MSc Programme in Urban Management and Development

Rotterdam, the Netherlands

October 2022

Civil Society in Collective Action
Bonding and Bridging in Saida's Historic District

Name: **Mohammad Al Hariri**

Supervisor: Carolina Lunetta

Specialisation: Strategic Urban Planning & Policy (SUPP)

Country: Lebanon

Report number: 1621

UMD 18

Summary

Socio-spatial segregation across residential income lines renders concentrated urban poverty and disadvantaged outcomes in marginalised neighbourhoods. Individual community members come together to act collectively upon common problems at varying levels and through different means of civic action. Scientific debate suggests that social capital facilitates collective civic action. However, research on this effect requires further empirical investigation in the context of poverty-impacted neighbourhoods in Lebanon and similar urban contexts. Saida's historic district (Old Saida) is such a neighbourhood, where social actors show varying practices of collective action and interactive dynamics among each other and with state institutions. This research aims at examining the influence of bonding and bridging social capital on the practices and forms of collective civic action. In light of scientific reasoning on social capital and collective civic action, the research takes the Old Saida neighbourhood as a case study, collecting qualitative data through web-scraping of actions and interviews with civil society actors, community leaders and local experts, assessing and analysing their perceptions and practices. Through coding and qualitative discussion, the research examines and explains the influence of the different forms of social capital on collective civic action in the neighbourhood, referring to scientific literature. Social capital is found to enable civil society's collective action in Old Saida through facilitating the development of micro-level networks of reciprocity within the neighbourhood community and meso-level coordination mechanisms across the city. Those spaces of familiarity and coordination were deemed necessary for building coherent claims and purposes among civil society actors, thus focusing and increasing collective action in the neighbourhood. When those spaces deemed ineffective in aligning civic visions and agendas and managing disputes across civil society's community-level, religious, and political spaces, coherent participation practices and more collective action were mainly mobilised among actors who shared mutual political affiliations and religious values. The research finally suggests 5 relevant recommendations for further research and for application in policy and community development programming.

Keywords

Civil Society Actors, Bonding Social Capital, Bridging Social Capital, Collective Civic Action, Participation Practices

Acknowledgements

Foreword

This thesis was written for my Master degree in Urban Management and Development with specialisation in Strategic Urban Planning and Policy at the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS), as part of Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands.

This thesis dwells on the socio-political dynamics among and across civil society within the context of socio-spatial segregation. I find this research topic very interesting; in fact, I have investigated and addressed every side of this topic for years. The topic blends social sciences such as social capital and co-presence with concepts of urban development such as urban co-production and civic engagement.

Mohammad Al Hariri

October 2022

Abbreviations

IHS	Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies
CSA	Civil society actor(s)
ICSA	Internal civil society actor(s)
ECSA	External civil society actor(s)
SOG	Self-organised group
FO	Formal organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation

Table of Contents

List of Charts

List of Figures

List of Photographs

List of Tables

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   Background and research problem

1.1.1   Background

Socio-spatial segregation has long been debated as an urban process of exclusion among social groups, across various societal lines (Caner & Bölen, 2013; Unceta et al., 2020), among which socio-economics is preeminent in Marxist-tradition research (Lehman-Frisch, 2011). Residential income segregation renders areas of concentrated urban poverty, subjected to social isolation and exclusion as well as political marginalisation (Wilson, 1987; Marcuse, 1997; Unceta et al., 2020). Recent scientific research has explored wellbeing of neighbourhood-level communities, addressing the limited opportunities for establishing productive social networks useful for influencing policymaking and gaining access to resources (Wichowsky, 2017).

Social capital has been theorised to be a key weapon for the marginalised (Putnam, 2001), influencing the collective ability of agents to act upon common problems and break out of the poverty cycle (Ferguson and Dickens, 2000). Social capital is seen as a condition for democratic stability, economic effectiveness, and social integration (Newton, 2001). In fact, empirical evidence in the Global South has shown that social capital, in its bonding and bridging forms, has significant effects on community outcomes (Agnitsch et al., 2009).

Bonding social capital, referring to the coming-together of similar people (Putnam & Goss, 2002), is shown to facilitate economic wellbeing and life satisfaction and help those communities to 'get by' on a daily basis, within closed networks (Mpanje et al., 2018). On the other hand, bridging social capital, referring to the coming-together of dissimilar people (Putnam & Goss, 2002), is shown to stimulate instrumental actions of socioeconomic and political benefits (Mpanje et al., 2018) and help those communities to 'get ahead' (Woolcock, 2005) across open networks (Alfano, 2021).

Social capital has been theorised to facilitate collective civic action (Woolcock 2001), as social agents with low human or financial capital utilise their social relations to act collectively (Wichowsky, 2017). Citizens collectively take on roles they perceive missing, underperformed or ineffective in formal planning (Horlings et al., 2021).

1.1.2   Problem statement

From a state-centric perspective, collective action is often sanctioned to state-led participatory planning mechanisms targeting a definable, organised, and homogeneous civil society within an invited space of citizenship. From a theoretical perspective, this instigates an underestimation of societal complexities, especially in the Global South (Miraftab, 2009; Watson, 2009). Across spaces of interaction with the state, agents strategize their part of the relation flexibly, mobilising their collective action between the invited spaces of citizenship and invented, self-regulated spaces of citizenship, depending on timely and place-based effectiveness in voicing demands and claiming their right to the city (Miraftab, 2004).

Although insurgent actors have been perceived by governments and donors as criminalised, ultraleft movements, recent academic and development scholarship have recognised and supported insurgent practices, demonstrating that the production of urban space can be seen in the everyday city-making practices of marginalised communities (Miraftab, 2009). This has redirected scientific debate to examine participation practices as constituents of planning,

referred to as 'participation as planning,' rather than a mere tool employed in planning, referred to as 'participation in planning' (Frediani & Cociña, 2019).

Participation as planning is no different to the Lebanese context, particularly within segregated neighbourhoods such as Old Saida (check Figure 1).

Figure 1: Location and boundaries of Old Saida within the city of Saida and neighbouring towns

Adapted from: Hariri Foundation (2021)

As indicated in Figure 2, today, the district constitutes a high-density, multi-ethnic neighbourhood, impacted by poverty and featuring deteriorated housing structures, an absence of adequate urban basic services, and relatively scarce social services (Hbeish, 2016a; Dahsheh, 2020). With few socioeconomic opportunities compared to other neighbourhoods in Saida, the community suffers high rates of unemployment and drug abuse (Hbeish, 2016b) as well as low levels of education (Hariri Foundation, 2021).

Figure 2: Socio-spatial segregation factors in Old Saida compared to the city and neighbouring towns
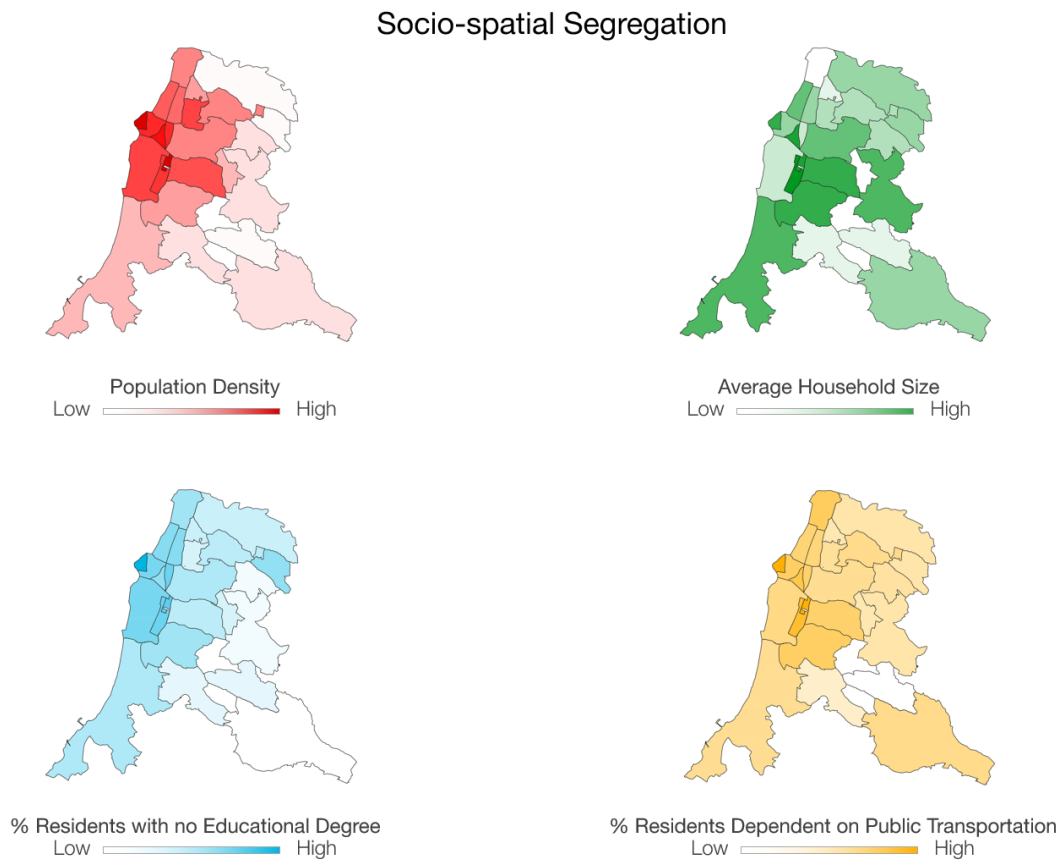
Socio-spatial Segregation

Population Density
Low —————————— High

Average Household Size
Low —————————— High

% Residents with no Educational Degree
Low —————————— High

% Residents Dependent on Public Transportation
Low —————————— High

Adapted from: Hariri Foundation (2021)

In response, a growing civil society in the neighbourhood has exhibited a range of political affiliations and religious values, taking on varying levels of engagement in daily self-organising roles and activities, often influenced by political leadership, perceived locally as community leaders at the meso- and micro- levels. Comprising neighbourhood residents and other citizen enthusiasts about the historic district, civil society actors often come together to address local needs or protest actions that they perceive as threats to their values or livelihoods. Actors mobilise across a wide spectrum of civic roles, including self-organised groups, neighbourhood watch groups characterised by informal leadership, NGOs, sports and arts clubs, scout organisations, religious institutions, and established political parties.

The Municipality of Saida, re-elected in 2016, and its civil society partners claim to face local challenges in local development plans, which are often blocked or compromised due to power coerced by local militarised groups and political party supporters (Hbeish, 2016a) as well as conservative social behaviours and values of some local community members (Al Howari, 2011). While the local government promotes and justifies its actions and plans based on its Sustainable Urban Development Strategy released in 2013, its local efforts for development involve coordination with local agents, whose responses or actions remain unpredictable, based on individual or group interests or on political mobilisation. Although residents seem to know each other well within the high-density community, internal trust is challenged by empirically-assessed disputes among residents due to dissatisfaction with services as well as nationality or political discrimination (UN-Habitat & UNICEF, 2019).

1.2 Research relevance

1.2.1 Academic relevance

According to Mpanje et al. (2018), research on social capital in vulnerable urban contexts may lack solid analytical frameworks, inadequately linking to scientific theory. For that, social capital in such vulnerable settings should be approached from a more complex lens, broken down to its constituents. Additionally, research should explore the conditions under which agents move between invited and invented spaces of citizenship, focusing on the relations and dynamics characterising those spaces (Miraftab, 2004). This research dwells on those gaps between scientific theory and empirical conditions in order to better understand the relations between an operationalised social capital and the drivers which influence the roles and strategies of a broader civil society in the Lebanese context.

Assessing society's civic health through the aggregation of measures taken by civic groups and acts (Mpanje et al., 2018), this thesis contributes to scientific literature on social capital and on participation as planning, examining the place-specific effects of social capital on the collective action of civil society, particularly in the context of socio-spatial segregation.

1.2.2 Practical relevance

In-depth investigations into neighbourhood effects of socioeconomic exclusion in Saida, such as social structures and interactive mechanisms, are absent (Hbeish, 2016a). Socioeconomic conditions and social actions are highlighted only to bring public attention (see Al Howari, 2011, Dahsheh, 2020), or addressed as obstacles to development (Hbeish, 2016b, UN-Habitat & UNICEF, 2019). Collective action among civil society actors inside the neighbourhood remains unpredictable, with no scientifically-rooted understanding of social group memberships, trust and reciprocity, or social networks and processes.

Since 2016, the incumbent municipality has used its urban development strategy to promote and justify its plans and actions across the city. The strategy dwells on the concept of "social capital" only once, as a means to bridge the gaps between marginalised groups and the local economy (Al-Harithy et al., 2013). Further plans and investigative studies in the neighbourhood mainly address civic participation as granted by local government and formal civil society organisations, giving negligible attention to the daily urban production performed by informal, self-organised groups of residents. This thesis constitutes an in-depth investigation into the social factors influencing civil society in Old Saida to establish a better understanding of local participation as planning and priority areas for relative social development.

1.3   Research objectives

The research aims at explaining the influence of social capital on practices and forms of collective civic action within the socio-spatially segregated neighbourhood of Saida's historic district. This being done by examining the different roles and strategies taken by civil society in the neighbourhood, as a case study and understanding how it benefits from its social capital in mobilising its collective action. Two forms of social capital, bonding and bridging, are assessed to identify the relations among civil society actors and the effects that their relations have on their participation practices. The study aims at linking scientific theory with empirical evidence in the Lebanese context, informing community development programming around the potential ways that social capital can affect the roles and strategies of civil society in their collective actions.

<u>Research Approach</u>	Deductive
<u>Research Nature</u>	Explanatory
<u>Timeframe</u>	To study social capital and collective action among actors adopting dynamic participation strategies within civil society and with the state, and since the subject of study is civil society itself as a variable, this research takes the state as a constant. Thus, the timeframe of the study is fixed to a consistent regime of local governance. This is reflected onto the term of the incumbent municipality from 2016 to the date of the study.

1.4   Research question

The main research question (RQ) is:

How do bonding and bridging social capital influence practices and forms of collective civic action in the neighbourhood of Saida's historic district?

The research sub-questions are as follows:

Q1. How is bonding and bridging social capital among civil society characterised in the neighbourhood?

Q2. What strategies and forms of collective action does civil society practice in the neighbourhood?

Chapter 2   Literature review

2.1   Concepts under study

2.1.1   Social capital

Social capital was first discussed as a theory in social sciences by Dewey and Hanifan in 1907 and 1916 and later tackled by Jane Jacobs in 1961. Bourdieu and Coleman advanced the theory in the 1980s, employing the concept as a tool for understanding social stratification and social relations (Hador, 2016; Alfano, 2021). It was in the 1990s that social capital theory gained prominence in the field of social science discipline. (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). According to early theories, social capital is the capital that could be accumulated or damaged based on the social investments made by people in their communities (Alfano, 2021). Jacobs (1961) reflects on social capital in urban neighbourhoods, in which the quality of life could be linked to interpersonal relations, featuring trust and cooperation over common goals.

Fukuyama (2001) suggests that social capital is a constituent of human capital which enables trust and cooperation among society members forming groups and organisations (Valadbigi & Harutyunyan, 2012). Putnam (2000) classifies social capital as a feature by which social organisation is characterised. It could be defined as form of 'relational resource' characterising the social environment (Mignone & Henley, 2009). According to Portes (1998), social capital constitutes the ability social agents use in acquiring benefits by means of memberships in new social structures such as social networks. Fukuyama (2001) elaborates, suggesting that abundance in social capital enables the production of a dense civil society. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) define social capital as the people's networks and norms which enable their collective action.

Accommodating the range of outcomes affiliated to social capital necessitates the recognition of a multi-dimensional nature of its sources, including the strong ties of family, kinship, and neighbouring characterising bonding social capital and the weak ties of distant friendships and affiliations characterising bridging social capital (Woolcock, 2001). A third form of social capital is tackled in literature; i.e. linking social capital, comprising hierarchical relations characterised by an asymmetry of wealth, power and social status, between individuals and communities on one side, and formal institutions in authority on the other (Stone 2001; Mpanje et al., 2018).

Social capital studied in an organisational context is referred to as 'organisational social capital.' Distinctively, it constitutes an intangible asset attained by organisations (Hadors, 2016). Social capital is thus argued to determine the extents of social relationships that enable organisations to achieve their goals through the patterns of their social interactions (Milana & Maldaon, 2015). Effects of social capital on organisational growth may be mediated by organisational structures and functions (Andrews, 2010); thus, recent research has focused particularly on the functions of bonding and bridging social capital to aid the growth of organisations (Williams et al., 2021).

Figure 3: Social capital measurement framework
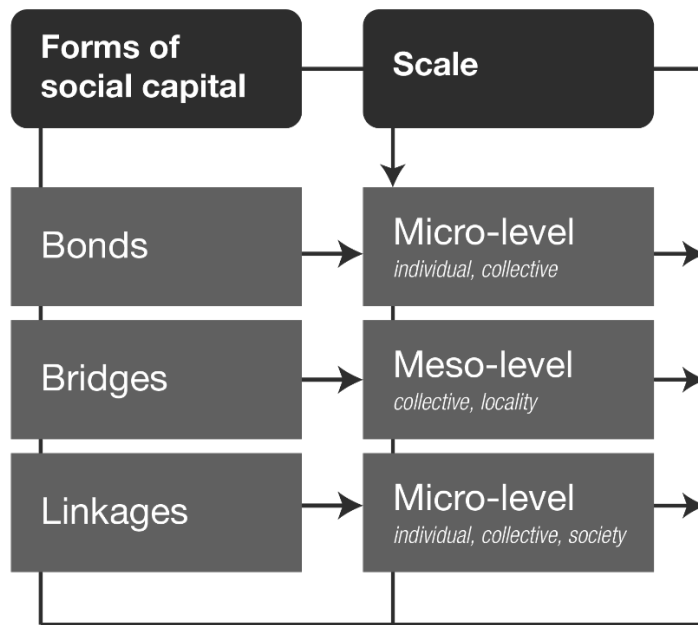
Adapted from: Mpanje et al. (2018)

2.1.2 Bonding social capital

Granovetter (1973) introduced the concept of bonding as strong ties and cohesion within groups, manifesting in tight internal relations and networks among members and often an exclusion of non-members. Siegler (2014) distinguished bonding social capital as a form of social capital determining people's knowing each other, establishing and maintaining personal relationships. Putnam and Goss (2002) affiliated bonding social capital with the coming-together of people sharing respects such as social class, ethnicity, gender, etc. At the organisational level, Williams et al. (2021) argue that bonding capital is based on homogeneity of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics among organisations. Hador (2016) further elaborates, referring to bonding as the strong ties as well as the inclusionary and exclusionary processes among those 'structured groups' of people. Those groups make up social networks, which feature intersecting ties binding them together as a society (Newton, 2001).

According to Scrivens and Smith (2013), bonding social capital characterises the nature, quality, and structure of people relationships. Dense social network among actors are suggested to contribute to the sustainability of civil society, characterised by trust and collaboration between citizens within civic participation and engagement (Newton, 2001). Outcomes of bonding social capital feature the facilitation of economic wellbeing and life satisfaction. For this reason, communities subject to socioeconomic marginalisation in the Global South rely profoundly on this form of social capital in 'getting by' on a daily basis (Mpanje et al., 2018).

Bonding social capital is defined in this study as the internal relationships and interactions among social actors within the neighbourhood.

2.1.2.1 Strength of internal relationships

According to Mpanje et al. (2018), the structure and strength of connections and interdependencies among actors, also referred to as 'social fabric,' represents the quantity of internal relationships. Those relationships construct the network as a theoretical population clearly bounded by an inclusive social collective of relevant actors (Newton, 2001). The capacity of individual relationships within this closed network is measured based on the

existence of the relationship, as well as its nature and strength (Gibson, 2001; Newton, 2001). The strength of this relationship may be measured by the amount of time and services shared among actors as well as their familiarity with each other (Gibson, 2001).

The strength of internal relationships, in this study, comprises the extent to which internal actors are familiar with each other and the amount of time and services they invest in their relations.

2.1.2.2 Trust

Trust may be defined by the expectations partners hold for each others' behaviours or responses, characterised by intimacy and commitment in social interactions regardless of changing contexts (Sako, 1992). Interpersonal trust among civil society is thought to be essential for maintaining social relations and enabling productive social cooperation (Gibson, 2001).

Trust within social networks may be assessed by the perceptions of agents on the willingness of other agents to knowingly do them harm or to act in their interest (Newton, 2001). Gibson (2001) suggested unconventional, yet empirically effective, levels at which trust could be measured, on one hand delimiting the study object of trust to the people known to the respondents, and on the other hand capturing the perceptions respondents have to the extent to which others trust them.

Trust is defined in this study as the expectations that internal actors hold for each other's behaviours to their benefit or disbenefit, regardless of changing contexts.

2.1.2.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity could be defined as the exchange of goods and services among parties involved in a defined social contract, manifesting in expectations and processes of mutual obligations for repayment (Stone, 2001), even if resources exchanged were different (Siegler, 2014). 'Reciprocated exchange' among actors, as tackled by Sampson et al. (2005), refers to their capacity and frequency in doing favours, organising visits and get-togethers, watching over others' property, or offering advice on accessing services or opportunities. It is suggested that relationships within social networks in urban contexts are based on the quality of reciprocal links (Fay, 2005).

Reciprocity is defined in this study as the exchange of access to opportunities, resources and services practiced among internal actors.

2.1.3 Bridging social capital

Putnam and Goss (2002) affiliated bridging social capital with the coming-together of dissimilar people. Siegler (2014) distinguished bridging as a form of social capital determining groups' links and interactions stretching beyond the identity shared among those groups and their members. Kreuter and Lezin (2002) linked it to the macro-connections among organisations, facilitated by the social structures and shared values and norms. While bonding is affiliated with 'closed networks' (Mpanje et al., 2018), Alfano (2021) affiliates bridging capital to 'open networks' connecting heterogeneous groups. Hador (2016) referred to bridging social capital as the weak ties across groups.

Outcomes of bridging social capital involves the stimulation of instrumental actions of economic, political and social benefits (Mpanje et al., 2018). For this reason, communities subject to socioeconomic marginalisation in the Global South rely profoundly on this form of social capital in 'getting ahead' as they interact with various networks which help make resources and opportunities available (Woolcock. 2005). However, such reliance on external networks is not clear in the context of vulnerable urban communities characterised by greater interdependencies and a higher quantity of internal relationships (Mpanje et al., 2018).

Spatially isolated communities may develop an in-group identity which enhances separateness from larger society (Uslaner, 2009). It is theorised that us/them boundaries across classes may develop processes which leave people outside those boundaries excluded from accessing 'value-producing resources' (Nast & Bokland, 2014).

Bridging social capital is defined in this study as the relationships and interactions between civil society actors spanning beyond the neighbourhood.
Mpanje et al. (2018) provide two dimensions to better understand bridging social capital: internal heterogeneity and structure of meso-level relationships.

2.1.3.1 Internal heterogeneity

Gibson (2001) suggests that civil society profits from social networks that are well-developed, spanning segments of society that are considered relatively heterogeneous. This heterogeneity comprises weak ties that are affiliated to distant associates and colleagues (Woolcock, 2001). Internal heterogeneity is characterised by the quantity and quality of actors as well as the horizontal and vertical connections among them (Mpanje et al., 2018). In organisational bridging capital, Williams et al. (2021) suggest socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to be factors of heterogeneity among organisations.

Internal heterogeneity is defined in this study as the socioeconomic differences among civil society actors and subsequent horizontal and vertical connections among them.

2.1.3.2 Structure of meso-level relationships

Scientific research suggests that physical proximity within neighbourhoods is not sufficient a factor for 'resource-poor' residents to access the resources of 'resource-rich' networks, unless met with networking among the two strata (Nast & Blokland, 2014). Bridging capital characterises people relations and interactions at the 'meso-level', meaning the social level further from a shared sense of identity, across the different strata (Mpanje et al., 2018). Meso-level relationships are characterised by the socio-structural nature of networks within which social actors engage. Civic relations may take place in identified, sometimes restricted, associations characterised by stable membership, or in loose associations or networks characterised by unrestrictedly evolving membership (Licherman & Eliasoph, 2014). This is measured through the characterisation of relationship between the community and institutions within formal or informal networks (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000), the organisational density of those networks, the barriers community members face in engagement, as well as the systems in place for mutual support and conflict resolution (Krishna & Shrader, 2000; Mpanje et al., 2018).
The structure of meso-level relations, in this study, comprises the stability and effectiveness of actors' memberships and engagement in meso-level formal or informal social networks.

2.1.4 Collective civic action

An ever-growing civil society debate has tackled civic action taking place at the individual level as well as the societal level (Sampson et al., 2005). Ever since Olson coined the concept of collective action in "The Logic of Collective Act" in 1965, collective action has been highly studied from psychological and sociological perspectives. Communities' tendency to partake in civic life relies on the inclusive and participatory nature of its civic environment (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013).

Marshall (1998) defined 'community action' as that taken by groups to achieve the shared interests perceived by its members. Agnitsch et al. (2009) characterised community action with place-based collective action, featuring the mobilisation of resources and local residents in pursuit of shared, place-specific goals. Participants in civic action coordinate action in aims to contribute to their society, as they imagine it, and improve aspects of social life (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014). Moro (2010) defined 'civic action' as a form of citizenship practice, comprising collective initiatives towards empowering citizens in employing rights and seeking common goods.

Social theories have long investigated civic action in order to understand the means through which 'ordinary citizens' intentionally and collectively orient social life to their favour (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014). Carbone and McMillin (2018) defined collective action as a broad range of actions that are voluntary and citizen-driven in aims for community change, through participation in voluntary and professional organisations such as neighbourhood associations or through civil violence. Sampson et al. (2005) suggest that collective action may address common purposes or claims demanding for change or resisting it. Collective action could thus be perceived as a democratic process characterised by the events in which citizens, together, engage in the public realm for reaching common purposes or solving common problems (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013).

Historically, democratic contexts have enabled the development of civil society actors i.e. voluntary associations within civil society (Filho & Viana, 2010), through which individual members voluntarily engage and cooperate in a set of events in order to achieve mutual goals (Newton, 2001). Moro (2010) suggests that civil society collectively mobilises its knowledge for utilising operational rules of civic action, also referred to as civic action technologies. Community-level associations may take institutional forms such as registered charities, faith- or gender-based organisations, development organisations, or professional, often intermediary, associations. Others may comprise civic spaces such as community councils, business groups, neighbourhood ward groups or watch programs, self-help groups, or ethnic clubs. Other forms, representing actor strategies, include social movements, advocacy groups, unions or coalitions (Putnam 2000; Newton, 2001; Yachaschi, 2010).

Civil society is defined in this study as a civic space through which citizens practice different forms of memberships within society, voluntarily and collectively partaking in formal organisations or across loose forms of citizen self-organisation. Collective civic action is defined as a form of civil society participation, initiated or practiced voluntarily and collectively through a range of technologies and aggregated strategies. Collective civic action is assessed here at two levels, a strategic level comprising the coherence of claims and spaces of participation among an aggregated civil society, and an in-depth level at which practices materialise into event forms and organisational structures enacted by civil society actors.

2.1.4.1 Participation practices

Robert Putnam suggests the assessment of society's civic health through aggregating actions taken by civil society actors (Mpanje et al., 2018). This involves understanding the methods through which societal members engage with each other and share bases for action (Lichterman

& Eliasoph, 2014). Scientific research has affiliated collective action with the threats to urban neighbourhoods and their livelihoods (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013). Citizens take on roles they perceive missing, underperformed or ineffective in formal planning (Horlings et al., 2021). Those roles come in response to government's incapability or limited attention to urban problems or for defending shared interests against external threats (van Meerkerk et al., 2013). The relationship between citizens and the state could thus be assessed within complex processes throughout which they make alliances and break deals (Watson, 2009).

Miraftab (2004) draws on the binary constructs of civil society participation with the state, introducing invited spaces and invented spaces of citizenship, yet challenging the dichotomous positioning of social agents such as grassroots and their collective actions across one of the two spaces. Invited spaces are spaces of citizenship initiated by governments and donors, who legitimise and sanction participation to non-governmental organisations and their allied grassroots. Engaged members aim to sustain their informal memberships within invited spaces, supporting the poor in coping with existent structural systems and mechanisms. On the contrary, invented spaces are spaces of citizenship claimed by the defiant collective action of social agents mainly as a pursuit of confronting the status quo and authorities in charge. Within invented spaces, grassroots mobilise to resist asymmetrical power relations and influence larger societal change. Grassroots strategize their part of the relation fluidly, mobilising their collective action between the invited spaces and invented, self-regulated spaces, depending on timely and place-based effectiveness in voicing demands and achieving results (Miraftab, 2004).

Figure 4: Grassroot strategies across Miraftab's discussed spaces of citizenship
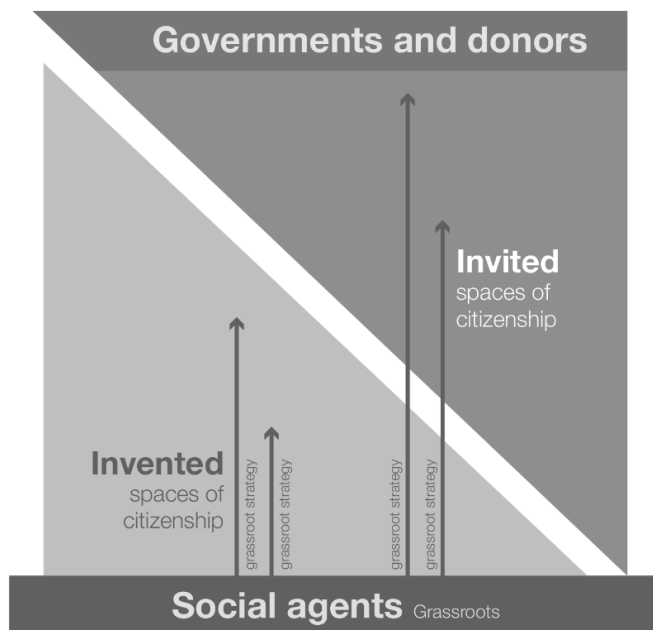
Frediani and Cociña (2019) argue that diverse, manifest practices in urban contexts fall into the one field of 'participation as planning,' attributing many practices to defined underlying categories of planning and coproduction. However, the planning debate still leaves some practices within a "blind-spot," which necessitates that attention be given to the support of marginalised groups in less organised neighbourhoods to engage in similar processes and to develop inclusive and sustainable collective initiatives.

Participation practices, in this study, comprise the collaborative or insurgent strategies actors mobilise towards other actors or higher levels of participation, across various spaces of citizenship, to address their claims for or against change.

2.1.4.2 Forms of collective action events

Measuring collective civic action requires understanding of civic participation, materialising in collective action events (Sampson et al., 2005). Perceived as a conscious form of societal self-organisation, civic action can take place within an array of social organisational structures (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014). Civic action technologies could be classified within identified routines that could be learnt, exchanged, and enacted by actors addressing specific needs or goals (Moro, 2010). For instance, varying forms of collective action events may help bring together group members to celebrate their community and to enhance their living conditions (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013). In their study, Sampson et al. (2005) suggest specific criteria that characterise collective action events. Events should be publicly organised within citizens' civic capacities, spanning beyond the initiative of state institutions or formal political parties. Events should involve two or more actors, taking place within discrete timeframes that are not regularly scheduled or held. Events should not be profit-oriented or classified as gatherings that are regularly-scheduled or typical to urban 'fair.'

Collective civic action events include implicit or explicit hierarchies. Lichterman and Eliasoph (2014) suggest that participants may not expect action to be coordinated within preestablished rules or hierarchies. They also suggest civic actors may expect their collective participation to be 'ongoing' rather than merely comprising spontaneous incidents or one-time events. The frequency of collective civic action measures to what degree (how much) civil society engages in collective action. This includes the frequency of involvement in events as well as the frequency of initiatives they take in specific contexts or over particular issues (Burstein & Sausner, 2005).

Forms of collective action events, in this study, comprise the contextual and organisational character and technologies of actions collectively undertaken by civil society actors.

2.2 Influence of social capital on collective civic action

In 1993, Putnam suggested that social capital facilitated collective action. In 2000, he elaborated that social capital could improve the efficiency of society in facilitating its coordinated actions (Mpanje et al., 2018). Through scientific reasoning and empirical evidence, communities' acquisition of social capital, both in its bonding and bridging forms, have shown significant effects on community outcomes (Agnitsch et al., 2009), especially in poverty-impacted communities (Lukasiewicz et al, 2019).

Research has found that social capital facilitates collective actions within local communities, which in turn positively contribute to their collective livelihood (Mpanje et al., 2018). Actors address common interests, empowered by their internal bonds and their interactions with external institutions which help them counter threats to their wellbeing (Sampson et al., 1999). While participatory programmes help citizens get their issues onto the public agenda, those with considerable social capital are better prepared to benefit from decentralising governance reforms and to act collectively and voluntarily (Berry et al., 1993).

Moro (2010) suggests social capital is a condition which positively enables the performance and frequency of civic action. A civic culture of reciprocity is suggested to encourage collective activity and to facilitate civic engagement (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013). Reciprocity and trust involved in relationships may reduce costs of transactions among actors and facilitate their collective actions with a lower risk of emergent opportunistic behaviour (Andriana & Christoforou, 2016).

Scientific debate has perceived civic action as operating differently at the collective, as citizens are encouraged to build trust and to develop a collective status and a set of shared interests; active members of social groups are expected not only to engage in multiple contexts of the civic realm, but also to pull in others as participants (Ebert & Okamoto, 2013). Theoretically, the more social actors share common characteristics and mutual preferences for common goods, the more likely they are expected to take collective action. This likelihood is higher in areas where opportunities and resources are made available to actors and the groups they form (Cress & Snow, 1996; Pfaff & Valdez, 2010).

Studies have tackled the determinants and constituents of collective action (Adger, 2003) as well as local capacities to affect change, influenced by social capital (Brisson & Usher, 2005). A study conducted by Sampson et al. (2005) in the United States has found that interpersonal social ties and the density of neighbourhood exchange may not necessarily predict collective action. Instead, the density of not-for-profit organisations was found to have higher effects on the variations in collective civic action. In the Global South, however, communities residing in areas subject to socioeconomic marginalisation are suggested to rely greatly on social capital, interacting within and across networks to access resources and opportunities (Woolcock, 2005). Empirical evidence has also captured the negative effects social capital has on communities when its internal ties outweigh external ties (Agnitsch et al., 2009). Marginalisation has been perceived to constrain the participation of the marginalised in both formal and informal groups, as citizens limit their participation to the level of addressing their basic needs (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014).

2.3   Conceptual framework

Throughout this thesis, I discuss and understand the relationship between social capital and collective civic action. As earlier discussed, scientific literature presents theoretical reasoning and empirical evidence explaining the influence social capital has on collective civic action. On one hand, two forms of social capital, bonding and bridging, are presented as independent variables X1 and X2, discussed and investigated through their underlying dimensions of social network structures and characteristics; on the other hand, collective civic action is presented as a dependent variable Y, investigated through underlying forms of collective events and participation practices of civil society. Two arrows present the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, to be discussed in line with the theoretical framework and empirical evidence collected and analysed throughout the research.

Figure 5: Conceptual framework
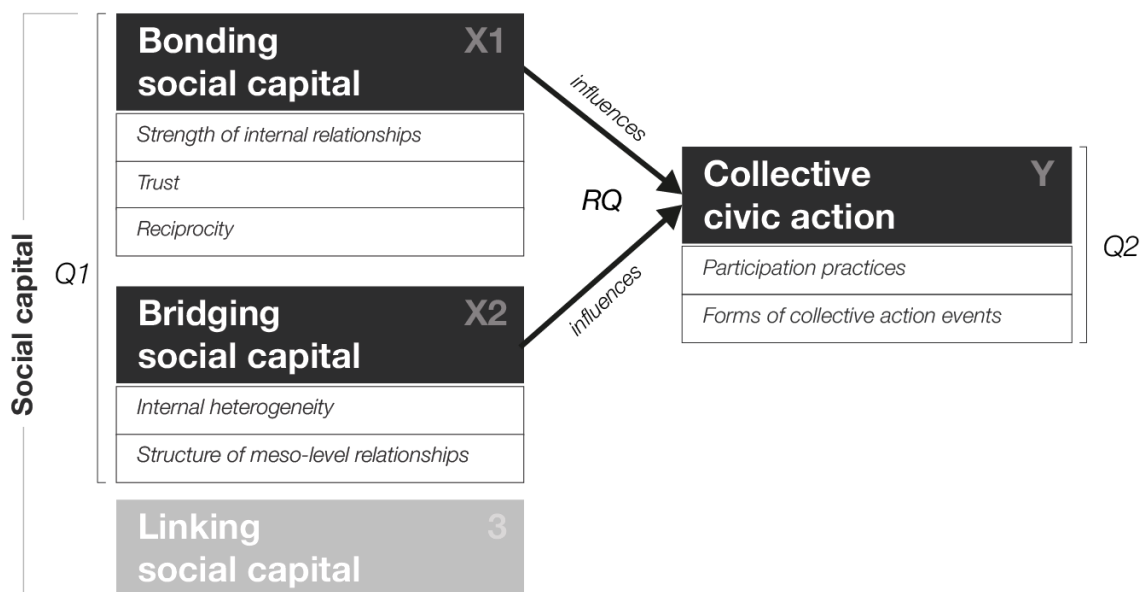
Chapter 3 Research methodology

3.1 Research strategy, approach, and process

3.1.1 Research strategy

Given that the objective of the research is explanatory, examining the influence of bonding and bridging social capital on practices and forms of collective civic action within the socio-spatially segregated neighbourhood of Saida's historic district in light of scientific theory, the research adopts a case study strategy.

A case study strategy is considered most favourable for this thesis since the research question is a 'how' question and since the research examines contemporary events without being able to manipulate relevant behaviours. This strategy involves 'historical methods' including secondary data and direct observations of events as well as interviews with relevant actors. A case study strategy may be used to explain the presumed causal relations among real-life phenomena and interventions. The strategy utilises empirical inquiries to conduct in-depth investigation of contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts in aims to clarify the boundaries between the context and phenomena under study (Yin, 2009).

Qualitative case study methods are used to explain complex phenomena through interviews and observations, collecting and using empirical material which describe incidents and their meanings to individuals (Nije & Asimiran, 2014). This thesis uses qualitative methods, as it examines the phenomenon in its natural settings, based on the meanings that people bring to them.

In this thesis, I use a single case study, the unit of analysis being the neighbourhood of the historical district of Saida, Lebanon. Single case studies are used for different rationales; one rationale is when the study explores a well-formulated theory in a critical context (case), where circumstances are suggested to influence a set of propositions and their results. The single case study would serve to extend existing theory (Yin, 2009).

Through the case study, I assess the nature of the relation between social capital, as a set of two independent variables, bonding (X1) and bridging (X2), and the dimensions of collective civic action, as a dependent variable (Y), within the specific geographic and social context.

This study tackles civil society actors as the smallest unit of study; it thus does not delve into the individual citizens or members of those organisations. Due to dissimilarities across the micro and meso-level communities rendered by socio-spatial segregation, actors are distinguished across 2 categories:

1. Internal civil society actors: whose area of action targets, exclusively or partially, the neighbourhood society and/or locality, within the timeframe of the study
2. External civil society actors: whose area of action span beyond the neighbourhood but who partake in collective civic action targeting, exclusively or partially, the neighbourhood society and/or locality, within the timeframe of the study

3.1.2 Research approach

Due to its explanatory nature, this research first involves an extensive literature review for understanding the dimensions and variables characterising the three concepts involved, as well as the scientific debate resembling the theoretical framework for the relations between the concepts.

Civic action is well-understood through the revelation of actors' everyday perceptions and routines, collected through interview research and other relevant assessment methods (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014). This research look into the practices and forms of collective civic actions using qualitative data collection such as interview outputs and secondary data to diagnose the landscape of collective action events and the characteristics of the civil society actors partaking in it, framing it within the context under study.

The study first identifies the landscape of civil society actors in the neighbourhood. Bonding and bridging social capital are analysed, operationalised, and assessed among local civil society actors. The study then analyses actors' participation practices within civil society and vis-à-vis the state, materialising into practical forms of collective action events. Later, the study discusses potential ways that findings on social capital justify findings on practices and action events, deriving key areas that social capital influence collective civic action, in light of scientific reasoning. I finally conclude with a context-specific explanations answering the research question, as well as a set of recommendations for further studies in similar urban contexts as well as for applications in policy and community development programming.

3.1.3 Research process

To answer Q1, I used qualitative research methods to collect and analyse the characteristics of bonding and bridging social capital. Qualitative methods helped examine the perceptions of respondents among the different variables and underlying indicators, by means of coding.

To answer Q2, I used qualitative research methods to map and analyse the characteristics of collective action events and participation practices, including motives and strategies. Qualitative secondary data identified a set of collective action events and actions that meet the conditions assigned in the operationalisation. Qualitative data was coded for classifying events, participant actors, and hierarchical properties of actions. A set of few numeric data helped determine the size and dates of those events as per assigned indicators.

To answer the main research question, I used qualitative research methods in order to discuss how responses across the independent and dependent variables are related in light of the conceptual framework. Qualitative analysis and discussions drew on the results from both sub-questions as well as input collected from local experts to discuss the specific relations between dimensions and variables.

3.2   Data collection methods

3.2.1 Collection of secondary data

Sampson et al. (2005) suggests searching for candidate events according to specific criteria, through data gathering and through the coding of articles from the archives of news sources. For this research, the collection of data on collective action events features web scraping of online local news sources, from which articles were selected using specified codes adhering to the conditions of the operationalisation. Data collected comprises a set of collective action events, whether structured events or daily activities targeting the neighbourhood locality and/or community within the timeframe of the research.

A dataset of secondary data including every collective civic event and participant actor were recorded and derived from the inclusive set of news articles scraped from the following local news sources on 26 July 2022, adhering to the operationalisation and timeframe of the research.

Table 1: List of news sources used for the web-scraping of secondary data

SaidaNet	www.saidanet.com
SaidaOnline	www.saidaonline.com
SaidaCity	www.saidacity.com

3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected as the most relevant form of data collection, as they facilitate the collection of an optimal amount of information in a structured and timely manner. This method would keep interviewees engaged in the natural course of the conversations and would facilitate the collection of their perceptions and interpretations (van Thiel, 2014). I thus conducted 33 semi-structured interviews with civil society actors, local experts, and community leaders to collect their perceptions and interpretations. Since the research is deductive, interview guidelines were used for each of the interviews above, including indicators and questions derived from the relevant variables discussed in the theoretical framework and operationalised within this research, as suggested by van Thiel (2014). Sampling methods and interviewee details are indicated in Appendix 1.

3.2.2.1   Interviews with civil society actors

A sample of 23 internal civil society actors was interviewed, represented by organisations or group leads (check Figure 6).

For the interviews with civil society actors, strata sampling was used across 2 strata: internal and external civil society actors. By stratification, interviewees were purposefully selected from the lists of actors derived from the web-scraped collective action events based on their frequency of actions and connectedness to other actors. Second, throughout fieldwork, snowball sampling was used based on earlier interviews (actors whom interviewees were aware of or collaborated with).

Figure 6: Civil society actors interviewed based on purposive and snowball sampling

3.2.2.2 Interviews with experts and community leaders

For data triangulation, 5 individual experts were interviewed based on purposive sampling, as urban development practitioners and coordinators of identified civil society coordination frameworks. Also, 5 community leaders were interviewed based on purposive sampling, as those most knowledgeable in daily city production practices and dynamics among civil society actors in the neighbourhood and the city. Those are identified in Appendix 1.

3.3   Data analysis methods

Articles collected from secondary sources were cleaned, processed and analysed using coding analysis software ATLAS.ti. Using a codebook developed based on the operationalisation, a set of collective civic events and participant actors were derived, classified, and exported. I then used data visualisation software PowerBI and GIS software to analyse event properties and characteristics. I also used Gephi to conduct a social network analysis featuring the intersection of actors and events.

Semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed using ATLAS.ti using a codebook developed based on the operationalisation. Descriptive analysis was used to interpret and visualise derived and classified information and their relevance to dimensions and variables.

3.4 Operationalisation

The following operationalisation, based on the earlier literature review, was utilised in web-scraping, qualitative data collection and analysis, and the research discussion. The independent variable is broken down into 2 concepts and further into 5 dimensions and 10 variables. The dependent variable, comprising 1 concept, is broken down into 2 dimensions and 7 variables.

Table 2: Operationalisation table

Concept	Dimension	Definition	Variable	Method
Bonding social capital the internal relationships and interactions among social actors within the neighbourhood	Strength of internal relationships	the extent to which internal actors are familiar with each other and the amount of time and services they invest in their relations	Extent to which internal actors are familiar with each other and others' values	Interviews: ICSA, experts
			Extent and purposes of individual encounters among internal actors	
	Trust	the expectations that internal actors hold for each others' behaviours to their benefit or disbenefit, regardless of changing contexts	Belief among internal actors that they would act in each other's interest or would knowingly or willingly do harm to each other	
			Belief of internal actors that other actors perceive them as trustworthy	
	Reciprocity	the exchange of access to opportunities, resources and services practiced among internal actors	Micro-level means of collaboration among actors to access resources and services	
			Extent to which internal actors converse on and share opportunities	
Bridging social capital the relationships and interactions between civil society actors spanning beyond the neighbourhood	Internal heterogeneity	the demographic and socioeconomic differences among civil society actors and subsequent horizontal and vertical connections among them	Extent of dissimilarity among actors' socioeconomic characteristics and affiliations	Secondary Data, Interviews: ICSA, ECSA, experts
			Meso-level means of collaboration between actors to access resources and services	
	Structure of meso-level relationships	the stability and effectiveness of actors' memberships and engagement in meso-level formal or informal social networks	Socio-structural nature and density of meso-level relations among actors	Interviews: ICSA, ECSA, experts, leaders
			Extent to which actors have influence over actions of meso-level networks	
Collective civic action a form of civil society participation, initiated or practiced voluntarily and collectively through a range of technologies and aggregated strategies	Participation practices	the collaborative or insurgent strategies actors mobilise towards other actors or higher levels of participation, across various spaces of citizenship, to address their claims for or against change,	Coherence of claims among actors for or against change	Interviews: ICSA, ECSA, experts, leaders
			Extent and methods of engagement among actors to address identified potentials and threats	
			Spaces of citizenship across which actors strategize their participation with the state	
	Forms of collective action events	the contextual and organisational character and technologies of actions collectively undertaken by civil society actors	Technologies of civic action events	Secondary Data Interviews: ICSA, ECSA, experts
			Timeliness of collective action events	
			Geographic and community-related targets attributed to collective action events	
			Organisational structures and size of membership in collective action events	

3.5   Research validity and reliability

This research accounts for validity and reliability as necessary measures for maximum credibility.

External validity refers to how effective and generalizable the research is to similar contexts. Case studies, such as the one in this research, adopt analytic methods which render analytical generalisations limited to expanding and generalising theories (Yin, 2009).

Internal validity refers to the extent to which results yielded meet the initial intentions of measurement. For ensuring internal validity, primary and secondary data was analysed in line with the research operationalisation.

Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency of measures used, which may render similar results in similar studies (Thiel, 2014). For ensuring reliability, according to the recommendations of Robert Yin (2009), every procedure including snowball sampling and interview conducting was documented. Interview guides were developed in Arabic language (Arabic being the native language common to local respondents). 4 interview guides were used, each for each level or stratum of interviewees. Guides were pre-tested with local experts to validate the relativity of indicators and questions to contexts under study and amended as per feedback.

3.6   Research methodology limitations

Interview guides were translated, conducted and transcribed in Arabic. Transcriptions were translated back to English, where coded analysis was used. Throughout the two translation stages, concepts or inputs featured linguistic and semantic inconsistencies; however, interviews, their transcriptions and translation, were conducted by the same researcher, who accounted for consistency across the process.

Since the sampling of civil society actors was primarily based on the lists derived from web-scraping of local collective action events, some less-famous actions and organisations sharing the characteristics within the operationalisation may have not been accounted for in secondary data collection. For that reason, primary data collection methods involved snowball sampling for further identifying unexplored actors and actions.

Chapter 4   Results, analysis, and discussion

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses a detailed set of findings as a result of the research process. After providing a general background on the case study, findings are enlisted under the 2 main concepts and their underlying dimensions. Later, findings are discussed in light of scientific research.

4.2   Background

4.2.1   Context

Comprising the historical district of Saida, Lebanon's third predominant city, Old Saida sits on the list of the oldest cities in the world, inhabited continuously for 6000 years (Morfin, 2017). Since the 1940's, the neighbourhood of Old Saida has been subject to major urban transformations due to recurrent security incidents, stagnation in economic activity, and related demographic changes. The bourgeoisie class has gradually resettled away from the neighbourhood amidst various cycles of urban sprawl outside the ancient boundaries of the district, which promised prospective opportunities in newly developed areas. Today, the district functions as a touristic destination for heritage and religious tourism due to its historical attractions. For four decades, local investments in the revitalisation of the district included mostly physical interventions, touristic activities, and social service provision, mainly handled by civil society organisations. However, the district remains to constitute a high-density neighbourhood of Lebanese citizens and host to communities of Palestinian and Syrian refugees as well as migrant workers. The neighbourhood is impacted by poverty, featuring deteriorated housing structures, an absence of adequate UBS, and relatively scarce social services (Hbeish, 2016a; Dahsheh, 2020). With few socioeconomic opportunities, the community suffers high rates of unemployment and drug abuse (Hbeish, 2016b) as well as low levels of education (Hariri Foundation, 2021).

In response, a growing civil society in the neighbourhood has exhibited a diversity of religious values and ethnic or political affiliations, taking on varying levels of engagement in daily self-organising roles and activities, and overlapping memberships within identified groups. Local civil society actors often act to address their local needs or protest against actions that they perceive as threats to their values or livelihoods. Using social networks (Hbeish, 2016a), they reach out to formal community organisations, religious institutions, political parties, and government departments for support in accessing resources. They may also rely on community leaders to voice out common concerns in planning and decision making.

Photograph 1: A group of youth and children from Old Saida, identifying as a self-organised group affiliated to the Nasserist Popular Organisation, borrowing the equipment of the local firefighting volunteers group, to clean a square in Old Saida in preparation for public celebrations for the holy month of Ramadan in 2022

Taken from: Saoudi (2022)

4.2.2 Spaces of membership in civil society

Through web-scraping and snowball sampling, 371 civil society actors were identified to have acted at least once within the timeframe of the study, functioning within three spaces of civil society membership, community-level, religious, and political. Actors identified included both internal (micro-level) and external (meso-level) actors and were either explicitly named or implicitly identified by member individuals partaking in recorded actions.

Figure 7: Types of civil society actors, spaces of membership, and levels of membership
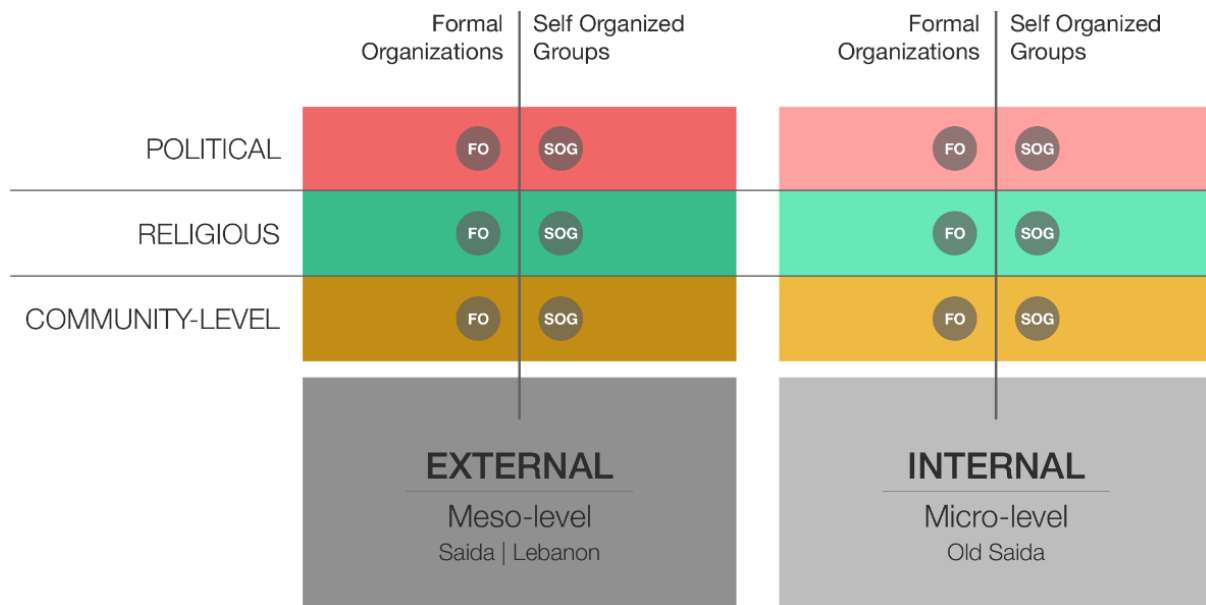
4.2.2.1 Community-level actors

Community-level actors include formally-registered organisations and self-organised groups of citizens such as self-help, advocacy, and neighbourhood watch groups. Formal community-level organisations established in Saida before the 1975 civil war have long had a charitable and volunteer-based character. Politically affiliated organisations were formed during the war, covering wide areas of activity. Organisations and groups established more recently mainly present themselves as apolitical or non-partisan. It was common among interviewees to refer to the term 'civil society' as a connotation to community-level formal organisations, disregarding community-level self-organised groups as well as religious or political actors.

4.2.2.2 Religious actors

Five main sects were represented in the local civil society, each of which had places of worship and formal organisations set up within or surrounding the historic district. Religious organisations found local community-level space as a medium where they could perform mainly relief interventions, including faith-based organisations and religious self-organised groups such as fraternities and masjid groups.

4.2.2.3 Political actors

Political leaders in Saida were referred to by civil society actors and experts as the community leaders of the city. Several interviewees agreed to that civil society actors cannot work without the support of political leadership. Most actors reported meeting with political leaders regularly to pitch ideas, share accomplishments, and discuss the status quo and the concerns towards sensitivities towards prospective donors. Although leaders themselves claimed this was no obligation, they highlighted potential areas of support they could provide, including establishing and maintaining vertical relations with public institutions and international donors, as well as orientation of activity towards local needs, due to their regular contact with large segments of the local community.

While political leadership involves tens of political affiliations, four political families or parties seemed to be most influential in local political and community-level activity. Community leaders may choose to act within local authority or representative roles, also resorting to their local political spaces or community level spaces of influence. Political affiliation and, much less, religious affiliation were observed to influence the community-level space. In fact, Leader 2 suggests, "politics is the most influential factor in development and civil society in Saida."

Recently, more electoral candidates have affiliated with the Lebanese uprising in October 2019, either individually or through a newly established coordination platform entitled "17th of October Coalition."

4.3 Findings concerning sub-question 1

4.3.1 Bonding social capital
Through web-scraping and snowball sampling, 28 internal actors were identified to have enacted collective civic action in Old Saida since 2016.

4.3.1.1 Strength of internal relations
Interviewed internal actors, mostly of Lebanese and Palestinian nationalities, reported to recognize each other very well at the personal and familial levels. Those actors could distinguish themselves based on either the type of services they provided, the quarters where they established their centres or where their members resided, or their explicit political affiliations. However, those seemed to share a common sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.

Strong bonds were reported between internal self-organised groups and deep-rooted internal formal organisations such as Muslim Scouts Association or Nadi Al Maani, the lead scouts association and sports club in the neighbourhood, respectively. "There is a deep fusion between the association and the citizens of Old Saida," explains Actor 1.

Among those groups, armed families of influence over neighbourhood quarters have recently taken neighbourhood watch roles, engaging local youth in protecting their neighbourhood through overseeing and indulging in daily civic actions taking place across their quarters of influence. This was applauded by other internal self-organised groups, who supported their efforts in protecting youth from engaging in crimes or misconduct.

Palestinian refugees, having lived in the neighbourhood for decades, were perceived by Lebanese interviewees to have bonded with the local community. Palestinian Actor 9 consider themselves as a core part of the local community, although their activity mainly addresses the interests and needs of Palestinian refugees. Nonetheless, Syrian refugees and migrant workers residing in the neighbourhood for almost a decade were commonly referred to as 'strangers' by internal actors. Inactive in civil society, those were seen not to acquire the values or sense of belonging that other groups in the neighbourhood shared.

The compact physical fabric of the district, including narrow squares, few alleyways and limited cafés, seemed to be the most effective justification for the regular, random, and informal encounters among internal actors during their daily neighbourhood activity. However, they did not deliberately meet to discuss neighbourhood issues or mutual agendas nor did they establish formal spaces to collectively address their issues; instead, actors may resort to coordinate with each other informally by phone or through physical visits on project or service bases. Actors choose to coordinate with others from different neighbourhood quarters based on the latter's local influence or knowledgeability of local needs.

Available in the neighbourhood on a daily, round-the-clock basis, an elected neighbourhood representative, also called a 'mukhtar,' Actor 9 mobilised self-organised groups to secure resources and channel services for themselves and their neighbours on a regular basis.

4.3.1.2 Trust
In general, internal actors identified with each other as 'neighbours,' believing others would not willingly do harm to them. However, several internal actors did not trust the agendas of others, especially those of explicit political affiliations, believing they would not act in their interest. Actor 6 justifies, "we are committed to acting in the interest of our political party. When having directions, we are exempted from cooperating with [other internal actor's]." Additionally, Actor 9 consider themselves to be the point of entry for all Palestinian services,

protesting the engagement of Palestinian groups they did not trust due to their dissimilar agendas. This might justify the formation of informal networks of trust among actors having similar political affiliations.

Internal community-level actors believed they were trusted by others due to their connectedness and knowledgeability of the needs of neighbourhood quarters. Some actors expressed their confidence that other actors acknowledged and trusted their religious values and drivers for community service. Neighbourhood watch groups further claimed they felt they were implicitly, and often deliberately, delegated by internal groups to protect their rights and wellbeing from external threats.

Internal organisations such as syndicates and clubs assumed they were trusted due to their collective social ownership by the micro-level community. Boards of those organisations are often nominated by political leaders; members thus act to the dual interest of the group and the political affiliations they represent.

4.3.1.3 Reciprocity

Even though internal actors seek to mobilise their own human resources independently from each other, they do exchange volunteer support services to help increase efficiency or reach out to more beneficiaries. Actors have also established informal means to collaborate over lists of beneficiaries to avoid duplication or exclusion of vulnerable households within their quarters of influence.

Actors with established physical spaces reported to provide their centres to other actors who share mutual values for undertaking their activities for free or in exchange for unsolicited favours or support fees. Where needed, actors may also borrow from each other necessary logistic resources to undertake their local operations, often in unsolicited exchange for sharing the benefits of those services.

Nonetheless, developing collective solutions seems to be absent in the daily talks among internal groups, who were seen to take minimal initiatives for addressing or sharing opportunities. Actor 5 justifies that those groups have become dependent on the recurrent and regular support they receive from external sources. Within informal networks of reciprocity, internal actors may indeed help each other in accessing opportunities of external services and benefiting their quarters of influence.

4.3.2 Bridging social capital

Aside from internal actors, 343 external actors were identified to have enacted collective civic action in Old Saida since 2016, through web-scraping.

4.3.2.1 Internal heterogeneity

Figure 8 reflects the distribution of identified actors across the community-level, religious, and political spaces of membership in civil society, based on secondary data attained through web-scraping and snowball sampling. Actors indicated with one or more colours are attributed to the colours of those space. The analysis returned the majority of internal and external actors as community-level actors. More political actors are external actors, mainly established political parties. Internal political actors are mostly affiliated actors or departments reporting to those parties. Religious actors are more visible at the external level, comprising mainly religious institutions, while internal religious actors mainly include mosque committees and Da'awa (Islamic preaching) groups.
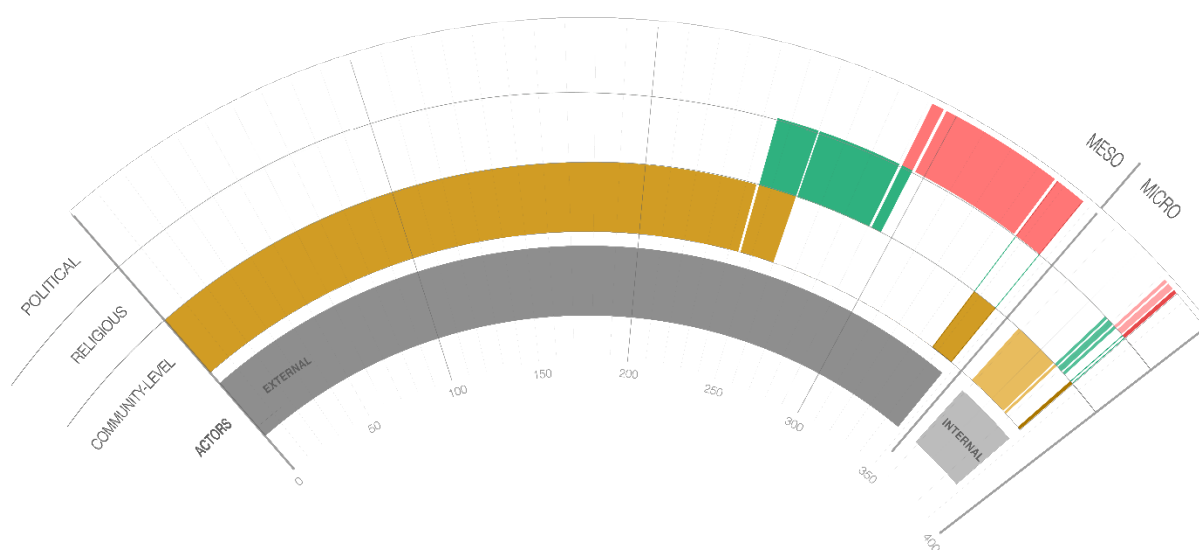
Internal and external actors have developed means of collaboration for resource and service provision or delegated advocacy. External actors perceive the neighbourhood as a challenging space due to its intricate urban fabric, its complex dynamics, and security threats posed by several internal groups affiliated with disrupting actions. Subsequently, external organisations solicit the support of internal actors in mapping beneficiaries, performing and validating needs assessments, and undertaking voluntary work at the neighbourhood level. The external advocacy group interviewed claimed to have close ties with internal groups, with whom they collaborated for addressing local issues. "Our power is in the people," elaborates Actor 23.

Most external actors reported maintaining good connections with select internal actors, and vice versa, and being one phone call away from asking for a favour or placing a request, often in exchange for resources. Organisations may offer in-kind donations to internal actors to facilitate logistic operations, sometimes providing necessary training for rationalising the use of those resources. However, some external organisations prefer mobilising local beneficiaries or neighbourhood-residing workers as social catalysts instead of reaching out to internal actors.

4.3.2.2 Structure of meso-level relationships

Less internal and more external community-level actors claimed to mobilise collective decisions and actions through established meso-level coordination mechanisms, including platforms and frameworks (check Figure 9).

Platforms comprise formal spaces of coordination involving a set number of actors who engage regularly or exceptionally through follow-up gatherings and mobilise actions around themes or occasions. 2 coordination platforms were identified.

Within the NGOs Platform for Saida and Neighbouring Towns (Tajamoh), organisations channel funds from donors to establish partnerships based on pre-established relations and cumulative experiences. The platform has been recently licensed to attain its legal personality. 65 community-level actors are officially registered in the platform, yet membership may expand during crises, as non-member actors join efforts within emergency programs enacted by the platform. Several interviewees suggested Tajamoh is a successful model that resembled a common ground among actors of multiple political affiliations. Others claimed the platform was not inclusive and that due to its legal personality, it shares the same stake as other member and non-member organisations in activities in which it is represented.

As introduced by Expert 5, Al Aa'yad Btijmaana Committee, Arabic for 'Holidays Bring Us Together' is a common space designated for celebrating Christian and Islamic occasions in the heart of the city," referring to the Greek Catholic Diocese. The platform aims at breaking stereotypes of sectarian and political division, alternatively creating opportunities for religious and political groups to act collectively. Unlike Tajamoh, this platform is not registered so it would preserve its role as an inclusive umbrella rather than a parallel entity.

Oppositely, frameworks are informal spaces of coordination initiated and facilitated by community leaders which keep sectoral or political actors engaged in recurrent follow-up meetings or formally underlying networks and committees within relevant areas of activity. Most interviewees agreed that recent multifaceted crises required that coordination frameworks be activated or established. 3 coordination frameworks were identified.

The Hariri Foundation framework was perceived as an umbrella for the collaboration and participation of diversified actors in local governance and development. Lebanese and Palestinian community-level actors are selected based on their sectoral relevance within committees or networks. Religious actors are occasionally invited to endorse collective decisions. Invitations are personally made by the president of the foundation, Bahia Hariri, who is also perceived as a community leader.

The municipality was perceived as a more appropriate space to set up an informal coordination framework among Lebanese actors of diverse political affiliations. Organisations partaking in the municipality-led framework put their resources within reach of its underlying committees, established for planning and implementation of collective actions. Political actors may play key roles in this framework, backing up collective decisions.

A more recent framework, "Mubadarat Saida Towajeh," Arabic for 'Saida Confronts Initiative,' was formed among all five interviewed community leaders around the time of this thesis field work, following the personal initiative of community leader Osama Saad. This framework, in its mandate, addresses inclusive coordination among civil society actors, partaking in underlying sector-specific committees, to influence local governance and planning. The framework is presided by a high-level committee of community leaders and operated by a secretary involving several platform and framework facilitators.

Figure 9: Abstract representation of the structures and relations of established meso-level coordination mechanisms
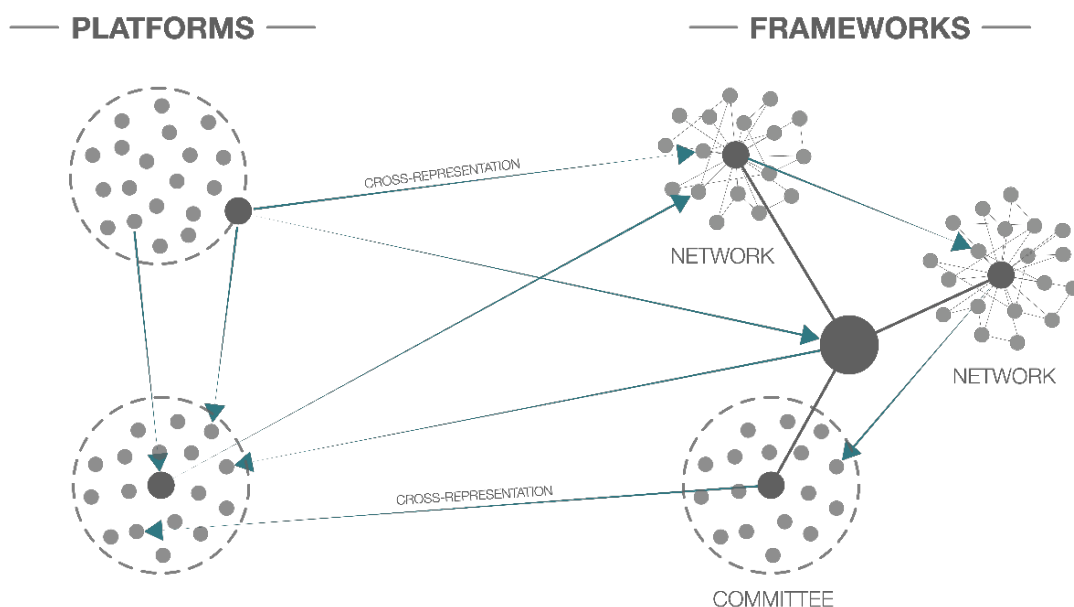
When analysing the differences between platforms and frameworks, political disputes were found to be more explicitly acknowledged and addressed in frameworks, where political leadership was explicitly present; on the other hand, platforms were perceived by several actors to be implicitly politicised, although Expert 3 refutes this 'misconception' due to their connectedness with select political leaders. However, as seen in Figure 9, regardless of explicit or implicit political affiliations, platforms and framework facilitators were acknowledged among each other, as they were cross-represented in each other's meetings.

Platforms and frameworks, established at the meso-level, involve mostly external actors, mainly due to the high ratio of external to internal actors as explained by Expert 1. The internal self-organised Nahnu Okhwa Group exceptionally reported not partaking in any platforms or frameworks and not being exposed to other actors. Actor 8 explains, "we do not understand how civil society works and collaborates."

Influence was addressed differently among interviewed community-level actors. Some actors rely on their size of membership and frequency of activity, while others promote their exclusive services. Several community-level actors criticised the politicisation and participatory models of platforms and frameworks, claiming collective decisions were pre-set among political leaders and could not be influenced by member actors. Some interviewees claimed platforms may particularly dilute members' identities and efforts within the one title of the platform. Leader 1 suggests, "networks are more successful models to coordinate efforts while preserving the identity and character of member organisations."

Apart from established spaces of coordination, more-connected community-level and political actors claimed they have become key players in civil society, individually solicited by others to provide support. While Actor 23, accounting for an advocacy group, claimed they are often solicited by internal groups to address local issues, some interviewees claimed those groups indulged in issues which were "none of their business," as expressed by Actor 4, having no sufficient knowledge to support their claims.

Expert 4 suggests that despite their mutual memberships in platforms and frameworks, "no cohesion could be built among [community-level] actors due to evident competition over rivalry funds and geopolitical influence." Some external organisations were observed to maintain a competitive stance, showing restrictive behaviour towards disclosing information. Although this issue has been addressed within frameworks, those actors still abstained, claiming to adhere to privacy restrictions imposed by donors or to protect the 'immense efforts' put to gather their data. Other interviewees claim main obstacles to exchange of information is the use of data for political and electoral purposes. Exceptionally, older, apolitical charities recognise the natural distribution of roles amongst them, thus cooperating over informal value chains across their services and within systems for data sharing and management.

Competition was also observed at the geographic level, as community-level actors may claim quarters of influence within the neighbourhood. Interviewed actors and experts explain that projects in the district must be coordinated with internal formal organisations or neighbourhood watch groups, without which projects may be halted or deferred. Those groups have set conditions to facilitate external organisations' actions inside specific neighbourhood quarters, including employment of group members, sub-contracting of group-related businesses, or involvement in the selection of beneficiaries. In response, a 'cash for work' scheme was employed by some actors to mainstream royalty payments to those groups, granting groups more power within those quarters and warranting influence over those quarters themselves. Other external actors maintain good relations with those groups, while others prefer to abstain from establishing direct contact, instead resorting to royalty-paying external actors or other internal groups as mediators or deferring their activity to other quarters.

4.3.3 Key findings

Following the above, Figure 10 presents the key findings concerning sub-question 1.

Figure 10: Key findings of sub-question 1

Bonding social capital	X1

Strength of internal relationships

1   Deep-rooted internal formal organisations are well-connected to most internal groups.

2   Internal actors, mainly Lebanese and Palestinian, are familiar with each other at the personal and familial levels, but are not familiar with internal groups of Syrian refugees or migrant workers.

3   Internal actors have regular, random encounters in their daily activities, but they do not deliberately meet to discuss neighbourhood issues or mutual agendas.

Trust

1   Internal actors believe that they would not willingly do harm to each other, but that they may prioritise political agendas over public interest.

2   Internal groups mainly believe to be trusted and delegated by others to serve them or protect them from external threats.

Reciprocity

1   Internal actors sharing mutual values have developed informal means of cooperation for exchanging necessary services and logistics.

2   Internal actors sharing mutual political affiliations and religious values have developed informal networks of reciprocity, often channelling opportunities to those networks.

Bridging social capital	X2

Internal heterogeneity

1   External organisations may mobilise external self-organised groups for community outreach and resource mobilisation.

2   Most identified internal and external actors are community-level actors.

3   Most internal actors have developed informal systems of collaboration with external actors to provide services or advocate for their rights.

Structure of meso-level relationships

1   Less internal and more external community-level actors partake in meso-level coordination platforms and frameworks.

2   Coordination frameworks address political interest more explicitly than platforms do.

3   Coordination frameworks resemble informal spaces in which membership is fluid, sector-relevant, and acknowledged

4   Platforms and frameworks acknowledge each other and may cross-represent themselves in each other's meetings.

5   Actors excluded from established meso-level coordination mechanisms are not familiar with civil society dynamics.

6   No cohesion could be built among external actors who maintain competitive relations due to geopolitical influence and rivalry funds.

7   External actors maintaining strong reciprocal ties with internal actors of influence have higher influence than others over relevant neighbourhood quarters.

4.4 Findings concerning sub-question 2

Collective civic action is assessed here at two levels, a strategic level comprising the coherence of claims and practices of participation among an aggregated civil society, and an in-depth level at which practices materialise into event forms and organisational structures enacted by individual civil society actors.

4.4.1 Participation practices

Interviewees shared several mutual claims for change in the neighbourhood, acknowledging its developmental challenges influenced by socio-spatial segregation; all interviewed external actors reported giving it special attention. Actor 1 claimed external actors did not have a real understanding of local humanitarian conditions and challenges, instead prioritising the district's physical and touristic potentials. Indeed, several actors, external and internal, addressed mutual grievances over misused potentials of the district's ready infrastructure for cultural and touristic activity, justifying their biases, in that touristic development is the most effective way to engage locals in accomplishing economic prosperity.

Several community-level actors pitched touristic visions, remaining to be a 'taboo' restricted from public communications among civil society due to implicit pressures from conservative groups who have high stake in the neighbourhood. Leader 3 expressed his readiness to mobilise affiliated actors to advocate against those visions or block them, justifying that the local culture should be protected from "the new war raged at its societal values." Advocates for those plans, including groups of influence in the neighbourhood, maintain minimal coordination with conservative groups to reach agreements, instead preferring those pressures are suspended at 'strategic levels of coordination,' among political leaders.

13 of 23 interviewed actors addressed mutual claims that security was absent in the neighbourhood, where drug addiction resembles a major burden awaiting strategic political will to be resolved. Those claim pressures from political parties may obstruct security devices from practicing their duties inside the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood watch groups, affiliated to those parties, confirmed they protested and sometimes obstructed the daily presence of security devices or centres in the neighbourhood, especially during occasions such as Ramadan, which attracts thousands of tourists into the district at night-time. The explicit spread of security forces, Actor 6 justifies, "contributes to a general misconception that Old Saida is otherwise unsafe." Subsequently, they provide implicit round-the-clock neighbourhood protection through their routine activities or throughout the aforementioned 'cash for work' scheme.

Expert 2 claims the asymmetric power distribution of actors within neighbourhood quarters, especially empowered by this scheme, attracts most prospective development projects and funds to the quarters where neighbourhood watch groups reside, in turn keeping other areas marginalised and exacerbating the socioeconomic imbalances inside the neighbourhood.

In general, most interviewees have reported they were unaware of any coherent, timely, long-term developmental agenda. Actors applauded any random development plans or actions in the district due to the big needs and burdens but remained sceptic towards the development of a holistic plan with a unified vision or aligned agendas.

Internal and external community-level actors reported addressing identified threats and acting collectively with internal actors who shared mutual political affiliations or who are knowledgeable and influential in neighbourhood quarters where their members reside or their centres are established.

Within established meso-level coordination mechanisms, member community-level actors were found to mobilise occasional collective actions, including celebrations of mutually identified religious and political occasions in the neighbourhood or enacting meso-level projects; however, they did not coordinate over neighbourhood-level projects, services, or beneficiaries.

External actors were observed to be selective in collectively sharing opportunities with others, who are often aligned with their visions, values, purposes, and claims. Among well-connected actors, areas of collaboration include the provision of physical space, volunteer services, and distribution of roles for accessing wider masses of participants and beneficiaries. This could further develop to full partnerships or support in undertaking actions as leading partners.

Both internal and external actors claimed internal groups did not have the capacities to maintain their physical environment or sustain outcomes of socio-economic interventions. They reported a denial among those groups that they belong to their environments. "We could not transform the neighbourhood community to a self-help community," confirms Leader 1.

Several interviewees acknowledged internal groups may not cooperate with some neighbourhood-level changes threatening their livelihoods. Expert 4 justifies their behaviour, "most neighbourhood-level projects are imposed onto it without proper engagement of locals or participatory models." 2 interviewees reported holding consultations with both external and local internal actors for developing mutual plans for the neighbourhood. When assessed, those plans did not seem to acknowledge outcomes of other actors' consultations or to integrate cumulative progress.

Oppositely, some actors claim neglect and resistance are only reflections of local groups' memberships in civil society; Syrian refugees and migrants had less stake in local development, while Lebanese and Palestinian actors act in favour of the agendas of their political affiliations or donors. Internal community-level Actor 5 further justifies that local groups, often reliant on support from established organisations, did not know they should address their own problems, suggesting their capacity should be built; "I am part of the problem, I should be part of the solution."

However, internal groups having less exposure or power within civil society claimed formal organisations took over actions they had initiated. In response, they resorted to enforcing partnerships with those organisations or claiming new roles that they believed were entitled solely to neighbourhood locals, such as providing exclusive services or channelling humanitarian aid with no pre-set conditions.

Actor 15 advocated engaging and employing "abadayet," influential groups in the neighbourhood, in local development projects to build their ownership and to prevent vandalism or misuse of project outcomes. Neighbourhood watch groups monitor the activities of external actors in public spaces and only intervene when solicited by actors to support, or when they sense a potential threat to the activity itself or to citizens' 'dignity.' Their interventions range from providing full protection for those actions to bringing them to a halt through obstructive behaviour, sometimes involving violence.

Following meso-level collective action taking place in the neighbourhood and engaging internal actors, they were reported to develop better tolerance to external actors. Only neighbourhood watch groups remain cautious of external organisations providing charity support and taking photos of local beneficiaries without their consent, often responding through obstructing such actions and 'warning other actors against it.'

Photograph 2: Banner on the neighbourhood's entrance placed by Saida Youth Group, protesting photographic coverage of civil society support offered to neighbourhood citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic: "Poor.. but we have dignity – You want to help, keep your camera at home"

Taken from: Awwad (2020)

Those conflicts were reported to increase as community needs multiplied due to recent national developments and as civil society interactions increased as a response. The municipality's local actions have diminished due to the absence of resources and to the malfunctioning of centralised national systems. Several interviewees found platforms, frameworks, and member actors have momentarily taken over the municipality's responsibilities to provide services which it is incapable of providing or mobilising itself.

Advocacy groups have protested the feasibility, lawfulness, and impact of major formal development plans and projects undertaken inside or at a proximity from the historic district, threatening its character, the conditions of its built environment and the livelihood of its community. Actor 23 use the municipal palace as a public good, exploiting the physical space to invent social spaces, where they could mobilise public hearings and voice out their objections of formal plans to funding sources and other civil society actors. Further, meso-level coordination platforms and frameworks may use the municipal palace as a physical space for meetings, activities and daily operations.

Several interviewees claimed collective civic action cannot take place away from the coordination with the municipality, perceiving it as an administrative umbrella for their activities, despite its political affiliation. They often solicited its patronage in their collective actions for purposes such as receiving legal permits or endorsements for donors' approval, securing financial support from public budgets, attaining public legitimacy, or promoting citizenship.

Interestingly, several interviewed actors reported supporting public authorities in connecting with other actors. Advocacy groups, often solicited by internal groups, to address neighbourhood-level challenges, choose to connect those with the municipality to pitch their problems themselves. "This is the role of every citizen," explains Actor 23.

Some external community-level organisations empower the municipality through developing developmental and crisis response programmes within its organisational structure or coordination framework, supporting it on enacting civic outreach and engagement of internal and external actors. Other political organisations act as mediators between the municipality and representatives of international and national state institutions with whom they maintained trust-based political connections.

4.4.2 Forms of collective action events

For triangulation of data, I reflect on earlier findings of participation practices through empirical evidence of collective action events from secondary data. Where possible, I refer to insights from interviewed actors or experts explaining specific events.

Referring to the criteria that characterize collective action events according to Sampson et al. (2005) and Moro (2010), 601 collective actions events were recorded within the timeframe of the study from the web-scraped news sources. In Chart 1, the frequency of collective actions (Y value) undertaken everyday was analysed across a timeline, through measuring the number of actors partaking in different actions by day (X value). Actions were classified by technology; the analysis returned 20.1% of actions as ceremonies and commemorations, 10.8% as programmes, and 13.62% as drives and volunteer efforts, across a range of other technologies.

Chart 1: Timeline of collective action events in the neighbourhood, including frequency by technology and number of civil society actors involved by day
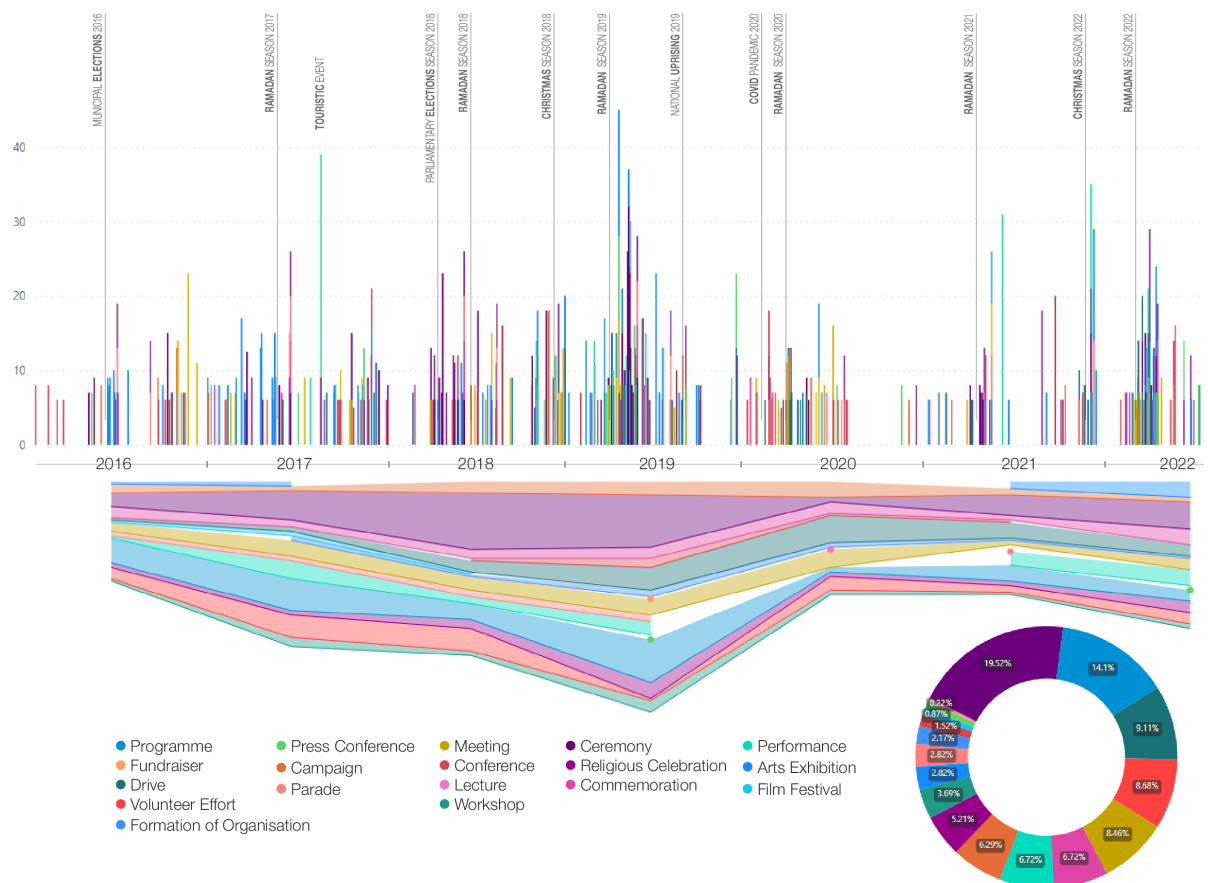
Events mainly span over few hours to few days, depending on their technologies and occasions. Spikes, representing both high number of actions per day and big size of participation, could be recorded around specific occasions (Chart 2) to which actions were attributed including mainly religious seasons at 63.96%, national and local memorials at 7.86%, and crisis response at 7.47%. 6.17% of events came as responses to local fires; among identified internal actors partaking in those were self-organised groups comprising residents of different neighbourhood quarters. Actor 4 explained this finding in that recently, they mobilised curious groups of observers to which they were familiar to instantly support their firefighting activities.

Chart 2: Occasions to which web-scraped collective action events were most attributed
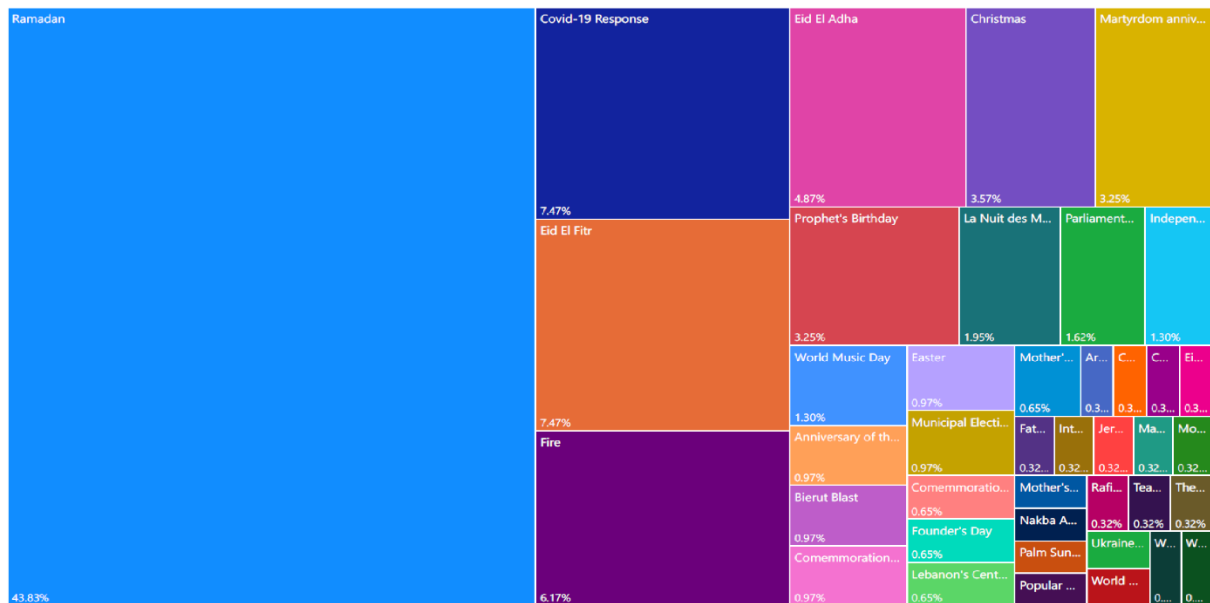
Pre-coordinated actions involving tens of actors would often be mobilised in a select list of venues within the neighbourhood (Figure 11). Some external community-level actors organise action events targeting the district locality through local touristic or cultural events and activities for select audiences; those often prefer to hold those actions within private and semi-private venues, managed by formal organisations, in order to maintain control and safety over the event, especially from internal groups whom they perceived as 'obstructive.' According to Actor 21, local cultural foundations holding actions attracting in-bound tourists, have only recently started engaging with internal actors in organising exhibitions and festivities. Other internal and external actors prefer to hold collective action events targeting the neighbourhood community within neighbourhood quarters or in public squares or cemeteries, depending on the technologies and purposes of their actions. Actors may as well reach out to others for providing services during events or activities that they could not otherwise provide, such as security, public safety, and artistic parades and shows.

Figure 11: Maps of collective action events enacted since 2016, including the classification of lead locations and targets

Internal actors mentioned few other actions they have undertaken in the neighbourhood which secondary data did not mention. In fact, very few news articles covered daily or seasonal actions of internal actors, who organised public spaces and performed regular drives away from media. Additionally, several external organisations preferred keeping their local activity at low-profile, enacting collective action implicitly to 'respect locals' dignity'. Subsequently, actors remain unaware of each other's activities and only acknowledge such actions which render more explicit results such as physical restorations and upgrade.

During seasonal occasions, actors rely on pre-established structures such as platforms, frameworks, and established value-chain partnerships to enact their collective actions. However, recorded collective actions signalled the development of event-specific organisational structures among actors, especially political and community-level actors who are well-connected with internal and external actors.

The network analysis in Figure 12 shows how civil society actors crosscut with other actors over documented collective actions tracked since 2016. Among the edges, actors are connected to actions they have partaken in. Through in-depth analysis of similarly connected nodes, entities sharing mutual political affiliations or religious values were found to be connected within concentrated or dispersed clusters of actors and collective actions. Actors leading meso-level coordination frameworks were most influential within their clusters and the whole network of actors and actions in the neighbourhood.

Figure 12: Network analysis of actors and intersecting actions in the neighbourhood since 2016
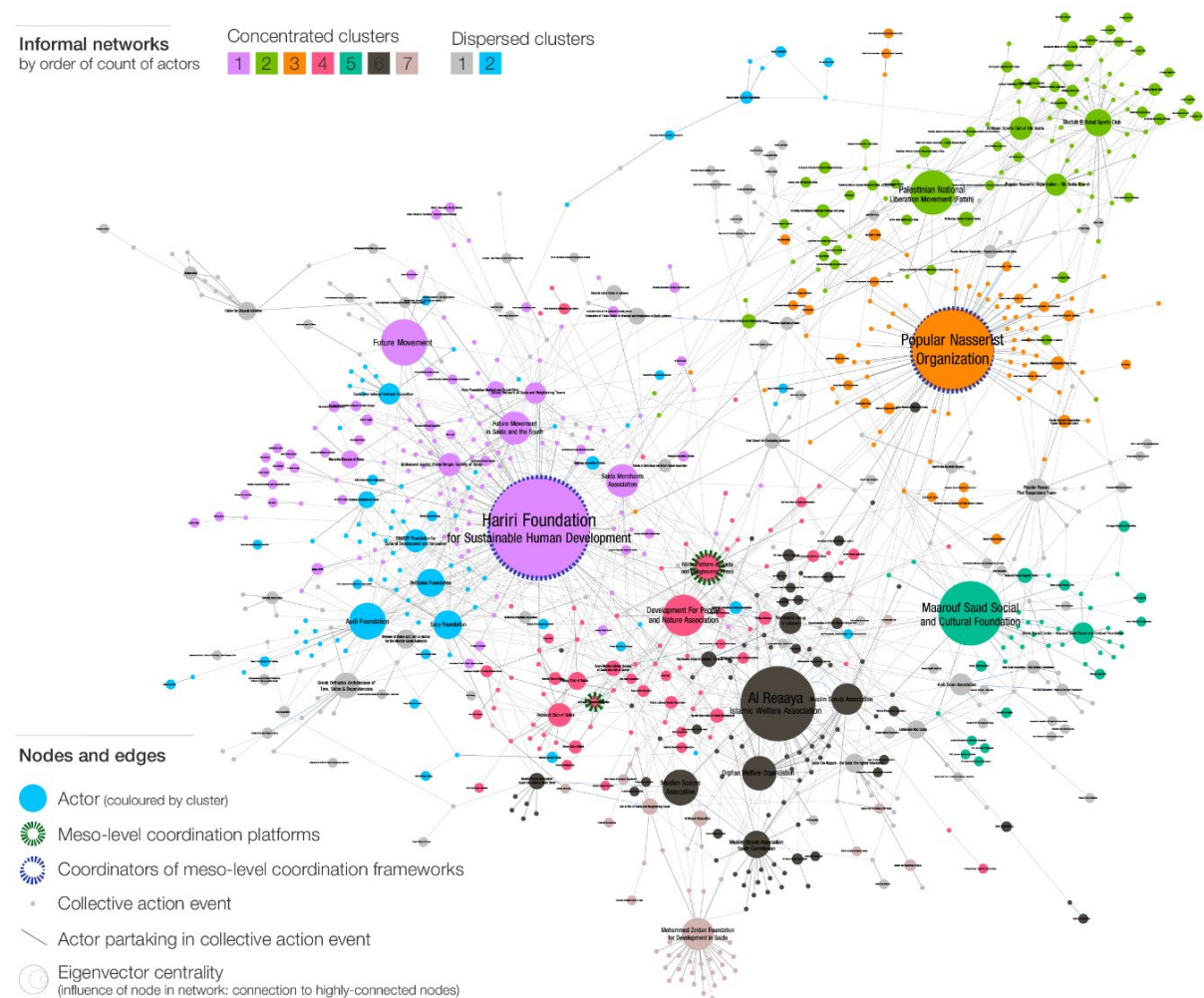
4.4.3 Key findings

Following the above, Figure 13 presents the key findings concerning sub-question 2.

Figure 13: Key findings of sub-question 2

Collective civic action — Y

Participation practices

1 Most actors share mutual grievances and claims for change in the neighbourhood. Only actors with contradicting social values may face disputes over claims, which they refrain from discussing for reaching agreements.

2 The asymmetry of power across neighbourhood quarters may exacerbate socioeconomic imbalances among quarters.

3 No unified development vision or holistic plan of aligned agendas could be developed among actors in the neighbourhood.

4 Internal actors choose to collaborate with other internal actors based on geographic influence or mutual political affiliations.

5 External actors choose to collaborate with other actors based on common values, availability of resources, or connectedness with influential internal actors.

6 Established meso-level platforms and frameworks facilitated coordination over city-level collective actions but not independent neighbourhood-level collective actions.

7 Internal groups of disengaged citizens, refugees and migrants, mainly relying on external support, do not claim responsibility to enact collective action or sustain its outcomes.

8 Few external actors engage internal actors in developing local development plans, often disregarding other actors' pre-set plans.

9 Less-connected internal groups claim self-help roles in the neighbourhood that they believe are entitled solely to neighbourhood locals.

10 Neighbourhood watch groups engage in protecting locally enacted collective actions and their long-term outcomes but prioritise defending citizens' dignity.

11 Actors, platforms, or frameworks may borrow physical space from the municipality for civic coordination, or further for inventing insurgent social spaces.

12 Several actors support locals to connect with the municipality and support the municipality in establishing invited spaces where more relevant civil society actors could be invited.

Forms of collective action events

1 Most explicit technologies collectively enacted among civil society actors are ceremonies and commemorations.

2 Development programs, drives and volunteer efforts account to almost one quarter of collective actions in the neighbourhood.

3 Collective action events are more frequent during religious seasons and memorials to which actors mutually affiliate.

4 Crisis response brings together pre-established actors and momentarily forming internal groups of citizens to act collectively.

5 External actors may choose to enact collective actions in closed and private venues, avoiding presumed disruptive behaviours from internal actors.

6 Collective action events enacted in public areas involved more internal actors than those enacted in closed areas.

7 Community-level actors rely on pre-established organisational structures such as partnerships, platforms, and frameworks to enact collective action events.

8 More connected political actors may establish event-specific organisational structures to enact collective action events.

4.5   Discussion

The empirical findings discussed above have given an in-depth understanding of social capital and of collective civic action, as characterised in the case study. Mainly, findings explained the enabling effects that the different variables of an operationalised social capital have on collective civic action.

Social capital has been theorised to facilitate collective civic action (Woolcock 2001), as actors with low human or financial capital utilise social ties and social networks to act collectively (Wichowsky, 2017). Trust and reciprocity among specific internal actors in the case of Old Saida manifested in the support they provided each other in terms of access to human and logistic resources as well as outreach and citizen engagement within quarters of influence. This was observed to increase the frequency of collective actions among those actors.

Bonding social capital in the neighbourhood was found to be strong in terms of familiarity among Lebanese and Palestinian refugee organisations and groups, but rarely with groups of Syrian refugees and migrant workers. This materialised across networks of trust and reciprocity across familiar actors but did not lay the foundation for frequent meetings or coordination, especially with non-familiar groups. Coordination mechanisms were informally established among actors sharing similar religious values or political affiliations, which increased the opportunity of transforming individual actions into collective actions among internal actors, often affiliated with religious or political agendas. This was observed to enable fewer collective actions to address their neighbourhood wellbeing.

Internal community-level organisations utilised their centres, resources they had access to, and levels of community's collective ownership to their institution in order to influence collective civic action in the neighbourhood. As suggested by Sampson et al. (1999), actors may utilise their social relations to collectively address common interests, empowered by their internal bonds and their interactions with external institutions that help them counter threats to their wellbeing. Internal community-level and political self-organised groups in Old Saida believed they were delegated by other internal groups to address their interests and needs. They did not necessarily build trust with those groups; rather they established informal networks of reciprocity, as they made themselves available to other actors round-the-clock and connected with external actors to channel resources and services within those informal networks. This reciprocal exchange was found to encourage collective actions across internal groups of influence. Oppositely, internal religious groups, showing less connectedness and reciprocity with other internal groups, seemed to influence local participation practices through promoting religious conservatism though they were rarely engaged in collective action events in the neighbourhood.

Agnitsch et al. (2009) and Uslaner (2009) pinpointed possible negative effects of social capital when segregated societies' internal relations outweigh their external relations, thus developing an in-group identity separated from larger society. The lack of meso-level coordination between internal actors and external actors in Old Saida was observed to render a misalignment of perceptions over needs and priorities among those actors and thus to reduce the frequency of collective actions engaging internal actors. Community-level internal groups are rarely invited to participate in established meso-level networks, thus having less encounters and urban development discussions with external organisations. Some of those were observed to practice more obstructive strategies towards local actions of external actors whose agendas they were not familiar with and whose actions they perceived as unacceptable. Few community-level external actors invested in their relations with internal groups to address issues that matter to

them; this has led to the promotion of engagement of internal groups in a wider scope of collective civic actions.

Miraftab (2004) suggests that actors mobilise their collective action between invited and invented, self-regulated spaces of citizenship, depending on timely and place-based effectiveness in voicing demands and achieving results. Actors in the case of Saida found disputes over local agendas and development visions to be typical with the state and among civil society in a democratic context as the one under study. In fact, community-level competitiveness over geopolitical influence and mobilising rivalry funds, in addition to disputes across political affiliation and religious-driven values were observed to be major place-based factors influencing micro-level and meso-level networking and mobilisation of collective actions within civil society. Although a large segment of actors in Old Saida adhered to invited spaces by the municipality or invented their spaces of engagement and insurgency, they did not seem to develop mutual claims or roles to substitute underperformed or ineffective priority areas. Every set of actors, within informally established clusters, relevant to their community-level, political or religious spaces, had unique claims over local needs and burdens. The more internal and external civil society actors could establish networks of trust and reciprocity, the more transparent disputes over claims and purposes were addressed and the more coherent and frequent their collective actions were mobilised.

Established meso-level coordination mechanisms such as frameworks and platforms were most effective in facilitating collective actions celebrating mutually identified occasions or enacting meso-level crisis response actions. However, those mechanisms rarely allowed for negotiation over disputed claims across clusters and thus could not facilitate the development of a coherent local vision and plan among actors. Those mechanisms thus did not render higher coordination over neighbourhood-level actions. Instead, collective actions were informally and randomly undertaken across the different clusters. Additionally, lack of trust among those clusters of civil society actors restricted them from exchanging updates on their areas of actions. This was perceived to result in duplication of services or service receivers, marginalising groups and quarters and leaving out other priority areas of action.

Well-connected formal organisations who operated centres or organised squares inside the district attracted more external actors to act collectively in the neighbourhood. The more the bridging capital developed between internal groups and those organisations, the more internal actors were found to participate in meso-level collective actions mobilised within those centres and squares. Internal actors who showed relatively less access to established meso-level coordination mechanisms and claimed roles in the neighbourhood which they perceived to be solely entitled to neighbourhood locals, thus solely undertaking self-help actions away from collaboration with other actors.

Among the everyday city-making practices of marginalised communities seen in urban production (Miraftab, 2009), actors who partkook in micro-level or meso-level coordination mechanisms reported higher levels of coordination over collective actions, featuring informal value chains along each other's daily services.

Actors involved in established meso-level mechanisms undertook collective actions within event-specific organisational structures, thus not specifically adopting consistent roles across actions or adhering to pre-established platform or framework structures. This fluidity in organising structures yielded a feedback loop in local development, as no actors were entitled to follow up on outcomes or harvest the impact of short-term collective actions. Actors claimed that effectiveness and sustainability of collective action necessitated the use of meso-level relations to orient participation and capacity building of internal actors, by which they become organising agents entitled to protect project outcomes and operating long-term services.

Chapter 5　　　Conclusions

5.1　　Research purpose

This research aims to explain how social capital influences practices and forms of collective civic action in the context of socio-spatial segregation. The segregated neighbourhood of Old Saida was taken as a case study to examine the various roles and strategies mobilised by civil society actors influenced by the social capital they have accumulated at the micro and meso-levels.

5.2　　Answer to the research question

The main question of this research was: How do bonding and bridging social capital influence practices and forms of collective civic action in the neighbourhood of Saida's historic district?'

Social capital could facilitate collective civic action (Woolcock 2001), as social actors with low human or financial capital utilise social ties and social networks to act collectively (Wichowsky, 2017).

A. Micro-level networks of reciprocity

At the micro-level, bonding social capital, referring to the coming-together of similar people (Putnam & Goss, 2002), is shown to help communities 'get by' on a daily basis, within closed networks (Mpanje et al., 2018). Actors such as formal and informal groups within poverty-impacted communities (Lichterman & Eliasoph, 2014; Lukasiewicz et al, 2019) interact within various networks to access opportunities and exchange resources available to them (Woolcock, 2005). In the case of Saida's historic district (Old Saida), internal formal organisations and self-organised groups established informal networks of reciprocity, making themselves and their spaces of operation available to other actors round-the-clock and exchanging resources and services to which they had access. This reciprocal exchange encouraged collective actions within an implicit social structure comprising clusters of internal actors, in which those who are most connected, most resourceful, and most frequently enacting collective civic action had higher influence across neighbourhood quarters. Among the lack of trust among internal actors that they would willingly act in each other's interests, reciprocal exchange with external actors, who provided resources and access to external relations, encouraged internal actors, in return, to empower and support those external actors in enacting their collective action across neighbourhood quarters and protect its outcomes. This rendered asymmetric levels of collective action among internal and external across those quarters, exacerbating socioeconomic imbalances inside the neighbourhood.

B. Established meso-level coordination mechanisms

Bridging social capital, referring to the coming-together of dissimilar people (Putnam & Goss, 2002), is shown to stimulate instrumental actions of socioeconomic and political benefits (Mpanje et al., 2018) and help those communities to 'get ahead' (Woolcock, 2005) across open networks (Alfano, 2021). Meso-level coordination mechanisms in Saida, comprising frameworks and platforms established across the city of Saida, aim to increase familiarity of actors towards each other and the frequency and coherence timeliness of collective actions

among them. Current mechanisms increase coordination between engaged few internal actors and a pool of member external actors over select collective actions in the neighbourhood.

C. Coherence of claims and purposes

Actors insurgently mobilizing against authoritarian regimes to claim their right to the city have been perceived by governments and donors as criminalised, ultraleft movements. Thus, participation has been utilised by governments and donors to involve more 'legitimate' civic actors (Miraftab, 2004). In the case of Old Saida, insurgent internal groups of influence were perceived by several external actors as obstructive, using violence to halt projects or impose political agendas in the neighbourhood. However, those actors addressed genuine community-level purposes and claims for or against change, some of which were similar to other actors' but some of which could challenge external actors' claims. Since insurgent internal groups were not engaged in established meso-level coordination mechanisms, they could not voice out their concerns; thus, claims and purposes across actors remained incoherent.

D. Political affiliations and religious values

Actors who are empowered by their internal bonds and their interactions with external institutions (Sampson et al., 1999), may benefit from reciprocity and trust to facilitate their collective actions with a lower risk of emergent opportunistic behaviour (Andriana & Christoforou, 2016). In Old Saida, established meso-level coordination mechanisms did not facilitate the development of a coherent vision or unified plan of action or coordination over neighbourhood-level actions. Instead, civil society actors developed clusters, comprising informal networks of trust and delineated by political and religious affiliations and values. Actors resorted to those informal clusters to act collectively with a pool of similarly affiliated actors, with whom they shared mutual claims and purposes. Those clusters were perceived by several actors as opportunistic networks which narrowed areas of action and pools of beneficiaries to cast political gains. This resulted in the duplication of services and service receivers, exacerbating marginalisation across groups, and leaving out other priority areas of collective action.

In general, the research supports the theoretical framework, explaining how social capital as an independent variable influences the practices and forms collective civic action, as a dependent variable. Social capital is found to enable civil society's collective action in Old Saida through facilitating the development of micro-level networks of reciprocity within the neighbourhood community and meso-level coordination mechanisms across the city. Those spaces of familiarity and coordination were deemed necessary for building coherent claims and purposes among civil society actors, thus focusing and increasing collective action in the neighbourhood. When those spaces deemed ineffective in aligning civic visions and agendas and managing disputes across civil society's community-level, religious, and political spaces, coherent participation practices and more collective action were mainly mobilised among actors who shared mutual political affiliations and religious values.

Research findings, as suggested in Appendix 2, may contribute to the refinement of 3 dimensions, challenging or further expanding theoretic propositions discussed in the problem statement and literature review.

5.3   Further research

Based on research findings, the following recommendations were formulated for further studies examining concepts or further investigations in Old Saida and similar urban contexts.

- Throughout interviews, several actors related their practices to their relations with the municipality, while others addressed related abundance of actions to their relations with select donors' agendas in the neighbourhood. While social capital may be operationalised across the 3 forms of bonding, bridging, and linking (Mpanje et al., 2018), the concepts addressed by actors relate to linking social capital (relations with the municipality, donors, macro-level networks, etc.). The conceptual framework of this study focuses on bonding and bridging due to their relevance to collective civic action according to different scientific sources discussed above. Further research may complement this study by examining the influence of linking social capital on collective civic action.
- Referring to Miraftab's spaces of citizenship (2004), some civil society actors in the case study were found to invent spaces of citizenship to promote participation with the incapable state, inviting other civil society actors to partake in those spaces to address common interest. Those practices could be further examined in the case of Old Saida and other similar urban contexts explain, contributing to Miraftab's and similar scholars' area of research.

5.4   Policy recommendations

Based on the interviews and research findings, recommendations were formulated for potential community development applications in policy and community development programming in Old Saida and similar contexts.

- Aiding the establishment of micro-level coordination mechanisms that would engage internal organisations and groups across different political and religious clusters. Potential areas of this framework would be to enhance familiarity, trust and reciprocity among internal actors, build coherence of claims and purposes towards neighbourhood development, report and coordinate collective actions in the neighbourhood, and mobilise internal groups to advocate for change in the district.
- Enhancing meso-level coordination mechanisms to be more inclusive of internal actors and to prevent or counter disputes among informal clusters of actors for avoiding the duplication of services or service receivers.
- Utilising established meso-level frameworks for building coherence of claims and purposed towards the development of Old Saida among internal and external civil society actors as well as for developing a common plan of action comprising contributions of different actors and centralising open-data on projects and beneficiaries.

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Appendix 1: Lists of interviews

23 interviews were conducted with civil society actors based on purposive and snowball sampling.

Table 3: List of internal civil society actors interviewed based on purposive and snowball sampling

Identifier	Civil Society Actor	Interview date/sampling
Actor 1	Muslim Scouts Association	4 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 2	Syndicate of Fishermen	10 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 3	Al Maani Club Association	16 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 4	Firefighting Volunteers	3 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 5	Fakker b Ghayrak (Think of Others)	15 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 6	Youth of Old Saida	11 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 7	Hariri Foundation Neighbourhood Committee	11 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 8	Nahnu Okhwa Group	11 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 9	Mukhtar Khaled Sin Group (elected neighbourhood representative)	15 Aug (Snowball)

Table 4: List of external civil society actors interviewed based on purposive and snowball sampling

Identifier	Civil Society Actor	Interview date/sampling
Actor 10	Sandouk El Zakat	8 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 11	Moasat Association	10 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 12	Cultural Street Association	10 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 13	Bqosta Association for Social Development	12 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 14	Development for People and Nature Association	12 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 15	Maarouf Saad Foundation	12 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 16	Al Reeaya	13 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 17	Lebanese Red Cross – DRR Department in Saida	13 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 18	Jamee Baher Association	15 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 19	Ahluna	16 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 20	Palestinian Popular Committee	11 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 21	Cultural Initiative for Saida	12 Aug (Purposive)
Actor 22	Rabih Awji Group	12 Aug (Snowball)
Actor 23	Alli Sawtak Group	13 Aug (Purposive)

5 individual experts were interviewed based on purposive sampling, as urban development practitioners and identified coordinators of civil society coordination frameworks in Saida.

Table 5: List of experts interviewed based on purposive sampling

Identifier	Role	Date of interview
Expert 1	Municipality-led Framework, Coordinator	5 Aug
Expert 2	Hariri Foundation Framework, Coordinator	6 Aug
Expert 3	NGOs Platform of Saida & Neighbouring Towns, Coordinator	8 Aug
Expert 4	Al Aa'yad Btijmaana Platform, Coordinator	16 Aug
Expert 5	Urban Planner, Specialist in Old Saida affairs	11 Aug

5 community leaders were interviewed based on purposive sampling, as those most knowledgeable in daily city production practices and how civil society actors invest in social relations to mobilise resources and access services. As explained in the introduction, civil society in Saida is influenced by political leadership, perceived locally as community leaders at the meso- and micro- levels.

Table 6: List of community leaders interviewed based on purposive sampling

Identifier	Role	Date of interview
Leader 1	Former MP, Political Leader	7 Aug
Leader 2	Mayor	8 Aug
Leader 3	Community Leader	9 Aug
Leader 4	MP, Political Leader	12 Aug
Leader 5	MP, Community Leader, Former Mayor	15 Aug

Appendix 2: Contribution to literature

Research findings may contribute to the refinement of three dimensions, either challenging or further explaining theoretic propositions discussed in the problem statement and literature review.

A. Criteria of dissimilarity

First, in assessing the influence of strength of internal ties on collective civic action; internal actors, sharing similar socioeconomic conditions, had frequent encounters but chose not to meet to discuss neighbourhood issues. Instead, they engaged in collective actions with actors of influence among neighbourhood quarters or with actors who shared similar political affiliations or religious values. This may shift the theoretic criterion of similarity among agents, suggested to be socioeconomic, to a more practical criterion in the case of Old Saida, being political and religious.

B. Bonding or bridging

Second, in assessing the influence of reciprocity and trust, under bonding social capital, on collective civic action, this influence does not necessarily reflect the faith and will of internal actors to work collaboratively within micro-level relations; instead, it may reflect the structure of external relations that those internal actors have developed, under bridging social capital. Individual internal actors collaborate with each other based on mutual affiliations and values and mobilise their actions within informal networks which are mobilised by external, more powerful actors.

C. Multidimensionality of invented spaces

Third, participation practices, under collective civic action, rendered two new suggestions based on empirical findings from Old Saida: Civil society actors may choose to invent spaces of citizenship to promote participation with the incapable state, inviting other actors to partake in those spaces to address common interest. This may be driven by the connectedness of those actors with a wide spectrum of civil society while maintaining a purpose of state building, or by the claim that the state is collectively owned and must be the 'proper' space for mobilising dissimilar groups and regulating disputes. Otherwise, civil society actors may establish invented spaces of citizenship within civil society itself, as they develop insurgent practices towards each other, often resorting to obstructing or differing actions due to lack of familiarity, trust, or coherence of purpose. Those strategies may take place away from actors' relations with the state, as suggested by Miraftab (2004).

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