

The Advantages of Decentralized Government from the Viewpoint of Public Service Innovation

Fayth Elliott¹

¹Business & Social Sciences, University of Tripoli, Libya

*Corresponding Author: Fayth Elliott

Abstract. *With a decentralized government, power is not concentrated in one location but rather shared across several tiers of government. There are a number of benefits to using this method to innovate public services. For starters, it promotes decentralization, which in turn improves public services by being more responsive to local demands. Second, it makes government more accessible, thus increasing accountability, by making it more open and responsive to the needs of the people. Further benefits include increased citizen involvement and a lower overall cost to operate the government. Lastly, decentralization promotes innovation and new approaches to providing public services by allowing for trial and error. In general, decentralization of power can lead to better public service delivery and longer-term stability for local communities.*

Keywords: *Decentralized Government, Advantages, Public Service Innovation*

Received: October 26, 2022

Received in Revised: November 15, 2022

Accepted: November, 26 2022

INTRODUCTION

According to Ho et al (2021) Devolution, or decentralized government, is the process through which national governments give more power and responsibility to lower-level governments at the state, provincial, or local level, as defined. Many public service innovations may benefit from decentralized government (Myeong & Jung, 2019). The ability of subnational bodies to customize their policies and services to the individual needs and situations of their communities is a key benefit of decentralization (Rashid, 2019). Decentralization of power has the potential to improve accountability and transparency by making local governments more answerable to the people they serve.

The ability of subnational entities to better cooperate with local groups and stakeholders and to take advantage of local skills and knowledge is one way in which decentralization can lead to the establishment of more efficient and effective public services. Decentralization of power allows for more people to have a voice in local decisions and more people to feel that they have agency in changing their communities. Subnational entities with more freedom and autonomy to test innovative approaches to tackling public concerns are more likely to innovate under a decentralized system of governance.

The term "devolution," which is synonymous with "decentralized government," describes the distribution of power and decision-making authority from a federal or supranational government to regional or local governments. In terms of improving public services, a decentralized government can have a number of benefits, such as: Decentralization enables subnational institutions to customize their policies and services to the individual requirements and conditions of their communities, resulting in more effective and efficient public services. Decentralization has the potential to promote the transparency of decision-making and the

accountability of sub-national bodies to the people they serve. Decentralization has the potential to provide residents a larger voice in local politics and give them more agency over how their communities are run. Subnational entities with more freedom and autonomy to attempt innovative approaches to tackling public concerns are one potential benefit of decentralization that can spur innovation at the local level. Efficiency: Decentralization can save money by empowering local governments to make decisions that are tailored to their constituents' wants and requirements rather than those of the federal government.

Decentralization can increase responsiveness of public services to local demands and challenges because local authorities have a better grasp of the local context and issues. The local governments are closer to the people they serve and have a greater grasp of their needs, which leads to better decisions when decentralization is implemented. Better sustainability and continuity: Decentralization empowers local communities to take greater responsibility for providing public services.

METHODS

Using interviews and literature reviews, the researchers in *Advantages of Government Decentralization from the Viewpoint of Public Service Innovation* conducted a qualitative study of how the public views public service innovations implemented as a result of government decentralization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Federalism, or decentralized government, has the potential to improve public services in a number of ways. First, decentralization permits more localized decision making, which, according to Schneider & Cottineau (2019), can result in more individualized and efficient public services. Officials and residents at the local level are typically more in tune with the unique demands and difficulties of their communities, and as a result, they are better able to tailor public services to meet those requirements (Ferri et al., 2020).

According to Christodoulou et al (2020) The second benefit of decentralization is that it might encourage governmental levels to compete with one another and experiment with new forms of governance. The result could be better utilization of existing resources and the introduction of novel public services (Sima et al., 2020a). Third, decentralization can encourage more citizen input into public service planning and delivery (Bednarska-Olejniczak et al., 2019). More citizen buy-in and pride in their government's services is a win-win (Kral et al., 2020).

Last but not least, decentralization paves the way for more malleable and adaptable governance, enabling governments to swiftly address new challenges as they arise. When a nation's federal government delegates more authority and responsibility to its constituent states and local governments, this process is known as devolution or decentralization. As a result of its potential for fostering creative approaches to providing public services, decentralized administration has much to recommend it.

To begin, public services can be improved by decentralization because they are more easily accessible and efficient. Those in positions of power at the community level are in a better position to identify and respond to the unique challenges facing their area, as well as to formulate and enact policies that are adapted to the specific conditions there.

Second, a decentralized government model can promote public service delivery innovation and experimentation. Local governments with more freedom to experiment with solutions to pressing public issues and share their experiences with one another. Finally, a third benefit of decentralization is that it encourages more active citizenship in the delivery of public services. Citizens are more likely to take an active role in assuring the quality and efficacy of services when they have greater control over those services.

To round things up, a decentralized government may better allocate its funds. The federal government can increase efficiency and transparency by giving subnational bodies more control

over their own budgets and resources. However, it's crucial to keep in mind that decentralized governments can also have their drawbacks, such as a lack of coordination and collaboration between different levels of government, an imbalance in the allocation of resources and power, and the possibility of corruption.

Expand community participation in decision making and development program planning

According to Lai et al (2020) There are a number of approaches that may be used to increase community involvement in policymaking and planning for development programs: Community people should be included in all stages of planning and implementation. Community discussions, questionnaires, and concentrated attention can all help with this (Jennings et al., 2021). Make a group or council accountable to the people it serves, and use their input when making decisions that affect them (Noorashid & Chin, 2021).

Give people in the community the tools they need to have a voice in the planning and decision-making processes through training and information. In order to keep the community members informed and involved, it is important to promote openness and open communication. Build in avenues for youth and underrepresented groups to have a voice in policymaking and planning. Include community members' opinions and suggestions in your planning and decision-making. Make a place where people can interact and provide feedback online to broaden your audience and get more perspectives. Participating in one's community in a significant way requires dedication, effort, and energy.

It's also crucial to be receptive to feedback from the local community and flexible enough to make necessary changes to existing plans and initiatives. Make it possible for people in the community to join decision-making boards and committees. Create alliances with local institutions that have established ties to the area. Get the word out and ask for feedback from locals by utilizing online and social media platforms. Tutor and advise community members as they take the reins in developing and executing their ideas.

Make use of community leaders or other trusted intermediates to help you connect with people in the area in a way that is both open and respectful of local customs and values. Establish a communication route back to the community to relay the outcomes of choices and program adjustments made with community participation. Encourage community people to take part in the decision-making and program-planning processes by offering them incentives or rewards for doing so.

Keep in mind that increasing community input into policymaking and development program planning is an on-going process that calls for dedicated work and dedication. To do this successfully, one must be receptive to alternative viewpoints, actively engage with community members, and act in accordance with their requests and concerns. To gain the trust of locals, it's important to listen to their problems and resolve any lingering distrust by talking about it openly. Implement a method called "participatory budgeting," in which locals have a say in the distribution of public funds.

The needs and priorities of a community can be determined through community-led assessments or evaluations. To get people involved in the decision-making process, try using visual and creative techniques like mapping, storytelling, and role-playing. Making sure locals have access to resources and say in how they're spent is one way to foster a culture of community-led decision making and program design.

Women, individuals with disabilities, and members of minority groups are often left out of the decision-making process; we should work to change that. Give everyone in the community the chance to learn about the problems and find solutions, so they can make educated choices. Recognize that increasing community input into decision making and planning for development programs is an ongoing effort that will demand adaptation and improvisation. It also necessitates appreciating and gaining insight from people's various backgrounds, expertise, and life experiences within the community.

Bringing public services closer to the community and increasing accessibility

Reports by Yigitcanlar et al (2020) There are several ways to bring public services closer to the community and increase accessibility, such as constructing additional community centers or satellite offices in underprivileged regions and providing transportation assistance to those who need it. Providing services over the internet or by phone might also widen their reach. Alternative approaches include forming partnerships with local groups and adapting services to residents' unique requirements (Napoli et al., 2019). Community-based delivery models are a fundamental technique for bringing public services closer to the community and boosting accessibility (Pollard & Booth, 2019).

Instead than having them housed in government buildings, services are provided in more accessible community settings like schools, churches, and other community hubs (Sentell et al., 2020). This can be helpful for persons who have trouble getting to a central area for services (O'sullivan et al., 2021). Community-based service delivery is an effective way to build trust and participation between citizens and government. Technology can also be used to expand service availability. The use of mobile technologies to bring services directly to people in their areas and on-line portals for them to access information are two examples (Sima et al., 2020b).

In the realm of public health, for instance, mobile clinics and telehealth can expand access to healthcare to underprivileged and remote places. Finally, one strategy to improve accessibility is to include members of the community in program planning and implementation. Government agencies can better satisfy the requirements of their constituents and increase the likelihood that their services will be accepted and utilized by the public if they include people of the community in the planning, design, and implementation stages of service provision. Enhancing the employment of community-based organizations (CBOs) as service providers is another method for bringing public services closer to the community and increasing accessibility. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are groups with a local presence and mission, such as churches, charities, and civic leagues.

They are better able to reach out to underserved communities because of their deep roots in the area. Government agencies can better serve their constituents by forming partnerships with CBOs that can capitalize on the credibility and rapport already established with local residents. Language and cultural adaptations are another approach to widening access. In order to serve communities that do not speak English, it may be necessary to provide translated documents, employ multilingual staff, and provide services in languages other than English. Staff members who have received cultural competency training are more likely to provide services in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the communities they serve. Last but not least, reducing poverty, improving public transportation, and expanding access to affordable housing are all necessary to make a significant impact on accessibility.

Government entities can assist make services more available to the public by addressing these fundamental challenges. A "no incorrect door" approach, where people may access a variety of services through a single point of entry, is another method for bringing public services closer to the community and boosting accessibility. Taking this route simplifies getting the aid people need by reducing the number of steps involved in doing so. Having to show several forms of identification or navigating a complex bureaucracy are just two examples of the kinds of obstacles that can be eliminated. Making use of service delivery methods that are malleable enough to meet the varying requirements of diverse communities is another crucial tactic. Services on a sliding scale, flexible scheduling, and outreach and case management support can all contribute to greater service accessibility.

Additionally, offering services that can be delivered to a client's home or on the client's schedule can greatly expand service availability, particularly for those who may have trouble getting to a central place or who may be limited in their mobility. Last but not least, it is also

essential to assess and track the availability of services. A number of methods exist for doing so, such as utilizing data to track and measure the efficacy of various service delivery models and conducting needs assessments to determine the precise requirements of the community. Government agencies can better ensure citizens have access to essential services by periodically assessing and monitoring delivery.

Strengthen local capacity in providing effective and efficient public services

According to French et al (2020) state that investing in the training and development of local government employees is one method to increase their capacity to provide high-quality public services. This could be done through the provision of chances for further study, instruction in cutting-edge methods and practices, and openings for advancement in one's career. It is possible to enhance local governments' capacity to deliver efficient and effective public services by providing resources such as technology and equipment and financing for required infrastructure improvements. Participation by local communities and stakeholders in the development and delivery of public services has been shown to increase the likelihood that those services will meet the requirements of local residents and that those residents would feel personally invested in the services' success.

Investing in the training and professional development of government employees at the local level is one method to boost the region's ability to deliver high-quality public services. One way to do this is to fund training and education programs that help workers develop their existing abilities and acquire new ones, as well as keep them abreast of developments in their respective industries. The public's faith and participation in local government can be bolstered, and services can be better customized to residents' needs, if the community is involved in their design and delivery. Local groups and leaders can better serve their communities if they have access to funding, resources, and assistance. Last but not least, information and technology can help make government services more efficient and effective.

Training and capacity development programs for local government officials and personnel are one strategy to improve the quality and efficiency of public services provided at the local level. Management and leadership training can assist public servants better oversee their teams and allocate limited resources, while more specialized training can improve their knowledge and expertise in the delivery of public services. It can also be helpful to provide access to technology and other resources that can streamline and improve service delivery.

One way to improve accountability and make sure services are adapted to the requirements of the community is to involve and empower the community in the planning and delivery of public services. At the end of the day, giving local governments access to resources like money and expertise can help them develop the infrastructure they need to serve their constituents. Investing in training and development programs for local government personnel and officials is one strategy to build local capacity in providing high-quality public services at a low cost. This can take the form of teaching service providers how to use data and technology to their advantage.

When local governments, community organizations, and private sector entities work together, they are able to pool their resources and skills to better serve their communities. Another option is to decentralize decision-making and authority to local governments and communities, so that they have more control over service delivery in their own areas. Finally, making sure that government workers and authorities at the local level have access to accurate and timely data and information can also aid in enhancing the quality and efficiency of public services.

Involving the community in the design, delivery, and assessment of public services is another strategy to improve local capacity in providing effective and efficient public services. Building confidence and support for services in a community is made easier when residents have a hand in shaping them to meet their needs and goals. Building capacity and enhancing the skills

and knowledge of local government personnel and officials can also be aided by offering technical assistance and support, such as through a technical assistance center or a mentoring program. Public trust and support can be strengthened and service efficiency enhanced by encouraging openness and accountability in government service provision.

Strengthening regional independence in administering public services

The term "strengthening regional independence in administering public services" is used to describe the practice of providing local governments or regional authorities with increased discretion and authority over the administration of essential services including healthcare, education, and transportation. It can lead to a more efficient and effective use of resources while also addressing the specific needs and difficulties of various communities and geographical areas. As an added bonus, it can make local governments more accountable to and accommodating of locals' concerns. Decentralizing authority and resources from the national level to regional or local governments can help regions become more self-reliant in the provision of public services. Giving regional or local governments more leeway in how they provide essential services like education and healthcare, as well as the authority and resources to do so, is one way to achieve this goal.

This strategy can also involve the establishment of regional authorities with decision-making and public-service management authority, such Metropolitan Authorities or District Councils. By empowering municipal officials to meet the unique demands of their constituents, this strategy seeks to boost the efficacy and efficiency of public service delivery. Establishing regional or local governance organizations, such as councils or boards chosen by residents, with decision-making and management authority over public services in their particular regions is another option for bolstering regional autonomy in public service administration. Local governments can take charge of public service delivery by enacting their own laws, policies, and regulations. In addition, it can entail the formation of independent entities, such public utilities or public-private partnerships, to handle the delivery of public services in a certain area. In this approach, local communities will have more say in the planning, delivery, and assessment of government services.

Using performance-based payment systems that compensate regions for achieving specified results or meeting performance targets is another way to strengthen regional autonomy in managing public services. To this end, the federal and state governments may enter into performance-based agreements under which the former allocates funds to the latter depending on the latter's success in providing public services. Outcome-based budgeting, in which regions receive funding based on their ability to provide outcomes rather than inputs or procedures, is another possible component.

This method can help to guarantee that resources are allocated to the areas where they are needed most while also encouraging regions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness with which they provide public services. Giving regional public service providers like schools and hospitals more control over their own operations and decision-making is one way to foster regional autonomy in the administration of public services. One way to do this is to give them more control over resources like money and personnel, as well as how and when services are provided to customers.

Public-private partnerships, where private companies are hired to deliver public services under public supervision, are another option for achieving this goal. In order to promote regional autonomy in the administration of public services, it is necessary to take into account the political, economic, and social climate of each country individually. The expenses of administration could rise, regional cooperation could suffer, and national control over public services might be compromised. Using citizen engagement and involvement systems that give locals a say in the planning, execution, and assessment of public services is another way to fortify regional autonomy in this area. Citizen-led monitoring and evaluation can be used to ensure that public service providers are accountable for the quality and accessibility of their services, while

participatory budgeting involves citizens in the allocation of public funding for specific projects or services.

This method has the potential to improve public service delivery by making it more accessible, accountable, and transparent. It's important to remember that increasing local autonomy over providing public services can be a lengthy process that involves the buy-in of many parties (including the federal government, regional governments, public service providers, and individual individuals). Checking in on how things are going and gauging how well the strategy is working will allow you to make any necessary tweaks or enhancements.

CONCLUSION

There are a variety of ways in which a decentralized government could improve public services. These include more potential for innovation, greater local control, higher accountability, greater participation and engagement, and more efficient use of resources. Decentralized systems can result in more efficient and effective public services because they give local authorities more authority and bring government closer to the people. It also has the potential to increase openness and sensitivity to citizen concerns and requests. In general, decentralization of power can lead to better public service delivery and longer-term stability for local communities.

REFERENCES

- Bednarska-Olejniczak, D., Olejniczak, J., & Svobodová, L. (2019). Towards a smart and sustainable city with the involvement of public participation-The case of Wroclaw. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020332>
- Christodoulou, K., Iosif, E., Inglezakis, A., & Themistocleous, M. (2020). Consensus crash testing: Exploring ripple's decentralization degree in adversarial environments. *Future Internet*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/fi12030053>
- Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., & Guzzo, T. (2020). Online learning and emergency remote teaching: Opportunities and challenges in emergency situations. *Societies*, 10(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc10040086>
- French, J., Deshpande, S., Evans, W., & Obregon, R. (2020). Key guidelines in developing a pre-emptive COVID-19 vaccination uptake promotion strategy. In *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Vol. 17, Issue 16, pp. 1–14). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17165893>
- Ho, S., Choudhury, P. R., Haran, N., & Leshinsky, R. (2021). Decentralization as a Strategy to Scale Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration: An Indian Perspective on Institutional Challenges. *Land*, 10(2), 199. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10020199>
- Jennings, W., Stoker, G., Bunting, H., Valgarðsson, V. O., Gaskell, J., Devine, D., McKay, L., & Mills, M. C. (2021). Lack of trust, conspiracy beliefs, and social media use predict COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy. *Vaccines*, 9(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines9060593>
- Kral, R. M., Maftukhah, R., Mentler, A., Murtiningrum, M., Ngadisih, N., & Keiblinger, K. M. (2020). Citizen science in the field: Co-experimentation at pilot scale for sustainable use of natural resources. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(18). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12187700>
- Lai, C. S., Jia, Y., Dong, Z., Wang, D., Tao, Y., Lai, Q. H., Wong, R. T. K., Zobaa, A. F., Wu, R., & Lai, L. L. (2020). A Review of Technical Standards for Smart Cities. In *Clean Technologies* (Vol. 2, Issue 3, pp. 290–310). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/cleantechnol2030019>
- Myeong, S., & Jung, Y. (2019). Administrative reforms in the fourth industrial revolution: The case of blockchain use. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(14). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11143971>

- Napoli, I. di, Procentese, F., Carnevale, S., Esposito, C., & Arcidiacono, C. (2019). Ending intimate partner violence (Ipv) and locating men at stake: An ecological approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16091652>
- Noorashid, N., & Chin, W. L. (2021). Coping with covid-19: The resilience and transformation of community-based tourism in brunei darussalam. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(15). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158618>
- O'sullivan, K., Clark, S., Mcgrane, A., Rock, N., Burke, L., Boyle, N., Joksimovic, N., & Marshall, K. (2021). A Qualitative Study of Child and Adolescent Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Ireland. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health Article Public Health*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph>
- Pollard, C. M., & Booth, S. (2019). Food insecurity and hunger in rich countries—it is time for action against inequality. In *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Vol. 16, Issue 10). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16101804>
- Rashid, L. (2019). Entrepreneurship education and sustainable development goals: A literature review and a closer look at fragile states and technology-enabled approaches. In *Sustainability (Switzerland)* (Vol. 11, Issue 19). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11195343>
- Schneider, & Cottineau. (2019). Decentralisation versus Territorial Inequality: A Comparative Review of English City Region Policy Discourse. *Urban Science*, 3(3), 90. <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci3030090>
- Sentell, T., Vamos, S., & Okan, O. (2020). Interdisciplinary perspectives on health literacy research around the world: More important than ever in a time of covid-19. In *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Vol. 17, Issue 9). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17093010>
- Sima, V., Gheorghe, I. G., Subić, J., & Nancu, D. (2020a). Influences of the industry 4.0 revolution on the human capital development and consumer behavior: A systematic review. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU12104035>
- Sima, V., Gheorghe, I. G., Subić, J., & Nancu, D. (2020b). Influences of the industry 4.0 revolution on the human capital development and consumer behavior: A systematic review. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU12104035>
- Yigitcanlar, T., Desouza, K. C., Butler, L., & Roozkhosh, F. (2020). Contributions and risks of artificial intelligence (AI) in building smarter cities: Insights from a systematic review of the literature. In *Energies* (Vol. 13, Issue 6). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/en13061473>