

SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY



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Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality

Sustainable Development Goal 5—Gender Equality—lies at the heart of inclusive and equitable development. At Brainware University, gender equality is neither a policy add-on nor a symbolic pursuit; it is a foundational value embedded in teaching, research, governance, and community life. The University believes that empowering women and girls through education, technology, and leadership opportunities is central to achieving all other SDGs.

During the academic year 2024–25, Brainware University deepened its institutional commitment to SDG 5 through targeted actions across education access, scholarships, faculty empowerment, safety frameworks, research initiatives, and rural outreach. The year saw significant growth in women’s participation at every level—student, researcher, innovator, and leader—marking a visible cultural and structural transformation across campus.

Institutional Commitment and Policy Framework

Brainware’s **Strategic Plan 2023–28** identifies gender equality as one of its six thematic pillars of sustainability. The University’s objectives align closely with SDG Target 5.5—ensuring full participation and equal opportunities for leadership in political, economic, and public life—and Target 5.a, which calls for reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to technology.

Concrete policy commitments include:

- **Inclusive Admission Policy:** 50 percent of all programme seats are open without gender distinction, with active outreach to encourage girls in STEM.
- **Women’s Representation in Leadership:** Nearly half of all School-level Deans and Heads are women, including in disciplines like Allied Health Sciences, Law, and Media.
- **Zero Tolerance Policy on Harassment:** A vigilant Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) operates continuously, supported by a Gender Equality Cell and campus security systems that ensure a safe environment.
- **Career Break & Maternity Policy:** Introduced in 2024 for female faculty and staff, ensuring no academic disadvantage for maternity or caregiving leave.

The policy architecture thus connects gender equity with opportunity creation—bridging welfare and empowerment.

Gender Parity in Education

The University achieved a significant milestone in 2024–25: **female enrolment reached 52 percent of total students** across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Schools traditionally dominated by male students—such as Computer Science, Electronics and Communication Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering—showed the sharpest rise, averaging 45 percent female participation.

The Nursing and Allied Health Sciences schools continue to lead with more than 70 percent women learners, while Management, Law, and Humanities also report gender-balanced classrooms. This broad-based participation reflects both accessible admission policies and the University’s active promotion of girls’ education in West Bengal’s suburban and rural districts.

Career outcomes reinforce the value of parity: over 90 percent of female graduates from the 2024 batch secured placements within six months, particularly in healthcare, IT services, and analytics.

Scholarships and Financial Empowerment

Financial independence is crucial for educational continuity. Brainware's **scholarship ecosystem** directly supports this vision.

- **Kanyashree Prakalpa** (State Government) benefited 100 girls, providing ₹ 25,000 per student as a one-time grant.
- **Swami Vivekananda Merit-cum-Means Scholarship** supported 80 students with tuition waivers up to ₹ 80,000.
- **National and Minority Scholarships** reached 60 beneficiaries from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **Brainware Merit Scholarships for Girls** awarded 150 students a 50–100 percent tuition fee waiver.
- **Internship Stipend Programme** introduced in 2024 provided ₹ 8,000 stipends to 30 female students working on rural and health-care projects.

Collectively, these initiatives distributed more than ₹ 50 lakhs to women learners in 2024–25—an increase of 32 percent over 2023–24. Dropout rates among female students declined to below 2 percent, indicating strong retention and academic success.

Research and Academic Leadership

Women researchers at Brainware University are increasingly leading projects that intersect gender, health, and technology. Ten peer-reviewed publications in 2024–25 specifically addressed gendered dimensions of health, education, and socio-economic empowerment.

Representative works include:

- *Assessment of Women's Awareness on Cervical Cancer Screening* (Allied Health Sciences) highlighting the need for early-diagnostic outreach.
- *Menstrual Hygiene Practices among Adolescent Girls in Rural Bengal* (Nursing) linking education to health behaviour change.
- *Gender Bias in AI Algorithms* (Computer Science) exploring ethical frameworks in emerging technologies.
- *Women Leadership in Higher Education* (Management) documenting institutional pathways to parity.
- *Microfinance and Women's Entrepreneurship in Rural India* (Commerce) analysing livelihood outcomes of self-help groups.

These studies combine academic rigour with community relevance, directly contributing to SDG Target 5.c—adopting sound policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality.

Innovation, Patents, and Technology

The University's growing research culture has opened pathways for women inventors. In 2024–25, **22 out of 90 patent applications (24 percent)** had female principal or co-inventors. Many of these patents focus on affordable healthcare, safety, and sustainability—areas directly improving women's lives.

Notable examples include:

- **AI-Based Monitoring Device for Remote Patient Management** (Pharmaceutical Technology, Dr Deepsubhra Guha Roy et al.) — granted patent enabling remote women's health care.
- **AI Food Safety Prediction Tool** (Hospital Management, Dr Dipanwita Chattopadhyay et al.) — supports community nutrition and food safety.
- **Bio-Plastic from Waste Peels of Elephant Foot Yam** (Biotechnology, Dr Ananya Das Mahapatra) — eco-innovation promoting women-led rural enterprises.
- **AI-Driven Talent Acquisition System** (Computer Science, Ms Anudeepa Gon) — advances workplace equity analytics.
- **Motion-Responsive Mattress for Elder Care** (Allied Health Sciences, Dr Tanmay Sinha Roy et al.) — gender-inclusive design for caregiving support.

These patents position Brainware's women scientists as agents of transformation, blending research excellence with social responsibility.

Outreach and Community Engagement

Gender equality extends beyond campus. Through **National Service Scheme (NSS)** and **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)**, the University conducted 18 gender-focused outreach programmes across Faldi, Chaturia, Dubgaria, and Barasat communities.

Key initiatives included:

- **"Women's Rights and Empowerment Drive"** – Awareness sessions on property rights, education, and welfare schemes (Faldi, Aug 2024).
- **Self-Defence Training for Girls** – A two-day workshop (Sept 2024) attended by 150 students from nearby colleges.
- **International Women's Day Summit 2025** – Theme: *Women in STEM and Innovation*, featuring 20 female scientists and entrepreneurs.
- **Rural Health Camp for Women Workers** – Allied Health students conducted free screenings for anemia and hypertension (Jan 2025).
- **Digital Safety Campaign** – Educating girls on cybersecurity and AI-based privacy tools (Nov 2024).

More than 1,000 individuals directly benefited. Follow-up surveys indicated that 70 percent of participants demonstrated improved knowledge of legal rights, health care, and financial literacy.

Women in Leadership and Entrepreneurship

The **Institution's Innovation Council (IIC)** nurtured 12 women-led start-ups during 2024–25. Projects spanned biotechnology, healthcare devices, AI solutions, and sustainable fashion. Brainware University offered seed funds, mentorship, and industry connections.

Prominent examples include:

- A wellness brand producing herbal nutraceuticals by Biotech students.
- A social AI application enhancing accessibility for differently-abled women.
- A low-cost hygiene product line developed through campus incubation.

Parallelly, women faculty increasingly occupy decision-making roles. In 2024–25, **five Schools were headed by female Deans**, and three new committees—Ethics, Research Publication, and Student Welfare—were chaired by women academics.

These structural shifts sustain a culture where leadership is measured by competence, not gender.

Campus Safety and Support Systems

Brainware University has built one of the most secure and inclusive campus environments in Eastern India. The ICC, reconstituted in 2024, met quarterly and recorded zero pending grievances. Female security officers and resident wardens are deployed 24×7 across hostels.

The University also launched a digital portal for anonymous reporting of grievances, linked directly to the Registrar and Dean—Students. All first-year students receive gender sensitization orientation, while faculty undergo annual training on workplace ethics and diversity.

A dedicated counsellor was appointed for psychological well-being of female students facing academic or personal stress.

These measures fulfil SDG Target 5.2—eliminating violence and discrimination against women in public and private spheres.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Gender equality efforts gained momentum through strategic alliances:

- **Kasama University (Zambia):** Joint training for female students in public health and curriculum development.
- **Hanyang University (Republic of Korea):** Exchange of women researchers in biotechnology.
- **North City Hospital (Kolkata):** Health camps for female students and local women.
- **SWADES NGO:** Entrepreneurship training for rural women self-help groups.
- **CII Women in Business Forum:** Leadership mentorship and networking for final-year graduates.

Such partnerships extend the University's impact from campus to community and connect its learners with national and global networks of empowered women.

The academic year 2024–25 marks a turning point in Brainware University's journey toward gender equality. Women are not only participants in its progress—they are shaping it through research, innovation, and leadership. The University's vision of "*Education for Empowerment*" has translated into tangible results: more girls in STEM, stronger women's networks, and visible equity in academic governance.

As Brainware advances toward 2025–27, its focus is clear: to institutionalize gender mainstreaming as a culture of practice—not just policy—and to extend the benefits of education and innovation to every woman in its orbit of influence.

Brainware University reaffirms that true progress occurs when women learn, lead, and transform society together with equal voice and power.