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Internal migration in the context of decentralization: The case of Sudan.

By:

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Abstract:

This paper analyzes internal migration in the context of decentralization. To do so the study looks at the patterns of internal migration in Sudan and examines the correlation between internal migration and some socioeconomic variables. The information available in the 2008 census revealed that about 10% of the total population changed their places of residence in their lifetime. All but three states are sending states and the most receiving state is Khartoum State. Internal migration is also found to be negatively correlated with poverty indicators and positively correlated with consumption expenditure per capita per month, however, the correlation between in- migration and youth literacy is uninformative. The study recommends implementation of balanced

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development between states and creating job opportunities at state level, subsidizing poor states to formulate poverty reduction strategies and to conduct more specialized research on internal migration to fill the data gap.

Key words: Internal migration, Decentralization, Sudan

1.1 Introduction

Internal migration is the movement of people from one area to another in the same country and can be voluntary or forced. Voluntary migration is the movement of people into a new area by their own choice being motivated by “pull” factors, whereas forced migration is the movement of people into a new region against their will; with some push factors forcing them to move. Push factors refer to factors that encourage involuntary migration such as land and water scarcity, while pull factors refer to factors that induce voluntary migration such as high urban wages (Bigsten, 1996 and Wouterse, 2010).

Migration is determined by economic, social, political and environmental factors. For instance people move from one area to another seeking jobs, security, better education and health services etc. In the literature of migration, some researchers argue that push factors are stronger than the pull factors as they think that rural problems rather than

urban attraction are the major cause of population migration (Stockdale, 2002,). Other researchers believe that pull factors such as more investment in the urban areas and the resulting job opportunities are more crucial than the push factors (Harris Todaro 1970, Lipton, 1977). A third group of researchers argue that the two factors are interrelated such that those who are pushed into migration are simultaneously pulled by the expectation of better life elsewhere (Kainth, 2009, Ackah and Medvedev, 2010). Migration can also be viewed as diversification strategy. For instance, a developed urban center may provide employment opportunities for supplementing farm income (Bilsborrow et al. 1987); infrastructure could enhance market participation by reducing transaction costs, thereby improving rural incomes (Renkow et al. 2004) and credit provision could avert an important source of market failure (Wouterse, 2010).

Accordingly, migration can be understood in social, economic, political and institutional contexts. Among the issues related to population movement is the quality of life in the sending and receiving areas and the way they exercise political power. Decentralization has the potential to improve local service provision as it allows public expenditure decisions to be made at a level of government that is closer and more responsive to a local constituency, which is closely linked to migration and its

determinants (Litvack and Seddon 1999, Wouterse, 2010). For instance, improvements in infrastructure that facilitate access to input and output markets could improve agricultural productivity, provision of education and health services could develop human capital, consequently reducing an individual's need to migrate away from their residential areas.

In Sudan, the establishment of an effective local government system has been very essential because Sudan is a large scale country with a cultural and ethnic diversity. Hence the decentralization policies were implemented by successive governments in 1951, 1971 and 1981 (Hamid, 2001). After a decade of that, the 4th Constitutional Decree of 1991 adopted a federal system of governance. Accordingly, the country was divided into nine states (Wilayat) each having its own government, legislative body and a number of provinces and local councils exercising power at the local level. In 1993, the country was further subdivided into 26 states so as to delegate more power over smaller geographical entities. In 1995 the federal system was consolidated further by devolving more financial powers to the states thereby reducing the powers of the central government. The 1998 Constitution reaffirmed the federal system and included within its stipulations a map detailing the names, boundaries and capitals of the 26 states, thus making it difficult to change (Hamid, 2001).

Despite the delegation of more political and financial power to the states; still internal migration was a prominent phenomenon in Sudan. According to the 2008 census data, only Khartoum state, Red Sea, and Blue Nile were receiving states while the remaining 11 states were sending states; with Northern state, South Kordufan, West Darfur, North Kordufan and Nahr El Nil being the most sending states.

Among the key objectives of the decentralization policies is to promote the states and localities as a means of reducing rural-urban poverty, migration and slowing down the rapid growth of the large urban centers. However, its outcome depends on its design and the institutional arrangements governing its implementation (Akpan, 2011).

In Sudan, the number of migrants has been increasing rapidly from 0.7 million in 1973 to 1.3 million in 1983, to 3.4 million in 1993 and 3.7 million in 2008. This paper aims to find out why population movement from peripheries to the center is ever increasing, despite the fact that successive governments implemented decentralization to ensure balanced population distribution, empower local people and to promote local development. It also intends to shed light on the link between decentralization and development and the potential impact of development on internal migration.

This paper is important in view of the fact that understanding of the linkages between decentralization and access to social services and population movement will enable the policy makers and planners to design sound policies and strategies to deal with internal migration.

1.2 General objectives

Based on the forgoing, the broad objective of this paper is to determine whether decentralization and devolution of social services improve outcomes and curtailed internal migration.

1.3 Specific objectives

The specific objectives are to:

1. Review the literature of internal migration in the context of decentralization for better understanding of the link between the two issues.
2. Examine the reasons behind internal migration in Sudan, with reference to the case of Khartoum State as the most receiving state.
3. Assess the role of decentralization in population movement.

1.4 Methodology

The paper adopts descriptive approach to identify the levels and trends of internal migration in Sudan using the 2008 census data. It also explores the reasons behind such migration and the preference of Khartoum State as the most favorable destination for the majority of internal migrants. Using the primary data collected by the National Population Council in 2011. Secondary data and information from the literature will be used to review the relationship between decentralization and internal migration. Correlation analysis is used to find the relationship between migration and socio-economic variables such as poverty rate, access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, literacy rate, youth unemployment, proportion of households using firewood, consumption expenditure per capita and maternal mortality.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews the literature of migration in the context of decentralization. Section 3 describes decentralization in Sudan and discusses the relationship between decentralization and development. Section 4 presents the main findings concerning the levels and trends of internal migration and discusses the reasons behind the internal migration. Section 5 should be concluding and proposing recommendations.

2. Literature review

The relationship between migration and development is complex and not easily comprehensible. While migration models aim to explain levels, trends and forecast possible migration patterns, migration theories and macro theory in particular, seeks to study aggregate moves and are best suited to answer questions pertaining to socio-economic development and labor market concerns, as well as, the impact of migration on receiving and sending regions (Mahmud et al, 2010). Within this perspective, Todaro (1969) and Harris-Todaro (1970) put forward the notion that rural-urban migration is affected by the differential in expected earnings between origin and destination; and this notion dominated theoretical research until recently.

Other theories argue that rural-urban migration flows consist of distinct streams with distinct objectives, and thus, migration need not necessarily cause unemployment in any meaningful sense. In fact, it is fully believable that it is the economic growth and inequality that causes migration, and not vice versa. Other macro-economic variables of interest include health and education, marriage, infrastructure, informational and

migrant networks at destination, and on the other hand, poverty, population density and landlessness at place of origin (Mahmud et al, 2010).

One possible starting point for examining the relationship between decentralization and migration is the use of a farm household model (Singh et al. 1986; Ellis 1993, Wouterse, 2010). According to the household economic model, migration decision is based on the on-farm returns to labor time compared to off-farm earning opportunities.

In other words, with a given asset base such as land, farm infrastructure and equipments besides a given amount of total labor time, the household's decision to migrate is based on a comparison of the returns to using more of that time on the farm against deploying it to nonfarm wage earning or other income-generating activities. Increase in the returns to time spent on farm activities caused by increases in farm output prices and/ or farm productivity would tend to reduce the motivation to migrate, whereas a rise in off-farm wage rates and greater opportunities to undertake rewarding off-farm employment would increase the motivation to migrate (Wouterse, 2010).

Decentralization is expected to improve service and infrastructure delivery in poor rural communities (Owusu, 2005 Wouterse, 2010). Enhanced infrastructure and service provision can improve the returns to agricultural products in a variety of ways. For instance, improved transportation and communication infrastructure facilitates spatial integration of product and factor markets, thus decreasing transactions costs. By lowering the transaction costs of market exchange, infrastructure can improve the net returns to agricultural production (Renkow et al, 2004). By increasing the returns to agricultural production, decentralization may

reduce the need for migration as means to supplement agricultural income or reduce risk through income diversification.

An important assumption behind decentralization is that it should add to greater institutional and political stability, as a result for better knowledge about local or regional conditions and through improved social services delivery. Also there is an argument that in the context of decentralization the support for national development policies may be better understood, in that it could create greater cooperation between national and local levels of governmental power. However, decentralization may also increase power conflicts and provide more opportunities for corruption (Desai and Potter, 2008, Vletter, 2012).

Also the World Bank and other international donor agencies consider decentralization as an important poverty reduction strategy. They claim that a democratic local government is more reactive to local citizens' needs, including the majority of the poor, which will lead to poverty reduction. However, in many cases these neoliberal shifts have resulted in increased poverty and underdevelopment, especially in rural areas. The linkages between decentralization and poverty reduction have not been convincing, but instead had often negative outcomes in the form of increased poverty and marginalization (Crawford, 2008, p. 236), cited by Vletter, 2012.

Equity in social services provision is not always attainable in the context of decentralization; for instance, Philippine's government assessment of the experience of decentralization in health sector reveals doubt as to whether decentralization has an overall positive effects; it found only slight improvement in health status and persistence inequities in

services access (Popic and Patel, 2011). In such circumstances, decentralization may not help in deterring population mobility.

In summary some attributes such as country's size, population, and its political and institutional inheritance and diversity have a considerable influence on decentralization and are crucial for its success. The success of decentralization represented in social services delivery, poverty reduction, creation of job opportunities, in turn may lead to curtail population mobility.

3.1 Decentralization in Sudan

There is a consistent drive towards decentralizing the power structure to administrative units lower than the central government in Sudan. Decentralization predates political independence in 1956 and was used during the colonial era as a means of coping with the country's vast area, cultural diversity, the weak communication linkages between its parts; hence prohibitive costs of infrastructure networks. In that, limited administrative and judicial powers were delegated to tribal leaders throughout Sudan in 1922 and in 1951, the Local Government's Act was endorsed and thereby the country was divided into urban and rural councils with considerable powers delegated to them under the supervision of the provincial commissioners that were established in 1943. (Hamid, 2000; Musa, 1998). Decentralization scheme became more prominent by 1971.

The 1971 Peoples' Government Act established provincial administrations with broad legislative and executive powers. Each province was in turn divided into several councils at the district, urban, rural, neighborhood, village, and market levels (Hamid, 2001). The main objective of the Act was to decentralize decision making away from the

national capital, Khartoum, and to provide channels for popular participation at lower levels. However, according to Rondinelli (1981), it resulted in the concentration of authority at the province headquarters and only limited powers were delegated to lower councils (cited in Hamid, 2001).

One decade later, the 1981 Regional Government Act was enacted, whereby the country was divided into five regions and a separate entity for the national capital. Similar to those created in 1971, each region was subdivided into several urban and rural councils. Although the regions had their own elected governors, governments and parliaments, they were financially dependent on the center. The experience of regional governance system operated by the 1981 Act was criticized as being largely ineffective in spite of the considerable attention and publicity given to it (Hamid, 2001).

A federal system of governance was adopted by the 4th Constitutional Decree in 1991; and accordingly, the country was divided into nine states (wilayat) each having its own government, legislative body and a number of provinces and local councils administering the affairs at the local level.

Following this, a number of constitutional decrees were enacted with the aim of detailing and consolidating the federal system further. For instance, in 1993 the 1991 decree was amended to subdivide the country into 26 states in order to delegate power over smaller geographical entities (Hamid, 2001). In 1995 more financial powers were devolved to the states with the intention of reducing the powers of the central government. The 1998 Constitution reaffirmed the federal system and included within its

terms a map detailing the names, boundaries and capitals of the 26 states, thus making it difficult to change.

3.2. Decentralization and development in Sudan

The important reason for decentralization is to encourage the active participation of citizens in local tasks. This may not only lead to an increase citizens' sense of dignity, and the development of community spirit in them, but also development projects will be implemented more rigorously and enthusiastically. Fiscal decentralization is also expected to redistribute the resources among regions and reflects the commitment and responsibility for the provision of public services needed to meet the demand at the local level, and thus improve fairness in dealing with different areas.

States' Support Fund was established under the law of the National Fund for supporting the states in 1995. One of the main objectives of establishing States' Support Fund was to lay the foundations of justice, balanced regional development, and to eliminate the disparities and paradoxes of the concentration of development in certain areas.

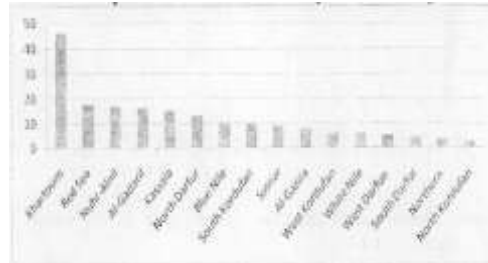
The implementation of decentralization in Sudan, however, coincided with the onset of armed conflicts in Southern Sudan, Southern Kordufan, Blue Nile, Eastern Sudan and finally Darfur. This led to escalation of military and security spending which represents a serious contender for development, and thus it reduces the chances of development, and destroys all previous development efforts (Hamid, 2011).

Another factor that negatively influenced reaping the benefits of decentralization is the adoption of economic liberalization policies in 1990

s, under which the State abandoned many of its functions in regard to direct production of goods and services (Hamid, 2011). The Center has transferred a number of its functions such as the provision of basic education, health, drinking water, etc. to the states; while the domestic private capital was not eligible to undertake this task and this weakened the federal state's role in all developmental levels (federal, state levels, local). Moreover, the huge expansion in federal government and the consequent huge increase in the existing expenditure on these government bodies are at the expense of development expenditures.

Regional disparities in regard to development expenditure are evident. According to Figure (1), the development expenditure as a percentage of the total expenditure is by far the highest in Khartoum state and the lowest in North Kordufan.

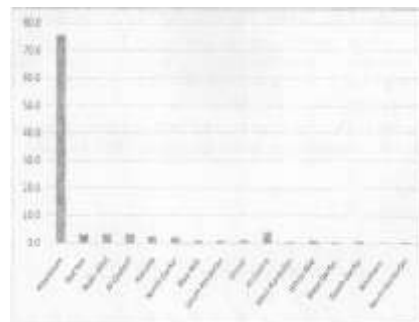
Figure 1: Development expenditure as a percentage of the total expenditure in the fiscal year 2003, by state



Source: States accounts for fiscal year 2003 (Adapted from Hamid, 2011).

Slightly above three quarters of development expenditure in Northern Sudan is shared by Khartoum State (76%) followed by Al- Gezira 4.1%, Nahr- Alnil 3.2%, Al- Gadarif and Red Sea 3%. The least development expenditure is reported in Northern State (0.05%) and West Darfur (0.03%), (sec Figure (2)).

Figure 2: Percentage distribution of development expenditure by state (2003)



Source: States accounts for fiscal year 2003 (Adapted from Hamid, 2011).

The immediate consequence of the varying development expenditure was the deepening social and economic inequalities between states.

Regarding to provision of basic services such as clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, it is clear that Khartoum state and Northern state are by far the best while Darfur region, Al-Gadarif, Blue Nile and North Kordufan are among the worst (Table 1).

According to the findings of a survey conducted by Ministry of Finance, Central Bureau of Statistics and African Development Bank to extract the households' basic information in 2009, more than 50% of the total population in 9 out of the 15 States were below the poverty line (Table 1). Moreover, youth unemployment rate is above 30% in Red Sea and Kassala States and above 20% in the remaining State except the Blue Nile State, North and South Kordufan States.

Education and health indicators by state are used as a proxy of social services provision. According to Table (1), youth literacy rate is above 80% in Khartoum State, Northern, Nuhr-Alnil and Al-Gezira State and below 50% in South and West Darfur. Maternal mortality is an indicator of health status of countries or states, in 11 out of the 15 states; maternal mortality ratio is above 500 per 100000 live births. These regional disparities have fuelled the massive rural-urban migration; which in turn negatively affected development process. For instance, the sending states face labor shortage because of the selectivity nature of migration and this, in its turn, impedes

local development. On the other hand the massive influx of people in the receiving states causes pressure over the already limited existing resources.

Table 1: Social and economic indicators by state, 2008.

State Variable	Ethiopia	Nahr Abail	Red Sea	Kassala	Al-Qadifiya	Akroum	Genina	White Nile	Sinnar	Blue Nile	North Darfur	South Kordofan	North Darfur	West Darfur	Kh Darfur
% of households with no sanitation facilities	15.8	27.6	67.4	62.3	59.4	9.4	45	53.1	51.5	46.8	51.8	60.0	49.6	59.4	58.3
% of households that use firrwood for cooking	50.2	37.4	51.1	66.4	59.1	6.0	27	35.3	49.2	80.1	79.7	87.7	92.1	94.8	89.6
% below poverty line	36.2	37.3	37.7	36.3	51.1	26.0	37	55.5	44.1	56.5	57.9	60.0	69.4	55.6	61.2
Average consumption expenditure per capita per	162	168	125	164	136	205	15	131	145	122	124	116	105	143	121
Literacy rate among the age group 15-24	89	83	51	52	68	89	83	72	71	50	65	64	60	44	46
Unemployment rate among the population aged 15-24	28.1	26.3	35	36	37.2	28.5	29	27.9	21.9	13.9	12.9	18.7	23.5	29.2	29
% of households accessed clean	87	62	21	54	43	82	81	49	75	43	44	60	38	38	37
Maternal Mortality Rate	437	143	565	466	564	389	42	503	509	578	531	591	618	615	581

Source: Central Bureau Statistics, 2008 Census, Survey of household's basic information, 2009.

4.1 Internal migration in Sudan

Available statistics indicate that the intercensal internal migration has increased since the first population census in 1955/ 1956. The share of internal migrants more than doubled from 0.7 million in 1973 to 1.3 million in 1983, to 3.4 million in 1993 and 3.7 million in 2008.

Life time internal migration represents 10% of the total population enumerated in 2008 census and the current migrants (those who changed their residence during the year preceded the census) were about 1 percent.

According to the 2008 census, the number and percentage of internal migrants increased and concentrated in Khartoum that received about 49% of all the migrants from different States (Yousif et al, 2010).

As reflected by Table (2), only Khartoum and Eastern regions are the attractive receiving ones in both 1993 and 2008 censuses with Khartoum region being the most attractive receiving region. This is consistent with the fact that it has the lion share in development expenditure and has the best socio-economic indicators, compared to the other regions. Kordufan and Darfur regions were the most sending region in 1993 and 2008 whereas the Central region was a gainer in 1993 and a losers in 2008; Northern region however, was the loser in 1993 and in 2008.

Table 2: Life time In, Out and Net migration by Region 1993-2008

Region	1993	2008				
	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net
Central	639047	633395	5652	814.900	912	97.938
Darfur	367618	684570	-316952	188019	696181	1.093.286
Eastern	490022	199374	290648	650836	194599	456237
Khartoum	1534712	110859	1423853	3.812.107	72.360	3.739.747
Kordafan	261810	882293	-620483	86.204	1.179.490	-1.387.627
Northern	106625	424876	-318251	90.956	1.391.807	-1.300.851

Source: data on 1993 is adapted from Yousif et al 2011, data on 2008 calculated by the author.

To discuss the issue of internal migration in the context of decentralization, we considered the current migration rates (those who changed their residence during the year preceding the census) rather than the life time migration because life time migrants might have changed their place of residence more than once during their life - time and current

migration have taken place during the most recent experience of decentralization.

Data analysis proves that only three States in Sudan have positive net in-migration, namely, Khartoum State, Red Sea and Blue Nile States, whereas the remaining States including Al-Gazira State were sending states. The deterioration of the Gazira Scheme is among the push factors accounted for out-migration.

Table 3: Current In-Migrants Out-Migrants and Current Net Streams of Migration and Migration Turn-Over, Sudan: 2008 census

	In migrants		Out migrants		Net migration		Migration turn-over	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Both sex								
Northern	4339	0.65	10559	1.56	-6220	-0.93	14898	2.22
Nahr El Nil	5322	0.50	8885	0.83	-3563	-0.34	14207	1.34
Red Sea	4729	0.36	3487	0.26	1241	0.09	8216	0.62
Kassala	3667	0.21	4955	0.29	-1287	-0.07	8622	0.50
Al Gedarif	4783	0.37	5167	0.40	-384	-0.03	9951	0.78
Khartoum	73665	1.53	48999	1.02	24666	0.51	122664	2.55
Al Gazira	10249	0.30	25596	0.74	-15347	-0.45	35845	1.05
White Nile	11733	0.71	14942	0.91	-3210	-0.19	26675	1.62
Sinnar	5868	0.48	8714	0.71	-2847	-0.23	14582	1.19
Blue Nile	5119	0.66	4361	0.56	758	0.10	9480	1.22
North Kordofan	10784	0.39	16560	0.59	-5777	-0.21	27344	0.98
South Kordofan	7843	0.58	13172	0.98	-5329	-0.40	21015	1.57
North Darfur	3428	0.17	7964	0.40	-4536	-0.23	11393	0.57
West Darfur	2021	0.16	7740	0.62	-5719	-0.46	9761	0.79
South Darfur	11617	0.29	14997	0.38	-3379	-0.09	26614	0.67
Upper	17625	1.98	12293	1.39	5332	0.60	29918	3.36

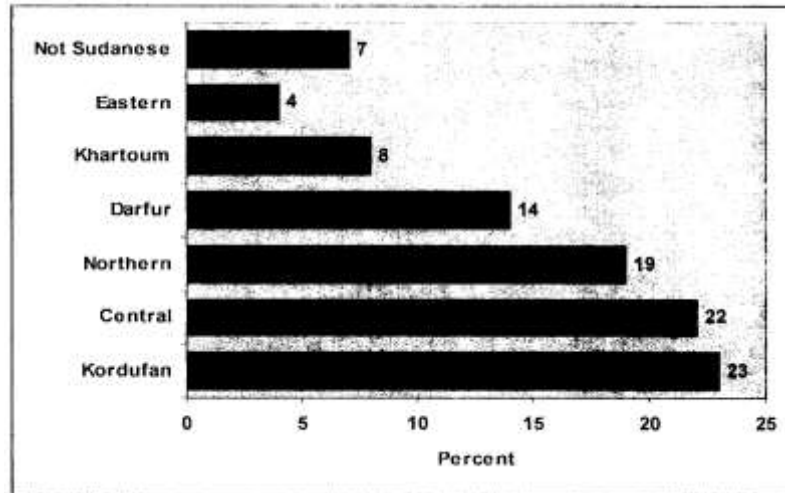
Nile*								
Jong lei	17231	1.36	9944	0.79	*7287	0.57	27175	2.14
Unity	6465	1.28	5211	1.03	1254	0.25	11676	2.31
Warrap	23260	2.59	13256	1.50	10004	1.12	36516	4.07
Northern Bahr El Ghazal	18026	2.71	7170	1.10	10855	1.63	25196	3.79
Western Bahr Kl Ghazal	16838	5.97	17926	6.34	1087	-0.39	34764	12.33
Lakes	4657	0.81	7213	1.25	-2555	-0.44	11870	2.06
Western Equatoria	8311	1.46	9834	1.72	7523	-0.27	18145	3.19
Central Equatoria	12556	1.29	17706	1.81	-5150	-0.53	30262	3.12
Eastern Equatoria	13922	1.67	7409	0.90	6513	0.78	21332	2.56
Total	304060	0.82	304060	0.82	0	0	608119	1.65

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008 Census.

***The Southern States are presented in the table to balance the migration matrix.**

The region of origin for 23% of the in-migrants arrived in Khartoum State during the year preceding the census date is Kordufan, those whose region of origin is Central region, Northern, Darfur and Eastern region were 22%, 19%), 14% and 4 percent respectively. About 8 percent of the in-migrants stated that their region of origin is Khartoum suggesting that they were once out-migrants from Khartoum, (Figure (3).

Figure 3: Current in-migrants by region of origin, Khartoum state, 2008



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008 Census.

4.2 Reasons behind internal migration

In some parts the poor agro-ecological conditions result in low agricultural output, which is an important reason for farmers to migrate. This is supported by the cross-sectional analysis of migration and natural resources scarcity; the analysis showed that migration tendencies correlate strongly with annual rainfall, vegetation cover and crop yields. (Van der Geest, 2011, Vletter, 2012). It is also consistent with what is actually going on; for instant, drought and desertification were among the push factors in Kurdofan and Darfur regions during the 1980 s.

There is an obvious limitation of data on internal migration in Sudan. The census questionnaire includes five questions related to internal migration; namely on the place of birth, place of numeration, place of usual residence, place of previous residence and duration of residence. These questions never address the reasons behind, or cultural impacts of migration and very few specialized surveys on internal migration are cited. In 2011 the National Population Council conducted a household survey in the outskirts of Khartoum State to examine, besides the other issues of internal migration, the reason behind moving to Khartoum State. Khartoum State was chosen as an area of study as it is the most receiving state (Ahmed, 2011).

In this survey, the reasons for moving to Khartoum State was asked to two samples of in-migrants, a sample taken from those who had migrated to Khartoum State within the last seven years (recent in-migrants) and a sample taken from those who had in-migrated before seven years (non migrants). For both samples, the main reason detected for moving to Khartoum State was searching for work (reported by 64%). The second main reason was armed conflicts as reported by 22% and 17% of the recent in migrants and the non-migrants respectively. Seeking better life in Khartoum was stated as the reason for migration, by 7%) of the non-

migrants compared to 3% of the in migrants. Seeking better education and better health services were respectively reported by 3% and 1.3% of the in-migrants compared to respectively 4.3% and 1.4% % of the non-migrants (Table (4)).

Table 4: Percentage distribution of those who moved to Khartoum state before and after 2004 by reasons of migration, Khartoum state, 2011

Reasons for migration	Migrated in after 2004 (recent in-migrants) N = 156	Migrated in before 2004 (Non-migrants) N = 139
Searching for work	63.5	64.0
Better health services	1.3	1.4
For better education	2.6	4.3
Life is better in Khartoum	2.6	6.5
Due to conflict	21.8	16.5
Drought	0.6	1.4
Others:	7.7	5.8

Source: National Population Council, 2011 Survey.

Correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between in-migration and the socio-economic variables presented in Table (1). The variables used in the analysis were namely, percentage of households using fire wood, percentage of households with no sanitation facilities, percentage of households accessed to clean drinking water, percentage of households living below poverty line, average consumption expenditure per capita per month, literacy rate among population aged 15-24, unemployment among population aged 15-24, and maternal mortality. Data on all variables including the number of in-migrants were taken by state.

The findings revealed that there is a moderate negative correlation between internal migration and inaccessibility to sanitation facilities, the correlation is significant at 5% level of significance ($r = - 0.60$; $P = 0.01$). The relationship is consistent to expectations, because as the

percentage of households inaccessible to sanitation facilities in a state increased, the likelihood of migrating to it decreases.

There is also a moderate negative and significant correlation between in-migration and utilization of firewood ($r = - 0.59$; $P = 0.02$). Internal migration is weakly negatively correlated to poverty and accessibility to clean drinking water with ($r = -0.47$; $P = 0.08$) and ($r = - 0.45$; $P = 0.09$) respectively. Though the correlation is weak insignificant but the negative sign is indicative.

There is a positive, moderate correlation between in- migration and consumption expenditure per capita per month with ($r = 64$, $P = 0.01$) the correlation is significant at 1% level of significance. Maternal mortality as a proxy of quality of health is found to be weakly negatively correlated with in-migration with ($r = - 0.45$, $P = 0.09$). The negative relationship is acceptable.

The correlation between internal migration and youth unemployment rate and youth literacy rate are both weak and insignificant, with ($r = - 0.12$, $P = 0.66$) and ($r = 0.44$ and $P = 0.9$) respectively. The detected positive relationship between internal migration and youth literacy is inconsistent with what is theoretically expected and need further investigations. This distortion may be because Red Sea State is among the few receiving states while the youth literacy rate is among the lowest (50%).

Proponents of decentralization argue that decentralization can equalize regional disparities and promote economic growth through a well-managed intergovernmental finance system (Popic and Patel, 2011). Also among the potential impacts of decentralization, is its positive effect on poverty, increased in job opportunities and reduction in inequalities.

However, the available data indicate something different. More than 60% of the internal migrants were seeking job opportunities suggesting that decentralization has not created enough jobs at the state level to deter population movement. Conflicts over resources were also another push factor as reported by over 20% of the more recent in-migrants. Moreover, internal migration is found to be correlated to variables that suit to be used as proxy for social services delivery and community welfare. Thus if the goals behind decentralization are achieved, it is most probable internal migration will be reduced and balanced population distribution among the states will be obtained.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The recently increased move towards decentralization raises concerns about the internal migration patterns that might emerge as a result. It is expected that people will move to the areas that receive a disproportionately higher share of social services, security and achieve sustainable development. All the better life indicators are also expected to be gained through implementing decentralization as local people are more knowledgeable with their environment and would share in designing policies and practice power.

Decentralization was implemented in Sudan even before the independence era in different manners until in 1993 the country was subdivided into 26 states in order to delegate power over smaller geographical entities. Though decentralization was meant to ensure balanced population distribution between states, internal migration is continuously increasing with massive streams heading to the center.

The present paper aims to investigate why the purposes of decentralization in maintaining balanced population distribution is not attained. Thus it investigates the correlation between internal migration and some socioeconomic variables and assesses the reason behind internal migration. The findings revealed that internal migration is negatively correlated to poverty indicators such as inaccessibility to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, utilization of firewood as fuel used for cooking, maternal mortality as quality of health indicator and positively correlated to consumption expenditure per capita per month. From previous studies the main reasons behind population movement was seeking for job and evading armed conflicts.

The study is not assessing the decentralization process; however, it is raising a question why people are moving to the center while decentralization and delegation of power to local governments is implemented mainly to empower local people and to accelerate pace towards regional stability and balanced growth. It also questions the creditability of the process itself, is there a real delegation of power and people are moving for the sake of movement? Or the process itself is not real? On the bases of our discussion and findings the study recommends the following:

1. Government policies should, aim at ensuring balanced development between states and creating job opportunities at state level to absorb the massive increase of youth entering the labor market.
2. To subsidize poor States to implement poverty reduction strategies.
3. To conduct in-depth researches to investigate the creditability of the decentralization process.

4. To conduct more specialized researches on internal migration to fill the data gap.

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