

**Institutional Distinctiveness**  
**Rabindra Mahavidyalaya, Champadanga**  
**Session 2022-23**

The session of 2022-2023 has given us a unique opportunity to showcase our best practice followed during this time. Since girl or women empowerment constitutes one of our prime institutional aims, the golden jubilee celebration deferred for a year due to Covid constraints-becomes a platform for programs and events that keeps on strengthening and promoting the girls' cause while being in sync with the commemorative moment of the 50-year journey of the institution. This time we have aimed at the financial empowerment of the girl students along with some of the women of neighbouring community. Some food and handicraft stalls were set up so that food items and delicacies could be put on display and be sold to eager customers taking part in the celebration either as enthusiastic participants or simply as curious onlookers. Likewise, handcrafted wares including ornaments were on show in such stalls both as artful exhibits as also like items for merchandise. The girls wear given a free hand in deciding the price and be solely involved in the process of buying and selling and canvassing for respective items so much so that they got an adequate exposure of practical experience as a timely supplement to any theoretical knowledge that some of them might have obtained as a way of growing into responsible adulthood. Exercise of adequate skill and basics of teamwork while engaging with a financial venture are some of the benefits that the girl students, along with some of their gender opposite, could reap and that added a lot to their confidence and an inner sense of growth. In fact, this might go a long way in augmenting the neighbouring rural economy of financial domesticity where women often play a central role but without being acknowledged properly. Participation of some local women alongside the girl students may thus encourage a spirit of entrepreneurship imparting a sense of agency leading to financial growth and independence. However, this was not restricted to setting of food and hand craft stall. In all programs and events where local cultural groups or neighbouring schools have participated, no gender category was maintained. All the participants were asked to send their girls alongside the boys as a way of striking a balance and thus harp on the aspect of gender equity.

The next best thing we carried on with is the arrangement of psychological counselling as a way of taking care of the mental well-being of our students. Here as elsewhere, the girls remain a greater victim compared to their mail counterparts since various

forms of social regression and taboos render the girl child hopeless creature with little or no scope for speaking out let alone be treated or counselled for her inward suffering. Covid and concomitant confinement only compounded the issue further as bitter residues of negative experience continued to de establisthe students' capacity for balanced, healthy living. So like we did in the previous year, we decided to continue with the practice of psychological counselling by a body of professionals and experts and students had already registered their significantly improved level of comfort as participants in the counselling program on the previous occasion. The present endeavour proved to be no exception as the art of listening that the counsellors are capable of itself has imparted an immediate and highly beneficial result. Moreover, the afflicted girls as also the boys got a chance to avail the privilege of anonymity while being able to interact even via online without getting detected by the peers. Since a healthy mind complements a healthy body, we put a premium on this aspect of counselling to produce healthy beings capable of looking after themselves and contribute necessarily for the good of the community. We further believe that a sustained effort in this regard would not only augment the foundation of our institutional health but would go a long way in making balanced humans to be considered as dependable resource and good citizens for the society and the country as well.



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