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**Women in Physics in Latin America: why so few in leadership positions?**

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Women are greatly under-represented in physics in Latin America. Among all sciences, physics is the field where the increase in the number of women has been particularly slow. Because of this imbalance, many bright young people do not receive the opportunity to learn about physics and to prepare themselves for a physics career, and others are discouraged from doing so. However, the problems is not only that girls are not attracted to go to physics, they few ones that decide to follow the career find difficulties in funding and in promotions. We show that women in Latin America leave physics disproportionately with each step of career advance. Moreover, we also show that in many cases the promotion process exclude women with the same abilities of men. But, why should we care about this problem? Why should women be in physics after all? Women that have a passion for physics should be able to make a living and have a successful career in this field. But, the need of gender balance in science, it is not only a equal opportunity issue. Physics need a greater participation of female researchers in order to survive. Science is changing and it is becoming more interdisciplinary. This evolution is only possible through diversity of thought and of strategies to approach problems. Therefore, excluding women more than limiting the available pool of talented people to half of humanity, we are limiting diversity. Finally, in a society where technology is becoming quite important and is governing our everyday life and where women are highly involved in the educational process, exposing women to science generates a more scientific literate public. We show that the implementation of a few affirmative action strategies bring more balance to the promotion process.