

## **Impact of Provincial Councils of Service Delivery within the Intergovernmental Relations: With Reference to Decentralization In Sri Lanka**

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Decentralization has developed into an increasingly familiar theme in administrative theory and democratic practices in the global context. Countries have indicated different types of decentralization such as political, administrative, and fiscal for various reasons. The democratization of countries also leads to more decentralization. There were 69 democratic countries in 1989, which raised to 125 by 2014. According to Piccone (2016), 2.28 billion people lived in democratic countries in 1989 that increased to 4.18 billion by 2014. A growing number of countries are introducing decentralization mechanism to promote more efficient service delivery, advance democratic reform, encourage economic growth, and reduce poverty. The meaning of decentralization transmits some part of the central government's powers to sub-national level. The passage into the law of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka and the Provincial Councils Act No. 42 of 1987 to satisfy that demand hailed as the most controversial codification of the 20th century in Sri Lanka. The Provincial Councils established in Sri Lanka function under the supervision of the central government, and a new service delivery system was established under the Provincial Council system to ensure widespread administrative, political, and economic transformation in Sri Lanka. The primary objective of this study is to examine the autonomy of Provincial Councils to provide a better service delivery under the intergovernmental relations in Sri Lanka. The research problem aims to identify the reason(s) for conflicts between devolved subjects in the central government and Provincial Councils, and it emphasises how that result influences the provincial level service delivery system in Sri Lanka. The study used a broad range of secondary sources and textual sources such as reports of the finance commission, central bank reports, official reports of Provincial Councils, and other government legal documents in Sri Lanka. This is a study based on period of 1988 to 2016. The results reveal that decentralization without political, administrative, and fiscal autonomy will not be successful at regional and local levels. Every Provincial Council has financial dehydration, a power struggle with the elected executive and the central government and the appointed executive, and the central government has not yet devolved the Provincial Councils on several subjects. Besides, problems have arisen over the administrative and financial management due to the intervention of the central government for Provincial Council activities. Evidently, Sri Lanka's inter-government relations fail to provide a better service delivery system, and the decentralization process in the country has revealed signs of re-centralization after the establishment of Provincial Councils.

**Keywords:** Financial Dehydration, Re-Centralization, Provincial Councils, Regional Autonomy

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