

Equality Issues: Role of Men and Women

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

- ▶ To understand what Islam says about the role of men and women in the modern world
- ▶ To learn that men and women are equal citizens

Key Words

- ▶ Equality, gender, complement

Islamic Values

Islam teaches us that we should respect men and women equally. It also tells us that both genders can have some specific roles in this world and that they complement each other.

Citizenship Values

All citizens are equal in British law.



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M (B)



Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson.

Share the lesson objectives.

A Starter Activity

Read out the following statements and ask pupils to guess who you are describing:

- ▶ I never believed in or worshipped idols.
- ▶ I was one of the richest among the Arabs.
- ▶ My door was never closed to the poor.
- ▶ I became so rich by the time I was 40 that I retired and led a comfortable life in my home.
- ▶ I carried out business trading in various parts of the world.
- ▶ People used to come to me for business advice.

Ask pupils to think whether this person could be a man or a woman.

If children cannot guess the exact person tell them this was the respected Khadija رضى الله عنه Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ wife.

Now ask pupils to guess who this person is:

- ▶ I mend my own clothes and shoes when I need to.
- ▶ I wash dishes and prepare food.
- ▶ I look after my children.
- ▶ I visit my neighbours and ask how they are.
- ▶ I visit the sick and pray for their health.
- ▶ I play games with my family especially at `Id time.
- ▶ I give children rides on my back.
- ▶ I cried when my children died.

Allow time for the pupils to discuss who this person could be. They should guess that this is Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Pick up on a few qualities from both descriptions and discuss in detail – for example: should a man cook and look after children? Can women run businesses?

B Development

Activity 1: Professions Table

Divide the class into smaller groups and give a copy of Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1801 to each group. Ask pupils to work in their groups and place X against each of the professions in the appropriate column. For example, if they think that being a taxi driver is for men only, then they should put X in the 'men' column.

Give them a few minutes to complete the sheet and then take feedback. Pick up on a few answers and discuss with the whole class. If there is a gender imbalance, ask the pupils why one gender is undertaking more jobs than the other.

Suggested answer: Culture/lifestyle/certain jobs only suited to one gender.

Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1801:
Professions Table

Activity 2: Class Survey

Ask pupils to speak to five different students in their class and complete Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1802. The purpose of this survey is to find out how household chores are divided within their homes.

For example, if someone asked five pupils who does the ironing in their house and three said it's a female (mum/sister, and so on), one said a male (dad/brother, and so on) and one said it is shared by both a female and male, then you put 3, 1 and 1, as shown in the first row of the activity sheet.

After they have finished the survey, pupils should total each column to complete the results section of the sheet.

Take feedback and add up the whole-class results on the board, or you may prefer to use one of the survey sheets.

The result might be that the chores are generally divided by gender.

Discuss the results with the whole class and stress that all family members have to play their part actively in order for things to run efficiently in any household. Explain that both men and women have to play their role in the community for the benefit of the whole society.

Make it clear that men and women can have different roles, but this does not mean that one is more important than the other – they are both sharing the responsibilities equally.

Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1802:
Class Survey

Activity 3: Islamic Guidance

Ask a pupil to recite the following verses. Explain the meaning.

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ

'...They (women) are garments for you (men) and you (men) are garments for them (women)...' (Surat al-Baqarah 2:187)

Question: What does it mean to be each other's 'garments'?

Suggested answer: Men and women complement each other, help each other, comfort each other and protect each other.

Question: Why do we wear clothes?

Suggested answer: Protection, warmth, comfort, beauty/fashion, looking good, dignity

C Plenary

Read the following statements and ask pupils to stand up if they agree or remain seated if they disagree:

- ▶ You should respect both male and female teachers.
- ▶ Boys are cleverer than girls.
- ▶ Only women should do the cleaning at home.
- ▶ Girls and boys should have equal rights to education.
- ▶ Boys and girls have equal responsibility towards their parents.
- ▶ Women cannot join the army.
- ▶ Muslim women can get involved in politics.
- ▶ Only men are allowed to go on Hajj.
- ▶ It's mum's responsibility to cook.
- ▶ Men and women are equal citizens.

Sum up and stress that in Islam men and women are treated equally, but may have different roles/ responsibilities.

Take feedback.

Suggested Follow-up Work

Ask pupils to speak to their parents and other adults (family members and friends) to find out their views on the different roles of men and women in Islam, for example:

- ▶ Do they think that it is right for women to run a business? If not, then why not?
- ▶ Should men help with household duties? If so, why? If not, why not?
- ▶ Can women become leaders? If not, why not?

Professions Table

Please add other professions to the list as appropriate

Profession	Men	Women
Teacher		
Nurse		
Solicitor/lawyer		
Bus driver		
Imam		
Fire fighter		
Taxi driver		
Cook		
Builder		
Football manager		



Class Survey

Speak to at least five pupils in your class and ask them who does each of the following chores in their household.

For example, if you asked five pupils who does ironing in their house and three said female (mum/sister etc), one said male (dad/brother etc) and one said it is shared by both female and male, then you put 3, 1 and 1 as shown in the first row.

Household chore	Who does the job?		
	Mum/other females	Dad/other males	Both
Ironing	3	1	1
Sewing			
Cooking			
Gardening			
Cleaning			
Vacuuming			
DIY			
Cleaning the car			
Taking the bins out			
Shopping			
Results			
Total number of jobs done by females			
Total number of jobs done by males			
Total number of jobs done by both			