

Examiners' Report January 2010

O Level

O Level Pakistan Studies (7535 02)

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January 2010

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1 General comments:

The majority of candidates found this paper very accessible and successfully managed to complete four answers. In many instances candidates appeared assured in writing their answers and produced a good standard of written English.

Typically, one of the observed shortcomings on some scripts was an apparent failure to give due care and attention to the preparation and planning of answers. This often led to repetition and sometimes deviation from the question set. Answers were often lengthy and on occasions some candidates were not sufficiently discerning over what to include and, equally importantly, what to leave out of answers. The latter was perhaps most clearly evidenced in the final part of question 4 where irrigation was clearly very pertinent to the answer but not a detailed and time consuming description of the different types of irrigation found in Pakistan.

2 Comments on individual questions:

Q1

Question one was generally well answered as was to be expected. Most candidates had a sound knowledge of the general geography of Pakistan but not all gave sufficient attention to spatial detail in addressing this question. Accuracy is imperative.

Where errors occurred in this question it was most frequently in part (b). Fundamentally, some candidates overlooked the clear instruction to 'mark and name'. India was sometimes incorrectly offered as a neighbouring country to the west of Pakistan. The precise location of Islamabad defeated a surprising number of candidates and the major dam on the River Indus sometimes strayed a considerable distance from the river.

Q2

Question two was very popular, parts (ai) and (aii) normally being well handled. In the case of the latter many candidates had a good understanding of the reasons for the differences between the levels of emissions in the low income countries and Western Europe and USA, pointing out that the latter two had both greater resources and political will to address the matter. On occasions answers possibly flattered the perceived success in Western Europe and USA.

In part (b) many answers progressively drifted away from atmospheric pollution. Indeed, such was the interest of some candidates regarding the issue of pollution that its causes also appeared in part (ii) which resulted in the matter of legislation not being fully considered. Strong answers here introduced issues of political ineptitude, corruption and the ambivalence of some industrialists. In some instances legislation was referred to as a 'paper exercise'.

Q3

Question three proved particularly attractive to candidates. Parts (a) and (b) normally were soundly answered; part (c) frequently saw deviation from the question.

The concepts of cottage industries and bonded labour were well understood. Answers often presented a range of valid reasons as to why cottage industries attract large numbers of women, most commonly concentrating on their limited education and cultural constraints. Bonded labour was often shown to be the 'lesser of evils' where legislation simply had had minimal impact.

However, all too often in part (c) candidates answered a question not set which was: 'What are the advantages of women in the workplace?'. The actual question invited candidates to assess the impact of increasing numbers of women in the workplace as opposed to passing laws of equality. Where this matter was considered, opinion was that a markedly greater impact did indeed stem from women going to work but there was nonetheless a place for legislation.

Q4

Where candidates had a good understanding of Pakistan's climate and a capacity to read the graphs, they successfully answered the early parts of this question.

The best answers offered reference to the monsoon, the westerlies, orographic rainfall and convectional rainfall to account for the distribution of rainfall over the year on graph B.

Answers to the final part of the question were often disappointing and simply went into some very considerable detail about the different types of irrigation. The essence of the question was about rainfall variations and gave scope to consider occasions when there was both too much and too little. In many instances flooding was not addressed. The best answers not only offered irrigation as a means of coping with variations of rainfall but also suggested that science has a part to play in adapting plants to certain environments.

Q5

This was the most popular question on the paper but on occasions such was the passion for the issues that candidates lost sight of the question.

Part (a) was not always accurately answered some candidates finding it difficult to convert information from pie charts into percentage figures.

Additionally, there was very often a failure to adhere to the structure of the question and while candidates were generally well informed about the issues answers were sometimes muddled as a consequence.

There were sound answers regarding literacy rates for those over 50 years of age, candidates pointing out that when this group was younger provision was poorer and the perceived need for education was markedly lower.

Where candidates attended to higher education in the final part of the question some very good answers emerged. These gave attention particular attention to the training of teachers and the availability of funds for students to access higher education. International contributions were also widely regarded.

Q6

This proved a challenging question for the relatively small number of candidates who attempted it.

Sometimes no distinction was made between the physical and economic factors in part (a). All that was required here was the likes of the presence of rivers (physical) and infrastructure (economic). Moreover, only statements were required, not detailed descriptions.

Part (b) was often only partly answered insofar that clearly investment in other regions will give access to resources, (though sometimes it was appropriately made clear that access is often difficult), but also it is pertinent to note that it may take some pressure off both Sind and Punjab.

There were a few excellent answers to (c) where opinion was well substantiated. The general drift of informed answers was that while there are some aspirations to develop other regions and add to their relative prosperity, the political self interest of Sind and Punjab, together with the inertia of the other regions, will limit change.

Q7

This was a well answered question in parts (a) and (b) but all too often candidates failed to focus on the issue of expanding the country's export base in part (c).

The most commonly quoted 'other traditional exports' were spots goods and rugs/carpets. The concept of primary commodities was well understood though some candidates seemed to be of a view that the term applied solely to agricultural items.

Answers on the balance of payments were frequently accurate and comprehensive though sometimes there was confusion between balance of payments and balance of trade. The balance of payments includes the balance of trade together with any invisible earnings.

Sadly, in many instances candidates forfeited marks in part (c) as they gave sole attention to measures which might bring about an increased level of exports. More successful answers addressed the likes of adding value and the further development of tertiary sector exports.

Q8

This question, while not widely adopted, was generally well answered across the board.

Road transport was viewed as relatively cost effective and offering a 'door to door' service. The Karakoram Highway was seen to have very appreciably enhanced trade with China. Air transport was accurately reported to have increased owing to a growth in demand from passengers and specified goods. Moreover, more commercial airlines are now available and airports have been further developed and expanded.

In part (d) extensions into both Balachistan and to the north of the country were considered important in order to assist the further development of these regions and to access their very considerable resources. However, topographical and financial constraints were rightly highlighted.

Overall Subject Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	C	E
Overall subject grade boundaries	060	42	31	21

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