

# Agency of Women of Color in STEM: Individual and Institutional Strategies for Persistence and Success

Mia Ong, Lily Ko, and A.K. Hodari

—E. H. Branch (Ed.), *Pathways, Potholes, and the Persistence of Women in Science: Reconsidering the Pipeline* (pp. 183-195). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

## Chapter Summary

In a direct challenge to the passive pipeline metaphor, the authors describe multiple ways in which women of color are active agents in their educational and career trajectories. Focusing on four disciplines in which they are most underrepresented – physics, astronomy, computer science, and engineering – we illuminate how women of color are innovative agents in the strategies they utilize to navigate and persist in STEM. These strategies include: choosing to learn and work in safe, welcoming places; participating in STEM diversity conferences; building alternative academic and professional networks; temporarily leaving the STEM realm; and engaging in activism. We conclude with a list of actions for institutions to further promote the recruitment and retention of women of color, which will lead to broadened participation in STEM.

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