groups were computed,
10 middle income respondents (M = 4.03, SD = 0.71) had higher trust in their social
11 capital modality than the other income groups. Interaction effects were also
12 observed on some of social capital modalities. For example, the interaction effects
13 of residence and occupation on trust and cohesion, residence and income on trust,
14 occupation and income on trust, and resident, income and occupation on trust
15 dimensions were registered.
16   The multivariate analysis of variance further showed that sex, education and
17 age had no significant main effect on all dimensions of social capital. The author's
18 assumptions were not met, suggesting further study on the variation of the
19 elements of social capital as a function of those demographic variables.
20 Nevertheless, statistically significant interaction effects were observed between
21 sex and education on empowerment (F (3, 249) = 2.036, P = .05, η p2 = 0.029).
22 Sex and age had also interaction effects on cohesion modalities of social capital (F
23 (2, 249) = 3.784, P = .024,) η p2 = 0.031). The study also reported there were
24 interaction effects of education and age on empowerment dimension of social
25 capital. Given the present main and interaction effects of demographic variables on
26 social capital dimensions, how individuals conceive their state of social capital
27 modalities and meanings attached to the sociocultural standards of the community
28 are taken into account in the inclusion of poverty reduction.
29
30
31 **How Women and Men Benefited from Social Capital in Reducing Poverty?**
32
33   Regarding who might be more beneficial from the social capital formation in
34 light of poverty reduction, subsequent focus group discussions were made with the
35 two groups, spinning our discussions with the basic differences in social capital
36 formation and unequal benefits. Gender roles, as emergent theme, on whether
37 women and men have different kinds or levels of social capital as implications for
38 the benefit of social capital were taken up long debates. Interestingly, one of the
39 participants spoke widely *"If a majority of the women are neither able to develop*
40 *useful networks neither for increasing their own social capital, nor given entry*
41 *into men's networks where social capital flourishes, how can social capital then*
42 *be an efficient instrument for poverty reduction for women equally in every*
43 *aspect?"* Others were even silent to bring the issue as discussion point as if
44 inequality of networking is a natural happenings and orders of the unseen sprits of

God. However, the discussion ends up that men and women are not equally
beneficial from the social capital formation for many reasons; stereotyped
thinking, dominating positions of men in the society and masculinity/femininity
mind sets of the community. Put in another way, as an attribute of culture and
psychology, the divide line of social networks of the neighborhoods and beyond
serves as the unbalanced benefit of social capital among men and women were
also raised. The social ties that provide the poor with a significant coping
mechanism to deal with poverty as function of horizontal and vertical links was
also another emergent theme of the discussion, with a reminder that the cultural
traditions are breaking down in response to shifts in gender roles and
responsibilities.

**Sorts of Networks of Community that would more likely improve Livelihoods and
Lessons Learned**

Previous research contends that villages or organized groups with strong
interpersonal ties can provide shared assistance in poverty reduction strategies.
This research also reveals the following state of conditions of networks that would
more improve the livelihoods of the local community: Idir (38.4%), Iquib (68%),
Maheber (72.4%), Work Campaign (84%) and Regular Meeting (72.4%). These
sorts of networks allow the author to pose a more formal definition of the terms
used here above, where conceptualization of informal social networks as a focus of
theme to validate the meaning. Idir is voluntarily established informal institution
by members of a neighborhood and is involved in self-help activities, whose prime
purpose is to provide mutual aid in burial issues (Pankhurst & Mariam, 2000;
Kebede & Odella, 2015). At present, Idir is a part of community level
development programs. Equb is an informal institution established voluntarily by a
group of people who collect fixed amount of money from the members with fixed
time interval to be paid on round and lottery basis to the members, whom the
members know and trust each other to make the Equb function smoothly
(Desalegn & Aklilu, 1999; Kebede & Odella, 2015). Maheber is voluntary and
mutual aid community, religious associations atypical to Orthodox religion
followers, whom the members gather together at church or in the member's house
to pray together to get blessing from God and Saint and discuss their problems and
further share information (Dercon, et.al, 2005; Kebede & Odella, 2015). These
three networks suggest the importance of social capital on collective outcome.
Supportive communities with shared trust and mutuality would be built through
helping groups of poor people called formal groups and ties as another emergent
theme. Exemplary evidence that one of the FGD participants cited "the formation
of 1 to 5 - a group of 5 individuals work together, sharing their best experiences in
their life cycle", bridging individuals with mutual cooperation.
From the present research the author has learnt quite some important lessons.
The social networks established in the form of Idir, Iquib and Maheber, with the
shared emphasis on self-empowerment, strongly suggest the importance of group

1   dynamics at collective outcome. While antipoverty efforts seem to focus on only
2   part of the solution; there is no one cause of poverty rather it is the result of
3   multiple factors. In the study area, poverty eradication strategy seems to lack of
4   emphasis on social capital. There is a tendency to focus much more on human and
5   physical capital of the poor although further researches need to backup the present
6   findings.
7
8
9   **Discussion**
10
11   This study on linking dimensions of social capital and antipoverty behavior in
12   Ethiopia extends the literature in some important ways. First, the author captures
13   attention to the predictive value of specific elements of social capital as a useful
14   supplement to acknowledge antipoverty action of the community (Woolcock &
15   Narayan, 2000, Clert et al., 2001). Second, it is useful to look at social capital in its
16   constituent elements in terms of gender and residence.
17   The factor analysis provides further support for the five distinctions of
18   social capital dimensions such as networks, trust, cohesion, cooperation and
19   empowerment. This result agrees with the previous findings reported by Allahdadi
20   (2011), and Hakim, Hakim, Razak and Ismail (2010) although social capital
21   modalities vary in terms of relative weight of standard deviation difference. These
22   variations may be accounted to the differences in contextual settings.
23   The relative weight of social capital modalities of cooperation, network and
24   trust had low mean scores as compared to the scores of empowerment and social
25   cohesion. This suggests the local community doesn't seem to cooperate with the
26   local government. Likewise, the local people have not been networked to impact
27   policies and expand their opportunities in the reduction of poverty. The discussion
28   with FDG and interviews witnessed that respondents were relatively engaged in
29   the process of decision-making for poverty reduction. Decision-making processes
30   involving neighborhoods and local residence positively affect livelihoods. In this
31   regard, government institutions should create small cooperative units that
32   encourage the likelihood of poverty reduction and acknowledge the importance of
33   interactions with local community.
34   As observed in FGDs, respondents argued that social capital, having various
35   forms namely cohesion, solidarity, trust, communication and networking, is a
36   resource that changes for several important reasons. Such changes in social capital
37   are attributed to the history, culture, and dynamics of group members in the
38   community. For example, trust embedded with the social context is a precondition
39   for understanding the complexities of human relationships and prevent from
40   exclusion. This suggests aware of social networking; trust and norms allow the
41   community to coordinate actions which can improve the efficiency of social
42   interaction in poverty reduction.
43   This research shed some insight that the relationships among social capital
44   modalities and anti-poverty activism behavior were positive. In localities where
45   there are strong levels of voluntary participation and campaigns of poverty, what is

called civic engagement by Putnam (1993); there will be strong mutual level of trust in social network members of the community. This has been also proved by previous researchers, for example, Narayan and Pritchett (1999) revealed that villages composed of households with strong social capital facets seems to have strategic position to use advanced agricultural practices, access better public services, make use of credit for agricultural improvements and participate in common activities thereby reducing poverty in their locality. Another studies by Yusuf (2008) and Okunmadewa, Yusuf and Omonona (2007) found that household income can be enhanced through tailoring social capital. With this juncture, the higher the level of social capital modality, the higher will be the probability of poverty reduction, with a reminder that strength with respect to one kind of social capital does not necessarily mean that poverty is reduced.

The result shows elements of social capital varied by income group; where the middle-income groups had higher social cohesion and trust scores than both lower and higher-income groups. One possible reason perhaps the lower and the higher income groups will take the extreme position and there may not be trust and cohesion as such with other groups. On the contrary, the middle income groups are at the intersection point and may have close contact to either of the groups that they can develop trust with other members of the group. The results also indicate residence and sex had no main effect in explaining social capital. In contrary, age had effects on social capital and the result suggests the younger the person, the lower will be the social capital and vice versa. With regard to sex, this research contradicts with the previous works of Hakim, Razak and Ismail (2010) where female headed households tend to have higher social capital than male headed households. They suggested the uniqueness of the culture where their study samples were constituted can be attributed as the reasons for their observation. In this study, the explanation goes to the social ties of parental hood when woman are largely connected with cultural ceremonies/rituals serve to create social capital bonds in the community.

Importantly, FGDs across men and women led the author that women represented a wide range of social networking for private and family livelihoods. Stratification, with some more or some less, is common to all societies. Concurrently, stratification and differentiation can be used to define some groups or people as members of the society, and to keep others out. Gender stratification was a case in point in the long debates the author had with the participants. Both individual and collective empowerment in decision making was observed among men's group and this acknowledges further interest of marginalize the poor. Conversely, there is strong reason to believe that another feature of poverty may result from social exclusion. Most importantly, the result suggests that the horizontal and vertical power relations and status of men and women can control the relations that its members have with other domains within the wider society, necessitating more actions or series initiatives of poverty eradication. The tradition allows women to be at the lower position of such stratified societies. Social capital is more likely to vary across a community as a result of the rules that shape gender relations. Differentiation due to symbolic interaction and exclusion can thus be

1 important vehicles for powerful pathways in extreme poverty. If women fail to
2 adjust to the dominating norms of men, they can be exposed and excluded.
3 Understanding the "real" values of society indicates that women are submissive in
4 the power relations in the existing social structure. This can witness that there are
5 set of stereotypes in the functional power relationships. It is less likely that women
6 will be welcomed in most social networks when the whole set of stereotypes are
7 floating around the social structure. The pattern of discussion inclined to the
8 tendency that the normative understandings of the society don't take men and
9 women in the networks where there exists the divide line of social networks,
10 indicating cognitive and behavioral distancing were entertained. Distancing is the
11 dominant response to females on the part of those who are males and that
12 distancing, separation and devaluing ultimately leaving discrimination behind it.
13 The author suggests that further research will examine the accounts of this
14 variation.
15   From the present research the author has learnt quite some important lessons.
16 First, series of initiatives taken to break the poverty cycle are undoubtedly
17 complex. Likewise, lacking emphasis of social capital in understanding and
18 analysis of poverty issue could be the puzzle of poverty indicating the missing link
19 between social capital and poverty reduction. In the study area, poverty
20 eradication strategy seems to lack of emphasis on social capital. There is a
21 tendency to focus much more on human and physical capital of the poor although
22 further research needs to backup the present findings. Second, in addressing the
23 issue of poverty, there is much more reason to believe that social capital should be
24 given more attention in the local community. The investigation of the present
25 study provides evidence that the formation of social capital is the key mechanism
26 to elucidate the efforts of poverty eradication. Conversely, bonding the facets of
27 social capital refers to inclusive actions that include peoples of different behaviors
28 that work together towards a common action (e.g., fighting poverty). Synergetic
29 interactions occur when local governments create cooperation on the setting of
30 poverty agenda primarily with networks of community and organizations to
31 achieve a desired common goal.
32   In general, the findings have core contributions of social capital as a
33 mechanism to elucidate poverty reduction. Dimensions reflect the way how social
34 capital can be seen from different ways of thinking. First, how social relationships
35 act as a channel through which individuals secures or hinders access to resources.
36 Second, how participation in different community groups shapes the capacity for
37 collective action. From the first point of view, individuals or collective being that
38 overtake strategic positions in social networking is observed to have more social
39 capital than others, indicating an increase in the probability of reducing poverty.
40 Because social relationships/position (e.g., gender power relations) embedded in
41 those networks give them better access to and control over valued resources. The
42 recognition that the distribution of social capital in a given community is unequal
43 and stratified; social capital can function as a means of both exclusion and
44 inclusion. The second standpoint takes the position on the means through which
45 individual interact and work together on issues of shared concern. This pays

1 attention by the local government in facilitating or discouraging public
2 involvement because social capital serves as the capacity for mutual action.
3 Linking the facets of social capital with antipoverty behavior is also helpful to
4 design more practical poverty reduction policies.
5
6
7   **Conclusions**
8
9   The present research confirmed five most important perceived social capital
10 modalities/dimensions namely cohesion, empowerment, networks, trust and
11 cooperation in their order of rankings by the local community. The result provides
12 some insight on the way how social capital modalities and anti-poverty activism
13 behavior were positively correlated. Social capital modalities predicted anti-
14 poverty activist behavior. The author also concludes the results show that social
15 capital modalities and demographic variables interact with one another to
16 influence poverty and antipoverty activism behaviors.
17
18
19   **Practical Implications**
20
21   The results from this study are particularly important for establishing
22 theoretical and empirical baselines of social capital for subsequent interventions
23 that has significant implications of poverty reduction in the country. The results
24 will assist social workers and practitioners in understanding the facets or
25 dimensions of social capital as pathways for the reduction of poverty in the local
26 district. Since there is a strong reason to believe that social capital has practical
27 significance or impacts upon the implementation of development policies and
28 strategies at community level, the findings are helpful for the local government to
29 design behavioral and cognitive interventions linking social capital to the
30 initiatives taken to break poverty cycle.
31   As much as poverty reduction strategies have been the focus and remain
32 national priorities, factors that are strongly related with poverty need to be
33 identified.   To have more effective strategies as well, identifying and
34 understanding the determinants of poverty is thus crucial to improve the existing
35 strategies. In the study area, it appears that poverty eradication strategies tend to
36 lack of emphasis on social capital while more focus would be given on physical
37 and human capital of the poor. Hence, in addressing poverty issues, the promotion
38 and advocacy of social capital should be given much more attention in the wider
39 community. Accordingly, such investigations provide the evidence that
40 dimensions of social capital matter more to the efforts invested for poverty
41 eradications. The results further suggest promoting the link between social capital
42 and antipoverty behaviors could enhance the effectiveness of poverty eradication
43 strategy.
44

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12
13 **Appendix 1**
14 *Factor Analysis of Social Capital Modalities*
15

Loading Items	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I possess the knowledge and skills obtained from social relationships	.245	.320	.363	.359	**.742***	.198
I feel membership in formal organization solve our common problem	.222	.414	.278	.315	**.774***	.248
I feel membership in informal organization solve our common problem	.361	.243	.294	.351	**.584***	.279
The ability to get support from others would motivate me in challenging poverty	.304	.323	.185	.212	.331	.008
I trust most people in the community	.330	.392	.387	.271	.400	.039
I feel we often faith and help each other in our locality	**.549***	.230	.201	.125	.215	.123
I have a mutual level of trust in social network members	**.555***	.361	.541	.191	.303	.098
I have a mutual level of reciprocity norms in social network members	**.682***	.408	.382	.214	.215	.211
I contribute time towards common development goals	.130	.356	.316	.228	.384	.363
I contribute money towards common development goals	.368	.184	**.825***	.191	.370	.275
I cooperate to solve common problems through campaign	.333	.422	**.573***	.288	.539	.301
I feel I belong to my neighborhoods and communities for our common good	.298	.225	**.619***	.286	.338	.245
I have a symbolic attachment to in my locality	.331	.356	**.558***	.294	.404	-.060
I believe frequently listens to radio improve our well being	.234	.337	.346	.122	.398	**.459***
I believe frequently reads newspapers improve livelihoods	.241	.391	.328	.409	.340	.156
I believe frequently watches television promote livelihood	.066	.023	.381	.154	.044	0.391
I enjoy strong feelings of togetherness for achieving prosperity	.395	**.558***	.203	.397	.398	.125
I possess strong feelings of togetherness that protect me from exclusion	.445	**.620***	.241	.187	.365	.043
I have solidarity in my locality to reduce poverty	.066	**.728***	.381	.154	.044	0.391
I control making decisions that affect everyday activities improve life standards	.372	.023	.364	.313	.448	.135
I have sense of personal efficacy & capacity to influence local community	.193	.331	.382	**.712***	.402	.162
I am empowered to control over local institutions for improving our wellbeing	.227	.242	.339	**.722***	.403	.321
Eigen Value (Successive strength of factors)	**6.314**	**1.475**	**1.297**	**1.102**	**1.016**	**0.976**
Total Variance Explained (45.42%)	**28.997**	**5.304**	**4.133**	**2.818**	**2.206**	**1.964**

16 **Factor loading > 0.4, Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring, Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser*
17 *Normalization*