
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

9239/12

Paper 1 Written Examination

May/June 2018

1 hour 30 minutes

INSERT (RESOURCE BOOKLET)

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Resource Booklet contains Documents 1 and 2 which you should use to answer the questions.

You should spend approximately 10 minutes reading the documents before attempting to answer the questions. This is allowed for within the time set for the examination.



This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

The documents below consider gender issues. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the paper.

Document 1: adapted from *Lack of education is adversely affecting girls*, an article written by Wajiha Khalid in 2012. The author is a journalist for the online daily newspaper *Pakistan Today*, Lahore, which published her article.

Education is the only tool that can break the cycle of oppression, abuse, and poverty of women that continues through generations, because it has the power to change societies. Education is the right of every human, and educated women are more aware of their other rights. A greater involvement of educated women in the economy and political process would lead to a better world today, as well as in future generations.

However, unfortunately, in Pakistan women are still deprived of education. So today, Pakistan is far from meeting its international obligation to provide quality basic education for all children. One in ten of the world's primary age children who are not in schools live in Pakistan, placing the country second in the global ranking of out-of-school children. According to UNESCO, 30% of Pakistanis have received less than two years of education. At least seven million children are not in primary schools. That's around as many people as live in the city of Lahore. Three million will never go to school and 60% of these are females.

In Pakistan, girls face some of the highest barriers to education. The major cause of female illiteracy is the increase in population. A family having more children and less income will prefer to educate the boys, while the girls will be given embroidery or sewing skills.

Also girls' education is not valued. Where it is allowed, it is often believed that courses for women should include subjects relating to their needs in life. These include beliefs, rituals, domestic duties and rights, raising children, solutions to domestic problems, nursing, home economics, budget, sewing, embroidery, industrial skills such as carpet making, poultry and preservation of food. But traditionally, women are considered as the property of the males of the family. So these males are responsible for taking the decisions in the women's lives and in most cases they do not allow their sisters or daughters to go to schools or universities.

Additionally co-education is not acceptable in an Islamic country, because of the rules of Purdah (seclusion). Every government in Pakistan has talked about the importance of female education, but none of them has given attention to it. In Pakistan's large city of Multan, the plan of a separate women's university and a women's medical college was announced, yet these plans have not been achieved.

So, we need to take steps to provide girls' education. The first step is that the government should develop partnerships with NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and the private sector to widen the responsibility to provide quality basic education for all children. The most important step is to spread awareness amongst the rural population about the necessity of education for girls. Then, annual research should be conducted to compare figures of learning achievement across schools, districts and regions over time.

Society cannot progress if it restricts more than half of its population to the deepest depth of ignorance. So Pakistan needs to follow the path taken by other pioneers of education reforms.

Document 2: adapted from *Achieving Girls' Rights Will Take More Than Removing Barriers*, an online article written by Nidhi Bansal, in 2015. The author is Senior Gender Equality Advisor at Plan International Canada (PIC), which is a development agency working to improve the lives of children.

Through years of political activity and global leadership, there have been some important successes in achieving rights for girls. However, PIC's 2015 report *The Unfinished Business of Girls' Rights* shows that we still have a long, long way to go. A survey within this report asked about barriers to girls' freedom: early marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence at school and in the community. More than 4,200 girls in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Zimbabwe answered the survey. Only 37% of girls believe that they're given the same opportunities as boys. This shows that large numbers of girls feel that they have little control over their lives.

There is good news in the report: nearly 90% of girls said that they have more opportunities in life than their mothers did. That's progress. But in developing countries, girls are twice as likely as boys to suffer malnutrition, and 63 million girls don't attend school. As one young woman in Pakistan said, "Girls should get a proper education. The government and family members should let them make their own decisions."

PIC also spoke to a small group of young women in Canada. They said that they see inequality in their own lives, as a lack of acceptance of girls in male-dominated areas, such as maths, sciences and sports. Additionally they don't see enough women in leadership positions in workplaces and politics. They also pointed to treatment of girls and women in media and advertising, as often sexist and sometimes violent. A 19-year-old woman said "The media presents a certain image which makes us feel awful."

So, we can see that girls need more than access to schools, school supplies and health care. Removing barriers to these and other rights just isn't enough. In addition, families, communities and nations have to change their attitude to girls. They need to end gender-based violence at schools and in their communities, and they need to change norms that treat girls as inferior to boys.

We can talk about national and global efforts, but now change needs to come at the local level. We need laws and policies that protect girls' rights, especially when it comes to stopping violence against them. However, change also needs to come from youth supporting each other, family members, male peers and community leaders.

In PIC's global study, girls talked about collective action, women's groups and breaking down taboos. One girl in Nicaragua explained, "I would gather all girls to talk on this subject and tell them they should speak out about their human rights." A young woman from Ecuador explained, "I would organize meetings with all the women my age to demonstrate and march about women's rights. We need to talk openly about topics considered by the society as taboos."

Girls' rights are human rights. We are all responsible for standing up for them. So on this International Day of the Girl, everyone needs to promise their support for girls' rights, and build the world we want.

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