IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY STRATEGIES:
THE CHALLENGES FACING MINORITY FOCUSED ADVERTISING AGENCIES

Census data show that the proportion of minorities in the Canadian and American populations will continue to increase. For marketers, minority segments can represent tremendous buying power, especially in Canada where much of the population growth is fuelled by immigration in the skilled worker category (Statistics Canada, 2002). The lack of representation of minorities in advertising represents an unexploited opportunity for business organizations, especially since research shows that minorities prefer to be ‘spoken to’ through messages that are culturally congruent (Lee, Fernandez and Martin, 2002). In highly competitive markets, a strategy which directs some of the companies’ resources to directly targeting these minorities with culturally congruent approaches can result in market share and profit margin increases.

Advertising agencies have a critical impact on the kind of advertising reaching the marketplace. Given the scope of the opportunity presented by the growth of minorities and their spending power, it is surprising that so few advertising agencies position themselves as specialists in reaching these segments. Institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) and Economic Detour Theory (Stuart, 1940) provide explanations for the slow pace of change thus far in marketers’ attempts to reflect the demographic landscape. Several barriers exist for advertising agencies that do attempt to differentiate themselves, ranging from structural barriers and discriminatory barriers to more process-oriented barriers embedded in the selection mechanisms employed by advertisers choosing an ad agency.

The Rational Goal Model (Price, 1972; De Lancer Julnes and Holzer, 2001) suggests that these barriers can be overcome and change can be effected if the outcome of the change is shown to contribute to organizational objectives. The idea that diversity can contribute to organizational objectives has been demonstrated by Thomas and Ely (1996) who note that matching employee and customer demographics can bring added value to the firm and that further benefits can accrue when diversity is viewed as an opportunity for organizational learning. The emerging pluralist paradigm can contribute to effectiveness (Thomas & Ely, 1996) and therefore represents a rational goal for organizations pursuing market success. To effectively incorporate diversity, however, a paradigm shift needs to occur in advertising agencies and their client organizations. Further, the processes employed to select agencies need to be modified to include criteria specific to minority targets.

The growing population of minorities in many advanced market economies creates opportunities for proactive advertisers to increase market share. At the same time, it creates new business opportunities for advertising agencies that specialize in minority markets. Since these advertising agencies are often staffed by minority group members and often employ minority group members as spokespersons and in other visible roles, advertising that targets minority consumers should enhance minority employment opportunities. Further given the reach and cultural influence of advertising, advertising which better reflects the diversity of the population may help to support the integration of minorities into the multicultural matrix.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE TRANSITIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATION AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Within the framework of career and adult development theories, I investigate traditional career trajectories and cultural age norms that serve as barriers for women striving to advance within organizations. In light of impending labour shortages, organizations need to maximize existing human resources. My focus is midlife women; an often overlooked and under-utilized group.

Organizations continuously strive to maximize efforts in terms of the recruitment, development and retention of organizational members. This is especially true in organizations that are looking to: increase workforce diversity; resolve impending labour shortages; and maximize their return on investment in human resources in an environment of increasing competition for talent. Finding innovative ways to address these challenges is an ongoing concern for organizations. For close to three decades, women have established themselves as permanent contributors to organizations yet continue to be under-represented in strategic positions. In light of impending labour shortages resulting from the retirement of older workers and fewer younger workers to replace them, organizations need to maximize existing human resources. However, traditional career trajectories and cultural age norms serve as barriers for women striving to advance within organizations. This is particularly relevant for organizations that invest in programs targeting women. The responsible organization is one that recognizes the complexities of women’s life course that influence career choice and path, and seeks to find ways for women to realize their career goals and potential.

In this article, I investigate these organizational issues within the framework of career and adult development theories. I suggest that career theory is gendered and thereby has traditionally neglected factors that influence a woman’s career development. Incorporating adult development theory, which too has historically gendered roots, reveals neglected factors that provide a broader perspective of women’s careers that are relevant to recruitment, development and retention. A note to the reader; although my article looks at women and career, it is by no means generalizable to the experiences of all women, however, I believe that this discussion will lead to further inclusive and diverse perspectives. For this investigation, my unit of analysis is midlife women and for three reasons. First, midlife women represent the first generation of women who have, in general, taken for granted that they will have a career or at least engage in some kind of paid work outside the home. Second, midlife women are part of the senior population of organizational members who are often under-utilized and/or overlooked as a resource of skilled talent. Third, midlife women represent a potentially untapped resource at a time when organizations are seeking solutions to an impending labour shortage.

I begin with an overview of career theory and two current career models, and describe how women’s careers have been neglected. Next I review adult development theory, focusing on life course transitions that impact career. This is especially relevant to organizations as the largest socio-demographic cohort in history is firmly established in midlife – a period characterized with a complex interplay of roles and personal reflection. Then I present the construct of age norms as a barrier to the advancement of midlife employees, in general, and midlife women, specifically. Finally, I discuss the responsibilities of the organization in terms of the career development and advancement of midlife women. Within these
frameworks, I present midlife women as an untapped resource of skilled talent and the potential contribution they have to make to organizations.
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWER'S ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: ROLE OF LEADER’S GENDER

This experimental study investigated the impact of leader's gender on transformational leadership and follower's organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative). The following hypotheses were tested.

**Hypothesis 1.** The presence of both masculine and feminine traits in the leader enhances transformational leadership and follower’s organizational commitment.

**Hypothesis 2.** The presence of both masculine and feminine traits in the leader enhances the effect of transformational leadership on follower’s organizational commitment.

The sample consisted of 84 managers of a manufacturing company in eastern India. Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 2 (femininity: yes or no) x 2 (masculinity: yes or no) experimental design. They took part in an exercise intended to find out ways and means to improve the quality of work-life. They were asked to divide themselves into teams comprising four members each. Participants were then told that for the purpose of the exercise, they were to assume the role of employees of a company. The actor was then introduced to them as the CEO of the company. The CEO exhibited femininity and masculinity as required by the design.

To measure transformational leadership, the most popular instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 1995) was used. To measure organizational commitment, Meyer, Allen, and Smith's (1993) questionnaire was used. We did a 2 x 2 analysis of variance of transformational leadership and organizational commitment across the feminine and masculine cells. There was a significant main effect of femininity on inspirational motivation (F = 5.53, p < .05). However, contrary to what we hypothesized, inspirational motivation was significantly lower when the leader was feminine (M = 2.80) than when the leader was not feminine (M = 3.24). There was a significant main effect of masculinity on normative commitment (F = 4.17, p < .05). Follower’s normative commitment was significantly higher when the leader was masculine (M = 5.39) than when the leader was not masculine (M = 4.91). There was a significant interactive effect of femininity and masculinity on continuance commitment (F = 5.38, p < .05). Follower’s continuance commitment was significantly higher when the leader was androgynous (both feminine and masculine) than when the leader was only feminine or masculine. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported only in the case of continuance commitment. To test our Hypothesis 2 that the effect of transformational leadership on commitment varies by gender, we did regression analyses with commitment as dependent variable and transformational leadership, cell
number, and the product of transformational leadership and cell number as independent variables. In the case of continuance commitment, the t-value of the product term was 2.71 (p < .01). The effect of transformational leadership on continuance commitment varied significantly across the four cells. The relationship was negative for the feminine leader (r = -0.54, p < .01) and positive for the androgynous leader (r = 0.49, p < .05). This provides some support for our Hypothesis 2. Transformational leadership enhanced affective commitment only for the masculine leader (r = 0.53, p < .05).
This paper examines the work experiences of visible minority immigrant employees in corporate Canada. Data used in this paper was collected via an online survey that focused on career advancement of visible minorities in the workplace. Over 17,000 managers, professionals and executives in 43 Canadian FP500 organizations and top Canadian law firms responded to the on-line survey. The survey, conducted between October 2006 and February 2007, contain questions that explore the career experiences of these employees and include both objective indicators including their earnings and organizational rank; and subjective perceptions of career satisfaction. About 26% of the respondents self-identified as members of various visible minority groups and a similar proportion indicated that they were born outside of Canada.

Analyses showed that visible minority immigrant women are most disadvantaged in terms of earnings, organizational rank, and career satisfaction. This suggests that visible minority immigrant women face a ‘triple jeopardy’ in terms of ‘making it’ in corporate Canada. Findings showed that visible minority immigrant women with the same educational level and same years of service in their current organizations earned significantly less and stayed at lower organizational rank than their counterparts. Even within the same organizational rank, visible minority immigrant women still earned less than those who were not. Compared to native born white males, visible minority immigrant men and women were less satisfied with their careers. In addition, immigrants with foreign educational credentials were also less satisfied with their careers in their organizations. While women reported higher level of career satisfaction, their earnings were lower and they also occupied positions in the lower organizational ranks than men. This finding suggests differential treatment in terms of gender, race and immigrant status in corporate Canada.

The perspective of intersections of diversity provides an understanding of how the various forms of social marginality based on gender, ethnicity, and immigration status constitute a system of mutually overlapping oppression. The structural exclusion explains social inequalities in the labour market establishment and limited opportunity of career development for visible minority immigrants. The two frameworks combined together to explain the effects of multiple barriers facing this particular group and challenges the systemic social inclusion for marginalized members of our Canadian society. They allow us to comprehend how earnings, career progression and perception of career satisfaction are racialized and gendered in an interlocking system and translated into a series of issues of differential employment outcomes and exclusion.

The findings suggest that corporate Canada has not maximizing the benefit of labour force diversity created by the influx of skilled visible minority immigrants. A better understanding of the underlying issues will increase the ability of corporate decision-makers in creating inclusive workplaces where all employees, irrespective of gender, ethnicity and immigrant status can thrive.