Intercultural Leadership: Variations in Chinese Canadian Perspectives of Career Mobility into Senior Leadership Roles

by

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COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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Abstract

This dissertation delves into the social issue of equity representation of visible minorities, specifically Chinese Canadians, in leadership roles. This qualitative study investigated the career experiences and perspectives of Chinese Canadians working in a large financial institution in Toronto, Ontario and Vancouver, British Columbia. This research goes beyond the paradigm of employment equity to explore bicultural identity within an organizational context and to critically investigate power structures that determine senior leadership roles. The study relied on a blended methodology of social scientific quantitative measures and phenomenography. The process included the use of demographic questionnaires, acculturation measurement scale instrumentation, and qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that, within this large financial institution, bicultural leaders are not ascending to senior leadership roles due to unintended cultural biases in organizational practices and norms. The research affirmed that Chinese Canadian employees contribute important skills, intercultural competence, and perspectives that enhance the practice of leadership, but that their leadership potential may not be fully recognized in the current organizational culture. The phenomenographic study also revealed career conceptions of acculturation and career mobility themes for Chinese Canadians within this financial institution. The discussion suggests that this financial organization needs to adapt to the changing workforce demographics and create an inclusive organizational culture that engages the talents of bicultural leaders.

Keywords: Chinese Canadian, leadership, culture, ethnic identity, bicultural identity, organizational diversity, phenomenography

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Chapter One: Introduction

A global convergence of trends in technology, aging demographics, and emerging markets are reshaping societies around the world (Dobbs, Ramaswamy, Stephenson, & Viguerie, 2014). The demand for global talent couldn't be more critical and Canada is positioned on the world stage as a leading immigrant receiving country that espouses a multicultural philosophy. If Canada wishes to thrive in the 21st century, there is an urgent need to understand the social, cultural, economic, and business impacts of integrating our populations (SSHRC, 2014). What are the emerging opportunities and risks; how can Canada show leadership as a pluralistic society? One could ask all the same questions of Canadian organizations. Few organizations will retain their competitive edge if they fail to understand the impacts of integrating their workforce. Canadian organizations urgently need to understand and adapt to a changing workforce that includes an emerging demographic of bicultural employees (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Conference Board of Canada, 2005). However, businesses could thrive through inclusion, innovation, and engaging their intercultural leadership talents (Hyun & Lee, 2014). This dissertation delves into the social issue of equity representation of visible minorities, specifically Chinese Canadians, in leadership roles. This research goes beyond the paradigm of employment equity to explore bicultural identity within an organizational context and to critically investigate power structures that determine leadership roles. Inclusive organizational cultures could more effectively engage the talents of bicultural leaders and stimulate new ways of thinking about cultural diversity in organizations (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Chin, 2010; Oliver, 2005).

Culture is shaped by ecology, history, and leadership (Schein, 2010). Leaders are compatible with culture but can also bring about change, thus leaders have an integral role in

influencing human behaviours in organizations. Organizations are micro-cultures that also contain diverse subcultures. Culture is defined as a system of shared meaning: "a set of basic assumptions that defines for us what to pay attention to, what things mean, how to react emotionally to what is going on, and what actions to take in various kinds of situations" (Schein, p. 32). Moreover, scholarship has neglected how bicultural perspectives might illuminate the practices of contemporary leadership in organizations and the potential of diverse leaders (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Friedman & Liu, 2009). The shift to recognizing ethnic identity will lead to expanded ideals of leadership and organizations that are more inclusive (Eagly & Chin, 2010b; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011).

Background

Canada is an ethnocultural mosaic; this is the new reality that is shaping our culture and organizations. The composition of the workforce is changing rapidly in Canada; as of 2012, all new labour force growth will come from immigration (Friesen, 2012). By 2032, all new population growth will also come from immigration (Statistics Canada, 2006). A recent Gallup poll shows that Canada is the third most popular destination for immigration globally (Friesen, 2012). Among the G-8 countries, Canada's proportion of foreign-born residents is second highest in the world at 20.6%, next to Australia. As of 2011, the second highest source of newcomers to Canada was China (Statistics Canada, 2011b). Canada is also a country of linguistic diversity: of those immigrants whose mother tongue was other than English or French, Chinese dialects were spoken by over 852,000 individuals (Statistics Canada, 2011b). Most immigrants have settled in urban areas and, as a result, visible minorities now comprise 47% of Toronto's and 45% of Vancouver's overall population. According to a 2006 Statistics Canada report, the visible minority population in Vancouver and Toronto is projected to reach 60% and

63% respectively by 2031. Chinese Canadians are the second largest group of visible minorities in Toronto and the largest group in Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2011b). The Chinese Canadian population could grow to approximately 23% of the Vancouver central metropolitan area population in 2031, as compared to 18% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006). In Toronto, the Chinese Canadian population is projected to remain flat at 12% from 2006 to 2031, based on lower birth rates, but nonetheless represents a significant portion of the population (Statistics Canada, 2006). Already in Vancouver, 33% of the Chinese Canadian community includes immigrant families (Statistics Canada, 2006). These Chinese immigrants are younger and more educated than past immigrants: 60% are between 25 and 44 years old, and 41% have a university degree at Bachelor level or above (Statistics Canada, 2006). Based on its size and level of education, it is apparent that the Chinese Canadian population represents a high quality talent pool for leadership in Canada.

Visible minority leadership in the corporate sector is among the lowest of all sectors in Canada and has not materially changed over several years (Cukier & Yap, 2011). The Diversity Institute of Management and Technology at Ryerson University conducted a three-year study (2009-2011) of visible minority employment in leadership roles. Findings in 2011 revealed that, of 3,330 leaders in the Greater Toronto Area, only 14.5% were visible minorities, far below the visible minority population of 47%. A breakdown of visible minorities in leadership positions by sector indicates that representation has improved 1% over a 3-year period (see Appendix A.1). Further, the corporate sector companies had only 4.2% senior executive visible minority representation (see Appendix A.2) (Cukier & Yap, 2011). Similar findings from the Center of Work-Life Policy in the United States revealed that fewer than 2% of Fortune 500 CEOs and corporate officers are Asian American (Hewlett & Rashid, 2011). Yet in this U.S. study, 64% of

Asian Americans aspired to leadership as compared to 52% of Caucasians. The findings validate the notion that the lack of visible minority and Asian representation in leadership roles is a North American phenomenon in *both* new immigrants and the existing population and is particularly pronounced in the corporate sector even though career progression is an aspiration (Cukier & Yap, 2011; Galabuzi, 2011; Giscombe, 2008; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011). The study surveyed 2,952 Asian men and women supplemented by qualitative interviews and focus groups. The study revealed that 48% of Asian Americans say there is pressure to conform to "prevailing leadership models—having to look, act, and sound like the established leaders in their workplace" (Hewlett & Rashid, 2011, p.4). Further, the participants feel stalled in their careers without mentorship, leading to retention and engagement challenges. The study documented that South Asians possess an English language and communication advantage over East Asians. Specifically, formulating key messages, managing upward to superiors, and articulating accomplishments were seen as gaps. However, the data revealed East Asians were more likely (57%) than South Asians (49%) and Caucasians (31%) to ask for stretch assignments. East Asians (59%) and South Asians (52%) equally reported that conformity to leadership norms was a challenge.

Catalyst Canada, a research firm specializing in diversity, launched a multi-year study that included data from visible minority executives, managers, and professionals employed in large Canadian organizations. Of the 4,461 survey respondents in 43 firms, 32% were Chinese Canadian (see Appendix A.3). The findings report that visible minorities are less satisfied with their career progression, feel excluded from valuable networks, and feel pressured to "Canadianize." Catalyst Canada therefore concludes that there is "imperfect execution" of diversity initiatives and goals as stated in the corporate goals of Canadian companies and

minorities (Giscombe, 2008). The Conference Board of Canada (2005) also researched the perspectives of visible minorities in leadership roles through focus groups in Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Halifax. Almost half of participants were foreign born. The study found that immigrants were more challenged with lack of fit issues, lack of recognition of foreign experience, and the differential need to work harder to prove themselves. Among organizational support factors, the direct manager was critical for success. Networks and mentors were also mentioned. Overall, the study revealed similar findings to other studies, but importantly highlighted the specific challenges immigrants face. In all three above mentioned studies, visible minorities report that their organizational cultures fail to recognize their specific ethnic identities (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Conference Board of Canada, 2005; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011).

In overall visible minority leadership representation and earnings, Chinese Canadians lag, despite having a large and well educated employee base (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Chin, 2010; Yap, Cukier, Holmes, & Hannan, 2010; Zong, 2007). Chinese and Koreans were the most educated but least represented in management roles, compared to 12 other ethnic groups in the Catalyst study noted above (see Appendix A.3). Furthermore, Pendakur and Pendakur (2007) found that men and women of Chinese backgrounds face a larger negative wage gap in higher level positions than in lower positions, yet perceive the lowest level of discrimination among visible minorities (Banerjee, 2011; Yap & Everett, 2011). Overall, Chinese Canadians employees are 8.2% less satisfied with their careers than white/Caucasian employees in large firms (Yap et al., 2010).

Research approach and research question

There has been ample research to highlight the gaps in leadership representation, but less

is known about the reasons why and how the phenomenon occurs. Comments from the above noted studies highlight cultural bias, feelings of exclusion, pressure to adapt to western leadership norms, and organizational lack of understanding of specific ethnic identities. Organizations may hire visible minorities, but it appears that those employees' contributions, particularly from a leadership perspective, are not fully realized. As such, managing diversity is a critical competency that has not fully developed in organizations. Cox Jr. (2001) outlines the principal components of diagnosing an organization's diversity climate, which include both individual-level measures and organizational-level measures. The organizational-level measures include an identity profile of the workforce, mode of acculturation, content of organizational culture (norms and values), power distribution among groups, people management practices and policies, and openness of informal networks (Cox Jr., 2001). This study deals specifically with identity profiles and how bicultural employees experience the organizational mode of acculturation, which might affect outcomes of power distribution or leadership representation. Most Canadian companies adopt a multicultural mode of acculturation in line with Canadian policy, but in reality, is this how employees experience their careers? This study takes the standpoint of the employees and their perspectives on how the organization handles cultural differences that may lead to acculturation differences such as assimilation or integration. Organizational discourse seeks to promote inclusion (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Cox Jr., 2001; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Oliver, 2005), but in what ways?

The research was conducted in a large financial institution in Toronto, Ontario and Vancouver, British Columbia, and guided by the research question "How do Chinese Canadian employees perceive their career progression into senior leadership roles?" This dissertation also employed a blended methodology using ethnic identity and acculturation scales along with

phenomenography to reveal the ethnic profiles and variation of experiences in the group. Consistent with the method, data was collected at the individual level, but analyzed at the collective group level. The objective of this study was to bring forth Chinese Canadian perspectives of their career mobility into senior leadership roles and to examine the thematic variations in their conceptions within the group of everyday practices that might perpetuate inclusion or exclusion. In Canada, Chinese Canadians represent a significant and important talent base for organizations (Yap et al., 2010; Zong & Perry, 2011), and while they represent just one bicultural group within the organizational setting, other bicultural groups likely experience culturally distinct dynamics. The aforementioned studies reinforce that employees want to be more fully understood for their specific ethnic identities whereas, many Canadian-based studies tend to focus on broad-based studies that look at visible minorities (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Conference Board of Canada, 2005) or perhaps an Asian demographic. In this study, the sample size was not large enough to delimit the sample population further to region specific backgrounds such as Hong Kongese, Taiwanese, or Mainland Chinese. However, in consolidating participants into one group, it is recognized that Chinese Canadians are not a homogeneous group. The intent was to respectfully engage employees who self-identify with their Chinese heritage. The ethnic identity scales did indeed acknowledge the differences within the group, as defined by the employees themselves rather than by deterministic demographical labels. The commonalities of the group, such as cultural nuances, are brought forward in the interviews. Moreover, the phenomenographical analysis further teased out the variation in perceptions within the group, rather than assuming all Chinese Canadians think and act alike. As such, the strength of the method is that it represented the group standpoint at that moment, based on bicultural perspectives, but did not treat the group as a

monolithic whole (Museus & Truong, 2009).

The theoretical framework relied on a foundation of acculturation theory (Berry, 2003, 2006), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1987), and culturally implicit leadership theory (House & Aditya, 1997); House, Wright, & Aditya, 1997). Culturally implicit leadership theory posits that societies and institutions develop their leadership ideals based on cultural knowledge and acceptance, which is a helpful framework to explain how bicultural employees, as noted above, may feel that leadership styles are mostly western based. It was also important for this study to understand the elements of leadership that are generally viewed as important toward progression into leadership roles. Given the primary focus on bicultural employees, the foundational frameworks of acculturation theory and social identity theory work together to explain an integrative view of bicultural identity and group dynamics within organizations. These theories are explained in detail in Chapter Two. Overall, the study affirmed that Chinese Canadian employees contribute important skills, intercultural competence, and perspectives that enhance the practice of leadership, but that those contributions are not always recognized in the face of unintended organizational bias. The phenomenographic study also revealed four variations in Chinese Canadians employees' approaches to acculturation and career progression within this financial institution. The current study adds to scholarship with its specificity of analysis on Chinese Canadian bicultural identity and participant experiences of career mobility towards leadership.

The research was conducted in one organizational site, anonymized as ABC Bank. ABC Bank (ABC) previously participated in the Catalyst Canada, Conference Board of Canada, and DiverseCity research studies noted above. Notwithstanding ABC's strong focus on and successes with diversity management, the representation of Chinese Canadian senior leaders

remains low for the company. ABC wished to gain a greater understanding of Chinese Canadian leadership representation and inclusion, and as such, gave its permission to participate in the study herein. It should also be noted that the researcher is employed at ABC Bank in a senior leadership position with understanding of organizational systems and culture. Additional responsibilities include a role as Executive Diversity Champion for one of the Bank's regions, which led to an interest in the current topic. In discussion with the Bank, it was determined that the organizational site created an optimal situation to examine diversity in one corporation where organizational culture, job types, and diversity practices were relatively uniform. The following section introduces an overview of the organizational site and explains technical terms, organizational structure, and policies regarding diversity management.

Overview of organizational site—ABC Bank

This overview serves to contextualize the research and orient the reader to the organization where the research takes place. ABC Bank is a federally regulated public company required to comply with *Canada's Employment Equity Act* (1995), a piece of federal legislation that requires employers to implement non-discriminatory policies and practices and policies to actively target underrepresented groups consisting of women, Aboriginals, visible minorities, and people with disabilities –in their recruitment and promotion initiatives (Government of Canada, 2013). The act may have compelled large companies in Canada towards affirming equality in early days, but the current sentiment in large Canadian financial institutions is that diverse workforces are an economic and moral imperative, and as such, diversity results are better than in small companies (Cukier, Smarz, & Yap, 2011). ABC Bank is one of Canada's largest banks by assets and market capitalization with broad leadership in financial services. It is one of the largest banks globally with operations in over 40 countries. There are tens of

thousands of full- and part-time employees. All of the research was conducted in Canada and therefore any international components are not included in the analysis.

Within the ABC Bank hierarchy, the participants ranged between 4 and 6 levels below the CEO level (see Appendix B1 for organization chart). ABC Bank grades its jobs by levels of complexity and seniority called PL levels (see Table 1). Each employee is remunerated at a PL level commensurate with the role he or she is in. PL levels are numbered sequentially with more senior roles having a lower number. Jobs are further distinguished by people management responsibilities; therefore, there are leadership roles, defined as having supervision responsibility for others, and individual contributor roles where there is no direct responsibility for others. Leadership roles start at PL09 and number down from there. For example, Branch Manager roles are generally graded at PL08 and PL07. Executive roles start at PL05 and number down from there. Another distinction in job type can be made by whether roles are responsible for generating financial results (line) or are in background support (staff) such as strategy and product manufacturing. Both types of roles embody a wide scope of PL Levels and include both leadership and non-leadership roles. This study involved both leadership and non-leadership roles, including both line and staff positions.

Table 1.

A representation of job levels at ABC Bank

ABC Bank job levels	Leadership	Non leadership
Executive levels PL02, 03, 04, 05	Encompasses all levels	N/A
PL06, PL07, PL08, PL09	Starts at PL09 and encompasses all levels	Encompasses all levels
PL 10 and below	N/A	Not included in this study

Diversity management at ABC Bank. ABC Bank's stated corporate values explicitly

include diversity, which has been a special focus of the CEO. ABC Bank sets diversity strategy every three years. The 2012–2015 strategy was accessed with the permission of ABC Bank. While the document is internal, it does not represent confidential information. The strategy builds upon successes and lessons of the previous period and currently defines inclusion as the

> state of being valued, respected, and involved… In simple terms, diversity is the mix, and inclusion is the mix working well together to leverage diverse perspectives, life experiences, cultures and ways of looking at the world to generate superior results… Inclusion is reflected in the organization's culture and practices, in addition to its programs and policies… The power of diversity is unleashed when put to common purpose. (internal documents of ABC Bank, accessed Feb. 2014)

The report further emphasizes the business case for economic potential given the shifting demographic landscape: "The companies and societies that best maximize the potential of diverse workforces and team will be those with competitive advantage" (ABC internal documents, accessed Feb. 2014). The strategy also makes a moral case for an ABC value of "ensuring opportunity for all and doing the right thing" (ABC internal documents, accessed Feb. 2014). To achieve its goals, the corporate strategy envisions balancing the needs of the community, client marketplace, and talent and the workplace. The talent and workplace component incorporates its own objectives and priorities, one of which is to "increase diversity and inclusion in our workforce globally, with a focus on increasing representation of women and visible minorities in leadership" (ABC internal documents, accessed Feb. 2014). Therefore, the current study aligns directly with bank objectives. There is no mandated diversity training for employees of ABC Bank, but there is an award-winning, comprehensive, web-based program of diversity resources that was recognized in 2014. In early 2014, ABC Bank tackled the

challenges of implicit bias (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013) and barriers to advancement by embarking on a training program for those in executive roles. It is evident that there is a priority and focus to incorporate diversity principles and that direction has been evolving, most recently to understand the concepts of inclusion and representation of visible minorities in leadership.

ABC Bank has established a broad structure of diversity councils worldwide, along with employee resource groups that work in tandem with the councils. Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are voluntary networks or groups of employees who share a common identity, characteristic, and/or set of interests. They are formed to act as a resource for both group members and the organization and are dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment within the context of the organization's mission, values, goals, and business practices. There are 16 types of ERGs supported worldwide with approximately 6,600 current members. The relevant ERG for visible minorities has 2,800 members. Its mandate is to

> welcome all ABC employees to volunteer and support their colleagues who are visible minorities and newcomers to Canada, through networking, peer support and relationship building. It serves as a forum for intercultural dialogue and discovery and is a conduit to create awareness and support for ABC's commitment to Diversity initiatives and programs. (ABC internal documents, accessed Feb. 2014)

The ERGs also support marketplace strategies and community outreach. To maximize effectiveness, ERGs are supported by regional leadership committees led by executive champions. There is also a Global Diversity Group Advisor to provide advice and counsel and operating guidelines. Membership in ERGs has increased 15% year over year in 2013 and there appears to be growing momentum from this source. Thus, there is substantial leadership focus and grassroots ERG support for diversity and inclusion at ABC Bank.

ABC Bank sets quantitative goals for national visible minority leadership representation. As a federally legislated company, ABC Bank conforms to definitions outlined in the Employment Equity Act and recognizes visible minorities as including persons who are non-Caucasian or non-white and who do not report being Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2014). In 2013, the goal for visible minority leadership representation was 14% for PL05 and 20% for PL06 positions. There is no stated goals for higher levels. There is also no national goal for PL07 and PL08 representation; however, these levels are still tracked as they are considered an important pipeline to senior leadership. The Bank is meeting it goals for visible minority leadership at the PL05 and PL06 levels (see Table 2). However, a breakdown indicates that more representation is typically seen in call centres (exceeds 20%) and head office support functions (some departments over 30%) (see Appendix B2). Results are further broken down for branch leadership roles in British Columbia and Greater Toronto, where the majority of interviews were completed (see Table 2). Toronto is well represented by visible minorities in leadership compared to British Columbia, although it should be noted that British Columbia results here include rural areas with smaller visible minority populations.

Table 2.

Visible minority leadership representation in ABC Bank branches.

ABC Bank Visible Minority Leadership Representation—Dec. 31, 2013							
Canadian Banking Overall*		Canadian Banking Regions (branches)		Greater Toronto Region (branches)		British Columbia Region (branches)	
PL05	14%	PL05	12%	PL05	28%**	PL05	15%***
PL06	20%	PL06	15%	PL06	13%	PL06	7%
PL07	29%	PL07	21%	PL07	34%	PL07	21%

*includes head office and divisional leaders that are not branch leaders (see Appendix B2)
** Chinese Canadian leaders 5%
*** Chinese Canadian leaders 0%

The bank does not track visible minority leadership representation by specific ethnicities

and is in alignment with Government of Canada Employment Equity measurements. This is not uncommon practice in Canada, where identification of ethnic group membership is not a generally accepted cultural practice in many contexts. However, a manual count for this study, verified by the Toronto and Vancouver Human Resources consultants, indicates Chinese Canadian leadership representation from PL08 to PL05 inclusive is 12% in Toronto and 18% in Vancouver. Most Chinese Canadian leaders are in the PL08 level (see Appendix H6). It should be further noted that Chinese Canadian leaders at the PL05 executive level is 5% in Toronto and 0% in Vancouver, which is notably lower than the total visible minority leadership representation in those cities (see Table 1). Overall, visible minority leadership representation at ABC Bank exceeds the corporate sector average in Canada (Cukier & Yap, 2011); however, those results include fewer Chinese Canadian leaders ascending to senior leadership roles than would be available in the population or employee group. It is unclear why a significant employee population, such as Chinese Canadians, is less represented in the executive ranks at ABC Bank. Specific ethnicities are not tracked and thus the gap may not have been as apparent. However, when the researcher questioned several Bank executives about the issue, there was an intuitive acknowledgement that fewer Chinese Canadians hold executive roles, but little understanding why that would be the case. While the Bank celebrates its progress, it also recognizes there is work to be done in achieving greater Chinese Canadian leadership representation. To the researcher's knowledge, no study of a large Canadian company has specifically investigated Chinese Canadians' perspectives of career progression into senior leadership roles using phenomenography or bicultural identity as a foundation. Given the applied and theoretical rationale discussed in this section, a phenomenographic study about the perspectives of Chinese Canadian employees at ABC Bank appeared a valid and insightful approach to providing

institutional direction and making a contribution to the development of intercultural scholarship.

Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. This first chapter provides an introduction to the study. Chapter Two reviews the theoretical framework for the study, relevant literature in the areas of bicultural identity and acculturation, along with cultural concepts, leadership theory, and organizational diversity theory. Chapter Three then provides a detailed explanation of and rationale for the blended methodology employed in the study. Ethnic identity and acculturation scales are presented along with phenomenography as the main qualitative methods used. The chapter also describes how the research was implemented and analyzed. Chapter Four provides a detailed report of the study's findings, which focuses on three main areas of discovery. First, the ethnic identity and acculturation scale results are reported, which demonstrate a majority tendency among participants to identify with an Asian pan-ethnic label that aligns with the majority finding of bicultural and bicultural Asian identified acculturation profiles within the participant group. The second area of findings represents the synthesized comments relating directly to the participants' career experiences, namely a review of their career preferences, education, job satisfaction levels, leadership role experiences, language and communication style, and leadership styles. The third group of findings reviews the participants' experiences of interacting with the organization relative to career mobility. This section includes the participants' ideas about ABC's commitment to diversity, their thoughts on why Chinese Canadians are not as evenly represented in senior leadership roles, followed by their observations about their relationships with their direct managers, talent management practices, sponsorship, and social capital as enabling forces or barriers. The findings chapter ends with a synthesis of these research elements, depicted in the phenomenographic chart, referred to as an outcome

space (Marton, 1986). The outcome space distilled four categories of career conceptions. Participants experienced their careers as: 1) marginalized by cultural barriers; 2) integrated in a specialized or professional niche; 3) integrated in a cultural markets niche; and 4) assimilated to the organizational environment. Interestingly, the categories mimic some acculturation strategies, particularly integration, marginalization, and assimilation, which makes sense given the cultural theories guiding this study. The dominant organizational culture and ethnic culture were moderating factors throughout the study, which brought forward five major career themes of concern for the participants, also captured in the outcome space, which is discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Chapter Five presents a detailed discussion of these five career themes: 1) language and communication; 2) leadership style; 3) the direct manager relationship and talent management; 4) sponsorship; and 5) social capital. The chapter begins with an overview of the distribution of leadership within ABC Bank, which revealed a potential pattern of a middle management segment located in cultural markets. This helps to contextualize some of the findings regarding the five themes. Chapter Six presents the study's conclusions, along with an inquiry into its limitations and recommendations for future research. Overall, the study provided a deeper look at Chinese Canadian bicultural identity in leadership roles and a unique snapshot within one organization, ABC.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review begins with a grounding in the main theoretical concepts of acculturation and social identity theories that form the foundation of bicultural identity. Implicit leadership theory is also explained. Thereafter, the review discusses the intersecting topics of Chinese culture, modes of leadership and organizational culture. The researcher considered these elements to be most salient to the research question.

Theoretical Framework

This dissertation is based on two theoretical premises: one, that ethnic identities and social relations between eastern and western cultures are distinct (Bond, 2010; Chen & Starosta, 2005; Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998; Nisbett, 2003; Zane & Song, 2007); and two, that bicultural identity affects how cultural knowledge is used in the work environment (Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002; Berry, 2006; Phinney, 2003). Culture is the unifying construct throughout.

Acculturation and Social Identity Theories. More than 70 years ago, acculturation was defined by anthropologists as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149). It is important to note that the definition focuses on groups and not individuals. Ethno-cultural groups may be conceptualized as a cultural phenomenon located at the national and institutional levels (Berry, 2003, 2006; Sam, 2006) and will be discussed later in the context of national and organizational cultures. Individuals act, not groups, which highlights the potential for variability in individual experiences from cultural contacts (Berry, 2003). Thus, theory has evolved to conceptualize acculturation at the individual level from a cross-cultural psychological perspective (Berry, 2003; Graves, 1967). Psychological acculturation refers to changes in an

individual who is a participant in a cultural-contact situation (Graves, 1967). Psychological acculturation leads to an adaptation process for individuals in both dominant and minority cultures that is both psychological and sociocultural in nature (Berry, 2003; Kim, 2007) (see Figure 1). In other words, it is helpful to understand acculturation in terms of intergroup relations, where interactions among cultural groups co-construct socio-cultural adaptations, in the process of relearning behavioural skills for effectiveness in a cultural context over time (Berry, 2003; Smith, Fischer, Vignoles, & Bond, 2013). The process stems from an individual's perception of himself or herself as a member of a particular social group or category, which has a theoretical foundation in social identity theory, discussed next.

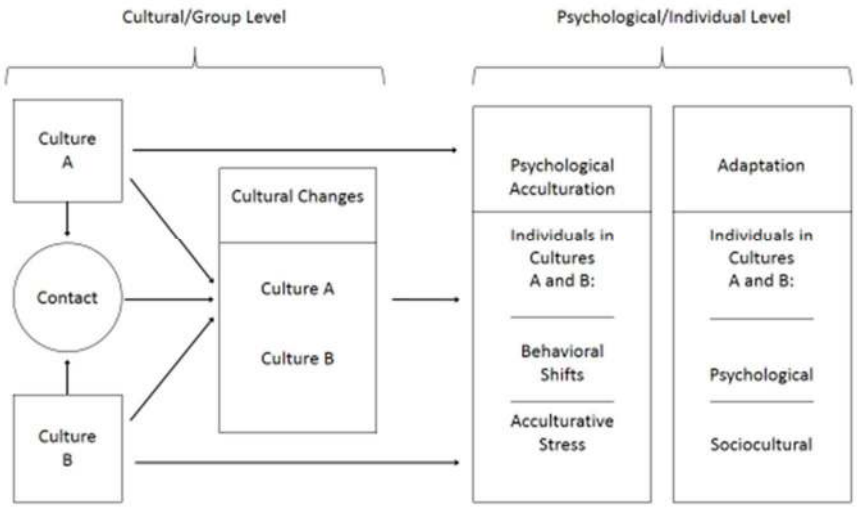

Figure 1. A framework for understanding acculturation: cultural and psychological levels (Berry, 2003). Recreated with permission.

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and the closely related social categorization theory (Turner, 1987) developed from social psychology. According to the social identity approach, individuals define themselves in terms of both social and personal identities thus conforming to a distinct group identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Haslam & Ellemers, 2012;

Smith et al., 2013; Spears, 2012). In addition, a group identity may also be a source of emotional attachment (Phinney, Horenezyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Spears, 2012). Social identities relate to many possible categories of belonging, such as age, gender, and ethnicity (Spears, 2012). Social identity theory posits that individuals will strive for a social and personal identity that distinguishes themselves positively against other groups and categories, creating in-groups and out-groups that represent the other (Haslam & Ellemers, 2012; Spears, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Thus, social identity theory might explain intergroup conflict and differences related to prejudice and stereotyping (Haslam & Ellemers, 2012; Spears, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Ashforth and Mael (1989) usefully theorized social identity theory within an organizational context and extended research applications. Since then, social identity theory has been used as a theoretical framework in organizational studies to explain leadership attribution (Haslam & Ellemers, 2012) and hierarchies and intergroup power (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Haslam & Ellemers, 2012; Spears, 2012). At the same time, social identity might represent a galvanizing force for collective agency and social change (Spears, 2012). Having a strong group identity might represent an important source of strength and support, which contributes to psychological well-being (Haslam & Ellemers, 2012; Spears, 2012). Social identity theory has provided the foundational extension to some other types of identity theory, such as ethnic identity and bicultural identity, which are described below. Overall, psychological acculturation theory and identity theory are closely related theories. The following sections will expand upon the various forms of these theories.

Enculturation and acculturation. Enculturation is the process of observing and learning one's indigenous cultural values, behaviours, knowledge and identity (Kim, 2007; Sam, 2006). As individuals become aware of their cultural differences, they begin to construct new

values, beliefs and behaviours, a process known as acculturation. Changes in individual acculturation and ethnic identity occur in the two dimensions of identification with the culture of origin and identification with the new host culture, leading to four potential strategies of integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 2003, 2006). Integration is represented by individuals who become proficient in the culture of the dominant group while retaining proficiency in the heritage culture, thus both enculturated and acculturated (Berry, 2006; Kim, 2007). Assimilation is indicative of individuals who do not wish to maintain their cultural heritage and seek to identify and adopt the norms of the dominant culture (Berry, 2003, 2006). Separation can signify a wish to hold on to ethnic roots while avoiding interaction with the dominant culture. Separation is only a valid response if other members of the ethnic group share in the collective wish. Separation might also be a result forced by the dominant group, in which case it could be considered segregation (Berry, 2003, 2006). Marginalization occurs when there is little interest in either culture, and usually results from a failed attempt to assimilate (Berry, 2003, 2006). When marginalization is imposed by the dominant group, it could be termed exclusion (Berry, 2003, 2006). The common assumption is that people acculturate in a linear fashion, becoming more assimilated into the larger society over time. However, Berry (1980) found that acculturation to the majority culture does not preclude retention of one's ethnic group culture or becoming bicultural. Bicultural identity should not be simply conceptualized as a midpoint, but rather as identification with two cultures enacted selectively dependent on the situational context (Berry, 2006; Kim, 2007; Sam, 2006; Trimble, 2003). The concepts of ethnic identity and bicultural identity are defined in the following sections.

Ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is defined as "a dynamic multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group" (Phinney, 2003,

p.63), and more specifically, one's sense of belonging to a group and the attitudes and feelings that accompany a sense of group membership (Berry, 2003; Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Phinney, 2003). The underlying concept is derived from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Although race and ethnicity are socially constructed concepts (Cokley, 2007; Trimble, 2007), there has been significant research on the structural components of exploration and resolution/commitment leading to achievement of an ethnic identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Yoon, 2011). Further, ethnic identity is developed at both the individual level and at the collective level due to interaction with society (Yoon, 2011), therefore environmental context is important. Ethnic identity is an important psychological construct shown to have positive benefits of well-being (Downie, Koestner, El-Geledi, & Cree, 2004; Phinney et al., 2001; Smith & Silva, 2011); positive self-esteem (Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2001); ethnic pride as a defence against discrimination (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Mossakowski, 2003); propensity to increase diversity in organizations (Linnehan, Konrad, Reitman, Greenhalgh, & London, 2003); and positive attitudes toward organizations that value diversity (Kim & Gelfand, 2003). Identity denial is the experience of being assumed to be a foreigner based on physical appearance (Cheryan & Monin, 2005). The concept stems from self-categorization theory (Turner, 1987), which discusses the degree to which individuals match the prototypical characteristics of the majority group. In this context, a racialized individual may be asked "where are you really from?" or "do you speak English?," resulting in the constant reminder that one's core identity is questioned, or worse, denied (Wu, 2002). The experience adds to the complexity of negotiating multiple identities; however, recent research indicates a greater propensity to reaffirm bicultural identity as a backlash to perceived discrimination (Cheryan & Monin, 2005).

Bicultural identity. In the context of psychological acculturation, this study defines

biculturalism as the construct involved in the process of integrating two or more cultural identities (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). Bicultural individuals could also be loosely defined based on demographics and ethnic heritage, but in this study, bicultural individuals are defined as those who have been exposed to and have internalized two or more cultures (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). Therefore, bicultural identity is viewed through the lens of an identity formed over time and through experience. LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) were first to propose a bicultural competence model in which bicultural experience need not represent psychological distress, but rather constitutes bicultural competence as a well-developed and integrated sense of both personal and cultural identity. Phinney (2003) further defined bicultural identity as having a strong ethnic identity and a strong national identity and implying integration into the larger society. National identity is a complex construct related to sense of belonging and attitude toward the larger society, whereas ethnic identity is a key aspect of the acculturation process in continual transformation (Liebkind, 2006). Bicultural identity is inherently social in nature (Nguyen, Huynh, & Benet-Martínez, 2009) and therefore is not uniformly developed within individuals. LaFromboise et al. (1993) identified two potential modes of biculturalism: alternation and fusion. Alternating bicultural individuals are integrated with both cultures but switch frames dependent on the context, whereas a fusion bicultural individual blends cultural identity to create an emergent third culture. Birman (1994) posited a third alternation strategy where only behaviours are adjusted and ethnic identity is maintained as separated from the dominant culture. Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) more expansively defined bicultural individuals as those who have been exposed to and internalized two cultures. The synthesis of cultural norms into one behavioural repertoire sometimes entails the ability to switch between cultural schemas to adapt to the current situation. The response is termed bicultural identity integration

(BII) and can be measured in a construct indicating the directional response to either cultural identity (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000). For example, those who score high in BII easily navigate dual cultures and even potentially construct a third culture. Those who score low in BII still may be considered integrated and bicultural from an acculturation standpoint, but experience stress and tension, potentially leading to a separation strategy. The additional analysis and measurement of bicultural identity integration is beyond the scope of the current study, but may be relevant at the individual level of analysis in a workplace situation. However, the underlying behaviour is indicative of the flexibility, adaptability, and intercultural awareness within bicultural individuals, which is discussed in the findings and discussion chapters.

Key markers of ethnic identity are often, but not always, linked to generational status. For example, Ting-Toomey (1981) found, in a study of Chinese American college students, that first-generation students strongly identified with Chinese culture and most second-generation students were bicultural, and that bicultural identification continued strongly (at 33%) through to the fourth generation. Other indicators linked to bicultural identity include language acquisition or loss, changing social networks, and thriving cultural values (Phinney, 2003). Changes occur over a lifetime or generations and at various paces, depending on the individual and contextual circumstances, although bicultural identification generally increases with chronological age and thus could be a greater factor for tenured employees going into leadership roles (Phinney, 2003). Overall though, demographics in themselves are an imperfect indicator of biculturalism (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). In general, bicultural individuals might be those who self-identify and label themselves in ways they feel most comfortable. For example, one could identify as Chinese, Chinese Canadian, Canadian, or even more specifically from a region. Chinese Canadian is a pan-ethnic label and also a bicultural label (Rumbaut, 1994). Accordingly,

changes in identity must be considered in terms of the strength of identification with an ethnic group and identification with the larger society. Overall, ethnic identity development is linked to the acculturation process (Yoon, Langrehr, & Ong, 2011). Whereas ethnic identity represents the extent to which one feels part of a group, acculturation and bicultural identity integration represent the extent to which behaviours and values are adapted in a certain culture (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007).

Bicultural individuals in organizations. How do bicultural leaders influence the practice of leadership and contribute to organizations? Most of the literature on bicultural identity comes from the field of social psychology; the literature on bicultural individuals in organizations is limited (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Fitzsimmons, 2013). Brannen and Thomas (2010) maintain that the study of bicultural individuals solely through acculturation theory "confuses the process of becoming bicultural with the way in which people experience or manage their bicultural identities" (p. 7). For example, the acculturation research does not delineate the various domains of acculturation, such as language, social affiliation, communication style, knowledge, beliefs, and values (Zane & Mak, 2003a). Therefore, there may be variation in the ways that bicultural individuals experience the organizational environment. The phenomenographic method employed in this study therefore highlights some of the variations in ways that bicultural individuals experience the organization, but not at the individual level. Bicultural identity integration may also be linked to cognitive complexity, potentially allowing bicultural individuals to better deal with the demands of dynamic and complex cultural situations as in organizations (Brannen & Thomas, 2010). Brannen and Thomas (2010) further conjecture that bicultural individuals may possess more empathy, flexibility, and creativity. More research is required, but applying the concept of biculturalism to

organizations may lead to different understandings of the ways that diversity between individuals is conceived, that cultural diversity exists in organizations, and how diversity exists *within* individuals themselves (Brannen & Thomas, 2010).

Friedman and Liu (2009) point to the potential of bicultural individuals in leadership roles. In addition to the characteristics mentioned above, the authors note that bicultural individuals may exhibit enhanced ability to cross boundaries with expanded social ties and networks, meaning bicultural individuals are more apt to collaborate across organizational silos, enhancing efficiency. Bicultural individuals' unique skills also support managerial benefits, such as the ability to manage teams cohesively. In short, they may be better able to understand and relate to people of varying backgrounds, an important skill in a multicultural environment (Friedman & Liu, 2009). Chinese culture, in particular, displays a sensitivity in dispute resolution and negotiations, which is another requirement of leadership (Friedman & Liu, 2009). In these ways, bicultural individuals may display an array of intercultural skills that lead to productive relations in the organizational environment.

In summary, the acculturation experience affords an individual a unique perspective of integrating both cultures and a fuller understanding of the environment and interpersonal relations (Berry, 2004; Friedman & Liu, 2009; Zane & Song, 2007). Bicultural individuals have enhanced their adaptability, flexibility and creativity (Brannen & Thomas, 2010), decision-making and mediation skills, flexibility, and leadership skills (Friedman & Liu, 2009). It would then seem that bicultural individuals also gain skills and perspectives that build their intercultural competence. That is not to say that all bicultural individuals are interculturally competent or that one needs to be bicultural in order to become interculturally competent. Any enhancement to intercultural competence could bring value to organizations as the demographic landscape

changes. Bicultural identity and acculturation is therefore used as a theoretical foundation to interpret the Chinese Canadian perspective in this dissertation.

Implicit leadership theory. This dissertation draws on an additional theoretical framework to explain how culture moderates leadership practice in the organization. Culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory (CLT), proposed by House, Wright and Aditya (1997), is a compilation of four theories representing a system of relationships that integrates leadership, culture, values, and organizational dynamics. According to House et al. (2004), "[t]he central proposition of the integrated theory is that the attributes and entities that differentiate a specified culture are predictive of organizational practices and leader attributes and behaviours that are most frequently enacted and most effective in that culture" (p. 17). In other words, "culture is the mother; the institutions are the children within which, leadership is a central organizing function" (Dickson, Den Hartog, & Castano, 2009, p. 220). The components of CLT are implicit leadership theory (Lord & Mahler, 1991), value-belief theory of culture (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995), implicit motivation theory (McClelland, 1985), and structural contingency theory of organizational form and effectiveness (Donaldson, 1993; Hickson, Hinings, McMillan, & Schwitter, 1974). Implicit leadership theory maintains that individuals have implicit beliefs and assumptions about the attributes and behaviours of effective leadership. These beliefs are attributed to leaders and form the basis of acceptance and followership. Value-belief theory states that the values and beliefs of the society influence behaviours in individuals, groups, and organizations that are congruent with the culture. Implicit motivation theory represents the unconscious bias and motivations that explain human needs for achievement, affiliation, and power in both short-term and long-term patterns, including the enactment of leadership styles. Structural contingency theory maintains that organizational practices shift in frequent

incremental changes, adapting to external forces to seek fit. Overall, the CLT framework mimics a systems view of culture, organizations, and leadership. Culture affects leadership behaviour; leadership affects and maintains organizational form, culture and practice; societal cultural norms also affect organizational culture in turn moderating leadership practice, leading to an implicit theory of leadership over time.

As the cultural makeup of the population changes, it might follow that more diverse leadership styles could be accepted. The CLT framework anticipates change (contingency) and the adaptive (relational) effect in organizations to societal changes. The CLT framework does not represent multiculturalism in an intra-national view *per se*, but does represent a systems model adaptable to this kind of shift. The founders posit that cultural differences may become more entrenched as individuals strive to preserve cultural heritage while still adapting to modernization (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2008). The theory speaks to the strength of cultural norms, but again does not anticipate how and whether multiculturalism can grow in society and institutions in the same manner that biculturalism can sustain in an individual.

The theoretical framework presented here provided an overview of acculturation and identity theory along with implicit leadership theory to guide the dissertation study. One overarching concept for the research is that culture is a unifying construct. The following two sections will provide more specific cultural context on traditional Chinese culture and Chinese leadership styles.

Traditional Chinese Cultural Influences

It is difficult to address the complex issue of describing Chinese cultural influences without stereotyping individual traits simply on the basis of national origin. However, there is research to suggest that distinct broad-based national cultures exist (Hofstede, 2001). This

section will provide a brief overview of some traditional Chinese cultural norms and their historical origins in an effort to identify their influences in the workplace for both new immigrants and multiple generation individuals. Chinese culture spans 5000 years, rooted in core philosophies, relational rules (*guan xi, mian zi, ren qing*), social institutions (familialism), and years of communist rule affecting leadership practices (Chen & Farh, 2010).

Confucianism. Fu, Wu, Yang, and Ye (2008) argue that Confucianism has exerted enormous influence and is synonymous with Chinese traditional culture. In traditional Chinese Confucianism, there are guiding principles for maintaining role relations and social harmony. Familial piety is the strongest of role relationships. Hierarchical and class structures are also keenly observed. Chinese live and work in a web of social relationships and networks called *guan xi*, which is a strong personal relationship between two people that can come from good connections and tight social networks based on trust and reciprocity. The commitment to one another is based on an exchange of favours and does not have to involve friendship (Fu et al., 2008; Gallo, 2008). A failure to meet social obligations leads to loss of face and trust (Steers, Nardon, & Sanchez-Runde, 2009). Face is the important value that everyone maintains esteem and personal dignity. *Guan xi* capitalism is important in the business context and differs from western capitalism with its more formal structures (Leung & Ang, 2009; Yang, 2002). A central principle is to maintain social harmony based on correct relationships between individuals and maintenance of face (*mian zi*). *Ren qing* is an internal moral virtue of kindness, benevolence, righteousness, and respect for others, and links persons of unequal rank. *Ren qing* is reciprocal in nature and individuals are expected to control emotions that could bring loss of face and shame to individuals and their families. Therefore, in social relations, a careful pattern of *ren qing* and *mian zi* is maintained. Cultural norms are understood as an interconnected system

informing the management of relationships (Chen & Farh, 2010; Fu et al., 2008; Gallo, 2008).

Relationship building is largely a formal process with particular norms for establishing private relationships that are distinguished by in-group/out-group member categories, such as family and friends over work colleagues. Insiders and outsiders are treated differently (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998), and in-group work relationships take longer to build. An intermediary (*zhong jian ren*) can help construct a relationship to save face, and build trust and confidence. Public relationships are developed only after a warm personal relationship is formed (Chen & Starosta, 2005). East Asians base their relational networks on the individual differences between members of a group, whereas Caucasians are more prone to in-group homogeneity (Yuki, 2003). Chinese perceive communication styles differently from Westerners (Chen & An, 2009; Nisbett, 2003). Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998) describe role hierarchy as an aspect of Confucianism that plays out in work relationships and communication. A good employee is one who communicates by listening (*tin hua*), does what he/she is told, and has a willingness to meet others' expectations and accept criticism. Therefore, employees focus their full attention on listening for nuance and offer limited feedback in return (Gallo, 2008; Li, 2004). To express an alternative idea may be interpreted as a lack of confidence in authority or be seen as egocentric and ambitious. The norm is to be an active listener and passive in speaking; therefore, Chinese managers rank oral communication skills as less important (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Chen and Starosta (2005) note communication is generally indirect and definitive responses are rare. East Asians may disclose significantly less and use more non-verbal clues than individuals in low context individualist cultures. In summary, "[t]he Chinese conceptions of self are relational, other oriented, and influenced by complex hierarchy and role relationships" (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998, p.10).

Culture versus universality. While individual behaviours are context specific, there is some evidence of broad generalizable patterns of personality traits and cultural influence (Zane & Song, 2007). Markus and Kitayama (1991) have asserted that the differences in eastern and western concepts of the self, as interdependent and independent, respectively, influence cognition patterns and emotional and motivational responses. In other words, theories of the self are not culture free. To the contrary, McCrae and John (1992) explain trait psychology as inherited features with their Five-Factor Model (FFM) of universal personality traits, even though they do acknowledge the effect of culture on behaviour. The universal traits include neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (McCrae & John, 1992). The universality as applicable to eastern cultures was disputed by Triandis and Suh (2002), who argued that the five traits existed in all cultures but accounted for behaviour less in collectivist than in individualist cultures. Additionally, Cheung et al. (2001) found evidence of an additional personality factor they labeled interpersonal relatedness, which included *ren qing*, harmony, and face. Interestingly, the interpersonal relatedness factor was tested and found among Caucasian Americans, concluding that western-based theories were incomplete (Cheung et al., 2001).

Value patterns are also useful in understanding cultural differences. Hofstede (2001) has categorized several value constructs, including individualism-collectivism and small-large power distance, which may be particularly relevant to the workplace context. Individualism-collectivism refers to the degree to which individuals see themselves as separate and independent identities, as compared to collectivist cultures in which the self is more strongly defined by one's place and interaction within a group (Hofstede, 2001; Smith et al., 2013). Power distance refers to the extent to which a less powerful member of an organization accepts that power is

distributed unequally and social hierarchy is accepted (Hofstede & Bond, 1988; Hofstede, 2001; Smith et al., 2013). East Asian culture is generally categorized as collectivist and exhibiting a large power distance (Carl, Gupta, & Javidan, 2004; Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1989). The combination favours a benevolent and paternalistic leadership style, in contrast to western styles that are individualist and low power distance (Ting-Toomey, 2009). However, it is noted evidence exists that younger Chinese leaders, born after 1980 (*ba ling hou*), are more likely to demonstrate a "Chinese style" of individualism as western ways of thinking are incorporated (Leung & Ang, 2009). Wong (2001) also asserts that, for Chinese, the concept of collectivism may not be as applicable in the workplace as in family situations. Some broad implications of these cultural influences are discussed next.

Culture and the workplace. How then do Confucian values, cultural influences, personality traits, biculturalism, and ethnic identity interact within the workplace? Hyun (2005) asserts that while behavioural acculturation—regarding such choices as food, clothing, and language use—shifts over generations, fundamental Confucian values change very slowly over generations and affect work relationships in North America in a variety of ways. For example, she notes that the strong obedience value is transferred into the workplace with superiors and this has a sustaining influence on power imbalances. Leong (2001) found that assimilated levels of acculturation were positively correlated to job satisfaction and less job stress. Less westernized Asian Americans experienced marginalization and bias. Negative perceptions of lack of assertiveness, introversion, acceptance of hierarchies, lesser public speaking abilities, lack of interpersonal fluency, and controlled emotional behaviour are all characteristics blamed for underrepresentation in leadership roles (Zane & Song, 2007). Zane and Song (2007) discuss whether these behaviours are actually skill deficiencies or if they indicate incompatible cultural

values in organizations. For example, lack of assertiveness was found to be contextual and usually occurred in interactions with strangers. Emotional moderation and self-constraint are seen as strengths in Chinese cultures. A collectivist orientation reduces the risk of offending others and of upsetting the balance of relations. Nonetheless, self-effacing behaviours were viewed by western managers as evidence of lower competence, poor performance, and less suitability for leadership (Zane & Song, 2007). Whereas western notions of leadership involve enhancing, promoting and extending one's self over others, the contrasting motivation for eastern leadership is self-criticism in an effort to make continuous improvement and meet important role expectations (Nisbett, 2003; Zane & Song, 2007). Moreover, the maintenance of humility reinforces and affirms a sense of belonging and harmony. Face saving is also face giving (Ting-Toomey, 2009), particularly in conflict resolution and negotiations avoiding a win-lose scenario. Triandis and Suh (2002) assert that eastern styles of communication may be less coercive, emphasizing respect. Chinese Canadian leaders could potentially help bridge cultural gaps in organizational understanding by explaining the Chinese cultural norms behind behaviours that do not conform to western behaviours.

The cultural norms discussed may be less evident among Chinese Canadians as bicultural individuals, but are nonetheless distinct from western culture in many ways. One could argue some aspects may manifest in communication differences in the workplace, particularly as they relate to promotion to leadership roles. Chinese Canadians may not be seen as leaders in the dominant western leadership style (Eagly & Chin, 2010a). Communication styles may be misinterpreted as indecisive and lacking leadership in the group if there is reluctance to speak up or disagree. Modesty as a virtue may be misinterpreted as lacking confidence to lead. Organizations may need to explore intercultural competence practices and training to understand

the variances in communication specific to East Asian cultures to elucidate the variance, as per the Chinese proverb "to see what is behind our eyes" (Fu et al., 2008).

Western Leadership Theory

Leadership has been broadly defined dependent upon the researcher's intent (Yukl, 2010). Two main views define leadership as either a "process or a specialized role" (Yukl, 2010, p. 3). When broadly described as an act or process, leadership involves influence and attribution, occurs in a group context, is usually mobilized toward goal setting and attainment, and its effectiveness is defined by followership (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Northhouse, 2004). As a specialized role, leadership has been defined in terms of individual traits, behaviours, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships, and occupation of the leadership position. The role specialization approach is generally used when the research topic concerns the attributes that determine selection of leaders (Yukl, 2010). Leadership definition can be further delineated by conceptions of *effective leadership*. There are as many approaches to determine *effective leadership* as there are variables used to define effectiveness. The evolution of effective leadership theory started with the skills and traits approach for leadership selection (Parry & Bryman, 2006). Having found no conclusive evidence to support the notion that leaders are born and not made, the emphasis shifted to the Ohio School research on leadership style and behaviours that could be trained (Stogdill, 1950). Inconsistent research outcomes eventually gave way to the contingency approach, which stressed task/relationship variables such as leader-member relations, task structure, and position power needed for high and low control situations (Fielder, 1967, 1993; Parry & Bryman, 2006). The transformational approach that evolved in the 1980s centered on how a leader makes meaning and defines organizational reality through vision, mission, and values. In this theory, a leader is moving

through transactional leadership to transformational or charismatic leadership, which raises the aspirations of followers toward meaning and purpose (Bass, 1985; House, 1977; Kouzes & Pozner, 1993, 2002; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). While transformational leadership is still the dominant theory in the 2000s (Barling, 2014), other research has emerged, such as distributed or shared leadership, which focuses on employee development and breaking down power structures, particularly as information and technology have become enabling factors (Collins, 2001; Gordon, 2002). Finally, a post-transformational leadership theory espouses pragmatic solution-based practice and learning from failure (Storey, 2004). Leadership theory and practices continue to evolve.

Looking broadly at leadership style at national and organizational levels, the GLOBE review of culture and leadership in 62 countries found significant links between preferred leadership styles and organizational and societal norms within cultural clusters (House et al., 2004). The study also researched leadership styles, looking for universal and culturally-specific leadership styles. Regions were grouped in clusters based on similarities. Canada falls within the Anglo cluster. It is uncertain whether the research accounts for the multicultural nature of Canada, not to mention the diversity within Vancouver and Toronto. It is reasonable to assume that culture moderates the practice of leadership and more blended styles would be possible. Overall, however, the GLOBE study linked charismatic leadership style (House et al., 2004) with the Anglo cluster. Charismatic leadership is closely aligned with the transformational leadership style (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2010). The GLOBE study also claims that some of the characteristics of charismatic leaders, such as being trustworthy, dynamic, encouraging, and intelligent, are universal preferences amongst the 62 nations (House et al., 2004).

The concept of transformational-transactional leadership was first introduced by Burns

(1978). Transformational leadership focuses on purpose, longer range goals, and the intrinsic needs of followers, whereas transactional leadership focuses on the exchange between the leader and follower looking for mutual gain (Burns, 1978; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). The theory was later expanded upon by Bass and Riggio (2006), who characterized transformational leadership by four "I"s: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence would describe a leader who is a strong role model with very high moral and ethical standards and who inspires a shared vision. Inspirational motivation describes a leader who communicates high expectations and inspires followers to join in a team mission. Intellectual mission leaders stimulate followers to be creative and innovative and to provide feedback towards solutions. Individualized consideration describes a leader who helps followers to develop and grow through mentoring and coaching (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transactional leadership is a nested component of transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yukl, 2010). Transactional leadership involves values such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and reciprocity (Yukl, 2010). Transactional leadership tends to be directive and action-oriented (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2010).

In summary, effective leadership is contextual, defined more by cultural and societal shifts and the needs of organizations than by individual leaders themselves. Integrative leadership theories could incorporate concepts from a range of cultures, yet leadership theories remain mostly western-based (Dickson et al., 2009; Kouzes & Pozner, 2002; K. Parry & Bryman, 2006). According to Schein (2010), "[l]eadership and culture are two sides of the same coin" (p. 22). Notable scholars have introduced empirical works on cultural differences in leadership practices around the world (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004; Triandis, 1989). For example, western leadership style is based on management science (Yukl, 2010), which

contrasts sharply with eastern philosophical leadership styles in several ways, as described in the next section.

Eastern Leadership Theory

Generally, in collectivist societies, leadership is seen more as a group activity (Dickson et al., 2009). The philosopher Lao Tzu once said, "a leader is best when people barely know [s]he exists, when his [her] work is done, his [her] aim is fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves" (Gallo, 2008; Wang & Chee, 2011). Five major ancient philosophies underpin Chinese leadership theory. Wang and Chee (2011) suggest the philosophical approach may be due to a strong scholarly influence and the importance of education that was established in the Confucian era. In order of emergence, Confucianism, Mohism, Daoism, Legalism, and Militarism form "the DNA of Chinese Culture and leadership" (Wang & Chee, 2011).

Confucianism is tied to the humane theory of leadership. Confucian values have had the most pervasive influence on leadership (Chen & Lee, 2008; Fernandez, 2004; Gallo, 2008; Lin, 2008; Tsui, Wang, Xin, Zhang, & Fu, 2004). According to Chen and Farh (2010), "[i]n Confucian philosophy, the leader is entrusted with the supreme task of building culture" (p. 607). The harmony, most importantly, starts with the leader who practices benevolence and *ren*, which is loosely translated as being people-driven. The leader is a role model and person of honour (*jun zi*). *Jun* means ruler and *zi* means master or scholar. Thus to be *jun zi* means to be gentlemanly, intellectual, and to practice perfect filial relationships, showing the utmost integrity and benevolence to others, all within a hierarchical structure (Gallo, 2008; Wang & Chee, 2011). A leader should also have deep insight into business issues (*wu)* and generally have proven technical ability (Gallo, 2008). Chinese leaders follow the "golden mean principle of *zhong yong*: self-cultivating, never extreme, collaborative, flexible", and developing *guan xi*

connections (Wang & Chee, 2011, p.33). Organizations are considered to run very efficiently in a structured environment that privileges age, seniority, and the male gender. In return for loyalty, the leader is bound to care and duty in a patriarchal leadership style and obligation. This outlook was evident in President Hu's approach when he launched "harmonious society" to establish stability and solidarity in a changing society (Wang & Chee, 2011, pp. 34–35).

Altruistic theory (Mohism) espouses a paternalistic leadership style but, in contrast to Confucianism, there is a move to lessen class differences. The predominant Chinese leadership style is paternalistic leadership, which stresses authority, benevolence, and morality (Chen & Farh, 2010). A Mohist organization would stress the fraternal team but the leader still maintains a strong hand; reward and punishment are introduced as mechanisms of control. Mao Zedong and the communist regime would be representative of this leadership philosophy, which is very much in existence in China today (Gallo, 2008). Those who identify with traditional Chinese values are more likely to respond to paternal leadership than those who identify with the less traditional Chinese societies of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore (Chen & Farh, 2010, p. 604).

Mao was also instrumental in elevating the role of women in the workplace by encouraging equality and the pursuit of work outside of the home. However, feminism in China today does not hold the same meaning as in western societies. Although careers are open to women, the Confucian value of gender hierarchy placing men first still persists. Consequently, women in leadership may also try to maintain face for their male subordinate employees (Wang & Chee, 2011). Communist ideologies have had a marked effect on leadership, including the gap in leadership development that occurred during the cultural revolution (Gallo, 2008). However, the economic reforms introduced in 1986 are now creating much variation and innovation in leadership style (Tsui et al., 2004).

A hallmark of Daoism, or *yin yang* philosophy, is naturalistic leadership theory: the belief that the world will evolve as destined. Adaptability and acceptance of the organization as a constantly changing dynamic between people and the environment guides this leadership philosophy (Chen & An, 2009). Daoist leaders are altruistic, calm, flexible, modest, transparent, and empowering, but still active in guiding others behind the scenes (Lee, Han, Byron, & Fan, 2008). There is more autonomy and a long-term view in the organization. The Chinese saying that embodies this leadership philosophy is "be like water," (Lee et al., 2008, p. 90) which is to be mild and adaptable, but a powerful enduring force. The unity of opposites encompasses more work-life balance. While philosophically elegant, in practice the theory is in contradiction with other predominant values of power control in a high power distance culture within organizations (Wang & Chee, 2011). Thus, Daoism may be applied more readily as an individual practice or philosophy than in a competitive organizational setting. Notwithstanding, there may be more overall tolerance of duality and ambiguity than in a western culture (Gallo, 2008).

Legalism or institutional theory strives to introduce regulation and the rule of law that is more prevalent in western societies. This was introduced in the 1990's as a means to bring about scientific management and structure (Gallo, 2008; Wang & Chee, 2011). This practice influences leadership and management practice more from an operational perspective, although it may also somewhat moderate the heavy reliance on *guan xi*. Lastly, Militarism or strategic theory has its roots in Sun Zi's writings, *Art of War*. The leader is seen as pragmatic, competitive, and goal driven, maintaining strict control and applying unorthodox methods. Most importantly, this philosophy relies on the leader to be an expert strategic thinker in defeating the opponent. The Chinese are reputed to be strong negotiators, which is often perplexing for western leaders who apply a more open style of business (Gallo, 2008).

East/west fusion of leadership styles. *Yi Jing*, the philosophical *Book of Changes*, suggests that no one leadership style is preferred and that circumstances should prescribe the type of leadership employed (Wang & Chee, 2011). It appears that Chinese leaders may indeed be more adaptable in their leadership styles. Tsui et al. (2004) conducted surveys, focus groups, and interviews with 1500 mid-level managers in mainland China, which identified their key leadership behaviours and found evidence of overlap between transformational leadership and paternalistic leadership. Zhang, Chen, Liu, and Liu (2008) surveyed business executives who used sincerity, social responsibility, harmony, and the golden mean of Chinese philosophy for their strategic and relational issues, and drew on western sources of leadership for task orientation. Leadership styles in China are combinations of diverse western and traditional Chinese leadership philosophies and indicate intentional changes in leaders (Chen & Farh, 2010 ; Gallo, 2008). Is it possible that western styles could also innovate and incorporate east/west leadership practice?

Intercultural Leadership

Globalization affects diversity within organizations and thus the exercise of leadership (Schein, 2010). Leaders do not act entirely independently; leadership also depends on context and the cultural conditioning of followers (Hofstede, 2001; Mellahi, 2000). Nonetheless, it has also been established that leadership can shift the values and beliefs of organizational culture as well as its organizational practices (Chen & Farh, 2010; Connerley & Pedersen, 2005; Schaetti, Ramsey, & Watanabe, 2009; Schein, 2010). However, it is unknown whether new "fusion" styles of leadership could reflect bicultural and even multicultural identities, and whether this could conflict with more static and lagging leadership norms held by organizations. Thus, organizations are encouraged to examine how leadership styles might be enacted in a

multicultural environment (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Eagly & Chin, 2010b). Eagly and Chin (2010b) argue the paradigm shift to recognize ethnic identity in leadership style will make leadership and organizations more inclusive. Organizationally acceptable leadership practices have neglected diversity from a standpoint perspective and therefore need to be expanded if they are to remain relevant (Chin, 2010; Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010).

The term *intercultural* is used to describe leadership in this study, rather than other terms that might be considered synonymous, such as multicultural, cross-cultural, or diverse. The term intercultural is closely related to interculturalism, which has been described as intercultural exchange: a dynamic interaction between cultures seeking commonality to overcome discrimination (Kymlicka, 2003), which implies an achievement or skill-based type of leadership. Bennett and Bennett (2004) similarly describe interculturalism as the "learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviours, of a group of interacting people" (p. 149). Thus, intercultural leadership is at the intersection of leadership practice and intercultural competence: "intercultural practice for contemporary leaders is the intention to develop a personal intercultural practice; developing from ethnocentric to ethnorelative competence as part of personal leadership development" (Schaetti et al., 2009, p. 129). Intercultural leadership competence is differentiated by inclusiveness and interaction that seeks to leverage different worldviews. Kim (2009) defines intercultural competence as "an individual's overall capacity to engage in behaviours and activities that foster cooperative relationships in all types of social and cultural contexts in which culturally or ethnically dissimilar others interface" (p. 62). Intercultural leadership competence might be considered an individual skill, but companies also need to be interculturally competent. Individuals act, not groups, but individuals act within organizational cultural norms (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). The extent to which "individuals

act within context, makes an interaction intercultural" (Deardorff, 2009, p.7). Thus, intercultural leadership competence at both the leader and organizational level is a key to success in the twenty-first century (Moodian, 2009).

National and Organizational Culture

Notable scholars have investigated national and organizational culture from a variety of dimensional perspectives, mostly comparing national cultures and values (Hofstede, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Schwartz, 1994; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). A debate among theorists relates to the pace of change that macro cultures might absorb and how might this shape culture. Hofstede (2001) maintains that cultures are stable over time and argues that amid globalization, values will be divergent. On the other hand, Ralston, Holt, Terpstra, and Kai-Cheng (1997) argue for a cross-vergence construct where managers in multinational companies might integrate cultural values across countries. Tung (2008) argues for the urgency to examine intra-national diversity rather than relying on country constructs for comparison. She further asserts that the "variations within a country can be as salient as, and sometimes more so than, differences across countries," particularly in such countries as Canada (Tung & Verbeke, 2010, p. 1266). For example, Tung (2008) explains the dynamic nature of ex-host country nationals (EHCN), as people who share the same ethnic background and may have been born in one country, but are educated or work in another country. As bicultural individuals, they cannot be arbitrarily assigned to one country or another based on ethnicity or nationality (Tung, 2008). The additional complex factors of age, ethnicity, and generational differences call for a multilevel, multilayer analysis, otherwise values, behaviours, and practices are difficult to gauge (Tung & Verbeke, 2010). Moreover, there is no straightforward answer to whether or not the individual perceives his/her cultural identities as compatible or oppositional (Benet-Martínez

& Haritatos, 2005). Cultural change is also contextually based on the "cultural tightness-looseness" of a given society. Gelfand, Nishii, and Raver (2006) explain, "The tighter the culture, the more rigid its codes of behaviour and social structures and the less forgiving it is of those who go against these norms" (p. 1226). In contrast, loose cultures feature relaxed social norms and are more tolerant of those who deviate from them. There is no specific measure for Canada; however, an assessment of the United States indicates it is one of the more loose cultures among a study of 33 countries, and thus more capable of absorbing cultural change (Gelfand et al., 2011). Canada has experienced a dramatic demographic change over recent years and it could be argued that national cultural values may also shift over time. Fang (2005) compared culture to the dialectic concept of *yin/yang*. Culture is 'both/and' instead of 'either/or' (p. 77). The comparison represents the complexity of a cosmopolitan mixing of values, old and new, that can coexist. Rather than culture being subsumed, "new types of nations are produced, new types of difference" (Fang, 2005, p.87).

Important foundations in organizational culture and diversity are informed by cross-cultural national influences and additional theories of organizational culture built from anthropology and psychology (Schein, 2010). Schein argues that if learning organizations make a commitment to diversity, that "diversity increases adaptive capacity" (p. 284). Connerley and Pedersen (2005) note that people who have lived in unfamiliar cultures possess more intercultural awareness and learn to respond in unique ways; therefore, promotion of ethno-cultural individuals may build upon the inclusive culture, skills of the organization, and leadership depth. Every organization is a cultural construct (Trompenaars & Wooliams, 2009). It would appear, then, that the prospects for successful multiculturalism in Canada should be strong, but how has the country and its institutions adapted to the new reality of its growing

intercultural citizenship? Organizations play a critical role in how they view diversity and in the practices adopted to promote diversity.

Diversity programs in organizations. Diversity programs have been championed as a competitive advantage and business strategy to attract and retain skilled workers and to better service and market to diverse clients (Cox Jr. & Blake, 1991; Ely & Thomas, 2001). Additionally, the "value in diversity" (Cox Jr., 2001, p.5) hypothesis suggests that diverse teams deliver better financial and organizational performance (Conference Board of Canada, 2008; Herring, 2009; Ng & Tung, 1998), or neutral to negative dependent on contextual group processes (Kochan et al., 2003). Diversity has become an overarching concept for a broad range of perspectives and programmatic business tactics. Ely and Thomas (2001) have explained the historical progression of diversity programs and corporate strategies. Organizational responses to equal employment legislation began with diversity awareness training and affirmative hiring goals. Under this paradigm, minority members are expected to assimilate and organizational members are encouraged to be colour blind. In the next phase, organizations reframe diversity as a competitive advantage to "gain access and legitimacy" with diverse markets (Ely & Thomas, p. 240). The authors identify a third phase in the evolution of diversity programs of "integration and learning" that might create an environment of inclusiveness (p. 243). But do diversity programs help to advance visible minorities into leadership roles? Herdman and McMillan-Capehart (2010) found that diversity programs contributed to higher levels of diversity climate, but that the relationship was not straightforward. They determined that organizations also needed to place attention on levels of visible minority leadership representation and improve upon managerial relational values. Bennett (2009) claims the current view in the diversity field has shifted from celebrating, appreciating, or managing diversity to inclusion and intercultural

competence. She further posits that intercultural competence is a prerequisite for addressing racial, class, and gender issues.

A critical review of organizational diversity theory reveals much about how gender and ethnicity are constrained in the workplace. Numerous studies have concluded there is a gap in employee experience that includes such things as tokenism, less access to mentoring, exclusion from valuable social networks, glass ceilings, and other forms of restricted mobility (Nkomo & Stewart, 2006; Zanoni, Janssens, Benschop, & Nkomo, 2010). Canadian data also suggests that multiculturalism is not always working in practice. For example, Zong (2007) examined how Mainland Chinese immigrants in Vancouver, British Columbia experienced prejudicial attitudes from mainstream society. In addition, Zong conducted an analysis of Chinese immigrants in Canada illustrating how current practices continue to emulate discriminatory behavior of the past (Zong & Perry, 2011). Zong (2007) concluded, "[t]here are contradictory social values within a multicultural society…. On the one hand, Canadian people generally accept 'racial equality' and 'democracy' as central values in a social democratic society; on the other hand, cultural ethnocentrism prevails in society as reflected in negative attitudes toward Chinese immigrants" (p. 126).

Alvesson and Deetz (2006) have observed that postmodern critical perspectives on diversity management are oriented in different ways to question dominant practices and ideologies with an overriding tone of skepticism. For example, Kersten (2000) claims that diversity programs fail to critically examine the racialized nature of organizations. Diversity theory has been criticized for its theoretical reliance on social psychology to explain social relations (Konrad, Prasad, & Pringle, 2006; Zanoni et al., 2010). These authors argue that there has been an inadequate theorization of power within the organizational context (Zanoni et al.,

2010). The criticism is that diversity programs have been constructed from a managerial perspective and there is great focus on normalizing diversity rather than arguing for strategies for change (Nkomo & Stewart, 2006). Therefore, the celebration of diversity in organizations has valued difference without dealing with power issues (Dei, 2007).

Leadership and power in organizations is a structural phenomenon. "Organization and equality are mutually inconsistent, because organization requires hierarchy, subordination and control" (Starbuck, 2003, p. 156). Clegg (2003) maintains that "all forms of organization are forms of social relations and all relations involve power relations" (p. 536). However, power in everyday social relationships can also lead to unintended repressive practices that marginalize and make invisible some constituents. The experiences of leaders and followers in diverse environments are "qualitatively different than in homogenous environments" (Eagly & Chin, 2010a, p. 221). Moreover, when leaders legitimate the unequal status of some employees, the effects are translated into power differentials (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). The structure empowers the ruling minority while disempowering the labouring majority (Clegg, Courpasson, & Phillips, 2006). Until there is representation of visible minority leadership, a class system could prevail that prevents social mobility of visible minorities, which is unhealthy for the social fabric of Canada (Omidvar, 2011). The goal is to reveal these practices to institute more ethical and responsive organizations, with coactive democratic organizational power, or "power with, not power over people" (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006, p. 34).

Discrimination and stereotyping. Psychological empirical research continues to highlight the existence of hiring discrimination. Myers (2000) argues that unequal social status is a precursor to sustaining stereotypes and prejudice. He discusses social identity theory in terms of in-group and out-group formation, highlighting the conformity that occurs to sustain

prejudice. The question is how does this originate in behaviour? Eagly and Chin (2010a) argue this occurs when stereotypes about a social group are incongruent with the attributes they believe are required for success in leadership roles. These social constructions sometimes surface in general and subjective statements like "they just don't have what it takes" for success in leadership. The remedy is to understand how people think about leadership. Ideals of leadership are influenced by situational and organizational contexts, as well as beliefs about leadership that weigh more heavily in the judgment of leadership quality. Eagly and Chin (2010a) claim that common leadership beliefs sustained in North American hegemonic constructs are strongly correlated to masculine qualities; for example, women are not seen as particularly agentic. Similarly, Asians are seen as quiet and unassertive (Madon et al., 2001). Pittinsky (2010) points out that both negative and positive beliefs are inherent in the more recent stereotype described as the model minority myth, which asserts that Asians have overcome all the barriers to success because of their hard work and high levels of education. This myth creates unrealistic pressure on Chinese Canadians and also ignores the realities of subtle discrimination in the workplace (Cheng & Thatchenkery, 1997; Hyun, 2005). In addition, Asians are subjected to occupational stereotypes. For example, Sy et al. (2010) found that Asian Americans were considered a good fit for an engineering position over a sales position and viewed not as suitable for leadership positions compared to Caucasians. Such beliefs are held as subconscious mental models and thus stereotyping is denied as a practice (Dovidio, 2001; Kandola, 2009). Consequently, fully qualified individuals from outsider groups have reduced access to leadership roles in organizations (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Heilman & Eagly, 2008). However, visible minorities demonstrate leadership in capacities external to the organization. For example, Hewlett, Luce and West (2005) found that visible minorities were apt to hold leadership roles in religious

organizations, serve as mentors to youth, and be involved in social outreach programs in the community. The authors concluded that the evidence represented invisible leadership, not yet recognized as transferrable to corporations. Stereotype threat also contributes to the problem. In this case, minorities come to believe the stereotype ascribed to them and therefore personal doubts about leadership ability prevent them from pursuing leadership roles (Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005).

Scholars have investigated the existence of gender bias and the importance of gender to our understanding of leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Heilman & Eagly, 2008). Less has been said about how cultural leadership can be integrated in a theoretical frame of leadership. Rather, Zweigenhaft and Domhoff (2006) claim that diverse leaders are "willing to join the game as it has always been played" by reducing visible signs of their ethnic origins (Chin, 2010, p.151). Eagly and Chin (2010b) elaborate on the intersection of leadership and diversity as traditional standalone subjects. They argue that new theory should explore how leaders with dual or more identities could provide excellent leadership based on their differences to North American leadership styles. The experiences of women in leadership in the workplace represents potential parallels and similarities to the experience of visible minorities in leadership (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Chin, 2010; Eagly & Carli, 2007). While the experiences of each are qualitatively different, Ayman and Korabik (2010) argue women and visible minorities coexist in a symbiotic relationship. For example, both groups are subjected to exclusion based on visible physical characteristics and invisible value components. Both groups experience bias that limit acceptance into senior leadership roles based on prototypical characteristics ascribed to senior leadership in western societies (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Eagly & Chin, 2010a). Both gender and ethnicity groups experience wage gaps, less access to power and resources, and structural

factors of occupational segregation (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Eagly & Chin, 2010a; Kandola & Kandola, 2013). Variables like education, training, and job experience cannot really account for the unequal access (Eagly & Chin, 2010a). To make leadership theories more inclusive, Chin (2010) asserts that leadership in a changing world could be shaped on the duality of identity as leaders and members of gender/ethnicity, whereas Ayman and Korabik (2010) argue for a reduction in ethnocentrism and a focus on intercultural competence within leadership theory to make models more inclusive.

Intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is defined as "the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent difference or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioural orientations to the world" (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009, p. 7). Intercultural competence is at the heart of linking leaders and organizational practice and many theories and models exist attempting to explain the construct (Deardorff, 2009; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

In a recent and relevant study of intercultural competence in an organizational setting, Li (2011) conducted a 2-year systematic assessment of 30 health authority executives in Vancouver, British Columbia. The pilot study investigated the effectiveness of a commonly used intercultural competence training model and found that fear was a missing concept among all intercultural competence models. Interestingly, more than 90% of the participants were at the minimization orientation stage of competence and did not progress, and even regressed, after a 6 month period (Li, 2011). Minimization tends to focus on cultural commonality, but does not recognize differences (Bennett, 2009; Li, 2011). Minimization is one of the most resistant stages since it is comfortable to assume "we are all the same despite surface differences," thus avoiding more complex understandings (Bennett, 2009, p. 102). The Li findings represented an important

observation since interculturally competent individuals should be able to recognize and accept their own and others' cultures. Li posited that the sticking factor was fear, a natural emotion including uncertainly, worry, hesitation, and reluctance (Li, 2011). He further argued that dealing with fear in a courageous way might help individuals to unlock progress toward intercultural competence (Li, 2011). The study represents an important comparison to the current dissertation, which seeks to explore invisible barriers in an organizational leadership climate designed to embrace diversity. Importantly, those bicultural individuals who have internalized changes from immigration may be more adept at intercultural competence change. "The difference is obvious: being a minority abroad or a majority at home. The former raises higher sensitivity to cultural similarity and difference than the latter" (Li, 2011, p.7). Therefore a blind spot of unconscious fear of change and minimization may be at the root of lack of progress in realizing intercultural competence within most leaders in organizations. It is possible that these dynamics might also be at play at ABC Bank.

Organizational intercultural competence. A relevant issue is whether organizations are interculturally competent in managing outcomes of visible minority talent into leadership roles (Cox Jr., 2001; Manning, 2011; Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Have organizations examined how their traditional practices might fail to recognize ethnic identity? Employment systems are designed for one fairly homogenous group of majority; however, Canadian workplaces need to be able to incorporate the "other" (Weiner, 2011). For example, valuing initiative, self-promotion versus self-effacing behaviours, and extroverted behaviours that are more common western practices may not reward the traditional ways of minority employees (Manning, 2011). Moreover, performance assessment is culture bound because skills and competencies of employees of different cultures are evaluated based on western paradigms (Manning, 2011).

Promotion into leadership positions generally occurs from within companies and from a track record in individual contributor roles. At some point in a career, there is succession planning into leadership, evidence of the ability to assume leadership, or sponsorship by the direct manager into leadership (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Kanter, 1979). The direct manager plays a critical role in decentralized hiring environments and recognizing and promoting diverse talent (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Manning, 2011). For example, in a three-year study, Thomas (2001) found a successful pattern of advancement for visible minorities included a strong network of mentors and sponsors who were interculturally competent. He also found that, unless mentorship was engaged early in a career, advancement stalled out in middle management. The direct manager can also help develop social capital within a unit creating a sense of belonging for all employees. Moreover, there is information inherent in the network that creates access to resources and levels the playing field (Catalyst, 2003; Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007). However, Manning (2011) notes the "direct manager is acting within the corporate culture of learned behaviours and may not be aware of cultural constraints or be willing to change practices without affecting his or her own place in the culture" (p. 63). Therefore, change must occur both in middle-management leadership practices and in organizational norms. If visible minorities were already well established in leadership roles, one could further argue that they would have the innate understanding of tacit organizational knowledge, while at the same time a deeper level of intercultural competence necessary to propel further change and deeper representation.

Summary

This literature review has broadly covered the complex and multiple factors that might

affect career progression of Chinese Canadians into senior leadership roles. In summary, cultural values and communication norms are distinct for Chinese Canadians. Leadership style is both reflective of the dominant culture and of individual values. There are differences in western and eastern leadership theories and styles, but evidence exists of some diversity in emerging leadership practice. Diversity management in organizations may have embedded cultural bias and power imbalances in that leadership is not representative of the "other." Organizational talent management practices and subtle stereotyping may continue to foster exclusion from career progression into leadership roles. Importantly, Chinese Canadians embody unique outlooks and values based on their bicultural experiences and have expressed an inability to maintain authenticity and to bring their full selves to the workplace. What does it mean to feel the need to "Canadianize" or feel pressured to conform to leadership models, as stated in the introduction? Bicultural identity might better inform intercultural leadership practices. This dissertation is designed to inquire about career mobility into senior leadership roles through the distinct lens of the bicultural identity of Chinese Canadians.

Research question. The scope of the research has been defined with the following question: RQ 1. How do Chinese Canadian ABC employees perceive their career progression into senior leadership roles? A sub question asked is RQ 2. What are Chinese Canadian ABC employees' conceptions of effective leadership style? Chinese Canadian employees are Canadians who self-identify with a Chinese heritage. The employee base in this study includes both immigrants and Canadian-born Chinese of multiple generations, as mirrored in the general population. Chinese heritage may include being from China or having one or more parents of Chinese descent.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The broad objective of this study was to better understand the social issue of Chinese Canadian leadership representation and how cultural factors, regarding both the participants and the organization, might affect the career mobility experiences of Chinese Canadians in ABC Bank. A specific goal of the research was to both honour individual experiences and provide useable data for broader generalizations in the workplace. The primary research question was: "How do Chinese Canadian ABC employees perceive their career progression into senior leadership roles?" After careful consideration of the study objectives and goals, phenomenography was chosen as the primary methodology. Phenomenography is a qualitative research strategy that categorizes the variation in the perspectives of participants (Marton, 1986). In order to expand upon the relationship of bicultural identity to the research outcomes, additional quantitative data was employed through the use of an ethnic identity scale, MEIM-R (Phinney & Ong, 2007), and an acculturation scale, SL-Asia (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992). This methodology complements existing knowledge of ethnic career mobility with a deeper understanding of Chinese Canadians perspectives.

Phenomenography

Marton (1986) developed phenomenography as a methodology with a strongly empirical approach based on variation theory (Marton & Booth, 1997); it is "a research method adapted for mapping the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in, the world around them" (p. 31), or more simply put, "[p]henomenography sets out to reveal the different ways in which people experience the same phenomenon" (Pherali, 2011, p. 145). Phenomenography aims for a collective analysis of experience and thus provides a fullness of understanding (Åkerlind, 2005).

The goal is to interpret the experiences of participants and tease out variations in perspectives among the group (Bowden, 2000). It is knowledge of the variation that allows learning to take place (Dahlin, 2007; Pang, 2003). Thus, variation theory provides the underpinning and value of the study.

Phenomenography falls within the interpretivist frame and borrows from elements of phenomenology, in elucidating human experience, and from grounded theory, in that the process is inductive, building theories rather than testing preconceived ones (Dunkin, 2000). However, phenomenography is differentiated from phenomenology: "where phenomenology represents the collection of separate individuals' perspectives, phenomenography represents the range of perspectives in a collectivized system of categories of description that aim to capture the essence of different ways of experiencing a phenomenon" (Dunkin, 2000, p. 139). In addition, Dunkin (2000) notes that phenomenography is interested not just in the phenomenon's description, but also in the similarities and differences between how people experience a phenomenon. There is a sacrificing of individual "thick" description, most common in phenomenology, for "thin" description (Dunkin, 2000, p. 139). What is gained is the ability to "map the range of perspectives" of all those in the group while still ensuring the participants have the opportunity to "make meaning" of the phenomena in the spirit of hermeneutic theory (Dunkin, 2000, p. 141).

Marton (1986) proposes that what gives phenomenography its empirical power is the second-order perspective that it takes. There is a difference between the participant's experience and the participant's conception or perspective of that experience (Dahlin, 2007). The second-order perspective studies conceptions of reality and presents the world as seen through the eyes of others (Pherali, 2011; Richardson, 1999). It is through second-order perspective that understanding about how one perceives the world is obtained. Marton and Booth (1997) expand:

> In order to make sense of how people *handle* problems, situations, the world, we have to understand the way in which they *experience* the problems, the situations, the world that they are handling or in relation to which they are acting. (p.111)

Once a second-order perspective is captured, in this case called a conception, a further logical extension is that these conceptions of phenomena could be grouped into similarities and differences. Taken one step further, the categories of conceptions could be grouped into related themes and mapped onto what is called the outcome space, which ultimately represents a collective wisdom. It is theorized that a limited number of categories of conceptions will surface and that the outcome space is thus generalizable. The conceptions are generally conceptual in character and are related to each other in a hierarchical way showing a progression, where at the higher level you can "look back and reflect" upon the lower one, but not the other way around (Dahlin, 2007, p.335). "Conceptions exist on the collective or cultural level and then tend to form systems with a life of their own" (Dahlin, p. 333). The unit of analysis is therefore the conception (Marton & Pong, 2005). An important distinction is that phenomenography thus represents research at the collective level of analysis and not at the individual level, which provided a fit for the current study. Overall, the second-order perspective, or differentiation between subject and object, helps to understand the ontological and epistemological nature of phenomenography (Marton & Booth, 1997). The phenomenon of how Chinese Canadians in ABC bank experience and make sense of career mobility, can never be measured directly. But it can be known by capturing variation in ways the phenomenon is experienced. By capturing the multiple aspects and constructing a whole picture – the outcome space, the whole of the phenomenon can be known.

Bowden (2000) proposes that there could be both pure and developmental applications of phenomenography. Developmental phenomenographic research engages participants in the research topic and thus both informs its participants and enables them to consider the ways the everyday world operates to create the social phenomenon in question. Bowden conceives of research in this context as similar to action research (Bowden, 2000). Indeed this study's topic itself is related to critical diversity studies and therefore fits with developmental phenomenography, which was adopted as the study's approach. The interview invitation described the objective of the study and therefore brought issues to the forefront, whereas pure phenomenography is more experimental in nature and thus masks the study topic from participants (Bowden, 2000). The participants were not as aware of issues surrounding mobility into leadership and were more apt to assume fault for their own development gaps rather than consider systemic issues. They were generally keen to learn more about what others might say on the topic. Participants, leaders, and career developers learn to expand their understanding which allows various constituents within the organization to develop more successful approaches in career advancement of Chinese Canadians to more senior leadership roles. In addition the learning facilitates the development of a portfolio of actionable items that could be undertaken.

Phenomenography was originally developed in the educational field in the 1970s, mostly in teaching and learning from variation theory, such as in the conceptions of academic development (Åkerlind, 2008). It has also been widely used in the health sciences, such as in the Canadian study of the impact of culture on health care services (Agger-Gupta, Agger-Gupta, & Richards, 2012). The method has been used most widely in the USA, UK, Scandinavian countries, Australia, Hong Kong, China (Hong, Wong, & Zhan, 2013), and increasingly in Canada. More recently, the methodology has been used in management and other disciplines,

for example in studies of workplace competence (Sandberg, 2000), mass media and acculturation (Qian, 2008), service quality (Schembri & Sandberg, 2002), leadership (MacGillivray, 2010), ethnic diversity (Peck, 2003), and democracy (Chareka, 2005), to name just a few. In summary, phenomenography is a qualitative approach that is empirical, representative, and also descriptive (Dunkin, 2000). Phenomenography is thus a research approach suited to any setting where there is both an exploratory and more prescriptive intent. As such, phenomenography provided a suitable approach to investigate the phenomenon of how Chinese Canadian employees perceive their experiences in career mobility toward senior leadership roles in ABC Bank

The researcher is responsible for carrying out phenomenographic inquiry free of predetermined views, biases, or attempts to steer the participants' direction (Ashworth & Lucas, 1998; Saldana, 2009). An acknowledged challenge is to maintain the integrity of the methodology and not become prone to what Ashworth and Lucas call "partial phenomenography" (p. 420), whereby the researcher looks to place emerging themes into presupposed categories drawn from the existing literature. Literature reviews completed in advance of the interview process may be premature and cause such biases. Some understanding of the topic is necessary to complete responsible inquiry; however, that very pre-existing understanding in the researcher could also inadvertently affect biases. In this context, Ashworth and Lucas (1998) introduce Husserl's concept of bracketing, which requires the researcher to purge all presuppositions to reach a state of '*epoche*,' in which the participant's life-world accounts represent the only reality (p. 418). It is important to acknowledge the challenges outlined are potentially relevant to this study. A preliminary literature review informed part of the interview question set. However, as will be described later, part of the interview also included open-ended inquiry, in which participants simply talked about themselves and their

careers. In addition, the coding process did not presuppose themes. Overall, strategies were implemented to mitigate some of the potential shortfalls of phenomenographic inquiry.

Ethnic Identity and Acculturation Scales

One ethnic identity scale, MEIM-R (Phinney & Ong, 2007), and one acculturation scale, SL Asia (Suinn et al., 1992; Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Vigil, 1987), were introduced as quantitative measurement tools to supplement the main phenomenographic approach. The quantitative measurement was not used to prove or disprove a particular hypothesis in the dissertation design, but rather to complement the qualitative data by assessing the levels of ethnic identity and acculturation within the participant group. The literature on acculturation supports that a blended methodology is preferable to gain a deeper understanding of the participant's perspective (Cokley, 2007; Matsudaira, 2006). Moreover, the concurrent triangulation of the blended method provided a way to use multiple sources of data to examine the same topic, thus strengthening the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). One of the key objectives of leveraging diversity in the workplace is to recognize unique perspectives and values that come from diverse workers (Eagly & Chin, 2010b). Therefore, the goal of using ethnic identity and acculturation scales in the study was to validate, in a uniform way, whether bicultural identity exists in the participant group and whether the bicultural identity was strong or weak. Previous studies of visible minorities striving for leadership roles have brought forward data that may be related to acculturation stresses. For example, visible minorities feel pressured to "Canadianize" (Giscombe, 2008) or may reduce visible signs of their ethnic origins (Zweigenhaft & Domhoff, 2006). In summary, the use of ethnic identity and acculturation scale results supported an extra group level of analysis to draw upon. Ethnic identity and acculturation scales are related and complimentary measurements that

are explained next (Berry, 2003; Phinney, 2003).

MEIM-R scale. The MEIM-R scale measures ethnic identity and is one of the more widely used instruments (Cokley, 2007; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). Ethnic identity is a subjective self-assessment of the degree to which participants feel part of an ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Each individual has a unique ethnic perspective and experience that is contextual, dynamic, and that shapes his or her cultural orientation (Berry, 2003; Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Proudford & Nkomo, 2006). An internalized sense of self and achieved identity stems from exploration and commitment and is an individualized process (Phinney & Ong, 2007). In the MEIM-R scales, the participant first declares an ethnic identity that most fits with his/her self-assessment and how he/she would describe him/herself. Once ethnic identity is established, the participant answers six questions scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) through 5 (strongly agree), such that higher scores indicated stronger ethnic identity. The MEIM-R scale was revised to include stronger factorial components and changed from a 4-point scale to its current 5-point scale. The questionnaire is a compilation of two equally weighted factor scales: one relating to exploration of one's ethnic group and the other relating to commitment to one's ethnic group. The exploration factor captures the process of seeking information and experiences relevant to one's ethnicity and is a precursor to the commitment factor that reflects knowledge of and understanding about one's ethnicity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Ethnic identity is a precursor psychological adaptation that leads to acculturation strategies (Berry, 2003; Phinney, 2003).

SL-Asia scale. Acculturation scales seek to measure psychological components of acculturation and ethnic identity (Cokley, 2007; Matsudaira, 2006; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Suinn, 2010). Scales have evolved along with acculturation

theorization to recognize individual strategies of assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 2003; Miller, 2007; Phinney, 2003). A bilinear scale measures the participant's affinity to the culture of origin or the host culture and points in between, using Likert measurement options on a questionnaire. For example, results highly weighted to the host culture would suggest assimilation, results strongly weighted to the culture of origin suggest separation, and results balanced in the middle suggest integration or bicultural identity. However, a single scale providing only the polarized options of origin culture or host culture does not capture the identity of those participants who are marginalized and do not identify with either culture. Thus, multiple scales have been introduced by scholars, providing the participant the option of scoring identification with both cultures on separate scales. The latter option is lengthier to administer but may be more appropriate to gaining a fuller picture in some situations. The choice of single scales versus multiple scales is related to the complexity of the study and how reliant the research will be on quantitative measures (Miller, 2007). In this study, the emphasis was on the qualitative interview data, therefore a single bilinear scale seemed an appropriate choice.

In addition, the content of acculturation questionnaires has evolved to recognize that participant cultural identity is broadly composed of both values and behaviours (Cokley, 2007; Matsudaira, 2006; Miller, 2007; Zane & Mak, 2003b). Values are more internal in nature and capture domains like beliefs, knowledge, and pride in cultural identity (Miller, 2007; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). Values are believed to be more deeply ingrained and sustained over generations (Miller, 2007; Ryder et al., 2000). Behaviours are evident in outwardly observable factors, such as choices around language use, choice in celebrating traditional customs and holidays, and interaction with others of the same cultural origin (Matsudaira, 2006; Miller, 2007;

Ryder et al., 2000). Behaviours may also be contextual, where an individual may act differently in the workplace than in his or her home or with friends and community (Berry, 2006; Miller, 2007; Ryder et al., 2000). Therefore, scales that include both behaviours and values provide a fuller understanding of the participant. Data collection on values and behaviours can be accomplished with separate or combined domain scales. Combined value and behaviour scales are called bi-dimensional scales (Cokley, 2007; Miller, 2007; Ryder et al., 2000). Lastly, an important consideration in selection of scale instruments is the recognition that cultures and sub-cultures are not homogenous in their adaptation of values and behaviours (Cokley, 2007; Matsudaira, 2006; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). Different meanings likely exist even within the same ethnic group.

There are over 51 recognized and tested scales in the literature and many more adapted scales based on the needs of various research projects (Matsudaira, 2006). The most widely used instrument for assessing acculturation variation in Asian Americans is the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) (Suinn et al., 1992; Deng & Walker, 2007; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Zane & Mak, 2003b). The SL-ASIA scale represents a bilinear, multidimensional, orthogonal framework measuring two or more cultures independently. The SL-Asia is one of the few scales specifically designed for an Asian participant. The methodological goal was not to explain the meaning of individuals' experiences, but rather to discover the patterns and relationships of acculturation to the qualitative results at a group level. For the purposes of this study, the SL-Asia bi-dimensional scale provided sufficient data to complement the qualitative interviews.

Implementation

Population and Sampling. The selection criteria were established based on participant

roles as leaders and "pre-leaders" within the PL09–PL05 job range in ABC Bank (ABC Bank level criteria is described in Chapter One). This range represents the probable "succession to leadership" position up to and including executive-level leaders. Additionally, the criteria included those who self-identified with the Chinese heritage of at least one parent. The research participants were invited via a feature article posted on ABC's intranet website that described the project and eligibility requirements along with a description of privacy protections. Given the size of the participant base and method of open invitation, it was not be feasible to limit by any other elements, such as gender or tenure. Voluntary participants who came forward self-identified as being of Chinese heritage (at least one parent) and were given the researcher's email address for contact information. Through email exchange, the potential participants were provided with additional information, if necessary, and approved based on the study requirements. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in Toronto and Vancouver over a two-week period in August, 2013. The interviews were conducted in English and held in private locations of the participant's choice. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Further details of the interview process are covered later in the interview protocol section. A total of 34 participants responded and participated in the study, with an equal distribution of participants between Vancouver and Toronto. In addition, two pilot interviews were conducted, not included in research results, which afforded an opportunity to make adjustments as noted below. The total number of participants significantly exceeded the optimum number of 15 required to effectively reach a saturation of experience categories in phenomenography (Dunkin, 2000; Lamb, Sandberg, & Liesch, 2011).

It was possible that even with privacy assurances some participants might have felt uncomfortable with the researcher's senior role in the organization. This issue was mitigated by

limiting participants to job levels that occupy more senior positions in the organization. In addition, participants were drawn from cities where the researcher does not work and does not have any authority over the participants. As an added provision, participants were offered the option to select an independent interviewer to administer the participant questionnaire and code the data with a pseudonym before supplying the data for the study. None of the participants selected this additional privacy option. Participants were also given the option to decline participation in the acculturation scale and also to decline audio recording. All participants elected to complete the scales. Only two participants declined the audio recording and, in those cases, notes were taken of the conversation.

Interview protocol, analysis, reliability, and rigour. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format (Creswell, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Each interview included planned but open-ended questions, allowing the participant to direct the topic in areas relevant to his or her understanding. In addition, prompts were used to tease out the participant's meaning in more detail, such as "tell me more about that?" or "can you explain your comment?" Broad question themes were derived from the literature based on quantitative employee surveys and correlations to talent management practices (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Gallup Business Journal, 2012; Ling, Chia, & Fang, 2000). A list of potential questions and probes are contained in Appendix C. Although a thematic outline guided the interview protocol, the interviews were open enough to produce some surprising results, as discussed in the findings chapter.

Credibility of the research design is predicated on the way participants are chosen from the population group, as well as the precise nature of posed questions and planned interventions (Åkerlind, 2005). Consistency in interview techniques is critical, but no two interviews can be

identical. Each must flow from the responses of the research participant and attempt to draw out his or her experiences in an authentic way. To the extent possible, the research was planned with clear intention and consistent purpose, which provided the guiding principles throughout the whole study. Sandbergh (1997) argues reliability as interpretative awareness is more appropriate than reliability as replicability. The researcher and the participant jointly construct meaning; therefore, a foundation of trust and open dialogue was important to set the tone. The researcher was aware of that her outsider status might reduce trust, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

Both Sandberg (1997) and Bowden (2000, 2005) agree that participant conceptions are unlikely to be stable and will vary with time and context. It is accepted that the "right" interpretation does not exist (Marton & Booth, 1997; Sandberg, 1997). The argument is tested in the academic community and feedback from the interviewed participants is not sought. This is because the outcomes do not represent an individual's view but are a range of understandings within a group (Åkerlind, 2005). Communicative validity is the extent to which the study investigates what it intends to and accurately conveys the participants perspectives (Sandberg, 2005). It is acknowledged that participants may not describe their experiences accurately; their accounts may be mediated by impression management, cultural norms, or other motives that produce discrepancies (Sandberg, 2005). Pragmatic validity checks via follow up questions and prompts are used to uncover deeper responses. The, larger than required, participant sample also provided additional validity. Both checks are required to defend the dissertation, present to academic and professional communities, and to present useful strategies to ABC Bank. Reliability is defined by the rigour that has been applied to the research to ensure both quality and consistency. The original intention was to apply a coder reliability check (Åkerlind, 2005).

The test refers to the practice of two researchers independently coding transcripts and then comparing categorizations. This plan was not implemented due to the time, training, and cost constraints of involving a second researcher. However, the research and analysis phases were conducted with rigour, which produced a comprehensive range of findings.

Two pilot studies were conducted to test the interview protocol and completion of scale instruments. These interviews afforded a good opportunity to make adjustments. One of the main concerns going into the study was the researcher's role as an outsider and also as a senior employee of ABC Bank. As such, it was determined that the best method was to take more time at the beginning of the interview to set the stage and ensure the comfort of the participant. For example, in all of the subsequent study interviews, the invitation letter (see Appendix D) was reviewed again to ensure there were no questions. Then the privacy protections and consents were reviewed and signed (see Appendix E). The participants were then presented with the MEIM-R scale and the longer SL-Asia scale to complete (see Appendices F and G). The scales were relatively straightforward and completed with minimal questions. To set up the qualitative interview in a warm fashion, the participants were given time to simply tell their stories, prompted by the following questions: "how did you come to be here today?," "what is your background?," and "how did you come to immigrate and what was that experience like?" The participants were prompted to discuss their educational experience and a brief career history, including highlights. The adjustment led to a very rich and comfortable conversation, with interviews lasting about an hour each. The researcher appreciated hearing about the participants' personal journeys, which also helped to understand some of their later comments when the formal questions were asked.

The oral interview recordings were transcribed by a professional third party into written

format, using the verbatim format (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The verbatim method included all oral utterances and fillers such as "ers," "ums," and "you know," but did not include any additional punctuation that would interpret meaning or emotional responses such as laughing, since the method did not require emotional nuances to be captured. Sidebar discussion was limited to allow the participants to provide their full responses without interruption. The extra verbatim transcription service was selected to ensure no meaning was lost; however, the reader should be cautioned against assuming lesser English proficiency in the participants, since oral speech (even in native speakers of a language) is not as smooth or proper as written language so the quotes tend to appear less coherent (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Next, the transcripts were reviewed against the audio recordings for accuracy and then downloaded into Nvivo. Nvivo is a qualitative data analysis software program, one of several known in the field as computer-assisted qualitative data analysis systems (CAQDAS) (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Nvivo proved invaluable in managing the scope of data, which made it easy to conduct a thorough job of coding. The benefits of using tools such as Nvivo, however, are directly predicated on a deliberate and consistent research design, from data collection to analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In addition, three external workshops were attended to prepare for the study, including one on the practice of phenomenography, another on the qualitative coding and analysis process, and a final course on how to use Nvivo software, provided by the manufacturer. The workshops were all helpful in preparation to conduct the final phase of research analysis.

The interview data analysis was primarily approached as an iterative process as instructed by the phenomenographic method (Marton & Booth, 1997; Sandberg, 2000, 2005). The first step is familiarization, or reading transcripts. Bowden (2005) suggests that after holistically

reviewing each transcript, the researcher should begin coding broadly for each participant and creating coding headings along the way. Two full reviews of all the participants' transcripts were reviewed in this fashion, although it is noted that common themes started to emerge relatively early. In addition to the emergent codings, six other major coding headings that matched the interview question protocol were created. The second and third phases alternated between determining the "what" and "how" of career themes and career conceptions. For example, at the second pass of coding, the variation of experiences was coded in sub-headings, thus capturing similarities and differences. These first coding efforts were meant to apply broadly and widely to the data. The next coding efforts were spent refining and distilling the data (some 2,065 codes) into thematic areas. Lastly, the data was sorted by the "collective approach" (Bowden, 2005, p. 11), which reviewed for the frequency and weighting of codings that came forth. In the final phase, the hierarchical phenomenographic outcome space chart was refined and reviewed for accuracy and fit. At this point, a code heading was kept of meaningful quotes that reflected the variations within the participant group. After the phenomenographic outcome space was produced, the career conceptions were compared to the characteristics of the participant group. Since all interview data and scales were self-reported, this step provided another means of triangulating the data and strengthening validity of the study. Several months were spent coding and analyzing data following the iterative and phenomenographic method. Descriptive and versus-type coding methods were used for first, second, and third cycles (Saldana, 2009). Attribute files were created for each participant in Nvivo, which might have allowed for additional matrix queries against the qualitative data, but it was found the semi-structured interview set up did not align easily, therefore Nvivo was used primarily for coding and housing transcripts. The demographic data, ethnic identity, and acculturation scales were

analyzed separately, primarily through the use of Excel™.

SL-Asia scale and MEIM-R scale analysis and reliability. The original SL-ASIA scale (Suinn et al. 1987, 1992) is a 21-item single scale measuring personal preferences such as language use, ethnic identity, friendship choice, and generation on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (low acculturation) to 5 (high acculturation) (Matsudaira, 2006). Scores can be either averaged across the participants or divided into three levels: 1 (Asian identified) to 3 (bicultural) to 5 (western identified). The alpha coefficients of the SL-ASIA have been found to range between .69-.91 (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). As a result of recent theorization on acculturation measurement, five extra items, questions 22–26, were added to the SL-ASIA instrument to measure values, behavioural competencies, and ethnic identity (Suinn, 2003). The reliability and validity of the extra items 22–26 have not been examined (Matsudaira, 2006). These items are also measured on a 5-point Likert scale but scored differently. Items 22 and 23 can represent an SL-ASIA values score; items 24 and 25 can represent an SL-ASIA behavioural competencies score. All four questions are scored on a matrix grid, with instructions provided by Suinn in his 2003 personal communication. Item 26 is held separately as a measure of ethnic identity and can be scored either on a continuum or by distinct number. Answer 1 is Asian self-identified; answer 2 is Western self-identified; and answers 3, 4, 5 are all bicultural-identified, but with the following sub-categories: Answer 3 is "bicultural, Asian self-identity," answer 4 is "bicultural, Western self-identity," and answer 5 is "bicultural, bicultural self-identity" (Suinn, 2003). Scores fall into one of the four acculturation strategies: those high in both cultural dimensions are regarded as bicultural, those low in Asian and high in western culture as Western identified, those high in Asian and low in western cultures as Asian identified, and those low in both cultures as alienated (Matsudaira, 2006). The extra 5 questions were renumbered 1–5 in the

participant questionnaire to separate them from the first 21 questions.

Other Asian culture acculturation scales were reviewed for suitability. The Asian Value Scale (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999) is comprised of a single scale with 36 items. This scale has good validity at .81-.82 but is lengthier and specific to values only. Another values-only scale with less reliability is the European American Value Scale for Asian Americans (Wolfe, Yang, Wong, & Atkinson, 2001). The Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (Gim Chung, Kim, & Abreu, 2004) has good reliability, but is a multiple-scale instrument with 45 items, which was deemed too lengthy for this study. Sam and Berry (1995) have developed a shorter 10-item scale that has been used for several ethnic groups in Canada, but no validity is reported and it is not specific to Asian culture. Finally, the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (Ryder et al., 2000) is a multiple-scale 20-item instrument that has been used for multiple ethnic groups in Canada, including Chinese Canadians. This scale was patterned after the SL-ASIA with some rewording and addition of two items regarding willingness to marry outside of the culture of origin and preferences for type of humour. However, Ryder et al. (2000) also tested SL-ASIA and found reliability to their own scale in a study on psychosocial adjustment and health outcomes research. Similarly, Deng and Walker (2007) expanded upon SL-ASIA in Edmonton, Alberta, with the addition of more Chinese specific cultural factors such as filial piety. They tested their instrument with an exploratory factor analysis and found validity and considerable similarities in the factor structure to SL-ASIA in the five areas of reading, writing, and cultural preference; ethnic interaction; affinity for ethnic identity and pride; generational identity; and food preference. Overall, the SL-Asia scale provided ease of use, reliability, and flexibility in structure and scoring of the components of behaviours, values, and identity. The scale's applicability in the Canadian context has been tested with only small revisions. In

summary, the SL-ASIA scale satisfied the requirements of this study.

Based on feedback received by the members of the dissertation committee on language throughout the questionnaire, the researcher substituted all references to "Anglo" and "American" with "Western." Language choices were adjusted to be more inclusive of Mandarin and Cantonese dialects. Self-identity choices were also expanded to be more inclusive of specific regions beyond "Asian" or "Chinese," adding choices such as Taiwanese or Hong Kongese. Other ethnicity choices were amended to simply read "Non-Asian." Questions 10 and 11 were amended to be context specific: "in the community" or "at work," respectively, as appropriate for the purpose of this research. Other cultural choices in food, music, and entertainment were expanded to recognize the possibility that neither Western nor Asian might represent preferences.

The MEIM-R is designed to transcend ethnic group, but instead examines an individual's attitudes toward ethnicity through two underlying factors of exploration (with co-efficient alphas of .76) and commitment (with co-efficient alphas of .78) (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). A Confirmatory Factor Analysis using an independent sample indicated goodness of fit ranging from .96-.98 (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). The 6-item MEIM-R questionnaire is rated on a 5-point scale and summed, where higher scores indicate a higher level of ethnic identity. The summing of scores is differentiated in MEIM-R because Phinney (1992) concluded ethnic identity is a unified construct that consists of interrelated components of achievement and affirmation. Achievement refers to the exploration and resolution of ethnic identity issues. Affirmation refers to a sense of belonging and positive attitudes towards one's ethnic group. MEIM-R has already been tested in two Canadian domains. In one study of a group of 234 Chinese Canadians in western Canada, the scale demonstrated good reliability and validity at .89

and .76 respectively (Chia & Costigan, 2006). The easy to administer, quick assessment MEIM-R scale provided additional data on ethnic identity in the participant group and is complementary data to the SL-ASIA acculturation scale. The MEIM-R and SL-Asia scales were scored by the researcher in accordance with the instructions provided by the scholars who developed the scales. All results were then formatted into tabular and figure formats along with demographic data captured in the participant package.

The blended methodology and scale instruments were carefully selected to serve the research objectives but it is acknowledged that there are always limitations. Thus, researcher bias in determining the research design and tools will affect the research outcomes. It was the intent to delve deeply into bicultural perspectives, but to take a different tack than reliance on demographic data. Even so, the scale instruments cannot fully explain the construct of bicultural identity since bicultural identities are always evolving and context-specific. Overall, the parallel use of qualitative and quantitative methods provided greater insight into ethnic identity and acculturation, which aligned to the theoretical framework of bicultural identity that underpinned the research design. Moreover, the blended methodology of phenomenography and use of ethnic identity and acculturation scales served the research objectives. Greater insight was achieved from the evidence of dynamic and individual acculturation that appeared in both the scales and phenomenographic study, which will be described later in the findings section. Organizations are not as apt to view diversity through the lens of acculturative change, showing adaptation on the part of the employee. The blended methodology was further differentiated by illustrating a more robust profile of the participant group.

Ethics and Researcher Positionality

An ethical review was undertaken and approved by the Royal Roads University Research

Ethics Board. The researcher applied the ethical principles and rigour to issues of informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity relative to the various aspects of data gathering, such as interviews, for both individuals and the organization. ABC Bank does not have a formal ethics review process. However, extra caution and full transparency was exercised to gain permissions and awareness within the executive at ABC Bank. The process included consultation with the global director of diversity, human resource professionals, and regional presidents in both regions where the research was conducted, before final consent of the Executive Vice President for Canadian operations. Although ABC Bank had given its permission to conduct the research, it was decided that the results would be previewed by the organization before the study was published, thereby allowing ABC to select anonymity, if desired. In the pragmatic interests of timing, the organizational site is presented anonymously here. The identity of ABC Bank may be revealed at some time after publication, when results are disseminated.

The researcher has experienced organizational life for over 30 years in a variety of settings. As an insider to the organization under study, she had *a priori* knowledge of the organizational culture and norms, which also provided some benefit in understanding terminology and process. She has held senior leadership roles in large organizations for many years and personally experienced the politics of exclusion in regard to the frameworks that exclude women from leadership, leading to a sensitivity to the nuances and subtleties of the language and practices of exclusion. It is with this sense of cultural and political sensitivity that she approached this study of underrepresentation. The researcher was aware that her senior leadership role might create discomfort or distrust and that it may be difficult to draw out honest and full responses. Mitigation strategies were presented earlier in the methodology section. The researcher's primary concern was that of being an outsider to the Chinese Canadian community.

Notwithstanding the difficulties outlined, she found the participants to be open and forthcoming, sharing valuable insights.

Chapter Four: Findings

The structure of this findings chapter comprises several major areas. The chapter begins with an overview of the demographics of the participant group. The presentation of research findings includes three main sections: a group level analysis of the ethnic identity scale and the acculturation scale based on behaviours, values, and a self-assessment; qualitative findings of the participants' career experience; and qualitative findings of the participants' workplace experience. The two latter sections are titled "Our careers in leadership" and "Our workplace." The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the participants' variations in career experience, which is depicted in chart form, called an outcome space. The phenomenographic outcome space presents four main conceptions of career experiences. Specifically, the participants' experiences reflected the following conceptions: 1) marginalized by cultural barriers; 2) integrated in a specialized or professional niche; 3) integrated in a cultural markets niche; and 4) assimilating to the organizational environment. The participants' conceptions are cross-referenced against five major career themes: 1) language and communication; 2) leadership style; 3) the direct manger relationship and talent management; 4) sponsorship; and 5) social capital.

Demographics

A total of 34 employees took part in the study. The phenomenographic method stipulates a minimum group of 15 to bring out the variations in perspective (Bowden, 2000), therefore there is confidence in the sample size. There was brisk interest in the study and word of mouth contributed to filling the study within one week of advertisement. An even distribution of participants came from Toronto (16) and Vancouver (18). In terms of gender, the group was almost evenly split at 53% female and 47% male, although more women responded in Toronto and more men responded in Vancouver (see Appendix H1). The age of participants varied from

early 20s to middle 50s with the majority (79%) in the 30–50 range (see Appendix H2). The mean age was 37.9 years.

The majority of participants (76%) were immigrants. The definition of immigrant, for the purposes of this study, consists of a person residing in Canada who was born outside of Canada, excluding temporary foreign workers, Canadian citizens born outside Canada, and those with student or working visas (Statistics Canada, 2010). The immigrant participants originated from a variety of Asian regions, with 24% from China, 32% from Hong Kong, and 17% from Taiwan. Most Chinese (88%) and Hong Kongese (64%) were situated in Toronto and 83% of Taiwanese were situated in Vancouver. Except for one person, non-immigrant (or Canadian-born) participants were of the second generation, defined here as having been born in Canada to immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2011a). The majority of Canadian-born participants (87%) were situated in Vancouver (see Appendix H3). For the immigrant participants, there was a wide variation in time since they had settled in Canada. Almost 60% had 4 years or less of Canadian school before entering the workforce. Of particular note, half of the immigrants from China came directly into the workforce, while the majority of Hong Kongese had five years or more of Canadian school experience (see Appendix H4).

Many newer immigrants explained that they had either immigrated in the final years of high school to establish themselves or as beginning university students to gain a North American education. Among the whole participant group, 94% had attained post-secondary education, with 62% at the bachelor level and 32% at the graduate level (see Appendix H5). There is no comparative data for ABC Bank employees at large, but it is likely that the level of educational attainment of Chinese Canadian participants at ABC Bank exceeds the average level of recent immigrants (51%) to Canada as of 2006 (Government of Canada, 2006).

ABC Bank grades its jobs by levels based on complexity and responsibility, as explained in the introductory chapter. This study included participants starting at PL09 and moving, with more seniority, to lower numerical levels of PL05, which is a vice president level. Of the participants, 74% were already in leadership roles, defined as having supervision responsibility for others, and the remainder expressed an interest in moving toward leadership roles. Most of the leaders, 58%, were in line leadership roles (responsible for generating financial results), predominately in the PL08 level with a few at the PL07 level (see Appendix H6). The seniority level of leaders was reviewed by PL level and age to determine how the leadership group was distributed. The chart below (see Figure 2) reveals that the representation of the group flattens out significantly after PL07 level and most leaders in the 31–40 age bracket are at the PL08 and PL07 levels. Interestingly, the various age brackets were represented throughout most levels of seniority.

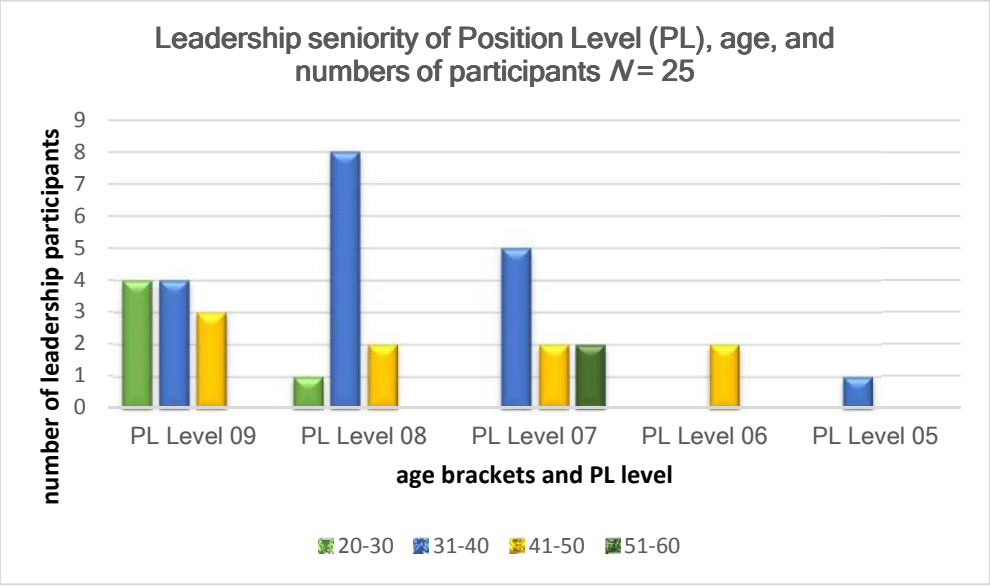

Figure 2. Leadership seniority at ABC Bank by position level, age and number of participants

Overall, the sample participant group represented a wide variety of dimensions, including location, gender, age, immigration status, education, leadership occupation, and PL level.

Ethnic Identity and Acculturation Measurement

Ethnic identity MEIM-R scale findings. Ethnic identity is a subjective self-assessment of the degree to which participants feel part of an ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). The findings reveal that the selections were often related to country of origin; however, 35% of the participants defaulted to Chinese or Chinese Canadian even if born in Canada, Hong Kong, or Taiwan (see Figure 3). In these cases, there may be more affinity to ethnic background than to national identity, which is not an uncommon finding (Phinney et al., 2001). Interestingly, of the eight Canadian-born participants, only one chose to self-identify as Canadian while the others chose elements from their specific ethnic backgrounds for identity. This may be a further indication of the strength in desire to maintain cultural roots. Overall, there was a strong preference to identify with an Asian ethnic background.

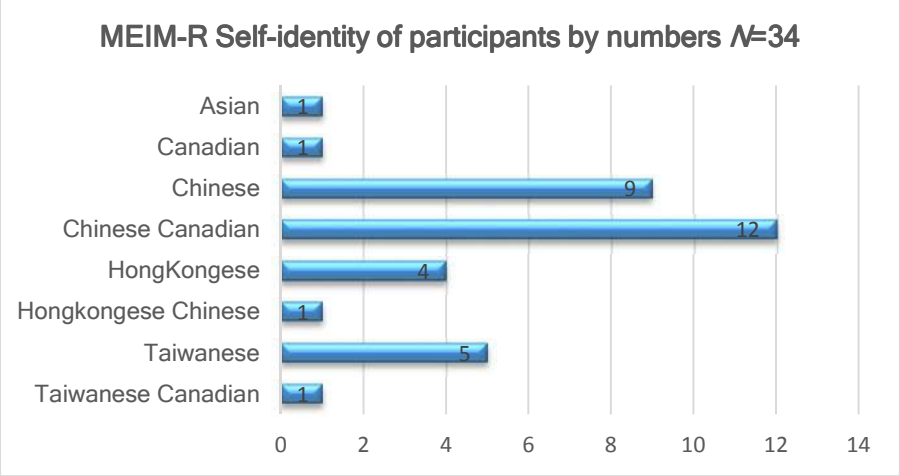

Figure 3. MEIM-R Self-identity of participants.

The MEIM-R scale is a compilation of two equally weighted factor scales, one relating to exploration of one's ethnic group and the other relating to commitment to one's ethnic group. The exploration factor captures the process of seeking information and experiences relevant to one's ethnicity and is a precursor to the commitment factor that reflects knowledge of and

understanding about one's ethnicity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Both individual scale results and combined scale results are provided. The average results of the two scales were 3.7 for exploration and 3.9 for commitment, out of a possible 5. The two factor scales were positively correlated $r(33) = .84$. The combined MEIM-R scale resulted in an average of 3.8 out of 5 with scores ranging from 2.3 to 4.8 ($SD = .66$). The overall score seems modestly high but is actually comparable to other studies to be reviewed in the discussion chapter.

A few participants shared their personal experiences of internalizing ethnic identity, even though this was not included in the interview questionnaire. Female participant #29 said "for the longest time and I had an identity crisis … for a period of time I didn't know if I was Chinese or if I was Canadian." Male participant #5 shared:

> I did see myself kind of, honestly it was a struggle and in some aspects I am Canadian and in some aspects I am Chinese so I went back and forth. I decided to look into my identity and how am I doing, I started accepting myself and I had the confidence and I can accept myself for who I am.

An internalized sense of self and achieved identity stems from exploration and commitment and is an individualized process (Phinney & Ong, 2007). In summary, the ABC Bank participants revealed the presence of a strong contingent of Asian ethnic identity and a positive psychological achievement of ethnic identity.

Acculturation SL-Asia scale findings. Acculturation is the process of adapting to the dominant culture and enculturation is the process of incorporating one's culture of origin (Berry, 2003; Kim, 2007). As such, biculturalism is viewed as an integration with the dominant culture (Berry, 2003; Kim, 2007). The SL-Asia instrument measures responses about behaviours and values using a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) through 5 (strongly agree). The tool

can be interpreted in a number of ways. The first 21 questions are largely based on behavioural metrics of acculturation, with 1 representing Asian behaviours, 5 representing western behaviours, and a median of 2.5 noted as bicultural. The average of the participant sample was 2.8 out of 5 (*SD* = .48), representing a bicultural profile of behaviours. The next 4 questions in the scale explore both behaviours and values but are not scored 1–5. Rather, they are evaluated using a grid depicting the outcomes of Asian, bicultural-Asian identified, bicultural, bicultural-western identified, and western behaviours and values. The participant group reported identical bicultural behaviours and values of 50% (see Figures 4 and 5). However, Asian values were 3% higher than Asian behaviours. Conversely, western values were 3% lower than western behaviours. The last question, number 5, asked the participants to pick a more specific identifier of identity from a statement provided (see Appendix G). The results provide a more granular view of self-identity, which is depicted in Figure 6.

The behavioural scores, from questions 1–21, mostly aligned with the selected self-assessments of identity, but not all (see Figure 6). For example, all those with a behavioural score above 2.6 described themselves as bicultural western or western, with the exception of one Canadian-born individual who rated himself Asian on all measures. Similarly, all those scoring below 2.6 described themselves as bicultural Asian or Asian, with the exception of one individual who rated herself western. As noted, the final question allowed participants to self-assess. Those responses are shown in figure 6 following the behaviours and values grids for comparison purposes. In the self-assessment, bicultural orientation was reduced from 50% to 38%, producing a granularity of bicultural orientation split between Asian and western components and where the combined western orientation increased to 30%. The findings show three separate profiles, but overall indicate the majority of participants are bicultural and

secondly bicultural Asian.

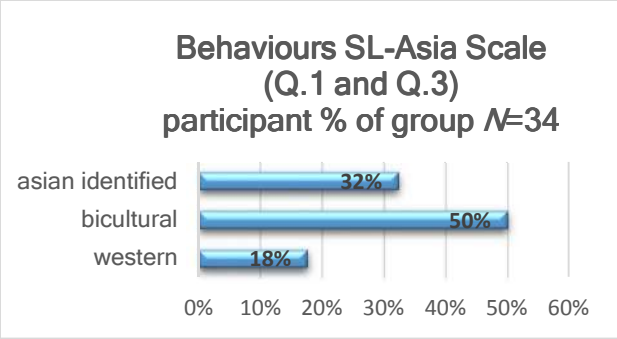

Figure 4. Participant group results of behaviours acculturation.

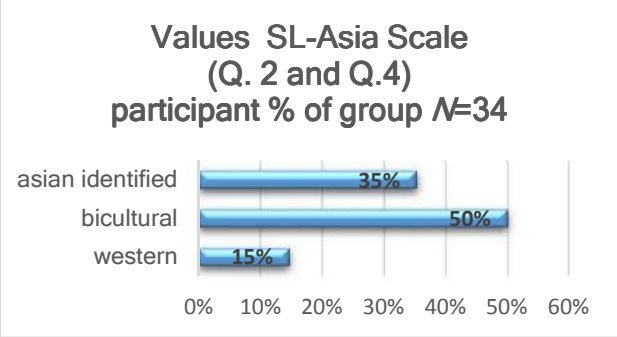

Figure 5. Participant group results of values acculturation.

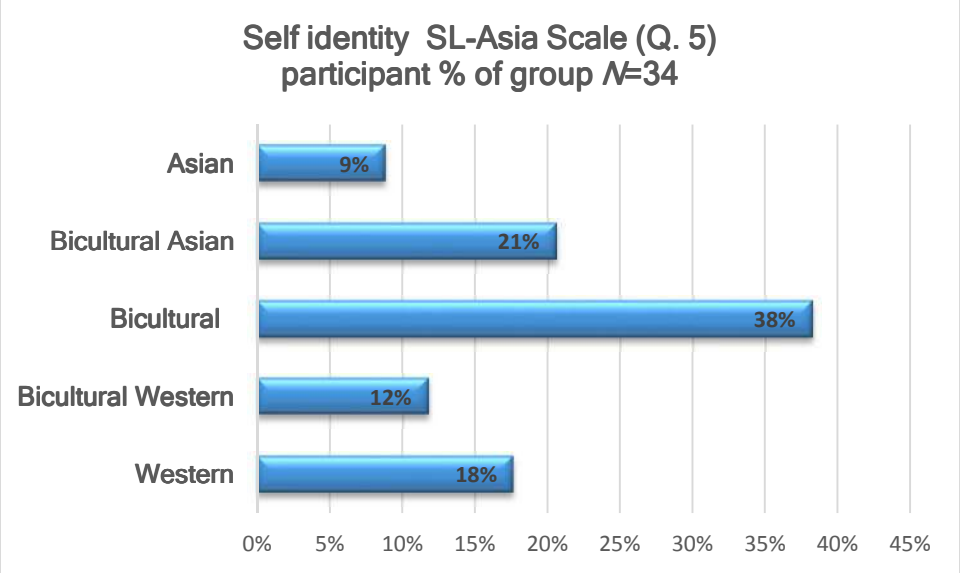

Figure 6. Participant results of self-assessment acculturation self-identity.

The overall SL-Asia scale acculturation results represent important evidence that there is

a significant cultural element at work within the participant group. However, the observation goes beyond stereotypical factors such as phenotype, country of origin, and immigration status by relying on the perspectives of the employees themselves.

Nvivo matrix coding further revealed an interesting combination of data on the sample group cross-referencing country of birth and how participants self-identify after immigration. Most notably, Canadian-born participants have mostly affirmed a bicultural orientation (see Figure 7). Also, not noted in the chart, but observed by cross-referencing the demographic data, was the connection of the length of time in Canada to self-identity. All those participants with less than 10 years in Canada indicated an orientation toward bicultural Asian-identified.

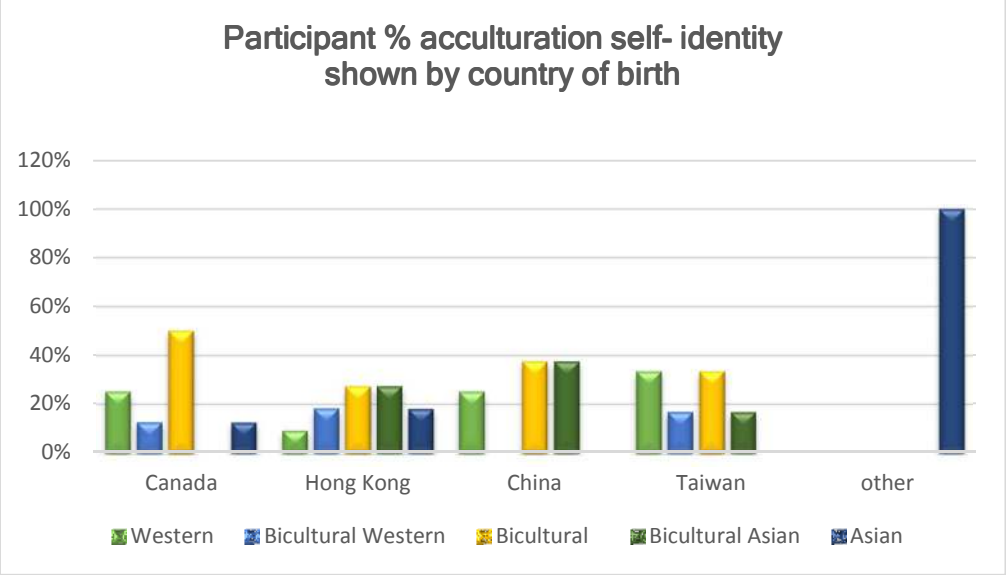

Figure 7. Participant acculturation self-identity by country of birth.

In summary, the inclusion of ethnic identity and acculturation scale measures have contributed to a deeper understanding of the participant group perspectives beyond demographic data.

'Our Careers in Leadership': Interview Findings

This section explores the participants' perspectives of their career experiences. The presentation follows the order of interview questions. The questionnaire protocol included a

review of career preferences, career path, career satisfaction, experiences in the workplace, and leadership styles. For experiences in the workplace, the findings focus extra attention on language skill and communication style, and particularly how this factored into the participants' level of confidence. The participant comments represent the major themes and variations within the group level experience of career mobility. The participants are represented by gender and number, where males are numbered 1–16 and females are numbered 17–34. Further interview findings are included in the section, "Our workplace-interview findings." The major findings of both sections will follow at the end of this chapter in a comprehensive chart referred to as the phenomenological outcome space. For a full explanation of this process, see the methodology chapter.

Career preference. ***Education.*** The question of how employees view their progression into senior leadership roles was preceded by the preliminary consideration of employee career preference and preparation for a career. Since 95% of the participants had a university education, the participants were asked about their academic majors and formal training to see if there was intent toward a career in financial services. Asian parents often weigh in on the discussion of education and career choice with their children, which was also apparent in the interviews (Hyun, 2005; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011). Over half of the participants wanted to appease their parents' wishes for them to pursue a technical profession, such as medicine or engineering (Hyun, 2005; Leong & Gupta, 2007). Business professions, such as finance and accounting, tend to be secondary choices (Hyun, 2005). Some participants initially began studies in the sciences and later switched courses, resulting in family concern. Male participant #8 said: "So it broke his [father's] heart that I actually decided that I wanted to go into management." Nine participants ended up with double-major degrees, such as

commerce and bio-chemistry, as a compromise. A few participants had entrepreneurial parents and talked about working for their parents' firms in Asia. Business education was considered useful in these situations. Female participant #24 said: "My parents have their own business in China. It is international trading company so they always encourage me to study business and especially international trade." A North American education is considered valuable for gaining international experience with English language capability (Wang, Lin, Pang, & Shen, 2007). Overall, the educational experience of participants appears to align with financial services, including qualifications mostly in business administration, economics, and commerce (see Appendix I). Almost all of the participants (29) applied to a bank immediately after graduation, including 19 that came directly to ABC Bank. The remaining participants worked in related financial services companies before starting with ABC Bank. The overall findings indicated that the participants pursued a career in financial services with intent.

Professional path. Asian parents tend to value the technical professions for their inherent respect and ability to serve others, but more pragmatically, they feel an autonomous profession offers their children protection against discrimination (Hyun, 2005; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Li, 2001). The professions are also valued for their ability to provide superior income. Female participant #26 said: "I think that Chinese parents really care about income for their children because once you are professional … it guarantees a certain income so I think they really care about the financial aspect of their children's life." Male participant #14 likewise said:

> Every parent has a conversation about where you want your kid to be when they grow up. … I don't want her [daughter] to climb the corporate ladder. I actually want her to have a profession [*sic*] designation to fall back on because at the end of the day I believe that corporation does have a glass ceiling but that comes with the territory, um, there are a lot

> of very high paying professional jobs in a corporation which are chaired by Asians, um, but leadership I don't see it.

As the last participant noted, Chinese Canadians might choose a professional path, but they still might work in a corporation such as a financial services company. In ABC Bank, the professional path would include such areas as law, accounting, and actuarial work.

'Not at this point in time.' All the participants showed a strong interest in career progression in leadership at ABC, including the 26% of participants who were not yet in leadership roles. Regardless, some participants expressed some personal considerations that would affect career timing and preference; in other words, they are interested in leadership, but just not now. For example, some had busy careers, including leadership roles, in their countries of origin and wanted a slower lifestyle. They were not ruling out leadership, but felt they needed a "breather" to adjust to Canadian culture. For instance, male participant #15 said: "We were thinking that probably we need a different life and slow down a little bit and that is why we decided to come [to Canada]."

Several participants talked about child and elder care commitments as a factor that would affect their ability to pursue senior levels of leadership. For instance, female participant #33 said: "I am holding myself off. I don't really think that it is relating to my capability but it is relating to reality, um, I am willing to make sacrifices to make sure that my kids are getting enough attention." Female participant #28 likewise said: "My goal is always that I wanted to move upwards… but it is also it is a family choice… I still miss the title of xx and it was very, very stressful and hard to give it up." Female participant #32 also expressed these concerns:

> I also have a lot of family obligations. I live with my parents and my sisters, but my parents are like seniors and they need a lot of attention. … in the Chinese culture right

> you have to take care of your parents and they rely on you.

Participants who were not in leadership roles yet, but who had expressed an interest toward leadership, expressed an uncertain understanding or lack of confidence in exactly how Chinese Canadian employees might advance into senior leadership, as they had witnessed minimal evidence of others accomplishing the goal. Male participant #1 said: "I close my eyes and think of the highest ranking Chinese Canadian in even XX downtown I am drawing a blank … I am drawing a blank." Another participant did not have a clear vision of how to attain a leadership role. Male participant #6 responded similarly: "I have made reasonable progress in career … can't see a path forward now … will check with colleagues first before I would bring it up. Hard to bring it up [with my manager] because I don't know if I am qualified."

Two of the participants compared the successful career mobility of South Asians with the notion that Chinese Canadians needed to be more aggressive. For instance, male participant #1 stated:

> I don't think that it is organizational barriers. I mean if South Asians can do it Chinese Canadians can do it if they so choose. … I am proud to say that in Canada at the ABC Bank if you have both the ability I am sure you get the opportunity. … So I think that it is a lot the fact that you are not asking for that chance so that is why you are not getting anywhere.

The latter participant's comment raises the idea that cultural norms influence career mobility and there are differences between ethnic groups. Organizational talent management principles and conversations might be inconsistently applied. Employees are seeking clarity with their career paths. Careers paths may not be exactly replicable because every person is unique. However, there may be recognizable career paths that others have taken into leadership. The

interviews showed that Chinese Canadians are looking for evidence of career models that they can relate to their own situation.

Affirmation of leadership. All of the participants who were already in leadership roles were proud of their accomplishments and career choices. Male participant #9 said: "My goal was to become a branch manager right and that was the goal that I set early. … A lot of people came up to me and said … they were really proud." When the participants attained a leadership role, the achievement was often accompanied by cultural pride amongst other Asian employees and their families. For instance, female participant #23 said:

> When I first started I got people calling me and say I am so excited and you know they finally hired an Asian senior leader. I went over to my parents' place and thanked Mom and Dad. I really did not really understand all of the things that you guys had to overcome to really pave the way for my generation. … In a traditional Chinese culture there is a certain status … my Dad was really proud of the title, Branch Manager title is really important. In fact I think that he made the comment one time why are Account Managers and Senior Account Managers—why is there manager in the title?

Participants also saw leadership appointments as affirmations of their career choices. The last participant also said:

> The best decision I've ever made because there is something about leadership there is that intangible kind of reward to it because it is not I don't think that there is a price tag. I think most people who enjoy leadership. It is nice to be compensated in an attractive manner but if you could equate all the hours and literally all the contributions that you do as leaders it is really not for the monetary reason for me it is the staff, the clients and things like that.

All of the participants were interested in career progression and some felt that even if there were barriers they could compensate by working harder in general. For example, male participant #13 said: "I told myself that I have to do more than 150% in order to get 100 % rating, the same rating as other colleagues." Studies have shown that Asian employees feel they need to perform at a higher level to be considered for career progression (Catalyst, 2003; Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Conference Board of Canada, 2005; Thomas, 2001; Woo, 2000). A parallel exists for women, who also experience the need to over-perform to achieve success (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

These findings demonstrate that the participants expressed a strong desire to assume leadership roles. They stated they were driven to represent their cultural group in a positive way and were prepared to work hard to exceed expectations. The majority expressed an interest in furthering their careers and were motivated to succeed.

Career satisfaction. The participants responded positively (68%) when asked "how satisfied are you with your career thus far?" (see Appendix J). The interview answers were coded in Nvivo as either satisfied, satisfied with a qualifying statement, or not satisfied. In expressing satisfaction, the participants pointed specifically to advancement. Female participant #26 said: "I am very happy I have been very fortunate and, um, because I know there are lots of people that work really hard but don't get that kind of advancement." The participants cited manager support most often as the underlying reason. For instance, male participant #2 said: "I am happy where I am and I think that one of the things that I consider myself quite lucky is that um, I have a lot of good bosses." Moreover, the participants reported that they felt managers were actively supporting their careers. Male participant #5 said: "So far it has been great, thankfully I have managers and superiors that are guiding me through."

A further 23% of participants expressed satisfaction but added qualifying statements. The qualifiers included statements about lowering expectations and wondering about time spent in each role. For example, male participant #13 said:

> … a little bit behind my plan, my expectations. I understand that when I moved to a new country that I have to start at zero again. Also there is a lot of limitations and I have to lower all of my expectations to be honest I don't expect much higher leadership role because it is reality and it is hard to say I am very realistic.

Male participant #14 likewise said:

> I don't know if I am spending too much time on each role but I compare myself sometimes to other people even the ones that I have mentored myself and am I spending too much time on the actual work rather than career advancement?

In these cases, the career dialogue between the employee and manager appears to be leading to uncertainty or stalling. If participants are indeed spending more time in each role, it is not certain whether additional career development is happening within the role that could lead to future advancement. A few participants voiced a feeling of being underutilized, which led to some frustration. For instance, male participant #13 said:

> Overall the team is very confident … overall my boss was happy with me and with my team and I am happy with the team and they say they love me. I can do more to be honest. I just do this for my own branch and I can do more for the whole bank to be honest.

Thus there is evidence that almost a quarter of the participants may not be reaching their full potential and want more career guidance to feel fully satisfied. There might be wasted talent in the organization and an underestimation of the scope that is achievable.

A small minority of 9% were dissatisfied with their careers. All of the dissatisfaction cases related to a lack of promotion where the participants felt qualified, had achieved strong performance reviews, received recognition awards, but were overlooked with minimal explanation. For instance, female participant #32 said: "I am not at all satisfied. I always think that I work hard but I never got the recognition." Another participant expressed frustration with lack of career development and follow through on commitments. Female participant #22 said

> Right now … not at all. I think that, um, I was quite disappointed because I was head hunted to come to ABC and at that time they were talking to me about the xx role so which I was so excited to come. … I am not happy with the current stage and should I stick it out or should I make a move.

Many participants did discuss their future plans with their direct managers. The majority of participants were also satisfied with both their career outcomes and the pacing of progression. These comments included being satisfied overall—enjoying their roles, making good money, and comfortable with their capability. Male participant #1 said: "I make a good amount of money and I cover all of my expenses and I do the saving that I need to pay off my mortgage and along a path that I am comfortable in doing." The participants sometimes commented on a desire to ensure that all skills were thoroughly learned, for example male participant # 2 said: "I want to really learn the business and do well." Some felt they could explore more scope within their existing roles, such as female participant #29: "I have been doing my job for about four years and I think that I have only started to scratch the surface." These latter comments appear to indicate a level of satisfaction and comfort in the current role. In other words, there was not an indication of wanting to move too quickly to the next role. Could the level of satisfaction translate to a longer time in each role and might this be a pattern among some of the participants?

Leadership role attainment. In this section, the perspectives of those who had already attained leadership roles are explored more specifically. 'Leadership role' is understood to mean those participants who have employees directly reporting to them in the organizational structure. Of the 25 leaders, three were in professional roles in specialized departments of the Bank aligned with their professional degrees and had acceded to administration and leadership. In these cases, the participants were delighted with their leadership experiences, and even though this was not their original career intention, they had now started to think about the practice of leadership and enhancing their skills. Nonetheless, these participants still emphasized their specialized skills and it was important to recognize their professional underpinning. For instance, female participant # 32 said:

> They always respect me for my technical knowledge even on this floor when I got this job actually one of my friends, one of my managers that direct report came up to me and said finally they have someone who really knows the area to take on that role.

However, the participants also expressed reservations about further career progression in their current roles. Female participant # 32 expressed a desire "to be a PL05 or above … and right now I have been a PL06 forever." Likewise, female participant # 28 said, "I am like a PLO7, um, but in five years if I am not PL06 there is something that I am doing that is not right." The participant professionals in this study are in staff roles, or those who support others but do not have bottom-line responsibility.

The remaining 22 leaders were in bank branch leadership roles with business growth and profit responsibility. Some were first-time leaders and others had had successive leadership experiences and were progressing in their careers. A distinguishable factor emerged among the line leaders relative to the geographical markets they were in. For example, 18 of the 22 worked

in predominately Asian markets. The researcher contacted the participants after the interviews to gather further information. The leaders were asked to categorize their markets based on their local knowledge and experience. The researcher provided three selections and criteria for guidance. The first selection was that the branch business was composed of more than 50% in an East Asian demographic, such that it was important to have language skills and a cultural understanding of client and employee needs. The second selection included a business composition of 25% or greater East Asian demographic such that it was important to have language skills and a cultural understanding of client and employee needs. The third choice described the business as having a nominal component of East Asian demographic and the branch did not necessarily need extra language skills to serve clients, even though it might have bilingual or multilingual employees.

Based on the participant leader's assessments, the majority (72%) said their markets were composed of a majority Asian client concentration and one indicated a concentration greater than 25% but less than 50%. The remaining four leaders were not working in predominately Asian markets. Several participants estimated a critical mass of Asian clients over 70%, where as many as 20% of the clients may not speak English, or prefer not to, such that their employees needed to be either bilingual or trilingual (English, Mandarin and Cantonese speaking). The Asian market percentages are not verified statistics of the market, but are estimates of the participants. For Chinese Canadian employees who speak Chinese dialects (predominately Mandarin and Cantonese), there are more employment opportunities and thus more leadership positions in those areas. The concentration of leader participants in Asian markets stands out as an interesting phenomenon. See Figure 8 for a breakdown of how leaders are situated in the company.

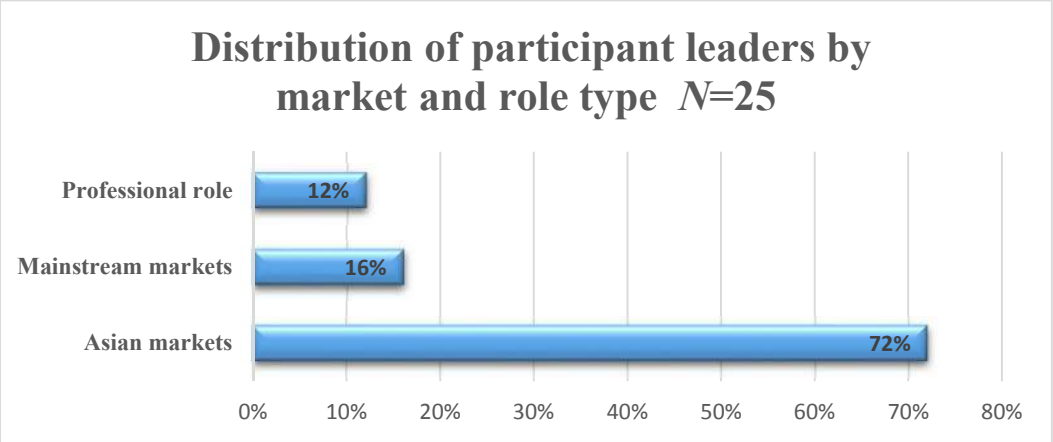

Figure 8. Distribution of participant leaders, by market and role type.

The participants reported their conflicting views on leveraging their Chinese language abilities to serve Asian markets. There are clearly career opportunities in Asian markets for those with unique language skills, and the majority of participants felt comfortable and even proud working in Asian markets. However, 20% felt that an Asian market was not their choice and they were being used unfairly by the organization for business gain.

Benefits of working in cultural markets. Clients are often comfortable and reward business to employees of a similar ethnicity, especially if they can relate in their native language (Catalyst, 2003; Li, 2004). Male participant # 1 said:

> I speak Cantonese very well so it does open up additional clientele for me because honestly some Chinese people don't deal with people who don't speak Chinese that is a simple fact of it and they don't learn English so it is a catch 22 for them.

Male participant #12 also commented: "Why not take advantage of my language capabilities and keep me in XX or XX markets. I think I can use both my English and Cantonese and I will be very successful in that demographic." Therefore, participants reported having an advantage and found financial success working in Asian markets, but they also felt comfortable in an Asian environment due to their language skills. In addition, some participants noted the career

advantage specifically for leaders with language skills. For instance, female participant # 26 said:

> Chinese or Asian population are the minority but due to the fact that there has been a lot of immigrants coming to Canada it is actually to our advantage that we do speak another language other than English. I feel very privileged to be Chinese and to be able to speak Cantonese and Mandarin and that makes me trilingual and it really helps me to move on in my career. I have worked at all Asian-focused branches because they work with people with specific language skills. Language with leadership is really, really limited [available talent].

Female participant # 25 concurred: "They feel more warm when they walk in to meet with someone who can speak their language and that is the difference and that is the reason why the bank has seen this type of potential and they were hiring quite a bit more on the Asian leader side."

Disadvantages of working in an Asian market. Several of the participants considered their longer term career objectives and had some concerns about being typecast. Further, the participants noted that specializing in Asian markets might create mobility limitations. For example, if an inadequate pool of qualified employees with language skills were available to back fill positions that might result in the organization keeping employees in their roles longer. Moreover, the participants found it may be more difficult to transition to non-Asian markets after a period of time. Male participant # 12 said:

> I was the one that stuck around and a trainee came before me and a trainee that came after and left and I was always the one that stuck around. And I think at the time ABC didn't have a Chinese branch manager in the market where the Chinese demographic had grown

so I understood why they would want to keep me.

Other participants reported that it was difficult to break into non-Asian markets, even after demonstrated success in a leader role. Either the organization does not recognize leadership talent or employees have been so successful in an Asian branch that the organization does not want to lose them, for fear of risking business results. As female participant # 25 said, "They [the organization] would have the position for me to move to a bigger branch and I make a huge mistake honestly for myself that I told him [Manager] was that I don't want to go into an Asian branch again." The same participant resigned herself to a job within Asian markets, based on ethnicity, but also acknowledged that there is potentially less success working with non-Asian clients:

> The one thing that really keep in mind for myself is that I am an Asian leader and that is always going to be, I cannot change it. It doesn't really matter whether I speak fluent English, I am still Asian and if that is the case then it may be worth it for the bank or even for myself to manage the Asian branch the majority of the time because, um, I have a lot of benefit because a lot of clients that know me and they will pass on the referral to me. Whereas in a mainstream it is not that easy because they look at you differently.

The foregoing comments reflect the business benefits and leadership role potential within Asian markets; however, there appears to be an unintended element of segregation, as opposed to integration, occurring in the marketplace and workplace.

Participants avoiding Asian markets. A smaller group of participants, 7 out of 34, expressed concerned about an over reliance on their language skills and being typecast into Asian markets, while two participants were undecided on the issue. The participants conveyed a desire to be recognized for other skills and to be able to take on other developmental roles in

mainstream markets. Mainstream is understood to mean those Canadian markets and businesses that are not specific to Asian markets in Canada. Mainstream was a term that evolved from the participant interviews and was not presented in the interview questions. Male participant # 3 said:

> I prefer to work in a mainstream branch, or a non-Asian branch because I want to get away from the so-called Asian branch because I don't want to be portrayed as only Asian. I see a lot of my predecessors and see what they went through and it does play a little bit of a trick in your mind so maybe I should just focus on mainstream. And too I think that I am very well Canadianized so I can do well on both sides of the world and so if I could get a choice I would prefer this.

Similarly, male participant # 8 said: "Throughout my career one of the main things that I am trying to do is I don't want to be Chinese exclusive. … I have been trying to skill build myself to be comfortable with the situation where it is not Chinese." Demonstrating the sensitivity of this issue, one male participant (#14) was even reticent to declare language skills to avoid being typecast:

> When we go to our own little profile we add what language we can speak and what can we write and obviously management would fit me into the proper location so they would need a person with my skills. The issue is that would I be typecast? I feel like an actor being typecast into a certain role. I would never get a purely Caucasian branch because of my background and it would almost seem like I am not sure. I think that ABC is using my talent to full potential but is it completely fair and did they ask me what I wanted, probably not. That would be, um, my comment about that and I cannot fault ABC for doing it because obviously they want to use everybody's talent to the fullest but they

never ask for what I wanted.

An overriding message is that participants want to be in control and make their own career choices. For some, that might indeed include building a career in Asian markets, while others may want to develop in other ways. As female participant # 31 said,

> I know of another colleague who is Asian and it was said to him that make sure you do these other roles so that you don't get typecast and the person who gave that individual the advice is not a direct mentor and is non-Asian so I think that is sad. If I am strong in that culture and language because that is me and I am happy doing that then that person should be able to do that … without being typecast.

In summary, there was a strong contingent of participants in leader roles in the Bank and they are progressing in their careers. The majority of participants were proud to be leading Asian market branches and feel most comfortable in an Asian setting. They attributed their success to the ability to use their additional language skills and cultural knowledge. They also considered the opportunity to gain leadership roles in Asian markets as a logical application of human resource talent. A smaller group of participants, while successful in those locations, had reservations about being stereotyped and had taken the role because they were asked to do so. Only four of the managerial participants were posted in non-Asian markets and, in one of these cases, the participant indicated they employed a conscious strategy to avoid such a scenario. The business case for diversity at ABC Bank is aligned with demographic changes and forces in the external market. Perhaps ABC Bank has employed a sound business strategy, but it appears that execution may be flawed if leadership opportunities in mainstream markets are excluded for some employees based on ethnicity. In relation to these issues, language skill emerged as a prominent element for the participants. The following section reveals how participants believed

that language proficiency might affect their career mobility.

Language skills and competency. Language skill is a valuable business and personal asset (Catalyst, 2003). Over 25% of the participants were trilingual. Some Canadian-born participants and those of a 1.5 generation (defined as those who immigrated before 12 years of age), who learned a Chinese dialect from relatives at home or in formal language training, appear to have benefited the most from their language skills. Many years in the Canadian school system creates fluency and comfort with the English language. Participants who were confident in both English and a Chinese dialect qualified to lead domestic Asian market branches and did not experience as many communication issues as those whose second language was English. Of the participants, 38% raised English language proficiency as an issue at work.

English as a second language. Participants for whom English is a second language shared the many ways that language competency affected their career experiences, particularly as it relates to leadership roles. It should be noted that the participant pool was already characterized by a high level of English fluency. All of the participants have trained and worked for years in the organization, led other employees of Asian and non-Asian descent, completed complicated financial transactions in English on a daily basis, read and implemented comprehensive instructions, and dealt with many English-speaking clients. Yet, in general, participants with less than 10 years in Canada reported that their confidence to present their ideas in both written and verbal English forms was compromised to a degree and that it was mentally exhausting to work in a second language.

Several participants equated senior leadership capability directly to communication skill, both in terms of spoken volume and ability to articulate key messages and coach employees. Male participant #12 noted: “For leadership in general, higher levels of communication in a

language other than a first language is intimidating and you need to feel that you can articulate very well to be confident in a more senior manager role." Regardless of whether language proficiency is sufficient, a generally low level of confidence might undermine career mobility. As male participant #13 said, "I think generally speaking Chinese people are not very confident in their English language skills and, um, that generally hurts that amount of confidence we can project, um, into our work." For native speakers, tasks can be performed much quicker and with more confidence. This manager, male participant #3, is still learning and perfecting his language at work:

> I have my dictionary to translate and that dictionary is still with me right now. I'll give you a perfect example: if I am to send out an email it would probably take you less than five minutes and you get what you want to deliver and for me I have to proofread about three or four times and make sure that the meaning is right. I learned from how the leader speaks and copy how they communicate and I sometimes write it down so it is a little bit added to my style but that is my practice. A couple of emails that I look at it ok, that is an interesting phrase that they used and I never learned before in school and I use that, that is how I learn.

Even Chinese Canadian participants who may be more outgoing find confidence in language is a factor in group or confrontational situations. Another male manager, participant #2, indicated his strategies for coping:

> I am sometimes challenged. I am very passionate, vocal, and articulate when I am one-on-one but when I am within a group of people I sometimes don't know how to initiate and I don't know, um, and then I tend to listen. I don't know if I am actually making the right comment and should I say this or should I say that, am I right or am I wrong. I

> worry too much before making a leap and the Asian side takes over. Sometimes the accent comes out and people kind of look at you and go "what?" For us, when people go "what," there is two things: a) was it my accent?, and b) they truly don't understand what it is that I was just talking about or didn't hear me. And your calm is starting to drop and you start back paddling and you start thinking in Chinese and you are going into that proverbial negative cycle and it is not helping. I look for a couple of people that I know, that I am comfortable with and if they nod, then it is going well. You kind of have to get yourself and the comfort up and I spend a lot of time prepping, prepping so that I don't look so prepped. I tend to then control my voice, um, louder and slower. I feel sometimes that its depending on if the person is willing to listen to you then it is very easy for me to communicate with you but when you are in a confrontational conversation … and the employee starts to lean forward and say "what." Then you get frustrated you are going to slur and, ok, speak slowly and keep it brief, right, present the facts. That is the thing that we constantly have to tell ourselves, when people want to do "what" to you and take you apart, don't take it personal just say it again.

These comments illustrate several dynamics in action. For example, the manager was less confident to speak in public and was concerned about his accent. In addition, stereotype threat (Steele, 2010) was illustrated in the stress level and inability to speak clearly. Another interesting notion that arose was that the receiver's willingness to listen makes a difference in the participant's ability to communicate.

Some participants indicated accent could influence others' impressions of their leadership and language abilities and yet, the willingness of others to listen is also a factor. A senior level female manager, participant #32, expressed a concern that her accent would hold her back from

career progression:

> Maybe you are presentable and you go out and speak and you have a strong accent and it is very difficult for them to look at you and comprehend you. I could never get rid of my accent because I was born with it. No matter how hard I try, it is there you can only be a B+ or A-, you'll never be able to get past an A or A+.

Male participant #13 spoke similarly about the ability to communicate, and shared his strategy to compensate for what he saw as a barrier to career success:

> When you speak a language with accent that has made a big difference and I have that challenge. Even my boss has told me that your communication and accent is very heavy. It matters if you speak very good English in the community and in the team meeting. If you fail to communicate effectively you lose your reputation in front of you. And they may place less trust on you. Right. So this is why I told myself that I have to give 150% performance and results together to get 100% rating to offset that communication.

Female participant #20 shared the same concern: "I was literally year 2 or 3 in Canada and, um, later on people commented that your English had accent sort of thing, um, then they made me reflect as to does it really matter or can you understand me?"

Furthermore, it is possible that confidence in language competency affects how an employee is viewed for leadership potential in the organization. Female participant #23 said:

> I think that there is also cultural and language type of barrier, language is a huge connector and, um, a lot of times it is really funny because if you speak to any Chinese bankers in English they appear very quiet and there is a certain subdued quality and then when they speak in their natural dialect the huge part of their personality comes through. I noticed this in the lunchroom that someone who I think would be very soft spoken and

> almost like oh I don't see them as a leader because we tend to think in English and all of our paradigms are in English but then I see them in our natural environment when they are connecting with their colleagues I see a different part of their personality and I have that luxury because I can understand part of that language.

She further observed that the employees' concern was partially in how they felt they were being perceived in the environment, as opposed to their actual confidence to do their jobs. The employees would not risk losing face and worked especially hard to present professional communication skills in order to manage their careers. As female participant #23 said,

> They always see themselves that they are not good with public speaking but it is not that they are uncomfortable with English. They don't want to be made fun of because their English isn't perfect. So much of leadership is the outward appearance and the polish and the communication skills and I know personally that speaking to Chinese leaders that I know presently that is always one thing that they felt kind of threatened by. They have worked very hard on learning to strengthen that whether it is public speaking in English or the written communication in English because they also know that there is so few of us that we are assessed or evaluated based on our communication skills. Whether it is through email or if we only hear them through a conference call how professional and how confident are they right. I think confidentially that it is natural for us right if someone goes on the phone and they speak with an accented English and it is very hard for us to understand we naturally just don't see the value of their contributions.

The foregoing observations require further investigation and will be covered in the discussion chapter. They raise the question of whether language competency affects the practice of effective leadership or the ability to elicit followership. Is leadership selection based more

heavily on communication skills? Is there a prejudice against accented English? It is clear that English language proficiency caused anxiety for some of the participants. A related, but different, area of concern for the participants was how communication style was influenced by cultural differences.

Communication style. The participants disclosed that their cultural norms of communication were at odds with a western style of communication and affected how they were viewed as leaders at work. The resounding message they received was that they should "speak up" in work meetings. The participants shared cultural background information on why they may be perceived as shy, introverted, or at worst, as not having credible leadership skills. Furthermore, they talked about their efforts to change when they were coached to do so, which resulted in either success or stress.

Most participants imparted that their Chinese upbringings at home and at school taught them not to speak up in public forums and not to speak first. The Chinese saying that best captures this value is "the first bird gets shot." Most participants agreed that behaviour is deeply ingrained, and they noticed the stark communication differences upon immigrating to Canada. Female participant #33 said:

> If you are socially active that is kind of the success model [in Canada] and in Asian culture and Chinese culture that is better to be humble, right, you tend to bite your tongue and hold your thoughts cause you tend to think you are not the best. Let the best people talk or you will be invited to talk and people will come to you and ask you to talk if you are successful if you are not successful yet just listen.

Similarly, female participant #20 said, "After I moved to North America that is when I realized the difference and right from the get go … even if it is just the way that kids are educated in

America and they are encouraged to share their opinion and their thoughts and that is how we learned together." One male participant (#10) also revealed how observation is used to seek to understand before speaking:

> We [Chinese] want to observe before we say anything. We always smile before you say anything because if you try to understand what is the style and what is he thinking what is his past and what is he interesting about and then try to come out with something and that is my personal style. We try to see the behaviour and try to understand.

Several participants easily understood how their behaviour could be misconstrued in the western culture:

> We are not considered to be mainstream to be honest we think in the way in our own way in Chinese … but it is different culture in Canada you talk, if you don't talk people think that you don't know nothing. Right. So in communicating we think first before we talk but I think that in western culture we talk first and then we think. (female participant #22)

> You have to speak up, you have to share your opinion and you have to share your thoughts and ideas and to be valued as well, it is more of a social belonging … if you don't speak up people don't know what you are thinking and it is not just being afraid it is just maybe you don't have an opinion which is really scary in our society nowadays. Right so and more so in leadership you have to speak up. (female participant #20)

> The Chinese culture does encourage people to talk less and do more and that is why I would see more doers but on the other hand it also holds them back because they don't move up in the corporation, because they don't sell themselves or promote themselves enough to move up. (female participant #24)

How easy is it to change these deeply held values and behaviours? Some felt that it was

dependent on personality. Other participants actively attempted to change their behaviour. At least three participants had attended external training for public speaking. Others had been coached by their direct managers in the work environment. For instance, female participant #33 said:

> My RVP [Regional Vice President] gave me the feedback that, oh, I felt that you are knowledgeable and you always have good insight, why didn't you share? Why didn't you talk? That was kind of my personal development plan is to talk more at the meetings right and, um, right now I just talk … maybe again I tend to be more senior and I have more experience than the other branch managers here and they sometimes just naturally turn to me and ask.

Another participant was also successful in speaking up more. Her manager's feedback was positive, but the participant also suggested that the difference was merely *talking* about the work she had always done. There was no change in actual performance:

> She [her manager] said I see it in your confidence level and I see it in the way you say things it is different but I am thinking that I am no less confident as a person, um, what I do back then … is demonstrated in my outcomes and my achievements … it is really how I have chosen and learnt to actually articulate more and be more up front and just doing that. So I think it is a very much, um, changeable but I think it has to be positioned by a place of value for that person and why do you need to do that? Because for me … I didn't pound on the table about my point of view and in the western style it was seen that I wasn't a standup leader who speaks up or whatever, right. It is not the case. (female participant #31)

The participant further elaborated the differences between South Asian and western culture, and

noted the organization should be more inclusive by creating organizational awareness of bias while also coaching Asian employees to change.

> The basic cultural difference between a Chinese Canadian and a South Asian Canadian and you might have heard this already it is a South Asian, um, culture by culture is much more of a, um, proactive like … it is much more outspoken about their point of views. … It is important just for me just to recognize that so either a) help coach that person to be to actually do it differently in order to fit the culture and also [b)] at the same time we calibrate our culture a little bit as an organization to recognize that at a leader level. (female participant #31)

Introverted behavior is interpreted as meaning an employee is unqualified or less capable. One female participant (#19) revealed how she had been coached by internal recruiters in her job attempt: "I described myself as a quietly effective leader. The recruiter told me never to say that again." Introverts often reflect before speaking (Cain, 2012); however, some participants noted this was also cultural. For instance, female participant #22 said, "Asians tend to talk slower and … by the time that they are ready to talk the meeting is almost over I think. So when the promotion opportunity comes out I am going to hire somebody that can talk better right."

It would be wrong to categorize all Chinese as introverted and shy; individual personality comes into the situation. Female participant #28 said, "my mom sometimes saying maybe better you stay in North America because you like to talk too much … in a typical Asian valued culture they would think that you are too aggressive and that is not appreciated." Similarly, female participant #29 said, "I find that I am actually more outspoken than most Asians and I don't know if it has to do with my personality." These cultural differences in communication style can be a stressful experience for some participants, who would prefer to be judged on strengths such

as high performance and ability to deliver strong results. Male participant #13 said: "I want to add that we didn't show our talents, one thing is that we are shy and maybe this is a cultural habit we set aside our failures or success to. It is the one reason why probably we are not going to be sought and profiled."

Furthermore, communication style manifested in the ability to network, which is often seen as a key skill in building social capital and creating upward career mobility (Hyun, 2005; Zane & Song, 2007). A few participants noted that networking is done somewhat differently in Asian cultures, where personal connections and relationships are developed, as opposed to the more direct, uninvited style of approaching strangers in western societies. Male participant #8 said:

> I find that people who are able to network get a career placement a lot easier and get more I guess senior level, um, positions, um … in certain areas of China. I mean yes, um, networking is always the most important part of doing business whether in China or in Canada doesn't matter it is always important but the way they network is different. You don't put yourself into a network event and start chatting. … There are always the introductions … I know somebody and I introduce or I ask them to introduce me to somebody else. And then build up the network over there and everybody is mutually beneficial to each other in terms of what they are doing and what not and they have a common interest and you have a common goal.

In summary, the participants identified communication style as one of the more prominent cultural differences affecting career mobility, and particularly for leadership. A dichotomy of values between the participants and organizational communication norms was evident. 'Speaking up' was both uncomfortable for most participants and considered

inappropriate in some situations. They valued doing over talking. Overall, an Asian ontology is quite distinct from western ideals, which resulted in undervalued contributions and a lack of organizational understanding or recognition.

Leadership ideals and style. Do the participants lead differently than what the organizational norm prescribes? Every individual has a unique style, but are there similarities or differences based on cultural perspectives and values that would influence the enactment of leadership? The participants were asked for a list of words that would describe their ideal of effective leadership. The participants provided multiple responses, which were then sorted by category. In some ways, the list might reflect an ideal to strive for based on best practices in the organization or how participants are being coached in leadership. Participants may also have read western-based literature on effective leadership practices that could influence their selection. A review of the ideal list reveals much overlap with the transformational style of leadership that is the North American norm (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2010). For example, the most noted ideal attributes were strong communication skills, vision and confidence in the future, guidance, mentorship, coaching to higher performance, and inspirational and motivating (see Figure 9).

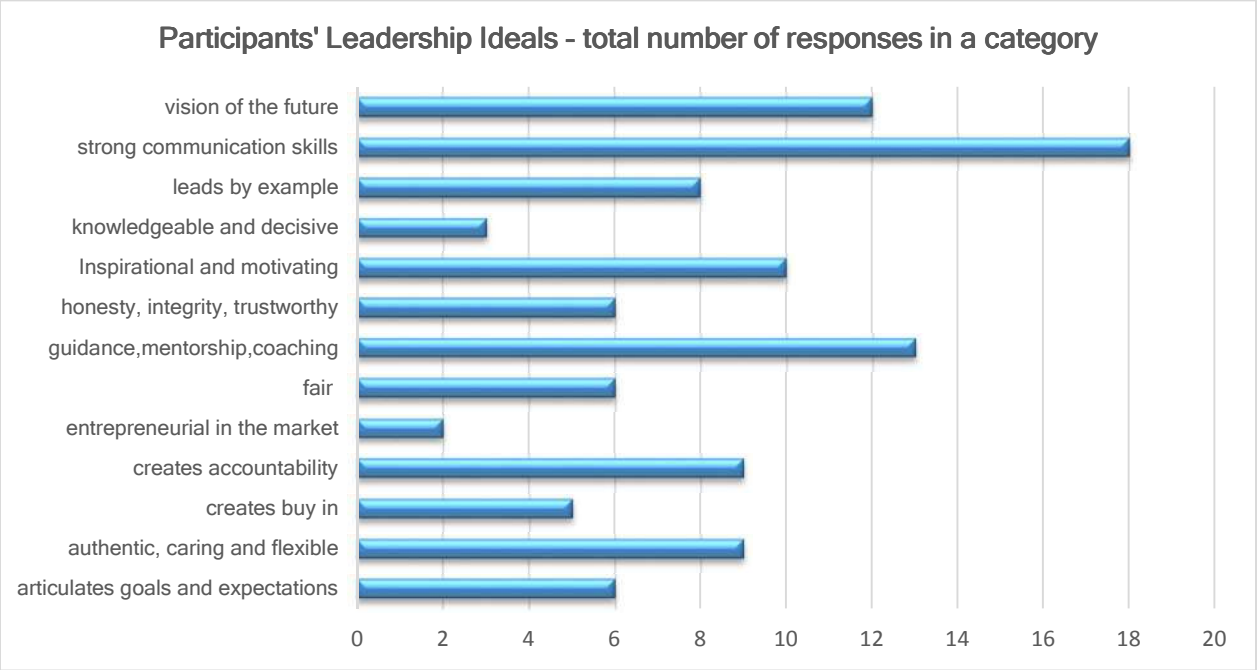

Figure 9. Participants' leadership ideals: Total responses by category.

Next, the participants were asked to describe their own leadership styles and how their teams would describe them if asked. The participants provided multiple responses, which were then sorted by category. Overall, the participants expressed confidence in their ability to lead. The items listed reflect their own enactment of leadership, albeit from a self-assessed perspective. The most frequently referenced traits of existing leadership styles in the participant group are presented in Figure 10.

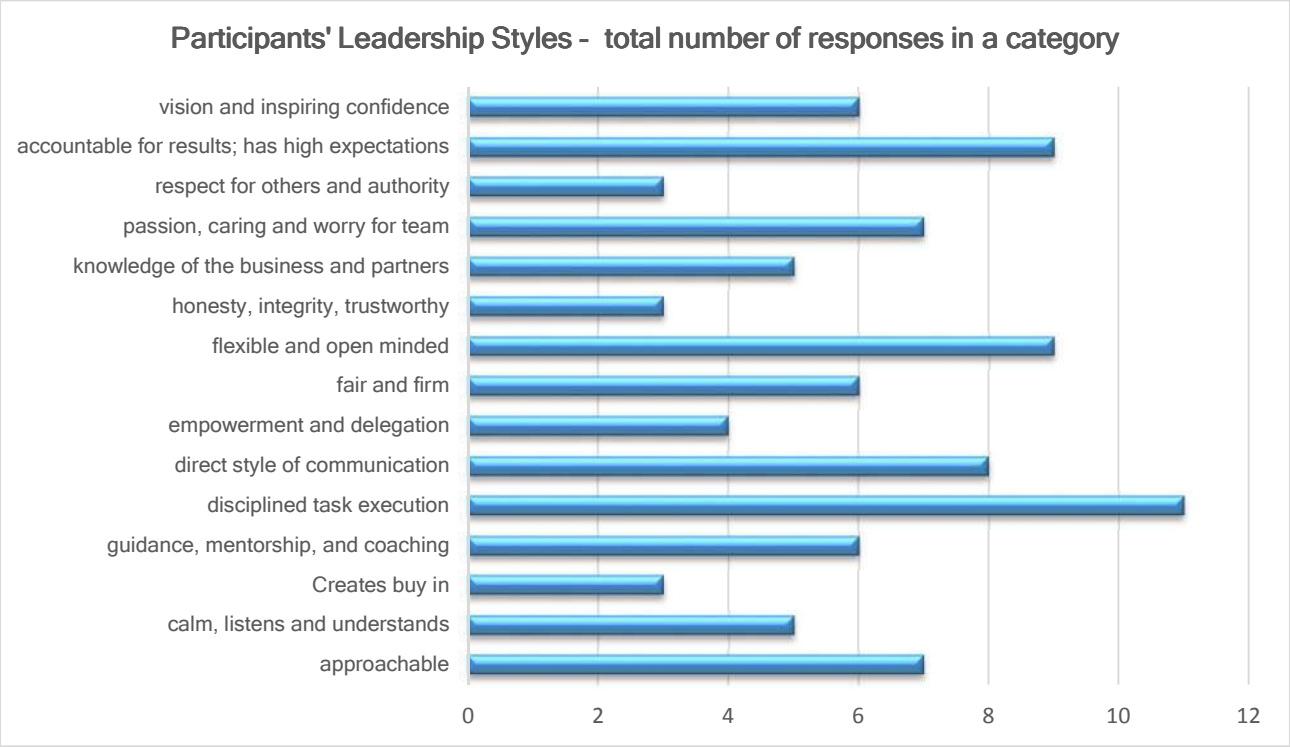

Figure 10. Participants' leadership styles: Total responses by category

The existing style list included some characteristics the participants had identified in their 'ideal' list of leadership elements, such as guidance, mentorship and coaching, and vision and inspiring confidence. However, some interesting differences were evident. For example, the two most frequently referenced traits for existing style were associated with discipline and assuming accountability for delivering high results. The participants were proud of their results orientation. Female participant #26 said: "I think that what really defined me is really the results that I was able to generate and deliver and I think that it really helped people understand about me a bit more I guess."

Furthermore, it was suggested that performance was related to culture, which would in turn affect leadership styles. For instance, female participant #23 said: "I think that being of Chinese ethnicity it is performance driven is very, very important." The participants observed that the combination of a high-performance orientation and a high-task orientation resulted in

high expectations of staff. Female participant #31 said: "I'm a person with high expectations … and it would be that they [employees] were scared or worried about my high expectations." Female participant #20 expressed similar ideals: "They [team] need to be able to perform at a level that I expect them to perform and so it goes both ways so that they feel that it is rewarding as well." Female participant #22 likewise said, "I do have a high expectation on my people and I would not say that I want them to be as high as me and I work with them to get to you know the high potential."

The participants indicated a high task orientation, revealing an underlying theme about the value of doing rather than just talking and being judged by outcomes rather than rhetoric. Male participant #2 said:

> My leaders say I actively seeks a lot of tasks … I am going to do what the task is and I am going to manage it and give you what you want and meet your deadline right. I judge my performance and I also judge my success on that because it is tangible and measureable and feels good.

Female participant #31 also said, "with a Chinese culture there is—let's make sure that we focus on the task at hand and deliver what we need to deliver to the best that we can." Male participant #13 likewise said, "Some of the colleagues have been very good at speaking and talking and even some leaders being champions or whatever but look at their performance and the way they coach the staff and it is nowhere to be honest."

Flexible and open-minded was ranked third in statements of existing leadership styles. Friedman and Liu (2009) noted that flexibility is an outcome of biculturalism. They argue the experience of internalizing other cultures expands flexibility and awareness. Flexibility, along with some of the lesser-ranked items—such as approachable, passion, caring and worry for the

team, calm, and listening and understanding—reflect more of the interpersonal aspects of the relationship between leader and follower, whereas the ideal list tended to describe the attributes of the leader. Perhaps some of the emphasis on interpersonal relations in leadership stems from the Confucian value of retaining harmony.

The participants described their predominant communication styles in leadership as direct, while also fair and firm. Female participant #26 said: "I find that Canadians [in comparison to Asians] tend to be less direct and sometimes they are less direct because they tend to worry about hurting people's feelings and they tend to just go around." Male participant #9 said:

> There are times when I am tired and when the results just need to happen … I am a little bit direct. Usually I will just walk into that room and say hey let's get something done by this time and are you able to step up to the plate and get it done or is it ok if you can't but let me know right. Um, but who is really going to say no, right, and I feel bad sometimes about that.

As aforementioned, fairness was an important value and principle that many participants said they upheld in their leadership. Male participant #16 said, "I think that they need to understand that I want to be fair and I want to be firm right. And from there I am going to be firm first if I want to be fair right." There was also an indication of a heavy sense of responsibility amongst the participant leaders. For instance, female participant #17 said, "…caring and work too hard, and I think that is our culture and we will work and I think that because I worry so much."

In summary, the ideal leadership styles list appears to describe leadership characteristics in the individual context of a person, whereas the existing leadership styles list appears to be more focused on the interaction between leader and followers, with more focus on relationships

and task orientation, or in other words, of relations in action. There are similarities between the participant perspectives of ideal leadership in the organization and their own practices. However, there are also some cultural differences in their responses from the organizational norm. There is no evidence that these different leadership styles would be less effective; however, it is possible that the differences could affect the career mobility of Chinese Canadian leaders because of the variances to the organizational norm.

'Our Workplace': Interview Findings

Perspectives on organizational commitment to diversity. Most participants agreed that ABC Bank was doing a good job of promoting diversity values and principles within the organization. Delving into this a little deeper, when asked about ABC's commitment to diversity, 50% of the participants gave an unqualified positive response: "we are lucky in ABC," "ABC is the best company," "ABC has been great with diversity," "I am just proud to be part of ABC," and "I have too many positive things to say because it is almost too good to be true" were some examples. Two participants were unable to provide an opinion and the remaining 44% of participants were happy to recognize ABC's efforts, but added qualifiers on the relative success of those efforts. For example, participants' perspectives were that there was frequent discussion and awareness, but less demonstration of diversity in practice. One female participant #22, noted: "ABC does not really have a true commitment to diversity in terms of the leadership level and I think that we have a huge Asian market but we do not have a senior Asian leader." The bulk of qualifying statements, 9 out of 15, reflected ABC's commitment, but that the organization had yet to gain an understanding of diversity at its core, or in others words, understanding the individual groups and their unique perspectives. For example, the dialogue on diversity speaks to visible minorities and there is a lack of understanding of specific ethnic

perspectives. Female participant #33 said:

> They [ABC Bank] understand that it is important that they are doing something but, um, you know I don't feel at this stage that they are touching the core about what, um, difference and the cultural diversity and, um, many executives they are doing their best to get inclusive and trying to understand the difference of the other cultures through courses to learn the other cultures.

There was also a recognition by two participants that organizational change would be slow. Male participant #5 said, "It is a work in progress, their commitment I see … for the ABC Bank it is a huge … it is slow moving … is it fully tuned in that direction? Probably not." Female participant #33 similarly stated: "I have been with ABC for almost ten years and I do see a very positive progression. … I think that it is a good improvement but we are definitely not there yet."

Interestingly, two participants noted that the organizational experience depended widely on the commitment and understanding of the direct manager, underscoring the importance of leadership. Female participant #32 said:

> There are occasions … there are inequalities and it is very subtle. It is never like kind of open and it all depends on the individual and the managers. ABC has a very good organization perspective, it has good intentions. It is how that intention as an organization is executed. … it is a big organization …. So you have people if I may call them the bad apples that they [are not] executing values the way that ABC envisioned.

Lastly, three participants noted that, as focused as ABC might be on diversity, some competitor financial institutions had gained more ground in both recruitment and support for ethnic communities. Female participant #26 said, "ABC is very committed, not as committed as XX."

ABC Bank maintains a hiring philosophy of meritocracy. The organization also claims to

understand the need for diversity measures and practices. For example, the bank mandates that at least one woman and one visible minority should be included when reviewing senior management openings, although in practice there may be gaps in implementation. All participants also believed in meritocracy. For instance, female participant #30 said:

> I think that ABC overall has done a great job in promoting diversity and promoting women and leadership and at the end of the day it is always an individual choice and something they want. People who want it may not have the right skill set and we would not be doing ourselves a great service as we promoted the wrong people.

Overall, there was recognition of ABC's organizational efforts in supporting diversity; however, the participants also acknowledged there is work to be done to get to the next level of understanding unique perspectives.

Perspectives on Chinese Canadian leadership mobility. When asked why Chinese Canadians are not as well represented in leadership, the participants provided an array of potential reasons, which are summarized in Figure 11. The participants provided multiple responses, which were sorted by category. The participant perspectives could be sorted broadly into categories of career preference, issues related to cultural fit, and organizational barriers against mobility. It is interesting that 43 responses claimed an issue of cultural fit compared to the 34 responses that related to organizational barriers. This may arise from an overall cultural impetus to take responsibility for one's own career outcomes. It is also surprising how many statements on the organizational front surfaced. The participants appeared very open and candid in their interviews, likely due to the confidentiality provided. Yet, in general it is recognized that lack of self-advocacy may be a structural barrier to success. Self-advocacy might be a difficult cultural behaviour to achieve on a one-on-one basis, considering the humility aspect of

Confucian values. The participants noted it might be easier to simply give up on career mobility than challenge the status quo. A lesser concern, but still voiced, was that leadership might be risky in terms of failure, resulting in loss of face, another Confucian tenet.

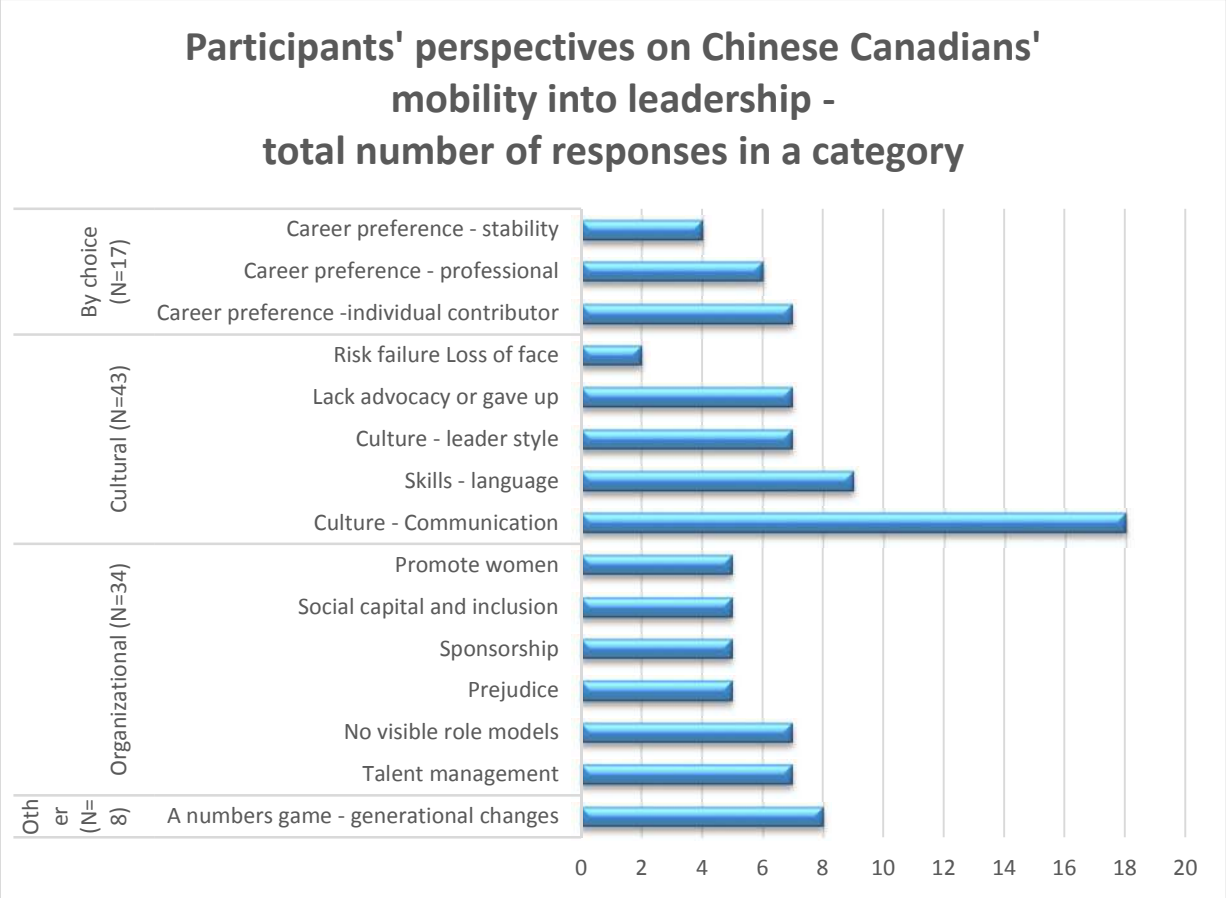

Figure 11. Participants' perspectives on Chinese Canadians' mobility into leadership

There was one outlier, but important, response that leadership representation would gradually increase as the younger generation developed their careers. Younger immigrants are increasing in numbers and may represent a closer fit to western norms, based on exposure through social media and better language capability. Male participant #15 said:

> I would think that it is changing quite a lot … so the younger generations, the ones born after the 1990's they have TV and right after they have internet and they have iPad and they have everything although I know in China it is media control but still you have a

> vast amount of information. … the families that get a future and they have they can provide a better support for their kids to go to higher education and go to university or they send them to these countries so those generations I would say will be in a much better position than the generation from 70's or 60's.

The participants' perspectives on the question "why are there less Chinese Canadians represented in leadership roles?" mirrored many of the personal career experiences discussed in a previous section, "Our Careers in Leadership." Their observations of organizational barriers are explored in more detail in the following sections.

Perspectives on talent management. The participants described the organizational processes that affect their career progression into leadership roles. This begins from the hiring process. While the direct manager is responsible for hiring, there is one human resource consultant in each region of Vancouver and Toronto, responsible for consulting advice to the senior leadership team and providing oversight and expertise. A number of participants talked about the lengthy process and up front rigour the Bank had applied to hiring. Male participant #7 said, "I made it to ABC Bank and I had to go through two or three rounds of interviews before I made it through." In Toronto, several participants were hired directly into leadership, including some new immigrants with previous leadership experience. Male participant #13 said, "I came to Canada in 2000 as a skilled immigrant and I came with my wife and I joined ABC right away." Another male participant (#15) arrived directly from China with previous financial industry experience and was hired directly into the ABC management program through an agency association: "The program was called Access Employment and they have program in the financial services program. ABC Bank valued my experience before and that is why they offered me the manager training program so that is why I chose to work for ABC."

The Toronto experience appeared to indicate that some individuals had been aggressively fast-tracked to create leadership representation at the senior level. Male participant #12 said: "We continued to grow … that [territory] was split into two and that was where I had an opportunity to become an RVP and XX [manager] carved out a more of the Asian concentration [territory]." The Vancouver employees appeared to transfer positions more within their respective territories than across the Vancouver central metropolitan area. There may be inconsistency in the hiring processes across the organization, therefore outcomes could vary based on the philosophies of senior leadership in Vancouver and Toronto.

The bank employs a job posting methodology for employees and its philosophy is that employees can take charge of their own career choices and mobility. Arguably, such a system should create fair and level access to jobs, but there is no evidence as to whether the system is used consistently or whether any cultural norms may impede some candidates from proactively applying for jobs. Job posting does not preclude the bank from employing succession planning or talent management practices; however, it is the bank's intent that jobs be posted to create transparency and access to all candidates. The participants talked about their perspectives on job posting and career management. Forty-one percent of the participants were not as proactive in career management and showed trust in their managers to advise them of appropriate moves. This number was arrived at by counting participant reports of using the job posting system. For instance, male participant #3 said, "I haven't applied for a long time so I don't know. The only job [applied for] was the CSR [teller]." The participants further relied on their managers to let them know when they were ready to take the next step in their careers. Male participant #12 said, "Job posting—no one even looks at job posting. They need to be tapped." As such, it seems that career outcomes were highly dependent on the direct manager. Sometimes, the

participants were surprised when approached for a type of role they might not have expected. Female participant #26 said:

> I don't really feel that I am career driven because all of the roles that I have talked about I never applied for the job, because it was really a touch on the shoulder and hey this is the place for you and I am into the role and then I just excel and I never liked to let people down because I always think that if you think that I am able to do a good job then I feel obligated that I should make sure that I don't hurt your reputation.

Female participant #23 described a similar experience: "He [manager] approached me at the time and asked if I would be ever be interested in a role in leadership I was actually taken aback because no not really. And I was actually thinking oh gosh maybe they must be dire straits right why are they coming to me?" Some participants preferred to wait until they were asked about promotion, interpreting it as a sign they were in fact skilled and ready to move forward. They showed trust in management to assess their talent accurately. For instance, female participant #25 said:

> Um, I have to say honestly I like to be, um, called to get promotion rather than asking to go on a promotion. When times come when my manager sees that I have potential and that particular role is suitable for me, that is where I will go and they will just tell me that this is something that you will be interested in and would you like to try it?

However, some close manager/employee relationships exhibited a sense of loyalty, and managerial resistance to move employees to the next assignments. The managers were potentially thinking about protecting their own results, or they perhaps had varied understandings of how long an employee should remain in a role. Male participant #14 said:

> If you are really good at your job at ABC there is a vested interest in the manager of

> keeping you where you are. You get to stay where you are. Even if you go to be promoted it would be in the same region because there is a vested interest in V[ice] P[resident] to keep you.

The opposite experience can occur where the direct manager believes in employee development and will actively promote the employee's career even if it is a sacrifice. Male participant #7 said:

> If a person is good you cannot keep that person for a long time and being a manager now I understand too. I understand the hardship of training someone and making them into a full capacity where they are ready to do the work and then by the time they are doing the work they move on.

While some participants did not appear to be actively engaging in moving their careers along or advocating for themselves, 59% were applying for jobs and focusing on career mobility. Male participant #12 said, "You have to manage your career, right, it is not the manager's job but basically it is your job so you cannot anticipate that someone set your career paths you have to set it up for yourself."

The participants were divided on their perceptions of the effectiveness of the job posting process. Some expressed reservations about possible favouritism in the job posting system. For instance, male participant #5 said:

> So this is a strong statement that I am going to make but I am going to throw it out there and hopefully I can adjust the words afterwards. I see favouritism and I see favouritism based on my perspective … some companies I can say with confidence that, oh, they go through the proper protocol and this is what they go through and such but that is not the case here and this is what I find that I see.

Other participants' perceptions of fairness were that the best candidates were selected. For instance, female participant #34 said, "If you do well you will get promoted. The job posting is fair, it is open up to everyone and I would say that we do a good job."

Lower and middle management positions are more plentiful and more easily attained, however from PL07 and up, there are fewer opportunities and the competition increases. Female participant #22 said: "I think that the more junior position is an open network ... but when you get into a senior position … they know who is out there and succession planning." There is a bottleneck, and gaining entry to the senior leadership ranks created an entirely different dynamic of a more political nature where career progression is concerned. Female participant #31 said, "I enjoy a lot of respect from my colleagues and of all the senior leaders but it doesn't get me up to that next level." Female participant #32 said:

> If you have a good relationship with like your senior manager and get to see your executives then you will get the opportunity, otherwise the door shut. It is subtle. Sometimes the job is not even posted but if you know the connection you'll get the job. And you'll get the recommendation.

Employees felt they were at a disadvantage in these instances. How would they gain the social capital necessary to be considered? Female participant #30 said:

> Not easy to get a promotion. It is not easy at all. Most of the people come with the mentality that if you worked hard enough and you produce what is expected and if they are slightly above peers then they are entitled to a promotion. In, um, in reality that is not the case.

Female participant #31 likewise said:

> What happens is that there will still be a debate and dialogue by the, um, by the EVP's

> [Executive Vice President's] about why this person versus another person but all of that points to then is more dynamics that gets fed into the selection process so that we have this great person who is a PL06 who is time to move up but we have all these PL07 who are in their job and getting bored that we need to move around.

Active management is required to move into senior levels of leadership. However, in this case, the employee may be more reliant on the political currency of the direct manager. If the manager does not have currency in the organization or leaves, chances of promotion for that employee are lessened. Female participant #31 said:

> Sponsorship is a big deal. So my sponsor she has retired. Sponsorship is actually more important than ever in terms of career progression. It is political and really it is not just what you can do that is great it is … how committed can you be as an individual to move up … and then with that is your sponsor, who is your sponsor and how strong is your sponsor, can your sponsor help navigate your move.

This participant also shared that another avenue was to cultivate a spokesperson as a means of building a positive reputation in the organization: "The sponsorship I have is really people who worked with me who have faith and trust and see the work that I do and as I compete for different things they might be my spokesperson and that type of thing."

The direct manager is the most critical of all relationships relative to career management and mobility (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Conference Board of Canada, 2007; Hyun, 2005; Oliver, 2005). All of the participants affirmed their reliance on their managers for mentorship and sponsorship. Early and regular discussions can make a difference in the trajectory of a career. Female participant #24 said: "The manager relationships that you have with your manager is very important and especially in your earlier career development, it could

just impact a lot on your own perspective." Likewise, female participant #30 said: "I think that relationships with your direct manager is the most important thing, um, for a job." In terms of increasing visible minority leadership representation, it may also be critical to identify larger numbers of potential candidates earlier.

Perspectives on the quality of relationship with manager. Most participants were pleased with their managers and several talked about one or more who had been influential mentors. Most times the mentor had been their manager. The manager's skill as a mentor was judged by his or her willingness to give up talent, coach the participant to success, and to guide career progression in the best interest of the participant. The participants did not choose their managers, but if the managers were good mentors, there was evidence that the participants tended to want to 'pay it forward,' thus building organizational capability of important leadership skills. Female participant #24 said, "She [manager] has been helping me a lot and that is why I hope that one day I would be in the position that I would have power or ability to help other people." Male participant #12 also said:

> I think that we spent an hour together and I think she might've missed a call but I still remember to this day and I try to think about my role now and think about those that help me along the way with my career and the advice of a given me and, um, I need to kind of go and do the same.

There was less evidence of formal mentorship programs with another leader; however, mentorship came from a variety of sources. Female participant #34 said:

> I don't have anyone formal and mentors but I do have peers that I go to, um, colleagues that I go to for different advice and if I have issues and ones that I look up to and so I do have a support group. And I have people that I share insights with. In terms of the

> formal mentor, no, I don't have anybody. I think mentors is almost too formal and it is like a title but really mentors are people that you go to, look for and your go-to people and I think that we all have those types of people that we reach out to.

For the most part, the relationships reported with managers were respectful and open. When asked if it would be helpful to have an Asian manager or mentor, almost all participants were neutral and, in fact, some mentioned it may be helpful to have a non-Asian sponsor to help with better mobility. Male participant #4 said:

> If you're an Asian to move ahead feel you need to have the support of someone that is not Asian. … I still talk to a lot of my [former] colleagues and they kind of say that we should have, and they are of Asian descent, we should have rubbed shoulders with more of the Caucasians just to kind of get in closer knit with them in their career because now they feel that they are stuck at a certain level and there isn't much more places to go to move up.

To underscore this comment, there was a desire expressed by 100% of participants to see more Asian leaders who could be role models. Male participant #5 said:

> I am talking about XX he is Taiwanese so the Chinese approach so he is very humble but he has been able to make it because he has played his part, he has made his influences. … he is my role model … I see that we follow the same path. … when I see him succeed I feel good and I feel hope.

A few of the more senior managers had come to realize they were in fact role models for more junior employees and had come to understand the importance of visibility in leadership. Female participant #23 said:

> People have made comment that it is so great that you are doing so well and you know

> and you are Chinese. And I will be honest at first I was offended that I always thought of myself as Canadian and why does that matter and then I realized that it wasn't about that and then I think in the last year or so is when I actually really embraced it and it is something to be proud of.

For the most part, the participants had good relationships with their managers. They trusted the advice they were given and appreciated the support. The positive experiences helped them to understand the importance of their own leadership activities in supporting employees and how their visibility was shaping the organization.

Perspectives on inclusion and social capital. The quality of relationships with colleagues and social capital are considered important factors in career mobility (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Thomas, 2001). Most participants commented that they had a diverse and wide circle of colleagues, some of whom were friends. However, a few participants stated they kept their personal and business relationships separate, which was considered more professional. When asked about the quality of relationship with colleagues, there was a 100% positive response from the participants perhaps supported by the espoused corporate value of diversity that sets the stage for collaboration. While the organizational environment was not perceived to outwardly present any issues, there were a few interesting comments from many participants around an intangible factor that several named "connection." They thought it might be difficult at times to establish a deeper connection with both colleagues and senior managers, possibly based on cultural differences. For instance, female participant #28 said:

> For minorities most people come as immigrants, right? So how do you make the connection to people who are so foreign to your culture or you know what is funny so say

> if I showed up just looking like a Caucasian right so instantly maybe you feel like, oh, I already kind of know you, even though you don't have an idea of this person. There is just a little bit more that you see in the person of a facial structure, even that you have never experienced, just because you all grew up in the environment that you kind of seen enough and you kind of have rules.

The feelings that participants articulated could be equated with inclusion. Perhaps work colleagues are not looking past what they see, to get to know individuals more completely. The participants noted that it takes dedicated effort to find a common ground with others. They talked about different strategies they could employ to make a connection with colleagues at work. Male participant #2 said:

> How many Asian Canadians will tell you, well I am going kayaking? Right … sometimes it is hard it depends on who you talk to and what value to put on right, you have your Asian friends and you talk about the Chinese soap operas … and you listen to that group of music … So for me I like to equal myself and learn and be able to be in that conversation so I watch the storage wars and the duck dynasty and I watch a lot of different things so that I can be part of the conversation. At first you're kind of what is the big deal but then you get into this is actually quite fun, um, hockey and watch a little bit of basketball and still don't get football but you have to know some of these things and so then if people want to talk about it you can be part of the conversation you don't have to be an active part of it but you don't drift, right. Um, I guess that is part of, um, getting yourself prepared and part of the appreciation of yourself to be part of that group and I think that is a fair point.

A few participants discussed how they might be excluded. For instance, female participant #32

said: "People will say that this person will be more aligned with because they came from the same cultural background and they can talk hockey or could talk golf." Male participant #5 expanded on how quickly the connection can be missed. He further noted that Asian relationship building is a lengthier process that could impact on career:

> One person told me it is how much influence one has, um, in order to relate. I see that for leadership one moves up and I see that there is a lot of, um, what is the wording, camaraderie and in order for camaraderie to occur it has to have a rapport and you need to have similarities and something that sparks, that sparks interest and that sparks relationship development. If there is no connection … it is awkward. … I am kind of sensing that is the case with Chinese because in one sense we are very reserved … we stick to ourselves but that can be viewed as oh this guy is not being you know open he is being closed off and that is just the way that we are. Asians it takes a little bit more to get to a comfort zone than Canadians. … for Chinese it is more you have to understand what your way of thinking is and you want to understand their values and again … it is not through speech it is action. So they don't see that action and they don't see the right queues then the door closes.

For the most part, the participants felt the awkwardness described, but did not feel they had been materially excluded. They enjoyed their work relationships and the diversity of their networks. Male participant #8 said:

> At ABC Bank it is hard not to know people and I find that I have a fairly diverse group of close colleagues or friends actually and I mean obviously I am still a little bit younger being in ABC Bank, um, only been there for about a year or so and I find I can work closely with pretty much anybody. Um, race is not really a huge issue, obviously you

> have a cultural proximity when you are talking with Chinese colleagues because they understand the puns, the jokes or whatever I mean that is natural but work wise and efficiency wise and in terms of closeness or being able to share, um, even some personal stories and that is fairly diverse actually.

The breadth and depth of the participant networks is naturally expanding due to demographic shifts. As male participant #1 said, "A lot of my colleagues are bicultural simply because of the demographics of XX."

Organizational territories can create artificial borders where employees may not be as widely known, thereby limiting career opportunities. A few participants noted this limitation. For instance, male participant #8 said, "I do know people in other regions but a lot more limited let's put it that way. I do know of a few senior VP in other regions but, um, they are definitely not going to be my primary contacts, if I have to pick up the phone." As such, if there is a geographic career move, an employee may be faced with rebuilding a network from scratch and building credibility. Female participant #22 said, "I am still new to the region and I have to do my network again and I have to build connections … and so why not you go out and see what you can do and spread your wings." Re-establishing credibility for visible minorities may be no different than it is for all employees; however, it may be more challenging for diverse leaders trying to build their social network/capital given the earlier comments about networking and communication style.

Workplace summary. The forgoing sections have covered aspects of the workplace as experienced by the participants. The review included an overview of ABC Bank's commitment to diversity and this was found to be mostly positive; however, deeper understanding of Chinese Canadian perspectives was desired. The findings included an assessment of the participants'

thoughts on why Chinese Canadians may not be fully represented in senior leadership roles. Three major themes surfaced, including career preference, cultural obstacles that the participants had internalized, and organization supports or barriers that moderated the career success of the participants. Delving deeper, the participants shared their experiences of hiring, talent management, and job posting. Next, the relationship with the direct manager was investigated, which revealed a mostly positive experience in sponsorship and mentoring. Sponsorship was found to be challenging as the participants progressed to more senior levels of leadership. Finally, the participants shared their perspectives on the quality of relationships with colleagues and their feelings of inclusion in the organization, which was found to be mostly positive but presented the challenges of building connections quickly. The participants were mostly happy in their social work environment. Nevertheless, the participants shared nuances of cultural influences that impact feelings of inclusion.

Summary of Findings

This chapter began with an analysis of the participants' ethnic identities and acculturation characteristics. The study revealed a propensity to retain a pan-ethnic self-identity, most often labeled Chinese Canadian. The analysis expanded on ethnic identity to determine acculturation levels by behaviours, values, and self-assessment. The participant responses conveyed a congruency between behaviours and values, and most often self-assessed as of bicultural identity. A significant secondary component of bicultural Asian identity was uncovered. The phenomenographic qualitative findings were then broken down into two main sections for analysis: "Our Careers in Leadership," which included a career review from the participants' perspectives, and "Our Workplace," which included a review of the organizational environment from the participants' perspectives. Thematic areas of interest relative to career mobility brought

out a variety of participant perspectives. The phenomenographic method synthesizes the main variations in perspectives, called conceptions, visually, in a chart known as the outcome space (see Figure 12). Four main conception categories emerged in how participants make meaning and respond to their careers. Namely, participants experienced their careers as: 1) marginalized by cultural barriers; 2) integrated in a specialized or professional niche; 3) integrated in a cultural markets niche; and 4) assimilated to the organizational environment. Interestingly, the categories mimic some acculturation strategies, specifically integration, marginalization, and assimilation, which makes sense given the cultural theories behind this study. The conception categories were aligned in a matrix against five main career themes that emerged in the interviews, to cross-reference points of interest in career mobility towards senior leadership. The themes included: 1) language and communication; 2) leadership style; 3) the direct manager relationship and talent management; 4) sponsorship; and 5) social capital. The career conceptions and career themes are related to each other in a hierarchical way such that progression is dependent on each level and the progression is directional. There are lower- and higher-order needs in career mobility and there are increasingly complex modes of acculturation. The categorizations are not presented to consign participants in a deterministic way, since the unit of analysis is the conception and the not the individual. It is noted the system is dynamic and contextual, such that participants may move between the career conceptions and career themes, but broadly the career conceptions and career themes exist on their own as a concept. The results are meant to draw out the broad cultural themes that emerged from the empirical data, which will be presented in the discussion chapter.

Chinese Canadian views of career progression into senior leadership roles (*N*=34)				
	Conceptions: Making meaning of career experience			
	Cultural barriers -marginalized	Specialized/ Professional niche - Integrated	Cultural leadership niche – Integrated	Adapting to Environment- Assimilated
Themes				
Language and communication (cultural moderators)	-Misunderstood fighting for credibility/ -Might resist type-cast Asian	Doesn't matter- rely on knowledge	-Capitalize on growth of Asian markets -Successful and comfortable	-Changing the "speak up" -Hone language -Might resist type-cast Asian
Leadership Style	-Fusion style -Misunderstood Results/work ethic should count for success	Professional *first* Leader *second*	-Fusion style -Bicultural *first* -Leader *second* -Proud of contribution to market	-Fusion style -Focusing on leadership development
Manager relations, talent management, and mentors	-Misunderstood -Held back to sustain business growth -Less control	Professional culture	-Appreciative -manager is key to success -passive control	-Optimize organizational resources and manager/mentor -In control
Sponsorship	-Fighting for recognition	-Vital for success	-Usually is the manager/mentor	-Seeking visibility for Career mobility
Social capital	-Struggling to make connections	-Credible and respected	-Diverse network	-Breadth and depth of network strong
Progression outcomes	-Stalled, but wish to advance	-Advancement limited *or* diversify	-Steady Based on market opportunity	-Growing competing in market

Figure 12. Phenomenographic outcome space: Chinese Canadian conceptions of career.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The discussion chapter begins with a review of the ethnic identity and acculturation scale results in order to understand how Chinese Canadian ethnic identities can be recognized. Then, in order to contextualize the phenomenographic study, interesting findings of how and where leader participants were situated in the organization are presented. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to phenomenographic findings as illustrated in Figure 12.

How can Chinese Canadian Ethnic Identities be Recognized?

This study used measurements of ethnic identity and acculturation to enhance understanding of the participant group beyond demographic information. The literature has highlighted that visible minorities feel their specific ethnicities and contributions are not well understood or recognized (Catalyst, 2003; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011). Thus, the concept of bicultural identity informed this study's theoretical underpinning and research question of how Chinese Canadians view their career progression in leadership. The intention was not to label the participants, but rather to gain insight into the overall profile of the participant group. The MEIM-R and SL-Asia scales measured ethnic identity and acculturation, respectively.

Ethnic identity is linked to acculturation and reflects an individual's psychological propensity to identify with his or her cultural group (Berry, 2003; Liebkind, 2006; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The participants' self-assessment MEIM-R results indicated that the majority (35%) of participants self-identified as Chinese Canadian. The next ranked identities were Chinese (26%), Taiwanese (15%), and Hong Kongese (12%). It is interesting to note that only one participant identified as Canadian, which may affirm a propensity to retain ethnic identity over national identity (Berry, 2003; Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Phinney, 2003). Overall, there was a

strong affinity toward an Asian identity. According to Cheryan and Tsai (2007), a pan-ethnic label, such as Chinese Canadian, acts to affirm both cultures. Further, pan-ethnic labels are sustained in environments with increased immigration (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007). Therefore, it was not unusual to see the high number of hyphenated identities and Asian identities in the participant group. Berry (2003) notes that ethnic identity labels are a predictor of personal acculturation strategy. For example, a national identity, such as Canadian, predicts assimilation. Hyphenated names, such as Chinese Canadian, predict integration, whereas a pure ethnic identity, such as Chinese, predicts separation.

The MEIM-R scale average results indicate 3.7 for ethnic exploration and 3.9 for commitment out of a possible 5 rating. Phinney et al. (2001) indicate that a high commitment score may result from identification with parents, but without personal exploration creates a less robust sense of identity. ABC Bank's high exploration scores along with high commitment are a positive outcome. The overall score of 3.8 out of 5 seems modestly high in the realm of other related studies. For example, Yoon (2011) studied 289 American minority graduate students aged 20–64, of which 100 were of European heritage and 189 were visible minorities. The visible minority-reported exploration scores were 3.76 (*SD* = .66.) and commitment scores were 3.97 (*SD* = .73). However, the European scores were somewhat lower at 3.06 (*SD* = 1.15) for exploration and 3.58 (*SD* = .94) for commitment. Another study of 630 Asian female participants reported exploration at 3.37 (*SD* = .83) and commitment at 3.94 (*SD* = .79), with total scores of 3.65 (*SD* = .71). In this study, the Chinese-only subgroup showed lower overall scores of 3.51 (*SD* = .72) (Brown et al., 2014). Lastly, in a study of 4,190 East Asian adolescents aged 12–19 in Canada, a breakdown was provided between English speakers at home and heritage language speakers at home, whether born in Canada or immigrants.

Interestingly, little difference in exploration and commitment scores were noted between immigrants and Canadian-born respondents. However, heritage language speakers at home showed exploration scores of 3.58 (*SD* = .72) and commitment scores of 3.81 (*SD* = .76), which were both .30 greater than English speakers at home (Homma, Zumbo, Saewyc, & Wong, 2014). Age may also be a factor in these results since ethnic identity is a developmental process. However, it is interesting to note that heritage language was a positive moderator of identity. The majority of participants in this study had heritage language skills. Also, there is a positive relationship between the process of achieved ethnic identity and self-esteem and confidence (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Downie et al., 2004; Phinney et al., 2001), which may be relevant for career success. The ABC Bank results bode reasonably well for the organization, as integrated ethnic identities are also aligned with positive attitudes toward organizations that support diversity programs (Linnehan et al., 2003). The identity profile of the group appears to partially align with the acculturation results, although it is also noted that ethnic identity and acculturation are dynamic constructs and thus are not necessarily matched.

SL-Asia acculturation scale results indicate the participant group acculturation profile contained a strong contingent of self-assessed bicultural individuals at 38%. Additional bicultural profiles revealed bicultural-Asian identified at 21% and bicultural western-identified at 12%, totalling 71% of the participants adopting bicultural strategies. A smaller contingent of 9% Asian was reported. What does the result predict for these Asian individuals? Acculturation strategies are not picked at random; the environment also affects personal responses (Berry, 2003; Phinney, 2003). Without further research, it is difficult to assess if a separation acculturation strategy might apply to the Asian contingent. This may signify a wish to hold on to ethnic roots while avoiding interaction with the dominant culture or could also be a result forced

by the dominant group, in which case it could be considered segregation. Likely, a combination of factors are at play. There were 18% western-identified participants included in the acculturation results, so another possibility to consider is that assimilation required the most personal changes and some loss of identity, which is not a positive outcome in a multicultural philosophy.

Concerning a bicultural strategy, there is some evidence that those who integrate fare best; good adaptation occurs with knowledge, contact, and a positive intergroup attitude (Berry, 2003; Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Phinney, 2003). For example, Racho (2012) researched the stories of 32 successful Asian American senior leaders and reported that the leaders had found a way to integrate their Asian and American cultures early in their careers. The study used SL-Asia scale instrumentation and reported that the participants self-assessed at 40% bicultural, 34% Asian identified, and 25% western identified. Language and cultural knowledge are assets in organizations (Catalyst, 2003; Conference Board of Canada, 2005; Oliver, 2005). By extension, ethnic identity and biculturalism are also assets (Friedman & Liu, 2009; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). The acculturation experience affords an individual a unique perspective of integrating both cultures and a fuller understanding of the environment and interpersonal relations (Berry, 2004; Friedman & Liu, 2009; Zane & Song, 2007). Bicultural individuals have enhanced their adaptability, decision-making and mediation skills, flexibility, intercultural sensitivity, and leadership skills (Friedman & Liu, 2009; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). In short, they are more apt to be interculturally competent and that brings value to organizations as the demographic landscape changes. The question remains, however, that if 71% of Chinese Canadians in ABC Bank are bicultural and have access to behavioural competencies from both Asian and western cultures, why might they encounter difficulties with advancement in the

organization?

Where are the Chinese Canadian Leaders?

It is interesting to note the distribution and location of the leader participants in the study. This discussion makes two distinct observations about the leaders only, based on phenomenographic variation: first, that professionals in leadership roles confront unique challenges in their career mobility, and second, that branch managers positioned in Canadian markets that cater to Asian clients (Asian markets) may face career opportunities or challenges based on their ethnicity.

It may well be that professionals in leadership roles at ABC Bank represent untapped potential for advancement into senior leadership and that their supporting roles are limited by a lack of power. The literature review suggests that a career in the professions is often a preference for Chinese Canadians (Hyun, 2005; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). In ABC Bank, the professional positions are located in supporting departments, such as accounting, risk, legal, and capital markets. A supporting role signifies that its specialized functions are not the main business of the Bank, as they would be in a law firm or accounting firm. Some of the participants in this study were professionals in those divisions of ABC Bank. This study also found that career advancement into senior leadership roles within ABC Bank has mostly been constrained to the employee's particular domain of expertise and within organizational divisions. There are simply less opportunities to advance if the participant professionals maintain positions within their specific domains of expertise. Furthermore, once ensconced in his or her speciality, it was difficult for others to see the participant's leadership capabilities over his or her professional knowledge. Indeed, the participants expressed their frustration at their inability to advance their careers beyond a certain point. All of the senior

professional leaders were successful in their leadership roles, but none were asked about developing their leadership in other areas of the bank, which is a common career latticing tactic with other employees (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Thomas, 2001; Woo, 2000). In addition, career sponsorship was harder to secure within a competitive and narrow field. This research corroborates findings from other studies, which have argued upward mobility may be achieved to a point, but essentially the professional leader is not seen as a leader in the main business (Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Thomas, 2001; Woo, 2000).

Generally, leaders with business growth and profit responsibility most often progress to executive roles, unlike those in professional and support roles (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Thomas, 2001; Woo, 2000). Furthermore, those in staff roles have less control over setting strategy and accessing resources than those in line roles. The result restricts access to roles of power creating an occupational segregation (Leong & Gupta, 2007; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Thomas, 2001; Woo, 2000). The present study found lateral movement from a technical managerial ladder into a line role and senior leadership at ABC Bank did not happen. In essence, the participants were categorized primarily as professionals and secondarily as leaders. However, it is important to acknowledge that the participants might be invested in their professional identities and prefer to work in a specialized field following from their educational backgrounds. They might see *themselves* as primarily professionals and accept, or not even see, the organizational limitations. At the very least, the organization could present choices before assuming professional leaders are not interested in expanding their field of influence. The organization may be blind to the potential of its professional talent pool. There are numerous examples of senior executives with working professional backgrounds who have crossed over to executive roles. For example, the former CEO of TD Bank is a Doctor of

Economics (TD, 2013); the CEO of Air Canada is a lawyer (Air Canada, 2014); the CEO of BC Hydro is an accountant (BC Hydro, 2014); the CEO of Suncor is an engineer (Suncor, 2014); and nearly a quarter of UK CEOs are accountants ("Nearly a Quarter", 2005). From a broader viewpoint, a substantial number of Chinese Canadians choose career paths in the professions and are working professionals within corporate businesses, but they have not progressed as often into senior leadership ranks and the CEO suite (Catalyst, 2003; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000).

Another interesting finding of this study was the concentration (72%) of Chinese Canadian leaders who work in East Asian markets. The Chinese demographic is increasing in geographic markets in both Toronto and Vancouver as a result of immigration growth (Statistics Canada, 2011b). ABC Bank has benefited from business growth in these cultural markets. Bilingualism is an important skill, and of the top 15 languages spoken in the world, nine originate from Asian countries (Catalyst, 2003). Moreover, biculturalism is an equally important business skill, as staff become “connecting points” for clients (Catalyst, 2003, p.3). Bank branches in East Asian markets in Canada, have tailored their services to meet the needs of Mandarin and Cantonese speaking clients by hiring diverse staff with appropriate language skills and cultural knowledge. Where possible, Branch Manager roles are also staffed by Chinese Canadians. This is an industry-wide phenomenon that has increased leadership opportunities for those employees with intercultural communication skills (Oliver, 2005). The hiring of Chinese Canadians in Asian markets aligns with ABC Bank’s diversity strategy and has led to a boost in Chinese Canadian leadership representation. Looking beyond the numbers, representation within the Chinese Canadian leadership group demonstrates that Canadian-born children of immigrants, new immigrants, and immigrants with longer Canadian experience are all being appointed into

management positions at ABC Bank. Therefore, an increasing diversity of Chinese Canadians is being achieved within the leadership ranks in Asian markets. It should be noted that there were four Chinese Canadian leaders located in mainstream markets: one was not bilingual, one had assumed a market deemed a growth area for Asian clients, one was awaiting a move, and one was in a head office role.

On the surface, the increased leadership opportunities for Chinese Canadians would appear to be a positive result of placing them in Asian markets. However, the phenomenographic analysis revealed a variation within the participant attitudes regarding how the business strategy may or may not align with their own career goals. For example, 20% of the participants felt they might be stereotyped and sidelined into a career in Asian markets. Their language skills and cultural knowledge benefited the Bank in terms of achieving business results, but they were uncertain as to whether they would be equally valued for their leadership potential in the longer term. Woo (2000) also found that Asian managers with linguistic and cultural skills were limited to supervising all-Asian groups. On the one hand, a competitive advantage arises from cultural capital creating more leadership opportunities, but if the opportunities do not align with a path into senior leadership roles, then a middle management segment could result (Leong & Gupta, 2007; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). In a three year study, Thomas (2001) found that visible minorities were often sidelined from senior leadership by assuming middle-management roles in cultural markets and support positions. The Middlemen minority theory (Hirschman & Wong, 1981) posits that Asian Americans are "permitted to occupy certain occupational niches which are non-competitive with the dominant group allowing a higher socioeconomic status … but there remains a ceiling on advancement into positions of authority or institutional power" (p. 496). Thatchenkery and Sugiyama (2011) further link model minority

to middlemen minority to forever foreign as the signifying chain of the Asian American hierarchical experience in career mobility.

It is interesting to note some of the corollary experiences of women in leadership. Eagly and Carli (2007) have researched women's occupational segregation in staff roles and also the concentration of women in middle-management roles. To borrow Scott and Brown's (2006) words from "Female first, leader second?," Chinese Canadians in the current study have achieved meaningful leadership roles but there is a preference to staff for ethnicity *first* and leadership *second.* If indeed leadership skills are sufficient for Asian markets, they should also be suitable for mainstream markets. Could there be a double standard in assessing leadership capability at ABC Bank?

The leaders in this study also feared they would lose the opportunity for development in other types of roles, since they were needed in Asian markets due to a shortage of leaders with appropriate language skills. There was no real evidence of rotation between Asian market branches and mainstream market branches in the participant career paths. Presumably, the open job posting process would dictate that employees only apply for jobs they want, but the evidence also demonstrates that most positions are filled at the direct manager's request. Perhaps the Chinese Canadian leaders do not wish to decline such advances for fear there may be less mainstream branch opportunities available to them. Overall, the business market strategy preserves an ethnic enclave seen in the community at large (Hiebert, 2009; Li, 2004). However, the parallel career outcomes, if not the employee's first choice, might also be viewed as segregation. This is not to suggest that ABC Bank intends to segregate; rather, there appears to be a blind spot in business norms that has created an imbalance between satisfying client needs and employee needs. Further research is required to determine whether specializing in cultural

markets hampers or helps career mobility in the long term. For example, it would be interesting to determine if average role tenure in Asian markets is comparable to tenure in mainstream markets or if career paths eventually evolve to mainstream managerial roles. A similar Canadian study of large contact centres where French language skills were in high demand ultimately concluded workers were entrapped in their culturally-determined roles (Heller, 2003). The researchers found that language and identity had been co-opted for the purpose of business profits. While there are substantial differences between the two studies (not least, the French Canadian participants were not immigrants), the organization's capitalization on language skills is not entirely dissimilar. Further investigation is nonetheless needed to determine the long-term impacts of this segregation.

The participants did not all report entirely negative experiences of this situation. The majority of leaders were proud to be serving Asian markets. They were able to use their linguistic and cultural skills to make a positive contribution to the Bank and also to enhance their personal financial outcomes through salary and performance bonuses. They have benefitted from their cultural skills. While on the surface this scenario seems a perfect marriage of employee desire, talent management, and business strategy, there may also be an underlying impediment to career mobility as noted earlier. The participants largely view the system as fair, and they have worked hard to achieve results and affirm their leadership skill. Indeed, their cultural skills contribute to their success within Asian markets. Several participants noted it was easier to gain business due to the loyalty of their Chinese clientele and their ethnic affinity. Such an outcome is related to the social capital and achieved prosperity that can result in an ethnic enclave economy (Li, 2004; Loury, 2002). According to Mata and Pendakur (2010), social capital is also a significant variable in achieving career mobility. However, the restriction of

social capital in cultural markets may be too specialized to be helpful in mainstream markets. Moreover, there may be a comfort zone in Asian markets that could hold leaders back, and may even reflect a leader's intimate knowledge of where he or she feels supported. Loury (2002) argues that, although individuals are capable of independent choice, visible minorities are more apt to gravitate to a racially organized place where they are supported by the social capital of skills, knowledge, and opportunities. The number of Asian branches with Asian leaders and staff could be seen as a culture unto itself, nested within the organizational culture of the Bank, not unlike a satellite business or outpost from the head office, which might create more distance between ethnic groups. That is not likely the intent behind the bank's diversity strategy or values. If ABC Bank's goal is inclusion and the promotion of visible minorities into senior leadership, some guidance on talent management strategies may be needed.

The organization, following its diversity program, was deliberate in filling Asian markets with Asian leaders, and the employees were mostly willing participants. The unintended consequence of the strategy could be less leadership mobility, thus it does not represent the ideal of diversity and inclusion. The bank may need to resolve its competing priorities of business growth and its stated core value of diversity. The research here contributes to knowledge in the field of organizational diversity studies by illustrating how language skills and cultural knowledge are used with unintended consequences. Further, the study illustrates the developmental stages in organizational diversity management (Ely & Thomas, 2001) and reveals how the transition stage of moving from an emphasis on market development to diversity and inclusion affects leaders' career mobility.

Phenomenographic Career Conceptions

The phenomenographic study identified four different but hierarchically related career

conceptions of the ways that Chinese Canadian employees experience their career progression into leadership at ABC Bank. The career conceptions are matrixed against five related areas of influence in career progression, called career themes. The findings are illustrated in the phenomenographic outcome space (see Figure 12). Both the career conceptions and career themes are discussed in detail in this chapter. To provide context, the participant group career conceptions are explained first.

Conception 1) Marginalized by cultural barriers: This group expressed frustration that their efforts were not acknowledged and they had difficulty in advancing their careers. They exhibited a performance orientation, in which they expected their performance would be recognized. All participants mentioned perceptions of exclusion and discrimination. They were uncertain how to overcome barriers and were skeptical that managers might be reluctant to promote them in an effort to sustain business results. As a result, they might stay longer in a role. They felt held back or stalled in their careers and sometimes struggled to make broader organizational connections. They wanted to be judged by their effective results and not their communication style, language skills, or accent. They sometimes resisted being typecast in cultural markets. Participants in this group struggled for recognition of their leadership potential within organizational norms and felt excluded from the mainstream relational circles of influence.

Conception 2) Integrated in a specialized or professional niche: This group possessed additional specialized skills which provided a buffer or above average starting point in career progression. The specialty was a point of pride for this group and in some cases included leadership responsibilities. Perspectives on career progression might suggest either assimilation or exclusion, but generally, organizational support and particularly sponsorship for senior

leadership roles was a challenge. The participants in this group sought recognition of their leadership potential beyond their specialized professions.

Conception 3) Integrated in a cultural markets niche: This group found their career niche in cultural markets and generally took a passive approach to career advancement. They were proud of their cultural assets and the contributions they made to the organization. They were comfortable with their work/life balance and trusted their direct managers to guide their careers appropriately. They were not as concerned about English language skill and communication style given their strengths in cultural markets. This group was focused on the job at hand in a middle-management role.

Conception 4) Assimilated to the organizational environment: This group was adapting to organizational practices and relational norms. For the immigrant participants in this group, advancement was about overcoming cultural barriers related to communication style and honing English language skills. For example, they prepared for and made conscious efforts to participate more in meetings and practice public speaking skills. They were acknowledged for their efforts by their supervisors. They practiced English language skills to raise proficiency in written and oral forms. There was evidence of active career management and raising their organizational profiles by working closely with managers, mentors, and sponsors. However, there was also a tendency to defer to management in terms of applying for their next jobs. They built relationships with executives and maintained a broad network in the organization. This group enjoyed career progression through social engagement, soft skills development, and assimilation.

A hierarchy of career conceptions and career themes. The findings not only revealed variations in how the participant groups perceived their career experiences and formed strategies

to cope; the four career conceptions were also hierarchically related to each other, moving from exclusion to inclusion. The hierarchy also reveals growing complexity, as the highest category embodies all of the lower categories. For example, career conception 4 (assimilation) included the most personal change in values and behaviours as compared to career conception 1. Career conceptions 2 and 3 were integrated where participants had found either a specialized profession or cultural markets niche that provided some insurance in gaining career progression. Participants in these two groups were more or less satisfied with career progression based on their cultural fit with organizational norms, relating to issues such as language, communication style, and relationships with leaders. The career conceptions intersected with career themes, which provide insight into important areas for career progression as determined by the participants and the literature review. The career themes were also hierarchically related where language and communication styles represented cultural moderators at the individual skill level and were most cited by participants as enablers or barriers to career progression. Leadership style was next represented in the hierarchy of career themes and also represented an individual skill that may be moderated by cultural influences. The remaining career themes of manager relations, talent management, mentorship, sponsorship, and social capital are enacted in the realm of social relations, thus a significant amount of career progression was dependent on expanding relationships with others and values of the organization to support such relationships.

Possible sources of variation in perspectives. The blended method design of the study provided a way to triangulate data and add some validity to the research outcomes (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). However, it is acknowledged that the data is all self-reported by the participants, potentially creating a common method variance, which is a variance that is derived from the measurement method itself.

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) assert that self-reporting may not always represent an accurate representation of reality if participants report a position that they think is more socially acceptable or more aspirational than their current reality. For example, in the acculturation scales, the participants chose an ethnic and acculturation label with which they personally identified. This is appropriate to the study as it takes a standpoint perspective and seeks to understand how the participants wish to be viewed. It is a respectful approach. However, the response may not reflect the everyday reality of the participant as evident to others. Common method variance phenomenon is also potentially embedded in the phenomenographic responses. As such, it was of interest to the researcher to review whether any of the four phenomenographic conceptions and scale results were related to characteristics of the sample group. It is recognized that a cross reference is imperfect, with individuals all at different points in their careers and bringing various circumstances to bear on their career progress and positions. Nonetheless, demographic variables and scale results were compared within the four career conceptions in Table 3 to highlight any overall trends.

The marginalized group stands out somewhat for the most demographic variables that were different from the other groups. For example, the marginalized group were mostly male and at least 9 years older in median age than any of the other groups. This could be attributed to generational differences in culture or skills of younger immigrants now coming to Canada. The marginalized group's average PL was lower than most other groups at 8.1, yet their average tenure with ABC Bank was 18 years, as compared to 11–14 years in the other groups. The combined data might suggest a lesser rate of career progression, although no data was collected for time in individual roles. Interestingly, the group had the longest time in Canada at 21 years, but had the least amount of Canadian school experience at 2.6 years, the latter of which is

sometimes highlighted as a mediator of integration success (Costigan, Su, & Hua, 2009). Additionally, the behavioural acculturation score of the marginalized group was lowest of all groups at 2.69, and it is noted that this average was elevated with the inclusion of two Canadian-born participants who scored high in acculturation behaviours. Lastly, the marginalized group had the second lowest ethnic identity scores and was the second lowest (63%) in terms of gaining leadership roles.

The specialized group had the highest representation of immigrants at 86%, which makes sense since there is evidence that immigrants most often choose a career in the professions to gain access to employment (Hyun, 2005) and to mitigate self-doubt in language and communication skills (Leong & Gupta, 2007). The specialized group also had the second highest PL at 7.8, which may align with their skills and return on educational investment, but the lowest level of leadership representation at 43%, perhaps underscoring the challenge for professionals to be seen in a leadership capacity (Woo, 2000). Interestingly, the specialized group, despite the high number of immigrants, had the second highest acculturation score at 2.8, but the lowest ethnic identity scores. Perhaps ethnic identity is not as critical when identity is tied to a profession. The integrated group in cultural markets, not surprisingly, had the highest ethnic identity scores. Interestingly, both the specialized and cultural groups were mostly female.

In contrast to the other groups, the assimilated group all (100%) held leadership roles. The assimilated group was also in the highest average PL at 7.1. This group also had the highest level of graduate education. It is interesting that 78% of this group had only ever worked at ABC Bank, whereas other groups had more prior job experience from elsewhere. Perhaps loyalty is another indicator of assimilation. It makes sense that the assimilating group had the

highest acculturation score given that there was the least representation of immigrants at 67%. This may present some evidence that Canadian-born individuals are more assimilated and not as concerned about cultural differences in their career perspectives. Notwithstanding, the ethnic identity scores were second highest for the assimilated group, an indication of the importance of maintaining ethnic identity (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007).

Country of origin appeared to have little bearing except in the marginalized group, where it is likely that the high representation from Hong Kong is related to the fact that Hong Kongese represented earlier waves of immigrants and this was an older group. Any generalizations cannot be determined with the small sample size of 34, but these observations do seem to notionally support the qualitative findings and phenomenographic categories noted in the analysis, adding validity and a broader organizational context to the overall results.

Table 3.

Sources of variation in sample characteristics to career conceptions.

	Cultural barriers - marginalized (8)	Specialized/ Professional niche - Integrated (7)	Cultural leadership niche – Integrated (10)	Adapting to Environment-Assimilated (9)
Gender (% of group *n* =34)				
Male	62%	29%	40%	56%
Female	38%	71%	60%	44%
Median Age	44.2	36.9	35.5	35.5
Years in Canada[1]	20.6	15.5	16.8	18.8
Years in Canadian School	2.6	4	5.6	4.8
Years in labour force	18	11.5	11.1	14
Post-secondary education[2]				
Under graduate	75%	86%	40%	56%
Graduate	25%	14%	40%	44%
Other	-	-	20%	-
Only ABC Bank experience[3]	38%	71%	50%	78%
Some prior job experience	62%	29%	50%	22%
PL position level[4]	8.1	7.8	8.5	7.1
Leadership role (% of group)	62%	43%	90%	100%
Country of origin (% of group)				
Canada	25%	14%	20%	34%
China	13%	57%	20%	11%
Hong Kong	50%	29%	20%	33%
Taiwan	13%	-	30%	22%
Other	-	-	10%	
Acculturation behaviour*	2.69	2.83	2.70	3.01
Ethnic identity**	3.65	3.51	4.06	3.82

Phenomenographic Career Themes

This section presents the five career themes captured in the phenomenographic outcome space (refer Figure 12). The detailed discussion covers: 1) language and communication; 2)

[1] Years in Canada, years in Canadian School, and years in labour force calculated for Immigrant participants *N* = 26
[2] Post-secondary school calculated as a percentage of group achieved using all participants *N*=34
[3] Only ABC Bank experience and Prior experience calculated as a percentage of group using all participants *N*=34
[4] PL position level calculated as an average of all PL levels in the group using all participants *N*=34

leadership style; 3) the direct manager relationship and talent management; 4) sponsorship; and 5) social capital.

Do English language skills hold back Chinese Canadian leaders? The participants ranked language skill and communication style their area of highest concern, and it is presented first in the hierarchical phenomenographic model. Other closely related studies have noted the importance of both language skill and communication style in career mobility (Catalyst, 2003; Hong, 2009; Racho, 2012; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). Notwithstanding, concern about language proficiency was an unexpected finding simply because all participants seemingly already had a very good command of English. None had directly experienced serious job performance issues as a result of their English language proficiency, or at least not of which they were aware. The participants had internalized that language proficiency was for their own development and a critical aspect that would affect their mobility in the organization, particularly in leadership. Categorically, their concerns were in two areas. First, the participants linked leadership potential with the English language nuances required for polished verbal and written communication and the power of language to illicit followership in creating vision and motivating staff. Second, participants raised concerns about how accent affected communication with others.

The English language proficiency finding could be related to skills competence, which may or may not be a real barrier. Understandably, the newer immigrants with less than 10 years in Canada reported the most challenges in this area. In view of comments in the previous section, it might be that working exclusively in an Asian market may affect an employee's ability to improve upon English language skills if that is indeed a personal goal. Leaders in Asian markets must be trilingual in some cases and it may not be reasonable to assume that one can

have a high level of fluency in all languages. It is also noted that language skills were already sufficient at the level necessary to perform everyday complex financial transactions. Were the participants particularly critical of themselves? An Asian ontology generally leans toward critical self-appraisal and also continuous development (Leong & Gupta, 2007; Nisbett, 2003). In a Canadian study, Hong (2009) also found that executive and senior leader participants thought they should work on their English language and communication abilities, whereas Caucasian colleagues thought the visible minority leaders should work on social relations.

In addition, the participants showed evidence of feelings of performance anxiety in public settings and self-doubt about appearing unintelligent in front of colleagues and managers. Therefore, there might also be an element of stereotype threat (Steele, 2010). This phenomenon occurs when people from outgroups are aware of the stereotypes commonly attributed to their group. They may become so preoccupied with not conforming to the stereotype that anxiety, caused by the need to perform, can lead to lower performance. Moreover, members of the minority group may also coach other members to work toward disproving the stereotypes (Kandola, 2009; Steele, 2010). The specific link between language proficiency and evidence of stereotype threat has surfaced in other studies (Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). It is important to note that stereotype threat does not relate to actual skill capability, but does contribute to stress and reduced performance, which can be a self-fulfilling prophecy (Kandola, 2009). Steele (2010) is careful to point out that stereotype threat also concurrently contributes to increased motivation to improve performance. The participants in the study group all indicated they were motivated toward success and continuous improvement. There is likely good reason for the stress experienced by second language speakers. The purpose of language is to communicate and speaking draws attention to ourselves and our identities (Smith et al., 2013).

Second language speakers are noticeable by language use and accent, so then how are they perceived by first language speakers in the organization? There is evidence that second language speakers can be rated lower in competence, thus creating workplace barriers, even when competence in task completion is equally high to native speakers (Ancheta, 2010; Cuddy et al., 2009; Hui & Cheng, 1987).

Accent is also a significant factor in issues of language and cultural interaction. The current study indicated there was some evidence of bias against accent from the direct manager and colleagues. In fact, several participants had been coached to reduce their accents, indicating some level of disfavour of accented speech or at least a lack of awareness that accent is an inherent trait that cannot be willingly eradicated (Munro, 2009). Accented speakers are subject to prejudicial attitudes that place them in a position of lesser status or with less potential for career advancement (Ancheta, 2010; Catalyst, 2003; Conference Board of Canada, 2005; Sadiq, 2005; Smith et al., 2013; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). The comments were surprising, since there did not seem to be significant accent issues that would impede work performance. Admittedly, the researcher was in "listening mode" but it is also notable that all transcripts were prepared by a third party with relative ease. The finding hints at an organizational barrier and need for awareness building on two-way listening and understanding with more focus on intelligibility rather than accent (Ancheta, 2008; Woo, 2000). Tellingly, the participants noted that their anxiety differed depending on whom they were talking to. This finding is not new research in the field, but does further confirm the existence of accent-based discrimination in Canadian organizations and points to an organizational blind spot for discussion.

Does communication style hold back Chinese Canadian leaders? The study results

corroborated a great deal of documented research that an Asian communication style at work was a concern for both the participants and their managers, in particular the tendency to be self-effacing and humble along with a tendency to talk less in organizational meetings (Catalyst, 2003; Chung-Herrera & Lankau, 2005; Hyun, 2005; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000; Zane & Song, 2007). These cultural norms stem from Confucian values and are at odds with western norms of self-promotion and active sharing of ideas (Hyun, 2005; Kim, 2002; Nisbett, 2003; Zane & Song, 2007). These Asian cultural norms are often infused from early childhood even across multiple generations (Bond, 2010; Gallo, 2008; Zane & Song, 2007).

The ability to speak up and participate proactively in organizational meetings came naturally to some of the Chinese Canadians participants, who described themselves as outgoing and likely not typical. However, talking more presented a challenge for the majority and, it may also be argued, a value change. It is thus understandable that the change effort was accompanied by some level of stress. As mentioned earlier, stereotype threat (Steele, 2010) might also contribute to anxiety when people are called upon to publicly communicate, further exacerbating negative stereotypes of leadership potential. This was found in previous studies (Catalyst, 2003; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000).

Interestingly, a majority of participants had internalized the need for change either on their own or through conversations with their leaders. The trend showed they were moving toward assimilation with the organizational and societal norms and were being rewarded for their efforts by their managers. The participants reported that the changes positively related to their managers' images of them. The exchange also demonstrated how organizational norms are indicative of a bias in communication style. Indeed many of the existing Asian leaders were actively coaching their Chinese Canadian employees to also change behaviour and speak up

more. There is thus a strong push to overcome the stereotypes associated with Chinese Canadians, which is a variation on stereotype threat theory (Steele, 2010). Several participants had made changes and this also supports the notion that an outgoing communication style is not an exclusively western skill, but rather that the participants showed great adaptability in the work context, even though it might be an uncomfortable process. Conversely, those who found an outgoing communication style more challenging were fighting for recognition of their successes and feeling misunderstood. It was the opinion of the participants that their difficulty in performing with an outgoing communication style and boasting about results was a major factor in their feeling disconnected. This research finding aligns specifically with the work done by Jian (2012), which drew correlations between acculturation and leader-member exchange. It is interesting that, although Jian's study showed the strongest positive leader/member correlations with an assimilationist identity, the bicultural identity also demonstrated a neutral to slightly positive association with leader-member exchanges. Thus, there may be some room for organizations to consider the effectiveness of other cultural communication styles. Further research is required in this specific area.

Another question might be how inclusive are organizations that do not recognize different cultural styles of communication? Accepting diversity means accepting different communication styles; employees work differently and contributions are no less valuable. Organizational norms sustain a certain way of communication which is believed to be the right way (Kandola, 2009; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011). Thus, organizations need an awareness and understanding of the motives behind certain behaviours in communication. For example, self-effacement is often misconstrued as a lack of confidence, but in reality it can be a way of promoting group harmony in Confucian communities (Zane & Song, 2007). Talking is associated with thinking in Western

society; 'thinking aloud' is considered a positive expression of the individual (Hyun, 2005; Kim, 2002; Nisbett, 2003). In three different studies, Kim (2002) found that East Asians were more effective at problem solving through thinking rather than talking. Talking is a cultural practice (Kim, 2002). Asians are sometimes stereotyped as quiet and not agentic (Catalyst, 2003; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000; Zane & Song, 2007). The phenomenon is not unlike the stereotype experienced for introverts (Cain, 2012). Yet, to gain visibility by becoming more assertive may seem contrary to personal values, inauthentic, and may even backfire if the perceiver holds a stereotyped view of how a Chinese Canadian should act (Catalyst, 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Kandola, 2009). But does effective leadership actually require an outgoing personality, and is this a universal preference?

Extraversion is "the most common correlate of leadership across study settings and leadership criteria" (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002, p.765). The authors base their research on leadership traits and a meta-analysis of 222 correlations against the Big Five personality traits theory (Goldberg, 1990). Extraversion is also associated with charismatic and transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2010). Although the research is mostly western based, a study of 101 participants in Hong Kong also confirmed extroversion as the highest correlate to effective leadership (Leung & Bozionelos, 2004). The authors pointed to possible convergence across global norms and leadership styles, but the research also supports the claim that Asians can be equally as agentic or extroverted.

It appears that extraverts have the advantage and are more likely to advance in leadership because they are perceived as more effective by supervisors and employees. The trend is consistent with implicit leadership theory, which predicts that individual leaders are perceived as effective when aligned with the dominant norms of organizations and society at large. However,

"effectiveness," as opposed to extraversion, has not been defined in terms of the actual performance of teams within organizations (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008). Performance effectiveness would include generating results and engaging employees to their optimum capability as important leadership responsibilities. Grant, Gino, & Hofmann (2011) also claimed that extraversion predicted leadership emergence and effectiveness but found that groups performed more passively. In the reverse, proactive groups actually made more money when the leader was introverted, thus showing effectiveness, but with more engaged employees. An introverted profile may create better sustainable outcomes. Regardless, the participant leaders in this study showed evidence of both introverted and extroverted personalities, no different from the society at large, yet they were mostly stereotyped by a cultural frame. Chinese Canadian leaders may have either extroverted or introverted personalities, and both communication styles can underpin effective modes of leadership. Organizations may need to expand their ideas of effective communication styles and encourage differences in work styles and behaviours (Catalyst, 2003; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Young, 2007; Zane & Song, 2007).

Do Chinese Canadians lead differently than non-Asian leaders? In this section, various leadership styles are discussed and compared to the research findings. The assumption of this dissertation is that culture might moderate leadership style in some ways, but that all styles bring value and indeed, a diversity of styles enhances organizational outcomes if embraced. This research addressed this question by asking participants to first list characteristics of effective leadership (ideal) and to then list characteristics of their own leadership styles (existing). A further assumption was that the ideal list would conform more to organizational norms based on the participants' observations and experiences within the organizational culture. Both lists were examined to determine if there were any elements that pointed to a particular

leadership style and to determine if there were any differences that might explain mobility into senior leadership. This section concludes by arguing for a blended leadership style that may expand our ideas of effective leadership styles and make organizations more inclusive.

The research findings in this study affirm an alignment between the participants' ideal leadership style lists and the four I's of transformational leadership style: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (explained in Chapter Two). For example, the most highly rated leadership ideals were strong communication skills, communicating a future vision, guidance, mentorship and coaching, and being inspiring and motivational. Other ideal characteristics were also mentioned that align with transformational style, including honesty, integrity, and trust. House, Wright and Aditya (1997) also highlighted characteristics including being trustworthy, dynamic, encouraging, and intelligent as universal leadership preferences amongst 62 nations. In the current study, the participants included honesty, integrity, and trust on both their ideal leadership list and existing list of characteristics.

Transactional leadership is a component of transformational leadership that is most common in hierarchical organizations such as ABC Bank (Smith et al., 2013). Transactional leadership tends to be directive and action-oriented, stressing honesty, responsibility, and reciprocity (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2010). Turning back to the findings of the current study, the participants most often described their existing leadership styles as having a disciplined task orientation along with a direct style of communication, indicative of transactional qualities. A fair and firm preference was also noted in the existing styles, which aligns with transactional values. According to Smith et al. (2013), an overreliance on personal leadership traits as an explanatory theory might not be a complete approach. For example, in

collectivist cultures, leadership may have more to do with role obligations than with personal traits (Smith et al., 2013). In the current study, there was evidence of role obligation and responsibility in the participants' existing styles with accountability for results ranked second. Accountability and reliability in delivering results was also strongly evident in the qualitative interviews findings. The transactional leadership style appears to align with the enactment and obligations of leadership more than the reliance placed on leader traits in transformational leadership. Moreover, Haslam and Ellemers (2012) also argue that effective leadership styles are ones that rely less on individual leadership traits than on leaders' focus on relational processes and particularly the value of fairness to avoid the creation of ingroups and outgroups. Overall, the participants' leadership style is aligned with transformational, transactional, and universal norms of effective leadership with a particular accountability to results and high standards enacted in a fair manner through a direct communication style.

Flexible and open-minded was ranked third in statements of existing leadership styles. Friedman and Liu (2009) noted that flexibility is an outcome of biculturalism. They argue the experience of internalizing other cultures expands flexibility and awareness. Flexibility, along with some of the lesser-ranked items—such as approachable, passion, caring and worry for the team, calm, and listening and understanding—reflect more of the interpersonal aspects of the relationship between leader and follower, whereas the ideal list tended to describe the behaviours of the leader. Perhaps some of the emphasis on interpersonal relations in leadership also stems from the Confucian value of retaining harmony. It could also be argued that a calm listening style might align with Daoist philosophies.

Paternalistic leadership is considered one of the dominant leadership styles in Confucian Asia (Chen & Farh, 2010; Fu et al., 2008; Gallo, 2008). Paternalistic leadership is mostly

characterized by authoritarianism, benevolence, and moral leadership (Chen & Lee, 2008; Smith et al., 2013). This study finds all three aspects in evidence within the participant's existing styles. For example, respect for others and authority, passion, caring and worry for the team, and honesty and integrity were noted. However, it is recognized some of these latter values are considered both paternalistic and universal, whereas a western notion of authoritarianism is likely not as positively received in individualist cultures and could therefore impose a cultural barrier. Does paternalistic leadership interfere with individualist ideals and also career mobility? Respect for authority may set up a power imbalance for employees but also for the leader, and this was mentioned by participants several times. For example, respect for authority inhibited leaders from pursuing career aspirations more aggressively, as they waited for their managers to give them permission to move on. Perhaps a strong accountability for results may sometimes exceed the follower's willingness to perform at such high levels. Several leaders indicated that followers were fearful of high expectations and this may be a potential barrier for leadership effectiveness in Canadian culture, if enacted through authority. However, the participants highlighted an equally strong focus on coaching and development that may help followers succeed and potentially mitigate such fears.

The research findings discussed above reveal a blended leadership style with components of bicultural identity, transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, paternalistic leadership style, Confucian values, and universally accepted leadership characteristics. A blend of styles has been researched in other locales. For example, Tsui, Wang, Xin, Zhang, and Fu (2004) demonstrated how leaders selectively used both transformational and paternalistic styles to create an effective leadership style while maintaining Confucian values in relations. Transformational leadership is a dominant western style, but there

is no evidence that this conflicts with collectivist values and, in fact, could be argued to be more effective. Bass and Riggio (2006) indicate that transformational leadership style aligns with collectivist values, but only conflicts when there is hierarchy and centralized decision making, in which case a transactional leadership style is likely to prevail. In a cross-cultural study of Canadians and Chinese, Wang and Gagné (2013) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and followers' autonomous motivation when the subordinates held collectivist values. Jung and Avolio (1999) found that collectivists performed better with transformational leaders and individualists performed better with transactional leaders, an indication that a diversity of styles can have positive results.

In summary, culture appears to have had some moderating effect on leadership style within the organization. Some differences were noted in the participant leadership style, but overall there was evidence of convergence between transformational and transactional leadership styles that are the organizational norm. If there are differences, they appear to stem from cultural influences. It could be argued, then, that lack of leadership mobility should not be attributed to skills deficiency, but rather incompatible cultural differences. There is less recognition of the bicultural perspective that could be brought to bear on intercultural communications and organizational intercultural competence. It is also reasonable to conclude that leadership styles may be evolving in general. Chinese Canadian leaders bring valuable leadership skills that enhance organizational results; therefore, leadership style does not appear to be a real barrier for the participants in their career mobility. Organizational policies, values, and sponsorship of senior leadership may indeed play a larger role than individual leadership style and effectiveness, a point that is discussed next.

Do organizational barriers present a challenge for Chinese Canadian leaders? The

representation of visible minorities, in particular Chinese Canadians, in senior leadership roles at ABC Bank is lower than the organizational structure and demographics suggest it might be. This suggests a barrier must exist that prevents the level of desired success. If barriers stand in the way of career mobility, then prejudice is apparent, whether consciously directed or not. As such, how does organizational practice contribute to the phenomenon of exclusion?

Diversity in organizations is becoming a fact by virtue of increasing immigration; however, organizational adaptation and change is a systemic, multilevel, and nonlinear process (Gonzalez, 2010). Gonzalez notes that changes result in positive (integration), neutral (assimilation), or negative (segregation and marginalization) intergroup relational outcomes (Gonzalez, 2010). The current study uncovered evidence of assimilation and integration for most participants, with some who felt marginalized. Two forms of diversity initiatives are most frequently implemented in organizations: colour blindness (assimilation melting pot) and multiculturalism (Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008). The multiculturalism approach aligns with the goals of ABC Bank and with national goals. Two theoretical models of the multiculturalism approach for managing diversity were contributed by Cox Jr. (2001), who suggested employees must bring their entire set of identities to work, and Ely and Thomas (2001), who assert that integrated organizations should encourage employees to bring their demographic and cultural knowledge to bear on organizational problems (Yang & Konrad, 2011). Noting the acculturative outcomes that were observed in the current study, ABC Bank has not fully recognized the bicultural identities of its employees in the presence of assimilation and some marginalization. Moreover, Asian Americans most likely welcome attempts of diversity management to incorporate ethnic identity and to be better understood (Catalyst, 2003; Linnehan et al., 2003). In the current study, 50% of the participants thought ABC Bank was

doing a very good job of diversity management and 44% thought the effort was good but added qualifiers. The most common suggestion was for the Bank to go deeper to understand specific ethnicities better. Overall, ABC Bank is making progress but implementation still falls short. How can this be improved?

Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly (2006) conducted a 30-year longitudinal study of effective approaches to diversity management and concluded that three broad tactics were most effective. In order of effectiveness, these tactics were: establishing organizational responsibilities, reducing isolation through networking and mentoring, and moderating managerial bias through training. In addition, the organization's strategic human resource skills in formalized diversity management practices have the potential to penetrate across the organization and are observable in such activities as creation of policy statements, recruitment, training, development, compensation, and management accountability (Cox Jr., 2001; Kandola, 2009; Yang & Konrad, 2011). These priority areas are compared to the study research and how participants perceived their career experiences.

Establishing organizational responsibilities. A comprehensive review of the ABC Bank's diversity strategy and processes appears at the beginning of the discussion chapter. Sponsorship of diversity values at the CEO and executive levels is evident through regular internal and external communications. There are established organizational goals, supported by action plans and regular monitoring, specifically for hiring visible minorities in leadership roles. There is established oversight of diversity progress, but only to the executive level. Limited organizational structure to support diversity initiatives includes one Director of Global Diversity and a small staff. However, there are extensive layers of diversity committees to support involvement at all levels. Interestingly, it seems there may be some decoupling of formal goals

from daily practice, since responsibility for diversity does not extend to all levels of management. If "diversity efforts are everyone's responsibility, but no one's primary responsibility, they are more likely to be decoupled" (Kalev et al., 2006, p. 592). However, decentralized hiring and talent management constitutes a scenario where the direct manager has significant discretion in the application of diversity management (Conference Board of Canada, 2007; Thomas, 2001). The mid-level managers therefore have authority and discretion but not the direct responsibility for change.

Reducing isolation; increasing networking and mentoring. ABC Bank has an impressive network of employee resource groups established for the purpose of networking and increasing awareness, currently with 2,800 members in the employee resource group that aligns with visible minorities. Networks provide useful contacts, encourage trust, support, and informal coaching (Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute, 2007; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Thomas, 2001). Research also shows that informal networks, important for career mobility, are segregated by gender and ethnicity (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Zanoni, Janssens, Benschop, & Nkomo, 2010). It is indeed the case that ABC's employee resource groups are separated by gender and ethnicity, forcing employees to choose. It may be the case that employee resource groups are falling short of their intended mandate, especially if they provide little opportunity to network with others. The social capital inherent in the groups may be too specialized. Thomas (2001) found that mentoring was also critical in the advancement of visible minorities, particularly earlier in their careers, since his study revealed visible minorities experienced longer tenure in role which both disadvantaged and frustrated them. He further maintains that mentors require specialized training to support visible minorities because of the additional issues they face. In general, mentors should not assume their own experiences and career advice will fit for visible minorities.

Racho (2012) also found that senior Asian American leaders attributed their success to hard work, taking risks, and working with a non-Asian mentor. Further, they acted in turn as mentors to others, which benefited their careers. There is no formal mentoring program in ABC Bank; however, most participants could name one or two managers who have positively influenced their careers. At the entry- and mid-level manager position, the mentor was most often cited as the direct manager. The influence of the direct manager was a recurring response to many questions. Networks will be discussed more fully under the heading of social capital.

Moderating managerial bias through training. In determining whether there are organizational barriers, a starting point is to separate artificial barriers from real barriers in the organization. Artificial barriers are those issues that impede progress and are not associated with individual qualifications (Woo, 2000). Woo (2000) also reports findings from the 1991 Federal Glass Ceiling Commission in the U.S. that real barriers could also reflect the lack of qualifications of the direct manager in mentoring, training, and career development. The direct manager is an important moderator and influencer of career success (Catalyst, 2003; Conference Board of Canada, 2007; Thomas, 2001). Indeed, the direct manager is also a hiring manager. The selection of leaders in ABC Bank is a subjective exercise based on impressions of leadership capability, past experiences and successes, fit to job requisition, and references. It was impossible to ascertain the suitability of leader selections in the current study, but extensive research points to bias based on ethnicity and stereotypes (Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Sy et al., 2010; Woo, 2000). Training regarding biases in hiring practices has not been provided for mid-level managers. However, it is noted the ABC executive team are beginning training in 2014 on the effects of implicit bias (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013).

The research suggests that artificial barriers exist at the direct manager/employee level.

This observation is based on the participant comments about how they have been coached and supported in their careers. Some issues were more obvious, such as coaching participants to change their accents or removing employees from training programs due to "poor fit." The majority of participants were coached to be more outspoken in meetings. The majority of managerial placements in both Toronto and Vancouver are into Asian markets, sometimes when employees were less willing. These are all examples of an unconscious effort to assimilate the participants or conversely to stereotype the participants into cultural markets.

Additionally, there is inconsistency in the application of the Bank's processes. It is not clear from the participant feedback why positions are posted or not; candidates interviewed or not; or why one manager may spend more time mentoring employees than another; or why a manager may hold back employees longer before encouraging them to move to the next role. There could be many variables in play, but it is evident that there is manager discretion in time spent with employees on career management and variability in management skill in performing human resource functions. There is some mostly web-based training for leaders in human resources practices. Some leaders appeared to derive intrinsic reward from coaching others to success even though there is no formal organizational reward for leaders who focus on developing employees. In fact, a tension between generating consistent business results and managing employee turnover is a moderating factor. Therefore, the research revealed talent management to be a somewhat subjective practice. This raises the question of whether inconsistency is due to the quality of the leader manger or the oversight of the organization in human resource practices. Decentralized human resource management would inherently invite inconsistency in a large organization.

On the upside, the dyadic relationship between the employee and direct manager can be a

very rich relationship, and many of the participants were grateful and inspired by the support they had received from their mangers. Leadership makes a difference at all levels. Executive and senior leaders have positively influenced diversity practices and the diversity focus of other leaders. The direct manager makes a significant difference in individual employee's career paths. However, that also means real barriers may exist if leaders are not competent in employee development. There is ample evidence that the participants were becoming bicultural, and integrating, and sometimes assimilating, into the broader organizational culture. However, there is less evidence of the organization and its leaders understanding and appreciating the cultural differences of the participants. This suggests the organization may not be as culturally competent as it thinks it is. Training and development in this area could reduce stereotypes and unconscious bias in the norms that exist in organizations and work against diverse leaders. At minimum, an adherence to all human resources practices as designed would reduce inconsistencies and potentially enhance career mobility for Chinese Canadian employees.

Is sponsorship exclusive or elusive? While mentors provide emotional and professional support in career coaching (Catalyst, 2003; Hyun, 2005; Nkomo & Stewart, 2006), a sponsor is someone who, because of his or her senior position and influence, is an advocate for the employee's career mobility (Hyun, 2005; Thomas, 2001). A sponsor is also staking his or her own reputation in providing a recommendation, so trust is a key element (Hyun, 2005; Thomas, 2001). The majority of participants were in a middle management category and viewed their direct manager as both mentor and sponsor. The findings suggest the lack of a network, and in that case the role of the manager is even more critical in facilitating career management. This was also found in the study of Asian women in the workplace (Catalyst, 2003). In fact, many of the participant's promotions were the result of direct suggestion of the manager. There did not

appear to be much pressure to compete for roles. In many cases, the participants' language capability assisted in garnering a leader role in an Asian market.

The participants mentioned sponsorship in the study with greater frequency as their seniority increased. Career mobility becomes more competitive at higher pay grades, where there are less numbers of promotional opportunities. Sponsorship appeared more critical at the PL07 management level, which is two levels away from an executive role. The participants in professional roles were also particularly challenged in progressing in leadership given their specialized positions. Their sponsorship was generally also located within the professional field and thus likely contributes to the lack of ability to move laterally to other business functions. Most of the participants categorized sponsorship as exclusive and limited to just one or two individuals. For example, if a sponsor retired or moved, the participant felt insecure. One participant also noted that a sponsor is only as good as the sponsor's reputation in ABC Bank, thus the support is political and unreliable. The senior leaders who were not in professional roles had more options, but were equally challenged in engaging sponsors. They stated that senior executives are often too busy and so it was difficult to connect or even to engage in the match to find a sponsor. It is difficult to ascertain whether senior executives were too busy or whether the participants were excluded in favor of other candidates. One senior leader alleged that at the more senior leadership ranks, capability was less important. It is assumed that all candidates will be capable, so then does career mobility depend on personal connection or popularity?

Companies are essentially organized hierarchies (Clegg et al., 2006). Less availability of senior leadership roles thus creates more acute competition. Sponsorship is necessary to navigate career moves (Hewlett & Rashid, 2011; Hyun, 2005). For example, Thomas (2001) tracked visible minorities who attained executive roles. He found that successful candidates

benefited from the active advocacy of the direct manager and at least two other sponsor executives. The participants in this dissertation reported that sponsorship was hard to access and this is likely a factor affecting Chinese Canadian representation at the executive level. Leadership roles at the executive levels are achieved by appointment rather than job posting. Appointment is sometimes generated from candidate lists that have been pre-sponsored and vetted by a committee. There is care in candidate selection because more risk is associated with poor hiring decisions at the senior level in general. The bank has a policy to include a woman and a visible minority on every slate, however powerful politics can play into selection depending on the dynamics within the selection committee and how candidates are represented. The decision comes down to a subjective choice. Therefore, the intercultural capability of hiring executives comes into play, in both reaching out as sponsors and in making decisions on placements. Based on the lack of Chinese Canadians at the most senior leadership levels, it would then appear that sponsorship is both exclusive and elusive to obtain. Policy and process is in place, but decisions are made by the dominant majority who will generally sustain those in their existing network (Eagly & Chin, 2010a; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011; Thomas, 2001). Without active sponsorship, perhaps bolder decisions to hire minority leaders are not made because of executive leaders' comfort with the status quo and a general fear of risking the unknown. Intercultural capability and awareness is a skill required at all levels of leadership, including the direct managers of mid-level minorities and the executives who will sponsor Chinese Canadians to senior levels. Perhaps with this leadership skill enhancement, sponsorship might be distributed more evenly and earlier in careers. In summary, sponsorship resources are politicized and hard to engage for Chinese Canadians who are in professional roles and more senior leadership roles.

Can social capital play a bigger role? No one makes it alone and not all networks are the same (DiTomaso, 2006). Various types of social capital include bonding, bridging, and linking capital, which serve to create effective networks and information across groups (Putnam, 2007). Social capital also includes social solidarity, which determines who is likely to help whom (DiTomaso, 2006; Li, 2004). Berry (2003) asserts that integration can only occur when there is a possibility to engage with members of both one's culture of origin and the new culture, thus both bonding and bridging relationships. Informal networks are like linking social capital ties that provide insights, skills, and knowledge critical to success as well as access to people in the right places (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hyun, 2005; Steele, 2010; Thomas, 2001). The dimensions of social capital could then serve a variety of functions, all of which were mentioned by the participants: to help with development and knowledge when a direct manager is not available, to provide for more field references, a broader group that could attest to a participants ability and create an organizational reputation, a bridge to other business functions and knowledge of job openings, and diverse networks that build our intercultural capability and comfort level in interactions. Social capital would seem to be accessible and as valuable as sponsorship in some circumstances, or at least could compensate for shortfalls in other areas.

Most of the participants claimed to have diverse networks and nearly all felt they had good relationships with colleagues. They felt included in social situations and several had good friends who were also their work colleagues. However, 18% of the participants did describe the phenomenon of trying very hard to make a connection with colleagues, and were unsure of how to proceed unless a quick association with common interests or hobbies could be established. The initial small talk and associations were viewed as gateways upon which to build relationships. While the work environment was polite and respectful, they had to make an extra

effort. The dedication to work and less social interaction also contributed to isolation and this is reported in other studies (Catalyst, 2003; Hyun, 2005). Some participants indicated their closer connections were with other Chinese Canadians. The quality and mix of the social capital is then an interesting consideration. The direct manager can play a role in ensuring all employees are engaged and included in work and social activities. Social capital appears to be an underutilized but valuable resource for Chinese Canadians that could ameliorate some gaps in organizational barriers

Summary

There is a significant cultural contingent of Asian values within the participant group at ABC Bank. Acculturation was measured in the levels of bicultural and Asian bicultural identities. As such, a dichotomy of Chinese values and western values is in itself an issue of integration. However, there is more evidence that assimilation is occurring as Chinese Canadians strive to adapt to organizational norms, which indicates unintended bias and a lack of awareness of cultural barriers in the organization. There is less evidence of change on the part of the organization. The aspirations of the participants affirmed a desire for leadership and career mobility, striking down the myth that Chinese Canadians are not interested in leadership roles.

Most participants encountered hurdles involving linguistic and communication style differences. Some participants were not as confident in the nuances of English language and saw their verbal and writing skills as impediments to career mobility in leadership. There was resultant evidence of anxiety and stereotype threat dependent upon the situation and listening attitude of the receiver. A few managerial issues to improve upon were a lack of awareness and insensitivity within the organization. Diversity training could alleviate such mishaps. The participants observed that their cultural styles of communication were often at odds with western

ideology. Some were overcoming the tendency to be quieter in public settings, showing an assimilation strategy. Diverse leaders are also coaching diverse employees to assimilate to western norms of communication style. Overall, there is a lack of organizational understanding and recognition of talents beneath the speaking surface.

Cultural knowledge and the ability to speak multiple Chinese dialects are important skills and resources within the participant group at ABC Bank, and those assets are fully deployed in Asian markets. Most employees are pleased to work in Asian markets, but not all. It is uncertain whether the specialization in Asian markets may be creating a middle-management segment and separation of Chinese Canadian leaders from mainstream markets. ABC bank may need to balance the needs of clients and business results against employee needs for development.

There were more similarities than differences in leadership style, and there is strong evidence of a transformational leadership style, which may be a universal norm. There are also some elements of paternalistic style and some transactional practices, indicative of a blended style of leadership. Blended styles have been shown to be emerging in other locales and may be evidence of convergence among cultural business practices. Moreover, there was evidence of intercultural competencies inculcated in the participants' leadership styles. Culture has created a moderating effect on leadership style within ABC Bank and a diversity of leadership styles may enhance organizational effectiveness.

The study found that organizational leadership at all levels makes a difference. Executive and senior leader sponsorship of diversity initiatives is creating positive momentum. The direct manager's intercultural competence, alongside skill in managing talent, was material in promoting and supporting Chinese Canadians in their careers in both cities. However, some decoupling of formal goals with daily practice is evidence that accountability for diversity

initiatives is not delegated through to middle-management levels, therefore individual discretion is creating inconsistencies in the way diversity is managed. Sponsorship is a scarce resource for most Chinese Canadian leaders, and it is politically fragile. Social capital is a further underutilized resource that offers promise and could bolster success in careers.

In conclusion, the major themes of 1) language and communication; 2) leadership style; 3) the direct manager relationship and talent management; 4) sponsorship; and 5) social capital were discussed. Throughout, the moderating factors of bicultural values and organizational cultural norms framed the research question of how Chinese Canadians view their career progression into senior leadership roles. The research affirms that Chinese Canadians at ABC bank contribute important skills, intercultural competence, and perspectives that enhance the practice of leadership, but are unfulfilled in the presence of unintended organizational bias.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Canada is an ethnocultural mosaic. This is the new evolving reality in Canada, and this study has begun to ask how organizations and its leaders are affected. The findings of this study have demonstrated that ABC Bank reflects some of the same inequities broadly seen in the corporate sector, despite a dedicated effort and focus. The evidence points to a lagging effect, where an organization has not kept pace with the changing demographic of its workforce. Organizations entrenched in the status quo force others to assimilate. Conversely, if organizations develop talent respectfully, support individuals' skills development, and not try to change personalities, employees can become their best selves. When individuals flourish, organizations flourish. Diversity management is good talent management principles in action.

The social issue of Chinese Canadian leadership representation is both timely and relevant. Equitable leadership representation is important if organizations wish to uphold their stated values and not perpetuate a class system where power is unequally distributed. In 2014, organizations can no longer say there are no qualified Chinese Canadian leaders who can progress to senior leadership roles. The research revealed the readiness and willingness of Chinese Canadians to advance their careers. The study further pointed to a lack of understanding and awareness of the contributions that bicultural individuals bring to an organization. As a result, the participants' talents were underutilized. Furthermore, the study determined that some of the acculturative adaptations of the participants related to career successes or stresses for the participants. The culture of the participants and organizational culture was a moderating factor throughout the study. The participants were able to identify their opportunities as well as impart scenarios where they were not fitting in with western norms and organizational expectations, indicating unintended bias within the organization's norms. In other words, intercultural

competencies have not yet developed.

Phenomenography was applied to address the question "How do Chinese Canadian ABC employees perceive their career progression into senior leadership roles?" The study enabled the researcher to describe the career elements of importance to the participant group, but also to identify variations in their perspectives of career progression into senior leadership roles. This approach has demonstrated that career is not defined solely by talent management processes as defined by the Bank. In addition, the career perspectives of Chinese Canadians are not defined simply by the demographic characteristics of the participant group, but rather in the way the group perceives career perspectives, resulting in four different ways of responding to acculturation to the organization. The career conceptions and career themes are not independent but interrelated dimensions. There is no universal or generic explanation, nor is there a predictable linear trajectory. In every case, the complex interplay of contextual factors may create different career perspectives. The findings move us beyond the accepted norms of organizational diversity to consider how employees may acculturate within a company, the strategies used to cope, and how their leaders create a variation in experiences. The study presents a more nuanced and comprehensive view of the participant group, which may benefit the organization in understanding how to create more inclusion and advancement towards leadership at ABC Bank. The findings help to create a collective understanding of how exclusion can occur, and demonstrate that it is occurring at ABC Bank, despite best intentions. The phenomenography has retained the employee experience, but highlighted the variation in perspectives that helps us to understand how employees approach their careers.

Theoretical Implications

The overarching theoretical framework for this study was based on implicit leadership theory (House, Wright, & Aditya, 1997), a systems approach founded on the idea that societal culture informs organizational norms and notions of effective leadership and followership. The theory was originally conceptualized within the cross-cultural research domain and does not explicitly address multiculturalism, but does account for the dynamic nature of the system. In Canada, bicultural individuals are becoming a larger contingent of society, particularly in urban areas, and may well start to influence organizational norms. At the present time, the study revealed that existing organizational norms and western leadership styles are powerfully sustained, but not completely. A blend of leadership styles and characteristics of biculturalism were evident in the leadership styles of the participants. Thus, there might be a need to extend the theory to include the interplay of culture and leadership practice to account for multicultural settings.

The implicit leadership theory adequately explains the overall dynamic observed in the system between bicultural identity, leadership, and organizations, but is too broad to explain the more nuanced outcomes observed in the study. For example, Chinese Canadian leaders and their skills are distributed in cultural markets. The theory does not explain the potential pockets of cultural leadership in a multicultural society. Moreover, a fuller understanding of how culture and leadership affects follower reactions is required. For example, Hanges, Lord, and Dickson (2000) have proposed a connectionist architecture that explains the variation in leadership/followership dynamics and allows for more sensitivity in leadership schemas, namely that leaders can successfully reorganize the schemas of their followers and thus be effective, in this case to incorporate other cultural leadership styles. Bass (1997) has argued that

transformational leadership is universally preferred and effective. This study has shown that transformational style was dominant, but that blends of transformational, transactional, and paternalistic leadership styles have been effectively practiced. Other studies have also shown a blend of leadership styles or cultural convergence (Kaiser et al., 2008; Tsui et al., 2004). Moreover, personality type, specifically extraversion, is noted as the dominant style and linked with transformational leadership. This study demonstrated an organizational influence and preference for extraversion, but also included examples of effective introverted leaders, which is consistent with the findings of Kaiser et al. (2008). It would then appear that the connectionist theoretical framework that links the interplay of culture and leadership is more flexible than would seem at the macro level with implicit leadership theory.

Acculturation and ethnic identity theory (in particular bicultural identity) explained the main operational components of the study. Although, the study was confined to the participant perspective, the research overlapped with their thoughts on how they interacted with the organization and with the practice of leadership as noted above. See Figure 13 for an illustration of the approach and scope of the research completed. Ethnic identity has its roots in social identity theory, which usefully provided an explanation for some of the career work experiences. Biculturalism also grounded the observation of the participants' employment in cultural markets. The overlap of bicultural identity with organizational culture produced the most variation in participant experiences and demonstrated the inconsistency between both intergroup and ingroup outcomes. The predominant outcomes were related to language and communication, the direct manager relationship, talent management, mentoring, sponsorship, and social capital—all aspects of social relations in a cultural setting. The findings are consistent with other studies on the specific topic of leadership representation of visible minorities (Catalyst Canada & Diversity

Institute, 2007; Catalyst, 2003; Hewlett & Rashid, 2011; Hong, 2009; Thatchenkery & Sugiyama, 2011; Woo, 2000). In this sense, existing theory and research have been validated. However, less is known about how bicultural identity integration (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002) may have varied at the individual level. For instance, might the participants situationally call upon more of less of their bicultural identity in the organizational setting? This study was conducted at the group level, so that factor was not investigated.

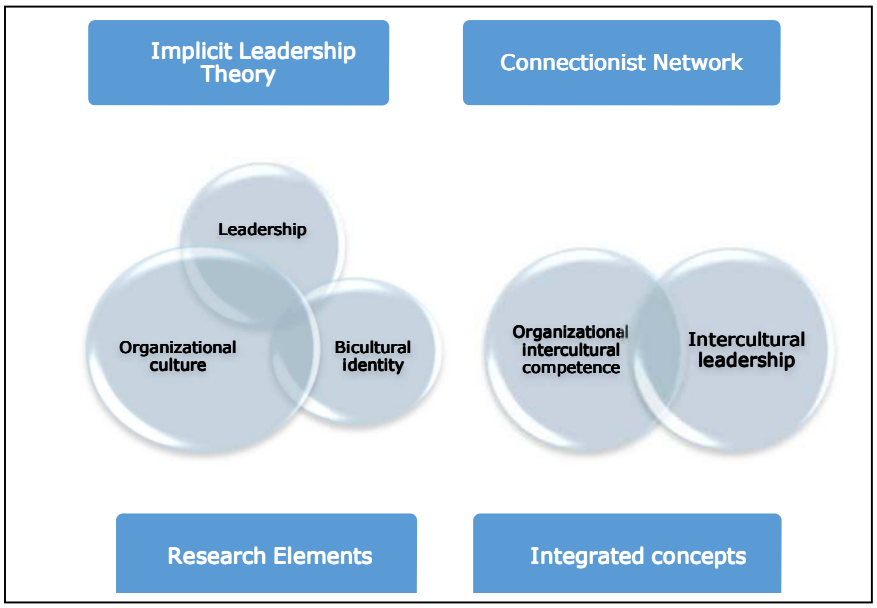

Figure 13. Key concepts framework: Intercultural leadership and organizational competence. Author's own diagram.

Strategies for Integration

A compelling case exists for organizations to take steps toward building more inclusive and diverse workforces. The general literature indicates that bicultural leaders are under-recognized and misunderstood. Organizations cannot afford to waste the bicultural talent within the leadership group. Bicultural individuals *are* more interculturally competent (Cheryan & Tsai, 2007; Friedman & Liu, 2009; Zane & Song, 2007), and will assist the organization in navigating and adapting to demographic changes (Oliver, 2005). As envisioned, the intersection

of intercultural leadership and organizational intercultural competence might be a powerful combination (see Figure 13). What is intercultural leadership? Potentially, the model may include broader leadership representation, equally distributed leadership, an inclusion of diverse and authentic leadership styles, and leadership skill development beyond personality and that incorporates cultural factors. What is organizational intercultural competence? In the first instance, the approach should always include a disciplined adherence to general human resource practices as documented by the organization, to avoid unconscious bias and provide equal opportunity. According to the Conference Board of Canada (2005), senior leaders play a key role in creating inclusive and diverse organizations, therefore leaders must commit to organizational change and demonstrate diversity values to ensure all talent is fully leveraged. Leaders' intellectual understanding, when not matched with action, is termed "pseudo diversity" and is based on political correctness, not organizational change (Oliver, 2005). Therefore, leaders need intercultural competence awareness and training to develop this skill to a higher level and truly internalize the meaning of diversity (Oliver, 2005; Thomas, 2001). All of the aforementioned conditions were also highlighted in research conducted by the Conference Board of Canada (Conference Board of Canada, 2005).

Suggestions for ABC Bank. The organization could adapt toward inclusive diversity in leadership at both the institutional level as well as at the direct manager leadership level. The research findings revealed that leadership at all levels makes a difference in affecting positive change. Below are a few suggestions that ABC Bank might consider.

While ABC Bank has established clear diversity goals and expectations, it may also need to create a stronger linkage of diversity to the bank's overarching strategic imperatives, such that leadership at all levels could understand the importance of diversity at the social, economic, and

business levels and that those strategies are seamlessly integrated and consistent. ABC Bank does state its diversity objectives, but may need to develop metrics to hold leaders accountable for implementing the strategy at all levels. Input and output based measures may need to be embedded into leaders' performance. To accomplish meaningful priorities, more data-based research may be required. For instance, the annual employee opinion survey could be designed and segmented to determine satisfaction levels by gender and visible minorities and minority leaders. The bank could conduct a pay equity analysis to determine any gaps that may impact engagement levels. A diagnostic analysis of the organization's hiring, promotion, leadership culture, and leadership systems and processes could provide more information. Leadership 360 reviews could incorporate feedback on the culture of openness toward diversity and inclusion. There are some parallel career mobility issues between women and visible minorities, therefore any learnings may be instructive towards the broader diversity mandate. There may also be an advantage of women in leadership that accelerates the diversity of all leadership (Annis & Merron, 2014). In summary, strategic initiatives need to be informed by the diagnostics of the organizational climate and linked to mainstream business outcomes for sustained execution. Perhaps nothing would be as powerful and sustaining as an inclusive organizational culture with world class employee engagement scores.

At the individual leader level, awareness of unconscious bias needs to be surfaced and understood in an unthreatening way. Training on potential blind spots could be a starting point towards infusing checks and balances in hiring, promotion, and succession planning. Systemic embedded business norms are invisible to the majority who have no comparison point and the development of intercultural competence could therefore be a prerequisite for addressing racial and gender issues (Bennett, 2009). Intercultural competence training along with a baseline

measurement at the individual and group level would also be instrumental in assisting leaders with meaningful data towards leadership development plans.

The organization and each leader needs to create the culture for change. The simplest and most effective way for managers to show respect is by appreciating the work of their employees. Minority members may feel less confident and require more guidance to feel comfortable, particularly when there are cultural gaps with the organization (Annis & Merron, 2014). Direct feedback can bolster confidence and create a workplace that values and respects everyone's contribution. The experience with the direct manager affects not only the employee, but the culture of the team. Since the direct manager is also the hiring manager there may be a barrier or risk for Chinese Canadians who may not wish to raise issues, risk careers, or be perceived as playing the "race card", therefore the direct manager should take the initiative in communication and create a culture open to differences. ABC Bank is moving beyond just representation to a values based, organizational change effort that attracts talent and aligns with an increasingly diverse marketplace.

ABC Bank might benefit from applying a business discipline to the practice of talent management, hiring and promotion, and succession planning. The discipline should invest effort to understand the cultural makeup of teams, including an exploration of deeply embedded cultural values that surface in communication and misinterpreted behaviour. Behaviours are visible unlike motivations, feelings, intentions, and thought processes (Hyun, 2012). In other words, ABC Bank should not underestimate the impact of culture and how it might impact the talent pipeline. ABC Bank should define clear competencies desired for leadership and guard against overreliance on judgements, stereotypical assessments, or vague descriptions. Bicultural competencies and a global mindset might be added as key leadership skills. The bank should

seek to engage diverse employees in the onboarding process and link with mentors early. They might also rethink mentor structures that could come from cross functional teams to highlight differences in the organization. Mentors may also require some guidance in providing meaningful support for diverse employees given differences in communication style and cultural norms. For example, it may be useful to train and designate cultural mentors within the organization. Lastly, the bank could allow for more access to meet executives and senior managers in the organization. Chinese Canadian leaders might then become more widely known.

The bank might want to engage employee resource groups for feedback on cultural change through surveys or round table discussions. These groups may also provide a sounding board for cultural marketing and business initiative testing. Employee resource groups require organization and management, representing a high profile opportunity for future leaders to develop their leadership skills and use their bicultural knowledge and communication skills in a stretch assignment.

ABC Bank might consider how its leadership development strategies might be tailored to accommodate the diversity of its leaders, and the potential in general, of tailored leadership programs for diverse candidates. Additionally, the bank may want to consider starting leadership coaching programs for emerging leaders so as to develop them earlier but also provide a better start when leadership roles become available.

Suggestions for participant leaders. The research findings revealed that Chinese Canadians may encounter individual, cultural, and organizational challenges in their career mobility toward senior leadership roles. Individual developmental needs may range from English language proficiency skills to other more specific needs. However in the presence of

cultural and organizational differences, a more customized approach to leadership development may be appropriate, especially in an environment of mutual adaptation between the employee and the organization. Even in the presence of organizational willingness, socially constructed norms may powerfully predict expectations. Therefore Chinese Canadians and other minorities may need different strategies. A few suggestions are recommended toward this type of leadership development.

Awareness of other perspectives is a powerful first step towards learning. The phenomenographic method stresses that learning of the variation in the ways that other Chinese Canadians perceive the issue helps to locate oneself and also to understand other approaches. Awareness of systemic challenges within the organizational structure also helps the participant to understand that they have not been at fault, which in itself is empowering and may help to alleviate stereotype threat. Awareness of cultural norms may also help participants to understand the unique contribution they can make to move ahead with confidence. Awareness of cultural gaps to the organizational norm may assist the Chinese Canadian employee to strategize which of their behaviours may be adapted with ease, without losing authenticity. Chinese Canadians may therefore benefit from dissemination of the current research findings and also from organizations that advocate for Pan Asian leadership, such as Ascend Canada (Ascend Canada, 2014).

Chinese Canadians may need to take more control over their careers and build another level of strategies to achieve success in the organizational setting. Communication with the direct manager was found to be one of the most impactful moderators. Chinese Canadians would be well advised to connect with the direct manager regularly. The participants should understand the full range of human resource practices for talent management and be proactive in seeking

regular reviews, discussions about career planning, and development requirements to succeed. They might consider more horizontal career latticing taking advantage of the job posting system to round out their development in other roles or take on stretch assignments. Diversification would create more career options.

Chinese Canadians may need to take more initiative and develop competency in forming a network of allies and a profile in the organization. Strong team relationships could build credibility and cultural capital. The direct manager may act as a mentor, but it would be wise to seek out at least two other leader/mentors as early as possible in a career, including one cultural mentor as noted earlier. A breadth and depth of social capital may insulate the participant from reliance on one manager, while also opening more career opportunities. The first step lies in relationship building and expanding one's network. A successful career is always achieved with the support of others and it would be important to gain an introduction with leaders one and two levels up in the organization. An employee might also expand their knowledge of the organization and relationships with leaders in other departments. A larger network simply diversifies the chances of sponsorship and career opportunity.

In summary, Chinese Canadians and ABC Bank may mutually develop respectful ways to bridge cultural gaps and enable greater participation in leadership. The organization will benefit from the bicultural competencies and engagement of its Chinese Canadian employees and further, may even find an approach that broadly engages all diverse employees.

Evaluation of Dissertation Objectives and Contribution to Research

This study answered the research question "How do Chinese Canadian ABC Bank employees view their career progression into senior leadership roles?" comprehensively in relation to the literature review and design parameters. Furthermore, the original objectives to

understand intercultural leadership representation and organizational bias were effectively weighted. The study represented the participants' perspectives, as best as possible, within the phenomenographic method, and categorized major themes, presented in the discussion chapter, which affected career mobility for the participants. The study revealed how cultural interactions manifest to create inequality. Bicultural identity was found to be significant and largely not understood for the value that can be optimized within organizations. Organizations are not fully aware of how to manage the transition to an inclusive workforce or how to recognize the talent within. This study adds to the research fields of organizational leadership, critical diversity, social psychology, and intercultural communications in several ways. The dissertation built upon the significant amount of research and acknowledges the valuable contributions there. New scholarship is added with the specificity of understanding Chinese Canadian ethnicities and leadership within a single organizational setting and specifically using the blended methodology of acculturation scales and phenomenography. Overall, this qualitative study has made available a richer level of meaning beyond numbers and is grounded in Chinese Canadian perspectives within the organization. As such, the current work both extends and fills a gap in the research.

The research is further differentiated by its blended methodological approach. This study draws on bi-dimensional acculturative theory and measurement rather than relying on demographic differences. The study contributes to research conceptually and practically. Most acculturation-related studies are quantitative, looking for correlated relationships of various phenomena. This study compared qualitative feedback to look for relationships and variations in the experiences of participants. A search could not uncover any studies where phenomenography has been employed as a methodology to study Chinese Canadian perspectives of their career mobility into leadership. The approach has contextualized the subject in a

different way to show the variation in how the participants approached or internalized their career experiences, and in this regard, various themes emerged that sometimes aligned to acculturation stages. The combination of phenomenography and the ethnic identity and acculturation scales has presented a unique set of results that again adds to the research on and understanding of diversity in leadership.

Limitations

Several limitations in the research and its outcomes must be acknowledged. The research scope was narrow, including only one organization and many similar job types. The scope was an important choice and intentional in a design that does not necessarily limit the research quality, but only limits one's ability to generalize from it. The sample was derived by advertisement, but it is feasible that word-of-mouth promotion attracted participants of a similar mindset. There was also no randomizing of the participant group. The narrow scope of the study is an advantage and also a limitation. The participant group volunteered because they are interested in leadership. The specificity of the group may narrow the findings but also strengthens the findings due to relevance of the group to the topic. Although conducting the research in one company does tend to control for variation in organizational culture and commitment to diversity, there were still variances between Toronto and Vancouver and how leaders enacted talent management practices. The study design purposefully focused on the urban areas of Toronto and Vancouver to capture areas with greater diversity. Therefore, there were no participants from rural areas, and it is uncertain how culture and career experience might vary in other regions. The sample size was also narrow and included only 34 participants. While the sample was more than double the requirement of phenomenographic research, the results should not be generalized to other organizations.

The study focused on bicultural identity in an organizational setting. To further delimit the scope and provide a deeper understanding of one ethnic group, the sample population represented only Chinese Canadian perspectives. Although the study did highlight the unique experiences of the participants, the reader should be cautioned from assuming the research represents outcomes exclusive to Chinese Canadians as it is possible that some similarities exist in the experiences of other visible minorities in an organizational setting. However, the Chinese Canadian perspectives were corroborated by the literature review indicating that ethnic identity was fairly represented. The participants all self-identified as Chinese Canadian, however within "Chinese Canadian," a wide cultural variance exists between those with different ethnic origins. The broader similarities were captured within ethnic identity categories, but these similarities should not be understood to relate to all individuals.

The blended approach to quantitative and qualitative methodologies provided depth and validity to the study, however it should be noted that all of the data was self-reported by the participants, which may be a source of common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). There was some evidence of participants responding in an aspirational way versus, perhaps, representing their current reality. This outcome is still appropriate to the study as it takes a standpoint perspective and seeks to understand how the participants wish to be viewed. However, triangulation of the methods also mitigated some of the common method variance effect. For example, the interviews probed deeper into the participant experiences, thus the phenomenographic method provided the majority of findings. In addition, common method variance was not compounded by any correlational calculations as might be the case in a pure quantitative study. A comparison of demographic data to the phenomenographic outcome space further supported the validity of the research. In totality, the mixed methods provided greater

insights through a broader view of acculturation dynamics, the bicultural identity profile of the group, and perspectives than would otherwise be limited to demographic data. The acculturation scales proved to be fairly consistent with acculturation theory in the amalgamated results, but not always consistent at the individual level, especially in the final self-assessment question, where it was unclear if individuals were assessing current or aspired ideals. The SL-Asia scale has not been validated for reliability for the additional measures of cultural values and identity self-assessment in the last six questions within the scale. The tool was used only directionally in this study, therefore one should be cautioned against concluding any quantitative results or generalizable factors. The MEIM-R exploration and commitment scores seemed modestly high. Admittedly, there is no direct method to compare to other studies, but the research appeared to be in the realm of similar Asian and visible minority studies. Although other studies involved participants in divergent roles, age groups, and environments, only one study involved Canadian participants and there were limited studies using the newly revised MEIM-R instrument. Therefore, the researcher made some assumptions about the correlation to well-being of the existing participants based on the study scores and the general literature review. The scales in general have limitations in that no instrument can fully measure a construct, and that there are many types of similar instruments that could have been used. In this case, the specificity of the scale instruments served their purpose well, particularly when combined with the other methods. The phenomenographic study was analyzed comprehensively through many iterations; however, there is always room for researcher bias in interpretation. Although the results broadly compared to other similar studies, that is not to say that the results would be replicated by another researcher exactly. Some interpretation was applied in the process. As is always the case, the study is a snapshot of one time and one place, so it only provides an impermanent idea of how

culture could affect leadership mobility for Chinese Canadians.

Recommendations for Future Research

Despite the limitations noted, this dissertation has fulfilled its objective in providing an answer to the research question "How do Chinese Canadians view their career progression into senior leadership roles?" The research has also generated new questions that require further research and validation. For example, it would be interesting to investigate the sociology within the organization. An institutional ethnography could trace back the career experiences revealed here to determine organizational processes and how power is distributed. Another approach would be to conduct a discourse analysis to show how language and communication is powerfully embedded in the organizational norms and how this interacts with cultural aspects. The study here did not specifically investigate women in diversity leadership, which would also be an important contribution to scholarship. Much has been written on women in leadership, but less on how cultural factors in tandem with gender affect career progression. A major theme that emerged from this research was that language skills can be an impediment or advantage in career mobility, depending on the situation, and further research is needed to determine how language skills are deployed in organizations. As culture underpins the study, it would be interesting to broaden the research to determine if the phenomenographic results may be applied to other ethnicities in an organizational setting. Quantitative measurement could be used to test the phenomenographic career conceptions and career themes which could tease out more specific information about work relationships and acculturation within an organizational setting. It would be helpful to apply a quantitative analysis of acculturation against relationships important to career mobility. For example, a duplication of Jian's (2012) study in a Canadian setting could reveal how relationships with direct managers and coworkers interact with acculturation. Many

iterations are conceivable within the overlapping areas of bicultural identity, leadership, and organizational culture, and these are just a few thoughts for future research.

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Appendix A

Figure A.1. Visible minority leadership representation by sector.

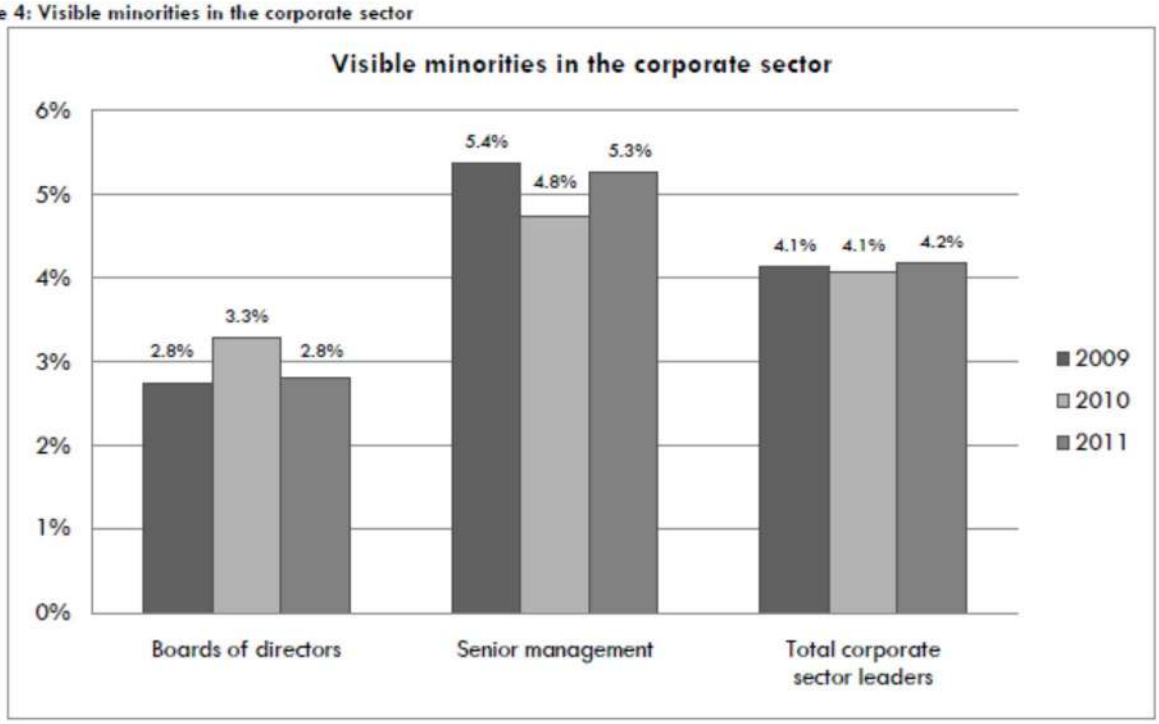
Table 1: Summary data: Visible minorities (VMs) in leadership positions

	VM Sector Average 2009	VM Sector Average 2010	VM Sector Average 2011
Elected officials	16.1%	15.4%	19.0%
Public sector executives	8.1%	9.4%	8.8%
Corporate sector boards and executives	4.1%	4.1%	4.2%
Voluntary sector boards and executives	12.8%	12.5%	12.5%
Education sector boards and executives	19.8%	19.9%	20.0%
Government agencies, boards, and commissions appointments	18.6%	22.3%	22.0%
Total	**13.4%**	**14.0%**	**14.5%**

Source: From Diversecity counts 2011 (Cukier & Yap, 2011, p. 7) Reprinted with permission

Figure A.2. Visible minority leadership representation within the corporate sector.

Figure 4: Visible minorities in the corporate sector



Source: From *Diversecity counts 2011* (Cukier & Yap, 2011, p. 19) Reprinted with permission

Table A.3. Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute study: Visible minority demographics

	Chinese	Total other VM	SE Asian	South Asian	Japanese	Korean	Filipino	Middle Eastern	Arab	Black	West Indian	Latin American	Multiple*
N= number Total = 4461	1408	3053	311	852	81	57	216	175	114	554	274	192	227
Average age	39.1	39.9	38	39.6	43.8	37.8	42.6	39	36.3	40.8	41.1	40	40.2
% with a university/ professional degree	85.7	75.1	86.6	84.5	76.5	89.3	72.8	80.5	85.1	65.1	57.2	72.3	61.5
Average number of years in Canadian labour force	14.9	16.1	13.2	14.5	21.5	12.2	18.6	15.2	12.5	18.1	18.1	13.7	18.9
Average number of years in current organization	9	9.4	7.8	8.8	11.9	5.4	11.9	9.4	7.2	10.2	11.8	8.7	10.6
Average number of years in current role	3.6	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.9	2.3	4.4	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.8
% Managers**	35.6	47.3	41.5	46.9	50.7	32.7	45.4	46.7	51	48.4	50.8	42.5	56.3
% Executives***	4.9	6.5	6.3	6.5	12.7	3.8	4.1	8.5	3.8	7.5	7.8	4	5.6
% Pre managers****	13.4	11.8	13.2	10.2	7	19.2	12.9	12.7	11.5	11.2	15.5	13.8	8.8
% Professionals*****	46.9	34.5	39	36.4	29.6	44.2	37.6	32.1	33.7	32.9	26	39.7	29.3
% Company	79.3	83.8	78	80.7	81.1	80	87.5	85.3	83.8	87.2	88.1	85.9	86
% Professional services firm	20.7	16.2	22	19.3	18.9	20	12.5	14.5	16.2	12.8	11.9	14.1	14

*(identified more than 1 VM group)

** In a company/organization, these are individuals in levels/grades/bands who are seen as being "in the pipeline" for senior management or senior leadership roles. In a professional services firm, these are individuals in administrative roles within the firm, such as Director of Human Resources or Manager of Associates.

*** These are officials holding the most senior positions in the organization. They include the CEO and those individuals reporting directly to the CEO. Executives are responsible for the organization's policy and strategic planning, and for directing and controlling the functions of the organization.

**** These are individuals who are potentially "in the pipeline" for managerial roles; they are typically one or two levels/grades/bands below managerial ranks.

***** These are individuals who provide a particular skill or expertise, but who do not have direct reports or people management as one of their key responsibilities.

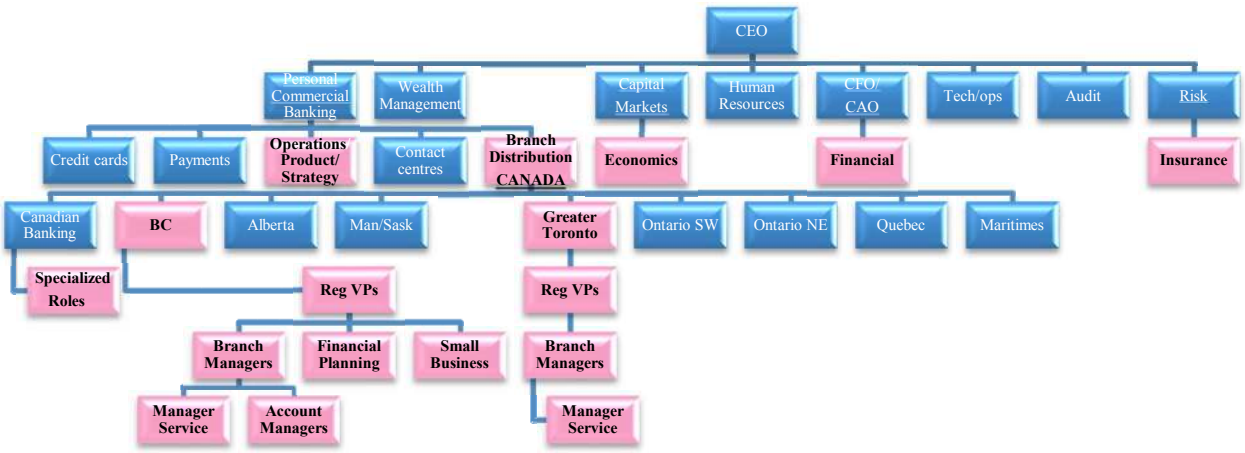
Methodology

More than 60,000 randomly selected managers, professionals, and executives in large publicly traded and privately held companies and firms in corporate Canada were invited to complete the survey in 2006-2007. A total of 17,908 people (29 percent of those invited) agreed to take part, representing 43 Canadian companies and firms. Nearly all respondents (17,468) were full-time employees at the time of the survey. Among these full time employees, 94 percent (16,464) self-identified as either a member of a visible minority group or as white/Caucasian. Among these full time employees, 25 percent (4,461) self-identified as a member of a visible minority group. Chinese Canadians were well represented at 32% of the visible minority respondents.

Table 1.A *Source: Adapted from Career advancement in corporate Canada: A focus on visible minorities survey – 2007 Catalyst Canada & Diversity Institute (2007). Reprinted with Permission*

Appendix B

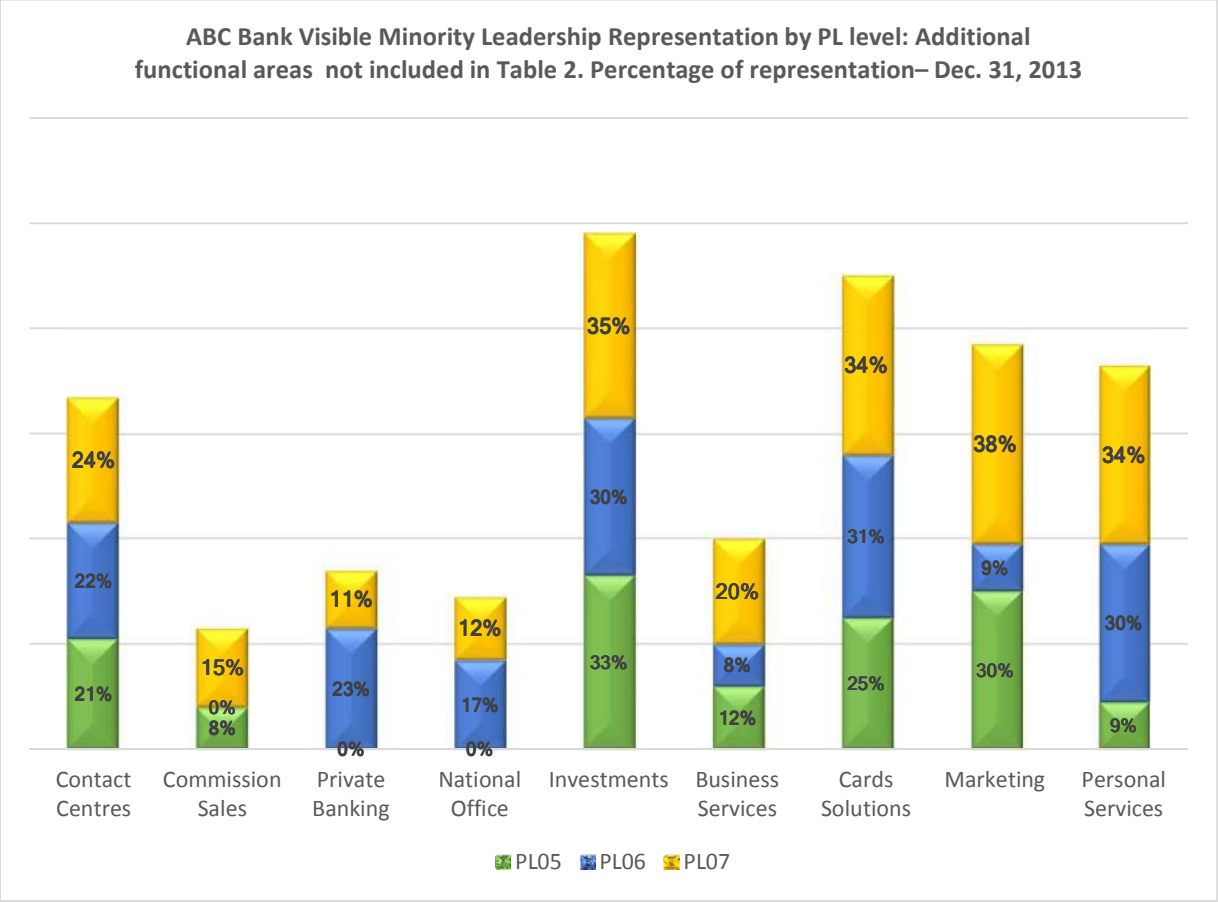
Figure B1. Organizational Chart ABC Bank*



Organizational Chart ABC Bank (simplified from internal records, Feb. 2014).

*Pink highlighted and bolded boxes represent research sites.

Figure B2. Visible Minority Leadership Representation in other functions at ABC Bank



Appendix C

Demographic Information for Analysis

Gender: _____

Age:

- 21-30 ☐
- 31-40 ☐
- 41-50 ☐
- 51-60 ☐
- 61-70 ☐

Education level achieved (Please check option):

- **Secondary (high) school** diploma or equivalent ☐
- **College or other non-university** certificate or diploma ☐
- University - Bachelor's degree ☐
- University - Graduate level and above ☐
- Other _____

Born in Canada: ☐

Immigrant: ☐

If you immigrated to Canada, please complete the following two questions:

Please note the number of years in Canadian K-12 school system _____

Please note the number of years in Canadian labour force _____

Qualitative Question Protocol

The objective of the question set is to determine the employee's conceptions of the leadership role and their progression toward senior leadership roles. Secondly, the questions are designed to determine the employee's perception of ABC's organizational culture regarding senior leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion and the social capital relationships at work that support career mobility. Noted below are possible thematic questions with prompts to guide a semi-structured interview.

My career: (Goal is to examine the employees' perspectives of their work-life experiences)

Leadership question prompts: What characteristics make an effective leadership?

- Please list 10 words or phrases that describe the characteristics of an effective leader.
- How do you feel leadership is described in ABC?
- Can you describe your own leadership style? How would others describe you? Does your style at work truly reflect your personal way of being?

Perceptions of career advancement question prompts- Tell me about your career progression in ABC

- What have your career preferences been and why? What did you want to be when you were growing up?
- Career advancement – How satisfied are you with the progress you have made toward meeting your overall career goals? Tell me about a time when you were happiest at work? Why?
- Do you have any future career plans? Have you discussed this with your manager? How do you feel your skills are being utilized?

Social network question prompts- How would you describe your social circle at work?

- Do you have a good friend or network of friends at work? Does your network include diverse colleagues? In what circumstances are you most comfortable?
- Do you feel included at work? Can you give me some examples?

My workplace: (Goal is to examine the exogenous variables of relationships that support inclusion and social mobility)

Quality of organizational commitment to diversity and inclusion question prompts

- What is your perception of ABC's commitment to diversity and advancing visible minorities into leadership roles?
- What do you think is the reason for less Chinese representation in leadership roles?
- Can you recall your experiences in seeking new roles in ABC?
- How do you perceive promotions occur in ABC? What is your opinion of the job posting process?

Quality of relationship with manager question prompts- How does your manager help you with your career goals?

- Is your manger aware of your career goals and aspirations? How do you receive support for development and sponsorship? How important is this for you?
- Do you have a role model or mentor in ABC? What is that experience like?
- Did you have a mentor and/or a sponsor in your career? If so, how did that influence your career growth? Was your mentor Asian?

Quality of relationship with colleagues question prompts

- Do you feel you receive the respect you deserve at work?
- Do you feel comfortable to voice your opinions at work? In meetings?
- How well do your colleagues at work know you? Do you feel like you are part of the team?
- What would you like others to know about you?

References – Ling, Chia, & Liluo Fang, 2000; Catalyst Canada, 2007; (Gallup Business Journal, 2012)

Appendix D

Letter of Invitation

Intercultural leadership: A Chinese Canadian perspective

Researcher: Deb Linehan (xxx-xxxx)

University: Royal Roads University

Advisor: Dr. matthew heinz (xxx-xxxx)

We invite participants to take part in a research study being conducted by Deb Linehan who is a doctoral candidate at Royal Roads University. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. The study is described below and this description tells about any risks, inconvenience, or discomfort participants might experience. Joining in this study will give participants an opportunity to provide feedback on an important topic that will make a positive contribution to our knowledge of Chinese Canadian employee perspectives.

Purpose of the Study

The proposed dissertation topic delves into the social issue of equity representation of visible minorities, specifically Chinese Canadians, in leadership roles. The research goes beyond the paradigm of employment equity to explore how cultural values influence career preferences and career progression in ABC (ABC Bank). Also of interest is how leadership style is influenced by cultural values, particularly in a multicultural work environment. The research will explore how organizations can adapt/incorporate bicultural values in creating inclusive talent management practices.

Possible risks and discomforts

Participants may feel discomfort by disclosing potential dissatisfaction with their career or certain organizational practices. Although confidentiality is protected, participants may withdraw at any point if they are uncomfortable.

Possible benefits

Participants may wish to tell their story and feel that they are contributing to valuable learning. The research findings may produce organizational learning that benefits career outcomes and leadership practices. ABC may attract and retain valuable employees by enhancing leadership practices and increasing visible minority leadership representation

Who can participate in the study?

Participants will be recruited from the Canadian Banking division of ABC, in Vancouver, B.C. and Toronto, Ont. The selection criteria will be those employees, self-identifying with Chinese heritage within the PL05-PL09 range in ABC.

Study Design and what will you be asked to do

This is a qualitative research study that involves interviews with Chinese Canadian employees. The researcher will be asking questions about participant perspectives on effective leadership styles, career preferences and advancement opportunities, talent management practices, ABC's approach to diversity, and about the quality of your social network at work. The participant may select to have an external interviewer if desired. The interview will be electronically recorded and transcribed by an outside transcription service. Participants may decline to have their interview taped. In addition Chinese Canadian employees will be asked to complete a numerical questionnaire of 26 questions regarding cultural preferences and heritage. Completion of the questionnaire is optional.

Interviews will last1 hour and will be arranged in a neutral office location of the

participant's convenience.

Confidentiality and anonymity

All participants will be individually coded by pseudonym. Direct quotes and interview content will be reported by the pseudonym. All questionnaire results will only be reported in the aggregated total only. Demographic data is obtained as a separate item and the participant may choose to decline. Retention of all raw data (notes, audiotapes, demographic data, and interview transcripts) will be stored for the duration of the study and for five years thereafter in locked filed cabinets or password protected computer files in a secure office of the researcher. At the end of this period, all paper files will be shredded and computer files securely erased.

Compensation/expense reimbursement

Out of pocket parking and a Starbucks/Tim Hortons gift card is provided up to $25.00.

Withdrawal

Participants may request a full withdrawal by contacting the researcher by email or live phone call at any time prior to publication, in which case all transcripts, quotes, recordings, demographic data or acculturation scale data will be deleted.

Problems or concerns

In the event that participants have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of their participation in this study, they may contact Dr. matthew heinz at xxx-xxxx or xx of the Royal Roads Research office at xxx-xxxx.

(Consent form attached)

Participants will receive a copy of this consent form for their records

Appendix E

Consent Form

This is to certify that I _____

( ) agree to voluntarily participate in this research for the purposes of investigating intercultural leadership and Chinese Canadian perspectives. I understand that I do not have to participate and that I am free to withdraw my consent and may end my participation at any time.

Data that are collected will remain confidential with regard to my identity. Only the researcher and her academic supervisor will have access to these files, which will be securely stored electronically and physically. All interview data will be attributed to a pseudonym, rather than your actual name, during this study. I understand that I can select the pseudonym myself, and that all direct and indirect quotes and references will be attributed to this pseudonym. My actual name will not appear in any publicly available documentation.

I am aware that the results of this research will be presented at academic conferences, published in a dissertation and possibly in subsequent journals, books, or made available through other media and formats.

I have had a chance to ask any questions I want about this research project, and know that I may do so at any time during my participation in this project. I have received a copy of this consent form.

My signature below indicates that I have reviewed this document and that I have understood the intended use of data collected during this interview.

Please select one of the following options:

- □ I choose to decline audio recording.
- □ I choose to accept audio recording.

Please select one of the following options:

- □ I choose to decline the completion of the acculturation questionnaire.
- □ I choose to accept completion of the acculturation questionnaire.

Please select one of the following options:

- □ I choose an independent researcher outside of ABC to conduct the interview.
- □ I choose to accept a direct interview with Deb Linehan

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: (please print) _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: _____

DATE _____

Appendix F

MEIM-R Ethnic Identification Scale

MEIM-R Ethnic Identification Scale (Phinney & Ong, 2007)

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples include Asian, Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kongese, Chinese Canadian, Canadian and many others. How would you describe yourself? _____

These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it. Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

_____ I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group such as its history, traditions, and customs.

_____ I have a strong sense of belonging to my ethnic group.

_____ I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.

_____ I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better.

_____ I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.

_____ I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

Table 1
Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure—Revised (MEIM—R)

Item no.	Item
1	I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
3	I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
4	I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better.
5	I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.
6	I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

Note. In administering the measure, these items should be preceded by an open-ended question that elicits the respondent's spontaneous ethnic self-label. It should conclude with a list of appropriate ethnic groups that the respondent can check to indicate both their own and their parents' ethnic backgrounds (see Phinney, 1992). Items 1, 4, and 5 assess exploration; Items 2, 3, and 6 assess commitment. The usual response options are on a 5-point scale, from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), with 3 as a neutral position. The score is calculated as the mean of items in each subscale (Exploration and Commitment) or of the scale as a whole. Cluster analysis may be used with the two subscales to derive ethnic identity statuses. Items were adapted from "The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure: A New Scale for Use With Diverse Groups," by J. Phinney, 1992, *Journal of Adolescent Research, 7*, p. 172–173. Copyright 1992 by Sage.

No written permission is required for use of the measure

www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/ftp/meim.doc

Appendix G

Suinn-Lew Asian Self Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA)*

INSTRUCTIONS: The questions which follow are for the purpose of collecting information about your historical background as well as more recent behaviours which may be related to your cultural identity.

Choose the one answer which best describes you.

1. What language can you speak?
   - ☐ Mandarin and/or Cantonese
   - ☐ Mostly Mandarin and/or Cantonese, some English
   - ☐ Mandarin and/or Cantonese and English about equally well (bilingual)
   - ☐ Mostly English, some Mandarin or Cantonese
   - ☐ Only English

2. What language do you prefer to use at home?
   - ☐ Mandarin
   - ☐ Cantonese
   - ☐ Mandarin and/or Cantonese and English about equally well (bilingual)
   - ☐ Mostly English, some Mandarin and/or Cantonese
   - ☐ Only English

3. Do you
   - ☐ Read Chinese language?
   - ☐ Read Chinese language better than English?
   - ☐ Read both Chinese and English equally well?
   - ☐ Read English better than Chinese language?
   - ☐ Read only English?

4. Do you
   - ☐ Write Chinese language?
   - ☐ Write Chinese language better than English?

- ☐ Write both Chinese and English equally well?
- ☐ Write English better than Chinese language?
- ☐ Write only English?

5. How do you identify yourself?
   - ☐ Asian
   - ☐ Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kongese as examples
   - ☐ Chinese-Canadian (or Taiwanese-Canadian, Hong Kongese-Canadian)
   - ☐ Canadian-Chinese (or Canadian-Taiwanese, Canadian-Hong Kongese)
   - ☐ Canadian

6. Which identification does (did) your mother use?
   - ☐ Oriental or Asian
   - ☐ Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kongese as examples
   - ☐ Chinese-Canadian (or Taiwanese-Canadian, Hong Kongese-Canadian)
   - ☐ Canadian-Chinese (or Canadian-Taiwanese, Canadian-Hong Kongese)
   - ☐ Canadian
   - ☐ Other

7. Which identification does (did) your father use?
   - ☐ Oriental or Asian
   - ☐ Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kongese as examples
   - ☐ Chinese-Canadian (or Taiwanese-Canadian, Hong Kongese-Canadian)
   - ☐ Canadian-Chinese (or Canadian-Taiwanese, Canadian-Hong Kongese)
   - ☐ Canadian
   - ☐ Other

8. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child up to age 6?
   - ☐ Almost exclusively Chinese
   - ☐ Mostly Chinese, Chinese Canadian
   - ☐ About equally Chinese and other non-Asian groups
   - ☐ Mostly non-Asian ethnic groups

- ☐ Almost exclusively non-Asian ethnic groups

9. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child from 6 to 18?
   - ☐ Almost exclusively Chinese
   - ☐ Mostly Chinese, Chinese Canadian
   - ☐ About equally Chinese and other non-Asian groups
   - ☐ Mostly non-Asian ethnic groups
   - ☐ Almost exclusively non-Asian ethnic groups

10. Whom do you now associate with in the community?
    - ☐ Almost exclusively Chinese
    - ☐ Mostly Chinese, Chinese Canadian
    - ☐ About equally Chinese and other non-Asian groups
    - ☐ Mostly non-Asian ethnic groups
    - ☐ Almost exclusively non-Asian ethnic groups

11. Whom do you prefer to associate with at work?
    - ☐ Almost exclusively Chinese
    - ☐ Mostly Chinese, Chinese Canadian
    - ☐ About equally Chinese and other non-Asian groups
    - ☐ Mostly non-Asian ethnic groups
    - ☐ Almost exclusively non-Asian ethnic groups

12. What is your music/song preference?
    - ☐ Only Chinese music
    - ☐ Mostly Chinese
    - ☐ Equally Chinese and Western
    - ☐ Mostly Western
    - ☐ Western only
    - ☐ Other

13. What is your movie preference?

- ☐ Chinese language movies only
- ☐ Chinese language movies mostly
- ☐ Equally Chinese/English-language movies
- ☐ Mostly English-language movies only
- ☐ English-language movies only
- ☐ Other

14. What generation are you? (Circle the generation that best applies to you)

☐ 1st Generation = I was born in Asia or country other than Canada

☐ 2nd Generation = I was born in Canada, either parent was born in Asia or country other than Canada

☐ 3rd Generation = I was born in Canada, both parents were born in Canada and all grandparents born in Asia or country other than Canada

☐ 4th Generation = I was born in Canada, both parents were born in Canada and at least one grandparent born in Asia or country other than Canada and one grandparent born in Canada

☐ 5th Generation = I was born in Canada, both parents were born in Canada, and all grandparents also born in Canada

☐ Don't know what generation best fits since I lack some information.

15. Where were you raised?

- ☐ In Asia only
- ☐ Mostly in Asia, some in Canada
- ☐ Equally in Asia and Canada
- ☐ Mostly in Canada, some in Asia
- ☐ In Canada only
- ☐ Other

16. What contact have you had with Asia?

- ☐ Raised one year or more in Asia
- ☐ Lived for less than one year in Asia
- ☐ Occasional visits to Asia
- ☐ Occasional communications (letters, phone calls, etc.) with people in Asia

- ☐ No exposure or communications with people in Asia

17. What is your food preference at home?

- ☐ Exclusively Chinese food
- ☐ Mostly Chinese food, some Western
- ☐ About equally Chinese and Western
- ☐ Mostly Western food
- ☐ Exclusively Western food
- ☐ Other

18. What is your food preference in restaurants?

- ☐ Exclusively Chinese food
- ☐ Mostly Chinese food, some Western
- ☐ About equally Chinese and Western
- ☐ Mostly Western food
- ☐ Exclusively Western food
- ☐ Other

19. If you consider yourself a member of the Asian group (Oriental, Asian, Chinese-Canadian, Canadian-Chinese, etc., whatever term you prefer), how much pride do you have in this group?

- ☐ Extremely proud
- ☐ Moderately proud
- ☐ Little pride
- ☐ No pride but do not feel negative toward group
- ☐ No pride but do feel negative toward group

20. How would you identify yourself?

- ☐ Very Chinese
- ☐ Mostly Chinese

- ☐ Bicultural
- ☐ Mostly Westernized
- ☐ Very Westernized

21. Do you participate in Chinese occasions, holidays, traditions, etc.?

- ☐ Nearly all
- ☐ Most of them
- ☐ Some of them
- ☐ A few of them
- ☐ None at all

1. Rate yourself on how much you believe in Asian values (e.g., about marriage, families, education, work):

1 2 3 4 5

(do not believe) (strongly believe in Asian values)

2. Rate yourself on how much you believe in Canadian (Western) values:

1 2 3 4 5

(do not believe) (strongly believe in Asian values)

3. Rate yourself on how well you fit when with other Asians of the same ethnicity:

1 2 3 4 5

(do not believe) (strongly believe in Asian values)

4. Rate yourself on how well you fit when with other Canadians who are non-Asian (Westerners):

1 2 3 4 5

(do not believe) (strongly believe in Asian values)

5. There are many different ways in which people think of themselves. Which ONE of the following most closely describes how you view yourself?

☐ I consider myself basically a Chinese person. Even though I live and work in Canada, I still view myself basically as a Chinese person.

☐ I consider myself basically as a Canadian. Even though I have a Chinese background and characteristics, I still view myself basically as a Canadian.

☐ I consider myself as a Chinese-Canadian, although deep down I always know I am Chinese.

☐ I consider myself as a Chinese-Canadian, although deep down, I view myself as a Canadian first.

☐ I consider myself as a Chinese-Canadian. I have both Chinese and Canadian characteristics, and I view myself as a blend of both.

* Ethnic choices amended to coincide with Canadian census categories

http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/rp-guides/ethnic-ethnique-eng.cfm

Psychosocial Measures for Asian Americans (Suinn et al., 1992)

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www.columbia.edu/cu/ssw/projects/pmap

Appendix H

Participant Demographics

Table H1 Gender of participants

Demographics: Gender of Participants (*N*=34)

Gender	Toronto	%	Vancouver	%	Total	Total %
Female	11	61	7	39	18	53
Male	5	31	11	69	16	47

Table H2 Age of Participants

Demographics: Age of Participants Age (*N*=34)

Age range	Toronto	%	Vancouver	%	Total	%
20-30	3	60	2	40	5	15
31-40	8	44	10	56	18	53
41-50	4	44	5	56	9	26
51-60	1	50	1	50	2	6

Table H3 Participant Country of Origin

Demographics: Participant Country of Origin (*N*=34)

Country origin	Toronto	%	Vancouver	%	Total	%
Canada	1	13	7	87	8	24
China	7	87	1	13	8	24
Hong Kong	7	64	4	36	11	32
Taiwan	1	17	5	83	6	17
Other	-		1	100	1	3

Table H4 Participant Number of Years in Canadian School

Demographics: Participant Number of Years in Canadian School (*N*=26)

Years High school	China	Hong Kong	Taiwan	Other	Total
0	4	1	1		6
1	2	1	-		3
2	-	1	2		3
3	1	1	1		3
4	-	-	-		
5+	1	4	2		7
10+	-	3		1	4

Demographics: Immigrants acculturation by going to high school in Canada (N=26)

Table H5 Participant Level of Education

Demographics: Participant Level of Education (*N*=34)

Education	Toronto	%	Vancouver	%	N	%
High School	-		1	100	1	3
College/Certificate	-		1	100	1	3
Bachelors	10	48	11	52	21	62
Graduate	6	55	5	45	11	32

Table H6 Participant Job Level

Demographics: Participant Job Level (*N*=34)

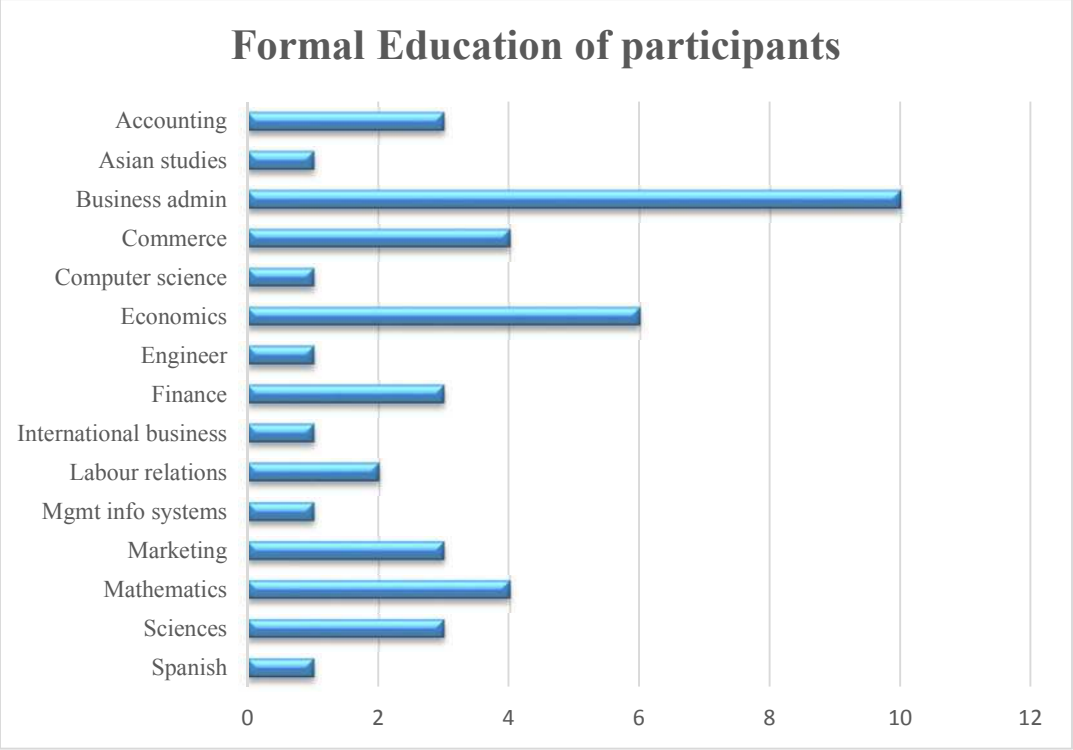
PL level	Toronto	%	Vancouver	%	Total	%
PL09	3	27	8	73	11	32
PL08	6	55	5	45	11	32
PL07	4	44	5	56	9	27
PL06	2	100		0	2	6
PL05*	1	100			1	3

Lower PL numbers are equivalent to more senior leadership roles. PL05=executive level

Effective leadership

Appendix I

Formal Education



Appendix J

Career Satisfaction