

Three Trouble Spots Facing Women in Science—and How We Can Tackle Them

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Women are pursuing careers in science at rates never seen before, and this growing representation of female voices is truly exciting. Yet we are well aware that the academic community has not solved all the problems facing women.

That's why we're using this column to highlight three challenges that we see as particularly relevant across the sciences—and what we as an academic community can do about them. This is based on a [paper](#) June co-authored with more than 50 of her psychology colleagues listing trouble spots that continue to hinder the advancement of women in their field. Our discussion focuses on women, but the problems and solutions likely also apply to other underrepresented groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities and scientists with a nonbinary gender identity.

Many of the problems we discuss aren't new—in fact, they've been voiced for decades—but that doesn't mean solutions will elude us. It is only with continued work and awareness that we will progress toward equality.

Trouble spot No. 1: A sense of belonging

Across many fields and career stages of academia, women report a lower sense of belonging compared with their male colleagues, which is problematic because if a young scientist feels that they don't belong, why would they work hard to stick around? Many women also report that they are granted less respect and authority and have to work harder to be successful compared with men.

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