

# Inclusivity In STEM: An Introduction

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There are few fields in the history of the world that have proven to be indispensable to every facet of our existence the way STEM has. From health to entertainment, STEM has proven to be the dominant force driving innovation and progress in every aspect of our lives for centuries. Seeing the massive impact that technology has on each and every individual of our society, it is expected that members from all communities, classes and sects play an equal role in contributing towards this quest to transform the world. The reality, however, is distressingly different.

Even after several decades of social reform, the representation of historically marginalized communities including women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, the differently abled and the financially disadvantaged remains shockingly low. In India, caste is another insidious factor that keeps a large section of our populace away from the rapidly advancing world of STEM. It is painfully obvious that like many other fields, science and technology too, still remain the preserve of the most privileged sections of our society.

The reason for this disparity is not difficult to understand. As women studying in an engineering college and working towards a career in STEM, we have had ample opportunity to observe and even personally experience the factors at the foundational level which finally culminate in the erasure of a vast number of different perspectives at the upper echelons of the STEM world. From a lack of suitable role models to dealing with insensitivity and even outright discrimination at every step of the college journey, the less privileged among us navigate countless roadblocks on the path to progress. Though a detailed discussion on these factors is beyond the scope of this column, there is one pertinent aspect which we would like to address here- the lack of a platform for the diverse voices in the STEM field which sadly remain muffled due to our ignorance about what lies beyond the existing status quo.

DTU Times' latest offering, 'Inclusivity in STEM' is an attempt to bridge this gap and provide a platform to all viewpoints and stories that make up the vibrant fabric of DTU. As a newsletter which caters to and represents each and every student in the university, the task of embracing new and diverse perspectives is both a privilege and a responsibility, one which we intend to



Illustration By: Tejasv Mohan, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, B.Des.

fulfill with the utmost diligence and commitment.

This new column, which will be included in every edition we put forth this day forward, will feature articles by our columnists specifically addressing the agenda of diversity in STEM, interviews with personalities who have furthered the cause of inclusivity, as well as educative pieces focusing on the lived experiences of those individuals who are often wilfully ignored in our insistence to paint every perspective with the same brush. This column is also a space where you can think aloud and find questions that you should be asking and answers that you didn't see coming- What is imposter syndrome and how is it relevant to minorities in workplaces, especially in STEM? Is it okay to feel overwhelmed on a campus where you don't see a lot of people like you? Do you belong here even if you don't necessarily "fit in"?

We have a ton of questions that we are finding answers to, and a lot to say that has been left unsaid for too long. With the column, we do not guarantee solutions to everything that has us puzzled but we can assure you a safe space where you'll be able to find your voice. A warm nook, where you can find comfort in being yourself, knowing that you belong here even if it is something you don't quite believe yet. A place where you won't be hushed because you're not a part of the majority.

We hope that our efforts to build a more inclusive, more welcoming environment for every student of DTU will find purchase among our readers, and that this column will foster newer, more enriching conversations among all those who seek to learn from it.