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Abstract

With a growing need for skilled STEM workers in the US, it is necessary to examine why minority groups such as women continue to participate in STEM at far lower rates. The historical exclusion of women from education created a system of STEM education that was formed for and by men. Despite changes in the education system that have allowed women to gain traction in almost every other content area, evaluation of the current status of the field reveals STEM subjects remain dominated by men. Additionally, there appear to be a new set of barriers that exclude women at all levels of STEM education. Changes to address these new barriers need to be made – and educators who are at the forefront of this occurrence have a unique opportunity to inspire change for future generations. Specifically, female STEM educators acting as mentors and role models have been shown to help female students overcome the obstacles they face in pursuing a STEM education and career. In order to fully realize the potential of female educators, the treatment of female educators in academia needs to be evaluated to ensure they are properly supported by the schools they work for.

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