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Embracing our multiple identities to transform organizations and societies

Lakshmi Ramarajan
lramarajan@hbs.edu

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While the notion that people are guided by a single, salient identity at a time has been predominant in theory and in practice, recent changes in organizations and societies today make multiple identities important and salient for individuals. Drawing and building on identity and feminist theories, in this thought paper I synthesize some of my own attempts to describe and understand how multiple identities are experienced in various contexts and their effects. I take a multiple identities lens to shed light on how societal status hierarchies, gender stereotypes and organizational contexts, can shape our sense of ourselves as belonging to multiple social groups. I also describe how people's experience of themselves as member of multiple groups and roles has important consequences for themselves and others, and for how they enact their work roles in the context of understudied organizations aiming to transform society.