Building Inclusive Cities: Diversity in the Infrastructure Industry

Matti Siemiatycki and Yoko Cecelia Pye
January 14, 2019

@imfgtoronto | #IMFGtalks
The Guardian

Journalism's lack of diversity threatens its long-term future
Harrison Jones

The barriers faced by those from poorer backgrounds or minorities are getting higher - how can newspapers expect to stay relevant?

Nature

Science and gender: Scientists must work harder on equality
Meg Urry

21 December 2015

Astronomer Meg Urry reflects on a turbulent year for women in science.

Subject terms: Astronomy and astrophysics - Institutions - Policy - Society

Gender equality in science made headlines repeatedly this year. Nobel-prizewinning biochemist Tim Hunt made his ill-advised quip about women in labs; Shrinivas Kulkarni, an astrophysicist at the California Institute of Technology, called astronomers and their telescopes "boys with toys"; and in a much more serious matter, astronomer Geoff Marcy resigned from his post at the University of California, Berkeley, after public disclosure that he had sexually harassed female students. More quietly, there were rumours that at least three astronomers had been dismissed, and in some cases scrubbed from institutional websites.

Financial Times

Hey Tech Giants: How About Action on Diversity, Not Just Reports?

The evidence is growing - there really is a business case for diversity

The way we were: Board meeting at the former Fisons pharmaceuticals and fertiliser company, 1990
Why Does Leadership Diversity Matter? 5 Propositions

1. Representative bureaucracy: more diverse leaders deliver projects that best meet their constituencies

2. Value of diversity: organizations with greater diversity of leadership have better performance
   - **Key Caveat:** Organizational performance is worse when there is only a token level of diversity in leadership positions, defined as less than 22% of managers (Robinson and Park, 2007)

3. Gendered management styles:
   - masculine leadership style tends to value independence, hierarchical authority, competitiveness, high risk taking
   - Feminine leadership style tend to value mutuality, reciprocity, collaborative sensemaking, networks of information and power sharing
   (Source: Buckle and Thomas, 2003)

4. Diversity and the talent pool

5. Leadership diversity as agents of change
General Findings: Diversity Gap in Global PPP Industry

- Board of directors more racially and gender diverse than management
- Public sector more diverse than private sector organizations
- 20% of firms have no women on their boards
- 78% of boards have no visible minorities

**Canadian PPP Industry:**
- Among the most diverse leadership of PPP public sector and public sector pension fund investors in the world
- Below global average leadership diversity in the private sector
- Leadership in Canadian PPP industry is more gender diverse as compared to racially diverse.
Glass Ceiling for Women and Visible Minorities

The graph shows the percentage of women and visible minorities in top executive roles across different positions:

- **Top Executive Manager**
  - Women: 5%
  - Visible Minority: 10%

- **Board Chairperson**
  - Women: 7%
  - Visible Minority: 5%

- **Top Infrastructure Politician**
  - Women: 3%
  - Visible Minority: 1%
Glass Walls by Sector and Job Role

• Women more likely to work in public sector rather than private sector organizations

• Within organizations, women are overrepresented in lower status roles: human resources, marketing, legal council, strategy as compared to men who are more often top manager, division leader or project director

• In politics, a woman is more likely to be the top politician of her country (president or prime minister) or health minister than she is to be the minister of infrastructure or public works
Intersection of Gender and Race

- 4 times the share of white executives who are senior executives in **Asian and African** based PPP organizations (20%), as compared to the 5% share of non-white executives who are visible minorities in **Europe, Oceania or North America**

- Men make up 96% of the white executives working in Africa and Asia

- Outside of Africa, Black executives hold less than 1% of all senior management and board level positions in the PPP industry
PPP Industry Less Diverse than Other Sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>National Average Number of Women on Boards</th>
<th>PPP Industry Average Number of Women on Boards*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France**</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany**</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy**</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain**</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands**</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Global Board Gender Diversity Analysis, 2016)

* Includes Private DB Contractors, Institutional Investors, Developer-Investors, O&M Contractors
** Country has adopted board gender diversity quota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Top Management Positions Held by Women</th>
<th>% of Top Management Positions Held by Visible Minorities</th>
<th>% of Board Positions Held by Women</th>
<th>% of Board Positions Held by Visible Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPP Industry</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphabet (Google)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 15 Technology Firms</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two Approaches Organizations Follow to Achieve More Diverse Leadership Teams

**Proactive Diversity Policies**
- Targeted hiring for key roles
- Diversity training for staff
- Parental support policies
  - Leads to increased representation of women in leadership roles within organization
  - Promotions to top leadership teams do not necessarily come from within organization and retention of women in mid management can be an issue

**Laissez-Fair Approach**
- Create competitive, meritocratic workplace culture
- Objective is that best people will rise through the ranks, regardless of gender or race
  - Does not lead to organizational gains in executive diversity
  - But does support reports of favourable work culture and retention of women

Based on Research by Madeleine Hicks
Policy Recommendations

Increasing Diversity in Trades and on Construction Sites

• Increase transparency of subsidies for apprentices in the trades

• Revisit workplace designs for gender diversity
  – gender appropriate facilities on building site and uniforms

Increasing Diversity in Infrastructure Industry Leadership

• Require transparent reporting of gender representation and wage gap for organizations in the infrastructure industry

• Explore proactive strategies to increase diversity in infrastructure industry leadership

• Create workplaces where all members of the team feel equally included and empowered to participate in decisions
The Lived Experience of Women and Minorities at the Forefront of Transit Planning

Research by Yoko Cecelia Pye

Metrolinx, Toronto

MTA, New York

Translink, Vancouver
The Universal Phenomenon of Men Interrupting Women
What is the lived experience of women and minorities at the leadership level in transit planning boardrooms?

How does this experience impact the discourse in the decision-making process?
### Research Method I: Content Analysis

Content analysis of publicly recorded board meetings of three public agency meetings: Metrolinx, Translink, and MTA. 45 hours of board meetings coded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking Time</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Qualifying Statement</th>
<th>Interruptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker’s Role</td>
<td>Visible Minority</td>
<td>Voice Volume</td>
<td>Board Composition</td>
<td>Tone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Qualifying Statement**
- **Board Composition**
- **Speech Volume**
- **Board Composition**
Content Analysis Findings

- Men speak a disproportionate amount of time more than their female colleagues
- White men tend to speak with greater assuredness and confidence
- Successful women and visible minorities speak proportionately less, are interrupted more, and are less likely to participate in certain discussion topics
Representation of Board Members

Metrolinx
- White Male
- White Female
- Visible Minority Male
- Visible Minority Female

MTA
- White Male
- White Female
- Visible Minority Male
- Visible Minority Female

Translink
- White Male
- White Female
- Visible Minority Male
- Visible Minority Female
Demographic Composition and Speaking Time

![Bar graph showing the percentage of board members and speaking time at board meetings for different demographic groups: White Male, White Female, Visible Minority Male, Visible Minority Female. The graph indicates a significant difference in speaking time between White Males and other groups.]
Chair of the Board
Demographic Composition and Speaking Time

Metrolinx
White Male Chair
32%

MTA
White Male Chair
36%

Translink
White Female Chair
16%
Interruptions by Board Members

- Men interrupt men, 43%
- Men interrupt women, 40%
- Women interrupt men, 9%
- Women interrupt women, 4%
- Unknown interruptions, 4%

Men initiate 83% of interruptions across all three boards
Degree of Assuredness

• Measured by voice volume compared to the Chair’s voice volume and the use of qualifying statements.

• Proportionally, women speak in lower voice volumes compared to male counterparts and use more qualifying statements when asking a question or voicing an opinion.
Research Method II: Interviews

Interviewing chairs, board members, and staff from the three transit boards

Questions related to their experience on the board, expertise, quality of debate, decision-making process, gender representation, racial representation, difficulties speaking up, interruptions, and governance structure
Interview Findings I

• Metrolinx and Translink boardroom environments described as respectful and cooperative, whereas MTA described as political and divisive

• Excellent representation of a variety of expertise

• Chairs of Metrolinx and Translink described as positive influences for collaborative and strategic discussions

• Perceived experience is different. Women and visible minorities do not feel that they are interrupted more or speak less
Interview Findings II

• Interviewees are aware of adequate gender representation
• Interviewees also cognisant of lack of racial diversity, but some do not recognize an issue with the inadequacy
• Minority board members stress the importance of expertise over “tokenism”
• Limitation to the content analysis, as public board meetings only contribute 20 to 30% of board meeting time
• Many board members would be interested in more public board meetings and transparency. Both Translink and MTA see positive impact from public speakers.
Recommendations

- Men in senior roles should reflect on the extent to which they dominate the speaking time and participate in gendered interruptions.

- Those in leadership positions must stand up against interruptions and discrimination to provide space for all perspectives.

- Acknowledge lived experience as a qualification and break unconscious bias.

- Interviewees recommend expanding representation of the board to include a broader geographic nexus, more young people, and people with invisible/visible disabilities to better reflect the population they serve.