Women in Science Are Doing All Right

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The toy maker Mattel recently honored International Women’s Day by making “role model dolls” of women in science, tech, engineering and math jobs, while lamenting that “girls are systemically tracked away from STEM.” It’s a cliché that these fields are rife with sexism, but at least in academia the data disagree, according to a new paper in the journal Psychological Science in the Public Interest.

“The literature on women in science, both scholarly and popular, portrays academic sexism today as an omnipresent, pervasive force in the daily lives of tenure-track women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields,” write Stephen Ceci and Wendy Williams of Cornell and Shulamit Kahn of Boston University. Yet their review of the evidence from 2000 to 2020 shows that women in scholarly sciences are doing fine.

Tenure-track women are at parity with their male counterparts in grant funding, recommendation letters and having research accepted by journals, the authors say. In hiring, women have an advantage over men: “Women are less likely than men to apply for tenure-track jobs, but when they do apply, they receive offers at an equal or higher rate than men do.”