

Conference on Global Approach to the Gender Gap in Mathematical, Computing and Natural Sciences: How to Measure it, How to Reduce It.

Asia and Oceania Discussion by Continent

Friday 8th November 2019

Participants:



Back: Tonya Blowers, OWSD UK/Italy; Catherine Jamie, CNRS, Paris; Anjana Jain, SGS Engineering and Science Institute, India; Bruce McKellar, IUPAP, Australian; Catherine Lang, ACM-W Asia Pacific, Discussion Leader; Umida Baltaera, Khorezm Mamun Academy, Uzbekistan; Ling-An Wu, Inst Physics, CAS, China; Hardud Ortiz Bufnueda, Capiz State University, Philippines.

Front: Jyoti U. Deukote, Kathmandu University, Nepal; Rachel Mamluk-Naaman, Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel; Supriya Saha, India; Zohrah Mostaghim, IUST, Iran; Budi Nurani Ruchjana, Univesitas Padjadjan, Indonesia.

Introduction to Discussion Session

After introduction around the table each attendee was asked to comment on two aspects:

1. What is their most important 'take-away' from the presentations and report.
2. What, if anything, will they take steps to work on within their own country, university, institution or professional association/union.

Each person commented as follows:

China – Ling-An Wu

- Comments that in China it appears that the media are attacking feminism. Previously women were equal, now appear to be going backwards,
- Harassment figures will be reported, will make recommendations.

Prepared from Discussion notes of Dr Catherine Lang, Assoc Prof La Trobe University Melbourne;
ACM-W Asia Pacific representative, Australia 1

Catherine Jamie, France

- Catherine had just delivered a very informative session in the program related to research into the gender gap from the perspective of social scientist.
- Implementing good practices in own union, and sharing what they do.
- Influence curriculum changes

Raquel Mamlock-Naaman, Israel

- Need for a bottom-up as well as top-down approach from societies and academic institutions
- High pressure in science – get messages to parent that Science opens all doors
- Help men to tackle the gender gap problem alongside women

Budi Nurani Ruchjana, Indonesia

- Reported faults in communication between government and education sectors
- Culture is gendered, males are preference and prioritised in education
- Will try to influence curriculum.

Zohrah Mostaghim, Iran

- Run workshops
- Education for women is an increasing priority. Iran has a good proportion of women in STEM

Supriya Saha, India

- Women are going into Engineering rather than Sciences
- No special quotas
- Social problems and caste issues, rural and urban discrepancies exist.
- Government has pledged free education for families with a single female child.

Bruce McKellar, Australia

- Quite a difference in statistics as you move around Asia, country to country
- Difference in undergraduate and postgraduate statistics in Physics, gap starts to be more noticeable in postgraduate
- Take back some recommendations for Union to implement.

Umida Baltaera, Uzbekistan

- Undergraduate numbers of women in mathematics are more than 50%, then decreases in postgraduate.
- Uzbekistan Mathematics Union is building women in mathematics
- Collaboration and support is important

Hardud Ortiz Buenenida, Philippines

- Country is forward about gender equality and has National celebration.
- Networking and how to implement good practices website.
- Harassment presentation was impressive, it is a sensitive issue
- Conduct gender sensitivities workshops and outreach programs.

Jyoti Deukote, Nepal

- Agriculture is 66% of national product with 50% women
- 50:50 balance in genders until postgraduate
- Big gender gap in jobs
- Will take back good practices policies for action and will suggest these to committees

Tonya Blowers, OWSD

- Data collected confirms other studies – the gender gap in science exists.
- Effect of family responsibilities on mobility, a key issue, and not the same for each continent. For example, in Africa, often extended families can provide daily childcare support - but women scientists face childcare difficulties if they move to another city or country to pursue their studies. In Asia, women scientists often elect NOT to get married and have children because family life and research are seen as incompatible.
- Confirmed the need to work with men – one of the highest reported indicators of success among OWSD PhD graduates is support from spouse and/or father.
- Work on redefining the notion of excellence, it should not all be related to publication outputs but should include capacity building efforts eg. in training, supervision and mentoring.

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Anjana Jain, India

- Need to encourage more female candidates for positions
- Mentor younger colleagues
- Train daughter and son to support each other equally.

Common Points in Discussion

The presentation of data related to harassment and gender differences across the world was both alarming and informative.

All will encourage Unions, Institutions etc to implement good practice

Change will only occur when both top-down and bottom up approaches. Need to work with families as well as all stakeholders.

The gender gap in sciences is not just a female problem. We all should be enlisted males to work to influence changes to stereotypes, biases and gendered practices.

All agree that female scientists in every discipline need support, and relaxing time for research to take in maternity leave is a great start

Agreed to inform colleagues.