Career Planning: Towards a More Inclusive Model for Women and Diverse Individuals

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Since the 1953 introduction of Super's model of career development, many publications regarding career development and career planning have been developed. However, career planning models for women and diverse individuals are not prevalent. This paper contains a literature review of various well-known models that have few specific applications for women and diverse individuals. This author suggests that a more inclusive model for women and diverse individuals should emphasize the goal and expectancy theories of motivation.

Keywords: Career Development, Diversity, Management

Many organizations today discuss career planning for women and diverse individuals from the perspective of workforce diversity, which Robbins defines as the "concept that organizations are becoming more heterogeneous in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and inclusion of other diverse groups" (Robbins, 2005, p. 17). The word individual is used as opposed to populations because career planning is an individual endeavor, although the individual may be assisted by others. Many individuals, situations, and events may influence an individual's career planning; yet, ultimately, the individual must live with and execute the plan. The typical phases that a worker experiences during a career are entry, advancement and sustainability. Each of these phases have numerous and varying steps for the individual.

A career is a "pattern of work-related experiences that encompass the course of a person's life" (Robbins, 2005, p. 593). According to Robbins career planning has made a transition from a traditional to a boundaryless approach. In the traditional approach, organizations took responsibility for managing their employees' careers. In the boundaryless method, which crosses boundaries, functions, and levels, individuals take responsibility for their future (Robbins, 2005); therefore, employees must become astute at managing their own careers (Robbins, 2005). Beverly Kaye identifies career planning as the "specific strategy and methods of the career development effort. It involves setting objectives, designing an evaluation scheme, assigning responsibilities for the entire effort, and determining methodologies, resources and support"(Kaye, 1997). According to Lee Isaacson and Duane Brown, however, career counselors have not begun to answer the classic question, "What types of intervention are most useful with which types of clients" (Isaacson, Lee & Brown, 1997, p.499)?

The researcher proposes that a model that addresses the needs of women and diverse individuals after they enter the workplace needs to be further researched and developed. As the global economy dictates the need for a more diverse workforce, most organizations have successfully implemented current models to recruit diverse candidates; however, the retention rates may not be as successful. According to Smith and Doty "[t]he retirement of the baby boom generation has already begun to impact organizations in the U.S. The need for entry level workers for the future is projected to become critical over then next several years and continue for decades" (2005, p. 888). The majority of the new workforce is projected to be women and diverse individuals. Their advancement and sustainability may be essential to the success of organizations throughout the world. The development of a model that is grounded in motivational theory; specifically goal and expectancy theories of motivation, may improve this aspect of job success for women and diverse candidates.

Problem Statement

There are numerous career development models that include career planning; however, there is no identifiable model that specifically addresses the needs of women and diverse individuals after they enter the workplace. The purpose of this review is to identify the extent that current career planning models address the needs of women and diverse individuals.

The following research questions guided this study:
1. To what extent are current career planning models inclusive of women and diverse individuals?
2. In what way(s) can motivational theories be used to develop career planning models for women and diverse individuals?

3. What challenges/barriers do women and diverse candidates consider during the career planning process?

Methodology

A review of current literature involving career development, career planning and diversity was conducted using the key words career development, career planning, diversity careers, women in careers. ProQuest , EBSCO Host and InfoTrac were research databases used to obtain articles related to this topic. Books were obtained from the researcher's personal collection and the university library.   The criterion for selection of the articles was that they had to be published in refereed journals. Each article was completely read and analyzed based on the goals of the study. Each book was also completely read by the researcher. The themes for the topics were identified based on the purpose of the study which is to identify the extent that current career planning models address the needs of women and diverse individuals.

Theoretical Framework

Career Planning Models
    Many career planning models have been identified, but very few specifically address career issues of concern to women and diverse individuals who wish to succeed in U.S. corporations. Writers have proposed that many of the theories are oriented primarily towards white males and are inappropriate for women and diverse individuals; others have argued that there is no need for a specific model for diverse individuals (Isaacson, Lee & Brown, 1997).
Super's Models
    Super's Life-Career Rainbow: Six life roles in schematic life space model was initially developed in 1953 (Gibson & Mitchell, 2006). The major concepts of his models included vocational stages; vocational tasks to achieve if one is to successfully pass through the stage; implementation of the self-concept in developing a career identity; the development of vocational maturity; and career patterns (Gibson & Mitchell, 2006). It associates age with five stages of career development. They are: growth (4-13), exploration (14-24), establishment (25-44), maintenance (45-65) and decline (65 and over) (Super, 2002). Super's theory suggests that everyone does not progress through the stages at fixed ages or in the same manner. Each individual develops and matures at different stages. Their life experiences also play a role within career progression.
    In the 1990, Segmental model of career development, Super based his life span development theory on 14 propositions. His propositions suggest that biographical and geographical influences affect individuals as they progress through the career cycle. This model was designed to address the differences in people and how their personality and social policy play a role in their career success. Super also proposed a ladder model of life-career stages, developmental tasks, and behaviors to express his theory with regards to the life stages and the ages at which they occur (Gibson & Mitchell, 2006).
    Super's model is not the only model for career planning; however, it is one of the most accepted. Other models of interest include, Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice, the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) Model, Beverly Kaye's Six Stages of Career Development, Hayes Career Transition Model and Karsten and Igou's Career Planning Model for a Diverse Workforce. Specific details of each model are described here.
Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice
    Holland's theory suggests that a person expresses personality through the choice of a vocation and that interest inventories are really personality inventories. He also suggests that individuals hold stereotypical views with regards to vocations. His perception is that individuals in similar vocations have similar personalities and will respond to situations and problems in similar ways. Holland's view is that the success of a person on a job depends on the extent to which the individual's personality and work environment are compatible (Isaacson & Brown, 1997).
    Holland's theory is considered to be the most influential of the extant theories and is used frequently to assess personality types. It identifies six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. Holland's Self-Directed Search instrument is used to match the person with the model work environment. He has also developed a Model for Interpreting Interclass and Intraclass Relationships for assessing the different inventories (Isaacson & Brown, 1997).
    Since Holland's theory and model are designed to assess personality traits and match them with potential vocations, women and diverse individuals may want to explore it further. It may provide them with information that helps them understand how their personalities can have an impact on job success. They must realize that this is a method of selecting options and depends on an objective self-assessment.
National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) Model

The NCDG Model is a competency based model that is designed for elementary, middle and high school students Kobylarz, Crow, & Ettinger, 2005). It is a framework for thinking about the knowledge and skills young people and adults need to manage their careers effectively, from their first job to their last. At the high school level, students are to be introduced to an individual career plan process. Individuals can use the goals and indicators obtained from the model as an informal checklist to determine areas of competency and gaps that need attention. Questions that arise with regards to this model include:

1. Are all high school students introduced to this model?
2. In what way(s) does this model address the unique needs of female and minority students?

Isaacson and Brown devote sections of their book to the special needs of gifted and physically, emotionally, and learning disabled students with regards to career planning; however, there is no specific reference with regards to gender, race and ethnicity (1997).

Kaye's Six Stages of Career Development

Kaye's model is designed from the organizational perspective and is focused towards the organization developing and sustaining a career development plan that will be beneficial for itself and its employees. Kaye's perspective arises from the notion that:

Career development is ideally a joint effort between the individual, the manager or leader, and the organization. While the individual has the primary responsibility for his or her own career, the leader is a supportive coach, and the organization provides the necessary systems and information. Career development involves looking realistically at the present conditions and at the career environment of today and tomorrow in order to regain the control necessary to ensure future productivity and job satisfaction (Kaye, 1997).

Kaye suggests that six stages of the career development cycle exist; they are as follows:

1. Preparing (Analyzing, Planning)

During this phase organizations are to determine the scope and nature of the career development effort through analyzing the needs, problems, and activities that led to the career development effort and that will, eventually determine its objectives.

2. Profiling (Identifying, Reality Testing)

In the profiling stage, the employee is responsible for identifying skills and interests, the leader must support the effort by providing opportunities for discussion, while the practitioner makes a variety of assessment tools available.

3. Targeting (Exploring, Specifying)

During the targeting phase the employee is to explore possibilities and specify goals. The organization is to provide guidance that points employees' exploration efforts in a direction consistent with the organization. Leaders and practitioners are challenged to make exploration and opening of possibilities and goal-setting a realistic and profitable exercise.

4. Strategizing (Understanding, Synthesizing)

The strategizing stage involves formulating a comprehensive strategy to accomplish the goals identified in stage three. Change is of the essence within this stage of development.

5. Implementing (Acquiring, Demonstrating)

During the implementing stage employees seek information, opportunities, support persons or groups, and resources to attain goals. The organization, through practitioners, provides financial resources and developmental activities, monitors progress, establishes motivation and reward systems, and documents activities and results. Managers provide information, encourage employees, provide necessary time for employee development activities, and establish internal means for using new employee capacities. The three groups share responsibility for two-way, effective communication, ongoing feedback, change in support of career development, and improved utilization of the workforce.

6. Sustaining (Maintaining, Evaluating)

Kaye also suggests several actions to sustain career development programs. They must be adapted to changing conditions, which can be done by designing various sustaining systems that keep the program alive during the preparation stage. Some questions to consider throughout this phase include:

   a. How does identified career development needs match our overall business direction?
   b. How can we create interventions that are flexible and adaptable enough to meet changing needs and audiences?
   c. How can our career development efforts be made to outlive individual stakeholders and particular actions so they become part of the fiber of the organization (1997, p.21)?

Kaye suggests that individual movement between the stages may proceed sequentially or oscillate among stages; yet, all six must be experienced at least once for one complete cycle ending at the sustaining phase (1997).

She considers career planning to be essential in stage one of her career development model. Little information in this model is specifically devoted to diverse populations and their individual career planning efforts. Kaye's model is developed from the organizational and practitioner perspective which, in most cases, differs markedly from the individual perspectives of diverse employees. This model includes individual responsibility within some of the stages, which can be utilized by women and diverse individuals. Kaye's model is not specifically designed for individual career planning purposes. It is designed primarily for practitioners inside organizations to advance the goals of the organization. It focuses upon the needs of the organization and not necessarily the individual needs and goals of the employee. Some stages of Kaye's model, specifically stages 2, 3, 4, and 5, provide the employees an opportunity to assess their positions and goals and take personal responsibility with regards to their career development both from an individual and organizational perspective. Stages one and six of her model describes that it is a model with organizational goals in mind and not individual goals unless those goals are the same which may not be the case.

Kaye implies that a diverse workforce poses both challenges and opportunities to an organization. Its main challenge is to develop the knowledge and flexibility of its diverse workforce to its highest potential. She suggests that organizational leaders ask the following questions to evaluate diversity development:

1. Are we satisfied with the state of the art of this organization's development opportunities for special needs groups?
2. How will each career development stage make our organization more responsive to diversity needs?
3. Are we using the skill identification information developed at the Profiling Stage, to give us a better picture of needs of any underrepresented groups?
4. Are the goals for developing diversity, set at the Targeting Stage, realistic?
5. Is the organization doing all it can to support these goals (1997, p. 227)?

These questions continue to support the fact that much work is needed within organizations to make it a level playing field for women and diverse individuals inside the workplace. Communication channels must be constantly open to women and diverse individuals so that they can express their concerns and develop their careers within organizations that may not be receptive to their presence.

Hayes Career Transition Model

Hayes identifies six steps for managing career transitions. She suggests that adults will go through this model several times during their career. The steps are as follows:

1. Self-Assessment: Employees get to know themselves very well by looking at their skills, values, interests and personality preferences.
2. Career exploration: Individuals open up to career possibilities and let go of stereotypes.
3. Decision making: People synthesize information and seek similarities among jobs and the marketplace and their own values, interests, personalities and skills.
4. Goal setting: Individuals establish goals to move forward towards their career choices.
5. Acquiring job search skills: People build networks of professional contacts and develop skills to market themselves to employers of choice.
6. Acquiring career success skills: Individuals learn ongoing career management skills and those that will help them fit into a new organization (Hayes, 2000, pp. 14-16).

Hayes presents an objective model for individuals who want to change careers. No specific reference is made to the use of the model by women and/or diverse individuals. It is an objective model that can be used to help people assess their ideas regarding career transitions to enhance their opportunities within the workforce.

Career Planning Model for a Diverse Workforce

Karsten and Igou suggest a need for a career planning model that addresses the unique needs of a diverse Workforce (Karsten & Igou, 2005). They have proposed a model that combines the efforts of Bowden and Ibarra along with their original ideas (Bowden, 1997, Ibarra, 2002). Their model primarily focuses upon environmental and personal factors. The phases that they describe are career preparation, entry and progress, reassessment and career change.

Karsten and Igou disagree with Super's theory from the perspective that "until recently, white women tended to leave and re-enter the workforce to deal with non-work responsibilities more than their male peers. Thus, their age may have placed them in the maintenance stage of Super's model, but, based on their development; they may have fit better in the establishment phase" (p. 97). Because of prior discrimination, experiences of racial and ethnic minorities also may differ from those assumed in Super's model (Ibarra, 2002).

They also argue that due to the impact of personal and environmental factors associated with women and

diverse individuals, inventories and other questionnaires designed to increase self-knowledge are not effective because women and diverse individuals have more of a tendency to select jobs based on community needs as opposed to personal preference (Ibarra, 2002).

During the career preparation they suggest using self-knowledge inventories but only to the extent that personal and environment factors specific to women and diverse individuals are considered. They also include developing an understanding of occupational information resources and how they explain career choices within this stage.

During the entry and progress phase the use of Bowden's Career States System model with regards to launching, building, sustaining, subsisting and searching within a career (Bowden, 1997). During the reassessment and career change stage, Karsten and Igou emphasize Ibarra's model of career change in which she emphasizes doing over planning. Her suggests are to try out change, make new connections and make sense of change (Ibarra, 2002). They emphasize that career models should allow for career breaks and that employees should be able to determine their own career success measures within their own timeframes (Karsten & Igou, 2005).

Karsten and Igou have developed a complex model that tries to address the needs of women and diverse individuals from a group and individual perspective. This in itself is a very difficult to accomplish. All of the variables that they mention should be explored with regards to women and minorities; however, it may make the model too cumbersome for individuals to effectively navigate.

Organizational Perspective

Within organizations one typically finds the individual, the group, the organization system and organizational dynamics. Each aspect of the organization must be clearly understood by women and diverse individuals to help them attain success within the organization. The characteristics of each of these elements of the organization vary among organizations. As women and diverse individuals enter the workplace, they must recognize these elements and prepare to develop their careers within the opportunities presented and despite the constraints that they may encounter upon entry.

Robbins suggests that in the boundaryless career, the organization's responsibility is to build employees' self-reliance and help them maintain marketability through continuous learning (2005). Specific ways that this can be accomplished are to clearly communicate the organization's goals and future strategies, create growth opportunities, offer financial assistance, and provide time for employees to learn Robbins, 2005). Women and diverse candidates must be aware of this shift in career planning and adapt accordingly. Women and diverse individuals have a tendency to enter and re-enter the workplace; however, they must remain aware of trends and changes in the workplaces of the world (Karsten & Igou, 2005). They can do this by reading the newspapers, listening to news reports and participating in community and professional organizations.

Career Paths

Citing Leibowitz, Farren, and Kaye, Isaacson and Brown refer to career paths as a representation of the sequential lines of career progression in an organization (Isaacson & Brown, 1997). Career paths can be used to develop career plans for individuals. Consistency is crucial when developing, explaining, and administering procedures related to career paths within an organization. Individuals progressing along a specified path should encounter no discriminatory experiences concerning gender, race, or ethnicity. Usually, career paths for each job are developed based on employees' experiences that reflect organizational promotion practices (Isaacson & Brown, 1997). However, few organizations provide career counseling or planning assistance to help employees, particularly, diverse employees, progress along the paths.

Power Relationships within Organizations

Employers are now seeking to create workplaces where employees from all backgrounds fully utilize their skills and feel personally comfortable (Jackson & Joshi, 2001). According to Pfeffer, "organizations have career systems in place that tend to reward and encourage activities and skills more generously than others…Therefore, those who rise to positions of influence and who benefit from this career system have a particular set of skills and have engaged in a particular set of activities – those favored by the system" (1992, p. 318). Therefore, upon entry into any organizational system, women and diverse individuals must build relationships and develop an understanding of the culture and career system they have entered.

Pfeffer notes that "the essence of organizations is interdependence" (1992, p. 38). Individuals must obtain power and the capacity to influence others to be successful within organizations. "It is critical that one be able to diagnose the relative power of various participants and comprehend the patterns of interdependence. One needs to know and understand not only the game, but also the players (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 49). "Developing and exercising power requires having both will and skill. It is the will that often seems to be missing" (Pfeffer, 1992, p. 338). Women and diverse individuals must use their acquired skills. Pfeffer also notes that "there is a greater sin than

making mistakes or influencing others – the sin of doing nothing, of being passive in the face of great challenges and opportunities, and even great problems" (1992, p. 300).

As a result of changing workforce demographics, organizations are having to make significant changes to accommodate the needs and nature of an increasingly diverse labor pool" (Alvarado &. Lynham, 2005, p. 890). One suggested change maybe to recognize that career systems within organizations may need to be adjusted to reflect the needs of this labor pool.

Performance

Cascio identifies training and development activities as planned programs of organizational improvement undertaken to bring about a relatively permanent change in employee knowledge, skills, attitudes, or social behavior (1998). Human Resource Development focuses on the individual's ability to perform what she has learned in training and development activities after returning to the job (Banks, 2002). Performance, as defined by Cascio, is the observable, measurable behavior from which we infer learning (1998). Women and diverse individuals must understand how training and professional development provide organizational support to help them acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities. Human resource development can enhance the ability of diverse individuals to succeed within their careers. According to results of a study by Bajawa and Woodall "no amount of equal opportunity and diversity awareness training, nor efforts to build the confidence and capability of 'minorities' will have the required impact, if we do not take into account how other human resource policies are implemented" (2005, p. 881).

Alvarado and Lynham in a literature review of barriers to advancement of ethnic minorities to executive positions in the workplace discovered "a number of barriers hindering the advancement of ethnic minorities from lower and middle management to executive level positions in the workplace can be identified. Four such barriers include: a lack of mentoring, a lack of informal networking, discrimination and stereotyping, and being held to a higher standard" (2005, p.893). All of these barriers may be influenced by techniques and methods within motivation theories to assist women and diverse individuals advance within their careers.

Goal and Expectancy Theories of Motivation

Women and diverse individuals often enter the workplace for survival reasons, without having identified their goals and expectations. Personal responsibilities are such that they often accept the first available position without considering career plans, goals, or personal expectations. Research also shows that culture, gender, and socioeconomic status influence career choice and development (Isaacson & Brown, 1997).

Goals are crucial in motivational theories. Pfeffer, referring to George Gallup, notes that, "People tend to judge a man by his goals, by what he's trying to do, and not necessarily by what he accomplishes or by how well he succeeds Pfeffer, (1992)." Having goals can only be an asset for women and diverse individuals.

According to Ormond, the general effects of motivation are to:
1. increase an individual's energy and activity level;
2. direct an individual toward certain goals;
3. promote initiation of certain activities and persistence in those activities; and
4. affect the learning strategies and cognitive processes an individual employs (1999).

Victor Vroom first proposed expectancy theory to explain work behavior. He developed three models dealing with job satisfaction, work motivation and job performance, to address people's choices among work roles, the extent of their satisfaction with their chosen work roles, and their level of effectiveness in such roles (Vroom, 1995). Vroom's model has been used primarily to predict job satisfaction and occupational preference (Banks, 2002). Adaptations including the Porter-Lawler Expectancy Model and Porter-Steers Met Expectations Hypothesis have been used to measure effort and job satisfaction.

The Porter-Lawler model has been used mainly to measure supervisor, peer, and self-effort. It focused on the value of the reward, the perceived and actual effort required to attain the expected reward, the actual effort, abilities and traits, role perceptions, performance (accomplishment), rewards (fulfillment), perceived equity of rewards, and satisfaction (Porter & Lawler, 1968). Porter and Lawler's value of reward variable referred to the attractiveness of possible outcomes to individuals. At a given point, individuals attach different values to a variety of potential rewards (Banks, 2002).

Met Expectations Hypothesis

Porter-Steers Met Expectations Hypothesis describes "three common denominators that characterize motivation: (1) what energizes human behavior; (2) what directs or channels such behavior; and (3) how this behavior is maintained or sustained". Motivational theories also have models that help to explain their characteristics. According to Porter & Steers, the basic building blocks of a generalized model of motivation are:

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(1) needs or expectations; (2) behavior; (3) goals; and (4) some form of feedback (Porter & Steers, 1973). Porter and Steers were concerned with the potential role of met expectations" on a person's withdrawal behavior, which is their tendency to be absent, avoid participation in optional organizational activities, or, in the extreme, quit (Banks, 2002). They define met expectations as the "discrepancy between what a person encounters on this job in the way of positive and negative experiences and what he expected to encounter" (Porter & Steers, 1973). Women and diverse individuals must be able to establish expectations when they start a job and progress through the career model allowing them to adjust to positive and negative experiences based on an understanding of the way such experiences relate to their personal expectations. Using met expectations hypothesis, Porter and Steers predict that when an individual's expectations are unmet, that person's propensity to withdraw will increase (1973).

Requiring individuals to recall their prior expectations after having been on the job for some time is a weakness of direct measures of met expectations. Recollections of pre-entry expectations are filtered by more recent experiences and behaviors (Irving & Meyer, 1995). By establishing goals and expectations upfront and throughout the career planning process, women and diverse individuals can establish baselines to determine how well their expectations are being met through their own and organizational efforts, as applicable. This is an area where more research is needed. A study that measures the gap, if any, between expectations and experiences of women and diverse individuals from their point of entry into the workplace and a pre-determined time-frame that they remain within the organization could be beneficial to career planning professionals. A study that determines whether or not successful women and diverse individuals had personal goals and expectations and the extent to which they believe those goals and expectations influenced their success could also be beneficial to career planning professionals.

Conclusion

In today's global economy, all members of the workforce must perform at their best. Women and diverse individuals want to succeed but may be unsure of their acceptance within organizations. Historically, they have struggled to participate actively even in workplaces that recruited them aggressively and welcomed them warmly at first.

Women and diverse individuals can use all models of career planning and development described in this paper in some way. It is up to them to assess themselves to determine if they have sufficient knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed. This does not to suggest that others are unavailable or unwilling to assist them. Rather, it points out that their personal motivation, desire, and will are more important to their success than the influence of others.

Super's theory is very familiar to individuals in occupations dealing with career development. Most seem to prefer Super's model and use it within organizations. This assumption produces a lot of questions not only with respect to women and diverse individuals but also with respect to white males. Questions of interest include the following:
   1. If and only if Super's model is being used within organizations, what aspect of the model is relevant and/or applicable to anyone other than white males?
   2. How well do the individuals using Super's model understand it?
   3. In what way(s) is Super's model being effectively communicated to women diverse individuals?
   4. Are women and diverse individuals aware that Super's model is the model of choice in today's workplace? Do they consider this information as they plan their careers?

The author suggests further research to develop a more inclusive model which incorporates all of the elements noted by Porter and Steers with regards to goals and expectancy theories of motivation. Women and diverse individuals must address their personal goals and expectations, which may affect job choice and on-the-job behavior. Their internal feedback, within themselves, and external, from others in their organization are essential to their professional success. Alvarado and Lynham suggest that:

In the context of the anticipated changes in the emerging ethnic make-up of the workforce in Texas (and the USA), and the anticipated notable growth in the Hispanic representation within this workforce, a better understanding of the needs, barriers of entry to, and advancement within the workplace can be expected to become increasingly important to the sustainable development, growth, diversity and well-being of the future state and national workplace (2005, p. 895).

Implications for Human Resource Development (HRD)

Perspectives from each model may be relevant to women and diverse individuals; however, the author believes that they must be most diligent at organizational entry. Many models help prepare women and diverse individuals to obtain a job; however, little emphasis is placed on the unique characteristics that they must understand to succeed

after job entry. After joining the workplace, women and diverse individuals must emphasize extensive planning and execution of strategy in three distinct career phases--entry, sustainability, and advancement (Banks, 2006). Internal factors, which are within individuals, and external factors, inherent in the organizations employing them, affect these stages. HRD can influence the success of women and diverse individuals by providing training and professional development, personal development, skill development and continuous learning opportunities. By focusing more research emphasis on developing models that address the sustainability of women and diverse individuals after they enter the workplace, more may be done to enhance their success within the workplace.

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