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OCCUPATIONAL TRAJECTORIES OF MINORITIZED GROUPS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MODERN CAREERS

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INTRODUCTION

The traditional linear concept of career, supported by a single firm and with a vertical upward proposal, has evolved to the so-called new careers, such as those that are boundaryless and protean, more focused on the protagonism of the individual in the definition of his/her professional career, seeking to achieve goals (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). In these advances, current career studies seek to broaden understanding of minorities and how they fit into this career-building process.

Similarly, the theme, diversity has also undergone great evolution. It has been studied from different perspectives, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, administration, among other study fields, because it is a very complex theme with implications for human subjectivity (Silva & Pinto, 2019).

In the corporate world, the search for value generation in an increasingly competitive, global, interconnected environment has made the theme of diversity occupy an important space in senior leadership and personnel management discussions (Roberson, 2019). The aim of organizations is to capture the benefits of teams that are more diverse, which, from different perspectives and experience, can lead to improved productivity and profitability, building greater engagement and a superior organizational climate (Wilson, 2014).

It is observed that, despite the positive expectation of the result, several minoritized groups are underrepresented in organizations or, even when adequately represented, cannot rise up the career ladder (Bloch; Taylor; Church, & Buck, 2020).

According to Fraga and Rocha-de-Oliveira (2021), theories of boundaryless and protean careers are challenged when analyzing professional ethnic experiences. The authors state that, as the barriers imposed by social difference markers, such as race, class or sexuality, are little explored by the literature, it is recommended to study the relations of power, privilege and inequality presented in socially invisible groups. These barriers can support understanding of this distance between the high perspective of positive diversity impacts and the practice of low group participation with certain characteristics in organizations' work teams.

In this context, this study's objective is to investigate the main implications of belonging to minoritized social groups regarding the process of career entry and development.

In methodological terms, the research is characterized as qualitative, conducted by semi-structured interviews with four professionals belonging to minoritized groups who described their experiences. Therefore, the strategy of collection applied was that of life stories, which has been employed to access the social reality investigated in a comprehensive, profound way and with the uniqueness of each situation (Mancebo; Costa & Pessoa, 2018).

The research features three principal contributions: for academia, it broadens the discussion about the barriers to entry and career promotion along with their causes for professionals with different social markers; for organizations, it delimits a set of actions that positively impact the reduction of these barriers; and, for society, it reinforces the importance of concrete action for the promotion of justice.

The results indicate that the *stigma* experienced by people belonging to this group is the main factor that impairs the process of entry and career development of these professionals. Furthermore, in the macro dimension, unconscious bias also constituted a significant barrier to some of the participants. In the *meso* dimension, academic financial assistance, mentoring programs and the presence of affirmative actions were identified as facilitators. The latter item

is also indicated as a barrier, as affirmative actions are not identified for some of the social markers analyzed. In the micro dimension, self-efficacy, optimism and resilience in some stories acted as facilitators, but in others, barriers.

This article involves four sessions. The first covers a literature review on career themes, diversity, minoritized social groups and barriers found by professionals with social markers of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and age. Following this, the research methodology is detailed. Then the results obtained are described. Finally, discussions and conclusions are presented. The study limitations and suggestions for future research are also presented in this latter part.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. From traditional to modern careers: opportunities and challenges

Evolutions and technological, cultural, political and ethical revolutions experienced in the current global conjuncture, as well as the diversification of professions, have caused major changes in work organization and a new concept of career and professional development (Duarte et al., 2010).

Historically, the concept of career is recent, emerging throughout the nineteenth century in the liberal industrial society (Chanlat, 1995). This new concept is the opposite of feudal society, characterized by an almost insurmountable social division between the Clergy, Nobility and the Third State - the latter composed of peasants, artisans and merchants, determining enormous social inequality without the possibility of mobility. From this perspective, the author emphasizes that an emerging capitalist society opens up opportunities for various success models, as well as encouraging social promotion, in theory, within the reach of all (Chanlat, 1995).

Initially, a career was understood as synonymous with positions or a sequence of positions occupied by the individual throughout his/her life in an organization, whose position structure was hierarchical and well defined (Dutra, 2008; Super, 1980; Clarke, 2013). Most of the time, this growth was supported by the organization through training, development and career management (Clarke, 2013).

From the 1990s, with increased competitiveness of organizations in the globalized world and technological advance, a new way of conceptualizing career arose. Increased competitiveness required changes in organizational structures, such as downsizing, reducing hierarchical management levels (Clarke, 2013) and the adoption of new management models, characterized by flexibility in labor relations and much of the responsibility for the career transferred to the individual (Boltanski & Chiarelli, 2009).

In this new concept, the so-called new careers emphasize the protagonism of the individual in his/her career choice, which define the professional career, without limits and barriers imposed by a particular organization (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

From this perspective, the proposal of vertical progression in an organization as a primordial form of occupational trajectory is reevaluated, expanding the definition for boundaryless careers. De Fillips and Arthur (1996, p. 116) define the boundaryless career as "a sequence of job opportunities that goes beyond the limits of a single employer."

In this new career configuration, the individual's possibilities of acting are expanded, as value is attributed to being engaged in different organizations, whether private or public institutions, or their own enterprises, although this requires the individual to have mobility in psychological and physical dimensions (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

In the same line of career concept evolution, there is the protean career, which advocates that the individual, in charge of his own career, defines his goals, performs the planning of

his/her trajectory and performs reinvention to achieve the desired psychological success (Hall, 1996). Hall (2004, p. 2) defines the protean career as “self-determined, directed by personal values rather than organizational rewards, and serving the person as a whole, family and purpose of life”.

Thus, the protean career has two dimensions: it is directed by individual values and self-determined, that is, the individual is the protagonist of his career evolution (Briscoe et al., 2006). The concept of personal agency reflects the proactive attitude of the individual to take command of his career management (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

Several criticisms have been made of the new career concept, which has an individual-centered perspective, conceived as the protagonist of his professional trajectory, and has management and control over his entire environment, to achieve his professional goals. Criticisms consider that this concept exaggerates the simplification of the nuances involved in career issues, disregarding the influence and power of context along this path (Bevort & Stjerne, 2020).

2.2. Diversity and inclusion

The term diversity is defined in the dictionary as: “1. The quality of what is diverse, difference, dissimilarity, variation, variety” and “2. A set that has varied characteristics; multiplicity” (Michaelis, 2021).

Expanding the concept, Roberson, Ryan, Ragins, (2017) understand diversity as any different composition among people in a collective, which leads to a perception of similarities and singularities. In this sense, diversity can be understood as personal attributes of individuals who form the basis for group identity. These attributes may be more visible, such as the characteristics: gender, race and age, or less observable ones like sexual orientation, educational background and other experiences.

In organizations, globalization, demographic changes, and sociocultural transformations of society have been the main drivers for this agenda to occupy a place of prominence in the areas of human resources and the agenda of the high leadership (Roberson, 2019). According to Wilson (2014), the benefits of adopting diversity may include increased productivity, profitability and equity, reduction of stereotypes and prejudice, expanding engagement and personal effectiveness.

Despite the expansion of investments in diversity programs, effective implementation has been regarded as difficult to achieve (Rice, 2012). To obtain the promised positive impacts of diversity, inclusion must occur. People need to feel that they are taking part, that they are in a safe environment, that they are valued, so that they can develop and apply their potential (Ferdman, Avigdor, Braun, Konkin, Kuzmycz, 2010).

Prasad, D'Avate and Prasad (2007) reaffirm that minoritized groups, such as women, blacks and those with disabilities, continue to be left out, suffering various institutional forms of exclusion, including at work.

2.3. Management of minoritized groups

Although the terms “minority” or “minoritized” may refer to a small number of people, the definition of such a group is a set of people excluded from participation or denied their rights, simply because it features characteristics different from what was established as standard. These characteristics of non-dominant groups, also known as social markers, imply attributing to individuals belonging to this group a position of inferiority and subordination, and, therefore, with less presence in power spaces (Paula, Silva, & Bittar, 2017). Silveira and

Freitas (2017) stress that several authors argue that a definition of minorities must observe the social, historical, political and economic context in which a particular group lies.

In corporate environments, several efforts have been undertaken to broaden the inclusion of individuals belonging to minoritized groups. This inclusion movement has been accelerated, seeking to increase the organizations' performance, but also by other motives, such as justice and well-being, which may be considered predictive of increased performance (Ferdman et al., 2010).

Prasad, D'Avate and Prasad (2007) state that women, the disabled, ethnic and religious minorities have been marginalized for different periods around the world. These minorities are excluded from participation in key processes of human life, such as work and rewards that derive from these processes. Laer, Verbruggen and Janssens (2021) argue that structural barriers tend to affect the career of identity groups differently, as common sense dictates the rule of "ideal" qualifications for "ideal" positions. In this sense, stigma exerts an important impact, given the relationship between the attribute and its stereotype, that is, the characteristics or behavior considered natural among those who bear this attribute (Myers, 2014).

According to Goffman (1963), stigma is established when an individual has an attribute that makes him/her different from the normative standard, thus reducing his/her social value. Monteiro (2019) stresses that this social image, built from negative stereotypes, can generate impacts on credibility and so be perceived as inferiority and weakness.

Some specific barriers, such as stereotypes, bias, and subtle racism lie on the path to a really mobile professional trajectory. Acting to deconstruct these attitudes is a challenge for organizations, but it is the way to minimize injustice and provide ethical, professional treatment to all employees (Wilson, 2014).

3. METHOD

According to Creswell (2007), the use of qualitative techniques for conducting research is recommended when a question or problem needs to be explored broadly and deeply or, for example, when interaction between people needs to be captured to increase understanding of these relationships. In this sense, as the objective of this research involves investigating the main implications of belonging to minoritized social groups regarding the process of career entry and development, the approach utilized will be qualitative.

Within this approach, the investigative strategy chosen is the modality of life histories, which, according to Barros and Lopes (2014), is outstanding for raising current complex sensitive social situations, generating relevant contributions, not only for the analysis and understanding of these issues, but also to signal alternatives to overcome them. Godoi, Flag-de-Mello and Silva (2012) complement the relevance of this technique for current situations, highlighting that life stories have privileged voices forgotten by official history. Guérios (2011) advances in this perception of contribution to complex issues, as he considers the technique a bridge between individual and collective history, enabling a social view of the phenomenon under study.

In this line, four professionals belonging to minoritized social groups, nominated by people who work with the theme of diversity promotion in specialized companies or consultancies, participated in the study. In order to maintain their identity confidential, the names that will appear in the reports are fictional and were attributed in honor of activists or scholars with important contributions to society regarding the theme of diversity and inclusion. The first interviewee will be called Marielle, the second, Helen, the third, Alexandre and the fourth, Jean.

Professionals listed for the study have their characteristics of age, management position, marital status, parenting, race, sexual orientation and current employer described in Chart 1.

CHART 1
Participant profiles

Fictitious Name	Age	Leadership	Marital Status	Children	Race	LGBTQIA+	Current Firm
Marielle	44	Yes	Married	2	Black	No	Large
Helen Keller	35	No	Married	1	White	No	Large
Alexandre	45	No	Married	5	White	No	Size Alerting
Jean	36	No	Married	1	Brown	Gay	Large

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The participants' data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which lasted 60 - 90 minutes. This data underwent processing following the systematic categorization model of communication content, which, according to Lakatos and Marconi (2021), leads to quantitative results when categorized in previously defined aspects. For Bardin (2021), the work organization stage aims to structure data considering non-selectivity, relevance, representativeness and congruence with the study, allowing the results found to be meaningful, whether quantitative or not.

The categories and subcategories were defined, considering the literature and the research problem (Chart 2).

CHART 2
Analysis categories and subcategories

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY
Micro (Personnel)	Academic Qualification
	Parental Support
	Mentoring
	Financial Resources
	Self-efficacy
Meso (Organizational)	Training Assistance
	Benefits Policy
	Leadership Receptivity
Macro (Institutional)	Stigma
	Leadership Bias
	Affirmative Action

Source: Research data.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Facilitators and barriers to career development in relation to the personal dimension

A relevant career variable that can act as a development limiter is self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981), and this reported by the first interviewee as a negatively impacted feature by aversive experiences of prejudice and racism experienced during the school period:

‘At school, no one heard me. My voice was muffled. I spoke so softly that no one listened to me. It was because I was so humiliated, so persecuted all the time that I wanted to be invisible. I struggled to be invisible. It is impossible for a black girl with frizzy hair, in a school that only has white children with straight hair, to become invisible [...]. So, I think the more I wanted to be invisible, the more the children noticed me and the more they massacred me’ (Report, Marielle).

Experiences in childhood that are evidence of aesthetic stereotypes, such as frizzy hair seen as ugly and straight hair seen as beautiful, according to Holvino (2008), refer to a typical form of maintaining conservative structures in power. This individual barrier reflects the institutional context in which a black is perceived.

On the other hand, Blustein et al. (2002) identify that parental support represents a strong influence on career decisions, especially at the outset. According to the authors, parents' participation in this process, both in stimulating career development and supporting planning and decision-making, may be important factors in achieving career satisfaction.

Helen demonstrates in her reports the absence of social resources that could support her in professional choices. She tells her story, successive comings and goings between living with her mother and stepfather, father and stepmother, grandparents and, at 16, with a boyfriend, all of whom weakened support in choosing a career at the beginning of her professional trajectory.

Jean also does not mention in his report strong parental support in his professional path, although they were one of the motivations to achieve his higher education diploma: "I said: guys, I also need to give this pride to my parents".

Marielle highlights family support as a point that favored her career trajectory. She enjoyed a close relationship with her parents, who had career capital (Chudzikowski & Mayrofer, 2011) to support her development process, and they welcomed her in situations of racism:

‘I kept on advancing. Very well educated academically, I became an executive. I was brought up for that. I remember sometimes my mother would say: ‘Come and help me wash the dishes’, but my father would intervene: ‘Of course not. The girl is studying, Let her study’ (Report, Marielle).

Alexandre enjoyed his mother’s pride, as, after twenty years away from the job market, passed a public entry contest to become a civil servant. He also reported his experiences with his father, who ran a micro-company repairing calculators and typewriters. They exercised an important support role in his vocational training and career choices:

‘I came to work with him a little, when I was small, when he was going to undertake maintenance in his companies. Sometimes, when I could, I went with him to helped with the maintenance. It was a good business in that period, but then, with the advent of computers, it ended up disappearing from the market’ (Report, Alexandre).

Marielle attended good schools in her childhood, studied at a first-line college in Brazil and went on an exchange program abroad, thus accumulating important cultural capital. This background allowed her to participate and be approved in a selection procedure for training to embark on her career based on talent. This interviewee continued her path of self-development by taking MBA courses and a master's degree in renowned educational institutions in Brazil, sometimes supported by corporate subsidy, sometimes at her own expense.

The other participants had less fluid cultural building, possibly due to a more restricted financial condition. Helen resumed her studies after an accident, completed high school and, after three years, was able to advance her further education in business administration. Her goal of working in a multinational, motivated her to go to university and to study English in a disciplined way. Alexandre graduated in Accounting and did not advance in his studies later. Jean took a little more time to complete his higher education and had the financial support of the companies where he worked to be a postgraduate and to study English. He believed the language could be a point of differentiation for opportunities in his career.

Marielle, until the beginning of her professional trajectory, had a privileged financial condition, which supported her in the development of cultural and social capital. After her

father's death, however, she had to rebuild economic capital from the cultural capital already acquired: “And it was a very complicated time. I was starting work. Overnight I stopped being a spoiled girl and become a householder” (Report, Marielle).

Jean declares that his delay in conquering higher education was due to economic conditions:

‘My father started helping me, but later could no longer help. Therefore, I got this first job until I went to university. I asked my teacher, who had an agency at the time, for a job, but even working there and without my father's help, I could not carry on with my studies’ (Report, Jean).

On the other hand, Alexandre reports the impact of the economic issue at the beginning of his professional training, and, in the interview, remembers something his father had said : “I can't afford university for all of you, so, if you want it, you will have to work to pay for it.” He also states that, in the current family configuration, himself, his current wife and five children, the financial issue also has an impact.

Helen, in turn, reports several experiences of a more restricted financial life, but at no time does she mention this point as an element that has generated a restriction to developing her career.

Chart 3 summarizes the individual aspects found in the history of each participant that can be considered facilitators of their trajectories towards fulfilling their professional dreams and goals described in their paths.

CHART 3
Personal Dimensions of Facilitators and Barriers

Participant	Personal Dimension			
	Academic Background	Family Support	Financial Resources	Self-efficacy
Marielle	Facilitator	Facilitator	Facilitator	Barrier
Helen	-	Barrier	Barrier	Facilitator
Jean	-	Facilitator	Barrier	-
Alexandre	-	Facilitator	Barrier	Barrier

Source: Research data.

4.2. The organizational dimension of facilitators and barriers to career development

Considering the organizations, two of the four interviewees' training courses were sponsored by the companies where they operated and understood that this support favored professional development, recognizing it as a good practice on the part of companies.

Helen., a disabled professional, declares as a barrier the lack of preparedness of leadership to welcome and deal with differences. She describes an episode in which she asked the manager to let her work from home one day because she had diarrhea. Her request was denied, even though she explained her difficulty in controlling her feces release muscle due to her paraplegia. Helen makes it clear that she does not want to be treated differently, but that her specific needs are observed whenever she cannot compete in a similar manner to her peers:

‘I want to be treated as equal in whatever respect I am the same. If I am asked to deliver something manually on the computer, I will be able to deliver just like any other colleague. There will be no problem. But when faced with peculiar situation, I will need different attention [...]’ (Report, Helen).

This speech is in line with what Santos (1999) proclaims, that equality needs to be defended whenever the difference generates inferiority, and difference needs to be defended whenever equality implies decharacterization of individuality.

Managers and mentors appear in the interviewees' reports. Several studies with professionals from minoritized groups mention mentors, that is, individuals who offer indirect support to overcome obstacles and give suggestions on how to be successful in their trajectory (Wyatt & Silvester, 2015).

Studies indicate that women with disabilities have less access to mentoring (Noonan et al., 2004). Helen reports that she had many people to support her, but regarding empowerment, she relied on herself.

Jean also declares that, in his career, there was a presence of important people who supported him in his development trajectory, including his former manager in the company from which he had resigned: “We created a very great friendship. She had excellent plans for me, but I decided to brave another world, and she supported me so much in this too” (Report, Jean).

Unlike the literature, which states low access to mentors by black people (Wyatt & Silvester, 2015), Marielle says she received support from several mentors, all white men: “Diego helps me so much. And it is also very sincere. [...]” (Report, Marielle). Such access seems to be explained by her high career capital.

Considering human resource policies, Jean's testimony reflects a barrier in the form of practices of unequal benefits. He experiences, for the second time in his professional career, as a man married to another man and father of a child, a difficulty in obtaining the day care benefit and employment of a nanny, only provided for women in human resources policy in his last two organizations: “[...] the question I asked was: '... and a homosexual couple, who will never have a female figure, what are they expected to do? Do not they really have the same right?’” (Report, Marielle).

Finally, Chart 4 summarizes the organizational aspects found in the history of each of these participants, ones that positively affected their trajectories toward professional dreams and goals, or required management strategies to be able to continue.

CHART 4
Organizational Dimension of Facilitators and Barriers

Participant	Organizational Dimension			
	Training Sponsorship	Benefit Policies	Acceptance by Leadership	Mentoring
Marielle	Facilitator	-	-	Facilitator
Helen	-	Facilitator	Barrier	-
Jean	Facilitator	Barrier	-	Facilitator
Alexandre	-	-	-	-

Source: Research data (2021)

4.3. Institutional dimension of facilitators and barriers to career development

Marielle considers the stigma of lesser value that black people suffer as a development barrier. Her feeling is corroborated by Gomes (2017), who points out that the self-image of blacks and the unfavorable social image was constructed during slavery and has been constantly reinforced ever since. Marielle describes how she understands how blacks are perceived and how it impacts her:

‘So, the labor market is actually a social cross-section, and in society we are not associated with anything good: we are not associated with intelligence, commitment, competence, innovation, good ideas, brilliance - none of these. So, when people look at you, they expect nothing more of you than mediocrity’ (Report, Marielle).

The authors Silva and Saraiva (2020) point out that “being black” is historically perceived as a negative phenomenon, with differences visibly triggered in the labor market, without being related, however, to racial issues.

The experience reported by the interviewee reinforces the exception pointed out by Holvino (2008), that this stereotype in the negative sense more strongly impacts the black and poor individual, since Marielle is part of the second generation of family members with higher education and resident in one of the most affluent districts of Sao Paulo city.

The interviewee says that the emotional stress caused by the constant struggle to break with this stigma and try to find space, challenging the constructed social norm and demarcation of reserved places, is very high: “You are in a meeting, people even understand that you went to the meeting to participate and contribute to the agenda, not to serve coffee or adjust the equipment [...] Wow, you have to prove yourself every day. It's so tiring” (Report, Marielle).

This delimitation of spaces in the job market can be further illustrated by the sad experience she underwent when invited to lead the diversity team in another company. All her academic and social background were disregarded: “Who are you to talk about this: a black woman has to be in the area of diversity.” Our struggle is precisely for us to be anywhere, in any function, in any position” (Report, Marielle).

Stigma is also evident as a barrier to career development according to the perception of the homosexual interviewed. Jean demonstrates concern regarding performing inappropriate behavior due to the image attributed to homosexuals: “[...] people may even like me, much of my work, but it is a little insecure, like: “I like Jean a lot, He works very well, but I am afraid of putting him in contact with a client. How will he behave?” (Report, Jean)

The low learning capacity stigma also plagues Alexandre, who is 45 years old and seeking a different profession:

‘You know this guy is already elderly. He will not have the stamina to cope with the rush of everyday life ', which sometimes companies have, but I think it is not so much around here. I think sometimes there are older people who put a new little boy into their pockets, playing in terms of their disposition, displaying vigor to do things’ (Report, Alexandre).

Jean also reports a recent change of organization due to the restriction of growth opportunity in the company where he used to work: “Then he went and promoted the other girl. Then I felt this a little: 'funny, Jean is very good, you are always talking very well of Jean [...] but not when it comes to promotion, but Jean to become coordinator, better not do it' [...]” (Report, Jean).

Helen reports, in her trajectory, situations in which she was not considered in a selection process after mentioning she moves around in a wheelchair. On this occasion, the interviewee's feeling was of prejudice against her condition.

With further regard to leadership, unconscious biases that often translate into actions and decisions, stigmas present in society were identified in various reports, such as organizational barriers.

Marielle experienced this barrier upon her return from maternity leave by not being considered to succeed her immediate superior, who had left the organization. She had been assessed as being a high-performance employee and ready to take this next step. In addition, she describes that, in the selection process in which she was approved, it was complex to participate in an interview in which the interviewer declared, before starting the conversation,

that he preferred a man and with qualifications different from hers: “When I entered the room, he said: ‘I wanted a male lawyer for this vacancy’” (Report, Marielle).

Jean also feels that he was not promoted by virtue of a leading bias: “Jean is very funny, a funny person who does everything, but when it comes to promotion, I will not promote him. Let’s keep him in his quiet corner” (Report, Jean).

So it is with Alexandre, who understands that much of his difficulty in being reallocated in the market is due to the managers' belief that his energy and commitment level may be low due to his age: “This guy is already elderly. Would he have the stamina?” (Report, Alexandre).

In Brazil, the Disabled Quotas Law (Law No. 8.213/91) states that companies with over 100 employees are obliged to have people with disabilities on their staff. This law is an important employment driver for the disabled, even in the face of all the low contribution stigma that surround such persons. Helen understands that this law has supported her in her professional career: “This is the first time I've been working due to the quota, but, before this, I worked at the wheelchair store, which was a somewhat positive point - a wheelchair user selling wheelchairs” (Report, Helen).

Chart 5 summarizes the institutional aspects found in the history of each participant, ones that somehow supported their quest to fulfil their dreams and ambitions, or hindered their attainment.

CHART 5
Institutional Facilitators and Barriers

Participant			
	Stigma	Leadership Bias	Affirmative Action
Marielle	Barrier	Barrier	-
Helen	Barrier	-	Facilitator
Jean	Barrier	Barrier	-
Alexandre	Barrier	Barrier	-

Source: Research data.

5. CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the implications of belonging to minoritized social groups, regarding the process of career entry and development through the experiences of four professionals, who bear one or more social markers. A black woman with social privilege, a woman with a disability, a 45-year-old white man and a homosexual black man were interviewed for this study.

Career aspects without boundaries were observed in some of the participants, although all encountered barriers to growth in their career trajectories due to these social markers. As a way of resisting and facing these situations, they used different strategies to achieve or, at least keep their career goals alive.

There was evidence among the participants of an unequal distribution of career resources that act as barriers to development and achievement of their professional objectives. This finding reiterates that the concept of agency, that is, the person as solely responsible for influencing and modeling his/her own destiny, may not be a reality in practice for those belonging to minoritized groups. Mobilization of resources to continue with planned trajectories, in some situations, did not generate the expected result, and culminated in switching professional dreams.

The study pointed out the stigma of one or multiple social markers as a common professional development barrier to all participants. At different times and career stages of the participants, they realized the impact of stigma on the construction of professional experiences. This stigma has been materialized sometimes as subtle prejudice, described by participants as a feeling of inferiority and a perception of something “strange”, or even more tangible elements of discrimination.

This result reinforces the importance of organizations to act strongly in reducing stigma in relation to these social markers, generating balanced opportunities for entry and growth for these professionals.

Assessing the individual factors that affected the professional development of these participants, low self-efficacy was identified as a limiting factor in Marielle's career construction, impacted by constant micro aggressions suffered mainly in childhood. Helen presents the economic issue as a barrier, which caused her to delay her education, plus the lack of support from her parents in her decisions. The economic issue also arises in Alexandre and Jean's trajectories in which they had to revisit their professional choices early in their careers.

Analyzing aspects that favored professional development, Marielle enjoyed a substantial support factor in the form of economic capital provided by her father, a black man, who had already ascended professionally, altering the economic and family context. Thus, opportunities were generated for her to undergo good training, participate in an exchange program abroad and in other cultural activities, all of which provided her a high level of employability. Additionally, she was also encouraged by her parents and mentors who successfully conducted her in her professional career. She also had access to training sponsorship, provided by the company in which she was engaged.

Regarding Helen, it is clear that the way she reacted to the accident that left her paraplegic made a lot of difference to her trajectory. Self-efficacy was aroused in her that drove her toward new, bolder career goals. Besides this attitude, she made use of government benefits for people with disabilities, investing them in her vocational training. Furthermore, the quota law, to some extent, as an affirmative action, was important for her entry to the multinational in which she currently works.

Jean and Alexandre managed to take advantage of the social networks they had built and their access to people who realized their potential from some attitude and/or behavior they had presented. These contacts somehow supported their entry into the labor market or higher positions. Jean also managed to obtain support for academic training in one of the companies he worked for.

From the perspective of corporate action that supported the professional and career development process, participants highlighted educational subsidies as an important factor for valorization and growth of professionals, despite some economic challenges most of them presented. In addition, participants showed that investing in the formation of a more inclusive, more aware leadership, conscious of the bias in relation to social markers, was fundamental for building a psychologically secure environment that would support the development of these people. Another element suggested was a mentoring program, which also needs to be accompanied by training regarding bias in order to expand the impact of this tool on professionals belonging to these groups.

Also noteworthy is the role of the human resources area as an agent of transformation in this area, capable of leveraging the results by acting in culture, leadership development programs, definition of evaluation models, incentives, recruitment action, selection, integration and training of professionals.

From a practical perspective, the study shed light on corporate action, and, as a contribution to theory, the study deepened the approach to barriers and facilitators common to

people who have different social markers and specific aspects. However, there are some limitations to study opportunities for further research.

As for limitations, one aspect to be understood is the matter of one the researchers being a member of a minoritized group, in this case, a black woman. Another study limitation was that only one person was interviewed for a particular social marker.

In this sense, expanding the research to a larger sample of professionals belonging to each social marker could further highlight the barriers and the repertoire utilized to exceed them. Moreover, conducting analyses of Bourdieu's most critical perspective (1998) could expand on the results and strategies minoritized professionals use to achieve their career goals.

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