

HOW HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS CAN HELP NARROW THE GENDER GAP IN STEM EDUCATION

According to the United Nations, women constitute merely 14% of the total 280,000 scientists, engineers and technologists in research development institutions in India. In a survey of girl students aged 12 to 14 in India, 93 percent said they considered STEM as a career choice early on. However, 38% of school girls expressed that they were less likely to take up a STEM career because the field is male-dominated. This is despite the fact that their performance in school is as good as, or even better than, boys'. The same is true for all over the world and this has been called the 'leaky pipeline'.

Teachers can play a significant role in dissipating stereotypes in STEM education. The most effective way to narrow the gender gap in STEM is to prevent it in the first place. By taking an early-age approach, I believe that the pipeline can be plugged before it begins to leak.

I will discuss the reasons for the under-representation of women in STEM and how we can create educational interventions at the high school level itself to fix the 'leaky pipeline'. This can be achieved by implementing strategies to make their classrooms a gender neutral safe space and ensuring equitable opportunities for boys and girls.

Working group

Diversity, Education and Outreach

Primary author: KULSHRESTH, Niharika (The Scindia School)

Presenter: KULSHRESTH, Niharika (The Scindia School)

Session Classification: Special session