

## **BEST PRACTICE IV**

**Title:** “Save the Girl Child”: A Social Imperative

**Objectives:**

1. Explicate the difference between sex (a biological phenomenon) and gender (a cultural construct)
2. Promote gender equity and empowerment by deconstructing patriarchal ideologies.
3. Extend support to the cause of the girl child and ensure active participation in the movement for securing her rights.

**Context:** Gender discrimination is one of the greatest evils of our society since times immemorial. The birth of a girl child in quite a considerable number of urban and rural households is more often than not considered as a menace even today and incidents of female infanticide are still prevalent in countries like Nepal, Pakistan and India. Reports of illegal and unethical use of pre-natal diagnostic tests culminating in sex-selection abortion and female feticide even in the enlightened 21<sup>st</sup> century unravel the patriarchal preference for a male issue in our socio-cultural context. To address this grave situation and bring about a gender-neutral transformation in minds and cultures, there have been many initiatives in contemporary times. In 1995, at the World Conference on Women in Beijing, countries unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing the rights of not only women but also girls. The Beijing Declaration is the first to specifically clamor for girls rights. Eventually, on December 19, 2011, United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 to declare October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child, in order to recognize girls rights, focus attention on the unique challenges girls face around the world and promote their empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. In a similar vein, our college represents the ideals of change and progress by conducting awareness campaigns in favor of the girl child during the academic session 2019-20.

**The Practice:** The National Girl Child Day is celebrated every year in our college in recognition of the noble initiative launched in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Government of India. This annual event serves as a reminder about the extreme inequalities girls are subjected to early in their lives and conveys the urgent need to protect their rights and preserve their dignity for a healthy societal setup.

The volunteers of N.S.S Unit have furthered this cause by collaborating with the Government Social Welfare Department and organizing a series of events like poster competitions, debates and interactive sessions between faculty members of various departments and the students of Jatindra-Rajendra Mahavidyalaya. The college administration has arranged a few awareness programmes in this regard to communicate to the students the crucial obligation to educate and enlighten the daughters of the soil. For instance, a campaign on “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” mission has been held in our college on National Girl Child Day to inform and invoke the youth of our nation about the roles and responsibilities of the society in the mission of saving the girl child and bettering her future. The students have in turn circulated the message of these initiatives among the unlettered and uninitiated inhabitants of this community which has reaped salubrious results.

**Evidence of Success:** An expanding number of guardians of female students have enthusiastically lent their support to recognize the aspirations of their daughters by regularly sending them to the college, providing them requisite study materials and books and reaching out to their teachers and the college authority for checking on their progress. This is a major achievement for us in the background of a rural, financially-burdened, educationally-backward and minority-based community where girls seldom crossed the threshold of their homes. At present, the percentage of girls seeking admission in our college has exceeded the one of boys because of this exposure and encouragement.

**Problems Encountered:** None as such.