Effective Strategies for Achieving Gender and Race Equity in the Workplace

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1. Introduction

Throughout the semester, we have been analyzing the ways that gender and race affect the work environment. Today, we will describe a comprehensive model that can effectively design strategies aimed at achieving gender and race equity in the workplace. The model can be implemented across two specific areas of workplace-related policy, and will provide both an initial assessment and a final assessment of the potential policy plan. We will consequently apply our model to two case studies, namely, childcare and affirmative action.

2. Methodology

We have formulated a methodology that provides an analytical guide to developing effective strategies to achieve gender and race equity. Our schematic incorporates the many layers of consideration that are needed for policy development. It also accounts for the complex social and political interactions that affect policy development. Through this structured framework, one can easily begin to assess key factors in creating effective policy.

2.1 Development of Model

Our model was developed using the principles and ideas that we have learned throughout the semester. Using a gendered and racial method of analysis, we focused on the key social components and political bodies that effect policy development. We worked to create a methodology that looked at the development of policy systematically, however, bearing in the mind the complex institutional and community interaction that occur on every level.

2.2 Major Goals

- Account for the complex social and political frameworks that exist in the
 United States in which all policy must be incorporated
- Analyze the interconnections between race, gender, and class
- Consider the complex layers of identity
- Create a structure that addresses needs while also maintaining a sense of practicality
- Design a model that was self-checking
- Illustrate the multitude of considerations that must be made before policy can be developed
- Design a model that allows for versatility

2.3 Use of Model

The model only provides a framework to establishing effective policy. Although we were unable to incorporate every consideration necessary, we included in our schematic the most salient and important points of consideration for policy development. However, we realize when creating and implementing actual policy many additional concerns may arise.

2.3.1 Definition of Terminology

<u>Identification of Population Groups</u>: directly versus indirectly affected populations. It may be difficulty to separate groups into indirectly and directly affected populations because to some capacity all the population is in some way affected by work related legislations. However, it is important to the identify target groups. We define directly affected populations to be those individuals that

experience the most direct and immediate affect of implementation of proposed legislation and/or work related policy. Indirectly affected populations also have a stake in a proposed initiative, however, the effects can be considered periphery and beyond the direct scope of the developing policy.

Hybrid Populations versus Single Demographic Populations:

We define the hybrid populations to be groups and/or individuals that are affected in multiple ways as a result of their demographics. This category takes into account the complexity of identity and the many ways an individual may be impacted by their racial or gender classification. Single demographic populations are related to the issue by only one of their demographic classifications.

Social Ideologies: assessing if major goals are in agreement or disagreement

We define social ideologies to be the current value and ideas held by a society. Its important to consider this when developing policies that will work within the framework of these ideologies

Assessing conflicting goals: Ideological versus Pragmatic Differences

We define ideological differences to be conflicts that emerge from fundamentally different ideas. In contrast, pragmatic differences are based primarily and logistics and with positive mediation and compromise between the parties these issues can be resolved.

Assimilation Strategies:

Assimilation strategies are methods used to tailor the proposed policy, or give off the appearance of tailoring, so that it no longer conflicts with social ideologies.

3. Childcare

Childcare is an important policy issue because it affects many people. More and more women are entering the workforce today, and quality and affordable childcare is needed for their children. Children require good childcare for educational and childhood development. In addition, childcare can be potentially used to promote the workforce development of childcare and early education providers. This sector currently experiences high turnover, resulting in poorer care for children.

3.1 Background

In the United States, there are conflicting ideologies towards the role of women that have a dramatic effect on the value of childcare. On one hand, women are encouraged to enter the workforce. In today's economy, the presence of a dual-income earning couple is in many cases necessary. However, more traditional ideologies state that the women's role is in the home. Emphasis is placed on the idea of raising children at home, at least in the critically young years. Other sources of conflict come from the debate over the value of early education on child development and effective ways to invest in children. In order to secure the success of our nation, more attention and more value must be placed on children. There have been several state and federal initiatives in recent years to address this issue, and are presented here in summary. They serve as examples and precedence to our propose strategy for universal childcare.

3.1.1 State Initiatives

Table 1: Childcare Initiatives by Several States

State	Initiative Description
Florida	Voters passed a constitutional amendment on Election Day 2002 to provide state-funded, universal, voluntary pre-kindergarten programs for all four-year-olds by 2005.
Georgia	In 1995, Georgia began to offer publicly-funded universal pre- kindergarten to all four-year-olds thanks to the leadership of former Governor Zell Miller and revenues from the state lottery.
Massachusetts	The Act Establishing Early Education for All was drafted and filed on December 4, 2002. This legislation proposes to improve early childhood education for preschool and kindergarten children and to promote work force development of early education and childcare providers.
New Jersey	In 1998, New Jersey was the first state in the nation in which the courts decided, in the landmark Abbott V. Burke decisions, that educationally "at-risk" children are entitled to a "well-planned, high-quality" early education under the state constitution.
New York	New York established a Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program through landmark legislation authored by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver in 1997.
Oklahoma	Oklahoma legislators enacted a universal pre-kindergarten program in 1998 by financing it as part of the K-12 funding formula.

3.1.2 Federal Programs and Funding Level

Table 2: Federal Childcare Programs

Federal	Program Description	
Program		
Child Care	CCDBG, passed in 1990, was merged with child care funding for	
Development	families receiving welfare as part of the 1996 welfare law. With a 199	
Block Grant	ock Grant funding level of \$1.2 billion, it is the primary federal child care program	
(CCDBG)	for low-income families. States must spend at least four percent of their	

	CCDBG funding on child care quality and providers receiving CCDBG funds, except for certain relatives, must meet required health and safety standards. The program also provides funding for early childhood development and before- and after-school child care services.
Title XX/Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)	Title XX of the Social Security Act supports a broad range of social services, including child care. In FY 1997, the latest year for which data are available, about \$300 million out of the program's \$2.4 billion in total spending was used to support child care. The program's total funding has been cutback in recent years, dropping to \$1.909 billion in FY 1999.
Head Start	Created in 1965, Head Start helps prepare low-income children to enter school. It provides comprehensive services including education, nutrition, health and social services during part of the day for most recipients. A number of local Head Start programs are coordinated with other services to provide all-day care. Head Start received \$4.6 billion in funding in FY 1999 and served over 800,000 children.
21st Century Community Learning Centers	This program provides funding to help schools stay open longer, provide recreational and learning-based activities, and generally provide a safe place for children after school. Funds are distributed in the form of grants to inner city and rural public schools. The program, funded at \$200 million in FY99, may involve community organizations and independent service providers.
Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC)	The dependent care tax credit provides tax relief to tax payers with children under the age of 13 to offset some of the cost of child care. The tax credit can be used to offset up to 30 percent of child care expenses up to \$2,400 per year for a family with one child and up to \$4,800 per year for a family with two or more children. The credit is income-based but most poor families gain nothing from this program since the tax credit is not refundable. About half the states have dependent care state tax credits. The estimated FY 1997 cost of the tax credit is \$2.7 billion."

3.2 Strategy Development

3.2.1 Problem Identification

The importance of child-care in the child's development is not yet well understood. While research shows that it eventually enhances an individual's cognitive, analytic, and social-integration skills, the results are not concrete. This is due to the fact

that it takes too long for the results to be observed, and one cannot pinpoint with certainty whether it was the individual's early child-care that contributed to his or her adulthood "self," or whether it was his or her other experiences growing up. In addition, U.S. society's ideologies and the government's agenda do not tend to place much emphasis on child-care, reflected in the fact that funding is often scarce, and in professional caregivers' salaries who often opt to change fields as a consequence. The government identifies the home as the primary entity in which children should be ranged. Furthermore, quality child-care is often very expensive. A final ingredient in this chaotic problem is that society ideologies tend to dictate that women should be the nurturers. This adds another complication because women now feel that they cannot grow in their career. Even if they leave work for a couple of years to take care of their child, when they return to the workforce, they find themselves in lagging behind their colleagues in their growth, and as a result often feel out-of-place and some consequently leave the work-force altogether or choose never to enter. The problem is even further complicated by the fact that there are single-mothers that can neither afford to send their children to centers, nor afford to stay at home to take-care of the child.

In this part of the paper we shall try to identify the major players and their interrelationship following the framework model presented earlier in this paper.

3.2.2 Directly Involved Parties and Their Goals

Who is directly affected by child-care policies? First and foremost, it is the children themselves. According to research, quality child-care is essential for the healthy development of the child. In contrast to many other policies in society, the direct party (children) does not have their own representative from their parties' group. Children

unknowingly rely on their parents (and primarily their mothers) to fight for their needs and rights. In their turn, the parents, with today's challenging economic demands, face major challenges in balancing their work-family responsibilities, thus possibly jeopardizing the child's development if they do not send them to a quality care-center. In comparison to other countries like France, the government plays a small direct role in familial issues. For this reason, government is considered as an indirectly affected party in the child-care problem facing today's society.

3.2.3 Indirectly Involved Parties and their Goals

1. The Government

The government (and state legislators) is one of the major affected indirect parties primarily because it is the largest source of funding for childcare. Ideally, its interests lie in the fact that quality child-care could potentially lead to a "better" society and stronger economy by shaping its youth. Unfortunately, the extent to which they are willing to pay is limited by the political system. Many legislators are in office for a limited period of time, sometimes only two years, making such a long-term investment such as child-care not high on their political agenda.

2. Employers/Business

The employers are directly affected because child-rearing requires the cessation of their employees' jobs for a temporary period of time. Investments in recruiting new employees and training them from scratch to replace their old-employees have major economic and time consequences for them. From a cost-benefit analysis, in these cases it may be more cost-effective to provide paid-leave

or child-care. Also, can argue that they might have a slight interest in child-care because they will make up their future workforce; however, this is a weak argument due to the corporate attitude of gaining money "now."

3. Child-Care Providers

Child-care providers are indirectly affected by child-care policies because their salaries and worth depend on them. Most professional child-care providers undoubtedly have the child's well being in mind; however, if the salaries are low and growth opportunities are minimal, they will seek better opportunities elsewhere.

3.2.4 Direct & Indirect Goals: Do they Match Up?

Table 3 shows the supporting and conflicting goals of each of the parties. Notice that two parties can have both supporting and conflicting goals depending on the "role" they assume.

Table 3: Conflicting and Conforming Roles of Parties

Supporting	Conflicting
Parents as a "role" and child development	Parents as "workers" and child
	development
Care-providers as a "profession" and child	Employers' employee retain-age and child
development	development
Government as "shaper" of society and	Government funding and child
child development	development

3.3. Initial Assessment

Following the conflicting-supporting analysis summarized in the table, many defining questions arise that will serve as guidelines for the strategy of informing the policy. The first one is the Parent-Government balance as to how much responsibility should each assume and which parent is responsible. Related questions that arise are: How much funding do child-care providers deserve? How much are they valued (comparable worth to society)? From the employers' point of view: should they care and why should they care? While the answers to these questions are obvious on the individual level, they are often indirectly answered (often in a seemingly contradictory fashion) in the society's nation ideologies.

6. Society's Ideologies

Popular belief holds that if financially possible, children should be raised at home by the mother, thus indirectly answering the first two questions posed in the previous section. For low-income families, popular belief looks down on government reliance, reflecting the view that family matters are not state matters in the society. At the same time, (quite contradictorily), modern belief is tending toward the ideology that women should be allowed to work and grow as individuals in an equal society.

7. Strategies

With this in mind, the main problem when formulating good child-care policies boils down to primarily awareness, or lack of it for that matter. It seems that each of the directly and indirectly involved parties are unaware of the benefits that good child-care policy could potentially bring to them. The question of changing societal ideologies is unfortunately an extremely challenging endeavor leading to a dead end, as is clearly seen in policies concerning other issues. One place to start is to investigate success stories

elsewhere, particularly France. The success of good child-care policies in France was in our opinion due to four major points:

- 1 The country as a whole was affected by the declining birth rates, reflected in their weakening economy (compared to their European neighbors). Child-care issues were therefore a national concern.
- 2 France is viewed as "La Patrie," (fatherhood figure who typically does concern itself with family issues).
- 3 The quality free-education system that it prides itself with.
- 4 Societal views on work differ considerably from the US.

We should therefore somehow portray the child-care problem as a matter that concerns the whole nation, and that <u>childcare is a right</u>. One way to achieve this is to market child-care as an educational issue rather than a baby-sitting associated job. We should initiate awareness programs through respectable research or otherwise targeting politically and economically influential people who have experienced the drawbacks of having poor child-care policies. The question of whether it should be targeted or universal is a challenging one. Each has its pros and cons in this case.

The concerned working population is already targeted: working parents. But how do we deal with the fact that society's ideologies dictate that the mother should be at home nurturing and taking-care of the child, especially at the infant stages? How will other non-parents react if they see their colleagues so much so-called "leave-time" (while in fact they're working the second-shift?

In a universal law, how do you ensure that productivity is not affected? How do you account for all the absences and the required investments into the training and recruiting of new personnel?

The answers to these questions depend on the time of action, the political figures on our side, but they are in conclusion extremely challenging in this case.

4. Affirmative Action

4.1 Background

Affirmative action remains one of the most misunderstood and controversial political philosophies throughout the world. Conservatives and liberals alike recognize that injustices inherent to many political systems have affected the economic and social progress of discriminated groups. However, the debate remains whether the state should employ policies that attempt to redress the wrongs of the past, even if these policies may be inherently discriminatory.

The end of the Civil War in 1865 ushered in a new era of American History, characterized by a tumultuous battle for equality that continues to this day. The passage of the 13th and 14th amendment outlawed slavery and prevented discrimination based on race. In response to these legislations, southern states passed "Jim Crow Laws," mandating the use of separate facilities for whites and colored people. *Plessey v Ferguson* (1896) upheld the legality of "separate but equal," furthering discriminatory policies against African Americans. It was not until *Brown v Board of Education* (1954), nearly 60 years after *Plessey*, that the government overturned the separate but equal practice.

The court claimed that requiring individuals to use separate facilities was "inherently unequal" and served to perpetuate the dehumanized condition of African Americans.

In upholding *Plessey* the United States was responsible for government-sponsored discrimination. Affirmative action was initially intended as compensation for this and other government imposed limitations on the liberties and opportunities of African Americans. In 1961, President Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925, mandating that federal contractors take "affirmative action to ensure that applicants are treated equally without regard to race, color, religion, sex or national origin." This trend of enacting policies based on racial preferences continued throughout several of the succeeding presidencies. However the effects of these policies were restricted to the public sector.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 broadened the scope of preferential treatment policies to the private sector and reinforced the legality of affirmative action. The expansion of affirmative action has changed work policies, hiring practices, and university admission throughout the country. Affirmative action enacted in the 1960s to compensate for government discriminatory practices has developed into one of the most controversial and politically charged policy movements. Misinformation of the public and the rampancy of political propaganda have resulted in many conflicting and misguided perceptions of what constitutes affirmative action in the United States. Affirmative action has been strongly linked with reservation systems and quotas. However, in the United States this is strictly forbidden. The Supreme Court upholds the necessity for affirmative action in order to achieve racial equity. Nevertheless, limitations continue to be placed on affirmative action policies in the United States.

4.2 Strategy Development

Like the childcare policy issue, we applied our problem-solving model to determine the most effective strategy for addressing the complex issue of affirmative action. The model involved taking a large number of steps and paths through affected parties, potential goals, and initial assessments to reach our final assessment and establish the ultimate potential solutions. Affirmative action is an especially difficult issue to combat because of the large number and variety of parties involved, all with their own primary and secondary goals.

4.2.1 Problem Identification

As stated earlier, affirmative action remains as one of the most complex and misunderstood issues in the United States today. Whether preferential treatment should be given to one group of people is a highly contentious topic, especially in the United States where the Constitution is based on the ideology of equal rights for all. This is indeed where people would argue the need for affirmative action comes into play, since for hundreds of years prior to the end of slavery were a group of people in the country systematically and deliberately humiliated and oppressed.

4.2.2 Directly Involved Parties and Their Goals

Parties that are directly involved with the issue, solution, and implementation of affirmative action strategies are the minority groups in the U.S., namely Blacks, Latinos, and Asians. Some may not consider Asians in this grouping, as they are not always an underrepresented minority, but when dealing with diversity issues in the workplace, they do indeed become an affected party. Both men and women minorities are part of this classification. From this mixture, obviously, one can find a number of hybrid or mixed parties – Black women, Hispanic men, and so on.

Despite the number of hybrid and overlapping parties, all share one basic underlying goal: to achieve a diversity of population in the schools and workplace. They would like to see a larger number of minorities have the opportunity and means to be educated and successful in the country today.

4.2.3 Indirectly Involved Parties and their Goals

1. Government

The government, as with virtually any issue, is a major indirectly affected party in policy-making. Affirmative action policies – or the lack of them – are dictated in much part to schools and businesses by the government, as shown by policy previously implemented like Title VII of the Civil Rights Act or the creation of the Fair Employment Practices Committee under President Franklin Roosevelt. In creating policy, the government seeks to address the discriminatory wrongdoings of the past and increase diversity in the workforce. In creating a more diverse workforce, the government will be able to better meet the needs of the increasingly diverse demographic of the United States.

2. Schools

Educational institutions are also a significant indirectly affected population in creating affirmative action policy. They too are in support of creating a diverse environment; the widespread belief is that diversity contributes to the university setting and positively enriches the learning experience. Most universities practice some form of affirmative action or another, but recently, under the risk of discrimination lawsuits, some

schools have dissolved all affirmative action policies, including the University of California and the University of Texas. However, they remain as a major player in the battle over appropriate affirmative action policy.

3. Businesses/Employers

Businesses have a rooting interest in affirmative action policy because of the need for diversity in the workplace. They must also comply with governmental regulation in not practicing discrimination, as outlined in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which makes it unlawful to hire or discharge an employee based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Private business enterprises can also adopt their own set of affirmative action policies to increase diversity in the workplace.

4. White Men

White men comprise an influential party that is indirectly affected by affirmative action policies. They are against any policy of preferential treatment policies, arguing that affirmative action policies thus far have resulted in a form of reverse discrimination. They are most concerned with preserving the perception of equal opportunity in the U.S., and perhaps even with maintaining their dominance in the workforce.

4.2.4 Direct & Indirect Goals: Do They Converge?

Upon examination of the goals of the direct and indirect parties, we find that most of the parties agree on the idea of promoting diversity in the workforce and in the schools. With the exception of white men, the directly affected population of minority

men and women as well as all the other indirectly affected parties choose to address the issue of diversity through some form of preferential treatment. The general class of white men does not share this similar goal because they see affirmative action as reverse discrimination, and they may also question the concept of diversity as a positive addition to the workplace or educational institutions.

4.3 Initial Assessment

Because some of the goals of the affected parties do not match, we must consider the converging and conflicting ideas separately. The goals do not coincide primarily because some parties see the issue as a need, and some as a right. The minority population, as well as government, educational institutions, and employers, see anti-discrimination as a right. Everyone is entitled to equal education and employment, and must have the same opportunities to succeed in these fields. However, the general class of white men sees equal representation and diversity as a need, and therefore as an issue that does not necessarily need to be addressed through preferential treatment.

Next, we must consider why these goals diverge. The conflict of goals is essentially ideological and deals with whether diversity is truly necessary in the success and effectiveness of a school or business organization. We must approach this issue from this ideological standpoint, and determine the importance of diversity in these work settings.

To resolve the conflict between the goals of the minority groups and of the general class of white men, we must look at the secondary, underlying goals of each group. From this, we determine that all these groups share a common goal of wanting to be productive and successful members of society. These minority groups are not only a

social class, but an economically important class as well, and are just as entitled to good educational and business institutions to contribute to the U.S's economy as majority groups. For instance, at the very least, a black doctor is needed for the black community, and therefore should have the opportunity to attend a good medical school. While this common secondary goal is not the basis of our argument for affirmative action, it provides a standing point upon which we can market our strategy to the public.

4.4 Societal Ideologies

Whether the major goals of the affected parties coincide from the beginning or whether they conflict and need to be resolved by looking at secondary goals, we must also consider societal ideologies – do the ideas of the majority of today's society match the goals being pursued by the affected parties? We conclude that on some level, these ideologies do not match. The benefits of diversity in the workplace and in schools is not something that has been officially or scientifically established; many people – including white men – doubt whether diversity truly enhances the workplace and are therefore reluctant to pursue any strategy that increases diversity in this setting through preferential treatment.

How, then, can we align these perceived ideologies with the goals that affirmative actions supporters are trying to achieve? The three potential solutions that we came up with were as follows:

1. Long-term social movement: This would involve people changing their fundamental views on the issue of diversity, so that the vast majority of Americans first realize it is a problem in this country, and then work towards promoting and encouraging practices that achieve diversity goals. This

solution to help align societal goals is obviously one that would play out over a long period of time, but may become more prevalent as globalization penetrates everywhere.

- 2. "Hidden" legislation: This method is actually practiced fairly commonly in order to get something passed quickly and without much room for discussion.
 A law could be passed that incorporates the diversity initiatives for minorities, but attached to another more important law in the form of "pork barrel."
- 3. Scientific proof: If comprehensive, reliable scientific data could be obtained on the benefits of diversity in the workplace and in schools, perhaps opposition to affirmative action would be convinced of the need for diversity. This would lead to a realigning of societal ideologies through scientific studies.

4.5 Final Assessment

Taking all these factors into consideration, we can now determine the type of policy we want to implement regarding affirmative action. Clearly, in order to promote diversity in work settings, a targeted policy is needed. This targeted policy will define affirmative action policy as a long-term policy plan, and will create initiatives that address early developmental deficits, like education, childcare, and healthcare. Thus, the realm of affirmative actions extends far beyond making policy in the later stages, in universities and in businesses, to the very beginning period of a minority's experience. This strategy also recognizes that minority groups are not only a social class, but an

economic class, thus helping to broaden the scope of affirmative action policy to influence other policy-making.

The implementation of these policies would be government-based. Businesses and companies may be held accountable for their actions through displaying a public record of their hiring practices. In addition, comprehensive studies on diversity may be conducted in these organizations to observe the effects of diversity on the work setting.

4.6 Weaknesses of Analysis

Several assumptions are made as we use this strategy to approach the issue of affirmative action. First, we are assuming that both government and business and genuinely concerned with providing equal opportunity to all. Also, we are assuming that the rest of society even recognizes diversity as an issue, and is interested in taking a stance on it. It may also be extremely difficult to enforce certain policies regarding preferential treatment; loopholes will always exist which some businesses and schools will take advantage of. Finally, funding of any of these policies will be of utmost importance to the government and to tax payers, which is an issue we have entirely ignored.

5. Conclusion

Developing an all-encompassing model to solve public policy issues is a daunting and probably unattainable task. However, frameworks such as the one developed in this paper allows for a systematic identification of all the components and interrelationships between the parties and factors that affect policy. A well-developed identification allows for an effective marketing strategy, while simultaneously taking all parties involved into consideration. Implementing the model through childcare and affirmative action

highlights the complexities and challenges that come about as we apply our model to actual policy-making.

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