

Panel discussion on 'Women's Careers in Cell Biology: Perspectives from Around the Globe'

New Delhi, Dec 23: Gender gaps are well documented in the field of science. Even before COVID hit us, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) revealed in 2019 that less than 30% of researchers across the globe are women.

The current pandemic has only made things worse. According to a study published in Nature Human Behavior by professors from the Harvard Business School, women in science have been “paying a steep career price in the pandemic.” Several factors could contribute to this situation, and this survey suggests that women scientists, especially those with young children, experienced a significant decrease in the time they could devote to research. This is not surprising, given that childcare facilities were closed due to lockdowns, and that this responsibility is often borne by women. Candid conversations and discussions on these issues are one way to address them and try to arrive at the changes in mindsets and policies required to help close the alarming gender gap.

To get a global perspective on engaging in a career in science as a woman, the American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB) hosted a panel discussion on 'Women's Careers in Cell Biology: Perspectives from Around the Globe'. Dr. Deepa Subramanyam from the National Centre for Cell Science (DBT-NCCS) in Pune, was invited as a panelist, to represent women scientists from Asia. She was joined by Frances Brodsky from USA, Susan Gasser from Switzerland, and Harmit Malik from the USA. Dr. Subramanyam shared her views, thoughts and perspective as a woman scientist from India, at this forum.

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