



This issue focuses on

The Absence of Women in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Can Women in STEM Please Stand Up?

[Gender equality: 'No room at the top for women scientists'](#)

The glaring absence of women in the field of STEM is becoming increasingly visible. A deeper look into this problem reveals that while women do constitute half of the students enrolled in STEM courses, the drop happens at the stage of recruitment and retention. The lack of women in leadership and senior roles within such organisations serves as a barrier for girls who wish to enter the field and this becomes a vicious cycle. What serves as the 'leaky pipeline' is a mix of exclusionary working conditions, lesser pay and the mindset that, STEM is not for women. Changing this mindset is the need of the hour.

India Needs Women Role Models in STEM

[Here's how IBM is increasing women participation in STEM](#)

While the phenomena of missing women from STEM fields is a global concern, it is important for developing countries like India to address this effectively, especially if she aims at achieving the predicted growth trajectories. Interviews with women who form the chosen few in the field in India indicate that one of the reasons for STEM becoming an exclusive club is the lack of role models for girls who aspire to work in STEM. With no one to look up to, girls are never encouraged to consider STEM as a lucrative career option. The change needs to begin right at the level of schools where children are first exposed to the possible career choices. Encouragement from families and seeing women leading the way is what the future needs.

Recommended Read

[Champions' league](#)

31 Fantastic Adventures in Science by Nandita Jayaraj and Aashima Friedog, published by Puffin Books, is a novel attempt to bring to the fore stories of women who have made a mark in the fields of science in India. With beautiful illustrations by Upasana Agarwal, the book is a must read.