

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LAHORE
PRESENTS



ISLMUN IV

SOCHUM
STUDY GUIDE

1st | 2nd | 3rd

NOVEMBER

ISL MUN IV

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee

Study guide:

A Note From The Dais

Hello!

My name is Muhamad Umar, and it is my pleasure to welcome you all to the 4th iteration of the International School Lahore Model UN Conference as the chair for SOCHUM. I hope that ISLMUN will be an enriching experience for you and look forward to three days of productive debate. See you all soon.



This is Neha Elahi, your Committee Director for SOCHUM this year at ISL MUN IV. Looking forward to forthcoming discussions and 3 extremely fruitful days filled with everyone's contextual knowledge and contributions to shaping debate. Additionally, please submit your position papers to the email mentioned before the first committee session:

nehanooorelahi@gmail.com.



This is Rana Umair, your committee director for SOCHUM, wishing you all the best of luck and hoping for an interesting debate.



Asslamualaikum, this is Rafay Noman. I will be your CD for SOCHUM this year, hoping to see a very fruitful debate.



Topic:

Standardizing Gender Segregation in Sports.

INDEX

1. Definitions and Glossary of Key Terms Introduction to the
2. Committee Introduction to the Topic
3. History and Background Past UN Actions
4. Existing International Frameworks Case Studies
5. Questions a Resolution must answer (QARMA)



Definitions and Glossary of Key Terms in Gender Segregation in Sports

1. Gender: is understood as a social and cultural construct that influences the roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities associated with being male, female, or non-binary. Unlike biological sex, gender is largely shaped by socialization and can vary across cultures and historical periods.

2. Sex: refers to biological differences between male and female bodies, generally defined by physical attributes such as chromosomes, hormone levels, and reproductive organs. Sex categories, traditionally binary (male/female), form the basis of gender segregation in sports.

3. Gender Identity: a deeply held sense of being male, female, or another gender, independent of one's biological sex. Gender identity often determines how individuals wish to participate in gender-segregated sports, influencing policies that aim for inclusivity while maintaining competitive fairness.

4. Biological Sex: physical characteristics typically assigned at birth based on visible anatomy and chromosomes. Biological sex often becomes central in sports classifications, influencing policies aimed at creating equitable competition among athletes.

5. Gender Parity in Sports: refers to equal representation and access for both men and women in sports participation, competition, and administration. This concept emphasizes the need for equal opportunities regardless of gender identity or biological sex.



6. **Transgender Athletes:** Individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. Policies around transgender athletes' participation in sports are central to the debate on gender segregation, balancing inclusion with questions around competitive advantage.
7. **Cisgender:** refers to individuals whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth. Most policies are traditionally designed with cisgender athletes in mind, though recent trends show adjustments to account for gender diversity.
8. **Testosterone:** A hormone primarily associated with male biological characteristics, impacting muscle mass, strength, and endurance. Regulations around testosterone levels are often used in gender-segregated sports to categorize athletes, especially in competitive contexts.
9. **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Policies:** regulates hormone levels in athletes, especially concerning the testosterone levels allowed for female athletes. Their regulations impact gender classification standards for international sporting events.

Introduction to the Committee:

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is a fundamental body within the United Nations General Assembly. Its primary mission revolves around addressing issues related to social, cultural, and humanitarian matters on a global scale. This committee plays a unique role in advocating for human rights, equality, and social justice while fostering dialogue and creating resolutions to improve the human condition worldwide.

Mandate of the Committee:

Central to SOCHUM's role is eliminating discriminatory practices that hinder individuals from participating fully in society, including in sports. Gender segregation in sports presents a unique case where discrimination might appear in the guise of competitive fairness. SOCHUM's mandate includes advocating for human rights within all social institutions, including sports organizations. Ensuring that gender-based policies do not infringe on individual



rights, while also considering factors such as safety and fairness, falls within this scope. Through sports, SOCHUM aims to build bridges between cultures, promoting mutual understanding and acceptance. Policies on gender segregation that are inclusive foster social cohesion, while exclusionary policies can exacerbate divides.

Introduction to Topic

The issue of Standardizing Gender Segregation in Sports”raises fundamental questions about fairness, equality, and inclusivity in athletics. For decades, sports organizations have categorized athletes into male and female divisions, based on the belief that such segregation ensures a level playing field. However, evolving understandings of gender, sex, and individual identities have challenged traditional approaches, with many advocating for more inclusive policies that respect the rights of all athletes, regardless of gender identity or biological sex.

Key Aspects of the Issue

1. Fairness and Competitive Integrity

Supporters of gender segregation argue that physiological differences—such as muscle mass, oxygen capacity, and speed—between cisgender men and women necessitate separate categories for fair competition. This view is often supported by data showing that male athletes, on average, outperform female athletes in certain physical tasks.

2. Inclusivity and Rights of Gender-Diverse Athletes

In contrast, advocates for inclusivity argue that policies solely based on biological sex fail to consider the rights of transgender, non-binary, and intersex athletes. They stress that rigid gender segregation could lead to discrimination, especially for individuals who do not fit traditional gender categories.

3. Ethical and Psychological Dimensions

Gender segregation impacts the psychological well-being of athletes who may feel excluded or marginalized based on their gender identity. Additionally, the ethical considerations of “policing” gender through hormone testing or invasive medical requirements raise questions about bodily autonomy and privacy



4.Challenges in Policy-Making

Developing a universal standard is challenging, as policies must take into account variations in national laws, cultural perceptions of gender, and the interests of multiple stakeholders. A key question for SOCHUM is whether a universally standardized approach is possible—or even desirable—in light of these complexities.

History and Background:

Gender segregation in sports has a long and complex history, reflecting broader social attitudes about gender roles and capabilities. From ancient Greece to the present day, sports have often mirrored society's views on gender, with women historically excluded from competitive athletics. Over the past century, however, significant progress has been made toward gender equality in sports, driven by shifts in social values and legal protections. This historical context helps clarify why gender segregation persists today and how emerging debates challenge existing frameworks.

Early Gender Roles in Sports:

In ancient Greece, sports were seen as a male-dominated domain. The Olympic Games, founded in 776 BCE, excluded women entirely, reflecting a societal view that women's roles were domestic rather than public or competitive. Women's participation in sports was limited to local or religious ceremonies, often segregated and non-competitive. Sports and physical activities during the medieval period were predominantly associated with men, especially among the nobility. Women's involvement was largely restricted to recreational or ceremonial roles. By the Renaissance, societal norms began to slowly shift, though competitive sports for women remained limited. With the industrial revolution and the advent of modern sports, organized competitions became more formalized, reinforcing gender segregation. Victorian values saw competitive sports as potentially harmful to women's health and femininity. It wasn't until the late 19th century that women began participating in organized sports, albeit in a restricted manner. Sports like tennis and gymnastics became popular among women but were framed within traditional notions of femininity.

The Emergence of New Gender Identities in Sports:

The 1990s brought growing awareness of intersex athletes, with some high-profile cases leading to controversy over eligibility. The IOC introduced sex verification testing in response, a practice criticized as invasive and discriminatory.



This period sparked a re-evaluation of how sports organizations classified gender. In 2004, the IOC introduced policies allowing transgender athletes to compete according to their gender identity, provided certain conditions were met. This policy was refined in 2015, allowing transgender women to compete in women's categories if their testosterone levels were below a certain threshold. This marked a new era of inclusivity, but also heightened the debate around fairness in competition. The early 21st century has seen a continued push for inclusivity, with international sports organizations grappling with how to create policies that respect gender diversity while maintaining fair competition. Controversies around high-profile cases of transgender and intersex athletes, such as those of Caster Semenya and Lia Thomas, have highlighted the tensions in existing policies and prompted calls for new approaches.

Past UN Actions:

1. UNGA Resolutions on Gender Equality in Sports: Resolution on Women's

Participation in Sport (1979):

Encouraged member states to promote equal opportunities for women in sports, emphasizing the importance of sports for women's empowerment. Set the foundation for international recognition of the need for gender equality in sports and laid the groundwork for future UN initiatives.

Established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Advocated for equal access and opportunities in all areas, including sports, as part of promoting inclusive and equal societies. Recognized sports as a tool for social change, calling on member states to address discrimination in sports, particularly regarding gender, race, and disability. Highlighted the role of sports in promoting education, health, and development, while promoting women's and girls' participation.



2. UNW initiatives and campaigns:

UN Women "Sport for Generation Equality" Initiative:

Established partnerships with organizations like the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through sports. Focused on ensuring safe, inclusive, and equitable access to sports for all genders, including advocacy for inclusive sports policies.

3. UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP):

Served as the UN's focal point for promoting sports as a tool for peace and development, which includes advocating for gender equality and inclusivity in sports. Encouraged partnerships between governments, sports organizations, and NGOs to promote fair and equal participation opportunities in sports. Aligned sports development programs with the SDGs, particularly around education, gender equality, and reduced inequalities, to foster an environment that encourages inclusive policies in sports. Provided policy guidance to countries and sports organizations on promoting inclusive sports environments. Though UNOSDP was dissolved in 2017, its objectives were absorbed by other UN bodies, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

4. Partnerships with the International Olympic Committee (IOC):

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the IOC (2017): The UN and IOC formalized their partnership to promote sustainable development, gender equality, and peace through sports. Focused on increasing women's participation in sports and leadership roles and promoting inclusive policies in sports worldwide.

Support for the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020+5: The UN backed the IOC's agenda, which aimed to foster gender equality by setting specific targets for female participation and leadership in the Olympic movement. Emphasized collaboration on issues of inclusivity, non-discrimination, and safety for athletes of all gender identities.



5. UNESCO's Kazan Action Plan (2017):

Framework for Global Action on Gender Equality in Sports:

Adopted at the 6th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI), co-sponsored by UNESCO. Set guidelines for gender equality in sports policy and called for member states to address discrimination and inclusivity in sports, including respecting the rights of intersex and transgender athletes.

Encouraged nations to integrate gender equality principles into national sports policies and promote gender-sensitive approaches in sports management.



Existing International Frameworks

1. International Olympic Committee (IOC):

The IOC has led the development of policies related to gender inclusion, specifically targeting transgender and intersex athletes. The most prominent of which are:

The Stockholm Consensus: Athletes were eligible to compete in their identified gender if they had undergone gender reassignment surgery, had legal recognition of their new gender, and had completed at least two years of hormone therapy.

Testosterone-Based Eligibility: The requirement for gender reassignment surgery for transgender athletes was removed, focusing instead on hormone levels. For transgender women (male-to-female), testosterone levels had to be below 10 nmol/L for at least 12 months before competition to qualify in women's events. Transgender men (female-to-male) athletes could compete in male categories without restriction.

Non Discrimination Framework (2021): This framework moved away from a one-size-fits-all approach based on testosterone alone. Instead, it advised that sports federations tailor eligibility guidelines to the specific demands of each sport. Emphasis was placed on evidence-based decisions about the physical demands and characteristics of each sport. Rejected blanket assumptions that transgender women or women with high testosterone have automatic advantages in all sports. Acknowledged that guidelines should respect athletes' rights and dignity without forcing unnecessary medical interventions. The IOC offered resources to help sports organizations understand and apply research on gender-related physical performance, aiming for inclusivity and safety without compromising competition integrity.



2. World Athletics (formerly IAAF):

World Athletics (formerly the International Association of Athletics Federations, or IAAF) has issued several guidelines focusing on testosterone levels to determine eligibility in women's events. These policies aim to balance inclusivity with fairness in competitive advantage, especially for athletes with differences in sex development (DSD) or those who are transgender.

Hyperandrogenism Regulations (2011): A policy limiting testosterone levels for female athletes with naturally high testosterone (hyperandrogenism) to compete in women's events was introduced. It aimed to ensure fair competition by setting a threshold, though the exact levels varied. Female athletes who displayed high testosterone levels were required to undergo medical evaluations to determine eligibility.

DSD (Differences of Sex Development) Regulations (2018): World Athletics set a specific testosterone limit of 5 nmol/L for athletes competing in women's middle-distance track events (400m to 1 mile), as the organization argued that elevated testosterone levels in these events offered a competitive advantage. The policy only applied to races from 400 meters to 1 mile, after research suggested that athletes with higher testosterone levels had significant performance advantages in these distances. Athletes with naturally high testosterone who wanted to compete in these events had two options: Lower their testosterone levels to below 5 nmol/L for at least six months prior to competing. Consider surgical or pharmaceutical means to reduce testosterone levels.



Update to Transgender Athlete Regulations (2023):

As of 2023, transgender women who had gone through male puberty are no longer eligible to compete in the female category of World Athletics events, regardless of testosterone levels. World Athletics cited scientific evidence suggesting that male puberty confers a lasting performance advantage that could not be fully mitigated by hormone therapy. World Athletics justifies its regulations as necessary to maintain fair competition, especially in events where testosterone-linked advantages are statistically significant. The policies have led to high-profile legal challenges, including Caster Semenya's case at the Court of Arbitration for Sport and later at the European Court of Human Rights, pushing for a reassessment of these policies to consider human rights and medical ethics.

Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA):

FIFA's initial guidelines mirrored the IOC's early approach, requiring gender reassignment surgery and hormone therapy for at least two years for transgender athletes to compete in their identified gender. In 2022, it was announced that it was updating its gender inclusion policies to be more flexible and inclusive, consulting stakeholders to better align with current IOC recommendations. Like the IOC, FIFA's new policies are expected to allow federations to tailor eligibility rules based on the physical demands of specific sports and positions (e.g., contact vs. non-contact roles).

NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association):

Transgender women athletes must undergo at least one year of testosterone suppression therapy to compete in women's events, aligning with guidelines from the IOC. Recognizing that various sports have unique demands, the NCAA allows each individual sport to implement additional criteria for eligibility. The NCAA's policy supports flexibility, acknowledging that sports participation is often educational and developmental. It reviews and adjusts policies based on new research and trends, striving to balance competition integrity with inclusivity.



Case Studies:

1. Imane Khelif

Imane Khelif, an Algerian boxer and 2022 silver medalist in the women's light welterweight division at the Women's World Boxing Championships, faced a sudden and unexpected disqualification from the 2023 Women's World Boxing Championships in New Delhi. Khelif was barred from competing due to what officials described as "not meeting the eligibility criteria for women" according to the International Boxing Association (IBA). Although specific details were not disclosed, reports suggested that her disqualification was linked to "elevated levels of androgens" rather than doping or hormonal interventions, sparking public debate over gender verification standards in combat sports. The IBA's decision to exclude Khelif highlighted the complexities and transparency issues surrounding gender eligibility rules in boxing. Unlike track and field, where regulations around hyperandrogenism have been well-publicized, boxing and other combat sports have lacked specific, publicly accessible guidelines on how high androgen levels affect eligibility. The case attracted considerable media attention, with fans and advocates questioning the fairness and scientific basis of the ruling. Many saw the disqualification as an example of discriminatory practices that disadvantage women from regions where gender testing protocols remain vague and largely unregulated. In the wake of the controversy, the Algerian Boxing Federation and other sports organizations voiced support for Khelif, calling for the IBA to review its policies and provide more clarity on gender-based eligibility criteria. The IBA faced pressure to establish clearer guidelines and more transparent processes for addressing gender and androgen levels in combat sports.

Algerian boxer Iman Khelif's exclusion from the 2024 Olympics has added to the ongoing controversy around gender segregation in sports. Khelif was declared ineligible to compete in the women's boxing category for the Olympics due to reportedly elevated levels of testosterone. This decision had further raised controversial attention to hormone levels and their impact on gender-diverse athletes, particularly those from regions where access to certain medical resources may be limited. Khelif's case highlights the broader challenges of applying uniform standards across diverse athletes and the complex balance between inclusivity and fairness that Olympic bodies must navigate as they strive to adapt to evolving understandings of gender in sports.



2. Caster Semenya and World Athletics' DSD Regulations:

Caster Semenya, a South African middle-distance runner and two-time Olympic champion, became a focal point for debates on gender segregation in sports due to her naturally high testosterone levels resulting from a condition known as differences in sex development (DSD). In 2018, World Athletics introduced a regulation mandating that female athletes with DSD lower their testosterone below 5 nmol/L to compete in women's middle-distance events. Semenya challenged the policy at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and later at the Swiss Federal Supreme Court, arguing that it was discriminatory and infringed on her human rights. Although CAS upheld the regulation, the case moved to the European Court of Human Rights, where it remains under review.

3. Laurel Hubbard's Participation in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics:

Laurel Hubbard, a transgender weightlifter from New Zealand, qualified to compete in the women's +87kg weightlifting category at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, becoming the first openly transgender woman to do so. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) guidelines, which allow transgender women to participate if their testosterone levels remain below 10 nmol/L for at least 12 months before competition, enabled her inclusion. Hubbard's qualification, however, fueled debates regarding physiological advantages and fairness, with some arguing that male puberty might afford her an edge, while supporters saw her qualification as a landmark for transgender rights in sports. Although Hubbard did not win a medal, her participation led the IOC to issue a new framework in 2021, granting individual sports the discretion to set their own eligibility criteria based on competitive demands.



4. Quinn's Representation of Non-Binary Athletes at the Olympics:

Quinn, a Canadian soccer player who identifies as non-binary, made history at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics by becoming the first openly transgender and non-binary athlete to win an Olympic medal, playing on Canada's women's soccer team. The IOC currently lacks specific guidelines for non-binary athletes, meaning Quinn participated within the female category due to standard gender registration rather than personal identity. This highlighted a significant gap in existing sports policies, as non-binary athletes often fall outside traditional eligibility frameworks. Since then, Quinn has advocated for greater inclusivity and policy reform for non-binary athletes within the sports community. Their participation brought attention to the limitations of a binary sports system and underscored the need for policies that better reflect gender diversity in competitive sports.

5. Fallon Fox and Gender Segregation in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA):

Fallon Fox is a transgender woman and former MMA fighter, became a central figure in discussions about gender, safety, and fairness in combat sports after transitioning and undergoing gender-confirming surgery in 2006. Fox began competing in women's MMA in 2012, sparking intense debate over whether residual physical advantages from male puberty might compromise the safety of her cisgender female opponents. While some advocated for Fox's right to compete according to her gender identity, others argued that high-contact sports like MMA required special considerations for safety. As a result, several combat sports organizations began re-evaluating their policies on transgender participation, opting for case-by-case assessments focused on balancing inclusivity with athlete safety.



6. Dutee Chand and the Fight Against Hyperandrogenism Regulations:

Indian sprinter Dutee Chand faced a significant setback in 2014 when she was barred from competing due to the IAAF's (now World Athletics) hyperandrogenism policy, which targeted female athletes with naturally high testosterone levels. Chand took her case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), arguing that such regulations discriminated against her natural physiology and violated her right to bodily autonomy. CAS ruled in Chand's favor, suspending the hyperandrogenism regulation and allowing her to compete without medical intervention.

Following the ruling, World Athletics revised its DSD policy to apply testosterone thresholds for specific events.

7. Tel Aviv Marathon Controversy:

In 2019, the Tel Aviv Marathon faced significant controversy when it announced plans to segregate male and female competitors, aiming to create a more comfortable environment for female participants. This decision sparked backlash from athletes and advocates who argued that it undermined gender equality in sports, leading to public protests and social media campaigns advocating for inclusivity. In response, marathon organizers engaged with local and international sports bodies to reevaluate their policies, ultimately deciding to revise the race format to allow mixed-gender categories while offering a separate category for women if preferred.



QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMA):

1. What criteria should be established to determine eligibility for female and male competitions?
2. How can we ensure that policies regarding gender segregation are inclusive of non-binary and transgender athletes?
3. What role should international sports organizations (like the IOC and World Athletics) play in implementing standardized gender segregation policies?
4. How can we measure the impact of gender segregation policies on athlete participation and performance?
5. What specific protocols can be established to accommodate transgender athletes while maintaining competitive integrity in women's sports?
6. How can national sports federations be incentivized to adopt inclusive gender policies and actively promote mixed-gender competitions?
7. What frameworks can be created to ensure that the voices of marginalized athletes are included in policy-making processes?
8. How can we utilize data collection and research to continually refine and adapt gender segregation policies?
9. What role should educational institutions play in promoting awareness and understanding of gender inclusivity in sports from a young age?



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