



**Professor Ghassan Aouad**

Chancellor of Abu Dhabi University, Past President ...  
2w



## Women Empowerment in Universities

In this post, I will cover a subject that has always been close to my heart: women empowerment in universities. I feel disheartened when I see some capable female colleagues worldwide not achieving the positions they deserve. I will refer to two types of obstacles: the "leaky pipe" and the "glass ceiling." These terms describe the challenges women face in career advancement and representation in various fields.

**Leaky Pipe:** This metaphor refers to the gradual loss of women at different stages of their education and career paths. As women progress, they often drop out or are lost to other fields, similar to water leaking through a pipe. This highlights how systemic barriers in education, workplace culture, and family responsibilities can lead to fewer women in leadership roles, even if they start with equal numbers in entry-level positions.

**Glass Ceiling:** This term describes an invisible barrier that prevents women (and other marginalized groups) from rising to top positions in their careers, despite having the qualifications and skills. It emphasizes the discrimination and biases that exist within organizational structures, making it difficult for women to achieve high-level roles, even when they are capable and deserving.

Both concepts illustrate the systemic obstacles that hinder women's career advancement and the need for organizations to address these issues to promote gender equality.

While women are well-represented in many areas, they are still underrepresented in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. For instance, only about 28% of women graduate with degrees in these fields. Globally, more women (around 55%) enroll in universities than men (UNESCO, 2023). However, only 30% of researchers worldwide are women (UNESCO, 2023). It is a fact that female students are outperforming males in many subjects across the globe.

Women hold only about 30% of leadership positions in universities, such as deans and department heads. This shows that there is still work to be done to achieve equality in leadership roles. The percentage of women serving as presidents or vice presidents is even lower.

Despite the progress, women in universities still face challenges, including gender bias and work-life balance.

Raising awareness about gender equality issues on campus is crucial. The UAE is exemplary in the area of women empowerment through various initiatives and incentive schemes. At ADU, the subject of women empowerment is of crucial importance.

To conclude, women empowerment helps to increase gender equality, enhance economic growth, and improve society.

"We need women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic, reshape the conversation, and ensure women's voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored." - Sheryl Sandberg

**#WomenEmpowerment #GenderEquality #HigherEducation**

**Abu Dhabi University** Allison Hope Hamilton MHRM, SHRM-SCP.  
**Khulud Abdallah**



👍❤️🌱 441 · 40 Comments