Metropolitan Housing Problems;Nature and Characteristics in Amhara Region

[1]kelemu Fenta Gebeyehu, [2]Seid Jibril Mohammed and [3]mikyas Abera Negawo

[1,2] Lecturer, Department of Sociology, School of Sociology and Social work, Gondar University[3]
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, School of Sociology and Social work, Gondar University

Email: [1]kelemusosa@gmail.com, [2]seidw14@gmail.com&[3]mikidar2003@gmail.com

Abstract

Urbanization is the process by which people are moving from rural to urban areas, which results in the formation of new life styles. Nowadays, it is highly contributing to the overall economic, social, cultural as well as infrastructural development of countries. Conversely, the prevalence of over urbanization results in the change in the dynamics and characteristics of housing problems. Though urban expansion has result in the birth of various housing problems, prevalent literatures and studies are not updated and limited in scale. Hence, to fill such gaps, this study is targeted at assessing the nature and characteristics of housing problems of metropolitan urban centers in Amhara region, namely Bahir Dar, Dessie and Gondar. To address this objective we have employed a crossectional descriptive research design. Specifically, 440 survey respondents were taken from Gondar (171) and Bahir Dar (167) and Dessie (102) were selected by considering land use classification and population density of each city.

The result of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the average age of respondents (F=14.54; α=.001) with the relatively oldest and the youngest residing in Bahir Dar (45.32) and Dessie (35.81) respectively. Though the amount of money spent on rent of residential place was not found to be statistically significant (F=.11; α=.90), its proportion relative to the income of the household was significantly higher for residents of the city of Gondar as compared to residents of the cities of Bahir Dar and Dessie.

There is significant variation between the cities in terms of households hosting kitchen (χ2=16.50; α=.001) – in favor of the city of Gondar – and bathroom (χ2=32.99; α=.001) – in favor of Bahir Dar. On the other hand, the average number of rooms in a housing in each city was three which is not statistically significant (F=.14; α=.24). In terms of the ownership status of housing units, the majority of the study population live in privately owned houses at Bahir Dar (49%), whereas rent (from government (40%) and private owners (57)) was the dominant ownership pattern at Gondar. Congestion is the most felt and reported problem of housing in Gondar (51%) which contrasts with their reports on the status of pollution in their residential areas which is relatively lower (32%).

Key Words: *Urbanization, Urban Center, Nature and Characteristics of housing problem*

Introduction

Urbanization is a development phenomenon that comes about with the development of a country's economy in general and industrialization in particular. It follows that the rate of urbanization is considered to be one of the indicators of a country's economic development (Abraham, 2007).

Urbanization also implies the growing share of the national population residing in urban areas. While it is likely to continue to grow throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, its rate in Eastern Africa seems to dominate others in the rest of Africa. Thus, existing small cities are likely to be large and existing large cities are likely to be even larger. The former's currently peripheral areas are likely to be relatively central and their infrastructure and capital stock will need major additions. One of these

additions has to be in the area of housing development. In a related note, housing need models catalogue the total housing need as including: *construction of new dwellings to supply new households*, *replacement of units already in the stock that require demolition or major renovation* and *construction of additional units required to relieve current overcrowding (Isaac, Megbolube & Man,1993). Moreover,* It is expected that as a country becomes more urban, more houses are needed to accommodate the increasing population in urban centers. The practice, however, does not support this in that the acceleration in urbanization is not accompanied by the provision of adequate housing (UNHABITAT, 2002).

Housing is also of great importance to households in both developed and developing economies, because it is the largest fixed capital investment that households make (Malpezzi, 2001). The United Nations states that every citizen of the world is entitled to be sheltered. Yet, a great part of the world's population is housed in unfit and unhealthy dwellings and physical surroundings. Thus, more than one billion of the world's city residents live in inadequate housing, mostly in the sprawling slums and squatter settlements in developing countries (UNCHS, 2001).

Despite this, the need for housing is not in complete equilibrium with its supply in any country in the world (Cattaneo, Galiani, Gertler, Martinez & Titiunik,2008). According to Brian and Ranvinder (1995) housing is one of the acute problems in many Third World countries. Moreover, they stated that the prevalence of squatter and slum settlements are indicators of the extent of poverty and shortage of housing in a society. The presence of slums and squatter settlements indicate a house that lacks the most necessary component for building of human communities and fails to contribute to human development. In Africa apart from multi-storied buildings, traffic jams and street beggars, one of the central "faces" of Africa's rapid urbanization in most if not all of its large cities is "non-standard, poor-quality housing units"(UNCHS,2001) which the United Nation calls "urban slums". As to them the scale of urbanization increases the task of providing appropriate and affordable housing to the urban resident has persisted as one of the most intractable problems facing developing countries.

Urban centers in Ethiopia are characterized by massive housing problem and around 70-90% of urban population are living in sub-standard housing, low economic activities, growing population, inadequate upgrading, etc. (UN Habitat, 2008). To reduce the problem the government has implemented the project of Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) where houses are constructed by low cost for medium and low income groups. The goal is to reduce the proportion of slum-dwellers, but still there are inadequate housing provisions (UN Habitat, 2010).

According to Abreham (2007) shortage of housing is one of the major problems that call for immediate action. Even the majorities of houses in Ethiopia are below the standard and lack adequate space. The extent of provision for water supply, electricity, and drainage is also very minimal which affect the lives and health of people living in these houses.

Urban centers in Amhara region are not exceptions to the aforementioned challenges and problems of housing that exist in Ethiopian urban centers. To date, comprehensive studies on characteristics and nature of housing problems of Bahir Dar, Dessie and Gondar metropolitan centers are rare, fragmented and, when they did exist, are not interdisciplinary and limited in its coverage.

There is, thus, a need for undertaking comprehensive studies whose findings would inform policies and strategies to effectively and efficiently address housing problems of metropolitan centers, and make the development and expansion of urbanization functional to the national development agenda.

Study Design

To make the research feasible with the available time and resources, the researchers were employed a cross sectional research design. Quantitative data collected from the sampling units

(households) in the three administratively defined metropolitan areas of Amahra National Regional State. To enhance the representativeness of the samples, land use and density of population were taken it to consideration while the researchers select the sub-cites in each study area. To these end, four hundred forty householders were interviewed using structured questioners.Mean, standard deviation and cross tabulations were used to present the data. In addition secondary data used to compare the findings of this reach with the previous similar undertakings.

Results and Discussion

Socio Demographic Background of Respondents

Table 1: The Socio Economic Status of Respondents by City of Residence

Variables		Cities			
		Gondar City	Bahir Dar City	Dessie City	Total
Average Income***	([n])	1814.5 [169]	2934.2 [167]	2487.0 [102]	2398.0 [438]
Number of years in the city [for migrants]****	([n])	10.65 [152]	25.72 [53]	20.72 [43]	15.6 [248]
Household Size	([n])	4.6 [166]	4.6 [164]	4.7 [101]	4.5 [431]
****sig at .001; ***sig at.01			[Source: Survey, 2016]		

Table one shows residents of Bahir Dar city (2934.2) earn one-third more than what residents of the city of Gondar earn per month (1814.5) and this difference was found to be statistically significant (F=5.83; α=.01). This finding is contrasted with World Food Program (WFP, 2009) report which implied per capital income per month varied between 226 Birr in Dessie and Bahir Dar and Gondar Birr 252 and 293 respectively.

The statistically significant difference in the average years of residence in the respective cities by the migrant population (F=26.01; α=.001) implies – at least partially – that the trend of immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon at Gondar (10.65yrs) as compared to, for instance, Bahir Dar (25.72yrs). The test, however, did not find statistically significant association between city, on the one hand and household size, on the other.

Nature and Characteristics of Housing Problems

Table 2: Housing Conditions of Respondents by City of Residence

Variables		Current city of residence			Total
		Gondar city	Bahir Dar city	Dessie city	
Money spent on rent	([n])	370.7 [100]	351.5 [48]	327.9 [26]	359.0 [174]
The proportion of income spent on rent*	([n])	0.56 [98]	.18 [48]	.43 [26]	.44 [172]
Number of rooms per housing unit	([n])	3.24 [170]	3.25 [166]	2.84 [102]	3.15 [438]
****sig at .001; ***sig at.01; **sig at .05; *sig at .1				[Source: Survey, 2016]	

As table above reveals, though the amount of money spent on rent of residential place was not found to be statistically significant (F=.11; α=.90), its proportion relative to the income of the household was significantly higher for residents of the city of Gondar as compared to residents of the cities of Bahir Dar and Dessie. Alternatively put, residents at Gondar who rent a house to live spent about 56% of their earning in the form of rent as compared to residents of Bahir Dar and Dessie who –

respectively – spent 18% and 43% of their income in rent. In relation to this finding, different explanations have been given by different experts and there is an aggregate standard for it and the standard practice is to count any household that spends more than 30 percent of its pre-tax income on housing as having an affordability problem. By convention, housing is considered "affordable" to a household if the rent (including utilities) is no more than 30 percent of its pre-tax income. Households spending more than 30 percent are labeled cost burdened and those spending more than 50 percent are labeled severely cost burdened (Belsky, Goodman and Drew, 2005). Hence, based on this standard, housing affordability is a serious problem in the city of Gondar and Dessie than Bahir Dar.

On the other hand, the average number of rooms in a housing in each city was not found be statistically significant (F=.14; α=.24); and the average was found to be 3 rooms. Relatively, housing units in Bahir Dar have greater number of rooms followed by Gondar and Dessie.

Table 3: Basic Characteristics of Housing Units by City of Residence

Basic Characteristics of Housing units			City of Residence			Total
			Gondar	Bahir Dar	Dessie	
	Kitchen at a housing unit****	n[%]	162 [97]	136 [93]	87 [95]	385
	Toilet at a housing unit	n[%]	122 [73.5]	135 [92]	77 [84]	334
	Bathroom at a housing unit****	n[%]	54 [32.5]	105 [71]	47 [51]	206
	Total	N	166	146	91	403
****sig at .001; ***sig at.01; **sig at .05; *sig at .1 [Source: Survey, 2016]						

As the Cross tabulation discloses above, there is significant variation between the cities in terms of households hosting kitchen (χ^2=16.50; α=.001) – in favor of the city of Gondar – and bathroom (χ^2=32.99; α=.001) – in favor of Bahir Dar. But the marginal variation between housing units located in the three cities in terms of having toilets was not found to be statistically significant (χ^2=3.95; α=.14).

In contrast, a report organized by Gebeyehu, Brazzoduro and Behailu, 2001, revealed that both at regional and town level there is a significant variation in terms of housing units not having toilets and in Tigray (70%) Gambella (67%), Amhara (61.5%) and Afar (58.3%) respectively housing units have no toilets. Similarly, in major towns at national level, there is a significant variation among housing units not having toilets and Jijiga (67.6%) takes the highest share and Hawassa (9.6%) is the least. In Bahir Dar (50.4 %), Gondar (50.2%), and Dessie (38%) still there is similar problem.

Table 4: Types of Housing Units and Ownership Status by City of Residence

Type of House of Residence****		City of residence			Total
		Gondar	Bahir Dar	Dessie	
Villa	N[%*/%**]	117 [69/35]	127 [78/38]	93 [95/27]	337 [78/100]
Condominium	N[%*/%**]	52 [31/57]	35 [21/38]	5 [5/5]	92 [21/100]
Apartment	N[%*/%**]	0 [0/0]	1 [1/100]	0 [0/0]	1 [1/100]
Total	N[%*/%**]	169 [100/39]	163 [100/38]	98 [100/23]	430 [100/100]
Ownership Status of Housing Unit**		**City of residence**			**Total**
		Gondar	Bahir Dar	Dessie	
Privately owned	N[%*/%**]	69 [41/29]	115 [69/49]	50 [49/21]	234 [54/100]
Rent from government	N[%*/%**]	38 [22/40]	30 [18/32]	26 [26/28]	94 [22/100]
Rent from private owners	N[%*/%**]	62 [37/57]	21 [13/19]	25 [25/23]	108 [25/100]
Total	N[%*/%**]	169 [100/39]	166 [100/38]	101 [100/23]	436 [100/100]
****sig at .001; ***sig at.01; **sig at .05; *sig at .1 [Source: Survey, 2016]					
*The percentage of residents of the city with Villa (within a city); **the percentage of residents with Villa residing in the city relative to all residents with Villa (within a housing-type)					

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In terms of the types of housing units, the overwhelming majority of the residents of Dessie lives in Villas (95%), while 78% and 69% of the residents of Bahir Dar and Gondar reside in the same housing type; and, 78% (337) of the households reside in Villas, while 21% and 1% of them resided in condominium and apartments respectively. With regard to the second housing-type, many residents from Gondar (31%), Bahir Dar (21%) and Dessie (5%) cities – in that order – occupied condominium. None in the cities of Gondar and Dessie resided in apartments, while only 1 (1%) household unit occupied such a housing type in Bahir Dar. On a related note, of the total number of residents who live in Villas, 38%, 35% and 27% are residents of the cities of Bahir Dar, Gondar and Dessie, respectively; and, 57%, 38% and 5% of the condominium residents were inhabitants of the cities of Gondar, Bahir Dar and Dessie respectively. In sum, there was a statistically significant variation between the city of residence and type of housing unit occupied by residents in the study population. (χ^2=125.96; α=.001). More than twice the number of residents that live in rented households from private owners (n=108) were residents that live in privately owned households (n=234). The remaining 94 residents lived in houses rented from the government (n=94) (χ^2=34.41; α=.001). In Gondar, while 41% of the residents own the house they live in, 22% (37%) of them reside in rented houses from the government (the private owners). At Bahir Dar, the majority of residents (69%) reside in privately owned houses; and, while 18% of the residents live in houses rented from the government, the 13% reside in houses rented from private owners. In Dessie, while 49% of the residents live in privately owned houses, there was an even distribution between those that reside in houses rented from the government (26%) and private owners (25%).

In terms of the ownership status of housing units, the majority of the study population live in privately owned houses at Bahir Dar (49%), whereas rent (from government (40%) and private owners (57)) was the dominant ownership pattern at Gondar. Contrary to this finding, Muleta's (2014) research finding revealed that a significant number, (75%), of households' residents of Bokoji town are living in privately rented houses.

Table 5: Materials Used to Build the Housing Units and City of Residence

			City			Total
			Gondar	Bahir Dar	Dessie	
Floor Material***	Earth	n[%]	73 [45]	61 [37]	63 [62]	197 [46]
	Cement	n[%]	77 [47]	79 [48]	34 [33]	190 [44]
	Ceramics/Tiles	n[%]	14 [8]	25 [15]	5 [5]	44 10]
	Total	**n[%]**	**164 [100]**	**165 [100]**	**102 [100]**	**431 [100]**
Wall Material****	Earth/Wood	n[%]	88 [52]	71 [43]	83 [81]	242 [55]
	Stone/Cement	n[%]	24 [14]	18 [11]	10 [10]	52 [12]
	Bloket/Cement	n[%]	58 [34]	76 [46]	9 [9]	143 [33]
	Total	**n[%]**	**170 [100]**	**165 [100]**	**102 [100]**	**437 [100]**
Roof Material****	Thatch	n[%]	5 [3]	3 [2]	0 [0]	8 [2]
	Corrugated Iron	n[%]	141 [86]	145 [88]	101 [99]	387 [90]
	Tiles	n[%]	6 [4]	14 [9]	0 [0]	20 [5]
	Concrete	n[%]	11 [7]	2 [1]	1 [1]	14 [3]
	Total	**n[%]**	**163 [100]**	**164 [100]**	**102 [100]**	**429 [100]**
Ceiling Material****	Plastic	n[%]	39 [24]	47 [29]	22 [23]	108 [26]
	Cloth	n[%]	91 [56]	64 [40]	52 [54]	207 [49]
	Gypsum	n[%]	21 [13]	45 [28]	11 [11]	77 [18]
	None	n[%]	12 [7]	5 [3]	11 [11]	28 [7]
	Total	**n[%]**	**163 [100]**	**161 [100]**	**96 [100]**	**420 [100]**
****sig at .001; ***sig at .01; **sig at .05; *sig at .1 [Source: Survey, 2016]						

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The table on the distribution of floor-type by city shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the cities in terms of the material with which the housing units' floors were constructed. Specifically, proportionately more housing units at Bahir Dar and Gondar were constructed with cement, while at Dessie, the majority housing unit had floors made of earth (χ^2=19.29; α=.01). Similarly, Muleta's (2014) research revealed that majority of housing floors in Bokoji town are made from earth/mud. On the contrary, the finding is relatively inconsistent with the report of Gebeyehu, Brazzoduro and Behailu, 2001) in Bahir Dar 13.9%, Dessie 10.8% and Gondar 8.9% housing floors' had made of cement and 81.4%, 80.9% and 71.4% housing units had floor's made of earth/mud in Bahir Dar, Gondar and Dessie respectively.

A little more than 4/5th of the housing units at the city of Dessie had their walls made of earth/wood – which is almost as twice as the proportion of the housing units with walls made of the same construction material in Bahir Dar. On a related note, more than half of the housing units at the city of Gondar had walls made of earth/wood. With regard to housing unit with walls made of Stone/Cement/Mud-plaster, the table shows that there is more or less an even distribution of housing unit between the cities of Gondar (14%), Bahir Dar (11%) and Dessie (10%). But, most housing units in Bahir Dar – as compared to Gondar (34%) and Dessie (9%) – had their walls made of blocket and cement (χ^2=45.48; α=.001).

Similar to this finding, at country level, almost 90 percent (89.3 percent) are built with "traditional" materials, that is wood and mud (locally known as Chika house), wood and thatch, stone and mud, reed and bamboo. Only 6.6 percent of all urban housing units are made up of "Modern" materials, which are stone, and cement, blocks and bricks. Specifically, in Bahir Dar (91.1%), Dessie (91.2%) and Gondar (82.75%) of walls erected from traditional materials (Gebeyehu, Brazzoduro and Behailu, 2001). Muleta's (2014) finding also supported the finding which explained in Bokoji town majority of housing walls are made from mud/earth.

Expect in the city of Dessie, housing unit had roofs made of different forms of materials. At Dessie, there were no housing units with roof made of thatch or tiles. In the city, with a single exception, all housing unit had roofs made of corrugated iron. A broadly similar account could be made for the cities of Gondar and Bahir Dar: 86% and 88% – respectively – of the housing units had their roofs constructed with corrugated irons. The cities of Gondar and Bahir Dar had a very small number of housing units with thatched or tiled roofs or roofs made of concrete. In 2001 Gebeyehu, Brazzoduro and Behailu reported that in Bahir Dar 85% of the housing units' roof is made from corrugated iron and 95% and 92% in Dessie and Gondar. Housing roof made from Concrete were 2.59 % in Gondar, 0.54% in Dessie and 0.39% in Bahir Dar. Moreover, a contrasting finding of housing roofs' from thatch implied 12.79% in Bahir Dar, 1.19% in Gondar and 0.59 in Dessie. On the contrary, the materials with which the ceilings of the housing units were built were found to be generally similar between the cities of Gondar and Dessie – plastic, cloth or gypsum. There was a minor difference between the two cities in terms of the proportion of housing units without ceiling whereby those in the city of Dessie had a marginally higher number of housing units without ceiling (11%) than the ones at Gondar (7%) – or Bahir Dar (3%).

As compared to both cities, housing units at Bahir Dar without ceiling were found to be few (3%) while the majority had ceiling made of cloth (40%), plastic (29%) or gypsum (28%). Interestingly, the percentage of housing units with gypsum ceiling at Bahir Dar was more than the combined percentages of those at the cities of Gondar and Dessie with the aforementioned ceiling material.

Table 6: Housing Neighbourhood Habitability by City Residence

			City			Total
			Gondar	Bahir Dar	Dessie	
Habitability of the neighbourhood	Congested residential area	N[%]	85 [51]	70 [42]	40 [39]	195
	Polluted residential area	N[%]	53 [32]	82 [49]	53 [52]	188
	Health post residential area	N[%]	141 [84]	100 [60]	68 [67]	309
	Primary schooling residential area	N[%]	145 [86]	102 [61]	90 [88]	337
	Secondary schooling residential area	N[%]	119 [71]	102 [61]	54 [53]	275
	Preparatory schooling residential area	N[%]	113 [67]	95 [57]	17 [17]	225
	Tertiary schooling residential area	N[%]	93 [55]	63 [38]	46 [45]	202
	Recreation center residential area	N[%]	50 [30]	87 [52]	9 [9]	146
	Youth center residential area	N[%]	42 [25]	51 [31]	1 [1]	94
Total		N[%]	168	166	102	436
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1=Yes.				[Source: Survey, 2016]		

Congestion and pollution: neighbourhood congestion is the most felt and reported problem by the residents of Gondar (51%) as compared to those at the cities of Bahir Dar (42) or Dessie (39). This contrasts with their reports on the status of pollution in their residential areas which is relatively lower (32%) than the reports both for the cities of Bahir Dar (49) and Dessie (52%).

Health and education: These two social services are very important relative to the living standard of a community and, with regard to health post, residents of Gondar reported that they have access to health posts near their residential area – which is comparatively better than the reports of both Dessie and Bahir Dar. As per the residents' reports, Dessie did well in terms of making primary educational institutions accessible for children near their residential areas; but the city fared poorer – specifically compared to Gondar – in terms of making secondary (71%), preparatory (67%) and tertiary (55%) educational institutions accessible.

Recreation and youth centers: the residents of the city of Bahir Dar reported that they had comparatively better access to recreational (52%) and youth (31%) centers.

Similarly, a national report of Ministry of Urban Development and Housing Construction,2014, revealed that at present it is estimated that about 60 percent of urban areas of Ethiopia is slum devoid of social and economic services, with overcrowded and dilapidated substandard houses devoid of basic housing facilities and services, unsafe and unhealthy living condition where 70 percent of their residents are living under extreme poverty.

Table 7: neighbourhood Habitability of Sub cities by Urban Land Use

			Category of Sub city by Urban Land Use			Total
			Commercial	Residential	Industrial/ Agricultural	
Habitability of the neighbourhood	Congested residential area	N[%]	60 [58]	75 [34]	60 [54]	195
	Polluted residential area	N[%]	49 [47]	92 [42]	47 [42]	188
	Health post residential area	N[%]	48 [46]	167 [76]	94 [84]	309
	Potable water residential area	N[%]	92 [88]	191 [87]	108 [96]	391
	Primary schooling residential area	N[%]	48 [46]	188 [85]	101 [90]	337
	Sec. schooling residential area	N[%]	22 [21]	160 [73]	93 [83]	275
	Prep schooling residential area	N[%]	5 [5]	144 [65]	76 [68]	225
	Tertiary schooling residential area	N[%]	6 [6]	140 [64]	56 [50]	202
	Recreation center residential area	N[%]	31 [30]	80 [36]	35 [31]	146
	Youth center residential area	N[%]	14 [14]	52 [24]	28 [25]	94
Total		N[%]	104	220	112	436
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1=Yes				[**Source**: Survey, 2016]		

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Congestion and pollution: Congestion is the most felt and reported problem of the residential area by the residents of densely populated commercial zones (58%) as compared to those at the residential (34%) and industrial/agricultural zones (54%). The same is true for major urban land use and reports of pollution whereby residents in densely populated commercial zones considering their residential area as polluted (47%) as compared to those living in residential and industrial/agricultural urban land zones (42%).

Health and education: As the table above shows, the same scenario is depicts with urban areas marked out for industrial and agricultural investment having better social, health and schooling facilities – with the singe exception of tertiary level of schooling – as compared to commercial and/or residential areas. Specifically, residents of industrial and agricultural urban zones reported that they have easy access to primary (90%), secondary (83%) and preparatory schooling (68%). They also reported that they have better access to potable water (96%) and health post (84%). As mentioned above, it is only with regard to access to tertiary education that residents of the industrial and agricultural urban areas (50%) fall short of reports made by residential (64%) zones.

Recreation and youth centers: While the residential zones of the three cities reportedly hosted better recreation centers (36%), both residential (24%) and industrial/agricultural (25)% zones made youth centers accessible than commercial zones (14%).

Conclusion:

Characteristically, there exists a significant variation among the three urban centers in terms of housing units having kitchen and bath room. Majority of households in the three metropolitan cities are living in privately owned villas followed by condominium houses which are rented from private and government owners. Majority of the housing units including its floor, wall, ceiling and roofs were made from traditional materials and there is serious problem of housing affordability. In relation to this, households in the city of Gondar (56%) and Dessie (43%) have invested almost half of their income to house rent. Moreover, though there is a slight variation among the three cities, congestion, pollution and absence/ shortage of recreation and youth center are prevalent in the residential areas.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings, we have suggested the following points:

Since, sousing was found as a serious problem in the study areas, especially households are faced with problems of housing affordability, pollution, congestion and shortage of recreational centers. Hence, concerned government bodies like Ministry of Urban Development and Housing Construction, city administrations and others are advised to take this finding as a bench mark and come up with thoughtful solutions to the problem. More specifically, the following measures are ideal to be taken;

❖ Adequate system of statistical data on housing building and construction has to be developed. This is not without reason; statistics on housing demand and supply highly depends on a legal and administrative system where all new housing units are recorded. If most new housing units are not counted in official statistics then figures for region's 'housing deficit' can be misleading. As we have observed, in the regional context, most housing construction is unrecorded. Currently, the data regarding housing supply, with its related characteristics such as size, services, ownership, age, etc., are only gathered during the demographic census, which is not enough to provide timely information, on which to base planning projects

❖ The country in general and the regional state in particular also needs a profound housing policy in which the quality of housing construction and extent of provision for water supply, sanitation, drainage, electricity …etc. is properly treated. The policy should give due attention at least for

the towns that serve as regional capitals and those towns with low level of proportion of access to housing services

❖ To maintain housing affordability, measures have to be taken through;
- ✓ Controlling for housing and neighborhood quality
- ✓ Building tradeoffs to lower housing costs into estimates of the problem
- ✓ Grappling with the thorny political issues of what constitutes a housing cost burden, minimally acceptable housing, and minimally acceptable neighborhood quality at different income levels

Acknowledgement

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