الرؤيــة

السعي لتحقيق الريادة في النشر العلمي المتميز في المحتوى والمضمون والتأثير والمرجعية في مجالات منطقة الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .

الرسالــة

نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة في مجالات الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره في مجالات اختصاص المجلة وفق المعايير والقواعد المهنية العالمية المعمول بها في المجلات المُحَكَّمَة دوليًّا.

الأهـداف

- نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة .
- إتاحة المجال أمام العلماء والباحثين في مجالات اختصاص المجلة في التاريخ والجغرافيا والسياسة والاقتصاد والاجتماع والقانون وعلم النفس واللغة العربية وآدابها واللغة الانجليزية وآدابها ، على المستوى المحلى والإقليمي والعالمي لنشر بحوثهم وإنتاجهم العلمي .
- نشر أبحاث كبار الأساتذة وأبحاث الترقية للسادة الأساتذة المساعدين والسادة المدرسين بمختلف الجامعات المصرية والعربية والأجنبية .
- تشجيع ونشر مختلف البحوث المتعلقة بالدراسات المستقبلية والشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .
- الإسهام في تنمية مجتمع المعرفة في مجالات اختصاص المجلة من خلال نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والمتميزة .

شروط النشر بالمجلة

- تُعنى المجلة بنشر البحوث المهتمة بمجالات العلوم الإنسانية والأدبية ؛

- يعتمد النشر على رأي اثنين من المحكمين المتخصصين ويتم التحكيم إلكترونيًا ؛

- **تقبل البحوث باللغة العربية أو بإحدى اللغات الأجنبية، وترسل إلى موقع المجلة على بنك المعرفة المصري ويرفق مع البحث ملف بيانات الباحث يحتوي على عنوان البحث باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية واسم الباحث والتايتل والانتماء المؤسسي باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية، ورقم واتساب، وإيميل الباحث الذي تم التسجيل به على موقع المجلة ؛**

- يشار إلى أن **الهوامش والمراجع في نهاية البحث وليست أسفل الصفحة** ؛

- يكتب الباحث **ملخص باللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية** للبحث **صفحة واحدة فقط** لكل ملخص ؛

- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة العربية يكتب على برنامج "word" ونمط الخط باللغة العربية "Simplified Arabic" وحجم الخط 14 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر في الصفحة الواحدة عن 25 سطر والهوامش والمراجع خط Simplified Arabic حجم الخط 12 ؛

- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة الإنجليزية يكتب على برنامج word ونمط الخط Times New Roman وحجم الخط 13 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر عن 25 سطر في الصفحة الواحدة والهوامش والمراجع خط Times New Roman حجم الخط 11 ؛

- (**Paper**) مقاس الورق (**B5**) 17.6 × 25 سم، (Margins) الهوامش **2.3 سم** يمينًا ويسارًا، **2 سم** أعلى وأسفل الصفحة، ليصبح مقاس البحث فعلي (**الكلام** 21×13 سم. (Layout) والنسق: (Header) الرأس 1.25 سم، (Footer) تذييل 2.5 سم ؛

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- يخضع تسلسل نشر البحوث في أعداد المجلة حسب ما تراه هيئة التحرير من ضرورات علمية وفنية ؛

- المجلة غير ملزمة بإعادة البحوث إلى أصحابها سواء نشرت أم لم تنشر ؛

- تعبر البحوث عن آراء أصحابها وليس عن رأي رئيس التحرير وهيئة التحرير ؛

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محتويات العدد 102

افتتاحية العدد 102

يسـر مركـز بحـوث الشـرق الأوسـط والدراسـات المسـتقبلية صـدور العـدد (102 – أغسـطس 2024) مـن مجلـة المركـز «مجلـة بحـوث الشـرق الأوسـط». هذه المجلـة العريقـة التـي مـر علـى صـدورها حـوالي 50 عامًـا فـي خدمـة البحـث العلمـي، ويصـدر هـذا العـدد وهـو يحمـل بـين دافتيـه عـدة دراسـات متخصصـة: (دراسـات قانونيـة، دراسـات اللغـة العربيـة، دراسـات علـم النـفس، دراسـات اجتماعيـة، الدراسـات التاريخيـة، دراسـات إدارة أعمـال، دراسـات مكتبـات ومعلومـات، دراسـات سياسـية) ويعـد البحـث العلمـي Research   Scientific حجـر الزاويـة والركيـزة الأساسية في الارتقاء بالمجتمعات لكي تكون في مصاف الدول المتقدمة.

ولذا تَعتَبِر الجامعات أن البحث العلمي من أهم أولوياتها لكي تقود مسيرة التطوير والتحديث عن طريق البحث العلمي في المجالات كافة.

ولذا تهدف مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط إلى نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والمبتكرة في مختلف مجالات الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية واللغات التي تخدم المعرفة الإنسانية.

والمجلة تطبق معايير النشر العلمي المعتمدة من بنك المعرفة المصري وأكاديمية البحث العلمي، مما جعل الباحثين يتسابقون من كافة الجامعات المصرية ومن الجامعات العربية للنشر في المجلة.

وتحرص المجلة على انتقاء الأبحاث العلمية الجادة والرصينة والمبتكرة للنشر في المجلة كإضافة للمكتبة العلمية وتكون دائمًا في مقدمة المجلات العلمية المماثلة. ولذا نعد بالاستمرارية من أجل مزيد من الإبداع والتميز العلمي.

والله من وراء القصد

رئيس التحرير

د. حاتم العبد

الدراسات السياسية

POLITICAL STUDIES

Decentralized Governance as a Strategy for Conflict Prevention: A theoretical vision in building peace

الحكم اللامركزي كاستراتيجية لمنع الصراعات: رؤية نظرية في بناء السلام

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الملخص:

إن ظهور مخاطر وأشكال جديدة للعنف، وكذلك الاحتياجات الجديدة المتعلقة بالأمن الإنساني هو عمل ضروري في تقديم حلول عاجلة لمشكلات الصراعات والوقاية منها، ومن ثم المضي في بناء السلام بالمجتمعات عمومًا كونها عملية باتت جزءًا من ديمومة ضمان الأمن الإنساني. لذا، ينبغي لمجتمعاتنا أن تعطي الأولوية للتغيير السلمي ومواجهة العقبات على مستوى المشاركة في إدارة الحكم وتولي المسؤوليات. من هنا بات الحكم اللامركزي وسيلة مهمة تسهم في تحقيق جميع هذه الأهداف، ومن خلال تحويل الصراعات، وتحقيق تقاسم عادل للسلطة، مع ضمان توفير حوافز الاندماج لمجموعات الأقليات والاثنيات ضمن المجتمع المتنوع الواحد، استنادًا إلى تحليل شامل للأدبيات الحالية ودراسة المواقف المختلفة للكثير من الظواهر التي انتجت تسويات لتكل الصراعات. على الرغم من صعوبة قياس تأثيرها على منع الصراعات؛ ولكن يمكن القول بأن الحكم اللامركزي، ومن خلال قدرته على تحفيز إنشاء وسائل منع الحرب/العنف، وتوفير مشاركة حقيقية للسلطة قد يكون له آثار جيدة للغاية على تقليل الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى الصراعات. بمعنى ستكون الفرص مواتية لتفادي مخاطر الصراعات الداخلية، ومن ثم المضي في بناء السلام. إذ يمكن أن يكون للامركزية على وجه التحديد تأثير جيد على ما يسمى بالمحفزات والمسرعات لتتحول إلى ديناميكيات فاعلة في صناعة السلام وبنائه داخل المجتمع والدولة، للقيام بالإجراءات التي تسهم في تمكين استدامة بناء السلام داخل الدولة والمجتمع على حد سواء.

Abstract:

The emergence of new dangers and forms of violence, as well as new needs for human security (human security) to be a suitable work for offering the way of pay solutions as a part of human security. So, our societies should prioritize peaceful change and to confront the obstacles. According to this point, the paper indicates that decentralized governance can contribute to these efforts by transforming conflicts, bringing about power-sharing, and providing inclusion incentives for minority groups, based on an exhaustive analysis of the current literature and the study of various situations. Despite the difficulty of quantifying its impact on conflict prevention, it may be argued that decentralized governance, through its potential to stimulate the establishment of war/violence preventers, may have highly good effects on the decrease of reasons that lead to conflicts.

Decentralization, specifically, can have a good impact on the so-called triggers and accelerators, according to this article (short and medium-term causes), to perform the procedures that contributed in building peace within the state and society alike.

Purpose of the study:

They adopted decentralized governance tools as a strategy to prevent conflict, in order to build peace in societies in general, as it is a process that has become part of the continuity of ensuring human security.

Problem of Research:

Decentralized governance is an important means that contributes to achieving all of these goals, by transforming conflicts and achieving a fair sharing of power, while ensuring the provision of integration incentives for minority and ethnic groups within a single diverse society, based on a comprehensive analysis of current literature and a study of the different positions of many of the phenomena that have produced settlements to power. So that, we have different questions such as:

1) How do we ensure the effectiveness of the conflict prevention strategy?
2) How do we achieve a fair equation for sharing power?
3) What is the nature of a peace building strategy?
4) How does the process of resolving disputes and differences take place to initiate any potential struggle for power?
5) How do we ensure real political participation that includes all people?

Hypothesis of research:

The research was based on a scientific hypothesis that focuses on the peace building process and ensuring the stability of governance through decentralization. The more effective decentralization is ensuring foe everyone to participation in governance, and to be a good opportunity to preserve peace building operations for all communities, then which contributes to the stability of the formal governance institutions of the state.

Methodology of research:

The research was based on a scientific methodology through which a systemic analysis approach was added, with the use of functional and descriptive approaches in order to analyze the dimensions of the impact of decentralization in preventing conflicts and ensuring the achievement of peace building in order to maintain the stability of the democratic governance experience.

The structure of research:

The research consisted of three items. Firstly, the dimensions of decentralization. Secondly, it tackled on conflict and conflict Management and building peace, for resembling decentralization and conflict prevention, then to achieve the peace and stability in both society and stats alike.

Introduction:

Decentralization is receiving more attention as a result of the continuing worldwide democracy movement. More than (100) countries have taken significant steps toward democracy in the last two decades, with (80) percent of them being in developing countries. As a result, global governance rules have shifted dramatically. According to Freedom House's yearly report from the late 1980s, scored two-thirds of the world's states were "not

free" That ratio has now been reversed. This has greatly increased the number of options for pursuing decentralization. It also situates a significant portion of the decentralization discussion in the context of countries undergoing macroeconomic and political transformations.

On the one hand, it is widely believed that greater popular participation and a perception that citizen activities may help shape the form and goals of government will generate greater social and political stability. There is no need for armed conflict if individuals believe their government is interested and responsive to their needs – and citizens have redress when grievances arise. In ethnically diverse societies, the likelihood of inter-group warfare can be reduced if decentralization allows people to practice their local customs and religious beliefs without fear of persecution.

Decentralization, on the other hand, is argued by skeptics to raise the possibility of ethnic and civil strife. Loosening central control sets in motion an unavoidable chain of ever-increasing demands for autonomy, increasing the state's centrifugal forces. Decentralized authority, rather than fostering a deeper sense of ownership and connection with the state, amplifies regional distinctions, develops citizen identification with ethnic or geographic groupings rather than the state, and emboldens minority group demands for particularized services. Decentralization encourages local politicians to stake out hard-line stances in support of regional priorities, heightening political polarization, by diminishing incentives to consider national concerns.

I. Definitions to Key Concepts:
1. <u>Decentralization:</u>

Decentralization is a multi-meaning term that includes within it many phenomena. Several scholars such as Rodnelly 1981, Maowood 1983 and 1987, Rodinelli with others 1983, Hayden 9183, Smith 1985, Conyers 1981 and others have defined decentralization from different perspectives. Looking at the definition in the Oxford Dictionary, we find that the term decentralization denotes the transfer of decision-making power from the central government to its local branches. The definition in the dictionary deals with decentralization as a political phenomenon that depends mainly on delegating the decision-making authority to different levels and distributing it instead of making the decision from a single center1.

Researchers also differ in the use of the term. Some of them, such as Hayden, say that "the concept of decentralization is broad and includes within it several phenomena", and therefore the authors differ in finding a unified definition of decentralization is expected2. There are many evidences that indicate that the results of using decentralization differ from one country to another and from one region to another. Therefore, the arguments presented based on those experiences indicate the complexity and dialectic of the concept of decentralization in governance. In other words, Haydn links the definition of decentralization to the environment in which it was applied, meaning that it is an applied term rather than a theoretical term3.

According to the definition of the World Bank, "Decentralization means assigning tax collection and political administration tasks to lower levels of government, a concept that is used in different parts of the world at different levels, for different reasons, and with different means." In this definition, the World Bank considered decentralization to be a political, administrative and economic phenomenon. Thus, it can also be understood that decentralization is a movement or transition from

the central situation, which gives the impression that the concepts of centralization and decentralization do not necessarily mean the complete contradiction, nor do they mean the necessity of exclusive use of only one concept of them. The two phenomena of decentralization and centralization can be combined in one system of government, as the administrative and political tasks of the government can vary in the application of the two concepts[4].

As for Smith, decentralization is the opposite concept of the concentration of management in a single center in addition to the distribution of power at the local levels of government. For him, decentralization is a political term that requires the transfer of decision-making and management from the center to lower levels of government that follow in its system the central government[5].

But perhaps the most contributing researcher to the definition of decentralization is Rodnelli, who provided a more comprehensive and broad definition of the concept of decentralization. For him, decentralization means transferring and delegating the authority for planning, decision-making, and management of public functions from the central government and its sectors to field bodies affiliated with those sectors, semi-independent public companies, independent local governments, or non-governmental organizations. He believes that the power of authority must be reduced by transferring the powers of planning, decision-making and implementation as well[6]

2. *Conflict and Conflict Management and building peace.*
A. **Concept of Conflict**:

With the spread of conflicts, it is not surprising that the controversy on this topic, which is also gaining importance in political science, is surprising that this precise concept of the term dominant conflict until today is considered one of the most ambiguous and controversial concepts, which causes the same

conflicts in many Sometimes according to Bonacker and Imbusch. Therefore, the Heidelberg International Institute for Conflict Research defines conflicts as: "a clash of interests, and a difference in attitudes, on national values, at least between two parties - organized groups, states, organizations - that are determined to pursue their interests and support their causes"[7].

While social researcher Lewis A. Coser defines conflict as: "a competition for values, power and resources, in which the goal between competitors is to neutralize, liquidate, or harm their opponents"[8].

Ahmed Fouad Arslan believes that the international conflict represents "the phenomenon of incompatibility or contradiction in interests, values and national goals among the active forces in the international system, which is characterized by the inevitability of interaction between its units, varying in their energies and capabilities, and contradictory in their value and ideological premises"[9].

As for conflict, according to Deutsch, it is: "The presence of incidental activities or ongoing actions that conflict with each other, an activity that does not agree with one another, and that prevents or impedes the occurrence or effectiveness of the second activity. The conflict can be as small as a disagreement, and as large as a conflict. the existence of war". Also, Berger and Lockman define conflict as: "the mismatch of interests, goals, values, needs, expectations, social cosmologies, or ideologies. Ideological conflicts tend to become violent". Also, Webster's Dictionary defines conflict as: "competition or mutual interference between opposing or incompatible forces, over ideas, interests, or will"[10].

Koser defined social conflict as "a struggle over values and claims to lower the status of power, authority and resources in

which its opponents aim to neutralize, injure or eliminate their competitors". McEnery also proposes a new definition of conflict, describing it as: "The interaction of any two or more value systems. The conflict is either malicious or benign, depending on whether the particular interaction of value systems tends to destructive collapse or creative progress".

According to Galtung, describing a situation as a conflict depends on the system of action of the conflict. If the regime has two or more cases of incompatible target countries, it can be said that this case represents a conflict. In the case of one representative (one party), the situation is called a conflict or a dilemma. As for the interpersonal conflict, it consists of incompatible motivational or behavioral tendencies (approach, avoidance, conflict)[11].

From an ontological point of view, research on the concepts, sources, and categories of conflict usually revolves around two approaches to conflict: a subjective approach, and an objective approach (Schmid). The latter searches for the origin of the conflict in the fields of social, political origin and the structure of society, and sees that the goals at risk can be precisely aligned. As the objective perception considers the conflict as a competitive situation in which the parties are aware of the conflicting positions, as each party wants to occupy a position that contradicts the positions it wants to occupy by the other parties. On the contrary, the subjective perception means the misperception of the objective situation because it stems from subjectivity and privacy[12]. Therefore, the subjective view (Deutsch) focuses primarily on conflicting goals and disagreements. And it shows the following: "Conflicting differences leads to conflict. The goal of incompatibility is not the most important, but rather the conflict's perception of incompatibility." It is the essence of analyzing contemporary political conflicts, especially ethnic, religious and

identity conflicts based on emotional rather than objective foundations[13].

B. <u>Conflict Management:</u>

Many specialists believe that it is not possible to get rid of conflicts because they are linked to differences in values and interests - within the same society and between different societies - that lead to deepening differences and consolidating results that are difficult to overcome[14].

They believe that seeking to "resolve such conflicts is unrealistic." Therefore, they see that the most that can be done is to manage and contain these conflicts and, in some cases, to cast violence aside, and to resume normal political relations. Hence, supporters of this approach define conflict management as "reducing or stopping the manifestations of violence and escalation in it, without expecting it to be actually resolved."[15]

There are those who define conflict management as "aiming at reducing future violent conflicts, and avoiding them by encouraging positive behaviors between conflicting parties"[16].

In general, this approach is based mainly on helping the parties involved in the conflict to reach a point of view or behavior that works to stop the parties to the conflict from engaging in hostile or violent behavior, and this approach does not focus on the sources of conflict but on modifying the behavior of the conflict. Which ensures that hostile or violent behavior does not occur from the parties involved in the conflict, and an example of this is working on a cease-fire between two warring parties[17].

In this context, the American policies towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which aim to prevent the violent manifestations of the conflict more than insisting on resolving the conflict itself, stand out. This policy is embodied in the acceptance

of the parties to the conflict to enter into long negotiations. In this case, violence prevention appears to be the real goal[18].

The approach to conflict management has been subjected to many criticisms, given that conflict management seeks to contain its violent manifestations, and find temporary settlements and solutions. Just without finding a solution to it. In addition, the issue of containing the conflict or freezing it in the long term is an optimistic assumption and it is not possible for it to erupt under any circumstances and at any moment[19].

Another criticism of this approach is its lack of the required depth and analysis, as it focuses on questions such as what should be done about this conflict? And how to find solutions to it? This is without regard to the context and situation in which the conflict arises. This entry is also concerned with the problem itself, not with the parties and people involved in it. This may be explained by the fact that the interest in resolving the conflict according to this approach takes place in an atmosphere of crisis and emergency, which makes little attention to the analysis of the problem that caused the conflict, or the theoretical foundations required to understand the conflict and its developments. Rather, it makes the issue of stopping the conflict at any cost a priority over Theorizing issues, and therefore there is not enough depth in understanding the solutions or recommendations presented in this context[20].

C- Building peace:

The building peace is a primary goal to provide the resources that find some ways to support, implement, and sustain the building of an infrastructure for peace over the long term. At the direct-response level, the NGO community should also understand its responsibility from a larger systemic perspective. So that, Strategic commitment is connected to an understanding of the complexity and long-term nature of the peace building

enterprise. An important task in the development of a framework for sustaining reconciliation is to build a peace constituency within the setting. Conceptually, at a very basic level this means that the international community must see people in the setting as resources, not recipients. In other words, citizen-based peacemaking must be seen as instrumental and integral, not peripheral, to sustaining change. [21]

II. Decentralization & Conflict Prevention.
1. Federalism & Conflict Prevention:

There is a lengthy academic tradition on the capacity of multiethnic federations to handle conflict. In contrast to decentralization, federalism requires a division of sovereignty, a constitutionally protected status for devolved units (typically states in their own right with parliaments, governments, and a distinct political process whose rights can only be revoked by constitutional amendment), a constitutional procedure for resolving conflicts between the central and decentralized levels, and a central organ where decentralized units have veto power. A decentralized unitary state's provinces, on the other hand, may have greater effective authority than a federation's member-states. This is one of the reasons why current federalism research has advocated replacing the dichotomy between federalism and unitary states with a more distinct typology of factors such as the degree of fiscal decentralization or the number of states in the federal system or electoral systems[22].

Lake and Rothchild attempted a statistical analysis of the function of federal institutions in the transition from war to peace and came up with a somber conclusion. They consider decentralization as a beneficial instrument for peacemaking in the near term, based on their data, since it serves as a signal of moderation by the majority. It may serve as a primary incentive

for secession and fragmentation in the long run. In a qualitative comparison, Ghai came up with a different conclusion, arguing that only "full autonomy" can prevent secession. Whether one considers Nigeria or Ethiopia, the track record of multinational federations in Africa in handling conflict does not inspire much hope[23].

So, what are the critical aspects that contribute to the stability of a federal system? McGarry and O'Leary have identified a number of factors, including consociational forms of democratic government at the national level, a minimum of three main ethnic groups, and a particular degree of socio-economic development that allows for fiscal equalization and distributive justice mechanisms. Stepan has also argued that federalism would be difficult to implement because only federations that came together voluntarily (by aggregation) have been able to effectively manage internal conflict, whereas former empires' 'holding together' federations are de facto 'pseudo-federations' doomed to fail[24].

The debate on the role of ethnicity as a cause to conflict reflects the territorial dimension when ethnic groups are located in one territory or make claims to a specific area. Kaplan is among several scholars who have portrayed ethnicity as a major cause to civil wars in Africa. David Horowitz has few if any academic followers in stating that "'ethnic conflicts is at the center of politics" and civil wars in Africa. Instead of that, the review concludes that ethnicity is only one among many factors interplaying in recent civil wars in Africa and so on. [25]

2. The Impact on protection and promotion of human rights:

Decentralization is a human right, and there are documents that refer to the interrelationship between democracy and human rights on the one hand, and political decentralization on the other. An example of this is Article (21) of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights, which states that "every person has the right to participate in managing affairs." In addition to these global documents, there are many regional documents that have indicated that both democracy and decentralization are among the guarantees of human rights, such as Article (20) of the American Declaration of Human Rights and Duties[26].

A sound decentralization needs a strong civil society to protect it, as it is the sector that is able to monitor the various local government parties and is able to play the role of supporter and mediator between citizens on the one hand and the elected and executive local government bodies on the other hand, and civil society organizations can play a pivotal role in assessing The quality of services provided by local bodies to the citizen, and they can also provide a mechanism for complaints and monitor and document violations of economic and social rights to which the citizen is exposed[27].

3. Impact on the proper planning and management of resources:

For several decades, decentralization as a governance reform has been at the top of the agendas of global development organizations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which have provided resources to local governance and promoted local capacity building. Decentralization is seen as a conflict management and resolution tool because it establishes mechanisms for distributing power between competing communities with their religious and ethnic differences, and achieves citizens' political participation at the local level[28].

In contrast, the deep centralization of political and administrative power, along with corruption and mistrust at the horizontal level, often impede local communities from contributing to important planning and management decisions related to development efforts in their surroundings. It can also impede citizens from direct political participation that enables them to communicate with local representatives, with the legitimacy and local expertise they have to represent their communities and consider their grievances. These situations usually lead to conflict between different groups, and exacerbate the division between the state and society, which leads to the outbreak of revolutions, which can sometimes develop into a violent war, as happened in the case of Syria and Yemen. Therefore, an inclusive dialogue on the forms and structures of representative and participatory governance is a path to the transition process in the aftermath of conflicts and revolutions[29].

During conflict, increased popular legitimacy and foreign support often strengthen local authorities. However, the redistribution of power through constitutional reforms, particularly those related to decentralization and administrative decentralization, is a key factor in restoring stability and resolving conflicts. However, in order to ensure the development of governance models that have a positive and sustainable impact on peace and development, the lessons learned from countries that have adopted governance reforms, such as decentralization, show that there must be some pre-reform conditions, as well as an understanding of the technicalities of institutional design and implementation[30].

These conditions include the inclusion of all parties in the decision-making process, the distribution of fiscal powers and resources, constitutional foundations, and strong central

democratic institutions that respect the rule of law. The series of papers in this paper on decentralization will discuss the motivations and steps for the institutional design and implementation of reforms related to decentralization, as well as the challenges and risks facing countries that have adopted decentralization models. These papers present a comprehensive vision on the legal basis and political context of decentralization in Iraq, Tunisia and Morocco. The last paper will discuss the lessons learned from these models, which can be applied in post-conflict Syria[31].

According to Sheema and Rondinelli, the concept of decentralization developed in the 1980s from administrative decentralization; That is, the transfer of power within the scope of the central authority structures and their branches, to decentralization, which is the constitutional sharing of power by assigning administrative, fiscal and political powers to regional and local authorities and structures. The development of the concept is related to reforms aimed at increasing local independence from the central authority, and distributing central powers rather than concentrating them in the grip of central structures[32].

4. <u>Decentralization and its role in promoting local development:</u>

The administrative aspect in the process of preparing, implementing and following-up development plans in general, and local development in particular, is an issue that must be dealt with as essential and necessary for the success of these plans in achieving their goals, as the failure of many development plans, especially rural ones in many developing countries, is mainly caused by the methods On the other hand, it is the administration

that highlights the importance of decentralized planning compared to sectorial planning, and it is the only means through which sectorial goals are transformed into a general framework that serves as a local development strategy that allows achieving Popular participation, and it ensures interdependence, harmony and integration between the bodies and institutions concerned with preparing and implementing local development plans. Therefore, official planning bodies at the regional and local levels must possess the authority and high administrative efficiency that enables them to perform their role to the fullest[33].

The planning process in light of administrative decentralization must mean activating popular participation and the role of target groups in the processes of preparing and implementing local development plans, and this is known as the method of planning from the bottom. The principle is the promotion of freedom, but not only in its political sense, but in its comprehensive humanitarian concept, which allows and maximizes the human ability to choose. Planning from the bottom also helps determine regional development goals that reflect the specificity of the region under planning, and there is always a big difference between the goals of regional development set by regional planning bodies and institutions, and regional development goals set by central planning bodies, although the first must be complementary and consistent with the second and not contradict it[34].

The effective application of decentralization in the field of planning and local development, works to adapt development programs easily to the needs and requirements of the local population, since it allows the participation of residents of the various administrative units in the process of preparing and implementing development plans for their regions, and it also provides necessary support for mobilizing energies and mobilizing resources, and this It creates opportunities for success for national

development plans in achieving their goals in a balanced manner that ensures the provision of an adequate life for all residents in all regions within the country. This success contributes to achieving regional balance and reducing regional economic and social disparities, and this depends primarily on the distribution of decision-making power among central development and planning bodies and its local counterpart, given that the distribution and monitoring of investments and resources in a society is closely related to the distribution of decision-making power in it[35].

Thus, decentralization contributes indirectly to reducing the intensity of conflicts through its important role in promoting local development. To safeguard peace and security, African countries need to adopt appropriate preventive strategies. To prevent disputes from escalating into large-scale conflicts, timely information about developing local crises is crucial for politicians, security agencies, and community leaders (Africa Renewal). In times of war, the focus often centers on resolving national political conflicts while communities grapple with their own disputes and tensions. Empowering diverse local peace actors to engage early and effectively can help prevent conflicts and promote peace among warring communities. This calls for deliberate efforts in empowering community members and building resilient peace defenders. For countries emerging from wars and violence, protecting and sustaining peace poses a daunting task. Insecurity, inequality and exclusion are common drivers of conflict that must be dealt with conclusively to prevent recurrent conflicts and support the creation of productive livelihoods and resilient communities. By focusing on education, community engagement, and inclusive development, we can promote equal opportunities and build a peaceful future. [36]

Conclusion:

Decentralization represents - with its broader powers of local bodies - an appropriate framework for involving local communities in planning, implementing and following up their own development. Decentralization also contributes to spreading democracy and the participation of various actors in the development process, which during the last three decades has become the most appropriate framework for the local sphere, thus decentralization is considered An important strategy in reducing conflicts and internal conflicts, especially through:-

1. Achieving optimal exploitation of the available and latent local natural resources, employing local manpower, and perhaps the contribution of decentralization to achieving local development.

2. Reducing administrative bureaucracy and accelerating and facilitating the administrative and development decision-making process, which contributes to a relatively fair distribution of decision-making power, investments and resources within the state.

3. The central government bodies concede part of their powers to local government bodies, these bodies that coexist with the problems of the local population on an ongoing basis and realize their causes and dimensions. Effectively and positively achieving the objectives of the national development plans.

4. Creating direct and continuous contact between development planning bodies and the population, and this enables those in charge of planners to obtain more accurate data about the conditions of their regions, and helps to prepare and implement realistic, effective and effective development plans.

5. Creating a fair distribution of development benefits, and improving the level of development and services in all regions of the country; Through the access of resources and investments to all regions and regions of the country, and this reduces the severity of regional economic and social disparities.

6. Reducing the administrative and developmental burden on the institutions and bodies of the central government; Where it freed it from many tasks and powers by assigning it to regional and local bodies, and this situation enables the central planning bodies to take sufficient time to supervise effectively and practically to follow up on the various development plans.

7. Consolidating the principle of democracy and expanding the base of popular participation in the development decision-making process at the local level, given that decentralization is a form and foundation of the democratic process.

8. Peace building required a prolific programs in order to solve all problem that confronted the societies, by exercising power share within democratic political systems and focusing on education, community engagement, inclusive development, and sustainable development within a real institutions for the society and state alike.

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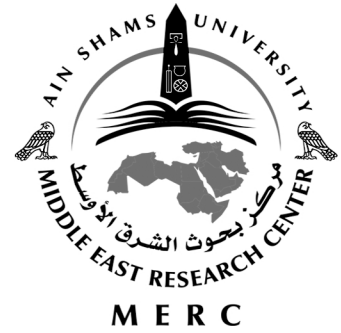
Middle East Research Journal

Refereed Scientific Journal (Accredited) Monthly

Vol. 102
August 2024

**Issued by
Middle East
Research Center**

**Fifty Year
Founded in 1974**