

ANNUAL REPORT

SDG
10

REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



UNIVERSITY OF CHITTAGONG
Chittagong-4331, Bangladesh

SDG 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES AND CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY

“The University of Chittagong is committed to reducing inequalities and increasing opportunities for people regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or economic status.”

Ensuring Equitable Access to Higher Education—A Comprehensive Overview of the Special Quota System of the University of Chittagong

Higher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of individuals and societies, and this is very true for the society of a developing country like Bangladesh. It is a gateway to opportunities, fostering personal growth, professional development, and societal advancement. However, access to higher education remains skewed, often reflecting entrenched social and economic disparities. To address these inequities and promote inclusivity, the University of Chittagong has implemented unique quota systems for undergraduate admissions.

Rationale for Special Quotas

Special quotas aim to bridge the gap in access to higher education by providing preferential consideration to underrepresented groups. These groups often face systemic barriers that hinder their educational attainment. By reserving a certain percentage of admissions for these groups, universities can level the playing field and ensure that their student bodies reflect the diversity of society.

Types of Special Quotas

Various types of special quotas exist, each addressing a specific need or circumstance. The quota system of the University of Chittagong is described below.

- **Quota for Tribal community:** The Chittagong Hill Tracts region is the home of the tribal population. To ensure access to quality education, the University of Chittagong has taken a unique system to provide opportunities to the indigenous community by allowing the highest number of students compared to other universities in Bangladesh. This quota is reserved for students from tribal communities, acknowledging their historical marginalization and unique sociocultural backgrounds.

- **Quota for Underprivileged Tribal:** This sub-quota within the tribal quota explicitly targets students from underprivileged sections of tribal communities not based on the Chittagong Hill Tracts, ensuring that the most disadvantaged members of these groups are not further marginalized.
- **The quota for Non-Tribal Underprivileged:** This quota provides preferential treatment to students from non-tribal communities who face economic and social disadvantages, addressing disparities that extend beyond tribal affiliations.
- **The quota for Physically Disabled:** This quota ensures access to higher education for individuals with physical disabilities, recognizing their challenges in navigating mainstream educational systems.
- **The Quota for Professional Sportspersons:** This quota encourages the pursuit of academic and athletic excellence by providing opportunities for talented sportspersons to continue their education while pursuing their sporting aspirations.
- **The quota for Dalits:** This quota specifically addresses Dalits' historical and ongoing marginalization, promoting their educational advancement and social upliftment.
- **Special Quota for Students from Bangladesh Institute of Sports Education (BKSP):** This quota recognizes the unique talents and potential of students from BKSP, providing them with a platform to pursue higher education alongside their athletic pursuits.
- **The quota for University Employees:** This quota acknowledges the contributions of university employees and their families, allowing them to further their education and professional development.

Ensuring Gender Parity and Meritocracy

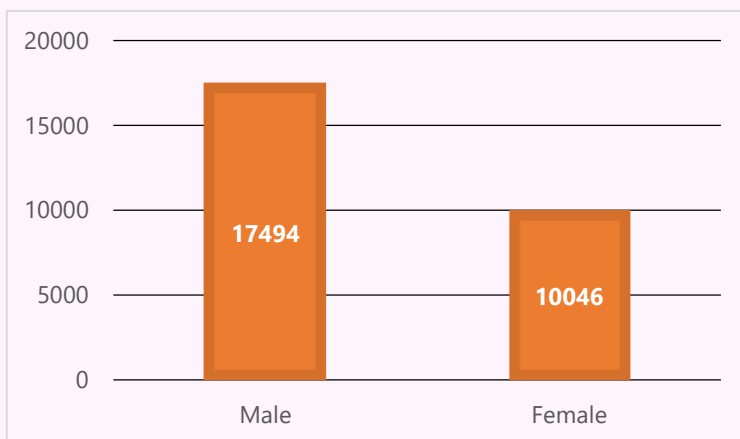
While special quotas aim to address historical and ongoing inequities, it is crucial to maintain gender parity and uphold meritocracy. This means that within each quota category, admissions decisions should be based on individual merit, ensuring that the most qualified candidates are selected regardless of gender.

In summary, Special quota systems are vital in promoting equity and inclusivity in higher education. By providing preferential consideration to underrepresented groups, universities can level the playing field and create a more diverse and representative student body. However, it is essential to implement these quotas transparently and fairly, ensuring gender parity and upholding meritocracy. By doing so, universities can

fulfil their mission of providing access to quality education for all, regardless of background or circumstance.

Our Students

The student body at our university comprises a total of 27,550 students, with 17,494 males and 10,046 females. While our overall enrolment is substantial, it is imperative to address the gender disparity. Currently, male students constitute approximately 63.5% of the total, leaving female students at around 36.5%.



We are actively working towards narrowing this gap through targeted initiatives, including mentorship programs and awareness campaigns, to ensure an equitable and supportive academic environment for all students.



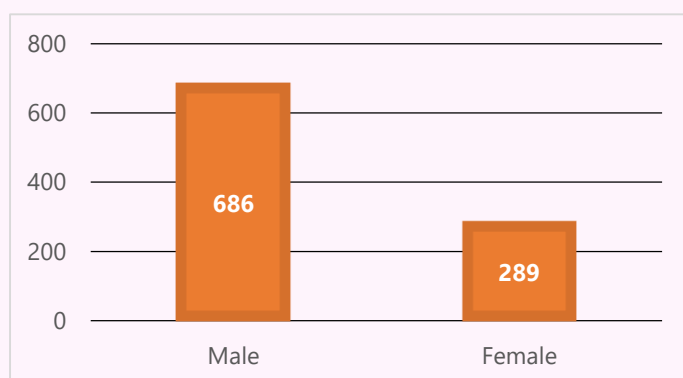
Photo: Annual Sports 2023, Prize-giving ceremony of Janonetri Sheikh Hasina Hall

Our staffs

As part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment within our university, we are pleased to present an update on our initiatives to reduce gender inequality across various levels of university jobs. It is also to be mentioned here that the university policy clearly indicates that there will be no discrimination in the academic or staff recruitment procedure in terms of gender, minorities, disabilities, low income, and traditional background.

Total Number of Academic Staff

The total number of teachers currently stands at 975, with males constituting 70% and



and females 30%. While the gender distribution among teachers is not yet balanced, we acknowledge the need for further efforts to attract and retain female talent in teaching positions.

Number of Senior Female Academics

Recognizing the importance of female representation in leadership roles, we are pleased to report that 52 women hold senior academic positions, including the highest rank, the Vice-Chancellor, within the university. This represents a positive step towards breaking gender barriers and fostering a more diverse leadership cadre.

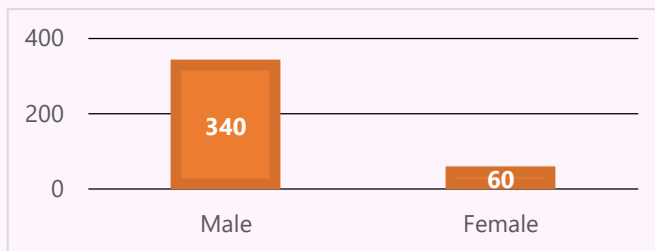


Photo: International Women's Day 2023 Celebration

Officer staff

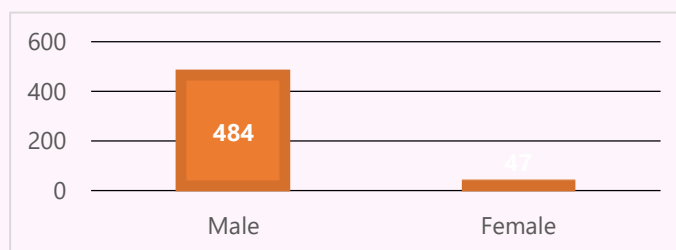
Among our officer staff, consisting of a total of 400 personnel, 85% are male (340), and 15% are female (60). Recognizing the significance of gender diversity in

leadership roles, we are committed to enhancing opportunities for female staff members to assume officer positions. Through focused strategies such as mentorship programs, leadership training, and transparent promotion processes, we aim to achieve a more balanced representation in our officer corps. Our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment remains steadfast, ensuring that individuals of all genders have equal opportunities for professional growth and contribution within our university community.



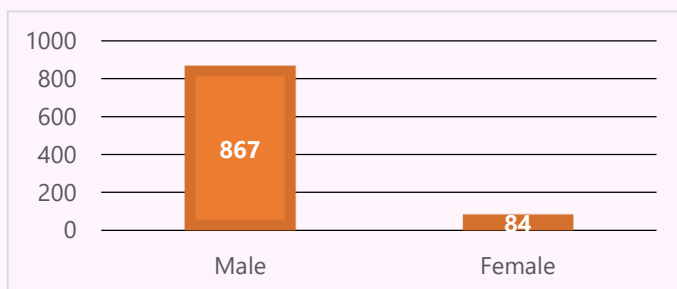
Number of 3rd Class Employees

The total number of 3rd class employees is 531, with females constituting approximately 9%.



We are actively working to increase female representation in this category through targeted recruitment and professional development opportunities.

Number of 4th Class Employees



In the 4th class employee category, females represent approximately 9% of the total workforce. To address this, we are implementing measures to create a more inclusive work environment,

focusing on providing equal opportunities for career advancement and recognition.

Awareness raising Programs for Female Academics and Staff

The University of Chittagong organizes a wide range of awareness-raising programs each year, i.e., training, volunteering, and seminars for enhancing the psychological and physical well-being of female academic and officer staff. This





university believes that social awareness requires *Photo: International Women's Day Seminar on DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality.*

staff and educators to acknowledge, value, support, and respond to the cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns of all students in the classroom. Such training programs and seminars focus on developing skills to take necessary steps against discrimination and sexual or verbal harassment not only at their level but also to support and protect female students against such issues.

Disability Support Policy

The University of Chittagong keeps a special quota each year to include students with disability. This institution is committed to creating an inclusive living environment for disabled people. Each of the departments and institutes provides them with support services, i.e., personal assistants and interpreters during their class lectures and for appearing exams.

As part of the Disability Accommodation Policy, each residential hall within the university campus has a designated block specifically tailored to meet the needs of disabled students. This thoughtful provision ensures accessibility and convenience for residents facing physical challenges. Notably, the university regularly reviews and reevaluates the allocation of these dedicated blocks based on the number of students assigned to each hall. This dynamic approach reflects the institution's commitment to adapting its accommodations in response to the evolving needs of its diverse student

population, reaffirming its dedication to fostering an inclusive and supportive community within the campus.

To facilitate unhindered access to our residential halls and academic buildings, the University of Chittagong has conscientiously implemented specific measures within the constraints of our available resources. Notably, some of our recent educational structures, such as the Faculty of Biological Sciences, have been equipped with ramps to ensure ease of mobility for individuals with disabilities. Moreover, a considerate practice is observed within our residential accommodations wherein disabled students are consistently assigned to ground-floor rooms. This strategic allocation mitigates the necessity for navigating staircases, promoting a more accessible and welcoming living environment for all members of our academic community.

The University of Chittagong has introduced a wide range of necessary policies and steps to empower disadvantaged and marginalized populations, promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or other status.