

The Future of Refuge in the Middle East: Social and Political Impacts

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Abstract

This study examines the subject of “the science of future studies” in looking at an important topic, which is the future of refuge in the region on the host countries. It investigates the historical view, and the legislative and legal view that decided the rights of the refugee and the host country. Also, it discusses the future of refuge in the region and the scientific theories that studied this phenomenon and its challenges to the host countries. It focuses on the sources of refuge and its crises, and the wars and conflicts that cause these crises. It discusses the hot spots and the causes of conflicts in the region. The study recommends eliminating the hotbeds and disputes in order to formulate a new world entertaining justice. The study recommends researchers, intellectuals, scholars and decision-makers to activate the foundations of integrity and justice in dealing with the refugees’ problem, and strengthening global efforts to deal with this aggravating international problems through the development of a global strategy that contributes to ending disputes and conflicts in a manner that ensures finding political, social and security solutions that guarantee the voluntary return of refugees to their homeland safely. It also recommends strengthening the efforts of the international partnership to help refugees and support the countries hosting them especially those suffering from deteriorating economic and social conditions.

Keywords: Arab World, Future science, Middle East, Politics, Refuge social and political impacts, Socio-political studies

Introduction

The science of future studies and orientalism has become important in political science due to its insightful future outlook with accurate expectations within the controls of this science. It puts decision-makers before their responsibilities towards many decisions based on prediction. This results in committing fewer mistakes and building clearer strategies that serve

humanity. In view of the importance of the issue of refuge in the world and the developments in terms of legislations regulating the international and regional levels and its effects on the host countries and the resulting problems in the Middle East, which contains more than half of the world's refugees.

Studies that examine the future of refuge and expectations are scarce due to the novelty of this science despite of its seriousness in dealing with important issues, especially at the level of international relations, which is one of the branches of political science. In-depth studies are needed to enrich the related literature. The importance of the study lies in identifying the main variables that govern the refuge process, the causes and sources of refuge, and building future perceptions based on "expectations of what will happen to this phenomenon in the future" taking into account the other factors and dimensions that have a role in the refuge process, such as the economic variable which is the main variable.

Based on the study problem, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the reasons for refuge in the region? And what are its sources?
2. Does the phenomenon of refuge have clear effects in the region?
3. What is the emerging explanation for its escalation, especially in the twenty-first century?
4. What is the future of this phenomenon in the region?

Importance of the Study

This study aims to build a holistic, complete and comprehensive vision of the future of refuge in the region based on the sources of refuge, conflicts and crises in the region and building expectations and predictions on them. The importance of the study emerged in the fact that it attempts to reveal the aspects of the phenomenon of refuge in the region and its direct and future effects on countries and individuals, and the resulting challenges and future repercussions in various political, economic, social, cultural and other aspects. The spatial limitation of the study is that it is restricted to The Middle East. It is limited to period from 2000-2020.

Definition of Terms

Future science: It is the science that investigates the possibilities that can happen in the future and have a great impact as a result of their occurrence according to possible expectations, and possible predictions. It is about the time that follows the present time. It is an orientalist science that relies on investigation, anticipation and exploration of what will happen in the future. It has developed since the 1980's.

Refuge: It is the protection granted by a state on its territory, or over a place under its authority, to an individual who has requested protection (Encyclopedia of Politics, 2001, p. 467). This means that an individual or a group who have moved from one place to another and a host country grants him legal protection.

The Middle East: It is the political division that includes the Arab Gulf states, Yemen, the Levant, Iraq, Egypt, Iran and Turkey with geographical borders. The Middle East region overlooks the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Arabian Sea.

Methods

The study adopted the historical method based on studying the historical events related to the study, and then analyzing and criticizing them scientifically, logically in order to reach the results that serve the purposes of the study, and reach generalizations and basic ideas on the subject.

A Historical and Legislative View of Refuge

Refuge is one of the ancient phenomena that human history has known since the beginning of creation, but with the development of time it has evolved and these have taken a large space in the academic research, and international law. When reading the history of refuge, we find that the Greek era is the beginnings of this phenomenon. The Greek were applying it on the perpetrators of certain crimes, then it was applied in the Roman era. Later, this phenomenon expanded in the Christian era and people turned to churches for fear of the Roman Empire (UNHCR, 2000, p. 22). The phenomenon has received much discussion in its modern sense in various legislative, legal and humanitarian aspects, and international agreements followed this successively, especially after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, which led to the refuge of one million Russians to Europe due to conflicts and turmoil there (John, 2017, p.18). After this, the problems of refuge agitated during the Second World War due to the large numbers of refugees, which amounted to about 60 million.

In the Middle East, 1948 was a notable year in the refugee issues as one and a half million Palestinians were expelled from their country. This year became the largest witness to the highest displacement process in the history of the region, which has continued until the present time. It has taken on multiple human dimensions and in various aspects. There were many details in it that revolve around an important idea, which is how an entire people were displaced from their land to give it to others unjustly. Then there were several crises that led to waves of refuge, such as the Lebanese civil war in 1975, then the Second Gulf War in 1990, and the US occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the fall of Baghdad. And then the repercussions of the Arab Spring catastrophes in 2010, especially the Syrian crisis, which increased the number of refugees at unprecedentedly high rates. The huge numbers surprised everyone and resulted in the deportation and displacement of millions of people, especially to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and other European and Western countries.

International Legal Legislation

In the midst of these crises that sweep the world from time to time and that caused an increase in the phenomenon of refuge that drew the attention of countries and peoples, jurists of international law tried to legally control this phenomenon in a way that guarantees the rights of states, individuals and human groups. So, a number of international agreements were established to protect the rights of the refugee and the countries hosting them such as: Montevideo Agreement (1933), European Convention on Human Rights (1950), The Convention of the Refugees Status (1951), Declarations of the Regional Shelter (1967), The Protocol of Refugees Status (1967), Caracas Treaty (1976), The Organization of African Unity Agreement (1969), The American Convention of Human Rights (1969) (but it came into force in 1978), Directives of the European Council (1976), African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), The Cartagena Declaration of Refugees (1984), The Arab Charter of Human Rights (1994), Directives of the Council of the European Union in (2004) (Al-Zalifi, 2013, p. 20-28).

Through these agreements, we note the extent of international interest in this phenomenon, so that it is based on legal and legislative foundations that guarantee rights and duties for all, and the global human view, which confirms the growth of this phenomenon and its wide spread in the last century. With the developments of events in the Arab world and the expansion of the Arab revolutions and turmoil during the Arab Spring, the League of Arab States moved with several meetings and consultations due to the massive waves of refugees that resulted in it. This led to the organizing an agreement by the League of Arab States in 2017 as the disasters of the Arab Spring became a milestone in the scene of refuge issues because they increased the number of refugees till their number in the Arab world reached half of the number of refugees worldwide. These actions at the international and regional level are a clear evidence of the size of the problem, its importance and its effects on what the refugee communities leave on the host countries in various aspects whether culturally, politically, economically, socially and others.

The Future of Refuge, Its Theories and Challenges

The science of future studies and orientalism is one of the modern sciences that is based on predictions for future periods, which may be predicting for long years, based on solid research foundations and standards. Scientists specialized in this science have expanded it and developed several theories such as:

Refuge Theories

Several political theories have emerged that discuss the issue of refuge in the hope of achieving comprehensive and compelling facts that researchers and decision-makers can benefit from. Among the most important theories that explain refuge are the following:

- The traditional theory: It mainly focuses on economic theories in achieving income levels and job opportunities, and this will be reflected in the standard of living of immigrant individuals and groups (Hammou, 2015).
- The theory of structural demand: It is based on the fact that work in developed countries creates a “structural” demand for unskilled immigrant workers to fill undesirable jobs that the native workers do not accept. The most famous pioneer of this economic theory is Douglas Massey (1990) who argues that the post-industrial economy has widened the income gap between white collars that require high levels of education while the jobs that refugees usually do may not require education (Massey & Williamson, 1990, p. 40).
- The theory of family reunification: This theory is based on the fact that refugees aspire to live with their relatives in the developed host countries, through family reunification (Massey & Williamson, 1990, p. 10-12).
- The theory of future integration: It means adapting to the new environment, including customs, traditions, language learning, the laws of these new countries and other procedures.
- The theory of follow-up educational attainment: It states that resorting to the pursuit of educational attainment and completion of studies.
- The theory of wars and refuge: It is at the forefront of theories that explain migration and refuge. Wars are a state of collective oppression and persecution that lead to destruction and genocide that result in leaving the country of origin.

- The Poverty Theory: Here, people live below the poverty line and the lack of a life of security and social welfare, and it becomes difficult with it to live in the country of origin (Robert, 2009, p. 10-12).
- The Population Explosion Theory: It revolves around the issue of increasing population growth in a country that leads to the explosion of this society and entails new problems of poverty and other disasters that will befall this society (Van Bavel, 2013).

These are the most important theories that dealt with the phenomenon of refuge. Despite the multiplicity of these theories in this field, we have tried to mention some of them that may explain this phenomenon.

Challenges Left by Refugee Crises

There is no doubt that refugee crises leave multiple impacts on the host countries, especially when the number of refugees is greater than the number that leaves an economic impact on the host country, as the economy is the backbone of any country in the world. Any refugee's community will constitute a clear pressure on the host country, whether at the level of the overall economy or at the level of various other sectors. The new refugee community will constitute a new pressure card on the economy of the host country, such as food, education, health, water and many other services accompanying these leftover effects due to refuge. Then this challenge will be followed by the political challenges that accompany refugee crises, as the economic chariot cannot be separated from the horse of politics. This will inevitably entail some changes, especially at the level of the internal policy of countries, and what the refugee crises will produce on legislative and legal formulas at the internal level to accommodate these societies and what is accompanied on budgets with the foreign policy approved by the international community and international legal entitlements in addition to the social and demographic challenges and what will be left by the weight of refugees on the infrastructure and state resources. Social challenges have a significant and clear impact due to the increase of unemployment rate, poverty and social changes that will inevitably be affected by the transactions of the new society. This will affect the cultural challenges of societies as a result of the new frictions with the of the host countries societies. Thus, all of these challenges will leave clear impacts on the societies of the host countries.

The Future of Refuge in the Region

This section discusses the most important and main topic of the present study, which is the future of refuge in the region. This depends on a number of factors as follows:

1. External interventions: There is no doubt that the Middle East region is located in the heart of the world and has many and varied resources, which made it the focus of the attention of the greater powers since ancient times. This competition may lead to wars, disputes and conflicts, especially since the interventions of the major countries in the region are clear and uninterrupted. They support countries and regimes at the expense of other regimes in greed for the resources of the region to serve their interests without caring about the peoples and systems of the region.

2. The internal interventions: if we look at the scene of events, we find that there is a clear problem in the political systems that govern the region, and this comes in harmony with the factor of external interventions. It is not possible to leave this region without conflicts and clashes such as artificial border disputes which are provoked whenever the need arises, and this will inevitably lead to conflicts, wars and struggles, which leads to strengthening the sources of refuge in the future. These conflicts are future foci that are used whenever the need arises.

Since most of the countries in the Middle East are Arabic states, we find that their formation is the result of political, social, and economic data. There were many views about their founding within several approaches in three directions as follows:

1. The first orientation sees that social fluctuations such as the state before colonialism interfered in its process and enjoyed the existing legitimacy of society, and this trend supports its emergence due to internal factors.
2. The second trend is the result of an external drive that serves the interests of the major countries.
3. The third orientation is the mixing orientation between the first and the second, so that the internal forces and the external forces converge in this process of formation (Abu Dames, 2019, p. 15-22).

This had clear effects on the various countries and peoples of the region and it had reversed negative effects that led to the failure of all political and economic development processes, and their peoples began to live in the orbit of division and fragmentation with the support of the major powers, which made the region remain on fire in an arena of endless conflicts. Thus, this reinforces the sources of refuge and its causes, which are mostly wars and conflicts, and the peoples of the region have lost their hopes and ambitions under the weight of the conflicts of these regimes, which planted all the seeds of conflict hotspots that lead from time to time to wars, conflicts and disputes. Refuge is the only result of such a situation.

If we look at a group of crises in the region that occurred previously, we will find that all of these crises are sources of future refuge later as the struggle caused by these crises are continuous disturbances, such as

- The Palestinian Cause, in which a large part of its Palestinians were expelled from their homeland. This had plunged the Arab region into the largest refugee crisis in its history in 1948, which was later called the Nakba year (Catastrophe Year of 1948). And then the dilemma occurred again after the defeat of 1967 and the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This supports the idea that the source of refuge is always the unilateral measures taken by the occupier. Britain had the most important and prominent role in displacing the Palestinians from their land through its policies of supporting Jewish immigration to Palestine, denying the right of the Palestinian people to their land, and also its role in consolidating the idea of the Jews' right to the land of Palestine, which prompted the Zionist gangs. Based on this view, they wanted to terrorize and displace the owners of the land from their land. It is the policy that Israel applied after its establishment in 1948 which denied the rights of the Palestinians. Rather, Israel has sought and still seeks today to support and market the idea of the Jewish state and expansion at the expense of Arab land, which means that there are new waves of displacement and refuge based on the new premises undertaken by the occupying state. This added to the future and expected sources of refuge (Aqil, 2018, p. 229; Hilal, 2021, 97-99).

- Unilateral solutions biased to one party have also played a role in aggravating the region's problems, such as the solutions of the Palestinian Cause, which is often unsatisfactory and unfair that resulted in expected refugee crises.
- The Israeli policies that support the continuation of settlements at the expense of the Palestinian people also play a role in new refugee migrations, in addition to exacerbating differences between Palestinian organizations, which may result in new refugee problems.
- Another important factor that plays a role in new refugee migrations is related to the possibility of the return of the Arab Spring as a result of the Arab countries' tendency towards authoritarianism, with the ability of the ruling regimes to absorb the peoples, lessons and attitudes from what happened, the spread of corruption, poverty and many social and political problems, and the ruling elites' monopoly of power at the expense of the peoples which will lead inevitably to new conflicts, which means that we will witness new sources of refuge.
- The strengthening of the sectarian war, which is supported by internal and external forces to serve their interests, so the apparent dispersion in the region appeared on the surface and became a "wick" that is used at all times as a new source of future refuge under the heading of religious refuge.
- The absence of national loyalty in many Arab countries, due to the rootedness of national, sectarian, clan or tribal loyalties, which prevents the collective national identity and opens the door to future internal conflicts that will cause new waves of refuge (Aqeel, 2018, 334)
- Civil wars that may ravage countries, as happened in the Lebanese Civil War, in addition to the re-division of some countries into several sections, as is currently taking place, and this is also a source of refuge.
- Successive crises that may result from artificial disputes, such as the current war in Yemen, and other crises, all of which are candidates for new sources of refuge.
- The conflict with Iran is an indicator that may result in new problems with Iran and the possibility that this conflict will increase and new refugee crises will occur.
- Countries such as Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen are still unstable, which are in control and are candidates for turmoil again, which will increase the sources of refuge in the region.
- The fears that surround the peoples of the host countries from the issues of settling refugees, so that these peoples (the people of the original country) would become marginalized from the point of view of custom. This may lead to a state of instability that may in turn lead to disputes between the original population and the refugees, and new problems would emerge.
- The nature of the political formation in the region leads to conflicts because they were not based on just foundations.
- The nature of technological developments and the rapid development they led to the approximation of the distant. The easiness of revealing or discovering facts, and rapid communication between people led to many movements such as the Arab Spring.
- The Kurds and their project in which they seek to establish a Kurdish state, may cause pressure on the neighboring countries in which there are Kurds such as in Iraq and Syria. This means that we will have more division and new numbers of refugees.

It is noticeable that all of the aforementioned crises are humankind and of their evil natures that do not allow stability because of greed and man's power over others. These characteristics of a human group may be few, but they exist, so how if these evil human groups take over and lead this world, we will face more refugee crises even at broader level at the

world level. Thus, we must confront this evil human nature and reduce it and lead the world preaching the global human being. Investigating these crises will inevitably affect all of humanity and will leave significant impacts, as the number of refugees in the world exceeds 60 million people, and almost half of them in the Middle East.

Results

The results of the study show that more conflicts, disputes and discrepancies will lead to wars, and this means more waves of refugees. The nature of the international system based on the foundations of strong and weak states as dependent states make the powerful states control the world's resources in the service of their interests and purposes without regard to the interests of the concerned peoples and states. Also, the multiple waves of refuge have led to the failure of many plans and strategies for countries, especially the host countries. The existence of hotbeds of conflict is considered a new cause for disputes, wars and more refuge. The conditions experienced by the refugee communities, which lead to more poverty, oppression and unemployment, will lead to serious social problems that affect the communities. Most of the refugee crises posed a major security challenge to the countries hosting refugees. The results of refuge posed major problems for the receiving host countries in various political, economic, social and cultural aspects. The repeated waves of refuge have affected the political behavior of countries. There is a lack of balance based on wisdom and rationality in dealing with countries' files and ending their disputes on fair grounds. The entire international system is facing a great moral crisis that has led to the exploitation of peoples to serve small and few groups.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study sought to address the future of refuge in the region, addressing the various rights of refugees in the host country. It analysed the future of refuge and explained the scientific theories that investigated this phenomenon and its challenges on the host countries, focusing on the sources of refuge, and the role played by the continuation of wars and conflicts without solutions in fueling the political and security situation, which is reflected in the continuation of the phenomenon of refuge such as the refugees crisis after the Palestinian Cause, which is the central issue, and the engine behind the cycle of violence and conflict in the Middle East. In addition, the hotspots and conflict still play a dangerous role in the continuation and complexity of the refugee problem, such as the Syrian, Iraqi, Lebanese and Yemeni crises. Furthermore, the repercussions of the regional and international conflict with Iran, and the intertwining of this file with the entrances to regional crises highlights the importance of addressing these explosive crises wisely and realistically, with the aim of formulating a new world governed by justice, integrity and transparency, and ending this human crisis.

The study concluded that it is necessary to eliminate conflicts and disputes and dry up their causes and sources to limit the waves of refugees, as their continuation has led to the failure of many plans and strategies taken by the host countries. In addition, there should be a balance based on wisdom and rationality in dealing with regional political and security crises, and ending them on a just basis, at a time when the entire international system is facing a major moral crisis that has led to the failure to reach to just solutions that end the suffering of the peoples that are still reeling under the scourge of conflict and wars. The study also shed light on the conditions experienced by refugee communities such as poverty, unemployment, and social, economic, political and cultural inequity, which may lead to serious social and security problems that will have important repercussions on the host communities, and their integration with the refugees.

The study recommends activating the foundations of integrity and justice in dealing with the refugee problem, and strengthening global efforts to deal with this aggravating international problem through the development of a global strategy that contributes to ending disputes and conflicts and in a manner that ensures finding political, social and security solutions that guarantee the voluntary return of refugees to their homeland in a safe manner. It also recommends strengthening the efforts of the international partnership to help refugees by all means and methods, in addition to supporting the countries hosting them especially those suffering from deteriorating economic and social conditions. The world should deal with the world crises on the basis of integrity and justice, exclude all groups of evil nature from the centers of decision-making and governance, advocate a global belief away from any destructive classes or racism, establish international bodies that seek to achieve contentment and well-being for all peoples without exception, strengthen global unity, deal with refugee issues in a way that guarantees solutions and their return to their homeland, develop a global strategy to ensure that no new events related to refuge and refugees will occur, and that disputes and conflicts will be ended immediately, and respect the rights of peoples to life and survival.

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