


THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES

Abdullah Abdulaziz Bawazir<sup>A</sup>, Mohamed Aslam<sup>B</sup>, Ahmad Farid Osman<sup>C</sup>, Sharareh Shahidi Hamedani<sup>D</sup>



ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p><b>Received</b> 07 April 2023</p> <p><b>Accepted</b> 05 July 2023</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> The main purpose of this study is to evaluate changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries to recognize that the inexorable demographic momentum will have important implications for the economic and social forces that will shape future societal well-being.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Demographic Change; Middle East.</p> <div data-bbox="172 884 480 1131" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>Theoretical framework:</b> The demographic change-economic growth relationship has become the dominant paradigm in the field of population and development, and an advocacy tool for highlighting the benefits of the age structure change. The young dependent population of a nation decreased compared to the working-age counterpart following an annual birth decrease. Thus, with lesser individuals who are dependent on the country, it has the chance for fast economic growth.</p> <p><b>Design/methodology/approach:</b> This study is based on a deductive approach to focus on the evaluation of changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries.</p> <p><b>Findings:</b> The working-age population in the Middle East region is a potential agent of change toward realizing a more successful future, through their role in reaping the demographic dividend. It is imperative for Middle Eastern countries to implement the needed macroeconomic strategies and changes, fiscal, regulatory, and labor-market policy changes, which will take full advantage of the employment prospects.</p> <p><b>Research practical social implication:</b> This study makes significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge of changing demographics in Middle East countries. Policymakers need to carry out critical action which is crucial if the working-age population in the Middle East is to attain its maximum potential, offer solutions to problems, and assist the region in benefiting from the demographic dividend.</p> <p><b>Originality/value:</b> This study is different from the previous studies because it evaluated the changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries in a detailed way.</p> <p>Doi: <a href="https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i7.2303">https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i7.2303</a></p>

<sup>A</sup> PhD in Economic. Lecturer. Faculty of Business, UNITAR International University. Selangor, Malaysia. E-mail: [Abdullahbawazir22@gmail.com](mailto:Abdullahbawazir22@gmail.com) Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8398-0646>

<sup>B</sup> PhD in Economics. Senior Lecturer. Department of Economics, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. E-mail: [maslam@um.edu.my](mailto:maslam@um.edu.my) Orcid <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6463-5561>

<sup>C</sup> PhD in Economics and Business. Senior Lecturer. Department of Decision Science, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. E-mail: [faridosman@um.edu.my](mailto:faridosman@um.edu.my) Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9007-4908>

<sup>D</sup> Doctor of Business Administration. Lecturer. Faculty of Business, UNITAR International University. Selangor, Malaysia. E-mail: [sharareh.pt@unitar.my](mailto:sharareh.pt@unitar.my) Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1179-2202>

## A MUDANÇA DO PERFIL DEMOGRÁFICO DOS PAÍSES DO ORIENTE MÉDIO

### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** O objetivo principal deste estudo é avaliar a mudança dos padrões demográficos nos países do Oriente Médio para reconhecer que o inexorável impulso demográfico terá implicações importantes para as forças econômicas e sociais que moldarão o bem-estar social futuro.

**Estrutura teórica:** A relação entre mudança demográfica e crescimento econômico tornou-se o paradigma dominante no campo da população e desenvolvimento, e uma ferramenta de defesa para destacar os benefícios da mudança na estrutura etária. A população jovem dependente de uma nação diminuiu em comparação com a população em idade ativa após uma diminuição anual do nascimento. Assim, com indivíduos menores e dependentes do país, tem a chance de crescimento econômico rápido.

**Design/metodologia/abordagem:** Este estudo é baseado em uma abordagem dedutiva para focar na avaliação de padrões demográficos em mudança nos países do Oriente Médio.

**Conclusões:** A população em idade ativa na região do Médio Oriente é um potencial agente de mudança no sentido da realização de um futuro mais bem-sucedido, através do seu papel na recolha do dividendo demográfico. É imperativo que os países do Médio Oriente implementem as necessárias estratégias e alterações macroeconômicas, alterações fiscais, regulamentares e políticas de mercado de trabalho, que aproveitarão plenamente as perspectivas de emprego.

**Investigação implicação social prática:** Este estudo faz contribuições significativas para o corpo existente de conhecimento de mudanças demográficas nos países do Oriente Médio. Os decisores políticos têm de levar a cabo ações críticas que são cruciais para que a população em idade ativa no Médio Oriente atinja o seu potencial máximo, ofereça soluções para os problemas e ajude a região a beneficiar do dividendo demográfico.

**Originalidade/valor:** Este estudo é diferente dos estudos anteriores porque avaliou os padrões demográficos em mudança nos países do Oriente Médio de forma detalhada.

**Palavras-chave:** Mudança Demográfica, Oriente Médio.

## EL CAMBIO EN EL PERFIL DEMOGRÁFICO DE LOS PAÍSES DEL ORIENTE MEDIO

### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** El objetivo principal de este estudio es evaluar los cambios demográficos en los países del Oriente Medio para reconocer que el impulso demográfico inexorable tendrá importantes consecuencias para las fuerzas económicas y sociales que determinarán el bienestar social futuro.

**Estructura teórica:** La relación entre el cambio demográfico y el crecimiento económico se ha convertido en el paradigma dominante en el campo de la población y el desarrollo, y en un instrumento de defensa para destacar los beneficios del cambio en la estructura de edad. La población joven dependiente de una nación disminuyó en comparación con la población en edad de trabajar después de una caída anual en el parto. Así, pues, con personas más pequeñas y dependientes del país, tiene la posibilidad de un rápido crecimiento económico.

**Diseño/metodología/enfoque:** Este estudio se basa en un enfoque deductivo para centrarse en la evaluación de los cambios demográficos en los países del Oriente Medio.

**Conclusiones:** La población en edad de trabajar en la región del Oriente Medio es un posible agente de cambio hacia un futuro más exitoso a través de su papel en la recaudación del dividendo demográfico. Es imperativo que los países del Oriente Medio apliquen las estrategias y los cambios macroeconómicos necesarios, las políticas fiscales, reglamentarias y del mercado laboral, que aprovecharán plenamente las perspectivas de empleo.

**Investigación e implicaciones sociales prácticas:** Este estudio aporta una contribución significativa al actual conjunto de conocimientos sobre los cambios demográficos en los países del Oriente Medio. Los encargados de la adopción de decisiones políticas deben adoptar medidas decisivas que sean decisivas para que la población en edad de trabajar en el Oriente Medio alcance su máximo potencial, ofrezca soluciones a los problemas y ayude a la región a beneficiarse del dividendo demográfico.

**Originalidad/valor:** Este estudio es diferente de estudios anteriores porque evaluó en detalle los cambios demográficos en los países de Oriente Medio.

**Palabras clave:** Cambio Demográfico, Medio Oriente.

## INTRODUCTION

Demographic dividend denoted an economic growth element following the changes in demographic compositions, thus leading to an increase in the percentage of the working-age population and a subsequent decrease in the dependent population. A duration of time encompassing a demographic transition is the prerequisite for an economy to undergo a demographic dividend, that constitutes a decrease in fertility and mortality, followed by the succeeding change in a population's age composition. The young dependent population of a nation decreased compared to the working-age counterpart following an annual birth decrease. Thus, with lesser individuals who are dependent on the country, it has the chance for fast economic growth.

The Middle Eastern region has come to portray a very low dependency ratio. Such a high percentage of the population in Middle Eastern nations were predicted to attain optimal and productive years in the future, thus initiating the demographic dividend prospects. The transient age composition augmented economic growth with the existence of appropriate policies for the sustained human capital investment of children and youth. Additionally, the constructive incorporation of the increasing working-age population in the labour market strengthened the positive cycle of improving employment, health, and educational prospects. Consequently, lesser dependency ratios could enable gender equity development and minimise one of the barriers towards the inclusion of the female workforce.

Overall, Middle Eastern nations are currently experiencing a shift from the age compositions of young to ageing populations to benefit from a demographic dividend for adequate policy establishment. Regardless, the prospect differed across nations following the decline in fertility rates and an increase in life span. In accommodating to the increasing population of adolescents and youths in educational systems, the labour market would demonstrate significant region-specific issues in integrating both cohort groups. Hence, a prioritised need for the cultivation of new employment opportunities and skilled workforce by decision-makers was evident.

The development of age composition has recently highlighted issues on the ageing population and opportunities in the developing world (Ven & Smits, 2011). The United Nations established long-term forecasts that further validated the scenario. Over the next decade, the developed regions would reflect a decrease in the number of working-age individuals and an imminent increase in the working-age proportions in developing regions. Meanwhile, the demographic trend in Middle Eastern nations revealed an increasingly ageing population apart

from a new and substantial growth concerning working-age populations. In 2020, the most notable increase in population ageing could be observed in certain countries (Kuwait, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey) with the population consisting of individuals from age cohort of 65 years and above ranging between 5% and 8.2%. Predictably, population ageing would continue to rise in Middle Eastern nations over the next decade.

Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to evaluate changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries to recognize that the inexorable demographic momentum will have important implications for the economic and social forces that will shape future societal well-being. Furthermore, this paper discusses each country's economic, social, human development, and educational issues over time. Accordingly, the research approach is based on a deductive approach to focus on the evaluation of changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries. The originality of this study is that it is different from the previous studies because it evaluated the changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries in a detailed way.

This study consisted of 10 Middle Eastern countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. Following data shortage for the intended study period involving all Middle Eastern nations, this study was confined to 10 nations. Additionally, these countries were selected based on economic, social, and political importance in the Middle East. For example, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey represented the largest population in the region. Meanwhile, GCC states (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, and the UAE) reflected high per capita income levels in the region. On another note, Jordan was the most politically stable nation as opposed to other Middle Eastern countries.

The remainder of the sections are organized in the following manner: section 2 reviews the extant literature. The next section consists of population trends which provides age structure and gender gap. This is ensued by Section 4 profile of countries that discusses each country's economic, social, human development, and educational issues over time. The next section is Section 5, where the author provides the governmental views and policies on the population. Meanwhile, Section 6 provides the discussion that discuss reaping the dividend through the priority policy actions. Lastly, this research article culminates in Section 7 which comprises the conclusion.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of age structure on the economic growth of different economies and groups of economies. The dynamics of age

structure positively influence the economic growth and general standard of living (Uddin et al., 2016). The development impact of changes in age structure is obtained through several paths. Firstly, a rise in the share of the working-age population means that more people can work. In other words, the working-age population produces more than its consumption, so the per capita output is increased. The second path is a rise in the savings. The working-age population produces and saves more, which causes a higher level of investment and an increase in the output. The third path, which is the most important, is the rise in human capital due to the change in age structure.

According to a study carried out by Ahmad and Khan (2018) on developing countries, the outcomes disclosed that changes in age-composition and human capital and have a positive impact on the growth of the economy throughout the disaggregated levels. Based on a study by Hajamini (2015), it was revealed that the importance of bringing about shifts in the age structure of the population as opposed to the expansion in the population of the developing nations. Furthermore, based on a study by Cruz and Ahmed (2018), the shifts in the portion of the working age cohort in the population and dependency ratios to gauge the shift in the demography. Results of the study reveal that a rise in the proportion of the working age cohort in the population has a favourable impact on the per capita Gross Domestic Product growth.

The impact of demographic change on the development of the economy in China was explored by Hsu et al. (2018). They confirmed the idea that countries experiencing high population growth tend to be more negatively affected by population growth in terms of schooling than countries with low population growth. For OECD countries, Yoon et al. (2018) showed that population growth, share of the elderly (65 and above), and share of those aged 15-64 affect real GDP per capita growth negatively.

A study executed by Sánchez-Romero et al. (2018) suggested that the population structure accounts for 50% of the total income growth from 1850 to 2000, and hence the changes in labour supply and capital accumulation accounts for 50%. In the study by Ahmad and Khan (2019), stated that the ratio of working age cohort and the growth rate of the labour force growth have a positive effect on the economic development of developing economies.

In addition, some studies have examined the effect of internal demographic composition of the working-age population on economic growth. One such study is Oliver (2015) who illustrated the fact that a rise in the number of age cohorts (15 to 24 years old, 25 to 34 years old, 45 to 54 years old, 55 to 59 years old and 77 plus years old) are associated with a rise in the real Gross Domestic Product per capita. Zhang et al. (2015) revealed that age structure

changes (shifts in the size and internal demographic composition) related to the working-age cohort in the population, have an obvious influence on the economic growth rates in the provinces.

Moreover, Wongboonsin and Phiromswad (2017) showed that cohorts of young labour force, middle-aged labour force and senior labour force possess a favourable association with the development of the economy. In the context of the Middle East countries, a study carried out by Rizk (2019) revealed that the increase in working age group within the population has intensified the GDP per capita for a long term and short term.

A recent study by Saxena (2019) emphasized that the countries' governments need to execute advanced preparations for the generation of employment opportunities for new entrants of the working-age groups. If the governments can create job opportunities for the workforce members, the countries would obtain the optimum dividend that could increase the GDP of the countries, and with the joining of female workforce, there could be doubling of the GDP. According to Forouheshfar et al. (2020), the demographic transition in the MENA region started relatively late, however, it is happening considerably faster and could be regarded as an opportunity. Governments can play an active role in helping those potential benefits take place and preparing the youth to be absorbed in the labour market by investing in labour-intensive jobs and developing training programs.

Moreover, there are only a handful of authors of recent literature, who emphasized on the interactive part played by the age structure and human capital on the development of the economy. For instance, a study conducted by Lutz et al. (2019) stressed on education enhancement over the age structure and human capital dividend. Therefore, it is pertinent for the global population policies to cater in supporting the human resource base towards the achievement of sustainable development. In the context of African countries, Ojewuyi and Alimi (2019) revealed that working age share are not able to improve the growth of the economies as it has to be reinforced by enhanced investment on human capital. Thus, it is crucial for governments to focus on prioritizing all levels of education and identifying skills/competencies that could lead to a functional and productive education. Bawazir et al. (2020) The findings indicated that the ratios of the working-age population positively affect economic growth in Middle East countries.

Ghavidel and Mirghiyasi (2018) demonstrated that the negative impact of population ageing on economic growth appears in countries where the life expectancy index is greater than 70 years, whereas the impact of population ageing on economic growth is not negative in

countries where the life expectancy index is less than 70 years. Maestas et al. (2016) implicated that there has been lagging of the annual GDP growth by 1.2 % points these ten years and will lag by 0.6 % points by the next ten years caused by the ageing population.

In Europe, Cuaresma et al. (2016) indicated that population ageing in Europe is expected to have effects on economic growth that will create obstacles to further in come convergence in the EU unless they are actively counteracted by economic policy. Kajimura (2020) found that increasing the proportion of old people has a detrimental effect on economic development in the long run. In the case of Australia, Uddin et al. (2016) showed that the dependency ratio has a negative response on GDP per capita.

Few studies have examined the effect of internal demographic composition of population on economic growth. One such study is Oliver (2015) who illustrated that a rise in the aged cohort in the population pool, within the age range of 70 to 74 years old is associated to a decline in the GDP. According to Wongboonsin and Phiromswad (2017), cohort of senior population comprising those of over 65 years of age have a negative association with the economic growth.

Miri et al. (2019) discovered that the more elderly generation of the population aged over 64 years old possess a negative and significant long duration impact on the growth of the economy. In Korea, Lee et al. (2017) found that elderly participation in the labour force has a positive influence on economic growth, which suggests that the harmful effect of ageing can be mitigated by more active participation of the elderly in the labour force in Korea. Huang et al. (2019), an ageing workforce has a significantly positive impact on the rate of economic growth in Taiwan using quarterly data from 1981–2017.

From the studies conducted by Li and Zhang (2015), in addition to studies done by Ruidong (2018), they revealed that in China, there is a positive impact of the dependency ratio on the GDP. This is possibly due to the growth rate of per capita GDP that is greater in comparison to the rate of growth of the aged in the overall population. Additionally, Mamun et al. (2020) discovered that in the long-term, there is a positive effect of the ageing population on the per capita real GDP in Bangladesh. This might be caused by the increase in capital formation that escalates the working age population's labour productivity and substitutes the reduction in the contribution of the ageing population in the economy.

In a study by Munir and Shahid (2020) on South Asian countries, they concluded that the demographic factors have no capacity to boost the regional economic growth, instead, it is the demographic dividend, which is deserving for countries giving greater emphasis on

productive labour, enhanced health amenities and controlled population. Jain, N., & Goli, S. (2022) highlighted that to reap the maximum dividends from the available demographic window of opportunity, India needs to work towards enhancing the quality of education and healthcare in addition to providing good infrastructure, gender empowerment, and decent employment opportunities for the growing working-age population.

Added to the above studies, Amornkitvikai et al. (2022) showed that the working-age population share, the labour force relative to the working-age population, and the growth of the actively employed population have significant and positive impacts on economic growth. Berde & Kurbanova (2023) indicated that human capital with proper education and an appropriately absorbed labour force does have a more powerful effect on the demographic benefit. Bawazir et al. (2021) They confirmed that the most important policy recommendation to the government is to position human capital development at the centre of its development strategy.

Zahir (2023) revealed that the population is an important factor that plays a double role in the economic development of Pakistan. The larger size of the population produces a larger amount of the labour force. When resources are presented in sufficient amounts, then the labour force can become beneficial to economic development. Gakpa & Kouadio (2023) showed that an increase in the share of the working-age population only has a positive effect on economic growth when countries have better economic freedom institutions. This contribution is made through improvements in indicators of investment freedom, financial freedom, and government integrity. These results call on policymakers in the region to improve these dimensions to enable their economies to benefit from the demographic transition dividend.

## **POPULATION TRENDS**

The Middle East is geographically located between the southwestern region of the Asian continent and Egypt in North Africa. Middle Eastern nations (covering an area of approximately 7 million square kilometres) consist of Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Northern Cyprus, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen (see Figure 1).

Despite the inequalities in nation-based income, a considerable degree of regional similarities existed in historical and cultural assimilations. The lingua franca (Arabic) connected the regional population, whereas a common oil resource undoubtedly increased regional incomes and established economic integration. Additionally, Middle Eastern nations shared specific demographic similarities. Changes in the fertility phase also favourably



occurred across Middle Eastern nations and several other countries (Turkey, the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iran, and Qatar) where the fertility rate attained a replacement rate.

Figure 1: Map of Middle East region



Source: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/which-are-the-middle-eastern-countries.html>

### Population Age Structure

The increase in the Middle East population could be primarily associated with natural increases (notable declines in death rates). According to World Bank (2023), the crude birth rates are increasing over years reaching 20% in 2020, whereas the crude death rates are decreasing over years reaching 5% in 2020.

Regarding the fertility rate of Middle Eastern countries, increased life quality and rapid economic growth resulted in lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy. Specifically, the fertility rate decreased from 6.3 births in 1980 to 2.7 births in 2018 per woman (World Bank, 2023). Such a downward trend resulted in a higher proportion of the working-age population.

The life expectancy for males at birth increased from 57 years in 1980 to 67 years in 2000, whereas the life expectancy for females increased from 61 years in 1980 to 71 years in 2000. Furthermore, the life expectancy at birth increased for both genders in 2020 with 71 years for males and 75 years for females (World Bank,2023).

Table 1: Population and population growth by country, 2020

Country	Total Population (million)	Growth Rates (%)
Bahrain	1.48	-1.13
Egypt	107.47	1.73
Iran	87.29	0.84
Jordan	10.93	2.13
Kuwait	4.36	-1.83
Oman	4.54	-1.30
Qatar	2.76	-1.68
Saudi Arabia	36.00	0.47
Turkey	84.41	0.78
UAE	9.29	0.82

Source: World Bank (2023).

Regarding the population growth by country in Table 1, Jordan denoted the highest population growth rate (2.13%) in 2020, followed by Egypt (1.73%) and Iran (0.84%). Meanwhile, Egypt denoted the highest population (107.47 million), followed by Iran (87.29 million), and Turkey (84.41 million).

This section provides data on the age composition of the population of Middle Eastern countries. As for the population age structure by country, trends concerning the decreasing population proportion below 15 years old and increasing share of the working-age population (15 to 64 years old) across nations with Qatar and the UAE indicated the highest percentage of the working-age population in 2020 (83.5% and 83.4%, respectively). Notably, Turkey had the highest share of the aged population in 2020 (8.2%), thus indicating a more rapid population transition (see Table 2). The similarity in trends demonstrated the decrease in young age cohorts across regions regardless of the current national economic terrain.

Table 2: Country population by age group (% of total population)

Country	1980			2000			2020		
	0-14	15-64	65+	0-14	15-64	65+	0-14	15-64	65+
Bahrain	34.6	63.4	2.1	30.1	67.4	2.5	20.3	76.5	3.2
Egypt	40.8	54.7	4.5	36.9	58.2	4.9	33.2	62.1	4.7
Iran	43.6	53.4	3	34	61.7	4.4	24	68.9	7.1
Jordan	49	47.8	3.2	39.6	57.3	3.1	33.1	63.3	3.6
Kuwait	40.3	58.1	1.6	28.4	70	1.6	21	75	4
Oman	45.1	52.2	2.7	37.1	60.5	2.4	25.6	71.6	2.8
Qatar	33.6	64.8	1.6	25.7	72.5	1.7	15.3	83.5	1.2
Saudi Arabia	43.6	53.3	3	38.3	58.7	3	26	71.6	2.4
Turkey	39.6	55.6	4.7	30.6	63.3	6.1	23.7	68.1	8.2
UAE	28.1	70.4	1.4	26	72.9	1.1	15	83.4	1.6

Source: World Bank (2023).

Regionally, the working-age population between 15 and 64 years old denoted more than 72.4% of the total population. Given that the advantages following age structure changes were impermanent, the ageing population would inevitably hamper economic growth. As a

demographic force, the considerable surge of young population in the Middle East provided a historic opportunity. Based on the average educational level and high workforce engagement, workforce quality also catalysed future economic growth.

Regarding the demographic dividend, the first dividend arises because the demographic transition induces changes in the population age structure that increase the share of the working-age population. Currently, Middle East countries are classified as being in the early demographic dividend stage. Fertility rates have declined, and dependency ratios are low with less than 10% in most Middle East countries. Falling fertility rates will lead to a labour force that is temporarily growing faster than the population dependent on it. All else being equal, per capita income grows more rapidly during this time too. This economic benefit is the first dividend received by a country that has gone through a demographic transition.

It is widely believed that the demographic dividend will provide a window of opportunity for faster economic development; however, this is not a given, and the demographic dividend may or may not be achieved. It is entirely dependent on the successful use of available possibilities and the implementation of appropriate policies. The most important policy recommendations for countries in the early stages of the demographic dividend are focused on investing in human capital, increasing labour market mobility, lowering barriers to female labour participation, improving the environment for saving, and creating new opportunities for employment opportunities.

## **Gender Gap**

The Middle East has suffered from common challenges that have created serious obstacles to its sustainable development. One of the most important obstacles in the development process of Middle East countries is gender inequality and the lack of serious participation of women in the development process of these countries which impedes the exploitation of the capacities of half of their population.

In a study by Mohammed (2021), it was found that while governments in the Middle East region have tried to increase the enrolment and retention of girls in school across countries in the Middle East, however, a corresponding effort has not been made to invest in the quality of education being imparted. While it is encouraging to see that the increasing numbers of girls are being educated, there is a need felt for greater government investment to ensure that those who are educated are also employable. In addition, according to IMF (2018), gender gaps in primary school enrolments were mostly rectified across all regions despite the absence of parity.

Progress was also observed in bridging secondary school enrolment gaps. Regardless, the gaps in the Middle East remained from 1990 to 2015.

Table 3 shows facts about the evolution of the gender gap in economic activity measured by the ratio of female to male labour force participation rate for Middle East countries and different regions of the world for the period 1990-2020 (World Bank, 2023). In detail, some Middle East countries have achieved a bit high ratio of female to male labour force participation rate which in turn decreasing the gender gap in economic activity such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, while other countries have witnessed low ratio of female to male labour force participation rate below 50% such as Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

Table 3: Table: Ratio of female to male labor force participation rate (%)

Countries	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
<b>Middle East Countries:</b>							
Bahrain	33.23	36.11	40.13	45.19	50.07	50.34	50.34
Egypt	29.35	29.03	27.40	27.73	29.91	30.61	21.21
Iran	12.06	13.84	18.87	26.09	22.45	21.21	20.40
Jordan	15.70	17.70	18.40	18.10	22.70	21.90	23.85
Kuwait	47.07	48.46	51.82	50.82	54.75	57.31	55.19
Oman	25.81	26.53	30.24	31.90	32.88	34.32	34.55
Qatar	47.80	47.95	44.69	48.35	53.43	61.91	62.20
Saudi Arabia	18.35	19.27	21.31	23.89	24.52	27.94	36.90
Turkey	42.13	39.70	36.20	33.23	38.81	43.91	45.25
United Arab Emirates	31.20	33.95	36.94	40.26	46.74	53.45	67.73
<b>World Regions:</b>							
East Asia & Pacific	80.70	80.17	79.99	78.55	77.85	77.59	79.36
Latin America & Caribbean	51.55	56.54	59.95	64.32	65.66	66.67	66.71
Middle East & North Africa	23.54	24.66	26.21	28.41	29.24	30.20	29.69
South Asia	35.11	35.44	35.99	37.59	33.38	31.09	33.08
Sub-Saharan Africa	81.44	82.31	83.64	84.58	84.52	84.42	83.82
World	66.83	67.23	67.70	67.66	66.90	66.45	68.00

Source: World Bank (2023).

In respect of international comparison, Table 3 shows the performance of the world regions. Some regions have fallen back in the ratio of female to male labour force participation rate (increasing the gender gap) such as East Asia & Pacific, and South Asia. While other regions have achieved a higher ratio of female to male labour force participation rate (decreasing gender gap) as Latin America & Caribbean, and Sub-Saharan Africa. For the Middle East and North Africa region, the ratio of female to male labour force participation rates are lagging those in different developing regions and shows the lowest ratio at 29.69% in 2020, which equates to under half of the global ratio. This ratio reflects a gap of 70% between the

female and male activity rates. This figure assures the existence of the problem of the gender gap in economic activity in the region.

## **PROFILE OF COUNTRIES**

This section provides an overview of selected Middle East countries namely Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, this section discusses each country's economic, social, human development, and educational issues over time.

### **Bahrain Profile**

Bahrain is made up of an archipelago of islands situated in the Middle East. The main island is Al-Bahrain with several minor islands and islets. With a population of 1.47 million in 2020, approximately 62% of its population are males, while females constitute the remainder. The young dependency ratio has decreased from 44.6% in 1996 to 26.5% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio come to 4.2% in 2020. It has a high rate of life expectancy, with the men having a lifespan of an average of 78.2 years, and the women having a lifespan of 80.4 years, according to statistics in 2020 (World Bank, 2023). Based on the World Bank (2023), Bahrain's GDP per capita is USD 47,847 in 2020 and it was categorized to be a high-income economy.

Economic issues are unemployment, particularly amongst the young people coupled with the decline in both oil and underground water supplies are the substantial long-term economic challenges. Bahrain's workforce came to a total of 0.83 million in 2020. Bahrain's rate of unemployment was 1.67%. Bahrain's unemployment rate experienced substantial fluctuations in the past few years, with a pattern of decline from 2009 up to 2018 phase, terminating at 1.67% in 2020 (World Bank, 2023).

Bahrain has established several programmes and services to aid in the reduction of unemployment among Bahrainis. Placement and employment services, as well as the National Program on Employment and Training, are examples of what is available. In addition, significant progress has been achieved in the role and position of women in Bahrain, which deserves to be recognised. High rates of education, increasing involvement in the labour market, increased representation of women in social dialogue institutions, and a favourable political and legislative climate are some of the factors that contribute to this.

It is mandatory education for children within the age range of six up to fourteen years old. Citizens in Bahrain enjoy free education in public schools, with the provision of free textbooks as well from the Bahraini Ministry of Education. There are no Co-ed public schools, as boys are kept apart from girls in separate schools. Bahrain promotes the setting up and running of institutions of higher learning, deriving the pool of intake from expatriate talents, and the cumulative pool of incoming homeward bound Bahrainis from abroad, possessing advanced degrees (International Bureau of Education, 2020). In 2020, the rates of enrolment are stated to be 60 percent for tertiary education, 97 percent for secondary school, and 98 percent for primary school (World Bank, 2023). Government expenditure on education has increased over the years arrived to 2.15% as percentage of GDP in 2020. Based on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Report, the education index of Bahrain is at 76.5%, and in 2018 it was positioned with a country ranking of 42 out of 189 countries.

### **Egypt Profile**

The economy of Egypt relies principally on agriculture, media, petroleum imports, natural gas, tourism, money sent from Egyptians in employment abroad and incomes from the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal, which links the Mediterranean Sea with the Indian Ocean, is the main shipping passageway which offers a vital source of income for the Egyptian government. In 2010, there was a rise in Egypt's GDP per capita from USD 9523 to USD 11380 in 2020. However, as of 2020, the country continued to be a lower middle-income country. In 2020, the Egyptian workforce was valued to the sum of about thirty million workers. An approximated 23.79% of the workforce in Egypt were actively engaged in the agricultural sector, 27.68% were engaged in industry and 48.53% were engaged in the services sector. The unemployment rate was approximated at 8% in 2020 (World Bank, 2023).

Pertaining to demographic matters, Egypt is the most inhabited country in terms of population count in the Middle East, amounting to approximately 107 million inhabitants as calculated in 2020 (World Bank, 2023). The population count escalated swiftly from the years ranging from 1970 up to 2020 as the result of advancements in the medical sector and rises in productivity of the agricultural sector empowered and made possible by the Green Revolution. For dependency ratios, the young dependency ratio has decreased over time reached 53.5% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased slightly come to 7.6% in 2020.

Pertaining to the education sector in Egypt, there was a decline in the illiteracy rate in the year 1996 from 39.4% has declined to 25% in 2020. The literacy rate for Egyptian adults in

the year 2020 was calculated to be 73 %. In 2020, the rates of enrolment are stated to be 39 percent for tertiary education, 89.5 percent for secondary school, and 106 percent for primary school (World Bank, 2023). Government expenditure on education during the late 1990s to 2018 reflects an increased public allocation to education reached to 2.5% as percentage of GDP in 2020. In terms of the education index, in 2018 Egypt stands at the ranking of 116 out of 189 countries, with an education index of 60.9% (UNDP, 2018).

Youth employment has been high on the government's priority list for a long time, with the goal of providing more and better opportunities for young people. The Action Plan highlighted three key areas, which were technical education and vocational training, business growth, and labour market policies and programmes, as well as other initiatives. The priority of technical education is to create the training system for students and to improve the basic and soft skills of graduates from both secondary and tertiary-level education in the areas of language and technology, as well as to improve the basic and soft skills of students in general. Providing start-ups and young entrepreneurs with technical and marketing assistance is the goal of the enterprise development focus area, which aims to encourage entrepreneurship. The development of public employment offices and the strengthening of labour market information units at the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration are two of the top priorities in the field of labour market policies and programmes (Barsoum et al., 2014).

Egypt has encouraged women to participate in social and economic activities and has made it a point to include this information in national policy and strategy documents. The establishment of the National Council for Women was a significant step forward in the empowerment of Egyptian women and the strengthening of their status in society. Among the objectives of the National Council for Women is to participate in the formulation of policies and programmes related to women's advancement and the sustainability of their development, as well as to define their active roles that support their participation in bringing about a positive transformation in their society on all levels.

In 2015, the Sustainable Development Strategy had three strategic dimensions with some pillars for each dimension: the economic dimension, the social dimension, and the environmental dimension. One of the key performance indicators for economic development until 2030 was to increase female labour force participation from 22.8 percent in 2015 to 25 percent by 2020 and 35 percent by 2030 (Alkitkat, 2018).

## Iran Profile

Based on the World Bank data, Iran has a population of approximately 87.3 million in 2020; where an estimated one-third is situated in the rural areas and two-thirds are situated in the urban area. From a 2020 estimation, the population of Iran is composed of 24% of a cohort with an age range of 0 up to 14 years old, another cohort with an age range of 15 years old up to 64 years old making 69%, and the remainder is 7% comprising of a cohort with an age range of 65 years old and above. In 2020, the estimated overall life expectancy is 74.8 years, with a life expectancy of 72.1 years for men, and 77.8 years for women. Again in 2020, the estimated fertility rate is approximately 1.71 births per woman, which is a substantial decrease from the estimated rate of 6.48 births estimated in 1980 (World Bank, 2023). The young dependency ratio has decreased from 71.4 % in 1996 to 34.8 % in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased from 7 % in 1996 to 10.3 % in 2020. This is because the old population has grown at a faster rate than the young population.

The government is presently expanding the family planning program while improving the quality of maternity care to achieve the goal of slowing the pace of natural population increase in the country (Hosseini, 2012). Iran's new population strategy seeks to handle the possibilities that arise because of the demographic window by investing in human capital and making an attempt to generate new and productive employment opportunities. The growing proportion of the working-age population, particularly if they are engaged in the production of goods and services, has a beneficial effect on the Iranian economy. As a result, it is essential to make investments in human capital.

The Iranian government has worked hard to establish legislation that would help women earn a living and get access to employment opportunities. Several laws have been enacted to promote the economic empowerment of women within the context of the social framework. Since women's participation in cultural, social, economic, and administrative professions is essential for the attainment of social justice and the development of a society, particular emphasis should be given to this problem. There has been ratification of the rules and benefits proportional to motherly occupations such as paid maternity leave, reduced working hours, retirement benefits with a shorter length of service, job security, and social security during periods of unemployment, illness or incapacity to work (Janghorban et al., 2014).

In 2020, the workforce in Iran is summed up to 27.2 million. The estimated unemployed statistics stands at 9.7 %; where the younger workers made up the majority of the unemployed. Underemployment was also a typical situation. Initiated in 2005, the Fourth Economic



Development Plan was established to create 700,000 new jobs annually. However, the unemployment rate plateaued and maintained its stagnancy throughout the ensuing years after the establishment of the plan.

On matters pertaining to education, in 2020, the enrolment in primary schools was 110% due to the fact that primary education is obligatory. However, secondary school attendance is not obligatory. Consequently, due to the non-obligatory attendance for education beyond primary school, the enrolment rates are lesser—with approximately 89% enrolment for secondary schools and 58% for tertiary educational institutions in 2020. Government expenditure on education is about 3.6% as percentage of GDP in 2020 higher than expenditure on education in 1996. Based on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Report, Iran's education index stands at 75 %, positing the country to the country ranking placed at 70 out of 189 countries in 2018.

### **Jordan Profile**

In 2020, Jordan's population was 10.9 million, with a substantial increase from 7 million documented in 2010. An annual growth rate of about 3.5% was the estimated increase in the population. Based on the 2020 World Bank estimation, the age composition of Jordan comprises approximately 33% which is less than 15 years old, with a cohort of age range 15–64 years standing at 63%, and 4% of the cohort with an age range of 65 years and above. As for the fertility rate, there is an estimation of 2.9 births per woman. In 2020, the average life expectancy of Jordanians is approximately 75.2 years, with life expectancy for males at 73 years and life expectancy for females is 77.8 years. The young dependency ratio has decreased over time reached 52.2 % in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased slightly come to 5.7 % in 2020 (World Bank, 2023).

Jordan's National Population Strategy (NPS) was developed by the country's National Population Commission (NPC). Reproductive health, population and sustainable development, gender equality and equity and women's empowerment were the four major focuses of the strategy document. The document also included recommendations for increasing public awareness and activism on these topics (Higher Population Council, 2013).

The Higher Population Council (HPC) aims to raise public awareness of population and development problems, as well as to strengthen advocacy in the following areas: education, health, and the environment. First and foremost, reproductive health and the expansion of the number of people who can benefit from reproductive health services. Next up are reproductive

health indicators such as young people's self-empowerment (including unemployment and employment), occupational training possibilities (including public engagement), and educational quality. In the third place, promoting equality and empowerment of women and girls, including economic empowerment, training and capacity-building opportunities for women, the transition of women's employment from the informal to the formal sector, new opportunities to increase women's participation in the labour market, and women's participation in public life are all priorities.

In 2020, the workforce in Jordan was calculated to count of approximately 2.9 million workers in total, based on the World Bank statistics. It was calculated that 71.77% out of the entire workforce were engaged in the services sector, 24.77% were engaged in the industry sector, and 3.47% were engaged in the agriculture sector based on statistics for the year 2020. Furthermore, in 2020, the rate of unemployment was calculated to be 19.21%. The women form a small portion of the workforce but are increasing in number—constituting approximately 15% percent of the workforce (labour force) in 2020. This figure has increased more than two-fold when compared with the level ten years previously. Over fifty percent of the women being employed are engaged in the education and health industries.

In terms of education, all Jordanians enjoy free primary and secondary education, and it is made obligatory up to the age of 15 years old. In 2020, the rate of enrolment in primary schools is stated to be 80.4%, for secondary school the rate of enrolment was at 67.8%, and at the tertiary level, the rate of enrolment was at 33.6% (World Bank, 2023). Government expenditure on education has increased over the years arrived to 3.7% as percentage of GDP in 2020. Based on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Report, Jordan's education index stands at 66.4%, positing the country to the country ranking placed at 102 out of 189 countries in 2018.

### **Kuwait Profile**

According to the World Bank statistics as of the year 2020, Kuwait was populated with 4.4 million people: out of which 61% of the populace were constituted of males, and 39% of the populace were constituted of females. Kuwait has a high life expectancy, with the males having a longevity rate of approximately 75.4 years, and the females having longevity of 80 years. Even though the rate of birth in Kuwait rate is approximately equivalent to the global average, owing to its low rate of death rate has resulted in a high rate of natural increase. The country is constituted of a high proportion of young people, with approximately 21% of the

population are of the age less than 15 years old. The young dependency ratio has decreased from 44% in 1996 to 28% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased from 2% in 1996 to 5.3% in 2020. This is because the number of elderly people has increased more rapidly than the number of young people.

In 2020, the workforce of Kuwait was calculated to be 2.4 million. Approximately 2.23% of the people employed in Kuwait were actively engaged in the agricultural sector, another 25.37% of the people were engaged in the industrial sector, and 72.4% are engaged in the service sector. In the same year, the overall unemployment rate was assessed to be 3%. The involvement of Kuwaiti women in politics women has been restricted, even though Kuwaiti women are considered as among the most liberated women in the Middle East. In 2015, Kuwait was positioned at the topmost rung amongst the Arab countries in the Global Gender Gap Report. In 2020, the percentage of Kuwaiti women participation in the workforce was estimated at 56%. The country possessed a huge percentage of female citizen participation in the workforce, higher in comparison to other Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Kuwait possesses the highest rate of literacy in the Arab world. There are four levels to the general education system which comprise of kindergarten (that last for a duration of two years), primary education (that last for a duration of five years), intermediate education (that last for a duration of four years) and secondary education (that last for a duration of three years). Primary and intermediate level education is obligatory for all students within the age range of 6 years old up to 14 years old. Education provided by the state is free for all levels of education, inclusive of higher education. In 2020, the rates of enrolment are stated to be 61 percent for tertiary education, 96.97 percent for secondary school, and 87.3 percent for primary school. Government expenditure on education has increased over the years arrived to 6.6% as percentage of GDP in 2020. Kuwait's education index is at 63.8 % and it is ranked at the position of 64 out of 189 countries by the Human Development Report in 2018.

Equal employment possibilities for Kuwaiti women and men are provided by state laws, which include guaranteed public sector positions with equal pay for both men and women. Women and men may benefit from government scholarships to pursue higher education in Kuwait or abroad, and wages in the public sector rise in direct proportion to the degree of education attained. Additionally, the government provides incentives to men and women who want to work in the private sector by supplementing low private sector salaries with subsidies for both employees and employers (Garrison, 2015).

## Oman Profile

In 2020, Oman's population stands at 4.5 million inhabitants, where males made up 62% of the population and 38% of the population are females. In the same year, the total rate of fertility was approximated at 2.7%. An estimated 72% of the population are categorized as working-age population, who are within the age range of 15 and 64 years. The young dependency ratio has decreased over time reached 35.8% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased slightly come to 3.8% in 2020.

Based on the World Bank statistics, in 2020, the workforce of Oman was calculated to count of approximately 2.2 million workers. Based on statistics gathered in 2020, it was appraised that 62.69% of the entire workforce were engaged in the services sector, where 32.75% were engaged in the industrial sector, and 4.56% were engaged in the agriculture sector. The rate of unemployment was evaluated to stand at 2.94% in 2020. The women were mostly engaged in the education sector, public administration, defence and social insurance sectors, wholesale, retail and transportation repair undertakings, and social work sectors. Men are impacted to a lesser degree by unemployment in comparison to women with 2 % unemployment for men in comparison to 12 % for women in 2020. For both genders, involvement and employment have been rising in recent years. However, this pattern has been obvious for the women, whose participation hiked from 23% to 38% between 2000 and 2020.

Government initiatives based on the ideals of modernization, especially education, women's empowerment, and political involvement, have contributed to a narrowing of the gender wage disparity. Women's involvement in the labour field is encouraged by government policies, which include provisions in labour law and regulations that provide significant benefits to spouses who want to work. According to the most recent government regulations in Oman, women now have equal chances for public employment as well as positions of authority, and they are not subject to any duties or obligations to their male counterparts (S. Mansour et al., 2020).

In terms of education, the adult literacy rate was estimated at 96% in 2020. Starting from 2020 Oman attained a high score on the gross school enrolment ratios, with the enrolment for primary schools at 105%, secondary schools at 107%, and tertiary education at 45.5%. Government expenditure on education during the late 1990s to 2020 reflects an increased public allocation to education reached to 5.5% as percentage of GDP in 2020. In 2018, as for the education index, the education index for Oman was at 71.8% and it was ranked at position number 60 out of 189 countries.

## **Qatar Profile**

Qatar's GDP per capita was valued to be above USD 89019. It maintained its title of being one of the most affluent countries in the world in 2020 (World Bank, 2023). In terms of the demography, there has been a continual expansion in the population of Qatar. In spite of an evidently low rate of death, nevertheless, Qatar's comparatively low birth rate has resulted in a rate of natural increase which is somewhat lower than the world average. The World Bank evaluated that the population of Qatar to be 2.8 million, with 73% of the population were males and 27% of the population were females in 2020. The population of Qatar comprises to a large extent those of the working age, with over 83.4% of the population showing a high indication of age cohort ranging between 15 years old up to 64 years old. The average life expectancy for males is approximately 78 years and for females is 81 years. The young dependency ratio has decreased over time reached 18.4% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio come to 1,5% in 2020.

In terms of its workforce, it was calculated to be 2.1 million in 2020. The workforce depends exhaustively on the foreign workforce to expand its economy, to the degree that the migrant workers constitute 86% of the population and involvement of 94% in the workforce. It is estimated that in Qatar, 1.22% of the workforce were actively engaged in the agricultural sector, with 54.47% of the workforce were engaged in the industrial sector, and 44.31% of the workforce were engaged in the service sector. In terms of the women's participation in the workforce in Qatar, 59 % of Qatari women were involved in 2020 (World Bank, 2023). There has been an increase in the participation of the local women in the workforce in Qatar, with certain employers perceiving them to be more tenacious and more reliable in comparison to the average local male worker. The women were more economical too to be taken in for employment in terms of salary. Women climbing the occupation ladder to powerful and influential positions have a propensity to arise from the middle- and upper-class families. Undeniably, a woman who rises to a designation that is influential at work requires backing from her family, particularly from the male members.

Free education is made available for the entire citizen of Qatar within the ages range of 6 to 16 years of age; however, it is not obligatory. Classes are not co-ed and students are separated according to gender. Qatar emplaces a heavy budget educational expenditure; it has one of the exorbitantly high per-pupil expenditures globally. The rate of enrolment is stated to be 104% at the primary school level, 93% at the secondary school level, and the enrolment rate for tertiary education is at 21 % in 2020. Adult education classes are also made available by the

government in schools and centres all over Qatar, with prominence given to enhancing adult literacy. Pertaining to literacy, approximately four-fifths of the population in the country is literate, with almost equal percentages of males and females who are literates. Government expenditure on education has increased over the years arrived to 3.2% as percentage of GDP in 2020. Based on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Report, the education index of Qatar stands at 65.3%, where the country is positioned at the country ranking of 45 out of 189 countries in 2018.

### **Saudi Arabia Profile**

The population of the country was estimated to be 36 million, where males constituted 58% of the population and females constituted 42% of the population in 2020. A large majority of the population is young. Based on the 2020 World Bank estimation, Saudis within the age range of 0-14 years constituted 26% of the population, and Saudis within the age range of 15–64 years constituted 72% of the population. There is only 2% of Saudis who are 65 years old and above. The life expectancy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is fairly high: with the males having a life expectancy of 75 years, the females having a life expectancy of 78 years, and the total life expectancy of 76 years. Its fertility rate is 2.5 births per woman, showing a substantial decline in the last two decades from 6.4 births per woman in 1985. The young dependency ratio has decreased from 73% in 1996 to 36% in 2020, whereas, the old-age dependency ratio has increased to 3% in 2020. (World Bank, 2023).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the leading economy in the Middle East and the eighteenth biggest economy in the world since October 2018. The world's second-largest established petroleum reserves are found in the country, and it is the leading exporter of petroleum. Furthermore, the fifth-largest established natural gas reserves are also located there. Saudi Arabia is coined as an "energy superpower". Additionally, the third highest total estimated value of USD 34.4 trillion in natural resources are also found in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2016. Its prime economic resource is based on petroleum, where the oil industry generates approximately 63% of budget revenues and 67% of export earnings. The World Bank categorized the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a high-income country. In 2020, its GDP per capita was USD 45240.

The Saudi economy faces challenges that involve stopping or overturning the depreciation in per-capita income, enhancing education to train the youth for the workforce, and offering them jobs, expanding the economy through diverse initiatives, invigorating the

private sector and housing construction sector, and reducing corruption and disparity. For the Kingdom, the workforce is a substantial issue. The rate of unemployment remained stagnant and maintained its 7.5% rate in 2020. The economy is wholly dependent largely on the skills and expertise of expatriates living in the country. In 2020, the workforce of the country is estimated at 16 million, with expatriate workers forming almost a third of that total.

Free education is provided at all levels. In 2020, the percentage of the enrolment ratios is stated to be 100% for primary school, for secondary school it is 113%, and for tertiary education, the enrolment rate is 71% (World Bank, 2023). Government expenditure on education during the late 1990s to 2018 reflects an increased public allocation to education reached to 8% as percentage of GDP in 2020. There was a rapid expansion in the higher education sector, with the establishment of great numbers of universities and colleges, predominantly since 2000. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was placed at ranking number 28 at the global level based on its first-class research output, which was accorded by the Scientific Journal Nature. As for the education index, in 2018, it achieved 78.9% and was a position with the country ranking 40 out of 189 countries based on the Human Development Report.

Recently, the Saudi government introduced numerous radical changes in labour policies under two banners: first, Saudi nationalization, which means larger domestic labour market restructuring, and where the government requires employers to fill their workforce with specific levels of Saudi nationals (Al Abdulkarim, 2018). Second, the long-term socioeconomic reform disposition, represented by Saudi's "Vision 2030" which is the primary roadmap for the Kingdom's economic and social policies, including diversifications of government sources of revenue. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has been implementing programmes aimed at assisting women, and the Saudi government has enacted legislation to provide assistance to women who are employed through provisions related to maternity leave, vacation time, and nurseries, among other things. The Saudi government has also sought to increase the number of women employed in its administrations, as well as the number of women in general (Galloway, 2020).

### **Turkey Profile**

Turkey is categorized as an upper- income country. In 2018, the gross domestic product was valued to be USD 2.3 trillion (USD 28473 per capita) in purchasing power parity. An estimated 5.82% was generated by the agricultural sector to the GDP, while 29.47% was generated by the industrial sector, and 54.26% was generated by the services sector (World Bank, 2023). Turkey is deemed to be the nineteenth leading economy at the global level. Turkey

is among the founding members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the G20.

In 2020, the workforce was calculated to stand at 32 million. Approximately 55.32% of the workforce is engaged in services, an estimated 26.31% of the workforce was engaged in the industrial sector, and an estimated 18.38% of the workforce was engaged in the agricultural sector. In 2020, the overall unemployment was estimated to stand at 13%. The unemployment rate for males is estimated to approximately 10% of the workforce, and the unemployment rate for females is 14% of the workforce. Women constituted approximately 25% of the entire workforce but constituted only 60% of the agricultural workforce (World Bank, 2023).

In 2020, the population of Turkey stands at 84 million people. Of which, 24% of the total population are those in the cohort within the age group range of 0 to 14 years of age; another 68% comprises of the cohort within the age range from 15 up to 64 years of age. Meanwhile, 8% constituted the senior citizens who are 65 years old or above. The young dependency ratio has decreased from 52% in 1996 to 35% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio has increased from 9% in 1996 to 12% in 2020. This is because the number of elderly people has increased more rapidly than the number of young people. In 2020, the fertility rate was 2 births per woman. Since 1960, life expectancy has risen rapidly, with a life expectancy of 73 years for males and 79 years for females in 2020 (World Bank, 2023). Turkey has become a nation with low fertility and death rates in recent years. This is linked with a variety of hazards that have been seen in certain nations, such as an ageing population and a decreasing working-age population, among others (Yucesahin et al., 2016).

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, even though women account for almost half of the country's population, the labour participation rate for women in 2020 remains at 31 percent, compared to 68.5 percent for males. The Turkish government is implementing a comprehensive initiative titled "More and Better Jobs for Women" in order to address the issues stated above. In addition to assisting women job searchers in obtaining employment prospects, the programme seeks to make a positive contribution to the development of acceptable working conditions for women in the workplace. As a result, the programme includes several projects that are focused on different dimensions of the difficulties that women face in accessing decent work in collaboration with key actors in the world of work in order to increase the number of women who work in decent working conditions and contribute to the promotion of gender equality.



Pertaining to education matters, based on publications by UNESCO the adult literacy rate in Turkey is 97%. The rate of literacy for male is 98.82%, and the rate of literacy for females is 93.5%. In 2020, the rates of enrolment are stated to be 117 percent for tertiary education, 104 percent for secondary school, and 97 percent for primary school. Government expenditure on education is about 3.4% as percentage of GDP in 2020 higher than expenditure on education in 1996. Based on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Report, the education index of the country is 72.7%, and Turkey was ranked at the position of 54 out of 189 countries in 2018.

### **United Arab Emirates Profile**

Most recently, the United Arab Emirates government acknowledged that a disparity in population size has an adverse effect on unemployment among graduates of the contemporary educational system (A. M. E. Mansour, 2015). The population of the UAE is estimated to be 9.3 million in 2020. The population constitution for males stands at 70%, while the constitution for females constituted the remainder which is 30%. The population of UAE is largely young and is made up of a cohort within the age range of 15 to 64 years old estimated at over 83.4%, with approximately 14.9% in a cohort who are younger than 14 years old, and a cohort who are 65 years old and above with a percentage of 1.7%. The young dependency ratio has decreased over time reached 18% in 2020, whereas the old-age dependency ratio come to 2% in 2020. The UAE has a comparatively high level of life expectancy; with the males having a life expectancy of 77.4 years, and for females' life expectancy is approximately 81 years, and the overall life expectancy is 79 years. In 2020, UAE's fertility rate was 1.5 births per woman (World Bank, 2023).

In terms of education, the public schools in the United Arab Emirates are supported by the government, and the curriculum is designed to contribute to the country's development objectives. In 2020, the rates of enrolment are stated to be 54 percent for tertiary education, 103 percent for secondary school, and 115 percent for primary school. Government expenditure on education is about 3.9% as percentage of GDP in 2020 higher than that in 1996. Pertaining to the education index, in 2018, UAE's education index was 80.2% and it was positioned with a country ranking of 31 out of 189 countries.

## **GOVERNMENTAL VIEWS AND POLICIES ON POPULATION**

Given the apparent incongruencies among Middle Eastern nations, various barriers were encountered by the nations, such as increasing populations, high youth unemployment and urbanisation rates, overcrowding in cities, and a huge influx of immigrants. Demographic issues would continue to denote developmental barriers and pose environmental, economic, and political impacts on the region. Employment availability issues also needed due consideration following the millions of applicants in the labour market with the perpetual increase of both working-age population and labour force engagement rates (specifically for women). High unemployment levels would occur despite the presence of foreign migration in several nations. The increasing number of labour immigration in GCC nations occurred simultaneously with high unemployment rates among local workers (specifically university graduates).

In Middle Eastern nations and other countries, the demographic terrain of the last five decades involved rapid population growth that substantially deterred the economy. Nonetheless, the limitation is being substantially resolved following social changes, particularly the moderate development of female empowerment. Middle Eastern nations are now promoting a demographic change that provides dual demographic dividend potentials if governments could develop a conducive atmosphere. The potentials sourced from a huge portion of the working age population, with low responsibility of caregiving for the youth and aged. The following decades reflected increased capital prospects from the savings of middle-aged employees preparing for retirement. Nevertheless, the prospects could become risky with insufficient employment opportunities for the youth labour markets when the savings proved inadequate in the next few decades.

Most Middle Eastern governments in the region observed extensive immigration movements as the most significant demographic issue. The high proportion of the working-age population was a primary concern following the need to develop appropriate job prospects for rapid workforce development. Further challenges faced by governments in the region denoted a high population growth rate. As such, this section outlines governmental perspectives and policies on the Middle East population.

Firstly, the significant policy is related to the population growth and the age structure. Numerous Middle Eastern Governments in the region persist to be worried about by the ramifications of the swift population growth related to economic growth and sustainable development. Policy interventions were also developed following the unfavourable implications of high population growth. Specific Middle Eastern nations (Bahrain, Egypt,

Jordan, Oman, and the UAE) implemented policies to reduce the population growth rate by utilising modern family planning techniques, increasing the legal marriage age, and decreasing immigration movements. The policies aimed to overcome the tendency to use renewable and non-renewable resources, minimise climate changes, avert food deficiencies, and provide appropriate employment scopes and vital social services for the population.

Several nations had grave concerns regarding the working-age population size. The provision of appropriate work opportunities for their growing labour forces are the dominant strife faced by countries in the region. In 2018, the youth unemployment rate in the Middle East was at 26.1% (more than twice the global average). According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a reformation on the availability of Middle Eastern youth employment to limit the rising unemployment rates was necessary. Based on the population forecasts, a rise in the working-age population (between 15 and 64 years old) was expected in the Middle East, wherein more employment opportunities (up to 94 million) are required by 2030 (an approximate increment of five million jobs annually).

Regarding the aged population in the region, family members are responsible for the social support and care provided for senior citizens. The situation was acknowledged and reinforced by stakeholders who recognised family units to be the principal providers for aged populations within the conventional social support system. In most Middle Eastern nations, many seniors lived with and relied on family members for familial support and attention. Furthermore, a significant development has been achieved in employing government programs to support the aged in a number of the countries in the region. Pertinent initiatives comprise, mobilizing health insurance provisions covering the disadvantaged aged individuals, intensifying welfare provisions covering incapacity and challenges resultant from ageing process, improving pension funds and social security schemes, in addition to setting day care centres for the elderly.

Further to this, the second offered policy is pertaining to fertility and family planning. The decrease in the fertility levels through direct or indirect means has been implemented by the Governments via a variety of methods. The various methods constitute the incorporation of family planning and safe motherhood programs into the primary health care systems, the provision of access to reproductive health services, increasing the minimum legal age for marriage of men and women, the enhancement of female education and employment prospects, the promotion of the empowerment of women, and the provision of access to affordable, safe and effective contraception. In recent years, fertility decline has come to a standstill in some

Middle Eastern countries. In a majority of the countries such as Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Turkey, and the UAE, the rate of fertility is lower in comparison to the replacement rate of 2.1 births per woman.

The third policy concerned international migration. Governments in the Middle East region have the tendency to execute steps in lowering immigration. In the majority of Middle Eastern countries that have enforced restrictive admission policies, the situation will consist of migrants making up more than 15% of the population, or that of the countries experienced soaring immigrations statistics since the 1990s. Starting from the terminal end of 1990s, the growing number of migrant workers in the workforce have impelled Governments to formulate programs to “nationalize” the workforce, to substitute migrant workers by their own local citizens, and hence offer greater employment prospects to citizens, and decrease their dependency on migrant workers. Customarily, there are two categories of policies in this context: Firstly, policies targeted at reducing the foreign workers, and secondly, policies meant at increasing the workforce demand for citizens. According to Savin et al. (2023), the problem of international migration of low-skilled labour needs to be regulated. Its processes have formed permanent migration channels through which migrants move around the world. In this context, the process of forming and implementing a coherent strategy that provides for the harmonization of migration policies of different countries needs to be significantly strengthened.

There are a variety of measures being implemented in every GCC state to promote national involvement, including tariffs, quotas, and salary subsidies, among others. The unemployment compensation or tax established in 2006 in Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia to guarantee that jobless people are developed and then employed within a certain period of time is an example given by Hertog (2014). Companies benefit from the establishment of "nitaqat" in Saudi Arabia, which separates quotas by forty-one industries and four business sizes, allowing them to operate more efficiently (Hertog, 2014). In order to promote national involvement, Kuwait has implemented "dam al amala," which is a salary support programme for Kuwaiti workers and their families. As a result, wages in the private sector have been brought into line with those in the public sector.

## **DISCUSSION**

In the Middle East region, the working-age population is a potential agent of change towards realizing a more successful future, by their role in reaping the demographic dividend.

However, for this to actualize, they should be viewed as part of the probable solutions. Policy makers need to carry out critical action which is crucial if the working-age population in the Middle East are to attain their maximum potential, offer solutions to problems, and assist the region in benefitting from the demographic dividend.

It is imperative for the Middle Eastern countries to implement the needed macro-economic strategies and changes, and the fiscal, regulatory, and labour-market policy changes, which will take full advantage of the employment prospects. Moreover, policy means targeted at boosting the demographic dividend in the countries need to concentrate chiefly on the individuals who are already in the working-age category, and to deal with the labour force participation; the creation of employment; to consider the business environment; and attend to productivity returns through enriching the human capital in the existing labour force.

In terms of education, it is a definite necessity for any country with the objective of actualizing a demographic dividend to have a well-educated workforce, with the apt combination of technical and skills needed by the labour market. Investing in education is critical. However, in the face of concerns pertaining to the educational systems quality in the region, the essential investment needed is not merely to keep abreast of the increasing numbers of school-age children, but also to facilitate accessibility to quality education for transformational investments. Wider skillsets pertaining to learning, employment, personal empowerment, and active citizenship are progressively significant. Learning approaches that prioritize life skills and citizenship education are crucial to guarantee that the education system generates proficient human capital workforce candidates. Hence, national systems are recommended greatly to invest extensively in a comprehensive life skillset that will form the groundwork for further learning and training, to enable the working-age population to be employable. Based on a study by Hien B. T. T. (2023), it was revealed that to renew education and training radically and comprehensively; implement the viewpoint that education-training and science-technology are the leading national policy. This is a strategic, long-term issue. Therefore, it is necessary to make a focused and effective investment in education and training, and science-technology, which, to focus on investing in high quality human resources in these fields.

Regarding employment and decent jobs, the rates of unemployment in the Middle East region are currently the highest at the global level. Thus, the mere adjustment and modification of the new labour market entrants are inadequate to maximize the economic dividend. Furthermore, half of the jobs of the future is not in existence yet, although there is a foreseeable

swift technological change and its impactful effect on the economy and social lives in the future. It is essential for the working-age population to attain varying skill sets to secure jobs. Consequently, it is crucial for education systems to cultivate the required skills demanded by the changing economy towards a positive transition into the workforce. Additionally, those who are not employed presently, or are out of the workforce are needed to be incorporated into the economy. For attaining this end, a mix of policy measures is needed pertaining to labour force supply and demand.

Pertaining to inclusive economic growth, a demographic dividend will not be actualized without economic growth and this economic growth needs to be inclusive. This signifies that the creation of decent quality jobs for countless of people are required. Hence, it is highly significant that policy measures which promote inclusive growth, and which lead to high quality jobs for the population at large be established and implemented. There is a need for private sector-driven job creation, as the region has been dependent on the public sector to engage new labour market entrants for an extremely long time; a scenario that has ceased to be sustainable or appropriate.

On matters pertaining to unlocking the potential of women, the female labour force participation rate in the Middle East region is extremely low. This signifies that the region is forsaking a significant proportion of its human capital and restraining its economic growth. As indicated in the past studies, narrowing the gender disparity in the workforce engagement would multiply the labour force in the countries by more than twofold in the region. The resultant economic expansion prospects are colossal. Countries can take immense advantage from policy procedures targeted at guaranteeing the maximum involvement of girls in education, in addition to the empowerment of women economically. Accordingly, these countries will also actualize a double dividend, due to the increasing female labour force participation rate, and the decreasing female unemployment will further lessen dependency ratios. There are other means implemented to raise the female labour force participation rate, for example, the creation of active employment enterprises for women; flexible work provisions; the promotion of financial inclusion and access to finance for women; methods that advocate equal pay for men and women; initiation or expansion of parental leave provisions; and provisions of reasonable-priced childcare.

In summation, if the Middle Eastern countries in the region are unsuccessful in investing for their working-age population in preparing them for a productive life, and they do not admit the labour market entrants, the exceptional window of opportunity in capturing the demographic

dividend will escape. A huge percentage of the working-age population in the region will be either out of the labour force or jobless. These people will probably be disheartened, and their state of unemployment will put a substantial dependency on public resources. It is critical to act now, in a timely manner for this depressing possibility is to be averted, and for the demographic transition to affect an invigoration of the economy for prosperity in the region.

## CONCLUSION

The demographic change-economic growth relationship has been extensively researched for several decades. This has become the dominant paradigm in the field of population and development, and an advocacy tool for highlighting the benefits of the age structure change. In the Middle Eastern nations, the proportion of the working-age population demonstrated a remarkable change in the population structure over several decades with potential implications for the economy. Additionally, the influence of human capital on economic growth proved crucial as it has been seen as the engine of economic growth. The main purpose of this study is to evaluate changing demographic patterns in Middle East countries to recognize that the inexorable demographic momentum will have important implications for the economic and social forces that will shape future societal well-being. This paper discusses each country's economic, social, human development, and educational issues over time. The discussion from this study reveals that the Middle East region required demographic and economic policies that promote active engagement in the labour market to enhance productivity and achieve a high-income economy. Educational policies were also needed to prioritize human capital development.

The unavailability of data for certain Middle Eastern countries formed one of the greatest challenges and restrictions for this current research. This is regardless of the availability of massive data in the World Bank database for practically any type of world activity. There are numerous suggested aspects for further research. An extended study could be conducted that expands the sampling size to other Middle Eastern countries. Authors advocate researchers to concentrate on Middle Eastern countries to provide illumination and clarity on the realities pertaining to the demographic and educational dividends.

## REFERENCES

Ahmad, M., & Khan, R. E. A. (2018). Age-structure, human capital and economic growth in developing economies: A disaggregated analysis. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 229-252.

- Ahmad, M., & Khan, R. E. A. (2019). Does demographic transition with human capital dynamics matter for economic growth? A dynamic panel data approach to GMM. *Social Indicators Research*, 142(2), 753-772.
- Al Abdulkarim, M. K. (2018). *Labour demand, firm survival & productivity in dual labour markets: The case of the nitaqat policy in Saudi Arabia*. King's College London,
- Alkitkat, H. (2018). *Egyptian female labor force participation and the future of economic empowerment* (1st edition ed.): Springer, Cham.
- Amornkitvikai, Y., Harvie, C., & Karcharnubarn, R. (2022). The impact of demographic structure, human capital, migration and environmental degradation on economic growth in Asia. *Journal of Economic Studies*, Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 216-233.
- Barsoum, G., Ramadan, M., & Mostafa, M. (2014). *Labour market transitions of young women and men in Egypt*. Retrieved from Work4Youth publication series, No. 16; ISSN 2309-6780; 2309-6799:
- Bawazir, A. A. A., Aslam, M., & Osman, A. F. B. (2020). Demographic change and economic growth: empirical evidence from the Middle East. *Economic Change and Restructuring*, 53, 429-450.
- Bawazir, A. A., Aslam, M., & Osman, A. F. (2021). Gender, education levels and economic growth in the Middle East. *Journal of Economic Cooperation & Development*, 42(3), 25-57.
- Berde, É., & Kurbanova, M. (2023). Does the demographic dividend with human capital development yield an economic dividend? Evidence from Central Asia. *Post-Communist Economies*, 1-25.
- Cruz, M., & Ahmed, S. A. (2018). On the impact of demographic change on economic growth and poverty. *World Development*, 105, 95-106.
- Cuaresma, J. C., Loichinger, E., & Vincelette, G. A. (2016). Aging and income convergence in Europe: A survey of the literature and insights from a demographic projection exercise. *Economic Systems*, 40(1), 4-17.
- Forouheshfar, Y., El Mekkaoui, N., & d'Albis, H. (2020). Demographics in MENA countries: a major driver for economic growth. *De Economist*, 168(2), 183-213.
- Gakpa, L. L., & Kouadio, H. K. (2023). Effect of demographic transition on economic growth: does economic freedom matter? Evidence from ECOWAS countries. *Studies in Economics and Econometrics*, 1-24.
- Galloway, A. H. (2020). Equality in Saudi Arabia workforce. *Electronic Interdisciplinary Miscellaneous Journal*, 25(6).
- Garrison, S. (2015). *Kuwaiti female labor force participation: agency and development sustainability in Kuwait*. (Doctor of Philosophy). American University of Kuwait (AUK),
- Ghavidel, S., & Mirghiyasi, N. (2018). Population aging, life expectancy and economic growth. *Iranian Journal of Economic Research*, 22(73), 159-196.



- Hajamini, M. (2015). The non-linear effect of population growth and linear effect of age structure on per capita income: A threshold dynamic panel structural model. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 46, 43-58.
- Hertog, S. (2014). *Arab Gulf states: an assessment of nationalisation policies*. Retrieved from
- Hien B. T. T. (2023). Training High-Quality Human Resources: From the Perspective of Development Policy and Strategy. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(5), e01654.
- Hosseini, H. (2012). *Demographic Transition, Window of Opportunity, and Population Bonus: Toward a New Population Policy in Iran*. Paper presented at the Paper Accepted for Presentation at the European Population Conference, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Hsu, M., Liao, P. J., & Zhao, M. (2018). Demographic change and long-term growth in China: Past developments and the future challenge of aging. *Review of Development Economics*, 22(3), 928-952.
- Huang, W.-H., Lin, Y.-J., & Lee, H.-F. (2019). Impact of population and workforce aging on economic growth: Case study of Taiwan. *Sustainability*, 11(22), 6301.
- IMF. (2018). *Pursuing women's economic empowerment*. Paper presented at the meeting of G7 ministers and central bank governors, Whistler, Canada.
- Jain, N., & Goli, S. (2022). Demographic Change and Economic Development in India (No. 2262).
- Janghorban, R., Taghipour, A., Roudsari, R. L., & Abbasi, M. (2014). Women's empowerment in Iran: a review based on the related legislations. *Global Journal of Health Science*, 6(4), 226.
- Kajimura, M. (2020). Changes in the demographic structure and economic growth in East and Southeast Asia. In. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute: economics working paper No.2020-05.
- Lee, H.-H., Shin, K., & Park, D. (2017). Population aging and its impact on economic growth: implications for Korea. *Economic Analysis*, 196, 162-188.
- Li, H., & Zhang, X. (2015). Population aging and economic growth: the chinese experience of Solow model. *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, 7(3), 199-206.
- Lutz, W., Cuaresma, J. C., Kebede, E., Prskawetz, A., Sanderson, W. C., & Striessnig, E. (2019). Education rather than age structure brings demographic dividend. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(26), 12798-12803.
- Maestas, N., Mullen, K. J., & Powell, D. (2016). *The effect of population aging on economic growth, the labor force and productivity*. Retrieved from
- Mamun, S. A. K., Rahman, M. M., & Khanam, R. (2020). The relation between an ageing population and economic growth in Bangladesh: Evidence from an endogenous growth model. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 66(June), 14-25.

- Mansour, A. M. E. (2015). Population imbalance and immigration as a public policy problem in the United Arab Emirates. In *Besharov, SJ and MH Lopez, Adjusting to a world in motion: Trends in global migration and migration policy* (pp. 308-329).
- Mansour, S., Al-Awadhi, T., Al Nasiri, N., & Al Balushi, A. (2020). Modernization and female labour force participation in Oman: spatial modelling of local variations. *Annals of GIS*, 1-15.
- Miri, N., Maddah, M., & Raghfar, H. (2019). Aging and economic growth. *Iranian Journal of Ageing*, 13, 626-637.
- Mohammed, L. A. (2021). Female education in the Middle East closing the gap. *Global Journal of Education and Training*, 4(1).
- Munir, K., & Shahid, F. S. U. (2020). Role of demographic factors in economic growth of South Asian countries. *Journal of Economic Studies*, DOI 10.1108/JES-1108-2019-0373.
- Ojewuyi, A. T., & Alimi, A. S. (2019). Age structure, human capital development and economic growth: Evidence from Nigeria and South Africa. *EuroEconomica*, 38(2).
- Oliver, M. (2015). Population ageing and economic growth in Japan. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 35(11/12), 841-863.
- Riaz, S., & Nadeem, N. (2019). Factors affecting female labor force participation in Punjab, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 39(3), 1059-1066.
- Ruidong, Y. (2018). The impact of population aging on China's GDP. *Frontiers in Management Research*, 2(2), 61-66.
- Sánchez-Romero, M., Abio, G., Patxot, C., & Souto, G. (2018). Contribution of demography to economic growth. *SERIEs*, 9(1), 27-64.
- Savin, V., Yin, L., Chernoba, L., Konokhov, S., Vasiltsova, N., & Tytarchuk, I. (2023). Analysis of the Impact of International Migration on the Financial and Economic Cooperation of Countries. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(5), e01591-e01591.
- Saxena, P. (2019). Demographic dividend in the Middle East countries: An empirical assessment. In *India's Low-Skilled Migration to the Middle East* (pp. 29-52): Springer.
- Uddin, G. A., Alam, K., & Gow, J. (2016). Population age structure and savings rate impacts on economic growth: Evidence from Australia. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 52, 23-33.
- UNDP. (2018). Human Development Reports. In. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>.
- Ven, R. v. d., & Smits, J. (2011). The demographic window of opportunity: age structure and sub-national economic growth in developing countries. In *NICE Working Paper Series; 11-102*.
- Wongboonsin, K., & Phiromswad, P. (2017). Searching for empirical linkages between demographic structure and economic growth. *Economic Modelling*, 60, 364-379.
- World Bank. (2023). *World development indicators*. Retrieved from Retrieved from <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>. : [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

Yoon, J.-w., Kim, J., & Lee, J. (2018). Impact of demographic changes on inflation and the macroeconomy. *KDI Journal of Economic Policy*, 40(1), 1-30.

Yucesahin, M. M., Adalı, T., & Türkyılmaz, A. S. (2016). Population policies in Turkey and demographic changes on a social map. *Border Crossing*, 6(2), 240-266.

Zahir, S. (2023). The Impact of High Population on Economic Development of Pakistan. *Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development*, 8(1), 36-45.

Zhang, H., Zhang, H., & Zhang, J. (2015). Demographic age structure and economic development: Evidence from Chinese provinces. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 43(1), 170-185.