

Webinar Brief: 84



# International Day of a GIRL CHILD

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Pakistan Institute of  
Development Economics



# International Day of a Girl Child



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VIRTUAL SESSION

**MONDAY**

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The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics hosted a webinar titled "International Day of a Girl Child" in which Ms. Fiza Khalid Butt served as a moderator. Webinar panelist are; Gull-e-Mariam Watto, who is the member of National Curriculum Council, Sam Ali Daada who is President of Rotary Club girl empowerment chapter, Dr Najeeb who is CEO of progressive education network, Fajar Rabia Pasha who is Executive Director of Pakistan Alliance of Girls Education. In Pakistan, 22.5 million children are out of school from which 32% are girl child. The primary goal of the webinar is to discuss the issues concerning to girl child about their education, skills, and empowerment.

### **Key Points by Sam Ali Daada:**

- The major concerns of today's debate are empowerment and literacy, because the female population has a literacy rate of only 47 percent, and there is a need to address this issue. Distance to school is a problem for girl children in rural areas; schools are inaccessible to females.
- Providing education to girls means we are empowering them, but education alone is insufficient; women also require skills and job placement. There is a need to improve their skills as well as create job opportunities for them.
- We have 18 women chambers of commerce in Pakistan, however, they are not effectively highlighting the women's issues. They must effectively ensure empowerment, work ethics, security & harassment, education, and education issues. Importantly, as mentioned earlier, simply educating them is insufficient; what is required with literacy is the enhancement of female skills and proper job placement for them.

### **Key points by Gull e Mariam Watto**

- In Pakistan, 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas, so establishing schools and providing education is not a priority because there is a gap in education and girls suffer as a result of poverty. Because of poverty, male children are given preference, while female children are neglected.
- Poverty has its own set of consequences, but we have a lack of awareness. Of the 22 million school-age children, 13 million are girls, because there is a belief in rural areas that a male child will bring bread for the family in the future, so there is a need to educate male children. This is one of the reasons why girls are dropping out of school.
- The majority of out-of-school girls live in rural areas, where there are fewer digital resources, fewer trained teachers, no digital training, no computer labs, and a higher rate of early marriage. Because of these issues, the rural education sector is lagging.
- Fear of sexual harassment, violence, rape, honor killing, and child abuse are also major reasons why girls do not attend school. According to a UN report, 53 percent of women in Pakistan lack access to education, empowerment, and training.
- There is a need for an awareness campaign, workshops, trainings, and conferences to educate people that educating girls is important, that girls can make a difference in society, and that females have the potential to boost the economy. Bills and legislation addressing harassment and gender-based violence should be passed in order to empower girls.
- A single national curriculum also aims to close the wealth gap by bringing together all stakeholders, politicians, and education experts to provide equal education to all children. In this section, digitalization is required, as is collaboration between the public and private sectors.
- Females must be accommodated in all sectors of employment, as Uber and Careem have done. Females must be aware of their rights, including the right to vote, the right to choose the job that is best for them, and the right to know their worth in society.

### **Key points by Dr. Najeeb**

- Progress Education Network (PEN) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works in twenty districts of Pakistan to educate children and improve government schools in terms of infrastructure, training, and staff.

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- PEN created a module to train staff and provide non-formal education to girls who did not receive a formal education and are now looking for work in the economic market. PEN established 13 non-formal education schools, five of which are in Bhakkar, four in Khushab, three in Mainwali, and one in Sargodha.
- These schools provide non-formal education, and PEN plans to set up computer labs in them, as well as provide technical skills and training and train female staff to educate females due to harassment and abuse issues. The organization focuses on girl children and attempts to empower females in society.
- If we want to empower girls through education, we must collaborate with ourselves, society, government, and stakeholders. We must also focus on events that involve society to parliament and parliaments to society, because all legislation and bills are subject to parliaments.
- To resolve these issues, there is a need for coordination and harmony among society, government, legislators, stakeholders, policymakers, socialists, and educators.

### **Key points by Fajjar Rabia**

- The real issue is a lack of understanding of the value of girl education, not a lack of education for girls. Girls are an important part of society, but most people only prepare their daughters for marriage. Girls are not supposed to be empowered; they cannot make decisions for themselves, and mothers do the same with their daughters; they feed the daughter not to think.
- All of the social issues are related to females such as social justice issues, out-of-school children being females, a high rate of early marriage in females, harassment issues, and so on. Education is important for both girls and boys, but there is a need to recognize the importance of girl education in Pakistan, which is very low.
- There is a need to comprehend the issues concerning the girl child. Different institutes and organizations are working in girl education, but we are unable to see any change because change is occurring on a very small scale and issues are relatively high and continuing to rise.
- What we need is to think outside the box; education alone will not suffice unless you have the government's understanding that you can't make a difference without female participation in economy. Females with a higher level of education are more dissatisfied because they understand their worth in society but have not received it in the way they desire. As a result, government intervention is required in terms of making laws, passing legislation, and so on.
- If you want to make progress, you must sit down with stakeholders and try to solve the problem of how to facilitate girl children and empower females.



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