

MAR13-2012-020399

Abstract for an Invited Paper  
for the MAR13 Meeting of  
the American Physical Society

**Marshak Lectureship: Women in Physics: Increasing in Number, and What Else?**

LILIA MEZA-MONTES<sup>1</sup>, Instituto de Física BUAP, Mexico

Latin America is a region with high contrasts. With abundant natural resources and home of several celebrities among the wealthiest in the world, the zone has elevated indexes of poverty. In spite of this, and mostly thanks to the continuing intense efforts of the scientific community, it has been possible to create many excellence research centers. In contrast, illiteracy and lack of access to information and communication technologies are widely spread across our countries. Attitudes toward women have even coined a term, *machismo*. The situation of female physicists in this scenario is analyzed. We present a statistical overview of the participation of women as students or researchers in physics and related areas, for countries where data are available. Initiatives and ongoing programs to support and promote participation of women in science are discussed. Beyond statistics, some comments are given, as expressed by colleagues about work environment and gender issues in general, which have been collected through several years of exchanging concerns on the topic. Mexico and Brazil are discussed in more detail. Finally, we propose some joint actions to increase and improve the participation of women in our scientific field, which will give rise to better conditions for us but will also contribute to building a more equitable and developed region.

<sup>1</sup>Member of IUPAP Working Group on Women in Physics.