

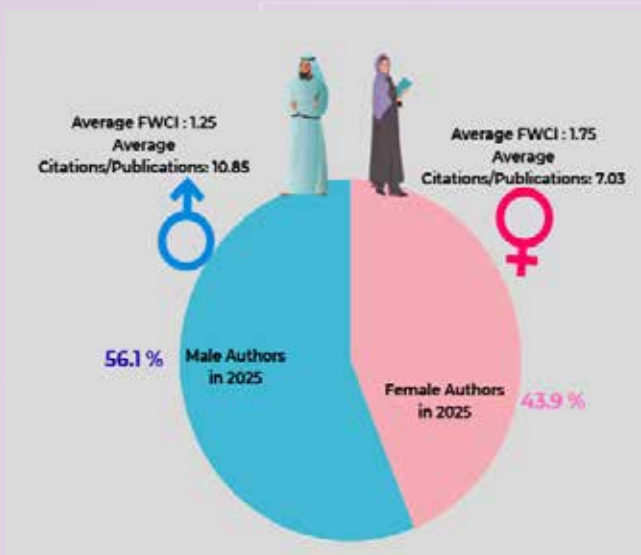
# Empowering Women in Research A Decade of Growth and Impact at Qatar University (2015–2025)



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Over the past decade, Qatar University (QU) has witnessed a remarkable transformation in its research landscape - one marked by diversity, inclusion, and excellence. Central to this transformation has been the growing participation and leadership of women researchers across disciplines. In alignment with QU's Research Strategy (2025–2030) and the Third National Development Strategy (2024–2030)—both of which prioritize fostering a cohesive society and empowering human capital—this analysis examines the evolving contributions of women scholars at QU between 2015 and 2025. According to Scopus/SciVal data for the 2015–2025 window, female scholars now constitute approximately 46.7% of active researchers, illustrating a near-gender-balanced research ecosystem.

Drawing on bibliometric data from Scopus and SciVal, the study highlights gender-based trends in research productivity, impact, and collaboration. The findings demonstrate how sustained institutional commitment to equity and capacity building has positioned QU as a regional leader in women's research empowerment.



**Figure 1:** Research Performance Indicators by Gender (Year 2025).

### Rising Scholarly Output and Gender Representation

Between 2015 and 2025, QU’s research ecosystem has expanded significantly, reflecting not only institutional growth but also increased global engagement. While total research output has more than tripled over the decade, an equally impactful development has been the steady rise in female scholarly participation across disciplines. In 2025, the number of active authors, those whose most recent publication fell within that year, had expanded nearly sixfold, comprising 56% men and 44% women (Figure 1). When analyzing trends over time, the gender gap in research participation progressively narrows as the decade advances. Notably, between 2021 and 2023, the number of female authors slightly surpassed that of male authors, marking a pivotal period of gender balance and demonstrating the strengthening role of women in QU’s research enterprise. The steep rise in scholarly output over time coincides with enhanced institutional support mechanisms, including targeted funding, interdisciplinary collaboration platforms, and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts have collectively cultivated a more dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable research environment—one that empowers both women and men to contribute meaningfully to Qatar’s innovation ecosystem and advancing knowledge economy.

### Citation Impact and Research Quality

Over the time from 2015 to 2025, both male and female researchers have contributed significantly to the university’s growing citation footprint, but female scholars have shown exceptional performance in terms of average citation impact and global relevance. The average citations per publication among female researchers consistently exceeded that of their male counterparts during several key years. For instance, in 2015, publications authored by women received an average of 21.43 citations per paper, compared to 13.15 citations per paper for men. Similarly, in 2016, women scholars averaged 29.78 citations per publication, significantly exceeding the 17.48 citation average of their male counterparts. Even as the overall publication base expanded after 2020, female researchers maintained competitive impact levels, averaging between 7 and 26 citations per paper, closely aligned with male performance. The Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) values further underline this strength. Female researchers consistently achieved or surpassed the global benchmark (FWCI = 1.0), with notable peaks in 2016 (1.53) and 2019 (1.41). The average FWCI for female researchers remained between 1.03 and 1.53 across most years, highlighting strong global visibility and discipline-adjusted impact. Interestingly, in 2025, when the number of active female researchers reached 759, the FWCI stood at 1.25, reflecting that women’s research remains 25% more cited than the world average—a remarkable achievement given the rapid growth in participation. Male researchers also demonstrated strong performance (FWCI = 1.75 in 2025), indicating that both genders have contributed synergistically to the University’s global recognition.

### Building Capacity and Empowering Future Leaders

Over the past decade, the University has placed increasing emphasis on creating a supportive research environment that enables women to pursue advanced





studies, develop leadership skills, and actively contribute to the national research agenda. A significant trend reinforcing this transformation is the rising proportion of women among postgraduate students, particularly at the master's and PhD levels. This shift reflects not only an expanding talent pool but also the success of initiatives encouraging women to engage in research careers and contribute to Qatar's knowledge-based economy.

Female academics at QU are now leading impactful research in sustainability, health, materials, social sciences, and education—fields that align closely with Qatar's national priorities. Their contributions extend beyond scholarly publications, encompassing innovation, community engagement, and interdisciplinary collaboration that address societal challenges and promote sustainable development. Moreover, according to SciVal data for the 2015–2024 period, QU's research performance within the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Gender

Equality achieved the highest Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) of 11.39, underscoring the global influence and quality of research that advances women's empowerment and equality. This accomplishment reflects both the academic excellence and leadership potential of QU's women researchers, who continue to inspire future generations and shape the University's evolving research identity.

Finally, it is equally important that women's research contributions align with Qatar's societal priorities. Their work addresses issues central to the Society pillar of QU's Research Strategy (2025–2030) -including education, health, sustainability, and community well-being -and complements the goals of the Third National Development Strategy. As QU looks ahead to 2030, sustaining this momentum through continued mentorship, research support, and equitable opportunities will be key to deepening the impact of women in research - both within the institution and on the global stage.