The Impact of Conflict in Tigray Region: The Perspectives from Bule Hora University Community

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of the conflict in Tigray from the Bule Hora University community. To this end, exploratory researchdesign has been employed and important data were collected through unstructured interview from purposively selected key informants consisted of the vice president of the university, directors of the university (human resource directorate director) of the university, public relation of the university, Dean of college of social sciences, and Head department of political science. In addition to in-depth interview the study also employed focus group discussions, from five lecturers and six students. In which the lecturers and students were discussed in two separate groups. The research has also reviewed previous works on the area with similar concern. Therefore, the findings of the study revealed that thecurrent conflict has exacerbated economic impact like food insecurity. Most famines today are the result of the armed conflict between the Tigray regional states and federal government. The study also underscored that the conflict in Tigray is affecting the economic activities such as agriculture and trade. Furthermore, the study concluded that the security impact of conflict in Tigray remains volatile with a gradual improvement in some areas in the Eastern and Western Zones of Tigray. In general, the study concluded that the conflict created between Tigray regional government and federal government is impacting the political institutional capacity of the Ethiopia to respond to the conflicts in the region as well as in the country. Finally, the researcher recommended to the regional government of Tigray and federal government of Ethiopia.

Keywords: 1. Conflict **2.** Impacts **3**. Security **4**. Economic **5**. Political.

1. Introduction

On Nov. 4, simmering political tension turned into armed conflict in northern Ethiopia, because Abiy blamed that the TPLF attacked the federal army base in north. Given the likely catastrophic impact of the conflict neither party stands to profit from war. The internal conflict is usually known by its threatening the country's unity; and regional stability; especially with the growing difficulty of separating domestic tensions and regional conflicts(Murdoch and Sandler 2002). Meanwhile, the tension more got in to worsen when Abiy decided to dissolve the coalition (EPRDF), where the region refused to join believing that he is using this to gain power. The intergovernmental tension was further exacerbated when the House of Federation suspended the transfer of funds to Tigray state government. It elected to work directly with local governments in Tigray, bypassing the state government. Tigray reacted by making public its intention to withhold all federal taxes collected in the state.

Aside from the alleged TPLF attack on the military base, the immediate cause of the hostilities was a constitutional dispute over delayed national elections that brought the spat between the federal and Tigray authorities to a head. Moreover, the tension has been clearly revealed when the current Prime Minister come to power in 2018 after widespread dissatisfaction with EPRDF ruling system.As soon as Abiy Ahmed took power, tensions escalated between the federal government and Tigray regional state. The Ethiopian ethnic federalism system allows for both the federal government and the new regional states to establish, their legislative, executive and judiciary institutions. Accordingly, regional states have been instituted with limited power under the jurisdiction of the federal constitution. These ethnic and linguistic parameters to redefine state structure resulted in conflict among regional states and among regional states and federal government (Ahmed, 2004). Especially, the tension between Tigray regional state and federal government is the recent phenomena in this regard.

Ethiopia is home to more than eighty ethnic-groups. The country has a plurality of peoples with their own language. Since, especially, 1991 the Ethiopian governmental structure comprised of nine regional states except the tenth newly included region (Sidama region). The regional states have divided based on ethnic federalism. The TPLF then became the leader of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a political coalition consisting of four main political parties all with a pronounced ethnic and regional basis (Asnake Keflale, 2004; Stephen Ndegwa, 1997). In its ruling time the TPLF has criticized by severe parts of bringing Ethiopia into internal suspension and conflict, which is resulting the problem of survival even. Ethiopia is also facing economic, social and

security problems because of internal conflicts, which are considered as the legacies of TPLF.

Furthermore, internal conflicts have become the dominant form of conflict, making an understanding of their impact extremely significant (Gleditsch, 2002; Erikson and Wallensteen 2004). The conflict in Ethiopia between federal government and Tigray regional state is by far this type. The conflict is seems short in terms of duration, but complex and devastating. The tensions flared up when the federal government postponed the national election due to the ongoing pandemic, which sparked widespread objections from various political forces and parties. The federal government also dissolved the EPRDF, establishing the Prosperity Party as an alternative, which is disliked by the Tigray People's Liberation Front. These actions result the TPLF to hold internal regional elections without the federal government and national election board consent and then the crisis ensued. The intergovernmental tension was further exacerbated when the House of Federation suspended the transfer of funds to Tigray state government(People, R. U. S. I., 2021; Michael. J,2021).

Since then, the conflict has been running high for a month. Of course the conflict doesn`t ended though it decreases in terms of intensity after the government controlled the capital city of Tigray region i.e. Mekelle. The conflict could test the integrity of the Ethiopian state and armed forces, already shaken by numerous outbreaks of violence across the federation.Before this conflict began, Tigray was home to about hundred thousand Eritrean refuges. More than the other regions there were hunger and food insecurity in Tigray. To make things worse the trucks filled with food, fuel, and medical supplies sitting idle near the border of the Tigray region. The Humanitarian agencies like that of UN are also contending with the internet blackout and blocked phone services, making the effective coordination of relief efforts all but impossible (Crisis group, 2020).

Moreover, with the launch of more than three missiles from the Tigray region, targeting the airport of the Amhara regional i.e. Gonder and Bahir Dar November 2020, the conflict between the federal government and Tigray impacts not only in Tigray, but also to spill out into neighbouring regional states. Not only this but also spontaneous to the conflict in Tigray, Sudan entered in to Ethiopia`s territory, which Sudan claims as it`s land. To add more on it, the crisis also extends the Benishangul Gumuz regional state specifically at Metekel (Medihane, 2020).

Having discussed above, it is relevant to explain the existing empirical literature. There are some researchers who have conducted on conflict in Ethiopian in different perspectives.

Accordingly, the first dedication comes from Lubo Teferi (2012) the purpose of his research was to investigate the main causes of the post 1991 ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia based on secondary data. His study confirmed that the real causes of the conflicts were inequitable distributions of economic and political power or the demand for access to political and economic benefits.

The next dedication is from Semir Yusuf (2019) the main objective of his study was to investigate the driving force of Ethiopia's ethnic conflicts. Consequently, his study revealed that, rising competing ethno-nationalisms led to the relative weakening of party and state structures, resulting in the intensification of ethnic mobilizations. On the other hand, the last, but by no means the least work of Amare Kenaw (2013) on the topic Inter-ethnic conflict transformation in the post-1991 ethnic federalism: Experiences from Asossa Woreda in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia. The finding revealed that there are clear manifestations of better inter-ethnic integration and cohesion than before such as growing inter-ethnic marriage between the Bertha and settlers, participation in wedding and mourning ceremonies, etc.

Even though, the above studies have tried their best in dealing with some critical parts of their own concerning conflicts in Ethiopia as explained above; however, they have tried little or no concerning the security, political and economic impacts of conflicts in Ethiopia specifically, in Tigray region. Accordingly, as far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned, there is no study undertaken on the impact of the conflict in Tigray. There is no academic work that covers this area. In fact, this grey area needs further exploration. Consequently, the aim of this study was to fill this gap by investigating the impact of conflict in Tigray.

Moreover, the study has focused on answering these questions: What is the security impact of the conflict in Tigray: What is the economic impact of the conflict in Tigray, and what is the political impact of the conflict in Tigray. In similar fashion, the study aimed at addressing the following objectives; to explore the security impact of the conflict in Tigray,to examine the economic impact of the conflict in Tigray, and to explain the political impact of the conflict in Tigray.

2. Materials and Methods

Research Approach: The researcher usedonly qualitative approach. This is due to the following reasons; qualitative approach is the most appropriate means of exploring human views of their experiences and realities. Furthermore, if a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because no/little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2009:18, Hughes, 1999:413 and Kothari, 1990:25). Precisely, there is no an empirical study that conducted on the impact of conflict in Tigray until this proposal being proposed. Accordingly, the study employed qualitative approach to effectively answer the research objectives and questions through examining the informants' data. Generally, the study employed qualitative research approach because of the study`s objectives and questions were more significantly requires qualitative approach.

Data Source: The study used of both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were collected through in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The research`s primary data were congregated from different segments such as the vice presidents of the university (one), directors of the university (human resource directorate director) of the university, public relation of the university, dean (one), head departments (one), lecturers (five) and students (6). Among those, five lecturers and six students were selected for focus group discussion. In which the lecturers and students were discussed in two separate groups. The interviews were covered different themes including the security, economic, and political impacts of the conflict in Tigray. The interview guide was has unstructured format design to cover a wide range of topic in depth and questions. Besides, secondary sources those were necessary for the study was also used. These refers to obtaining information from systematic review of previously published and unpublished materials by others-books, journals, reports, articles, etc.

Data Collection Instruments: The important data were gathered by using different types of qualitative data collection techniques which include; in-depth interview and focus group discussion (FGD). The focus group discussions and in-depth interview were conducted in English and Amharic languages. The researcher prepared the English version questions, to make clear for the reader what types of questions were used in the field. The researcher used in the focus group discussion and in-depth interview such as, mobile recorder, pen and notebook. Moreover, the data collection instruments are briefly discussed as follows.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): In this study, focus group discussion was used as a major technique of data collection. This is because; different individuals can have different concerns on the impacts of conflict in the Tigray. As to Bohnsack (2004), FGD is useful for deeper understanding of social problems in a qualitative research. Based on this, the researcher and several participants meet as a group to discuss a given research objective.

The researcher leads the FGD discussion as a moderator, by asking participants to respond to open-ended questions that is, questions that require an in-depth response rather than close ended questions.

According to Christine Daymon and Immy Holloway (2005:187), a focus group involves a group of people often with common experiences or characteristics who are interviewed by a researcher. The ultimate goal in focus group interviewing is to see the topic or issue from the participants' point of view. A main advantage of focus groups is to make use of participants' feelings, perceptions and opinions and that they yield gain greater insights information over a relatively short period of time. FGD is effective for accessing a broad range of views on a specific topic, as opposed to achieving group consensus. In this study, two focus group discussions (five lecturers and six students) were organized. Totally eleven individuals participated in focus group discussions based on the objective of the study. This helped the researcher to get wide and important information about the impacts of conflict in Tigray.

Hereafter, the aim of FGD was to collect information from a wide range of people. Thus, appropriate discussions were made with participants of the lecturers and students.In this part, the researcher role was leading the FGD discussion as a moderator by asking participants. And during the time of discussion giving equal chance for all participants and time for the participants and giving compliments, respect and getting the consent of the participants before collecting data.

In-depth Interview: Creswell (2014: 239) states that in qualitative interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, telephone interviews, or engages in focus group interviews.In-depth interview was also one of the main data gathering instruments as well. In this study, a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to describe their perspectives on a particular idea or issues. According to Kothari (2004:97), the researcher's interviewing techniques are motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant to share their experience, attitudes, and beliefs in their own words depend on the research topic and objectives. Researchers engage with participants by posing questions in a neutral manner, listening attentively to participants' responses, and asking follow-up questions and probes based on those responses.

Furthermore, the interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and, if possible, through telephone interviews.Henceforward, the researcher did not lead participants according to any preconceived notions, nor did he encourage participants to provide particular answers by expressing approval or disapproval of what the participants say. Therefore, twelve informants were interviewed in

the in-depth interview, i.e.the president of the university, vice presidents of the university (two), directors of the university (both academic and admin) of the university, public relation of the university, deans (two), head departments (two), and admin (two). The duration of each interview ranges from 30 to 40 minutes. Giving compliments and getting the consent of the participants before collecting data.

Sampling Techniques: This research used a qualitative approach that has allowed the researcher to apply a purposive sampling technique for in-depth interview and focus group discussion. In this type of sampling, informants will select deliberately by the researcher (Kothari, 1990:59). Accordingly, the researcher was used key informants, which have special knowledge, to explore and better understand the problem and the issue in-depth.

Research Design: The study utilized exploratory research design. Exploratory research design mainly focused on formulating a problem for more precise investigation. When the research is being conducted because of the rarity of earlier studies on it, then it merits an exploratory research design (Creswell, 2009:18 and Kothari, 1990:25). Thus, the research employed exploratory research design which was provide the deeper knowledge based on data that were collected to answer the research objectives and questions by unfolding and investigating.

Data Collection Procedure: Researcher`s strive, steps and procedures that invested to collect data from targeted groups or individuals are known as data collection procedure (Grove, 2013:523). In so doing, in interview, the interviewees or key informants and some guidance questions for unstructured interview was identified and prepared in advance. During the interview informants were selected pursuant to their ahead give consent and information can offer. We, together with the interviewees were choice comfortable environment and conducted the interview taking short notes besides taping based on the willingness of the interviewee. Regarding the focus group discussion students were select the place they were fill free to share their ideas. In case of data from different documents, the pertinent documents were identified in advance and permission was secured from its owner. At the end, the study were tried to properly acknowledge all sources and materials as much as possible.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical practices in research require respect for individual participants and institutions (Plano-Clark and Creswell 2010:191). To make sure secrecy, informants were not obliged to tell their identity in the interview. The data were interpreted and analyze with the utmost respect and care. The study was not also abused results to the advantage of certain individuals, groups or another. Equally, the study was tried its maximum efforts not to pass off someone else's work. Therefore, the study made efforts to comply with the ethical principles and properly acknowledge all sources and materials as much as possible.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: The researcher was analysed the data from the best effort to find the most meaningful way to describe the results. Accordingly, this study used only qualitative approach. Thus, qualitative data analyzed by classifying or thermalizing, coding and editing the answers. The researcher was classified raw data into homogeneous groups which in turn were help to get meaningful relationships of data. Indeed, the researcher categorized data that were collected, as primary and secondary data. Then identified them in their respective category according to resemblance of pattern they were manifested. Data exhibiting similar pattern were categorized under the same class. Relationship between categorize of data were expounded. Then after, the researcher was analyzed the data properly.

3. **Data Analysis and Interpretations**
   3.1. Introduction

This part of the study is devoted to the data analysis and interpretations of the impacts of the conflict in Tigray which is set out to answer the research questions and address the objectives of the study. In fact, under this chapter (chapter four) the study tries to analyze and interpret issues concerning theimpacts of the conflict with especial focus to the political, security and economic. In the process of data presentation and analysis, the results obtained through each data collection instrument used in a mixed way as necessary. In other words, the results of the in-depth interview are presented together with the results of FGD and document analysis as it is appropriate.

Moreover, under this chapter, the basic research questions are answered, and the objectives of the study are addressed. The results of the analysis are presented under topics and sub-topics created in line with the objectives and basic research questions of the study. Accordingly, data that have been collected from in-depth interview, relevant secondary sources for the study and focus group discussion interpreted and analyzed under this chapter.

Furthermore, in conducting this study different codes have been given to the informants for the purpose of secrecy. Accordingly, the informants for in-depth interview represents

by KI1, KI2, KI3, KI4, and KI5. Whereas the FGD informants represented by, FGDT1 and FGDT2.

The Impact of Internal War: After the end of the devastating Second World War, there has been a steady rise in the number of internal wars. They have become much more common than international war, affecting close to one quarter of all countries in the world by the mid-1990s. Over this period these wars not only became more frequent; they have also gotten longer. They mark a change in the character of war generally: The impacts of these conflicts are diverse in nature (Fearon, 2002).

On the other hand, according to Kellas, Hashmi & Majeed (2015) in the post-Cold War there have been estimated that due to internal conflict around ten million lives were lost during 1945 to 1975. Likewise, Ibrahim (1998) also stated that since 1945, internal conflicts have claimed some 16 million lives, several times more than those dead in inter-state wars. Moreover, from 1990 to 94, nearly 800,000 people were lost their lives in ethnic warfare between Hutus and Tutsi tribes in Rwanda and Burundi (Hashmi & Majeed 2015). Accordingly, as of the key informants and focus group discussion participants, currently, Ethiopia is experiencing internal conflict in Tigray that have security, economic and political impacts.

The Security Impact of the Conflict in Tigray: The impact of ethnic conflict has a very direct effect far beyond its epicenter. It creates instability, refugees, organized crimes and international terrorism. It also creates other ethnic conflicts in the same country or elsewhere in the region, and at times because of spillover effect of the conflict. Ethnic conflict usually forces people to displace from their residence and seek refuge in the neighboring countries or regions (Moe, 2009). Similar to the above concepts, KI1confirmed, that the Tigray conflict has significant security impact. The conflict is has spill over substantially into other regions of Ethiopia. The informant assured that the TPLF has fired rockets at the airports in Amhara region. It has the capability to engage in significant actions in neighbouring territories. Although, the conflict is happening in the Tigray region, its impact extended to whole parts of Ethiopia. This was because, according to KI2, the TPLF was tried to attack Amhara region and carried out attacks in the capital Addis Ababa. Moreover, the twenty seven years of political and economic domination of TPLF, creates in much of the rest of the country as if it wins the war and control the country again.

Likely, KI3 said that, even if the Tigray conflict comes to a formal close in before few months, the security environment in the region remains volatile for long. Although prime ministry Abiy has been keen to present the Ethiopian national defense force operations as an attempt to liberate the Tigray people from the TPLF "junta", the TPLF's narrative that he

is launching an attack on Tigray has traction in the region. It is likely to become a fertile recruitment ground for secessionist or otherwise anti-government ethnic militias, which in turn creates fear and suspension in the country.

On the other hand, according to FGDT1 the conflict has both domestic and regional (Horn of Africa). The Ethiopian government has pulled some troops from Somalia to help quell the armed uprising. That move may have a negative impact on Somalia and the Horn of Africa, the informant says the informant. This puts Ethiopia into jeopardy, especially as Ethiopia gets ready for national election. The most worrying concern would be, as the FGDT2 confirmed, the conflict also stretch Ethiopia's internal security apparatus.

On the other hand, as the expression of FGDT1, the impact of the conflict in Tigray extended to the whole regions of Ethiopia. As he added there is widespread inter-communal fighting going on across the Oromo region, Amhara region, and southern people's regions and the army quite often has to be deployed to contain that and in particular, situations where local security forces are unable to do so. The fact that now the federal government is involved in this conflict against the Tigray region is only going to stretch that capacity further and force Abiy to partner tough decisions about the deployment in Ethiopia.

Beside, according to KI4 while most analysts believe the federal government will prevail in this conflict, the TPLF have a formidable history as a guerrilla force in the region, and could prolong low-level fighting for months, if not years, increasing the possibility that Ethiopia could become precariously unstable. The informant further explains that, major roads through the country could become impassable, or inundated with checkpoints and barricades, making overland travel prohibitively difficult.

Security issues in other regions of Ethiopia especially militia attacks in Benishangul-Gumuz, ethnic clashes in Oromia and SNNPR, violent unrest in Somali has worsen as the government focuses on Tigray and federal government responses to these issues will be slower to come. Anti-government unrest has also emerge as the conflict drags on and Ethiopians become weary of another internal war when they are already facing severe economic aftereffects of internal war, and the possibility that the leader they once welcomed as a peacemaker may be going the way of his predecessors. Worryingly, as the result of conflict in Tigray, border tensions with Sudan are also escalating.Even though, their relation already strained due to the dispute over Ethiopia's dam on the Nile; Sudan entered into Ethiopia`s territory using the conflict in Tigray as good opportunity(the interview from KI5). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the conflict in Tigray has great security impact on Ethiopia.

The Economic Impact of the Conflict in Tigray: Internal conflict impacts economic production due to the destruction of productive assets, diversion of resources and damage to human capital. Numerous conflict-related studies show a dampening effect of internal conflict on economic growth (Collier, 2018). Through sharing the above concepts, FGDT1 admitted thatthe conflict in Tigray has immediate impact like hunger. In addition to the immediate impact, the informants added that there are indirect and longer-term impacts. These include impacts that spill over to other regions of Ethiopia such as through trade and refugee flows. Other longer-term effects are, the informant further elaborated that on human health and human capital can have a knock impact on the economy of Ethiopia.

On the other hand, according to FGDT2, the conflict is hurting an economy that had been soaring, albeit from a low base, becoming the world's fastest growing in 2017, driven by agricultural exports and heavy infrastructure spending it hoped would drive a manufacturing boom. In this aspect, internal conflict dismisses the very bases of development and discourages the playing field for sustainable development (Dagne, 2010). Similarly, the KI3 informant confirmed that the internal conflict between Tigray region and federal government of Ethiopia damaged the economic resources of the area, which in turn impacts the economy of the Ethiopia.

More importantly, as of the information from KI2, Ethiopia was for years trying to position itself as an emerging industrial hub that would draw its 115 million populations, the second largest in Africa, off subsistence farms and into factories. For more than a decade, the government poured billions of dollars into hydro-electric dams, industrial parks, railways and highways. Then when Abiy took power in 2018, he began opening up sectors like telecoms to private investment. Those aspirations are now at risk because of this conflict. Instability that has been happening between federal government and the Tigray region is also scaring off investors which in turn rapidly rising Ethiopian government debt and worrying existing investments of firms like foreign textiles.

On the other hand, there is a large body of research that finds internal wars have large and significant aggregate impacts on economy and trade (Abadie and Gardeazabal, 2003; Martin et al., 2008). By confirming the above concept the informant KI1 assured that individual houses of Tigray community were burned and the people displaced from their home/residence. Due to the conflict in Tigray, lots of individual properties (houses, animals and crops) were looted, burned and lost. Broadly, according to the informants, the current conflicts severely impacted the development activities of the region as well as the federal government. Thus, the conflict is bringing economic constraint in Ethiopia.

Generally, many of key informants and FGD participants underlined that the conflict is affecting the economic activities such as agriculture and trade. Because of fear of insecurity

of conflict, the economic activities of the community hindered. This in turn negatively impacted the livelihood of the people in the conflict area. Based on the report of fact check Ethiopia, the people who are living in the Tigray region is highly susceptible to food insecurity. This was because the agricultural activity of farmers was interrupted because of insecurity situations. The conflict broke out during cultivation season of the farmers of the area. As a result, the farmers of the area did not harvest the crops. Consequently, it endangered the flow of agricultural products and goods that profoundly reduced incomes of merchants and farmers. In general, as confirmed by the informant from both FGD and KI, due to the conflict the loss of lives and properties are posing a serious challenge to economy in the country.

Political Impacts of the Conflict in Tigray: Apart from its security and economic impacts, the conflict has resulted political impacts. As the FGDT1 informants stated, the conflict not only have security and economic impacts but also make political impact a reality. The conflict in Tigray could also trigger unrest elsewhere. It might embolden other ethno-nationalist the federal government opponents who are concerned that federal policy in Tigray violates constitutional principles of regional autonomy and self-determination. There are already escalating ethnically targeted attacks in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, though it seems on the verge of de-escalating. These moveimpacting prospects for a credible election, as they target rivals of ruling Prosperity Party.

As KI5 stated, after the federal government declare the end of military confrontation, following the federal government control the capital town of Tigray regional state Mekelle, the Amhara regional government has controlled the Raya Alamata, Armachuho, and Wolkait Tsegede, which the region claims as its parts of home land before the coming to power of EPRDF.Amhara nationalists claim parts of Tigray's west and south as historically belonging to their people, suggesting that they intend to stay. Since then there is political confrontation between Amhara politician and the transitional government of Tigray regional states.

Moreover, as KI2 informant indicated, because of the suspicion and mistrust have been created between the Tigray regional residents and federal officials they did not easily accepted the political decisions of the federal government and Tigray`s transitional regional government. In general, the conflict created between Tigray regional government and federal government is impactingthe political institutional capacity of the Ethiopia to respond to the conflicts in the region as well as in the country.

By then, the KI1 confirmed, that insecurity and lawlessness had spread in different parts of Ethiopia, and tensions between Tigray and Amhara, a larger region that neighbors Tigray to the south, had decidedly worsened. Moreover, according to FGDT2, if the conventional war between the TPLF and Federal government does come to a quick end, almost no impartial

observers believe this will put an end to the underlying strife that caused it. The crisis is much too far-reaching and complex for that. At its heart is a naked quest for power, as well as a bitter tussle over ideology that touches all of Ethiopia. It is a fight not just to control the Ethiopian state, but to define its identity.

According to KI3, the recent outbreak of conflict in Tigray sounded a serious warning regarding Ethiopia's political transition; any significant deterioration in the central government's relations with Tigray is posing a threat to the integrity of the federal state itself. With the federal government set on military victory, the struggle is a matter of survival for Tigray's leaders. Some of these leaders have already been killed in battle, but those who are still at large are likely to continue to resist unless the government fully control all leaders of TPLF. They appear to have significant popular backing. The informant also added that Tigray`s political and military leaders are still claiming battlefield victories, despite having been overpowered by the ground incursion and aerial bombardment and having lost control of the regional government apparatus. Moreover, as of the KI4, the federal government faces a fundamental political challenge, as many Tigrayans appear to view the ousted TPLF leaders as legitimately elected and the federal intervention as illegal. Generally, the informant forwarded that atrocities during the war have also heightened Tigrayan outrage, which makes a political settlement harder to achieve.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

To being with the study concluded that the conflict in Tigray has impacting the economy of the country through reducing economic growth and destroying the mechanisms of redistribution, and aggravating poverty. The conflict is leading to the loss of physical and human capital. Houses, land, livestock and other productive assets are also destroying or stealing. The death, injury, disability and trauma caused to household members reduce income while food prices increase, leaving many households struggling or unable to buy staple items. These losses along with conflict induced impacts on markets and human capital are leaving Ethiopia in a state of chronic and structural poverty.

In Ethiopia, this study found that, the current conflict has exacerbated economic impact like food insecurity. Most famines today are the result of the armed conflict between the Tigray regional states and federal government. The study also underscored that the conflict in Tigray is affecting the economic activities such as agriculture and trade. Because of fear of insecurity of conflict, the economic activities of the community hindered. This in turn negatively impacted the livelihood of the people in the conflict area. The people who are living in the Tigray region are highly susceptible to food insecurity. This was because; the study revealed that, the agricultural activity of farmers was interrupted because of

insecurity situations. The conflict broke out during cultivation season of the farmers of the area. As a result, the farmers of the area did not harvest the crops that they sew. Generally, the study scrutinized that, though armed operations are technically over, economic instability persists in the region as well as in the country.

As made clear by this study, the conflict in Tigray has security impacts. Accordingly, the study revealed that even if the federal government declared that the Tigray conflict comes to a formal close before few months, the security environment in the region remains volatile for long. Although the federal government has been keen to present the Ethiopian national defense force operations as an attempt to liberate the Tigray people from the TPLF, the TPLF's narrative that he is launching an attack on Tigray has traction in the region and the country. It is likely to become a fertile recruitment ground for secessionist or otherwise anti-government ethnic militias, which in turn creates fear and suspension in the country. Therefore, the study concluded that the security impact of conflict in Tigray remains volatile with a gradual improvement in some areas in the Eastern and Western Zones of Tigray.

On the final note, the study confirmed that the conflict in Tigray also has political impacts. This is because due to the suspicion that have been created between the Tigray regional residents and federal officials, the Tigray regional residents are not easily acceptingthe political decisions of the federal government and Tigray`s transitional regional government. In general, the study concluded that the conflict created between Tigray regional government and federal government is impactingthe political institutional capacity of the Ethiopia to respond to the conflicts in the region as well as in the country.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, at least, to reduce the security, economic and political impacts of the conflict researcher attempted to forward the following recommendations.

To start with, Ethiopia's deep fault lines are fundamentally political, however; they cannot be resolved on the battlefield. Therefore,to overcome the political impacts of the conflict the researcher recommended to the Tigray regional and federal government of Ethiopia to make ever more critical inclusive national dialogue. Furthermore,the researcher recommended that the federal government should stresses on national unity and cooperation of diverse entities for the common good. That would serve as a precursor to a national dialogue, which would seek first to reach agreement on how to overcome the impact of the conflict.

Furthermore, the researcher recommended that to lay the foundations for political impactsin Tigray region and the country as well, the federal government

should put disputed areas under the interim Tigray government's writ, push Amhara leaders to withdraw their forces and expedite a federal boundary commission's work assessing Amhara claims.

To overawe the economic impacts, the researcher recommended that the federal and regional governments should work on unfettered access of humanitarian assistance, and the swift resumption of the rule of law in a secure environment and in full respect for human rights, paving the way for a true and lasting reconciliation.

On the other hand, the researcher recommended that to overcome the security impacts of the conflict, the federal government should establish strong institutions than strong transitional government in the Tigray region. Moreover, the government should reveal what is practically going in the region at least to reduce the insecurity creating in the region and in the country. For the reason that, the conflict is not only the conflict of the Tigray region rather the conflict has spillover impact to other regions of Ethiopia. Consequently, the researcher recommended that, it is better if government build institution than individual leaders and if the regional government needs to solve the security impacts in the region, the existing transitional government of Tigray region should get acceptance from the Tigrayans residents by making grass-root dialogue.

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Appendix

Profiles of key informants in this study are listed under the following tables. For the purpose of collecting the necessary data in-depth interview and focus group discussion were used.

A: Profile of the Key informants of the Study

Guiding Questions

1. What do think about the impacts of conflict in Tigray?
2. What are the main political impacts of conflict in Tigray?
3. What are the security impacts of conflict in Tigray?
4. What are the political impacts of conflict in Tigray?

Profiles

No	Code	Sex	Age	Place of interview	Date of interview	Occupation
1	KI1	F	29	Bule Hora University	20/2/2021	Department Head
2	KI2	M	35	Bule Hora University	22/2/2021	College Dean
3	KI3	F	32	Bule Hora University	24/2/2021	Human Resource Directorate Director
4	KI4	M	45	Bule Hora University	24/2/2021	Public Relation of the University
5	KI5	M	38	Bule Hora University	26/2/2021	Vice president

B: Questions and Profile of the participants on the focus group Discussion One (FGD1).

Guiding Questions

1. What are the main political impacts of conflict in Tigray?

2. What are the security impacts of conflict in Tigray?

3. What are the political impacts of conflict in Tigray?

Profiles

No	Code	Sex	Age	Place of Discussion	Date of Discussion	Occupation
1	FGD1	M	20	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student
2	FGD1	M	25	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student
3	FGD1	M	26	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student
4	FGD1	M	22	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student
5	FGD1	M	29	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student
6	FGD1	M	27	Bule Hora University	21/2/2021	Student

C. Questions and Profile of the participants on the focus group Discussion Two (FGD2).

Guiding Questions

1. What are the main political impacts of conflict in Tigray?

2. What are the security impacts of conflict in Tigray?

3. What are the political impacts of conflict in Tigray?

Profiles

No	Code	Sex	Age	Place of Discussion	Date of Discussion	Occupation
1	FGD2	M	32	Bule Hora University	25/2/2021	Lecturer
2	FGD2	M	35	Bule Hora University	25/2/2021	Lecturer
3	FGD2	M	36	Bule Hora University	25/2/2021	Lecturer
4	FGD2	M	42	Bule Hora University	25/2/2021	Lecturer
5	FGD2	M	39	Bule Hora University	25/2/2021	Lecturer