Population Growth in Africa and its Effects on Human Development

Prof. Magda Ibrahim Amer

Abstract

This essay reviews important Population growth trends expected to occur from 1960 to 2050. The population growth is the biggest problem that plagues people in developing countries, especially Africa, where the rapid population growth surpasses all rates of economic and social development. Therefore it threatens the future development plans and affects the existence and stability of Africans. Population growth devours any development which occurs in the environment in various fields, whether industrially, agriculturally, commercially, educationally, socially, etc. In addition to the disproportionate rates of production with the huge consumption rates, population increase leads to a deficit in food resources, lack of health services, high unemployment, growing dependency burden, deficit in annual income and high poverty rates, increasing pressure on agricultural land, high rates of migration to cities, and the deficit in the public services.

Keywords: population growth, economic and social development, Unemployment, poverty, Africa

Introduction

Africa is the second continent in the world after Asia in space (30.3 million km²), about 20% of the Earth's surface, and about three times the size of Europe, and the larger than North America, stretching 8,000 km from north to south, and about the same distance from east to west. The population of Africa has increased from 286.7 million or 9.3% of the total world population (3.024 billion) in 1960, to 1.100 billion or 15.4% of the total world population (7.137 billion) by mid-2013, which means the number of the population in Africa doubled to approximately four times during the period from 1960 to 2013, which increases the number of times of the replication for the world, which is estimated at 2.3% during the same period. It is also expected that the population of Africa, to double by mid-2050. The population will be about 2.339 billion in exchange for 9.624 billion in the world, due to the high rates of annual population growth in the continent, which is twice the rate of population growth in the

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world where population growth is dramatically slower across the globe except in Africa and most of the world lives in developing countries, by a ratio of six to one by the year 2050 (Cohen, 2010, P.1).

**Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to explain the trends and levels of population growth in Africa during (1960-2050) and its effects on human development through three perspectives; population growth in Africa; reasons for high rates of population growth in Africa, The impacts of population growth on human development in Africa.

**Data and methods**

Data are taken from the United Nations Population Division, and Human Development Report (HDR), annual report of the UNDP for 2012, 2013, world population data sheet. To measure change in the population size, the exponential change:

The number of people of the initial year ($p_0$) and the number of people of the later year ($p_t$) have been considered. Change in the growth of population ($r$), has been calculated with the help of the formula:

$$P_t = P_0e^{rt}$$

**Population growth in Africa**

Recently, population growth is the most important demographic phenomena as it is considered a significant challenge for the human being, especially in developing countries where population is growing at a remarkable rate over the rate of economic growth and the provision of food. It can be said that the high population growth with the limited economic resources or under-utilized appropriate is the main problem facing development in African.

The problem of population size has double faces, while some African countries are suffering from population pressure on land; others are suffering from a scarcity of population. In spite of the conditions of poverty that pervades most parts of the
African continent, the rate of population growth in Africa is one of the highest in the world. It has been observed from table 1 and figure 1 that:

- The steady rise of population in Africa was at its highest rate during the period between 1960-2013 compared to other continents and the world.

- The number has increased of the continent's population has increased to about 286.7 million between 1960 to 1.100 billion in 2013, the percentage of the increase was 383.7% during the period between 1960 to 2013, and population is expected to become about 1446 million in 2025, and 2339 million in 2050.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continents</th>
<th>Size of population (million)</th>
<th>Population growth rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>286.7</td>
<td>1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1707.7</td>
<td>4302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean islands</td>
<td>220.1</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>204.3</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>603.9</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>3038.4</td>
<td>7137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (1): Population Size and Annual Growth Rates for the World and other Region during the period (1960 - expected until 2050)

Data sources:
- UN, World Development Indicators Database 1960 at website: [www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com).

- As a result, the steady increase in the size of population, the relative weight of the continent's population rose from about 9.4% in 1960 to about 15.4% in 2013 and it is expected to reach its share of the total world population to about 17.9% in 2025 and will close a quarter of the world's population (24.3%) in 2050.
The increase weight relative of population in Africa refers to the high population growth rates in comparison with the rest of the continents of the world. While the population growth rate was about 2.5% per annum during the period (1960-2013), the global average stood at 1.6% only, and 1.9% for Latin America and the Caribbean islands which came in the second rank after Africa, and 1.7% for Asia & Oceania, while North America recorded 1.03% and Europe came in the last rank by 0.39% the lowest rate of population growth among the world's continents.

It can also be observed from table (1) & figure (2) that all the continents of the world decline in the rates of annual population growth during the following periods (2013-2025) and (2025-2050), while the annual population growth rate in Africa will continue to be more than twice the global average. The continents of Asia and Latin America will experience lower population growth rate in comparison with the world, but Europe will see its population decrease during the period (2025-2050).

Based on the annual population growth rates during the period (1960-2013), while the population of Africa will double in about 28 years, they will almost double in Latin America and the Caribbean islands in about 36.8 years, Asia and Oceania need about more than 40 years in order to double the size of its population, North America will double the size of its population in 68 years while the population of Europe will need about 179 years to be doubled (Table 2 and figure 3).
Table (2): Relative Distribution of Population and Number of Years needed for Doubling Population Based on the Annual Population Growth Rates during the Period (1960-2013) in Africa and Other Continents

Data sources:-
As for the regions of the African continent and its countries, table (3) and figure (4) illustrate the size of population and annual population growth rates within the African regions as follows:

- High population growth rates in all regions of the continent, compared to all the continents of the world and the world during the period (1960-2013), also all regions recorded with the exception of South Africa high population growth rates in comparison with all the other continents of the world during the forecast (2013-2050) which dropped population growth rates compared to the continents of North America, Latin America & the Caribbean, Asia and Oceania and the world average as well.

- It is expected that the decreasing population growth rates in all regions of the continent during the period (2013-2050) compared to the previous period (1960-2013).

- The East and Central Africa at the forefront of the regions where high rates of population growth, 2.79 % each during the period (1960-2013), while in the next period the Central Africa region will come in first rank with annual growth rate of 2.56 %, West Africa region will come in the second rank with annual growth rate of 2.29 %, the East Africa region at a rate of 2.23%, while northern and southern Africa recorded the lowest rate of population growth during both periods.
As for the population growth rates at the level of the African countries in (table 3 and figure 5), it can be divided into the following categories:-

**Category I:** It includes countries with more than 3 % a year; they were eight countries during the period (1960-2013): Western Sahara, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Niger, Djibouti, Kenya, Mayotte, and Uganda. These countries will come out from this category 1 with the exception of Niger in the period (2013-2050) and will be joined by Malawi, Zambia as the second category.

The main reasons of the high population growth rates are: (1) high birth rates and low death rates as the case of Niger and Zambia which is within the top ten highest fertility in the world in 2012 and Niger was the first among these countries and Zambia was the seventh (UN, Population Reference Bureau 2012, p.2) also Uganda and the Malawi and Mayotte recorded the rate for newborns more than 41 per thousand. (2) the immigration such as Cote d'Ivoire which came in the forefront of the region of West Africa in particular and Africa in general in the terms of the outcome of the immigrants which rose from 767 thousand in 1960 to about 2.4 million in 2010 and by 28.6 % of the total immigrants in Western Africa, and about 12.5 % of the total immigrants in Africa in 2010 (UNDP, 2009,P.145).

Kenya is the most attractive country for immigration long ago, where it occupies a geographical and strategic location in East Africa, in addition to advanced infrastructure and relatively healthy atmosphere and communications wild, it has a
delegation of immigrants from neighboring countries because of political instability and food insecurity (ICMPD, 2008, p.46) Kenya also attracted many international organizations, businesses and seasonal tourists who prefer some stability in the coastal areas like the Italians, the Germans, the French and other nationalities benefiting from the weakness of the Kenyan economy (OKOTH, K., 2003, p.1). So Kenya came at the forefront of East African countries in the terms of the outcome of immigration, and in fifth rank at the level of the African countries. The outcome of immigration has risen in Kenya from 59.3 thousand immigrants and expatriates in 1960 to 817.7 thousand immigrants and expatriates in 2010 (UNDP, 2009, P.145).

Category II: Includes the countries where population growth rates are between 2.5 -3 % per annum. They were 23 countries during the period (1960-2013): Libya, Sudan, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, and Democratic Republic of Congo and Namibia. All the countries of this category will come out in the period (2013 - 2050) with the exception of Tanzania, Angola, and Democratic Republic of Congo which will join the states of Mayotte and Uganda in the first category while the countries of Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Mali, and South Sudan will join the third category.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
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<td>Niger</td>
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<td>2.15 1.1</td>
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<td>Senegal</td>
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<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>1.68 0</td>
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<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>1.79 0.55</td>
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<td>2.54 2.04</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>2.59 1.69</td>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>2.77 2.9</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1.7 0.56</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>2.8 2.35</td>
<td>R. of central Africa</td>
<td>2.15 1.57</td>
<td>North America</td>
<td>1.03 0.79</td>
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<td>Malawi</td>
<td>2.89 3.01</td>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>2.68 2.18</td>
<td>South America and Caribbean</td>
<td>1.9 0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>2.58 2.43</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>1.28 0</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>2.77 2.27</td>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>1.6 1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (3) Annual Population Growth Rates in Africa during the period (1960 - expected until 2050)

Data sources:
- UN, World Development Indicators Database 1960 at website: [www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com).
**Category III:** Includes countries where population growth rates range between 2 and 2.5% per annum, seventeen countries were in the third category in the period (1960-2013): Algeria, Egypt, South Sudan, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Burundi, Mozambique, Somalia, Central African Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana, and Swaziland. Most of these countries will go out this category and join to either the second category as a result of high population growth rates or to categories IV and V due to lower population growth rates, only the states of Somalia and Burundi in the period (2013-2050) will join the countries of Sudan, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Madagascar, Chad, and Congo in the second category, and Gambia in the first category and these countries will decrease the rates of annual population growth in the period (2013-2050) compared with the first period (1960–2013). Equatorial Guinea and Gabon will join to the fourth category because the annual rate of population growth will decrease during the next period.

**Category IV:** Includes countries with the rates of annual population growth between 1.5 -2%, it has eight countries: Morocco, Tunisia, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Reunion, Seychelles, and Lesotho in the period (1960-2013) and annual population growth rates will drop in most countries in this category and move to the fifth category with the exception of Equatorial Guinea which will move to the fourth category in the period (2013 - 2050) while Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone will remain in this category in the coming period and will join the group of countries that will decrease annual growth rates such as Djibouti from the first category, Ghana, Mauritania, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Cameroon from the second category and Guinea, Zimbabwe, and Central Africa from the third category.

**Category V:** Includes countries with population growth rates less than 1.5%, per annum, this category included Mauritius only in the first period (1960-2013) in the next period, most of North Africa countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) will enter and all the countries of the Southern Africa region, as well as Kenya, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Reunion, Seychelles, Sao Tome and Principe.
The reasons for high of population growth rates in Africa

It has been observed that the rates of annual population growth in all countries in Africa were high compared to all other countries in the world as a result of following factors:-

1. High birth rates

Many studies indicated that Africa came in the first rank among other compared continents of the world in the birth rates. While the birth rate in the world was about 38.4 per thousand in 1960, It was about 47.2 per thousand in Africa, the increase of approximately 122.9% of the world average, and this high rates continued in 2012, the birth rate in the continent of Africa was about 36 per thousand, with an increase of 180% for the global average which was 20 per thousand. Compared with other continents, the birth rates in Africa was almost twice the birth rate in Asia and Oceania and approaching twice the birth rate in South America and the Caribbean islands, it was more than three times the birth rate in Europe and about 2.8 times the birth rate in North America.(table 4, figure 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Crude birth rates per 1000</th>
<th>Crude Death rates per 1000</th>
<th>Natural increase rates</th>
<th>Total fertility rates 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>48.15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25.69</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>49.77</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.61</td>
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<td>Central Africa</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>Africa</td>
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<td>22.2</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>9.8</td>
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<td>South America and Caribbean</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Oceania</td>
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<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (4) Vital Statistics in Africa and other Region (1960-2011)
Data sources:

It has been seen from table (4)& figure (6) that the birth rates vary between sub-regions within the African continent, East Africa has record the highest rate of births (49.37 per thousand) in the continent in 1960, followed by the West Africa region at a rate of (49.09 per thousand), then the territory of North Africa in the third place at a rate of (48.15 per thousand) and then South Africa (45.06 per thousand), and finally the territory of central Africa at a rate of (44.39 per thousand). It can also be observed that the situation was reversed in 2012 where the central Africa came at the forefront of the regions in Africa at a rate of (43 per thousand), then the West African region (40 per thousand) followed by the East Africa (38 per thousand), while the record of North Africa was (26 per thousand) and South Africa came in the last place with (22 per thousand).

![Crude Birth Rate (1960- 2010/2011)](image)

Figure (6)

Figure (7) shows that most countries in the continent have a high rate of birth, and as it is well known that any rate more than (30 per thousand is highly regarded), if
the increase is more than 40 per thousand, it is very high, while touted rates between 20-30 per thousand as medium rate, and 20 per thousand is a low birth rate.

Figure (7): Crude birth rate in Africa per thousands (1960) and (2011)

Source of data:

Factors behind high birth rates in Africa:

a) **High fertility rates**: it was recorded from table (4) & figure (8) that the continent of Africa has the highest fertility rate in the world (4.7 child in 2012 per woman), double of the global average (approximately 2.4 child), and it is close to double the rate of fertility in Oceania (2.5 child) and more than twice the fertility rate in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean islands (2.2 child each), North America (1.9 child per woman) and Europe (1.6 child). Ten countries in Africa have the highest fertility rate in the world in 2013; Niger (7.6 child), Chad (7 child), Somalia (6.8 child), Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola (6.3 child each), Burundi Uganda and Central Africa (6.2 child each), Mali (6.1 child), Burkina Faso (6 children) (UN, 2013, World Population Data sheet, p.2).
b) **High mortality rates of children under five years:** the high rate of mortality of children under five to higher prepare birth in order to cope with declining population caused the deaths, where the report indicated the status of children in the world in 2012 that the mortality rate of children under five in Africa amounts to about 111 per thousand, it is approaching twice the global average which amounted to about 57 per thousand and it increased in sub-Saharan Africa to 121 per thousand, in North Africa the rate was 41 per thousand as it rose in the West and Central Africa to 143 per thousand. As the region of Central Africa has been slower progress in this area, it still has the highest mortality rate of children under five, it is also the only region in Africa in which the cases of children deaths under five increased in absolute terms more than it was in 1990, perhaps partly because of the high mortality rate from malaria, which caused more than 18% of deaths among children under five years in Central Africa compared with only 7.5% in the other regions (U N., and the African Union Commission, 2013, p.9).

In the other continents the mortality rates of children under five was lower; in Asia (48 per thousand), Latin America and the Caribbean islands, Central and Eastern Europe (23 per thousand each) while in industrialized countries the rate was about 6 per thousand only (UNICEF, 2012, p.91). Nine countries from the first ten countries in the world in terms of the mortality rates of children under five were Africans; Somalia (180 per thousand), Mali (178 per thousand), Burkina Faso (176 per thousand), Sierra Leone (174 per thousand) Chad (173 per thousand), Democratic
Republic of Congo (170 per thousand), and Angola (161 per thousand), Central Africa R. (159 per thousand), Guinea -Bissau (150 per thousand) (UNICEF, 2012, p.87). Most of the deaths of children under five in Africa were attributed to the risks in the first days of their birth, which dates back to the death of nearly a quarter of children under five, while contributing to pneumonia in the death of approximately one-fifth (17%) and causes diarrhea to death more than a tenth (11%), and dies more than one-sixth (15%) of children under five due to malaria (WHO, 2013, p.78).

c) High rates of illiteracy: Many studies indicated that uneducated women have twice the number of children compared with the educated women. Since mother's education is more important than family income or wealth in the protection of the child's life and the clear link between the mother's education and child's life. The available data about child mortality in many African countries shows the relationship between the education of woman and the life of children, for example in Mali and Niger, the mortality rate of children under five in general decreases with the level of education of mothers (UNDP, 2013).

Globally, the rate of illiteracy for adult reached 16 % in 2010; equivalent to 775 million adults almost two-thirds of them are women. The progress towards the reduction of adult illiteracy decreased in recent years. After the retreat of about 100 million in the nineties, the number of illiterate adults was less than eight million between 1995/2004 and 2005/2010. It is expected that the number of illiterate adults remain at 738 million by 2015. More than half of them were in South and West Asia, and more than 20% was in sub-Saharan Africa saw a literacy rate in sub-Saharan Africa has been slow to increase unlike the population growth. Sub-Saharan Africa came in first place in terms of the high illiteracy rates among young people, which amounted to 28% and this means that the 45 million illiterate young live in sub-Saharan Africa compared with 62 million in South and West Asia (UNESCO, 2012, p.91).

Africa south of the Sahara, South and West Asia came in the first rank in the world's regions in terms of the high illiteracy rate, which amounted to 37% each, followed by the Arab countries (25%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (9%), Central and Eastern Europe (2%) and Central Asia (1%), while North America and Western Europe recorded the lowest rate of illiteracy (zero%) during the period between 2005 and 2010. As for Africa, West Africa was the first rank in the terms of
high rate illiteracy, it is approaching half of the region's population (49.8 %), followed by Central and East Africa (28.8% and 28.5%) respectively, while North Africa region ranked fourth in illiteracy rate (26.9%), South Africa came last with (12.2%) of the total population.

d) **High rates of poverty:** many studies indicated that poverty and high birth rate are related, children are increasing among poor families as an economic power, they are used to bring to their families more income on the ground, which enables them to survive (Altam, 2011, pp.107-108)

“Poverty prevails generally in Africa which is composed mostly of low-income countries, the average GDP per capita in 2011 was 2094 dollars in sub-Saharan Africa, 3241 dollars in Southern Asia, and it was 6616 dollars in Eastern Asia and the Pacific. Average rose in Arab countries to 8104 dollars, in Latin America and the Caribbean was 10429 while the highest GDP was in Europe and Central Asia 12458 $ and the average of the world was 10103 $ per capita. The GDP per capita reduced in most African countries where 31 countries, 54.8 % of the total population in Africa, less than 2000 $. The population living below the poverty line was founded in 40 countries (more than one/fifth of total population) or 95.2 % of the total number of countries for which data are available and which numbered 42 countries”.

**2. Lower mortality rates**

Mortality rate is an important component of population change, it is more crucial factor than migration, it comes after fertility, it is also contrary to fertility, it is more stable and its level can be controlled. It not only affect the change of population size, but also their structure as the mortality is always linked to the level of the age average and life expectancy, therefore the control of mortality is more acceptable than the birth control (Abu-Ayaana, no date, pp.54-55). It has been investigated that the mortality rate declined in most African regions in recent years; the most notable reason is the improved health facility.

The decline of mortality rates is the major factor that have led to increasing rates of population growth and inflation, population largely exceeded economic resources exploited in many countries, However, despite the low rate of mortality in Africa, the global average is much lower, It was 8 per thousand worldwide, the mortality rate in Africa and Europe was (11 per thousand each), while it has been
recorded less than the rate of mortality 6 per thousand in 2012 in Latin America and the Caribbean islands.

Table 4 and figure 9 show Crude Death Rates decreased in all regions of Africa between 1960 and 2011. North Africa has the highest rate of decline falling from 20.5 per thousand in 1960 to 6 per thousand in 2010/2011, also Crude Death Rates decreased in Eastern and Western Africa by half during the same period, while the central and southern Africa have the lowest decreased which fell in the region of central Africa from 25.02 per thousand in 1960 to 15 per thousand in 2010/2011, It also fell in the Southern Africa from 17.37 per thousand in 1960 to 12 per thousand in 2010/2011. It can be observed from figure (10) that the countries vary in the mortality rates and the rates decreased markedly from 1960 to 2011.
3. The high rates of natural increase

In the majority of the countries, the main reason for population growth was natural increase caused by the disturbance of the traditional balance between births and deaths (Haghshenas, N.M., et-al, 2007, p.8). Table (4) and figure (11) shows Africa has the highest rate of natural increase among the continents of the world at a rate of 25 per thousand which is more than twice the world average of 12 per thousand, and more than twice the rate of natural increase in Asia and Oceania (11 per thousand each), it was close to twice the rate of natural increase in South America and the Islands of the Caribbean (13 per thousand), and about five times the rate of natural increase in North America (5 per thousand), while the natural increase in Europe was zero.
Sources of data:


As for the regions in Africa, they varied in the rates of natural increase, Central Africa has the highest rate (28 per thousand), followed by West and East Africa (27 per thousand), then North Africa (20 per thousand), while South Africa region recorded the lowest rate of natural increase (10 per thousand) in 2010/2011. This percentage reflects the nature of the relationship between birth rates and death rates and the contrast between the regions of the African continent. Concerning the
countries, experiencing variation in the geographical distribution of the rate of natural increase has been observed (figure 11).

The impact of population growth on development in Africa

High population growth leads to several challenges for African development in the following ways:

1- A large youth population presents challenges.

High population growth leads to increase in the proportion of young people around one in six of the world’s people are aged 15 to 24. They are disproportionately concentrated in some of the poorest countries. The youth population is particularly large and fast-growing in sub-Saharan Africa. Around two-thirds of Africans are under 25, compared with less than one-third in rich countries such as France, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. By 2030, there will be three and a half times as many young people in sub-Saharan Africa as there were in 1980. There are also large number of young people living in the Arab States and South and West Asia, were around half are under the age of 25 (UNESCO, 2012, P.14).

Estimated number of young people in the age group 10-24 years about 1.8096 billion people in 2013, 25% of the total world population is concentrated mostly in developing countries, which amounted to 1.5932 billion people, 88% of the total of young people in the world, while the number in developed countries about 216.4 million people (12 percent), are numbered in Africa at about 344.4 million people (31%) of the total population of Africa and about 19% of the total of young people in the world, followed by the Latin American and the Islands of the Caribbean 27%, Asia 26%, then Oceania 23%, and finally North America (20%) and Europe (17%). The regional East and Central Africa came at the forefront of the regions of the continent where the proportion of young people, which amounted to 33% of the total population of each of them, followed by the West Africa region increased by 32%, then South Africa region by 30%, and finally North Africa region by 28% (UN, Population Reference Bureau, 2012; World Youth 2013, Data sheet, PP.15-16).

The youth and adolescents are the groups most sensitive to the community and the effectiveness of its institutions and the prospects for the future, which makes it problematic adolescence and youth at the global, regional and national levels are
directly related to questions and challenges posed by the modern world and will result in increasing the proportion of young people to the following:

- An increase in the proportion of young people and this is reflected in the dependency burden, low proportion of older persons, low life expectancy of the population compared to other continents of the world.

- An expanding youth population makes it difficult for countries to maintain or increase per-capita spending on young people – for example on health and education, and it requires economic development that creates employment opportunities for them (UNFPA, 2011, P.6).

- The length of the waiting period to get a job relatively longer for young people because they do not have the work experience needed by the labor market and tend to mobility and professionalism.

- To improve the energies of young people and leave them without the care required, and do not employ their abilities and their energies and involve them in the decision-making process will transform them into destructive elements of development in the present and the future.

- The African youth population facing great difficulties in the labor market due to insufficient education and skills and the lack of employment opportunities. And young people face a future of low wages, unemployment, and underemployment. Compounding the situation is the increasing number of young people who join the ranks of job seekers every year.

- African economy facing many vicissitudes and repeated blows which limits its ability to accommodate the growing numbers of manpower and graduates who enter the labor market every year and has become a deficit and clear in the public and private sector in the capacity to absorb the unemployed, which contributed to the growing problem of unemployment and the migration of young people to the labor markets in the neighboring countries, which had an impact in development of their countries.

- The presence of hordes of unemployed youth work and frustrating and loss of hope and goal is a fertile ground for the conflicts and violence, personal and prisoners and collectively at any moment and for the most trivial reasons therefore
witnessed the communities that I knew growing in numbers and proportions of adolescents and young people under the age of thirty rise in crime rates.

2 – Impact on Employment and Poverty

With some notable exceptions, economists are increasingly convinced that there are links from high fertility and resulting population growth on one hand to persistent poverty and wage stagnation in developing countries on the other. High fertility and population growth appear to promote the transmission of poverty across generations. Simultaneously, they widen the gaps in income and health status that separate the poor from the upper and middle classes.

Because of disproportionately high levels of fertility among the lowest income groups in developing countries, population growth is likely to depress wages at the bottom end of the pay scale. A related concern, difficult to test, lies in the possibility that large numbers of low-skill, low-wage laborers in some developing countries can slow the adoption of more efficient, labor-saving technologies (Cincotta, and Engelman, 1997, p.6).

Over the next forty years, the population of the least developed countries is projected to double, their working-age population will increase by about 15 million persons per year, and their labor force will expand by about 33 thousand persons per day. These trends pose particular challenges, considering that about 50 per cent of the current population lives in extreme poverty and 80 per cent of the labor force is only vulnerably employed. Unemployment is particularly high amongst the younger generations, and many recent graduates find only low-paying and precarious employment in the informal economy (UNFPA, 2011, p.6).

Africa recorded the highest rates of unemployment in the world. Where six of top ten Countries with Highest Unemployment There are in Africa, namely: Liberia Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Zambia, Senegal and Lesotho (http://www.mapsofworld.com/world-top-ten/countries-with-highest-unemployment.html) Youth unemployment remains a barrier to the region’s development. Some of and the highest rates on the continent are in southern Africa, where 51 percent of young women and 43 percent of young men are unemployed.
Youth (aged 15–24) unemployment is currently one of the greatest development challenges facing countries globally, including those in Africa. In 2011, about 74.8 million youth globally were unemployed (an increase of more than four million since the start of the global financial and economic crisis in 2007), with nearly 20% of them in Africa. The global youth unemployment rate, estimated at 12.7% in 2011, remains a full percentage point higher than the pre-crisis level in 2011, youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) was slightly higher than the global average at 12.8% but with North Africa averaging 27.1%, the highest amongst the regions of the world. This gives an average of about 20% youth unemployment in Africa in 2011. In addition, young people in Africa are about three times as likely as adults to be unemployed. Youth unemployment is also predominately an issue for women in Africa, especially in North Africa. While the unemployment rate for young women in North Africa was 34.3% in 2010 (compared to the global average of 13.1%), the rate for young men stood at 18.5% (compared to the global average of 12.6%), all two are the highest for any region (Anyanwu, 2014, p.11).

The effects of unemployment among youth pose various threats which impede against the economic development in Africa. Unemployment leads to loss of human resources. Young people with adequate skills and competence are rather left unutilized due to the problem of unemployment. Individuals' talents and skills are untapped and left unutilized. This indeed is a great loss to Africa as such skills could have been utilized to foster growth on the continent.

High rate of youth unemployment leads to increase in poverty. Unemployment deprives a man of all sources of income and this is highly manifested across the continent. Most Africans due to poverty arising out of unemployment cannot satisfy the basic necessity of life. Most young Africans live in the streets across the capital cities because of their inability to afford decent accommodation.

Unemployment again leads to breeding of social problems; dishonesty, gambling, bribery, theft etc. Prolonged unemployment usually results in some form of social unrest, as reflected by an increased crime rate and violent agitators. It breeds discontent against the state, and any slight provocative issue or incident may trigger violent demonstrations and social unrest, which may result in loss of life and damage to properties. As a result of unemployment, social security is jeopardized. It’s of no wonder that most electoral violence staged on the continent are been instigated largely
by the unemployed youths. So this suffices to say that unemployment is an automatic threat to social, economic and political security.

Unemployment and working poverty are recognized as major obstacles to the continent’s economic and social development. Furthermore, there is a general consensus that unemployment was one of the root causes of the social unrest that arose in North Africa (Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya) in recent years (the Arab Spring), which led to major political upheavals in those countries (African Development Bank Group, et al, 2013, p.29).

3- Rapid urbanization changes

The world is undergoing the largest wave of urban growth in history: limited schooling and employment opportunities force migration and change the size and composition of cities. Giant cities have appeared during the last two-three decades in many developing countries due to this effect. Rapid urbanization without planning puts greater financial and physical restraints on education, health and social services if these services cannot keep pace with increasing demand. Even in the developed-country cities, population growth has been reported to increase costs of providing public services as well as to reduce service levels.

It is estimated that virtually all the world’s population growth will be concentrated in urban areas over the next thirty years, and that by 2040 more people will be living in urban areas than in rural areas in all developing regions. Urbanization has led to significant urban poverty, manifested in the growth of slums and informal settlements. More than 800 million people are estimated to live in slums in developing countries – equivalent to one in three city dwellers. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost two-thirds of the urban population live in slums making it even more crucial to pay attention to skills and work in these environments. Many young people live in extremely poor environments that offer little prospect of finding decent jobs. Slum dwellers and other urban poor suffer from inadequate housing, overcrowding, and lack of access to sanitation and water, and inadequate basic services. They are vulnerable to natural disasters and environmental hazards, experience high levels of crime and violence, and lack legal protection. Under these conditions where a growing number of disadvantaged youth are struggling to find good jobs that will give
them a secure future. But the odds are against them. Many are trapped in informal, insecure, low paid work (UNESCO, 2012, P.257).

**Conclusion**

Population growth is still a problem in Africa where socio-economic development is also far from the desired level. The cause in most of African countries is persisting high fertility. Despite having lowered their fertility levels, middle-income countries demonstrate unequal distribution of fertility with higher fertility in poorer segments of the population, which increases socio-economic inequalities.

Many of the stresses of rapid population growth are exacerbated by poverty and inequality. Continued Rapid population growth poses bigger threat to poverty-reduction in most countries. This growth will require unprecedented investment in new infrastructure and create undreamed challenges for political and social institutions. In order to increase human development level in the coming decades the countries should seek to achieve the following:

The coordination and balance between population growth and regular thoughtful, comprehensive and sustainable development. There is need for attention to the rapid population growth through putting an action plan to cope with this growth which will impact on the size of the purchasing power.

Knowing the size of illiteracy and obstacles to eliminate them and restrict them and also identify the targets of accurately literacy programs, and draw objective and realistic mechanisms to achieve those goals, and develop programs based on the calendar of scientific methods.

A strong decision from all African countries to seek a unified collective hard work on the official and popular levels, the combination of all the efforts , and monitoring of all the possibilities and the necessary funds and the allocation of appropriate organs , and enactment of appropriate laws and regulations in order to eliminate the problem of illiteracy in Africa.

Reducing population growth rates through the dissemination of culture population is needed to raise awareness of the importance of the growing population.
Rural development and establishment of agricultural and industrial projects are needed to eliminate the high poverty rates in rural areas.

Interest in education and health through increased financial allocations to achieve highest rates of development with attention to scientific research.

Reducing the proportion of dropouts and intensify the effort to adult literacy and bridging the headwaters of illiteracy for the awareness development and the embodiment of the positive involvement in the community and the fields of employment and production.

Coordinating between the scientific research in the Universities and other higher Institutions to achieve African integration and cooperation between their research programs for the renaissance of the African continent.

Database configuration for facing the problems in Africa and the opportunity to obtain this information.
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