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Women now represent 41% of researchers globally, but challenges persist: Elsevier report

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India ranks 3rd globally in growth rate for womenâ??s share of active researchers



Elsevier, a global leader in scientific information and analytics with a long-standing commitment to advancing inclusion in research and health, has released its latest report analysing gender equality in research.

Progress Towards Gender Equality in Research & Innovation – 2024 Review examines inclusion and diversity in career cohorts across intersecting disciplines and geographies, tracking multiple indicators over 20 years. It reveals progress, with women now representing 41% of researchers globally, but also that serious challenges persist in gender equity in research and innovation.

Women researchers in India are more often cited by policy documents than men on average, with respective normalised scores of 0.41 and 0.37 across all subject areas. Within broad scientific areas, women outperform men in Physical Sciences (0.37 versus 0.35), Social Sciences (0.36 versus 0.33), STEM (0.40 versus 0.37) and are on par in Health Sciences (0.52 for both).

Also, although women are underrepresented as inventors on patent applications, they are cited as often as men when focusing on patents citing scientific literature (0.40 for both). Women score higher in Life Sciences (0.36 versus 0.34) and STEM (0.38 versus 0.37).

Women make up nearly half of active researchers in Brazil, Spain, and Italy, and around 40% in the USA and UK. However, women make up 33% in India, now the world's third largest research producing country; 30% in Egypt; and less than a quarter (22%) of active researchers in Japan.

The report recommends accelerating commitments and actions towards greater gender equity in research; and to stop the decline in participation with rising seniority by prioritising the retention of early-career women researchers into mid and advanced career stages. The report also focuses on developing incentive structures to help women play an equal part in the full research and innovation value chain, including patents.