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Opportunities and Challenges of the Role of Decentralization to Develop Local Community: Al-Anbari Community as a Model

Abstract

The present study aims to clarify the role of decentralization in the development of local community. It is one of the first studies of this kind that examines the relationship between levels of decentralization and community development in Al-Anbar and Iraq. In addition, it sheds light on multiple meanings such as: public participation, especially in local councils. In Al-Anbar in terms of importance, role, influence, preparations, needs, and social problems.

The present study examines official community development programs in Al-Anbar in light of sufficient information about Residential Neighborhood Committee and development of community members 'awareness of the importance of decentralization in community development. To achieve these objectives, the researcher uses both the descriptive approach in the analysis based on primary and secondary information sources, conducting a study on a sample of members of the local council, interviewing members of the local committees in Al-Anbar, and holding meetings with those responsible for the local development program. The present study reached a number of results, the most important of which was that there is a strong desire among the members of the local council to implement decentralization in order to develop The local community and increase the awareness of the council members or its committees about decentralization for its influential role in popular participation and the development of the local community. The present study also concluded that members of the Al-Anbari community have a good understanding of the activities carried out by the various council committees and they fully participate in them.

Keywords: Role of Decentralization, Al-Anbari Community, Residential Neighborhood Committee.

Introduction

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The Theoretical Framework

First: The Study Dimensions

The Problem of Study

Iraq has suffered from problems of severe centralization or extreme centralization and rigid central economic policies associated with it for a long time. That had negative effects on economic and social fields and led to atrophy of economic resources. It also generated social problems in local communities. Then, severe centralization does not solve the problems generated by the successive previous governments nor are the reconstruction policies undertaken by different local communities, including Al-Anbari community. The problem of decentralization as a goal to develop the local community in Anbar, support reconstruction and reform policies, and improve the level of local communities is of utmost necessity to study the obstacles of implementation and how to get rid of social and local problems. Therefore, the researcher raises the following questions:

A. Will decentralization in Anbar lead to getting rid of partisan, sectarian, and ethnic authoritarianism?

B. Is the implementation of decentralization in Anbar the goal towards promoting local development, developing industrial and agricultural sectors and services, and eliminating the recurrent marginalization of these sectors?

The Aims of study

The present study aims at:

1. Present and analyze basic concepts of decentralization, its types, and its importance in local development.

2. Identify the causal relationship between local organizations 'application of decentralization and achieving effective results in local administration and meeting basic and life services for local citizens.
3. Conduct field studies and open interviews to confirm the role of local councils in Anbar in achieving local development and creating new services based on the results reached.
4. Identify the most important challenges that prevent the use of decentralization in the development of the local community in Anbar.

The Significance of the Present Study

The issue of development of local community in Iraq in general and Anbari community in particular is of distinctive importance that is represented in the structural change in the political and economic structure from severe centralization to decentralization and transferring it to the new economy, the free economy, or the so-called market economy. Hence, the present study focuses on local community development because it is closely related to economic development with the various concepts of local decentralization and the concepts of developing local community programs in Anbar.

The Questions of Study

1. Has decentralization in Anbar had an effect on the type of services provided to the citizens?
2. Has administrative decentralization in Al-Anbar limited the corruption process that rampant in the past years?
3. Does administrative decentralization allow citizens to participate in administrative issues, which leads to effectiveness, efficiency, and achievement in administrative local departments?
4. Has local decentralization contributed to the development of Anbar economy and the improvement of economic, social, and cultural conditions?

Basic Concepts of the Present Study

1. Decentralization

Decentralization means distributing the administrative position between the central authority and local or interest bodies that have a

legal personality. According to the decentralization system, there are several public legal persons in the state called administrative persons or public law persons. They may be regional administrative persons such as provincialities or utility persons or interests such as public institutions of all kinds (Al-Shaikhli, 2002).

Centralization and decentralization are two descriptions of the extent to which the authority or the decision-making process is concentrated in the hands of the responsible leader. They are also the extent to which he/she delegates part of it to officials at lower levels. The concept of centralization is based on the accumulation of power in the hands of a person or a presidential body throughout the state or institution. It is a method of distributing power between central government and legally independent bodies. In its idea, it takes forms of political or administrative decentralization (Atitaqa, 2011).

The British researcher Modi Grame defines it as an elected council in which the local unit is concentrated. This council displays political responsibility before voters, residents of the local unit. It is considered complementary to the state apparatus (Al-Shaikhli, 2002).

The procedural definition of decentralization is that it is a method of administrative organization of the state, that is, it is the distribution of administrative functions between central government and local bodies under the supervision of central government in order to meet local social needs.

Within the general conceptual framework of the term of decentralization, it is possible to distinguish between two types of decentralization related to administrative decentralization systems:

1.1. Political Decentralization

It is a constitutional situation based on the distribution of the various legislative, executive, and judicial governmental functions between the federal government in the capital and the state government or other political units. This pattern of decentralization usually prevails in complex countries such as the United States of America. This method is suitable for large countries in which there are many Nationalities, languages, and cultures (Al-Zoghbi, 1986). This type is excluded from the present study.

2.2. Administrative Decentralization

It means that the government transfers its powers in planning, managing, and allocating resources from the center to the local units in the field. In other words, it is one of the methods of distributing the administrative job between

central government and local bodies that may be elected or appointed or a combination thereof. In all cases, central government reserves the right to control, review, and direct (Roundinnclli, 1982).

Citizen participation remains the main element that distinguishes decentralization, because the idea and philosophy of the decentralized system stems from the importance of the participation of the population in various administrative issues. The democratic element in this system leads to the effectiveness and efficiency necessary for the management of states in general. From this standpoint, administrative decentralization differs from political decentralization in that it is limited to the distribution of the administrative position and its applicability in complex and simple states alike. Political decentralization means the distribution of the political function (Abdullah, 1991).

2. Development

In the modern sense, development means growth that is studied on scientific grounds, whose dimensions have been scientifically measured. It is either a comprehensive and integrated development or development in one of the main fields such as the economic, political, or social fields, or sub-fields such as industrial development or agricultural development.

The United Nations defined development as the process by which citizens and the government can unite the efforts of the citizens to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions in the local communities and to help them integrate into the life of the nation and contribute to its progress as much as possible (United Nations, 1996).

Development is defined as the structural development and structural change of various economic, social, cultural, or organizational dimensions of society in order to provide the best means for life for all members of society (Al-Quraishi, 2007).

3. Community Development

Development of the local community means a set of individual and group formal and informal programs that is, with the participation of civil society in addition to the government, with the aim of developing, improving, and meeting the needs of members of the local community and achieving their economic, social, psychological, and environmental stability (Darwish, 2017).

Thus, the plans of the local community usually proceed in two connected paths. The first path relates to raising the level of economic, healthy, and educational life for members of the community, which is known as the material

aspect of development. The second path relates to developing the self-capacity of community members by relying on the resources and capabilities present in the community and solving its problems on the basis of a democratic approach. All of this is known as the intangible aspect of development (Effendi, 2003).

Therefore, local development has several goals represented in community development and improvement of the economic, social, and demographic conditions of the local community with the achievement of integration of local communities and the national society, which depend on self-efforts and positive contribution among community members in planning, implementing, and developing development programs.

4. Local Community

It is a group of individuals who reside in a specific geographical area and participate together in political and economic activities. Together, they form a self-governing social unit dominated by general values and they feel a sense of belonging to it. Examples of local communities are cities and villages (Abdullah, 2015).

Community is a large number of stable individuals who are united by social ties and common interests that are accompanied by systems that control behavior and authority that nurture them (Al-Masry, 1980).

This means that local community should have several components to be described as such. There are certain geographical spots and a group of individuals who are characterized by homogeneity even if there is a sectarian or ethnic difference between them. But, this homogeneity is achieved as a result of social harmony, cooperation, and existence of a common interest between them in addition to the time factor that helps achieve harmony between them. This harmony shapes the problems and crises they are exposed to (Effendi, 2010).

Third: Previous Studies

First: Iraqi Studies

(Regional administrative decentralization in Iraq) by (Ghaidan, 2012).

This study indicates that regional administrative decentralization is one of the most important causes of contemporary administrative organization methods. This method is achieved through the participation of administrative units with the central authority in practicing local authorities, provided that the central authority manages administrative affairs of a national character that concern all citizens of the

state. This is for the legislator to take into account the law mixing local affairs that concern the residents of local administrative units with general national affairs to achieve the optimal application of regional administrative decentralization.

The study found many results, including:

Administrative decentralization is one of the methods of administration, because it means distributing the administrative position between the central government and local bodies.

Administrative decentralization differs from political decentralization on the basis that the first is concerned with the administrative function only, while the second is concerned with the basic functions of the state.

There is an overlap in the legislative and executive powers between the federal authorities and the provincial councils that are not organized in a region in accordance with Law No. (21) of 2008.

Second: Arab Studies

(The evolution of decentralization and local governance in Libya) by (Maatouk, 2018).

The study confirmed a statement of the extent of decentralization in Libya. It also confirmed that there are steps towards the implementation of decentralization. But, there are pitfalls from the practical side, which the study clarified. The study reached many results and recommendations that aim to activate administrative decentralization because of its great role in achieving various development aspects. This does not mean dispensing with centralization in general. But, it aims to apply administrative decentralization in addition to political centralization. The study also aimed to trace the development of the Libyan experience in administration and local governance since the monarchy and after independence, and during the September 1969 revolution, up to the current stage. The study indicates that the attempts at reform and the development of local administrative decentralization had faced many difficulties and obstacles that hindered the effectiveness of the practices of those mechanisms for their role in the development of the country.

Elements of Administrative Decentralization

The decentralized administrative system is based on a set of components, which are as follows:

1. Having Distinct Self-interests

The recognition of the existence of distinct local interests is the basic element of administrative decentralization, because the philosophy of decentralization stems primarily from the necessity for units to participate in managing special interests in a particular region, on the grounds that they are more efficient and effective and in response to the needs and priorities of citizens (Al-Bajouri, 2013).

The diversity of public needs that the state fulfills through the local administration are general needs by their nature and they concern all the state's provinces. These needs often have a national character, such as external defense and internal security. But, there are special needs or self-interests that pertain to a part of the state, a province, or residents of a particular region and no other regions. These needs or interests are called self-interest. They differ from national interests, such as water, electricity, waste collection, external roads, etc.

What matters to the needs of a particular region does not necessarily matter to the whole country. Therefore, it is well organized to involve the national public needs of the central authorities in order to assume their fulfillment, because this leads to achieving equality, justice, and control of affairs. Local needs are left to the bodies that represent the residents of a particular region in order to fulfill them. This is because only the residents of the region that need such services more than the representatives of the central authorities are aware of these needs, their importance, and value.

The decentralization approach is based on the idea that the management of local interests must be based on the jurisdiction of the central authority. It has been customary for these powers to be granted by the legislative authority of the state as a representative of the public administration. Some of the interests are approved by the description of national interests or self-interests. But, there are many public needs that are ambiguous, and controversy arises about whether they are local or national. Hence, it was necessary to search for a criterion by which self-interests are defined and distinguished from national interests. In this regard, two criteria are presented:

1. Defining the functions of the decentralized local bodies, exclusively, within a list included in the body of the local administration laws. In return, the interests not mentioned in the list of specializations stipulated in the law are considered within the list of national interests. It follows that local units are not permitted to consider and make decisions with

regard to issues that are not mentioned in the legislation (Al-Tahrawi, 2004).

2. Defining the competencies of the local authorities according to a general rule known as the French method. It is for the legislator to resort to setting a general standard according to which he/she clarifies what is considered a local specialty and leaves the determination of its content to the local units themselves directly under the supervision and control of the central authority (Al-Tamawi, 1992).

In this method, the local council assumes the task of defining local specializations. But, it is not considered an absolute authority. It is rather an authority bound by certain restrictions under the supervision and control of the administrative guardianship authorities. This criterion gives local councils greater authority to define its competencies according to reality instead of imposing it on it according to a specific legislative text. This criterion needs several standards that define what is considered local or national. The general standard remains in need of more specific standards, unlike the English standard, which is simple and clear and leaves no room for conflict between local bodies and central authorities about specializations of a different nature, that is, with local and national characteristics at the same time (Al Shatnawi, 2002).

2. The Independence of Decentralized Bodies from the Central Authority

The participation of the central bodies of the central authority in practicing the administrative function, including the authority of individualization and final determination of some matters and the management of self-interests, requires that these bodies enjoy independence from the central authority. The existence of self-interests and their distinction from national interests and making them the prerogative of decentralized bodies is not sufficient to achieve administrative decentralization. It has a moral personality that is distinct from the character of the state and the central authority, and its independence in administrative and financial terms from the central authorities (Al-Zoghbi, 1993).

This method is attributed to France. It was established in the French constitution issued in 1958, especially in Article 34 where it was stated that law defines the basic principles related to the administrative independence of local bodies, their competencies, and their financial resources.

This is done through a number of decentralized bodies in the province, including:

A. Administrative Independence of Decentralized Bodies

1. Decentralized bodies have an independent moral personality means that they grant the legal personality to confirm its independence and not subordination to the central authority, since according to this legal personality it has a legal entity independent from the central authority and has the obligation and competence to perform in harmony with the nature of these bodies, in a way that enables them to perform legal actions. Administrative independence, along with financial independence, is a consequence of the moral personality (Al-Qubeilat, 2008). Thus, administrative independence is achieved for decentralized bodies when the law authorizes them with the powers to issue administrative decisions, without referring to the central authority, where decisions are made. The decisions of those bodies are final and executive. There must be administrative regulations for these bodies that differ from those found at the central authorities.

Election Method

Under this method, the residents of the local unit choose the members of the provincial council representing their local unit on their own. This method is considered the original in the formation of the provincial councils. This method is more democratic than other methods (whether the election is direct or indirect) and more expressive of the management of the residents of the local unit. However, this method may produce persons who lack administrative competence for membership in the provincial council (Al-Zoghbi, 1993).

Selection and Election

This method seeks to provide independence for the council and to provide an element of competence through the election of a number of the provincial council in a direct manner by the local population. Then, the elected members choose the remaining number of people of expertise and competence according to specific organizational principles. It will be incomplete if the number of elected provincial council members is based on certain personal and factional preferences. The matter also remains related to the nature of the final decision (Al-Qubeilat, 2006).

Recruitment Method

This method stems from an attempt to avoid the state and the local population from the extra

material costs and complications on the grounds that some communities are not at the level that qualifies them to properly elect their representatives in local councils as a result of the lack of political and cultural awareness in these communities (ibid).

Central authorities appoint members of provincial councils in order to ensure administrative efficiency. But, this method seeks to ensure administrative efficiency. It is far from the will of the local population, especially if the members are from outside the city or province and they are not aware of matters of local people. This causes a loss of trust between the two parties.

The Mixed Method

This method seeks to combine the two methods of election and appointment in the representation of the local population in the provincial council through election, and the introduction of an element of efficiency in administrative and technical terms to ensure the proper conduct of the work of the provincial council, and to raise the level of services provided to citizens. On the one hand, if the election of the bodies responsible for the management of regional persons is a prerequisite for the establishment of administrative decentralization, this does not mean that all the members who make up the council are elected. But, there may be members appointed by the central authorities. On the other hand, the presence of appointed members should not lead to the emptying of the administrative decentralization system. Regionalization is one of its true contents. For this, it is required that the elected members prevail and not the other way around (Al-Tamawy, 1980).

B. Financial Independence of Decentralized Bodies

In light of the importance of administrative independence, it cannot be isolated from the importance of financial independence. If decentralized bodies depend for their funding on the central administration, this reduces their independence and makes them subject to the central authority, which is able to practice tight control over the decisions and activities of the decentralized bodies according to what it deems appropriate, and not necessarily as the decentralized bodies see. That is why the financial independence of the decentralized bodies enables them to implement their development projects and decisions without the need for the approval of the central authorities if they are self-funded (Al-Zoghbi, 1985). Thus,

financial independence can be embodied in several points as follows (Povof, 1984):

1. The necessity of having a budget for the decentralized body that is distinct from the state's general budget. It is formed from the revenues and expenditures of the decentralized body because this will help it in making decisions and undertaking actions that are important, especially in the field of local development.
2. The existence of a budget for the decentralized body does not have its financial independence if this budget is financed by the central authority. When it suffers from a deficit in its financial resources to cover its expenses, this would lead to weakening the functioning of the decentralized body and making it under the control of the central authority and according to its own convictions.
3. Decentralized bodies need for financial systems that are independent of the financial systems of central authorities, such as the financial system for provincialities and the works and supplies system for provincialities.
4. Supervision and control of Central Authority.

The independence of local bodies and their non-subordination to the central authority is considered one of the basic pillars on which administrative decentralization is based. But, complete independence is non-existent, because it causes the state many problems, such as the emergence of political entities that demand separation from the state, which threatens its unity and territorial integrity. So, the central authority abandoning its authority is of a local nature in favor of local units, but it has reserved the right to monitor and supervise it in order to ensure that it is running in a manner that is commensurate with the public policy and public interest of the state. Good management places local bodies under special supervision and control practiced by the central authority within the limits established by law (Awada).

This special oversight means that there are authorities established by law for the central authority to enable it to supervise the activities of the decentralized bodies and their work to ensure their legitimacy and to achieve coordination between their various actions to protect the public interest)) (Berber, 1996).

Administrative authority is not to protect the interests of decentralized bodies as is the case in civil authority within civil law. On the contrary,

it is to protect the public interest represented by the central authority.

Given the merits of administrative authority that aims to preserve the unity of the state in both political and legal terms so that decentralized bodies do not become states within a state, the control should not be of strength and intensity, so that decentralized bodies lose their freedom to operate and eliminate the purpose of their establishment, and they should not be so weak that these bodies deviate from the line decreed for them in the deed of their establishment.

It is known that there is usually a law that states the competencies and powers of the local administration, through which, the type and manner in which carrying out the central authority's control is determined. So, the central administration cannot reach its control over local units to the point of issuing orders, as is the situation in presidential oversight, because the practice of the authority to issue orders presents the independence of local units and touches the essence of decentralization.

Forms of Administrative Decentralization

When the central administration realized that managing resources and providing services is difficult to limit to a single central administration, it expanded towards decentralized management worldwide. So, administrative decentralization in practice takes two forms:

1. Regional Decentralization

It is based on the distribution of the state's administrative functions between the central government and local elected bodies that carry out their activities under the supervision and control of the central government. Thus, the term regional decentralization is synonymous with the concept of local administration, which is that administrative organization is based on the existence of local interests that are distinct from national interests it seeks to achieve within the local region in the limits of the responsibilities defined by law under special supervision from the central authority (Al-Shuyuki, 1981).

In other words, this type of decentralization is based on the existence of administratively and financially independent regional units that enable them to perform their tasks and achieve their goals within the limits of administrative authority in a local region of the state. These local units are distinguished by having legal personality represented by local councils that may be elected and selected by its residents, such as provincial councils (Al-Awji, 1986).

Regional decentralization is defined as the transfer of the authority to issue administrative decisions to freely elected councils of the concerned parties (Farhat, and Al-Maani, 2000).

It is also defined as organizing the administrative apparatus in the state in a way that allows the multiplicity of its administrative persons on a regional or geographical basis. Hence, the people of regional decentralization practice general competencies in a specific geographical area under the supervision of the central administration under the concept of administrative authority (Abu Zaid, 1990).

2. Utility Decentralization

Absolute decentralization is defined as an economic project owned by the state, which is granted by the state that manages it in ways that differ from its traditional tools aiming at satisfying public needs and interests (Al-Awamleh, 2000).

Public institutions is one of the most common methods in managing public utilities. It is a kind of administrative decentralization. In this case, public utilities have a moral personality in order to achieve the greatest possible independence to enable them to achieve the goals and tasks assigned to them. But, this independence is not identical. Rather, it is subject to control by the central authority.

Since all public institutions, whether wholly or partially owned by the state, are supposed to serve social goals related to providing all facilities to citizens in various fields, particularly of a social character such as housing, transportation, health services, medical services, consumer services, social security ... Etc., they are also supposed to serve economic goals, especially in terms of carrying projects that the private sector fears entering into and not taking risks in achieving, and whose return is not guaranteed. On this basis, the annexed decentralization is resorted to in order to achieve the following (Al-Maani, 2005):

1. Moving away from the red tape and complications associated with work in the state ministries and the consequent delay in achievement and slow response to new developments and the conditions of the surrounding environment.
2. Attracting the technical skills and competencies needed to accomplish the work effectively.
3. Reducing unemployment by increasing job opportunities.
4. The state's need for projects that achieve profits to support its budget.
5. Reducing monopoly and exaggerating profits that some private sector establishments resort to.

6. Enabling some technical facilities to test working methods without being restricted to the exhausting methods of state ministries and central agencies.
7. Developing the regions of the state that need development and improving the standard of living of its citizens to stabilize them and limit their emigration.
8. Providing an appropriate environment for investing national wealth and energies that achieve economic returns, stimulating the national economy, and linking it to development policies and plans.

Decentralization and Community Development Policies in Anbar

The reconstruction process in the new Anbar is a complex and multi-dimensional process. Nevertheless, the process of social reconstruction is a basic and vital dimension of the reconstruction efforts in the framework of building a new Iraq. Long years of war and siege have left important distortions in the social conditions in Iraq in general and in the various provinces, especially Anbar. What made matters worse is the recent events of the so-called terrorist organization ISIS, which displaced, killed, and demolished three quarters of the province, which led to poor living conditions as well as the reconstruction process to start from scratch and up. For this matter, urgent programs must be prepared to rehabilitate the infrastructure and eliminate Many of the social diseases that have swept the society during the last fifteen years.

A set of social policies must be developed in order to address those most pressing social problems in the province, including (Abdulfadil, 2004):

1. The rampant unemployment among Anbar citizens and the dissolved army, which amounts to 55% of the Iraqi workforce.
2. The large number of displaced people due to the war and the forced displacement policies that were previously adopted.
3. The low living standards suffered by the segments of Anbar community due to disruptions to livelihoods, low wages, and escaping inflation.
4. Double socio-economic pressure on the middle class that was the backbone of the modern Iraqi state, including Anbar community.
5. The severe crisis experienced by Anbar citizens as only 21% of eligible

children attend primary schools in Iraq, in addition to the spread of child labor in Anbar.

6. The large number of the disabled population as a result of the war.
7. The high rate of social deprivation in terms of access to clean water, quality education, primary health care, and social security.

Nevertheless, unemployment issues and new job creation are the most pressing issues during the current stage in Anbar. Weak economic activity did not help reduce this unemployment during the past years, which may have been one of the factors that contributed actively to the instability of Iraq during the aforementioned period.

Temporary measures and short-term policies have been adopted to absorb a portion of unemployment of various formulas during the year 2018, which can be strengthened during the next year 2019. The following are the most important pillars of the said employment policy (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, National Development Strategy, 2010-2017):

Job Creation Programs in Anbar

These programs aim to create employment and employment opportunities for the unemployed in Anbar for a limited period in order to give these unemployed cash liquidity in an urgent and efficient manner through the implementation of activities within a short time without additional costs. An example of this is the expansion of the use of security guards as well as cleaning streets and public places. These programs can be expanded to include the rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools, agricultural and irrigation works, which are characterized by intensive labor, which contribute to the creation of great job opportunities.

Developing the Skills of Workers in Anbar Province

In addition to creating quick job opportunities and creating income for the unemployed in the province, there must be special job opportunities for vulnerable groups. Although the private sector is expected to play an important role in this field, the government must have special programs for the same goal. It is also necessary to parallel the processes of creating intensive work opportunities with training and skills development programs, which would create sustainable employment with the acquired skills required by the Anbar labor

market. The training centers of the Ministries of Labor, Social Security, and Education were able to develop programs to develop permanent businesses appropriate to the needs of the local market.

Small Investor Financing Programs in Anbar Province

These programs aim to help small investors and vulnerable groups in the province by providing small loans to meet their urgent needs and enhance their assets that would help the private sector increase employment and employment opportunities. These programs can be implemented through the financial and banking sector after enhancing its ability to establish permanent outlets for microfinance and projects.

The crises that affected Anbar province and prevented the use of decentralization.

First: Political and Legislative Crises

Iraq is facing heavy results, most of which are not positive, and Anbar province is trying to overcome these results. The repercussions of the American war on Iraq represent an economic blockade imposed by the major countries led by the United States, which paralyzed the Iraqi economy and damaged it, especially Anbar Province, which suffered from the American occupation for a period of eight years during which the American occupation controlled Iraq. The occupation crisis that Anbar was exposed to prevented the existence of any political decision or councils of government or local administration that the occupation worked in order that it did not exist.

When the country began to implement decentralization, the local forces clashed with the desire of some sects to divide according to their political trends. This was also helped by what Anbar province was subjected to from the ISIS hordes that tried and were able to control most of the province's cities and villages. But, the Iraqi government was able to regain control over these areas (Suleiman, 2017).

That is why Anbar has suffered many political crises that have followed since the eighties of the last century, whose effects are still continuing in the province.

Second: Economic and Social Crises

Development in Anbar is based on several components, which witnessed a lot of faltering and collapse during the period of the American occupation of Iraq, as well as during the period

of ISIS control over the province. The war with ISIS caused the loss of many of its resources and local economic potentials. Iraq, in general, and Anbar, in particular, have been subjected to several wars and numerous crises that have led to the abandonment of economic and social activity. These development crises have been reflected in Anbar as follows:

1. The Reconstruction Crisis

The United Nations and the donor countries have sought to compensate Iraq for the disasters and calamities it has suffered, and to follow the reconstruction policy. Anbar has relatively benefited from this policy, which was based on the basic needs assessment document that was drawn up by the United Nations in cooperation with the World Bank and includes the global community's call for the reconstruction of Iraq and its regions to develop its national and local projects (United Nations, 2003-2009).

However, these projects mostly came as housing projects in a basic proportion. They did not relate to satisfying the basic needs of citizens or establishing factories or economic establishments in a way that adds value to the economics of Anbar. This crisis has been doubled by what Iraq spends in terms of war compensation imposed on it and is still paying it until now (Kom, 2010).

2. The Oil Crisis in Anbar

Anbar is one of the provinces that produce oil and natural gas. It contributes about 3% of what Iraq extracts, that is, about (7) million per day. Anbar has huge reserves of oil and gas that allow it to spend on development in the future. But, the period of the seizure of oil and gas wells in Anbar Province has cost it a lot, throughout the occupation period and what it takes to rehabilitate these wells so that they can produce again from huge expenditures after their condition reached a deplorable situation (Qubrus, and Qadri).

3. The Agricultural Sector Crisis in Anbar

Despite the need for local development to double its economic resources, the agricultural sector in Anbar witnessed a major deterioration during the periods of the American occupation and after that the spread of Al Qaeda gangs and after the period of the so-called terrorist organization. After the liberation, the agricultural sector witnessed a relative growth, but there are economic problems. It impedes increasing the agricultural area and improving the quality of its crops, despite the fact that Anbar has a large area of agricultural land. In the field of growing

wheat, barley, flax and legumes, however, the production of this sector is not sufficient for the needs of the local community.

Reports of the Ministry of Agriculture confirm that there are many problems of agriculture, but the Ministry of Agriculture in the province is trying to overcome these problems.

Agricultural specialists also confirm that if agriculture is developed in the sectors of Anbar Province, the following benefits for community development can be achieved (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, National Development Strategy 2010-2017):

1. Achieving self-sufficiency for the residents of Anbar Province.
2. Providing stable income for agricultural families and peasant families.
3. Reducing unemployment among agricultural workers.
4. Increasing demand for agricultural materials and commodities.
5. Supporting complementary industries from well-known agricultural industries.
6. Achieving food security.

Infrastructure rehabilitation in Anbar

After the crises that hit Anbar, including the occupation, forced displacement, and destruction of infrastructure so that Anbar in most of its areas has become afflicted, the percentage of destruction is large and included everything, such as government institutions, buildings, electricity, water stations, roads, bridges, companies, and communication towers.

That is why the reconstruction plans included all these destroyed sectors in order to advance the province and make it one of the most beautiful provinces in Iraq in terms of the percentage of reconstruction after it had occupied the first ranks in the percentage of destruction.

For this, some of these sectors will be addressed, including:

1. Electricity Sector

Anbar continues reconstruction in all sectors after the liberation process and the devastation that befell the governorate after the events of 2014, the entry of terrorist groups and the destruction of the infrastructure, including the electricity sector, which received a large share of the destruction. The Ministry of Electricity and the Ministry of Industry and Minerals are working to repair the damaged network, re-establishing the electricity network, and increasing the generation capacity to a level that secures the supply process continuously and with a minimum

of sectors. Therefore, this cannot be achieved except through preparing a short and medium-term plan for training and increasing the efficiency of employees and executive supervisors in this sector to increase its efficiency. Anbar government has tried to achieve this since its return.

Adopting a more rational price policy and a feasible investment policy that suits the difficult social and living conditions faced by the residents of the province and improving performance efficiency with the aim of eliminating the current gap between supply and demand for electricity and paving the way for the private sector in the province to finance investments in this sector.

2. Water and sanitation in Anbar

The water and sanitation sector, like other sectors, suffers from many problems, including scarcity of drinking water, which has caused many diseases, due to the deterioration of drinking water pipelines and the leakage of pollutants into them, as well as bacteriological pollution inside the water pipes themselves.

Therefore, the specialized staffs in this field work to rebuild these services to the required level through:

1. Rehabilitating the public institution in this field in Anbar and training its affiliates.
2. Increasing the percentage of sanitation coverage for beneficiaries in Anbar by (15%) and developing a comprehensive plan to introduce sanitation in rural areas.
3. Reducing water leakage in Anbar by (15%).
4. Increasing access to water in the urban cities of Anbar to (15%) and to (20%) in the countryside.

3. Transportation

Despite the effective role that the transport sector plays in the development process and the development of the local community in Anbar, it has suffered from neglect in recent years, which negatively affected its performance. Therefore, it is necessary for these networks to regain their role. They continue to suffer from neglect in empowering society and working to continue projects Construction and economic development.

The severe weakness in the transportation sector is reflected in the development of the local community. This may appear as follows:

1. Accelerating the industrial renaissance movement in Anbar,

which entails the transportation of goods to and from Anbar.

2. Achieving a high degree of commercial liquidity to transport goods from factories in Anbar Province to different cities in Iraq.
3. Supporting the export and import industry by exporting various industrial products.
4. Easy transportation of raw materials to and from Anbar, which facilitates the speedy and scientific completion of existing and new industries and encourages them to invest.

It should be noted that after the period of ISIS, Anbar witnessed a great development in the field of transportation. The process of extending and cladding many internal and external streets in the province greatly developed.

4. Housing Sector

Housing problems in Anbar developed from a (shortage) in the eighties to (a problem) in the nineties of the last century, then to a crisis after the year 2000. According to the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction sources, there is an urgent need for about (600000) housing units (The World Bank and the United Nations, Joint Estimates for Reconstruction in Iraq: 30-31).

Thus, the number increased higher than that after ISIS gangs blew up more than 500,000 housing units in the province. The housing policy is controlled by the state allowing a minimal role for the private sector. This is the great interest in creating an environment that enables the private sector to provide affordable housing People's hands, with a special focus on meeting the housing needs of low-income groups in Anbar.

Field Study Procedures

The field study consists of the following steps:

1. The Study Hypothesis

The study starts from a basic premise which states that the application of decentralization fully contributes to the development of the local community, stimulates the local economy, and that community development programs undertake the actual implementation of decentralization, especially in Anbar.

2. Methodology

The study relied on obtaining analytical and field information on the approach of a social survey in order to determine the levels of

awareness of the members of the neighborhood committees in Anbar of the concept of decentralization, its objectives, its importance, and its relationship to the development of the local community and knowledge of their opinions regarding the local development programs in the province. The researcher conducted multiple meetings with members of the committees and a number of local officials to verify the validity of their opinions on the questions that were previously prepared after arbitration.

3. The Study Population

The study population included members of the committees in the residential neighborhoods of Anbar Province, the officials, directors of service departments and their assistants, in addition to some academics.

4. The Study Tools

The questionnaire tool was used as a means to collect information from the study sample. The questionnaire was based on personal interviews with the members of the research sample. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part included the primary data for the study sample. The second part included the basic data related to the subject of the study.

5. The Study Sample

The researcher used an intentional random sample represented by ordinary individuals, officials, managers and academics. The sample size is (200) male and female subjects.

Data Collection and Analysis

1. The Gender Variable

Table 1.

The gender of the participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	138	69%
Female	62	31%
Total	200	100

The above table indicates that the percentage of males was (69%), which is the highest percentage of the participants. The percentage of females was (31%). This indicates that the researcher found that the vast majority of officials, working managers, and working employees are males.

Table 2.

The educational level.

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Preparatory school	41	20.5%
Bachelor	88	31%
Diploma	9	4.5%
Post graduate	62	31%
Total	200	100%

The above table indicates that the percentage of those who completed the preparatory school was (20.5%) of the participants. The highest percentage was that of participants having Bachelor degrees, at (44%). The second highest percentage was for postgraduates, at (31%) from the research sample. The percentage of (4.5) was for those having diploma. It is clear that the study sample was related to the educated segment that has an active role in institutions, including individuals with specialization in this aspect.

Table 3.

The role of service institutions in the province

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Totally satisfied	81	40.5%
Partially satisfied	78	39%
Unsatisfied	41	20.5%
Total	200	100%

The above table indicates that a percentage of (40.5%) of the participants are totally satisfied with the performance of service institutions in the province. This indicates that the majority of the sample members are satisfied with the performance of service institutions. This also indicates that service institutions have a clear service for the citizen in the province. A percentage of (39%) of the participants are partially satisfied with the performance of service institutions. Some participants answered that the performance of service institutions fluctuates between good and medium. A percentage of (20.5%) indicated that they are not satisfied with the level of service provision provided by service institutions.

Table 4.

The use of decentralization in the community led to the improvement of services

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	94	47%
No	32	16%
To some extent	74	37%
Total	200	100%

The above table indicates that the percentage of those who answered that the use of decentralization in Anbar community led to an

improvement in the performance of local councils and all service institutions in providing services to the citizen was (47%). The percentage of those who answered no, was (16%), while (37%) answered that they are satisfied to some extent in that the use of decentralization led to the improvement of services in Anbar community.

Table 5.

The impact of decentralization use on the type of services provided.

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	147	73.5%
No	53	26.5%
Total	200	100%

The above table indicates that the percentage of those who answered that the use of decentralization led to an improvement in the type of services provided in the province was (73.5%), while who answered no, formed a percentage of (26.5%), which means that they think that the use of decentralization does not lead to improvement in the type of services.

Table 6.

The use of decentralization in the community led to the improvement of services

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Achievement in providing services	75	18.6%
Improving quality of services	77	19%
Getting rid of routine and complications	61	15%
Reducing unemployment	56	13.9%
Reducing monopolism and high interests	35	8.7%
Attracting skills and qualities necessary for performance	8	2%
All	92	22.8%
Total	404	100%

The above table indicates that the percentage of those who answered that all of these options are among the most important positive effects of using decentralization in the province was (22.8%). The percentage of (18.6%) was for those who answered that the use of decentralization leads to achievement in providing services to the citizen. (19%) of the participants answered that this leads to improving the quality of services provided to the citizen. (15%) of them answered by indicating that using decentralization leads to getting rid of

routine and complications Accompanying work. (13.9%) indicated that it leads to a reduction in unemployment among young people. (8.7%) indicated that this would lead to a reduction in monopoly and exaggeration in achieving profits in some institutions. Finally, (2%) of the participants answered that decentralization leads to attracting the skills and competencies needed to get the job done.

Conclusions

Meeting with a large number of councilors, academics, managers, and employees, the researcher could conclude the following:

1. The development of the local community depends on the use of open door programs for community service, volunteer work, and housing rehabilitation programs.
2. Living conditions for housing should be provided and improved by adopting appropriate strategies to work on improving the quality of work and developing human capital.
3. Achieving sustainable development for young people sector in Anbar through the roles divided among all members of society and enabling young people to take their role in life.
4. In order to raise the level of services in the province, development plans must be prepared to reduce the root disparities, provide protection for women, and educate and guide women.
5. Helping individuals build their future through the material and social services provided to them and raising the level of job creation for them.
6. Protecting children by providing basic services, such as health, education, and family care to be among the beneficiaries of institutional programs.
7. Spreading the spirit of cooperation through communication and intertwining with the institutions of the local community for the sake of cooperation and integration to serve Anbar community.

As for the most important results of the questionnaires directed to members of the local community and members, they are as follows:

1. The trends of the study sample about the role of decentralization in developing the development of the local community in Anbar province attained a degree of agreement with a medium degree.
2. There is a consensus that decentralization in society is a social

demand and that it is required in all areas of life and society, and it is one of the rights of the nation. Likewise, decentralization is now being practiced to gain political prestige.

3. There are no differences between males and females in their viewpoint on the issue of the role of decentralization in the development of the local community.
4. The residential neighborhood committees are tools of decentralization, and a basic means in determining the needs of society to reach the achievement of development goals. It increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the institution and the programs of the various institutions. It expands the circle of work for institutions that provide community development programs and increases the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions and programs of various institutions. The work of neighborhood committees is linked to partisan goals.

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