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OF BUSINESS SCIENCE

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**Advertising agency diversity and multiculturalism in television  
commercials**

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## **Abstract**

Millions of people in South Africa watch television commercials on a daily basis. Advertising either shapes or reflects society. Either way, the relationship between diversity in advertising agencies and the diversity reflected in the work they produce is important in South Africa. This research is exploratory and qualitative. Four case studies were conducted which entailed four campaigns (two from each agency) and two clients (one per agency). There were ten commercial outputs from the four campaigns. Content analysis was conducted on the commercials with particular reference to the portrayal of age, gender and race. Creative team members from each of the four creative teams were interviewed, as well as other staff from agency and the clients. In total 27 in-depth interviews were conducted. Cross case analysis sought to identify relationships between creative team level diversity and multiculturalism in creative outputs, as well as emerging themes or explanatory factors. This revealed that creative teams' race and gender diversity appeared to have an influence on the portrayal of race and gender in television commercials. Age in advertising agencies and agency creative outputs was consistently youthful across all four campaigns. Market segmentation and targeting using age, gender and race emerged as a contributory factor. Diversity in creative teams appeared to have an influence on the depiction of diversity in commercials, and larger more diverse teams emerged as a possible mechanism for targeting multicultural audiences.

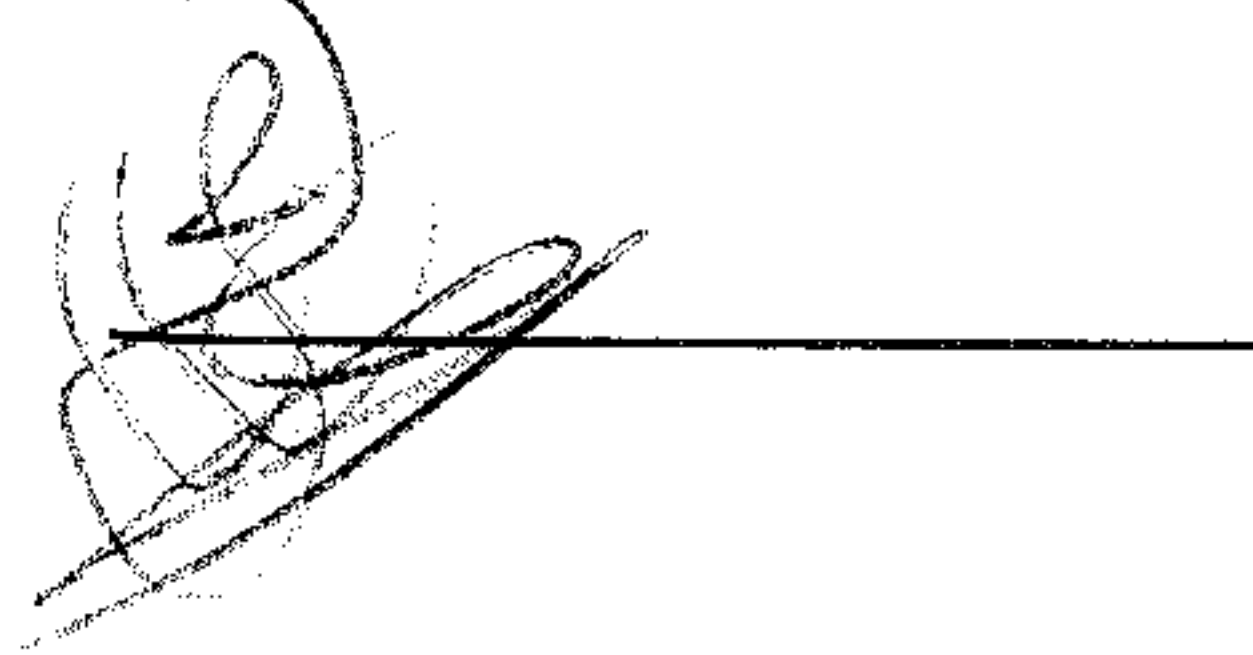
## **Keywords**

Advertising, Age, Diversity, Gender, Race.

## Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out the research.

Andrew Lester



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem**

"We hire White, middle-class kids – lots of them – and pay them enormous sums of money to create messages that speak to the inner-city kids who create the culture the White kids are trying like hell to emulate" (Dan Wieden in Precourt, 2009, p. 2).

Dan Wieden's, (founding partner at Wieden and Kennedy) statement suggests that diversity is a component of authentic advertising messaging. What the statement does not reflect is the role advertising plays in shaping our self-identification and our perception of self and otherness. When considered in relation to Cohen-Eliya and Hammer's (2004) statement as to the role of advertising in socialisation, the gravitas of the issue becomes apparent.

"Socialization begins with the family and then continues in school, but it is also conducted ceaselessly by the media. In this article, we argue for legislation that places restrictions on the transferal of stereotypical messages in advertisements. These messages shape the attitudes of people and are likely to lead to discrimination against minorities and women, to injury to the self-image of members of these groups, and to other harms" (Cohen-Eliya & Hammer, 2004, p.165).

This statement is a radical one, and raises serious concerns over individual freedoms and the freedom of expression. The counter argument to this position is that advertising merely depicts society - it is art imitating life and not life imitating art: "Advertising has long been defended as merely reflecting or even lagging behind culture..." (Bristor, Lee, & Hunt, 1995, p.94).

Radical or not, the opening statement's reflection of the lack of diversity in the advertising industry must be considered in conjunction with the role advertising messages play in culture re-enforcement and formation. Advertising has an additional responsibility in that media messages created by advertisers play a role in the portrayal of our cultural stereotypes: "[A] key consideration for marketers is the changing face of society, particularly regarding ethnicity" (Martin, Kwai-Choi Lee, Feng Yang, 2004, p.27). Advertising has had to deal with a period of rapid change in a post-1994 democratic South Africa. "Various groups have been particularly concerned about how people from different age, ethnic, gender and professional groups are shown in possibly



unrepresentative or stereotypical roles (Bollinger, 2008; Hazell & Clarke, 2007; Nina-Pazarzi & Tsangaris, 2008)” (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010, p.216). This study aims to investigate the relationship between inter-team diversity in advertising creative teams, and the level of multiculturalism exhibited in television commercials conceptualised by those teams.

Whilst the advertising industry has been quick to adopt a transformation charter and is relatively progressive as an industry, studies reveal that there is a lack of transformation at the functional levels of the industry, whilst the areas of ownership and skills development have shown success (Duffet, Van Der Heever and Bell, 2009).

### **1.1. Diversity in Advertising Agencies in South Africa**

“Consumers are exposed to hundreds of advertisements daily that influence what they buy, how they think, set trends and often depict their hopes and dreams. This is why it is important that the five thousand people who work in the South Africa advertising industry should be representative of all race groups” (Duffet, 2011, p. 6271).

Duffet (2011) asserts that advertising messages are instrumental in shaping or setting trends. His assertion that advertising reflects the ‘hopes and dreams’ (Duffet, 2011, p. 6271) is a statement which can be construed to illustrate the significance of representative advertising in South Africa. If advertising is a reflection of the hopes and dreams of South Africans then it follows that advertising should reflect the hopes and dreams of the populace not a sector of the population.

If we are to accept that creative outputs are informed by the experience of those generating the creative outputs then it would follow that the transformation of teams in the advertising industry has an influence on the nature of the hopes and dreams reflected. In addition, if advertising sets trends and influences the way people think and feel (Duffet, 2011), then it is imperative that the influence is not a perpetuation of a viewpoint that is informed by the age, gender and race of those creating the outputs.

Duffet (2001) explored the progress of transformation and Broad Based Black Economic Development (BBBEE) in the Cape Town Advertising industry. This research commented on the state of transformation in the national industry. It

found that there has been little with resultant meaningful qualitative data research into the progress of transformation in the industry (Duffet, 2011, p. 6271).

The advertising industry is regulated by the Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA) and is therefore self-regulating to a degree. The ACA has initiated several transformation initiatives which lead to the signing of the Marketing and Communication Charter. The Charter makes the industry self-regulating, but does not mean it does not comply with the requirements of BBBEE legislation and regulation (Duffet, 2011).

The progress of transforming the advertising industry has been slow, but not without success. The ACA as a self-regulating body imposed targets for the industry by way of a transformation charter in 2000. This charter stipulated targets of 40% Black representation by 2004 and 26% Black ownership by 2009 (Duffet, 2011, p. 6272).

## **1.2. Progress**

By 2006 the industry measured 40, 2% Black representation which was up from 23, 3% in 1998. Whilst this number is significant progress it lags behind the national average for all industries of 61, 4% (Duffet, 2011, p. 6276). The MAC (Marketing, Advertising and Communications) target for 2014 is 60%. Black female representation was 23, 9% in 2006, up from 17, 9% in 1998. Once again this was way behind the national average for all industries of 37, 4%. In mitigation, the industry employs mainly semi-skilled and skilled individuals and when compared to the national averages for skilled and semi-skilled workers the industry performed quite favourably (Duffet, 2011, p. 6276). Indeed in 2006 the number of Black females employed in management was 17, 7% above the national average of 7, and 9% (Duffet, 2011, p. 6276).

The national average for agencies Black representation was 40, 2% according to the ACE's EE survey of 2006 (Da Silva, 2006 in Duffet 2011). A possible area of concern is the lack of transformation at advertising schools (Duffet, 2011) which ultimately results in a lack of available Black creatives<sup>1</sup>.

There has been a significant amount of research done with regards to the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Creatives' is an industry term which refers to individuals who work in the creative departments of advertising agencies and related industries.

portrayal of age, gender and race in advertising outputs. There is significant debate as to the causality of the bias that exists in advertising content's portrayal of gender, race and age. What is clear is that creative teams impose their own bias and culture on the outputs they produce. "Marketers "en-code" the meaning through the use of cues such as culturally similar actors, shared cultural symbols, appropriate media placement, and preferred language or vernacular" (Grier & Brumbaugh, 2007, p.80). The question then arises: does the make-up of a creative team effect the level of diversity portrayed in creative outputs? A globalising market has increased the need for advertising messages that communicate beyond a traditional 'in-group'. Moreover, globalising markets have increased the need to deal with diversity in the functional work teams. "The demographic shift toward a more diverse work force had a profound impact on the business world during the 1990s" (Hostager & Meuse, 2002, p.189).

This study aims to explore the relationship between the ethnic, gender and age make-up of a creative team and their creative outputs. The question the research attempts to answer is: Does transformation at the functional level of the advertising industry result in television advertisement in which the portrayal of characters is reflective of the national population? To what extent does the makeup of a creative team determine the portrayal of characters and stereotypes with regards to gender, race and age?

The study aims firstly to observe the relationship between the age of creatives involved in the conceptualisation, scripting, design and production of a television commercial and the resultant commercials depiction of characters age as well as age related stereotypes represented. It is important, however, to assert that "[s]tereotyping is not necessarily a negative judgement, since stereotypes lead to expectations that can provide a useful orientation in everyday life" (Eisend, 2010, p.419).

Secondly, the study aims to observe the relationship between the race of creatives involved in the conceptualisation, scripting, design and production of a television commercial and the resultant commercials depiction of characters race as well as race related stereotypes represented.

Lastly, the study aims to explore the nature of the relationship that may exist between the gender diversity of creative teams responsible for the creation of

commercial and the gender diversity portrayed in the commercial outputs. Finally, the study aims to explore the level of race diversity in creative teams and the nature of the relationship that may or may not exist between the race diversity of creative teams and the level of multiculturalism that exist in creative outputs created by the team.

Themes that emerged (referred to as ‘emergent themes’ in this thesis) from the interviews conducted will be used as a means of identifying factors of diversity and factors that influence diversity in creative teams and creative outputs.

This research report has seven chapters and is structured as follows:

**Chapter One** introduces the research problem and discusses the relation between the research problem and the research objectives. The relevance of the research to the South African advertising industry is discussed in Chapter One with relation to the progress of transformation and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) in the South African Advertising industry.

**Chapter Two** is a review of the literature and discusses factors of diversity with particular reference to age, gender and race.

**Chapter Three** introduces the research questions.

**Chapter Four** outlines the methodology employed. Research limitations are not discussed in Chapter Four, but are reported in Chapter Seven. The research is comprised of four case studies on four campaigns. The four campaigns were created by two advertising agencies (each agency produced two campaigns.) The campaigns are coded throughout the document and Chapter Five contains explanatory tables of the coding of campaigns, outputs and actors. The research focuses on the teams responsible for creative outputs; the agencies that created the campaigns and the clients that commissioned or briefed the campaigns. In addition, the research analyses the creative outputs themselves by way of content analysis. The framework for the content analysis is presented in Chapter Two and Chapter Four.

**Chapter Five** reports findings across the cases, but does not contrast and compare the cases.

**Chapter Six** compares the four cases and draws conclusions based on the

comparison of the four cases, informed by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

**Chapter Seven** presents a summary of the findings as well as research limitations, recommendations for future research and recommendations for practitioners.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

A review of the literature was conducted and covered the following theoretical approaches and themes:

- An interrogation of the definitions and theories of diversity was conducted. The review explored social and self categorisation theory and the formation of in-groups in organisations.
- A review of Whiteness theory was conducted as means of understanding the normative role of Whiteness, particularly in relation to organisational dynamics and media messages.
- A review of the theories on creativity and diversity in creative teams focused on arguments both for and against heterogeneous teams and creative performance.
- Multiculturalism in advertising outputs was explored and the practice of targeting and segmentation was explored in relation to targeting homogeneous and diverse audiences.
- A review of the literature was conducted on the representation of race in advertising and racial stereotyping Literature on ethnic self-awareness was reviewed in relation to the literature on race.
- Literature on gender in advertising and literature on the gender composition of teams were reviewed, and included literature on the gender/age relationship in advertising.
- Finally, a review of the literature on age in advertising was reviewed and focused on age based stereotyping in advertisements and age based exclusion.

### **2.1. Diversity**

Williams and Riley (1998) in Mannix and Neal (2005) proposed a definition of diversity. “The word diversity has been used to refer to so many types of differences among people that the most commonly used definition is given as—“any attribute that another person may use to detect individual differences” (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998, p. 81)” (Mannix & Neale, 2005, p.31).

The definition goes beyond the observable factors of age, gender and race. Diversity by this definition speaks to any difference between individuals that

forms part of the conception of the self and the other. This rather broad definition suggests that all groups are diverse by virtue of the differences between individuals, even in a seemingly homogenous group.

It would be dangerous to reduce diversity to only the observable factors. Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) proposed an understanding of diversity on three levels:

1. *Informational diversity*: the differences in perspective that individuals bring to a group. This would be informed by education, work experience and training.
2. *Social category diversity*: observable factors of age, gender and race.
3. *Value diversity*: in the context of workgroups this would refer to underlying values as to the group's goals, targets and mission (Jehn, Northcraft, Neale, 1999).

This multi-modal interpretation of diversity is useful for an understanding of the effects of diversity on work groups. According to Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) these different levels of diversity have different effects on group performance in different contexts. "Triandis found that members of culturally dissimilar groups were less likely to be attracted to one another and had more difficulty communicating with each other than members of culturally homogeneous groups did (Triandis, 1959, 1960)" (Mannix & Neale, 2005, p.39). Triandis, then, was referring to social category diversity and reported negative impacts of social category diversity on group communication.

South Africa presents a unique set of challenges regarding diversity in the workplace. More importantly, the South African situation presents interesting questions of the effects of diversity on team performance. For South African advertising agencies the questions become even more significant and complex. The central question is not based on the relevance of a diverse workforce in the South African context, but rather what effect diversity has on creative team performance.

A review of the literature exposed major debate - a vast range of propositions and explorations. "In some studies, researchers have reported that team diversity is positively associated with performance (e.g., Ely, 2004; Van der

Vegt, Van de Vliert, & Huang, 2005). In another set of studies, team diversity has been found to negatively predict performance (e.g., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Leonard, Levine, & Joshi, 2004)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.599). The divergent opinion was continued through various studies, but was understood through categorisation theory and a focus on the creative outputs and teamwork.

## 2.2. Self/Social Categorisation Theory

**Social categorisation theory** (Mannix & Neale, 2005) is useful in understanding the relation between diversity in creative teams and creative outputs. Social categorisation can be viewed as a function of group membership, it is the component of self identity that is derived from belonging to a group or organisation. When the advertising agency is dominated by an in-group (traditionally White, western male and young), there is a danger that advertisements that target groups *not represented within*, or not the *dominant group* in the creative team, will resort to depictions of otherness and stereotyping. “Social categories, in effect, create “us-them” distinctions” (Mannix & Neale, 2005, p.40).

**Self categorisation** is a general theory of the self in relation to social constructs. If an in-group existed in a South African advertising agency, then it would follow that the dynamic of how an individual conceives of self and other in relation to that group is of importance (Wyer, 2010, p. 453).

The prevalence of English as the language of business and the customary language distinction of ‘English’, ‘Afrikaans’ and ‘vernacular’ within advertising and media buying, is perhaps indicative of a dominance of an in-group in the South African advertising industry. This in-group is perhaps a product of a lack of White racial awareness as described by Whiteness theory, (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009), discussed further in Chapter Two), but the role of English as the language of business in the advertising industry is a contributory factor to the facilitation of the dominance of ‘White’ thinking.

Turner’s (1987) concept of self categorisation as described in Mastro and Kopacz (2006) presented the possibility that those who are *not* part of an in-group could be stereotyped. This presents self-identity in relation to group identification on a complex continuum of self and group, and self and other.



“Thus, when a person is characterised as a group member, individual self-perception is transformed into a collective self-concept, convergent with in-group members and divergent with out-group members (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Turner, 1985, 1987).” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309).

This raises interesting possibilities - that belonging to the agency group plus a sense of identity in the context of the agency team might lead to a categorisation of self within the group. This concept of the self could serve to reduce the benefits of diversity on creative outputs as the concept of self within the group may lead to identification on areas of similarity and lead to the discounting of individual and cultural difference. If the agency has had a traditional White, male and youthful bias, what effect does this have on diversity in the workforce? The prevalence of a dominant subgroup may lead to a willingness to comply or be regarded as an outcast, or the acceptance of the role of outsider. “Self-categorization is a spontaneous and often unconscious process that occurs when people compare themselves with others and assess their relative similarity or dissimilarity.” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 336).

This is of particular interest in the agency environment where it is possible that the advertising schools provide a similar frame of reference. The AAA or Vega schools of brand communication (in Johannesburg) may serve as points of similarity within the industry in Johannesburg. The fact that these two schools seem to provide the ticket into the industry make their attendance almost mandatory.

“Advertising schools are not representative. The problem of too few Black previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs) embarking on a career in advertising still appears to be a problem, even though it was raised in both of the parliamentary hearings and was one of the primary focus areas of the MAPPSETA advertising skills needs analysis survey (Kelello Consulting, 2005)” (Duffet, 2011, p. 6281).

For the creative, individual group categorisation may occur due to age, gender or race or due to belonging to a creative team, an agency or working on an account. If accounts and teams are delineated or constructed on the more explicit and visible factors of age gender and race (a guy or girl team, a Black or White team) it would seem likely that the factors of age, gender and race

and their impact on categorisation then would be accentuated.

“For any given person, group categorization may occur on the basis of many different variables, including ethnicity, gender, age, occupation, and economic status. Although each of these group memberships is part of the person's identity or self, “the momentary salience of any particular membership is highly variable.” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337). The pressure of creative deadlines and the common goal of award winning work and creative outputs may serve as a unifying factor. The fact that agencies are constructed as interdependent units of writers and art directors means that the effects of categorisation are likely mitigated provided that diversity exists intra team and not only inter team.

“Social categorization theory would predict that higher outcome and goal interdependence is likely to unite team members to work toward a common goal and motivate them to cast aside differences (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Task interdependence may facilitate intergroup contact conducive to reducing categorization-based processes in teams (Pettigrew, 1998)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.610).

Agencies generally structure teams as a writer and an art director reporting to a creative director. These teams work on campaigns and are responsible for the creative work on a given campaign. These teams tend to be fairly permanent. The writer and art director are the core component of the team and often change jobs together and present their portfolios as a team. The team extends beyond the creative director and includes an account manager or account director who reports to a business unit director. This ‘art and copy’ model for agency creative teams (a writer and art director) results in teams that have long standing relationships. The industry is prone to short term tenure, but the team often moves as a team.

This phenomenon provides an opportunity for a diverse team that may be able to move beyond the differences of ethnicity, gender or age. The enduring differences of values, world view or religion may prove beneficial for adding richness and diversity to the creative outputs “Some studies that have examined temporal influences on team diversity outcomes have shown that the length of time team members spend together may diminish the salience of visible aspects of diversity and enhance the salience of attitudinal or value-

based aspects of diversity (Harrison et al., 1998; Harrison, Price, Gavin, & Florey, 2002)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p. 610).

The notion of the task as a unifying and fortifying agent is significant in the advertising agency. The pressures of deadlines associated to creative and complex deliverables provides an environment that should reinforce group identity and in so doing reduce the salience of diversity attributes. “Social categorization theory would suggest that aspects of a team’s task can minimize the salience of diversity attributes by reinforcing a common group identity or by placing demands on the team’s diverse cognitive resource base (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Jehn et al., 1999)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p. 606).

### **2.3. Whiteness Theory**

Studies by Mastro and Kopacz (2006) explored the dominant in-group culture and its relation to the evaluation and judgment of media messages. Their findings suggested that in the Western context the dominance of White culture resulted in White messaging being better received. If the antithesis should be true in South Africa should we expect to see agencies attempting to engage and adapt to a predominant emerging Black culture or is the media still dominated by Whiteness? “Specifically, the greater the perceived similarity to the in-group prototype (White), the more favourable the evaluation of the media characterization regardless of in-group or out-group status” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 310). This implies that should an in-group exist in the agency, the more the creative outputs are aligned to the in-group the more likely it becomes that the work would receive a favourable review in the agency regardless of the group categorisation of the group producing the work. Thus, if a female or Black team had produced work that reflected a White, male worldview (given that was the dominant in group) it would be positively received in the agency. This makes the role of a female, Black or older Creative Director all the more significant. If the Creative Director was reviewing the creative work and vetting the creative outputs, then the perspective and social categorisation of the Creative Director or Executive Creative Director would have a significant impact on which work was received favourably.

Mastro and Kopacz (2006) further expanded on this notion arguing that a ‘Whitening’ of ethnic portrayals resulted in more favourable reception in the

dominant White culture. “The pattern of results found here suggests that, in fact, similarity to the White norm plays an important role in predicting stereotypic responses to media content. Here, the greater the difference between racial and ethnic portrayals and White depictions, the more unfavourable the evaluations of minorities in U.S. society.” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 319). This, then, expanded the significance of in-group perception beyond the agency itself and into the influence of the commissioning client and the public receptors of advertising messages.

As agencies traditionally value creative awards (the Loeries and Cannes Lion) the dominance of in-group thinking on these creative review panels also has an influence. The role of perceivers then moved out of the agency and to the broader creative community, the client and the target audience.

Mastro and Kopacz (2006) conclude that favourable evaluation is based on similarity to the perceivers group if the perceiver is part of an in-group. Favourable perception is dependent on similarities with the in-group and is proportionate to the visibility of points of dissimilarity.

“In other words, the more similar an in-group or out-group target is to the relevant characteristic of the perceiver’s in-group, the more favourable the evaluation. Not surprisingly, more observable groups, such as sex and oftentimes race, are likely to signal at least preliminary category-based comparisons due to their accessibility, compared with less tangible group memberships, such as religious affiliation” (Coover & Murphy, 2000) (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309).

Coover in Mastro and Kopacz (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309) explored the role of racial identity in White viewers’ response to media messages. Coover contended that White viewers would respond to messages that affirm White views and norms and that positivity of the response would be related to the extent to which messages affirm those views. Coover posited that the mechanism for this behaviour is identity and not prejudice.

Coover asserted that racial identity is the mechanism for White consumers’ response to the portrayal of ethnic diversity in media messages and not prejudice. The positive reception of messages then became not only about the portrayal of White characters, but on the alignment of the portrayal of ethnicity

to White social norms.

“In her work on media exposure and social identity, Coover posits that racial identity, rather than racial prejudice, is the underlying mechanism determining White consumers’ responses to characterizations of race in the media. She contends that White viewers’ preferences for certain media representations of race over others can be understood based on the extent to which these depictions accommodate and affirm White racial norms” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309).

South Africa’s racial majority is not White and it could be argued then that the American research explores categorisation from the viewpoint of a White majority - but it has already highlighted that South African advertising agencies are still disproportionately White (see Chapter1).

South Africa’s recent history has resulted in a workforce that is not representative of the population. What have the effects been on a workforce that is dominated by a single ‘in-group’? Joshi and Roh (2009) suggested that an occupational context dominated by a demographic group will lead to stereotyping of the underrepresented groups.

“Unlike in a balanced setting, in an occupational context dominated by a single demographic group, negative stereotypes about underrepresented groups can influence categorization-based outcomes within work groups (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Larkey, 1996) (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.601).

Joshi and Roh (2009, p.600) made the distinction between relation and task oriented diversity attributes and contended that the visibility and pervasiveness of relations-oriented gender attributes contribute to social categorisation. “Relations-oriented diversity attributes such as gender, race/ethnicity, and age are cognitively accessible, pervasive, and immutable and are associated with social categorization processes (Fiske, 1998; Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.600).

The prevalence of a dominant demographic in an organisational context has then accentuated the likelihood that under-represented groups will be subject to negative stereotyping through this process of social categorisation. “When a single demographic group dominates an occupation, negative stereotype-based categorization processes against underrepresented groups are likely

(Fiske, 1993; Reskin et al., 1999)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.606).

An integration of these perspectives resulted in the proposition that an overrepresentation of an in-group or the existence of a dominant in-group subculture was likely to lead to stereotyping of the underrepresented or out-group. This in turn might lead to categorisation processes that serve as an obstacle to multicultural interactions and the move multiculturalism. Lastly, an organisation that has representative and balanced demography, gender representation and representation of age cohorts might be less prone to this level of categorisation (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.606).

Diversity, then, provides a counter-mechanism to categorisation and stereotype formation and permanence. Hartman, Gerteis and Croll (2009) further explored the White understanding of ethnicity and self as mechanism for the persistence of in-group dominance. “The new work on Whiteness explores how White attitudes and understandings—not about racial others but about *themselves* and *their own status* in the society—factor into the perpetuation and legitimation of racial inequalities” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 404).

The tendency that Whites have had to discount their own ethnicity has created a blind spot. The propensity to discount Whiteness as a racial identity has resulted in a failure to acknowledge the mechanisms of advantage and the manner in which Whites have benefited. “Overall, we find substantial support for key tenets of Whiteness theory: “Whites’ racial identities tend to be less visible than those of individuals from other racial groups, and Whites are less likely to see ways that they have been actively advantaged by being White” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 405).

Whiteness and maleness had in the past been a group of disproportionate privilege in South Africa. Understanding ‘Whiteness’ has become an area of importance. “According to Ruth Frankenberg, one of the pioneering sociologists in this field, the social phenomenon of Whiteness consists of three linked dimensions.

“First,” she argued, “Whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege. Second, it is a “standpoint,” a place from which White people look at themselves and others, and at society. Third and most

importantly, “Whiteness’ refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (Frankenberg 1997:1)” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 406).

Frankenburg’s assertion then was one that speaks to the invisibility of Whiteness. A racial categorisation that is unrecognised or under recognised has had the capacity to propitiate a dominance of White culture under the guise of rugged individualism and self-sufficiency, which are both constructs of the White identity. Hartmann, et al. further argued that Whiteness, then, is not merely underestimated, but rather that as a categorisation is has been unaware of itself. “Whiteness is thus a sense of self and subjectivity that is unaware of its own social foundations” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 406).

The mechanism for this discounting of Whiteness has been accredited to the positioning of a White Western male view and ‘the other’ by this view. It is implied that the failure to acknowledge Whiteness has resulted in the acceptance of a White world view as a point of neutrality from which all other world views differ or - even worse - depart. “Nevertheless, there appears to be consensus in the field that White identity is more taken-for-granted, more naturalized and normalized than other racial identities” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 407).

The blind spot then created in society, has served White hegemony almost unwittingly. As argued previously, it is not necessarily that categorisation takes place from a point of prejudice, but rather from a point of identity. The failure to acknowledge identity has thus resulted in a failure to acknowledge the privilege that is an implicit part of the identity. This has led to an under appreciation of the mechanisms of privilege associated with Whiteness. “Whiteness serves this function, it is further argued, by blinding Whites to the status and advantage that goes along with being White. In the literature these ideas are often referred to under the heading of “White privilege” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 407).

Hartman, et al., further argued that this has resulted in Whites being unable to place themselves in the broader context of race relations, diversity and multiculturalism, viewing themselves rather as a culture in a sense and thus reducing the debate on diversity, multiculturalism and privilege to a function of

‘the other’.

“They suggest that White Americans may be attuned to the realities of racial inequality and even acknowledge the disadvantages faced by communities of colour because of discrimination and prejudice, but they still have a hard time placing themselves in this system of race relations and seeing the ways in which the disadvantages of others are closely and directly tied to their own structural advantages” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 407).

The first step, it seems, toward true multiculturalism would be the acknowledgment of Whiteness and White belonging. This sense of awareness could then be followed by an awareness of the privilege that may accompany this categorisation.

“In a nutshell, the claim is that compared with others, Whites should be more likely to adhere to generally universal and “colour-blind” ideologies and explanations of individual success, specifically, that American society is fair, meritorious, and race neutral, that hard work and effort are the keys to success, and that any individual can succeed if she or he tries hard enough” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 408).

Of importance to the South African advertising agency is the argument of Affirmative Action versus merit. The merit argument holds in it the kernels of its own demise in the eyes of Whiteness theorists. “Whites may be able to see and understand the ways that Blacks and others have been disadvantaged by the racial system, but they tend instead to attribute their own success to individual effort and hard work.” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 408).

Furthermore, it may be that the denying of White identity and the failure to acknowledge White privilege, has resulted that South African business, and in particular advertising, develop into organisations that have perpetuated White dominance despite efforts to the contrary. Efforts to uplift previously disadvantaged individuals (PDI) without an acknowledgment of Whiteness and White privilege may have contributed to an understanding of the ‘other’ as inferior and therefore in need of assistance or charity. “The paradoxical effect is that by highlighting individual causes of inequality and by denying the structural effects of race, the outcome may in fact be a reinforced sense of the



“natural” inferiority of those disproportionately non-White individuals who are disadvantaged” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 409).

The dominance of Whiteness may have served as an anchoring point for a more complex construct of normality and may have served to further entrench a world view of White male and middle class and Christian nationalism in the South African context. “In many cases, White normativity bolsters and sustains other forms of normativity, such as middle-class or heterosexual norms that emphasize the pursuit of prosperity, safety, reproduction, and respectability’ (Duggan 2003; Halberstam 2005)” (Ward, 2008, p. 64).

The success of diversity plans and BBBEE initiatives may require then that Whiteness be acknowledged first. Ward asserted that White normativity may have undermined efforts toward multiculturalism even in organisations that are racially diverse. In fact even in organisations where organisational power has been extended to diverse stakeholders, Whiteness may have informed the norms and culture of the organisation (Ward, 2008, p. 564).

Ward’s view was that in order to address the predominance of Whiteness access to power needs to be extended to diverse non-White individuals. This as well as formal diversity programs have been suggested as methods or mechanism of reducing the dominance of Whiteness in organisations (Ward, 2008, p. 564).

Importantly, Ward also suggested that the acknowledgement of Whiteness and the explicit identification of White norms as such was an important component of such a restructuring (Ward, 2008, p.564). Ward further reiterated that the dominance of Whiteness in the broader culture had a trickle-down effect into organisations situated in those contexts. “In this case, consideration of White normativity draws attention to the ways in which White hegemony in the broader culture “trickles down” into organizations, producing Whiteness as the standard by which “normal” people, ideas, and practices are often measured, even within racially diverse organizations” (Ward, 2008, p. 564). Ward (2008) described the move from a view of social justice to a view of good business and argues that a business that uses diversity as an indicator of good business as an organisation that is on the path to multiculturalism (Ward, 2008, p. 568).

## 2.4. Diversity and Creativity

Triandis, Hall and Ewen (1965) in Mannix and Neale (2005) argued that heterogeneity (and thus social category diversity) is beneficial for tasks requiring creativity. “Another early stream of research on heterogeneity and problem solving was undertaken by Triandis and colleagues, who specifically argued that heterogeneity is most beneficial for tasks requiring creativity (Triandis, Hall, & Ewen, 1965)” (Mannix & Neale, 2005, p.33).

This finding was replicated in work conducted by Nemeth (1986): “Empirically, heterogeneous groups have been shown to outperform homogeneous groups, as the expression of alternative perspectives can lead to novel insights and solutions (Nemeth, 1986).” (Mannix & Neale, 2005, p.33).

Further, Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) asserted that team level diversity can provide creative impetus through simple exposure to alternate ‘world view’. There is substantial evidence that creative team diversity can act as a creative enabler through exposing the group members to alternate ‘world views’ - that contact with diversity on the levels of information and value diversity (Jehn, Northcraft, Neale, 1999) can through contact alone expand the creative frame of reference. Leung and Chiu (2008) expressed it as follows: “Thus, it is important to understand whether exposure to multicultural experiences can reduce individuals’ reliance on culturally accessible knowledge and, hence, increase their levels of creative potential (Chiu & Hong, 2005; Leung & Chiu, in press)” (Leung & Chiu, 2008, p.376).

Exposure to a culture other than one’s own is described as opportunity by Leung and Chiu (2008). Martinez et al. (2006) in Leung and Chiu (2008) highlighted the notion of the benefits of multicultural experiences. Whilst this research was not conducted in advertising agencies, the art and copy relationship (writer and art director) presents an opportunity for significant multicultural experience within this micro team construct. It affords the individual in the team a significant and deep experience of a culture outside of their own.

“Thus, exposure to a foreign culture may afford valuable opportunities to be exposed to ideas that are prevalent in another culture, but unfamiliar to one’s own culture. Recruiting and synthesizing such ideas in creative

problem solving could result in creative outcomes. Indeed, some researchers (Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Gardner, Gabriel, & Dean, 2004; Simonton, 1997, 2000; Sorokin, 1969; Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006) have acknowledged the potential beneficial effects of multicultural experiences on creativity” (Leung & Chiu, 2008, p. 376).

Leung and Chiu (2008) further asserted that multicultural experience may be a source of long-term creative advantage through the process of internalization of experience. The creative worker might then have a wider range of experience to draw from when approaching a creative challenge. More importantly, the notion that this, then, becomes a competency which can be drawn from into the future, is significant. “Once individuals become receptive to new and unconventional ideas through their multicultural experiences, they may spontaneously access from memory knowledge that is normatively inaccessible in their own culture and generate creative ideas. (Leung & Chiu, 2008, p. 377).

Leung and Chiu (2008) expanded on this notion and showed real benefits of multicultural exposure for the creative outputs typically associated with advertising teams.

“There is considerable evidence for the creative benefits of multicultural experiences. For instance, using both experimental and correlational studies, Leung and Chiu (in press) found that individuals with more extensive multicultural experiences were more receptive to ideas from foreign cultures and performed better on insight learning, creative metaphor generation, and creative story writing” (Leung & Chiu, 2008, p.377).

In South Africa the argument is influenced by history and the abnormality of a society. However, Cox (1991) posited that the move to diverse workforces is a global trend and a function of globalization. Cox (1991) highlighted potential benefits and pitfalls of growing workforce diversity.

“Organizations' workforces will be increasingly heterogeneous on dimensions such as gender, race, ethnicity and nationality. Potential benefits of this diversity include better decision-making, higher creativity and innovation, greater success in marketing to foreign and ethnic

minority communities, and a better distribution of economic opportunity. Conversely, cultural differences can also increase costs through higher turnover rates, interpersonal conflict, and communication breakdowns” (Cox, 1991 p.34).

King (2011) further argued that there is a benefit to having a workforce that mirrors the demography of the community. King (2011) argued that the demography of a workforce should be consistent with the demography of the population of the society in which the workforce functions. “In light of global trends toward increasingly diverse communities and workplaces, it is imperative that management scholars and practitioners attend to demography both within and outside of organizations” (King et al., 2011, p. 1114).

King further posited that non-representative workforces result in inter group conflict and a tendency to revert to stereotyping through the process of social categorisation.

“The results of the current study suggest that when organizations do not reflect the demography of the communities in which they are embedded, dysfunctional social categorization processes and manifestations of negative intergroup behaviours can emerge” (King et al., 2011, p.1114). This is an issue of major concern for South African organisations as the country seeks to redress the imbalances created by apartheid and work toward a corporate environment that reflects the demography of society.

If a workgroup or creative team is diverse it is still possible that the organisation has a dominant in-group. It would make sense then that those who are part of the in-group would exhibit higher degrees of organizational identification than those from outsider groups. “Organizational identification refers to the extent to which a person personally identifies with, and tends to define himself or herself as a member in the employing organization” (Cox, 1991, p.36).

The multicultural organisation then must be an organisation that moves from a single in-group culture toward a multicultural organization. Cox (1991) asserted that this organisation cannot have one monolithic all-encompassing organisational culture, but rather that it should move toward multiculturalism via an intermediate phase of plurality - a period of increased acceptance and

tolerance on the pathway to multiculturalism. This should include integration of other cultures and eradicate prejudice and facilitate organisational identity and categorisation of minority or underrepresented demographic groups. This in turn should create an environment that maximizes potential and the potential positive impact of diverse workgroups.

The notion of value in diversity seems well established. Hoffman in Mannix and Neale (2005) provided a cohesive, albeit seemingly obvious argument for the value of diversity in creative outputs. Hoffman (1959) in Mannix and Neale (2005) provided early proof of the value of diverse groups in the output of creative deliverables. The argument is built on the strength of varying perspectives. Returning to the concept of diversity as something that all groups have and no individuals do, the logical extension of this argument is the mass intelligence now beginning to gain traction via the Internet as community. Mannix and Neale (2005) further built on the early work of Hoffman and extend the argument to the efficacy of diverse groups with regards cognitively complex tasks. Hoffman's findings suggested that diverse groups were capable of producing higher quality solutions than homogeneous groups provided the problem at hand require complex decision-making and problem solving.

Joshi and Roh (2009) looked at diverse work groups in service industries and noted the advantage diverse groups have in serving diverse target audiences. Their study was focused on physical human service interactions, but would be of interest for television advertising if we accepted that television seeks to imitate reality in a sense. The study indicated that diverse customers may be more likely to be attracted to a store with diverse service staff. If the television commercial is intended to expand the reach of the brand beyond the front line of sales, then it would make sense that consumers would respond more positively to an endorsement of a product or a product offer from a spokesperson with whom they identified.

“Researchers have argued that increasing demographic attribute-based diversity can enhance a firm’s “market competence,” which is a form of competitive advantage in the service industry (Richard et al., 2007). Consider as an example that a retail store with a diverse group of store employees is more likely to attract diverse customers and thereby also more likely to have strong store sales” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607).

## 2.5. Counter-argument against Diversity and Creative Outputs

Opinion on the value of diversity as an enabler of creative outputs is divided. Joshi and Rohe (2009) referenced several sources of opinion that argued against diversity as source of improved performance: Di-Tomaso, Post, & Parks-Yancy, 2007; Skaggs & Di-Tomaso, 2004; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004 all argued that in settings with a dominant culture or in-group, a diverse team may perform worse. They explained the reasons for diminished performance as social categorisation and stereotyping of the diverse team.

“Cumulatively, the research perspectives discussed above suggest that in occupational settings dominated by a single demographic group, diverse teams may face performance losses primarily for two reasons. First, these teams may perform sub optimally because the work context enhances stereotyping and bias against underrepresented demographic groups that triggers social categorization based on these attributes within the teams (Di-Tomaso, Post, & Parks-Yancy, 2007; Skaggs & Di-Tomaso, 2004; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004)” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607).

If advertising is still dominated by an in-group this research suggested that diverse teams would fare worse than homogenous teams.

Furthermore, Baugh & Graen, 1997; Hultin & Szulkin, 1999; Joshi, Liao, & Jackson, 2006 in Joshi and Rohe (2008) asserted that a second reason for underperformance of diverse groups is that they could be prejudiced in the allocation of resources. In an agency context this may extend to the level of the brief being given to the team. A diverse team or team not of the predominant in group may then not be given the best briefs. Also, they may be more harshly rated on performance ratings and creative reviews if their output is not understood by the dominant in group. “Second, in these settings, teams with higher proportions of underrepresented group members (e.g., women or ethnic minorities) may be valued less and receive poorer performance ratings or access to resources, which is likely to impact subjective or objective performance outcomes (Baugh & Graen, 1997; Hultin & Szulkin, 1999; Joshi, Liao & Jackson, 2006).” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607).

Paulus (2000) in Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema, (2010)

argued that brainstorming or idea generation is best suited to an individual pursuit. In the same research Hülshager, Anderson and Salgado (2009), and Jackson and Joshi (in press) argued that the link between the advantages of diverse opinion and perspectives and creativity has never been proven. Moreover they concluded that the results of empirical study have proved inconclusive. “While research on brainstorming concludes that working individually is preferable when idea generation is at stake (Paulus, 2000), part of the common wisdom in favour of using teams stresses the potential advantages of bringing members with different perspectives on a task to the table. Even though it is conceptually straightforward, this link between a team’s diversity and its creativity has proven unreliable across empirical studies (Hülshager, Anderson, & Salgado, 2009; Jackson & Joshi, in press)” (Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2010, p.1).

The key to the benefit of diversity in-group creative work, then, is the presence of diverse perspective and the fact that the diverse opinion can result in a reframing of the problem at hand. The reframing mechanism though, is dependent on the degree of diversity in the group in relation to the matter at hand. Thus, ethnic diversity need not necessarily result in reframing if the group shares a perspective on the creative problem at hand.

“Crucially, this effect of perspective taking on reframing is contingent upon the existence of diverse perspectives. Actual reframing will only occur to the degree that the perspectives of different team members differ. Taking the perspective of a team member who shares one’s considerations on the situation does not offer new insights. Accordingly, perspective taking provides a mechanism to see matters in a different light for diverse teams whereas little value is added for homogeneous teams” (Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2010, p.3).

## **2.6. Multicultural Advertising Outputs**

“With the expanding diversity of the nation’s population, target marketing has become an increasingly crucial component of marketing strategy.” (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999, p. 79) For the South African market then one solution might be to micro segment the market. This would lead to the creation of advertising messaging for each segment specifically. The feasibility of this approach is debatable as it would require significant spend on the production on multiple

outputs and significant media spend on placement. The question as to the possibility to create one advertisement with multiple target audiences then begs asking. Grier and Brumbaugh (1999) argued that target marketing may not provide the solution for reaching increasingly diverse audiences; rather they argued that it is possible to create an advertisement that targets multiple consumer segments. This approach however, is fraught with danger and there is a possibility that non-targeted audiences and targeted audiences may be alienated by the messaging. “What may be a soundly crafted ad to the advertiser may be construed as patronizing and exploitive by the target market and as nostalgic and humorous by the non-target market...” (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999, p. 79).

There are differences in the manner in which target and non-target consumers understand, interpret and attach meaning to advertising messages. Understanding these differences makes managing the effects possible (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). Advertisements are understood subjectively and often culturally. Viewers bring their concept of self, their identity as an individual and as part of a group to the interpretation of media messaging (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). This is accentuated in a highly diverse society such as South Africa. Grier and Brumbaugh (1999) sought to explore the way targeted and non-targeted consumers create meaning from advertising messages. Targeted messages are believed to be more effective due to the fact that the messaging has been crafted to the perceived characteristic of the target group (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999).

Research suggested that, whilst meaning is varying from consumer to consumer, there are patterns of ‘meaning creation’ that are related to social categorisation. (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). Viewers interpret experience of advertisements through their own lenses - culture is a lens, subculture is a lens, and social category is a lens. These lenses provide categories or groups between which the reading of an ad may vary. Membership of a group or subculture may affect the reading or attachment or meaning creation of an advertisement through (1) its effect on the ‘reading strategy’ employed by the viewer (2) the ability of the individual to decode certain messages and cues specific or particular to the targeted audience (3) the effect of shared cultural perception held within the group (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999, p. 81).

There is a danger that non-diverse teams seeking to target diverse



multicultural markets could alienate not only the non-target market, but also the target market (Grier and Brumbaugh (2007) cite Penalzoza (1994)).

“Further, the power and social status of the target group may influence the non-target market's facility in understanding subcultural cues. Smaller, less powerful groups that do not adhere to the White, male, heterosexual norm in American culture need to become familiar with that culture to participate effectively in American society (Penalzoza 1994)” (Grier & Brumbaugh, 2007, p.83).

The danger is that teams are diverse only on the social category level, and that the organisation imposes schemas and cultural dogmas that result in a continued cultural dominance. “Central to the domination paradigm is the view that interaction, whether in the form of culture contact or diversity, will inevitably lead to one culture dominating the other.” (Montuori, Stephenson 2010, p.279). This level of cultural dominance must be viewed from a Whiteness theory perspective. “A viewpoint shared by Whiteness theorists is that race is the organizing discursive category around which has been constructed a system of socio-economic power, exploitation and exclusion, i.e. racism” (Burton, Klemm, 2011, p.680).

How is it possible in the South African context to target a diverse audience without alienating some of the target audience? Puntni, Vanhamme and Visscher put forward the notion of purposeful polysemy as a strategy. “The strategy of using ambiguous cues in advertising messages to generate multiple meanings across a heterogeneous audience entails purposeful polysemy (which we define in more detail subsequently)” (Puntoni, Vanhamme, & Visscher, 2011, p. 25).

How does the creator (the ‘creative’ in industry parlance) ensure that ambiguous cues are understood, but still ambiguous or not offensive to subsets of viewers?

“By definition, ambiguous ad cues are open to multiple interpretations and can thus lead to advertising polysemy: multiple meanings across an audience in response to the same message (Puntoni, Schroeder, and Ritson 2010). In a recent conceptual paper, Puntoni, Schroeder, and Ritson (2010) highlight the prevalence of purposeful polysemy, which

they define as advertising polysemy that results from advertisers' strategic efforts" (Puntoni, Vanhamme, & Visscher, 2011, p. 26).

In the South African context the role of purposeful polysemy could be reduce the number of outputs necessary to target a diverse set of consumers. One approach could be segmentation, resulting in multiple creative outputs from the different segments be they ethnographic, demographic, econographic, etc. The other approach would be to seek out a means of introducing subtlety that is understood by an in-group target, but non-offensive or perfectly acceptable to the out group perceiver.

The question then arises as to the possibility of creating advertising messages that target viewers authentically with sufficient nuance and insight so as not to appear condescending or contrived but that remain relevant for diverse audiences. Thereby Leigh, Rethans and Whitney (1987) and Whittler and Spira 2002 (in Puntoni, Vanhamme & Visscher, 2011) concluded that viewers who feel they are part of the target audience have more favourable responses to advertising messages than viewers who feel they are not part of the targeted audience.

A review of the literature suggested that little work has been done on the efficacy of purposeful polysemy in advertising as evidenced by the excerpt from Puntoni et al. (2001). "Despite previous calls for additional working this area (e.g., Greenlee 2004; Kates and Goh 2003), scant research considers purposeful polysemy in advertising targeting, and the few existing studies focus on multiethnic advertising (Brumbaugh and Grier 2006)" (Puntoni, Vanhamme, & Visscher, 2011, p. 26).

## **2.7. Race**

Segmentation is one approach to reach diverse audiences. A review of the literature on the effects of race in television advertisements revealed that spokesperson or protagonist race in a television commercial has an impact on the positive reception, decoding and meaning creation of a television commercial. "Blacks show better recall of content, and more positive attitudes toward advertisements that feature Black, rather than White, actors" (Whittler, 1991, p. 54).

However, merely proposing that Black protagonists should be used to promote

or endorse products to Black target audiences would be remiss. The mechanisms are intertwined with an understanding of social categorisation, self-categorisation and Whiteness theory. Indeed the literature suggested that whilst same group endorsement is in some cases beneficial the literature presented arguments for and against demographic segmentation or ethnographic segmentation and the use of segment representatives, protagonists or spokespersons as a tactic. “Moreover, because Black consumers seem to purchase products promoted by Whites, advertisers may reason that it’s unnecessary to include Blacks in their advertisements” (Whittler & Spira, 2002, p. 291).

One possible reason is that much of the research had been done from a White perspective, and sought to understand the effect of ethnic diversity from a White viewer’s perspective. As White viewers might be inclined to underreport or underrepresent their own White identity, it is then not surprising that some of the research has concluded that White viewers do not respond negatively to the inclusion of Black characters in television (Whittler & Spira, 2002). Research that sought to understand the Black viewer’s response to Black spokespersons illustrated this further. This once again may be due to the fact that Whiteness is to some degree invisible. Black viewers may be more sensitised to the portrayal of race in television commercials, however the literature was not conclusive.

“Fewer studies have examined Blacks’ reactions to a spokesperson’s race. Early results indicate that Blacks generated more positive affect toward the advertisement and the models when Black models were included in the advertisement (e.g., Schlinger & Plummer, 1972; Szybillo & Jacoby, 1974), whereas more recent findings show that Blacks’ product and advertisement evaluations were similar for advertisements featuring White or Black models (Whittler, 1989)” (Whittler & Spira, 2002, p. 291).

The salience of White identity and the ubiquity of Whiteness in media portrayals may further explain this phenomenon in relation to a White reading of diversity in advertising messages. The corollary is true for Black readings of messages featuring White and Black protagonists. Chaiken (1980) in Whittler (1991) posited that this might be due to the recipient’s use of heuristic processing of messages.

“Chaiken (1980) proposed that message recipients may use systematic or heuristic strategies when considering the validity of a message's conclusion. She argued that when recipients engage in systematic processing, they devote considerable effort to attending to, comprehending, and evaluating the message's arguments. In contrast, when recipients engage in heuristic processing, they exert little cognitive effort in determining the validity of a message; recipients accept the conclusion of a message based on simple rules or heuristics that they have learned from past experiences” (Whittler, 1991, p. 56).

Whilst the literature exposed differing viewpoints on the effects of race it could be safely concluded that spokespersons race does have an effect on the reading of advertising messages. “A spokesperson's race is another characteristic that may influence consumers' responses to advertisements” (Whittler, Spira, 2002, p.291). Burton and Klemm (2010) suggested an overrepresentation of Whiteness in print travel brochures. This overrepresentation of Whiteness was described in their analysis of travel brochures from a Whiteness theory perspective (Burton, Klemm, 2001). In this study Burton and Klemm described Whiteness as follows: “Whiteness can take the form of Whites 'interests', 'points of view', 'material well-being', 'self-image' and notions of 'appropriate behaviour that are portrayed as the norm (Thompson, 2004, p. 30)” (Burton, Klemm, 2011, p.680). The literature did not conclude an overrepresentation of Whiteness in South African television commercials, but Duffet (2011) did illustrate a proportional dominance of White creative in agencies disproportionate to the demography of the population.

Bristor, Lee and Hunt (1995) echoed this theory of a media White dominance: “Furthermore, many researchers argue that media portrayals of minorities tend to reflect Whites' attitudes toward minorities and, therefore, reveal more about Whites themselves than about the varied and lived experiences of minorities (Branthwaite and Pierce 1990; Humphrey and Schuman 1984; Staples and Jones 1985; Wilson and Gutierrez 1985.)” (Bristor, Lee, Hunt, 1995, p.48). The danger, then, is to look at multiculturalism as the presence or absence of those who are not White. This further promulgates the problem described in Whiteness theory (Burton, Klemm, 2011). Moreover, the danger is that Whiteness becomes the barometer against which racial diversity is measured. In South Africa this is of particular importance as Whites are a minority group,

yet there is still a preponderance of White spokespersons in television advertisements. “Whiteness is a marker against which other cultures, ‘the other’, are measured. A central objective for Whiteness theorists is uncovering how Whiteness develops and dominates racial and ethnic groups over time and space” (Burton, Klemm, 2011, p.680). White hegemony, then, is a danger that should be countered in commercial imagery.

Davis (2002) argued that there is a lack of transformation in the advertising industry itself. This is of interest to this study as the study seeks to explore this relationship. “In sum, it appears that a contemporary form of racial separation persists in the advertising business, which serves to constrain entrepreneurial efforts among Black and other ethnic minority entrepreneurs in the industry” (Davis, 2002, p.75). The connection between Davis’ statement and other literature reviewed here is the nexus of this study.

Furthermore Bristor et al. (1995) expressed an awareness of a possible relationship between the diversity of advertising creative teams and agency wide diversity and the lack of meaningful multiculturalism in advertising messages. Bristor et al. (1995) went as far as to suggest that the solution to the problem lies in diverse recruitment policies. Bristor et al. posited that this problem could be addressed by improving the hiring record of agencies as pertaining to the employment of minority groups (Bristor, Lee, Hunt, 1995).

From an agency perspective the casting of Black characters to address a Black target audience would appear to be a well-founded principle. “Early results indicate that Blacks generated more positive affect toward the advertisement and the models when Black models were included in the advertisement (e.g., Schlinger & Plummer, 1972; Szybillo & Jacoby, 1974).” (Whittler, Spira, 2002, p.291). Whilst these results have been countered in more recent research (Whittler, 1989), Whittler and Spira (2002) still concluded the following: “[W]e suggest that Blacks may respond more favourably to a Black than to a White model based on in-group versus out-group status” (Whittler & Spira, 2002, p.293).

“The societal implications of negative stereotyping and invisibility are profound, for media portrayal of minorities plays a significant role in their acculturation (Faber, O’Guinn, and Meyer 1987).” (Stern, 1999, p.3) The issue at hand, then, goes to a formative role in the portrayal of culture in mainstream media.

Current thinking is to view race more as a social construct than a genetic one. “Multicultural research addresses race/ethnicity as a bundle of meanings determined by individuals who have had varied life experiences” (Stern, 1999, p.4). Multiculturalism then, suggests that diversity needs to be achieved more on the levels of values and information than purely on the social level (Jehn, Northcraft, Neale, 1999).

## **2.8. Ethnic Self-Awareness**

The role of ethnic self-awareness has been discussed in relation to Whiteness theory. The review of the literature revealed that ethnic self-awareness is influenced by context and content - not just the presence or absence of spokespersons of the same ethnicity as the message receiver. However, ethnic self-awareness does prime the reading and decoding of a commercial message. “The authors propose that “ethnic self-awareness”—a temporary state during which a person is more sensitive to information related to his or her own ethnicity—moderates consumer response to targeted advertising” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 336). Forehand and Deshpande (2001) proposed that persons become ethnically aware when they engage in a process of social categorisation based on ethnicity. Importantly, they further posited that an increase in the presence of diverse portrayals in advertising might lead to a reduction in this tendency to categories based on ethnicity.

In the agency context, if teams are placed on accounts based on a target segment that is derived ethnographically, and the team is chosen due to their own ethnography, then the likelihood that ethnic categorisation will occur in the agency will increase. “In general, we posit here that ethnic self-awareness occurs when a person is prompted to categorize him- or herself along ethnic criteria and that this ethnically based categorization may be elicited by the person's enduring traits or social situation or by other environmental cues” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337).

From a creative outputs perspective though the technique of using ethnographic targeting and character portrayal might prove effective “For example, recent research has found that both felt similarity to an ethnic spokesperson and the perception of being targeted by an advertisement are important mediators of consumer response to ethnic advertising (Aaker, Brumbaugh, and Grier 1999)” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337).

Forehand and Deshpande argued that ethnic self-awareness leads to greater identification with an endorser of the same ethnicity and thereby increase the likelihood that the viewer would perceive themselves as part of the targeted group. “As such, factors that increase ethnic self-awareness should increase the likelihood that a consumer will feel similar (or dissimilar) to an ethnic endorser and thereby feel targeted (or not targeted) by an advertisement that features the ethnic endorser” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337).

“Deshpande and Stayman (1994) found that participants whose ethnicity was distinctive attributed significantly more credibility to same-ethnicity spokespersons and that perceived credibility then mediated subsequent brand attitudes. More recent research has expanded on this effect and argued that distinctiveness is influenced not only by numeric prevalence but also by the social status of the group (Grier and Deshpande 2001)” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 338).

## **2.9. Gender**

“If men and women are intrinsically different, then we might expect them to respond differently to different styles of advertising” (Cramphorn, 2011, p.8).

This argument would seem to suggest that segmentation on gender lines is of value not only based on the product category but also on the response function as genders respond differently to styles of commercial. Cramphorn (2011) went as far as to suggest this, and offered insight into differences into response for male and female subjects “Males respond better to ads about self, while females are more externally focused (Brunel & Nelson 2003)” (Cramphorn, 2011, p.5).

Wolin (2003) in Cramphorn (2001) asserted that the differences in gender readings of commercial messages extended to the permanence of decided meaning with woman adopting a more iterative approach to the absolute approach of men who commit to an understanding (even and erroneous one).

“An exhaustive review of the research findings published on gender concluded that females process advertising elaborately over multiple exposures, while males see it once and have ‘got it’ (and are unlikely to reprocess it, even if they are wrong) (Wolin 2003)” (Cramphorn, 2011, p.5).

Stern (1999) found that the gender discrepancy in the reading of commercial messaging was a function of socialisation that is perpetuated once categorisation has become salient. “A key point is that the difference between male and female interpretive strategies based on childhood learning (Crawford and Chaffin 1988) and subsequent experiences can be extended to any differences that separate one group of people from another” (Stern, 1999, p. 4). Stern’s and Cramphorn’s work presented the classic nature-nurture argument with Cramphorn arguing that gender differences are biological and the biological difference explains the differences in the reading of commercials whilst Stern argued for nurture in the assertion that childhood learning and socialisation are responsible for differences in interpretive strategy and likens the mechanism to any categorisation mechanism. Stern then expanded the salience of gender stating that “...neither text nor language is sex-neutral, but instead acts as a vehicle for conveying different cultural expectations and value systems for men and for women (Allen 1987)” (Stern, 1999, p. 4). The differences, then, for Stern were not in the interpretation of the messaging, but in cultural expressions that serve as an extension of normative cultural and socialisation mechanisms.

The literature revealed an understating of the construct of gender as either a purely biological distinction (on the one extreme) to a social and cultural construct (on the other). Stern argued for an understanding of gender toward the societal and cultural understanding of gender “...and the findings indicate that there are more and subtler differences than those accounted for by the assumption of binary sex-based oppositional interpretations” (Stern, 1999, p.4). A biological view as espoused by Cramphorn established a binary opposition, whilst Sterns’ view was one of a gender continuum, one then might describe maleness and femaleness, rather than assigning absolutes binaries of male and female.

The research on gender representation is equally complex and is laden with cultural nuances that inform accepted gender roles: “In current gender research, the approach known as the difference or subcultural approach (Coates, 1988) is anchored by the assumption that different cultural expectations, life experiences, and interpretive habits determine the way people construe meanings of incoming media messages (Register, 1975)” (Stern, 1999, p.4).



According to Stern maleness or femaleness is a complex construct that informs how we engage with media messaging. Similarly, media messaging and advertisements are neither culturally neutral nor gender neutral. Rather, they are influenced by the context and culture in which they are generated. More importantly, this leads to the possibility that advertising messages are influenced and informed by the ethnicity, culture, values and gender of the teams responsible for their creation. “Differences in terms of responses to an ad made by one man and two women are considered, and the findings indicate that there are more and subtler differences than those accounted for by the assumption of binary sex-based oppositional interpretations” (Stern, 1999, p. 4).

Knoll, Eisend and Steinhagen (2011) asserted “the social role of men and woman has changed in many Western societies over the past few years. At the same time, advertisers still depict women and men in tradition-bound roles to promote their products” (Knoll, Eisend, Steinhagen, 2011, p.867).

Studies thus far have moved beyond factor analysis of presence versus absence on the level of gender inclusivity. Furnham and Paltzer (2010) analysed the role of authority and spokespersons in television advertising. Their research concluded that whilst roles are dependent on target audience, men are more likely to be cast as authoritative spokespersons, as product authorities. Women were more likely to be cast as consumers or product users. “[W]omen were by far more likely to be a user of the product advertised and men far more likely to be portrayed as an authority. This does vary as a function of product category where the advertised product is clearly aimed at one gender or the other” (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010, p.218).

Eisend (2010) conducted a meta-analysis (64 studies) of gender in advertising and found that females are:

- Four times as likely to be presented visually without speaking than males
- Presented as users and not authorities three times more than males
- Presented in dependent roles four times more than males
- Presented in a domestic setting three and half times more than males
- Are younger than males in a ration of three to one
- Twice as likely to be associated with domestic products

- Presented against female backgrounds (as opposed to male backgrounds) more than three times as likely as males

Eisend (2010) further argued that a meta-analysis of the literature in this area concludes that “[a]uthors generally agree that advertising uses stereotypical gender roles” (Courtney and Whipple 1983; Furnham and Mak 1999)” (Eisend, 2010, p. 418).

The nature versus nurture argument is prevalent in the discourse on the causality and the depiction of woman in advertising. The debate around advertising reflecting or influencing societal norms is evident in the literature on gender in advertising. There is a 'pessimistic' view that despite the societal strides made toward gender equality, advertising still depicts woman in a stereotypical manner.

“For instance, Ganahl et al. (2003b) have investigated TV commercials from three major US networks and have compared their results with a previous content analysis of US TV commercials by Bretl and Cantor (1988). They found that commercials perpetuate traditional stereotypes despite significant changes in women’s roles in the US” (Eisend, 2010, p. 420).

The optimistic view posits that whilst advertising reflect society it has made strides at the same time and has begun to reflect the changes that have taken place in Western (particularly American) societies. “They suggest that role portrayals in commercials are more representative of contemporary women and are gradually becoming equal to men (Furnham and Mak 1999; Sharits and Lammers 1983)” (Eisend, 2010, p. 420). This optimistic view was echoed by Wolin (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 28 content analyses of print and TV advertisements. She found both increasing and decreasing gender bias, but concluded an overall decrease in gender biased stereotyping. (Wolin, March 2003) .Furnham and Mak (1999) looked at 14 studies from 11 countries that investigated different stereotyping variables. The authors stated in their review that such a decline has occurred in Europe, but not in Asia or Africa (Furnham & Farragher, 2000).

Furnham and Paltzer (2010) conducted further meta-analysis of 30 studies published globally since 2000. Their findings were of particular interest as

South Africa provided the area of research for Africa by way of a study conducted by Furnham and Spencer-Bowdage (2002).

A summary of their findings is presented below:

- (i) A difference in portrayal exists where 52.1% of males were voice-overs while only 2.6% of females have provided voice-overs.
- (ii) There is a large difference between men and women in South Africa. Women were seen 82.1% of the time as a user, compared to 29.2% of men. Men were also most likely to be an authority (41.7%), while women were rarely seen as the authority.
- (iii) Females in South Africa and Mauritius were most often portrayed in a dependent role (60.7% in Mauritius and 78.6% in South Africa). Men were most often in an interviewer/narrator role (around 50% in both studies).
- (iv) South Africa (Furnham & Spencer-Bowdage, 2002) found 70.4% of women (more than three times the amount of women in the middle-aged group) and 47.8% of men in the young age group.
- (v) In South Africa men were more likely to offer a factual argument (39.6%) while women (78.6%) are more likely to not make an argument at all.
- (vi) Women in South Africa were portrayed more with social/self enhancement rewards (53.6%) while men were portrayed most with practical rewards (29.2%).
- (vii) In South Africa 42.9% of females advertised body products, more than four times that of men (10.4%). Men were three times more likely to advertise financial and other services.
- (viii) In one study (Milner, 2005), there were not significant differences between males and females with regards to the location of character portrayal. However, Furnham & Spencer-Bowdage, (2002) found that women were portrayed more in private homes than men (21.4 vs. 6.3%).

Stereotyping need not necessarily be viewed as negative or discriminatory. However, when stereotyping becomes problematic is when stereotypes lead to expectations and judgements that restrict life opportunities for subjects of a

social category.

### **2.9.1. Gender Composition of Teams**

As with the literature on diversity there was considerable debate as to the positive effects of sex or gender composition on team performance. The arguments supporting the diversity of sex composition were revealed to be very similar to the arguments for ethnic and age diversity. As such, the argument for gender diverse teams focused on the role's diverse insights and perspective have for complex problem solving. "Sex composition may be one way of ensuring a better balance of the team skills required for relatively complex tasks, such as case analyses"(Orlitzky & Benjamin, 2003, p. 130). Orlitzky & Benjamin's 2003 study concluded that "[b]ased on our findings, sex composition, by itself, explains a significant proportion of the variance of team performance in a student case competition" (Orlitzky & Benjamin, 2003, p. 130). Their explanation of this finding was in line with previous literature on small group and team diversity in relation to creative task completion and performance. "...the findings might be explained by mixed teams' effectiveness in leveraging the positive impact of the cognitive diversity and in managing the affective conflict at the same time" (Orlitzky & Benjamin, 2003, p. 130). The literature then suggested that just as teams could benefit from ethnic and racial diversity.

### **2.9.2. Gender and Age**

The literature revealed an overlapping bias with relation to the depiction of female characters and the age of characters depiction relative to their male counterparts. Furnham and Paltzer (2010) suggested that "[i]t is young, attractive women that appear more often in advertisements with mature men doing the authoritative voice over" (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010, p. 217).

Eisend (2010) noted that the average age of characters depicted in commercials is lower than the average age of the population resulting in a bias across genders. Eisend (2010) used age equality for central figures in commercials as means of identifying a gender bias in the depiction of characters age. This method was used to identify and illustrate an age discrepancy in the depiction of characters across the genders. Eisend (2010) concluded from the meta analysis of other studies that age based gender

stereo-typing is decreasing over time.

## 2.10. Age

“The rapidly ageing population of the industrialised world is well documented, and projections suggest that by 2030 the over 65s will comprise 25% of the total populations in some 30 different countries in the developed world (Cateora & Graham 2005)” (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 2).

This quotation suggests that the older consumer is of significant importance to the advertiser. Yet a review of the literature exposed that older consumers are underrepresented in commercial messaging. “However they might be defined, the evidence for the under-representation of older models in advertising is overwhelming. Francher's (1973) content analysis of American television advertisements concluded that the under-representation of older people both reflected and reinforced the “youth complex’ (p. 252) that predominates in the USA” (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3). Simcock and Sudbury suggested that the exclusion or absence of older characters portrayed in television commercials and in advertising lead to a reinforcement of a youth complex in broader society. Carrigan and Szmigin asserted that if it is unacceptable to exclude on the basis of race than it is equally inexcusable to exclude on the basis of age and that age exclusion in the portrayal of characters on television advertisement could be construed as discriminatory. Their primary research concluded that it was not the depiction or exclusion of older people that was the key concern, but rather that the depiction of the population was dominated by a focus on youth (Carigan & Szmigin, 2003). Nonetheless, both Carrigan & Szmigin and Simcock & Sudbury suggested that there is an underrepresentation of older models in advertising.

Carrigan and Smzmigin (2003) stated that

”[t]he advertising industry has been shown to display a relatively negative attitude toward older people as customers, despite it having been demonstrated that older people are both innovative and affluent (Mather et al., 1998; Carrigan and Szmigin, 1999b). They further stated that there was evidence to suggest that older people found advertisings attempt to target older consumers as offensive” (Carrigan & Szmigin, 2003, p.198).

Peterson (1995) in Simcock and Sudbury (2006) reported that older models were portrayed less often than young models in advertisements for banks and in the same work by Simcock and Sudbury (2006), Carrigan and Szmigin (1998) found that older models were underrepresented in advertisements for newspapers. This was of interest as the target consumer for both products was older - indeed, for newspapers the titles had an average readership of older than 50 years of age.

“Authors from a range of disciplines have concluded that general audience advertising celebrates youth and, consciously or unconsciously, denigrates the older consumer through negative stereotyping. Williamson (1978) notes that advertisements 'provide a structure... capable of transforming the language of objects to that of people, and vice-versa... (advertisements)... are selling us something else besides consumer goods... they are selling us ourselves' (pp. 12–13)” (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3).

The arguments stated by Williamson (1978) in Simcock and Sudbury (2006) suggested that the effects of negative stereotyping or the exclusion of older characters in advertising messages has a societal impact.

Kuypers and Bengston's (1973) (in Simcock and Sudbury, 2006) concept of 'Societal Breakdown Syndrome' suggested that the portrayal of ageing customers and characters creates a self-perpetuating cycle of ageism through the process of self categorisation and labelling theory. “In a similar vein, Kuypers and Bengston's (1973) 'Social Breakdown Syndrome' suggests that one's sense of self is a function of the kind of social labelling and valuing that one experiences in ageing. These authors view the process of social breakdown as a vicious circle where the individual is vulnerable to and dependent on sources of external labelling. This eventually leads to society's negative view of older people being internalised by the individual, creating further susceptibility, and thus the cycle continues (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3).

A review of the literature exposed an alternative viewpoint. This viewpoint still depicts an exclusion of older characters, but stated that negative stereotyping is quite rare. However, the viewpoint is consistent with research highlighting the underrepresentation of older models in commercial messaging. “Yet

another view is taken by Evers (1998) who, after an extensive review of the literature, suggested that negative stereotypes of older people are actually quite rare, simply because 'there is little commercial interest in presenting older people at all' (p.20)" (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3).

Opinion thus appears to be coherent and consistent on the view that older models are disproportionately represented. "While the portrayal of older consumers is still open to debate, the literature to date presents an overwhelming case for their under-representation in all forms of advertising" (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3).

The question then arises as to the cause of this underrepresentation. It is possible that a youthful bias in advertising agencies leads to the omission of older characters in advertising outputs or a stereotypical representation of older characters when older consumers are explicitly targeted. In line with the labelling theory, social categorisation and Whiteness theory, it is possible that the ubiquity of youth in creative teams results in a heightened salience of age with relation to older creatives and a blind spot or failure to acknowledge youthful categorisation. The older creative then might be subject to negative stereotyping and either produce work that is aligned to a youthful in group or exit the organisation.

"Regarding the effects of occupational age composition, a significant body of research suggests that negative stereotypes against older workers are fairly prevalent and can have detrimental consequences for these workers (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Rosen & Jerdee, 1977; see Shore and Goldberg [2005] for a recent review)" (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607). The advertising industry is associated with youthfulness, creativity and fresh thinking; this makes the industry prone to negative stereotypes of older workers or older creatives.

The possibility then exists that an organisation that has an in-group that is younger might be inclined to depict youth in their creative outputs. A review of the literature revealed a global concern that advertising does not depict characters of all ages but rather has a focus on young characters. "Not using older people in advertising is potentially discriminatory and socially exclusive" (Carrigan & Szmigin, 2003, p.199).

The argument for youthful characters is often contextualised as a function of segmentation claiming that the buying power exists with youthful consumers. However, Phillips and Stanton asserted that “[t]he mature consumer is becoming increasingly critical to business throughout the world today” (Phillips & Santon, 2004, p.8). This would suggest that, if the prevalence of young copywriters and creative directors has an impact on the portrayal of characters and age based stereotypes, it represents a potentially significant business problem and potentially hinders the effectiveness of advertising messages.

The effects of an in-group based on an age cohort are similar to an in-group based on ethnicity or gender. Indeed that in-group comprises all of these components and as such the mechanism of self and social categorisation and indeed Whiteness theory pertain not only to race and gender but also to age. A youthful in-group then becomes a categorisation mechanism and the salience of age becomes relevant.

“Although older workers may experience more unfavourable job outcomes overall, research also indicates that the age composition of a job context can influence performance ratings and advancement potential for older employees. This research suggests that older workers may face more unfavourable outcomes in occupations with fewer older workers (Cleveland, Festa, & Montgomery, 1988; Cleveland, Montgomery, & Festa, 1984). In view of this research, we would propose that among, for example, software programmers (an occupation dominated by younger workers), older programmers may be targets of negative stereotypes (e.g., viewed as less skilled or motivated); the implications of age diversity– based outcomes would thus be negative when older and younger team members collaborate on a joint software development project” (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607).



## Summary

A review of the literature informed an understanding of diversity and explored the factors of diversity relating to age, gender and race. Social and self-categorisation theory provided an understanding of the mechanisms of group identification and self/other group relatedness. This facilitated an understanding of in-group formation and persistence in the organisation. Whiteness theory provided a means for understanding the mechanisms of privilege associated with whiteness and whiteness as a largely invisible and yet normative construct.

The link between heterogeneity and creativity was explored. Two sides of the argument were presented in the literature review, but there was significant supporting literature for a positive correlation between creative team diversity and creative outputs, or creative team performance. The review then explored the literature on multicultural outputs and purposeful polysemy. The literature reviewed focused on targeting diverse audiences and the effects of in-group perception on the efficacy of an advertising campaign. The review sought to explore the portrayal of race in advertising, and explored the role of spokespersons race and the role of aligning race portrayal with the target audience. This included a review of the literature on ethnic self-awareness and the role of self-identification with advertising character portrayal and found that individuals respond better to character portrayals that are consistent with their perception of self.

The review explored the depiction of gender in advertising and meta-analytical studies found that woman were underrepresented and were represented as younger than male counterparts. The literature reported that stereotypical representations of gender roles may be on the decrease but that gender bias was nonetheless persistent in advertising.

The review explored the portrayal of age in advertising and the literature was consistent in reporting that advertising messaging targeted audiences younger than the population average and featured actors younger than the population average. The literature showed differing research results for age based stereotyping, but was consistent on the reporting of the exclusion of older characters in television commercials.

Building on the literature review, this research sought to explore the factors that influence the depiction of characters age, gender and race in television commercials. The research sought to explore relations that may or may not exist between the diversity of creative teams and the diversity portrayed in the creative outputs.

### **Chapter 3: Research Questions**

Diversity for the purpose of this study was viewed in a parsimonious manner, and was explored as age, gender and race diversity only.

#### **3.1. Age**

*What is the relationship between age diversity in creative teams and advertising agencies, and age diversity displayed in television commercials?*

#### **3.2. Gender**

*What is the relationship between gender diversity in creative teams and advertising agencies, and gender diversity displayed in television commercials?*

#### **3.3. Race**

*What is the relationship between ethnic and race diversity in creative teams and agencies, and ethnic and racial diversity displayed in television commercials?*

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Chapter Four described the methodology chosen for this research report.

The chosen method was described, followed by an explanation and justification for the choice of method. The population and sample were discussed and described followed by a description of the data collection methodology.

The data analysis methodology and the content analysis framework were discussed as they related firstly to the television commercials and secondly to the creative teams.

### **4.1. Chosen Methodology**

A comparative case study analysis was employed. As such, the research was observational and qualitative. Yin (in Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999) defined a case as follows: "... an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and... [that] relies on multiple sources of evidence" (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p.372). The research was dyadic in that information was gathered from advertising outputs (television commercials) and from creative teams (agency teams).

The agency on an organisational level was considered: "As a research strategy, the distinguishing characteristic of the case study is that it attempts to examine: (a) a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1981, p.59).

The level of diversity and transformation in the organisation was of interest as it may have an effect on the level of multiculturalism in the outputs. The agency organisational level analysis and the analysis of the creative brief were of importance as they provide the context in which the creative team functions. "The phenomenon is studied as it occurs within its context, and neither the phenomenon nor the context is directly manipulated by the researcher" (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p.373). "In social science phenomena, there are few direct A to B causal links because any links are strongly influenced by the

context. The complex cause-and-effect links grounded in the context of a situation are sometimes referred to as ‘causal tendencies’ or powers (Bhaskar 1978, p. 20)” (Perry, 2001, p.306).

Four campaigns were considered - the campaign being the unit of analysis. The study was structured as four independent case studies, which can then be contrasted and compared seeking out similarities and differences. The method involved two cases for the same product from two agencies, thus the four cases. Within agency differences were isolated by examining two campaigns per agency. These campaigns had large areas of overlap in the role of account managers, business unit directors and strategist. The campaigns also had similar influence from the client. Intra-agency analysis then allowed us to isolate the influence of the creative team on the depiction of characters in television outputs. The choice of agencies was informed by the choice of category. The choice of a single category (fast food chicken outlets) allowed for the observation of the effect of organisational transformation and attitudes to diversity across agencies. It also facilitated an understanding of the influence of targeting, segmentation and the influence of the client on the portrayal of character diversity in television commercials. This allowed viewing each individual case as an experiment with the bulk of the insights coming from the inter-case analysis (Yin, 1981, p.59).

#### **4.2. Type of Case Study**

Kaarbo and Beasley (1999), Yin (1981) and Perry (2001) all proposed multiple case study methodologies:

Yin proposed three types of case study, applicable to different circumstance:

“(1) The different types of case studies that are possible (exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory), (2) The types of research questions best ad-dressed by case studies as opposed to other research strategies (explanations rather than incidence questions); and (3) The types of case study designs (all must cope with the essential problem that, because the context is part of the study, there will always be too many "variables" for the number of observations to be made, thus making standard experimental and survey designs irrelevant)” (Yin, 1981, p.59).

Perry (2001) proposed a continuum from inductive to deductive, and

suggested that a central approach offers the best results. Whilst elements of inductive research were employed, guided questions were used and thus a deductive approach. The how and why questions were tested pertaining to the levels of diversity in creative teams and the effect this may have on multicultural advertising outputs. Since comparative cases were studied, the move will be more toward the centre of the deductive, inductive continuum (Perry, 2001).

The research attempted to examine a contemporary phenomenon, but contributory factors could not be entirely isolated. Theories were not tested, but rather an attempt was made to explore relationships that may exist. However, Whiteness theory and social categorisation theory were used to provide direction and assist in interpretation, differentiating the methodology from the grounded theory approach (Perry, 2001). Jensen and Jankowski, (1991, p. 68) stated that “[w]ithout this structured process of accumulating sensitising concepts, “researchers who set out to practise the precepts of grounded theory frequently went aground in uncharted analytical terrain” (Perry, 2001, p.309).

#### **4.3. Reasons for Choice of Method**

The existence of a relationship between the level diversity, the creative's gender age or race and multicultural creative outputs or outputs that reflect the creator were not perceived to be understood or explored. The case study served as a means to explore the possible existence of this relationship and to provide insight into the mechanisms that may inform the functioning of the relationships. (Perry, 2001, p.306).

The research involved a complex interaction of factors. The purpose was to understand the influence of creative team diversity, ethnic identity, gender or age on the level of multiculturalism or homogeneity in television outputs. It also sought to understand that if an influence exists, it exists within a given context and “involves a relatively complex, social science issue about which little is known” (Perry, 2001, p.305). Answering questions as to ‘how and why’ with regards influencing factors on the levels of multiculturalism in television output was the goal.

According to George (1979), the comparison is "focused because it deals

selectively with only certain aspects of the historical case... and structured because it employs general questions to guide the data collection analysis in that historical case ([pp. 61-62])” (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p.377). Of primary interest was the effect of diverse teams on the creation of multicultural outputs. Therefore, the study was selectively dealing with ‘certain aspects of the case’ (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p.377). A comparison was done between the effect of diverse teams on multicultural outputs, and, for example, also on the effect of diversity on creativity. This was done through comparing cases.

Perry (2001) referred to embedded cases and this methodology lent itself to this framework. The analysis of the functional creative team was an embedded case that was a component of the larger case. It was important, therefore, that the embedded cases from the four case studies be comparable. “For example, the strategic business units within each corporation have to be analysed to find the pattern within each corporation, before several corporations can be compared” (Perry, 2001, p.307). “The comparative case study is the systematic comparison of two or more data points (“cases”) obtained through use of the case study method” (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p.277).

#### **4.4. Population**

The influence of media on perceptions is of particular interest for a country that is grappling with diversity and transformation.

“[R]epresentational conventions in marketing communications draw upon these meaning systems, which may reinforce and reproduce damaging images of identity. In such a context, those associated with the privileged elements– the male, the rational, and the normal – stand in the position to claim knowledge of and denigrate all that is important to know about those associated with the subordinated elements– the female, the emotional, and the exotic (Borgerson, 2001)” (Borgerson & Schroeder, 2005, p.12).

The population was all advertising agency creative teams in South Africa that create television outputs. As the research was dyadic the population also included the outputs, all television commercials create by South African creative teams in advertising agencies.

#### **4.5. Sample**

The sample was purposive; the chosen focus was on campaigns for branded chicken outlets for the purpose of comparability. Brands were chosen that have distinctive brands and a significant above-the-line (ATL) ad-spend. The sample also allowed a comparison of creative teams in two advertising agencies; it also allowed intra agency comparison. The sample also provided the opportunity to explore the influence of the corporate client on the advertising outputs and on the selection and composition of creative teams.

Four individual cases were studied, treating each case as an independent case. For the purpose of comparability it was essential to ensure that the campaigns were appealing to similar, target audiences or that the difference due to target audience was explained. The sample then is of campaigns and of agencies - but campaigns were the unit of analysis. It was also chosen to ensure that the campaigns would have not only similar target audiences, but also similar products. This is to the benefit of comparison (Perry 2001, p.314).

#### **4.6. Data Collection**

“First, the case study does not imply the use of a particular type of evidence. Case studies can be done by using either qualitative or quantitative evidence. The evidence may come from fieldwork, archival records, verbal reports, observations, or any combination of these” (Yin, 1981, p.58).

The data collection methodology involved in depth semi-structured interviews and the analysis of content created by the teams interviewed. “from fieldwork, archival records, verbal reports, observations, or any combination of these” (Yin, 1981, p.58).

##### **4.6.1. Television Commercials**

Television commercials were identified, sourced and supplied by the agency and the client. The choice of campaign was done in consultation with the agency and the client (a possible source of bias and influence). Flight codes were drawn in consultation with the agencies and the marketing departments responsible for generating the creative briefs and teams associated with the production of the identified outputs were identified.



#### **4.6.2. Agency campaign Teams**

Agencies appoint teams to accounts, and to campaigns. Agency Human Resource departments and Traffic Managers will provide information on the creative teams responsible for the creation of campaigns. This will typically involve the Executive Creative Director, The Creative Director, an Art Director, Copywriters, Designer and Desktop Publishing Artists. Also included will be the Group Account Director, Account Director and Account Managers as they serve as the interface with the client and can provide information as to the client's brief and requirements.

#### **4.7. In depth interviews**

Ethical clearance was obtained prior to the interviews being conducted. Consent forms were signed for each interview conducted and are available on request, but were excluded from the report so as to maintain anonymity. Transcripts of the interviews are available on request.

In-depth interviews were conducted with all members of the creative teams (where possible). These interviews were semi-structured, with probing questions forming the basis of the interview questions. Interviews explored attitudes to diversity, and in so doing explored diversity on multiple levels, both the surface level visible indicators of diversity (age, gender, race) as well as diversity of values and beliefs (Perry 2001, p.311).

Questions were semi-structured to ensure that they were able to be replicated case to case, but no interview schedule was developed. The probing questions facilitated an inductive approach, whilst the analysis of data (covered in the next section) allowed us to move toward the deductive approach (Perry, 2001).

##### **4.7.1. The advertising agency as an organisation**

“Through trials, we have found the starting question in an interview should invite the interviewee to simply tell the story of their experience of whatever the research is about” (Perry 2001, p.311). Where accessible, senior management were interviewed to gain insights into the agencies transformation objectives and as a means of exploring the organisations diversity goals and transformation targets. This contributed to an

understanding of the environment in which the creative teams function. All agency representatives (except for two individuals who had moved jobs as a team) were interviewed at the agency premises. This allowed for contrasting the creative environments and the locations of the agency for possible effects on creative outputs. It also serves to inform a holistic view of the agency as organisation.

## **4.8. Data Analysis**

### **4.8.1. Television Commercials Content Analysis**

#### **Multimodal Analysis (Pauwels, 2011)**

Pauwels (2011) provided a Multimodal Framework for analysing websites: This framework was used in a modified state as a means of analysing television commercials. What was of importance for the analysis of television commercials was the notion that ‘modes’ interact and the interaction is of significance to a cultural reading. The modes represent the aspects of the medium that could convey cultural meaning. Also, the preservation of first impression and reactions (Pauwels, 2011) facilitated an initial inductive approach. The framework was developed for a cultural reading of websites, but was modified to work in conjunction with other existing frameworks to facilitate an in depth analysis of television commercials.

The model developed by Borgerson and Schroeder (2011) - who developed a framework for image analysis, with a particular focus on ethics in visual representations - was overlaid. “[Four representational conventions provide a broader context for recognizing and understanding ethical issues in marketing representation: (i) face-ism, (ii) idealisation, (iii) exoticisation and (iv) exclusion]” (Borgerson & Schroeder, 2011, p.21).

Borgerson and Schroeder’s (2011) model provided an augmentation to the models proposed by Pauwels (2011) and the model by Bristor, Lee and Hunt (2005):

“(i) Face-ism describes how mass media systematically shows men with more prominent faces than women and how women are negatively affected by this representational convention.

(ii) Idealization concerns how marketing communications routinely depict ideal

types – young, thin models, unrealistic scenarios, or unattainable goals – and the negative effects these often have, beginning in childhood (e.g., Belk & Pollay, 1987; Martin & Gentry, 1997; Richins, 1991; Shields & Heineken, 2002).

(iii) Exoticisation, which refers to the process of making someone seem exotic, strange, or different in ways that call attention to certain identity characteristics, such as skin colour, dress, or appearance can be seen as a crucial category.

(iv) Exclusion indicates how certain types of people – for example, poor, marginalized, or under-represented individuals and groups – have traditionally been left out of the marketing communication pantheon” (Borgerson & Schroeder, p.21).

Bristor, Lee and Hunt (1995) proposed a content analysis framework for the analysis of African American Roles in television advertising. Their 1995 study looked at the following: Numerical Representation, Role Portrayals, Families, Screen Presence, Tokenism, Objectification, Marginalisation or Trivialisation, Activity levels, Camera Distance, Exposure time, Status/Power Balance, and Cultural Values

The aim was to build a model of content analysis with both inductive and deductive analysis (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). According to Chinn and Kramer (1999) in Elo and Kyngas (2008) The inductive approach begins first with the particular and seeks to extrapolate themes applicable to the universal. Inversely Burns and Jones (2005) in Elo and Kyngas (2008) stated that the deductive approach begins with theories and models and seeks to move from the universal to the particular. (Elo and Kyngas, 2008, p.109).

#### **4.8.2. The Creative Teams Content Analysis**

“For their cross-case analysis, most qualitative researchers use some form of content analysis to initially analyse their data, that is, they code groups of words in their transcripts into categories” (Perry 2001, p.316).

The framework provided set out above for the analysis of television commercials served as the framework for content analysis of the in-depth interviews for both the creative teams and agency management (Yin, 1981,

p.73). This methodology was to facilitate comparison, but it made the hierarchy of analysis concrete.

Campaigns were analysed first in the method set out above (Perry 2001, p.316). This was followed by the first embedded case, the case of the creative teams responsible for creating the commercials. The content analysis was more deductive than inductive (Perry, 2001). This use of the case study is "disciplined-configurative" (Eckstein, 1975) or "interpretive" (Lijphart,1971). "Here, the focus is still on the case, but the analyst explicitly uses some theoretical foundation in order to examine or interpret the case" (Kaarbo, Beasley, 1999, p.374).

Yin (1981) suggested that if the goal is cross case comparison it may not be necessary to write single case reports but rather brief summaries of the individual cases with the focus being on the comparison. "Or, where cross-case analysis is the major goal of the research, there may be no need for any single-case report; such a study might consist of brief summaries of individual cases, followed by the cross-case analysis" (Yin, 1981, p.64).

## **Chapter 5: Results**

Results are reported in the following way per campaign:

There are four campaigns in total. In chapter five there is no case analysis, nor cross case analysis – this is reserved for chapter six. This chapter reports findings from each of the four individual cases. I presented each case as follows:

- Background: Agency specific overview, overview of the two campaigns the agency was involved with, and the clients for whom the campaigns were produced.
- Background to the specific campaign.
- Table of actors responsible for creative outputs. This is reported in a table made up of age, gender and race.
- Table of actors in outputs reported as role, age, gender and race.
- Content analysis of each individual creative output. This involved one spot for campaigns A (a) and B (a) and four spots each for campaign A (b) and B (b). Content analysis is done in accordance with the framework as described in chapter four. This involved elements of Pauwels’ ‘Multimodal analysis’ (Pauwels, 2012), Borgerson and Schroeder’s (2011) and Bristor, Lee and Hunt’s (Bristor, Lee, & Hunt, 1995) framework for analysing commercial content.
- Key excerpts are quoted and emergent themes are reported as they relate to age, gender and race and the influence of age, gender and race on creative outputs. Emergent themes are reported per campaign. An attempt is made to ensure that the cases all report on the same themes for the sake of comparison. These themes are:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>
1: Segmentation: Clients influence	1: Segmentation and Targeting: Client’s Influence	1: Segmentation and LSM
2: Industry youthfulness in South-Africa age focus	2: Insights	2: Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights
3: Agency Age diversity		3: BBBEE
		4: Team Selection and Appointment
		5: Advertising schools as a barrier to entry

**Table 1: Emergent themes**

## **5.1. Background: Agency A**

Brand A (the client) is located in the Northern suburbs of Johannesburg in an affluent, traditionally White suburb. Agency A is in the same suburb as the client. Agency A is a large agency with global presence and offices in Johannesburg Cape Town and Durban. The agency has a large campus with an impressive reception area in a prime Johannesburg location. The client has offices in a Grade AA office park. The client's offices are less ostentatious than the agency's.

In-depth interviews were conducted with agency personnel who work on Brand A and client representatives who are responsible for collaborating with the agency for the production of television advertisements. The client has a Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) and two Marketing Directors. The CMO was interviewed at his premises. He is a White male in his early forties. The CMO was interviewed with a line of questioning aiming to probe the client's attitude toward diversity and the client's perspective on agency diversity and multiculturalism. The interview sought to explore broad themes in relation to both Campaign (a) and Campaign (b) The marketing directors were questioned in relation to the campaigns they were responsible for. The marketing directors did, however, offer insights broader than the campaign focus. The marketing directors are responsible for campaign A (a) and campaign A (b).

Observations are reported on first as they relate to emergent themes from the interviews.

### **5.1.1.1. Background: Agency A Campaign (a) - Output (1)**

The output of the campaign was a single 45-second television commercial. The campaign was focused on a specific product and targeted at LSM five to ten. In-depth interviews were conducted with the creative team responsible for the creation of the commercial; with the client-service staff on the account; with the Creative Director for the account A (a); with the Executive Creative Director for the agency; and with the agency Business Unit Director. These interviews took place over a number of days at the agency, which allowed for observation of the dynamic within the agency and the agency work environment. In addition interviews were conducted with the Chief Marketing

Officer and the Marketing Director (for the sub-brand) for the client. These interviews took place over two days at the client's premises.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count	Code
<b>Client A</b>	<b>CA</b>				
<b>Chief Marketing Officer</b>	36-40	Male	White	1	CACMO
<b>Marketing Director</b>	40-45	Female	White	1	CAMD1
<b>Marketing Director</b>	35-40	Female	White	1	CAMD2
<b>Agency A</b>	<b>AA</b>				
<b>Executive Creative Director</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	AAECD
<b>Creative Director</b>	36-40	Male	White	1	AACD
<b>Business Unit Director</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	AABUD
<b>Strategist</b>	30-35	Female	White	1	AAS
<b>Creative Team</b>	<b>AAT1</b>				
<b>Copy Writer</b>	20-25	Male	Black	1	AA(a)CW
<b>Art Director</b>	26-30	Male	Black	1	AA(a)AD
<b>Creative Director</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1	AA(a)CD

Table 2: Agency A Campaign (a) - Output (1) Actors Responsible for Outputs

### 5.1.1.2. Content Analysis: Agency A Campaign (a)-Output (1)

#### *Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure*

The 45 second commercial features a major protagonist, a Black male who appears to be in his early thirties. The opening shot is of the major protagonist in an urban setting in the Johannesburg CBD. The first shot of a supporting actor is of a White male in his forties. This is followed immediately by an establishing shot of the protagonist entering the scene. In the background are two extras - a couple, Black male and female - though we do not see their faces and they are out of focus. The supporting actor then enters the scene. He is a White male of Greek descent and is typecast with an open White short and a large gold chain and a leather jacket. The stereotype is not out of keeping with his character portrayal. The next scene shows a dirty close up of two more extras shot from behind in a bus. They are a Black male and a Black

female. The next supporting role is a White male in his early thirties. He is featured in a medium wide two-shot with the major protagonist.

### ***Idealisation***

The major protagonist is well dressed, good looking and well groomed. He is an aspirational character. The female-featured extras are beautiful Black woman: one of the extras looks directly at the camera to establish perceived connection and approval with the protagonist.

### ***Exoticisation***

The first featured extra is heavily stylized to make clear his categorisation as an individual of Greek descent.

### ***Exclusion***

The commercial only features two females who enjoy any face time. The number of characters depicted in the commercial that are visible and including extras is 23 - of these 15 are Black males. Four are Black woman. There are no White women depicted in the commercial. There is one character that appears to be over 40 years old, that being the White male in the exclusive dealership. There are four White males depicted in the commercial, one of them being a non-featured extra.

### ***Role Portrayal***

The entire commercial has no dialogue and is set to a piece of urban music. The focus is clearly on the major protagonist. The major protagonist is an aspirational character who uses his street smarts to trade up to the car of his dreams. A White male was cast as the car sales representative, with one Black character in the upmarket dealership shown as car salesperson. The older White male character has no clear role. Women are portrayed as extras with the two featured-extras serving to bolster the viewer's opinion of the protagonist through their acknowledgment of him.

### ***Camera Distance***

The commercial makes use of mid shot and medium wide and only features one close up of the major protagonist. The supporting actors and featured



extras are always framed in a two shot and as mid shot or wide shot. There is one close up of the transfer of keys in the second car dealership, but it does not feature faces.

### **Activity Level**

The female featured-extras in the commercial make eye contact with the camera as a means of showing approval for the major protagonist. All featured extras interact with the protagonist as a device to move the story forward in the allotted time. Activity of the final White male character is uncertain, as the viewer we are not certain if he is a sales representative or a potential customer.

### **Status**

The narrative moves through a progression of perceived status from mass market to luxury. The final non-store scene shows a Black individual handing over the keys to a luxury vehicle. The major protagonist walks past a White male to get to the vehicle. He is positioned as an authority figure whose approval is needed for the lead character to drive the vehicle off of the show room floor, though his actual role is unclear.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	40-45	Male	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	46-50	Male	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	Black	2
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Female	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	1
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	1

**Table 3: Agency A Campaign (a)-Output (1) Content Analysis**

### 5.1.1.3. Interviews: Agency A Campaign (a)-Output (1)

#### Age

##### 1. Segmentation: Client's influence

The interviews revealed a perception that advertising is more effective if it targets younger impressionable audiences, and that this is necessary to reach the segments identified by the client. The influence of the client on segmentation and age targeting was significant and is reported as an emergent theme. This was illustrated by the excerpts below.

*“We were better. Well, we had an advantage there, in that we, from our backgrounds we could understand the target market better because they were targeting, I think, younger people, and I think we are fairly young” (AA(a)AD).*

*“We’ve made huge strides; in making sure we pull it back and be more in the centre or more younger, lower LSM” (CAMD1).*

*“I don’t think I’ve ever had a brief, unless they are medical briefs for like adult diapers or denture glue. Then the brief says, ‘We’re talking to the over 50’s’” (AAECD).*

##### 2. Industry youthfulness in South-Africa age focus

The agency interviews revealed a perception that advertising is a young person’s game and that youthfulness is necessary in creative teams. The youthful focus was reported as a national phenomenon and not an industry one. The excerpts below serve to highlight this perception. Younger creatives tended to report that youthfulness was important whilst older creatives (older than 30) reported that the industry was youth obsessed.

*“I think that’s a bit old for the kind of business we are in. And mostly because of the products we work on as well, you know. It’s a bit old. And because I believe younger creatives come up with fresher ideas that are current and they are not bound by systems that older creatives are bound by, you know, because what older creatives know is what they knew then and they’ve been doing that and, you know; so, ja, I think, that’s that hey” (AA(a)AD).*

*“Because things change; compared to before; when you think about now, what’s cool now is not cool tomorrow. And young people can keep up with that. Old people tend to struggle. You are not going to see an old person at a gig, unless you are different. But it is very difficult. People have families to go to; people go camping. But whereas the young people are out in Parkhurst, out in Melville or they are checking out latest YouTube or whatever. So, I think they are always on the pulse of what is new” (AA(a)CD).*

*“So, ja, I think this country is youth obsessed. Well not youth obsessed but I think the assumption of marketers is that you have to show the aspirational” (AAECD).*

*“So I would think that it would be the same, that you would rather go younger because older people like to see themselves as a bit younger” (CAMD1).*

*“Ja, I think, definitely in the States and in the U.K.; the creative people get much older. You’ve got much older people working than in this country, maybe it is just because everyone just immigrates, I don’t know, or they leave” (AAECD).*

*“So, if we had to say; most 50 year olds don’t want reality reflected in them because they don’t see themselves like that.” (AABUD).*

### 3. Agency Age diversity

Race diversity was reported as an advantage for creative outputs but age was relatively underreported as a source of creative advantage.

*“I think, at the moment, we are kind of cool, in terms of the age diversity” (AA(a)CW).*

*“Ja, I think like I said, the characters that we casted; the Black guy was, I think was basically my age. Because I think most people who are trying to get their stuff together are people of my age” (AA(a)CW).*

*“I just think that maybe it is the pace. Maybe they go into consulting or into different things I would imagine. And maybe it is also like because you are old you can’t, but actually that is rubbish because I think there*

*are senior creative people in agencies who are exceptionally experienced“ (CAMD1).*

*“Obviously diversity within Agency A, we are a younger business. I think that is nature of a creative industry, it is slightly younger. You don’t find that many people over 50“ (AAS).*

## **Gender**

### 1. Segmentation and Targeting: Client’s Influence

The interviews with client and agency revealed that, in the case of this account, segmentation played a significant role in targeting and resultant creative outputs. One of the outputs was particularly targeted to men and it was reported that men need to be placed on male-targeted campaigns, this was the case for campaign A (b).

The client expressed that it is not necessary to be a man to target males, but the agency perception of client response to team allocation was different.

*“Ja. So, and I think there’s major attraction with that client now. She buys; so the client is Black, she sees Mo and GT and Justice and she is like, “You guys get it.” I mean Mike is obviously the creative director and Mike has huge, like there’s a good relationship there as well but I think she buys Mo, you know. She’s like, “OK.” Sometimes that is just how it is. Like if I take a women team in on Castle, “crash and burn,” they just don’t get it “(AAECD).*

## **Race**

### 1. Segmentation and LSM

The reporting on race revealed that segmentation and targeting had a significant effect on the outputs for campaign A (a).

*“We don’t just do brand communication. We do sector driven communication, around key audiences, so it will be a Black middle class; a kind of male segment to female segment; a family segment, etc.“ (AAS).*

*“So, for example, with “Streetwise” we do focus it on the Black market*

*because we can do communication; we do communication resumes with cultural truths around that market” (AAS).*

## 2. Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights

The interviews with the creative team and the agency strategist highlighted a perception that racial diversity does serve as a source of creative advantage and that insights are informed by upbringing and therefore diverse backgrounds leads to a wider thought base and deeper insights.

*“So, what we are finding is, your dynamic is, you know, you could have a White sort of team member and a Black team member so you get it from 2 different types of worlds; 2 different types of thinking but, again, whatever the thoughts and whatever you try to portray, being universal, anyone in the world can pick up on that and have that conversation but then, I think again, where nuance works is because like, ‘You almost get me, as a person’” (AA(a)CD).*

*“There is compliance but what we are saying is that, as a creative business, in order to have great ideas that come from different places you need diverse people so it is actually fundamental to our business” (AAS).*

## 3. BBBEE

Creative teams reported that BBBEE was important to the agency, but felt that it was a work in progress and that racial equality had not been reached. Interestingly, it was reported that there are not enough Black teams to meet client demand. The lack of diverse racial teams in agency A was expressed as a possible area of exploration. It was not that the agency did not have Black creative, but rather that the agency had Black teams and White teams and few diverse teams.

*“Ja, I think they are working on that at the moment. So, I think that’s, ja, I think that is probably the one thing for me. Like I think in terms of everything else, like there’s a mixed sort of, you know the guys to girls’ ratio is probably more or less even. I think, in terms of diversity, like you know, more Black talent would actually help” (AA(a)CW).*

*“Because there aren’t enough Black creatives to work on the products*

*that need to be worked on, like based on the time, the turnaround time for those products and the agreements we have with clients. And I think they are addressing that issue and, well another transformation, another thing that could be best for us, in my own opinion, is to create teams that are Black and White because that kind of team could be strong. I've never, I've never been in a team like that but" (AA(a)AD).*

#### 4. Team Selection and Appointment

Agency A is a large agency, but makes use of the art and copy model of teams (a writer, an art director and a creative director). The allocation of teams to jobs or creative briefs was of particular interest. The interviewees reported that teams are allocated according to target audience or demographic target. The strategist reported that casting was informed by strategy and the development of a profile for the target consumer. The client's influence was reported by the agency ECD, stating that clients want young Black teams to work on their campaigns.

*"This is his view on the world. So we try and help them so that the protagonist is relevant to the consumer segment. So it is actually the right kind of person that would be consuming or buying that product. I think, in the absence, maybe people do. But that is part of our briefs. We actually write who is the target audience and we write a little story about him" (AAS).*

*"Ja, I think so; I think there is that conscious effort; well they have to, the way I see it, they have to think about it properly; who is best for the product they are trying to sell, you know. So, when they do the research and see, on our creative floor, who is best and whoever is suited for that job will get it, you know" (AA(a)AD).*

*"Well, I mean, I think sometimes it varies, you know because it really depends on who you are targeting at the end of the day, you know. Because obviously there are certain insights that I might have that a White team may not have. But also a White team might just find that they are talking to us; they can come up with insights that are quite cool and it will work quite well" (AA(a)CW).*

*"Because, I mean, we've got a lot of diverse clients but, I mean, like you*

*were saying, like sometimes there are certain jobs where it requires, for lack of a better word, Black thinking. So, I mean, like the Codesa ad. I think it was a very Black insight and, you know, to get it you would have to be, ja; to get to that kind of thinking you have to actually” (AA(a)CW).*

*“Ja, but they want Black. They want cool, urban, hip Black guys. So, I can’t also put a White woman on that because they’ll go; you know. Even though I’ve had a White copywriter, a woman, who, I mean, she could teleport herself into the mind of just about anybody. She could write gangster rap but if you took her into a meeting, with her librarian clothes, ja” (AAECD).*

### 5. Reflecting the Population

The client reported a need for the portfolio of creative outputs to be reflective of the national demographic.

*“So, for example, 2 years ago we looked at the body of our work and we were like, this is not reflective of our target audience and our resolution for that was to go to the agency and give them the problem” (CACMO).*

*“And what we found with different CD’s was I think everybody was hoping that somebody else would do that. So, now, with one CD, we look at everything so we can make sure that we are getting a mix across all our advertising” (CAMD1).*

*“We want to be more representative to all people in the country,” because obviously we are a brand that talks to everybody so we want, and that is part of our role, we want to be and we want to show more Black in our advertising” (CAMD1).*

#### **5.1.2.1. Background: Agency A Campaign (b), Output (1-4)**

The outputs of the campaign were four 45-second television commercials.

The campaign was focused on a specific product and targeted at LSM seven to ten. In depth interviews were conducted with the creative team responsible for the creation of the commercial; with the client-service staff on the account; with the Creative Director for the account A (b); with the Executive Creative Director for the agency; and with the agency Business Unit Director. These

interviews took place over a number of days at the agency, which allowed for observation of the dynamic within the agency and the agency work environment. In addition interviews were conducted with the Chief Marketing Officer and the Marketing Director (for the sub-brand) for the client, these interviews took place over two days at the client's premises.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count	Code
<b>Client A</b>	<b>CA</b>				
<b>Chief Marketing Officer</b>	36-40	male	White		CACMO
<b>Marketing Director</b>	40-45	female	White		CAMD1
<b>Marketing Director</b>	35-40	female	White		CAMD2
<b>Agency A</b>	<b>AA</b>				
<b>Executive Creative Director</b>	36-40	male	White		AAECD
<b>Creative Director</b>	36-40	female	White		AACD
<b>Business Unit Director</b>	36-40	female	White		AABUD
<b>Strategist</b>	30-35	female	White		AAS
<b>Creative Team</b>	<b>AAT1</b>				
<b>Copy Writer</b>	30-35	male	White	1	AA(b)1C W
<b>Art Director</b>	26-30	male	White	1	AA(b)AD

Table 4: Agency A Campaign (b) - Output (1-4) Actors Responsible for Outputs

### 5.1.2.2. Content Analysis: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (1)

#### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial shows three vignettes and as such three main characters. The majority of screen time is devoted to the three major protagonists and their interactions with beautiful woman. The first woman in the commercial is shown twice in a medium close up. After this woman are shown in groups; first of two and then of six. In all three vignettes woman are used as framing devices for the male protagonists.

#### ***Idealisation***

The male characters in the commercial are cast and styled as the everyman. Both White males characters have beards and epitomize the manly man. The



women are cast younger than the men. The women are all highly attractive and young.

### ***Exoticisation***

Women are portrayed in exotic outfits and stereotyped to reflect the male fantasy.

### ***Exclusion***

The commercial does not feature anybody older than 35. It features White and Black males and females. Black females are underrepresented and only appear in the final group.

### ***Role Portrayal***

The commercial intentionally parodies male stereotypes. Men are presented as intentionally using the product to appear sensitive and caring (brought to tears) to win the affections of beautiful young woman.

### ***Camera Distance***

The commercial is shot in a series of wide and mid shots. Women are often used as a framing mechanism for the male protagonists and there is only one mid shot of a female character on her own.

### ***Activity Level***

Black and White males are portrayed as consumers of the product who take advantage of its side effects to attract beautiful young woman. Women are shown as responsive to sensitive men and their actions are in response to the male protagonists crying.

### ***Status***

The opening vignette portrays the everyman. He is at leisure and typifies a White middle class male. The female supporting actor is a shop assistant in a pet store. The second vignette portrays both male and female character in a cinema. The male character is Black and the females are White. They appear to be of equal status, but for the age discrepancy, with the females being cast as younger than the male.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	White	2
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	20-25	Female	White	3
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	Coloured	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	White	4
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	White	2
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	1

Table 5: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (1) Content Analysis

### 5.1.2.3. Content Analysis: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (2)

#### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial shows three vignettes with the lead character serving as a linking mechanism between the four scenarios. The major protagonist has face time, and appears mainly in group shots or framed by the supporting actors.

#### ***Idealisation***

Not present.

#### ***Exoticisation***

Not present.

#### ***Exclusion***

There is only one female character portrayed in the commercial - a White female featured extra who appears to be 20 -25 years of age. The commercial then excludes all non-White females and all females older than 25.

#### ***Role Portrayal***

Men are portrayed as going about masculine activities, but hindered by a disability that the product resolves. The female character is purely an observer. The major protagonist is portrayed as all-knowing and the source of the solution (the product). The Black male (30-35) thus serves as the

endorsement for the product.

### ***Camera Distance***

The commercial makes use of medium two shots and full length wides with tight shots being used for dramatic effect. The first vignette features the Coloured supporting actor and the female featured extra and both are framed in full-length two shot. The two youth featured extras (Black male 10-15) are also framed in a full length two shot. The second vignette involves a Black male supporting actor and the White male supporting actor both 30-35 years old. They are both shot in a series of close-ups. The major protagonist enters the frame and is framed by the two supporting actors in a medium close up of all three. The third vignette is also framed tighter than the first vignette and features a White male supporting actor (30-35) and two White male featured extras. (one 50+ and one 35-40).

### ***Activity Level***

The supporting actor's pre-solution (product interaction) mannerism are portrayed as intentionally overtly feminine. This is contrasted against manly activities. The female character in the commercial does little more than observe the action.

### ***Status***

The characters portrayed in the commercial are of similar status. The protagonist has elevated status due to his perceived sense of knowing and his ability to provide an answer to the problem at hand.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Male	Coloured	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Male	White	2
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	10-15	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	50+	Male	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	36-40	Male	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Male	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Female	Black	3
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	White	1

Table 6: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (2) Content Analysis

#### 5.1.2.4. Content Analysis: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (3)

##### *Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure*

The commercial shows four vignettes with the lead character serving a linking mechanism between the four scenarios. The major protagonist has very little face time, and appears mainly as background action. The character serves a transitional device and is shot primarily in profile. There is not a single shot of the Black major protagonist as medium tight or close up. The supporting roles then receive more face time. The first three supporting roles are White male, a White female and another White male, followed by a White couple. All of these supporting roles receive single mid shots or close-up shots with their face as the focal point. The fourth scenario involves a Black couple and while the camera favours the Black male in terms of framing and focus, both receive significant face time. The closing shot features the major protagonist in the centre of a wide shot flanked by two White males to his right and a White and Black male to his left. The Black male is on the extreme screen left.

### ***Idealisation***

The male characters in the commercial are cast and styled as the everyman. One of the White male characters has a beard and the Black male supporting actor has a beard. Woman and men are cast at an equal age. Men are portrayed doing activities for the benefit of their female partners. All of the characters are of a similar age.

### ***Exoticisation***

Not present.

### ***Exclusion***

The commercial does not feature anybody who appears older than 35. It features White and Black males and females. Black females and males are underrepresented.

### ***Role Portrayal***

The commercial intentionally stereotypes female activities and shows men being subjected to shopping and dancing. Three of the four scenarios involve shopping.

### ***Camera Distance***

The first two scenes feature the male supporting actors shot in a medium close up. The female supporting actor is also shot in a medium close up. The second two scenes are shot as mid-shots and are both two-shots, with the second scene involving the Black couple shot in mid two shot cutting to a tight two shot.

### ***Activity Level***

The main character is portrayed striding and eating, whilst the remaining four men are portrayed either waiting on partners or performing tasks they dislike.

### ***Status***

All of the characters are portrayed as upper middle class young professionals.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Male	White	3
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Female	White	2
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Female	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Female	Black	3
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Female	White	4
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	2
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Male	White	3
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	White	1

Table 7: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (3) Content Analysis

#### 5.1.2.5. Content Analysis: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (4)

##### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial features six vignettes and as such six main characters. All six main characters are men. The first character exits a store (Brand A) and is shot as front on mid shot, cut to a profile mid shot, which cuts back to the front on mid shot. The first character is a White male. He is the oldest of the six in appearance and receives the most face time. Character two is a Coloured character. He receives very little face time, and his face is obscured by product. Protagonist three and four, both White males, receive little face time. Character five receives more face time than three and four, but character six is shot in multiple framings. He appears to be the oldest of the characters (36-40).

##### ***Idealisation***

The male characters in the commercial are cast and styled as the everyman. Character four is common to all four commercials in the campaign and once

again he sports a beard (White male).

### ***Exoticisation***

Not present.

### ***Exclusion***

There is only one woman in the entire commercial and she is shot from behind wearing only a bra.

### ***Role Portrayal***

The commercial portrays men doing stereotypically male activities: fixing cars, camping, and bowling.

### ***Camera Distance***

Camera distance is consistent as mid and wide shots, but for one shot. The entire commercial makes use of wide shots except for a shot of a woman's back, which is a medium tight shot.

### ***Activity Level***

White men are portrayed fixing cars, camping, sculpting with a chainsaw, and opening doors. The Coloured character is shown bowling with a group of White friends.

### ***Status***

The opening vignette portrays a well-groomed White male. He is stylish and sophisticated. The second scene features a Coloured protagonist and three supporting extras. They appear to be students. The remaining characters are all White males of similar ages and appear to be of equal status. They represent the upper middle class White male.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	36-40	Male	White	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Coloured	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	White	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	White	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	26-30	Male	White	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Male	White	3
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	indistinct	Female	Black	1
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	White	1

Table 8: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (4) Content Analysis

#### 5.1.2.6. Interviews: Agency A Campaign (b)-Output (1)-(4)

##### Age

###### 1. Segmentation: Clients influence

The interviews revealed an agency perception that the client is very involved in age banding the target audience and that the agency needs to follow instructions with regards the target audience.

*“The ideas that you come up with are out of your head so that idea belongs to a 26 year old. In terms of casting them that is normally a requirement that comes through from client” [AA(b)1CW].*

###### 2. Industry youthfulness in South-Africa - age focus

Industry youthfulness was reported as a local phenomenon. Older creative were aware of a lack of specialist career path and noted that the South African industry did not cater for specialization.

*“The South African advertising model is very different to how they work overseas. If I was 50 and in London I could still be a senior copywriter*



*and it would be respected. That is how you earn your senior status overseas is by how old you are and how many years of experience you have. Unfortunately here there's almost like a, "I've got to be a group head by 30 and a creative director by 35 or I've done nothing." And I think what it does is that it actually drains a lot of the talent out of the agencies because you kind of stop producing work and you end up overseeing stuff and you don't really make work anymore" [AA(b)1CW].*

*"No, it is. It is a hell of a worry. I think turning 30, for me, it's the new midlife and I'm like, "What the fuck am I doing?" And I had an interesting chat with a friend in Thailand and he was just saying and it is true, "In the States you can be an art director until you are 50," and it is a noble profession to be an art director, not senior management, an art director. Whereas here, if you are not like a creative director by the time you are 35 you are almost like, "Oh, shame, he hasn't made it," but it makes no sense to me, so not many people over 40" [AA(b)1AD].*

### 3. Agency Age diversity

A lack of age diversity was reported as a product of a focus on youthfulness in creative departments

*"So, generally, the creative departments are fairly young. I haven't had a sort of a fellow colleague that's older than 35, in the creative department" [AA(b)1CW].*

## **Gender**

### 1. Segmentation and Targeting: Client's Influence

The campaign was specifically targeted at men. The segment was identified as male and the client defined this. Agency interviewees and client interviewees responded that teams need not be male to appeal to a male target audience. The team working on the campaign was all male.

*"No; we briefed it in as LSM, I think it was, 7 to 10, at that point. And we said it was men, it borders that; 7 to 10 and sort of aged 25 to 39" [CAMD1].*

*“They said to us that we needed to recapture the man category because they were losing the market quite a bit to some of the competitors. So, for us, it was a man campaign. It wasn’t necessarily about race or age or anything. It was just about being men and the things you do for men.”*  
[AA(b)1CW]

*“I think it is a mistake to think that you always have to be, if you happen to be targeting males that you have to have males working on your business and portraying males”* [CACMO].

*“Yes, it was a campaign that was to target men but also have slight secondary spill into females. Where they could smile and go, “I’ve seen that behaviour before.” So it wasn’t alienating but it was definitely targeted at men and specifically men”* [AA(b)1CW].

## 2. Insights

The team writer [AA(b)1CW] reported that diverse insights on a gender and race perspective were valuable for creative outputs.

*“No, I think, there are certain pieces of business that we actually need the input and the cultural inputs and that. As a pale male all I know is my life and I draw from those experiences in coming up with a creative”*  
[AA(b)1CW].

## **Race**

### 1. Segmentation and LSM

The client reported that in the past they felt the body of work across campaigns had not been representative of the consumer and the population. The client also reported that the campaign was very targeted and the LSM targeting and the skew toward the higher end of the income bracket may skew the target audience to more White. Creatives reported that they disliked generic approaches that sought inclusivity at the cost of creativity.

*“What we did do is we went to them and we said, “Over a period of a year we want to step back and we want to see our broad body of communication as being representative. You solve it”* [CACMO].

*“It does have a White slant. I think in terms of the media who were buying were 7 to 10 but I think it would naturally skew upwards because of the price point of the product” [CAMD1].*

*“So we’ve become a lot more targeted now, in our approach, and quite specific in terms of the messaging of our ads as well as the way we buy our media” [CAMD1].*

*“There was definitely, it was more of an income banding. It was high income makes, LSM 7 to 10. They were ‘bit-eats’ so more ‘big-meals’ so about R55 for a meal which puts it in a slightly higher income bracket. That was our bracket. We weren’t given a specific colour. It was just the guys that make this money and sit in those brackets; that is who we are targeting” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“I think, and that one in particular, the problem is, in a way, most of these casting briefs these days is a ‘on size fits all’ thing. I’m going to be honest. It is like LSM 7 to 10 but it is like, “OK, we need 2 White guys, a Black guy and an Indian friend”” [AA(b)AD].*

## 2. Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights

Agency, client and agency creative team respondents reported that diversity was a source of creative competitive advantage. This was evident with reference to advertisements in languages other than English (and Afrikaans to a lesser extent). A White creative highlighted that White creatives are more insular than Black creatives and have a narrower view or experience base. Vernacular was highlighted as a reason for a growing need for Black creative in agencies. Finally, the client concluded that a diverse agency team may foster more trust of creative outputs. This was in reference to a scene that was cut as it was felt it may be perceived as racist. The team that created the spot was all White.

*“But diversity, in creativity you need diversity in order to make sure that you have the best ideas and you have different thinking and you have breakthrough. So diversity is absolutely fundamental. Not from a kind of socio-political perspective but from a creative perspective” [AAS].*

*“Look guys, it’s not working as a direct translation. We actually need*

*people who speak the language to actually write the scripts and to interpret the sentiment and not to interpret the script” [CAMD1].*

*“Ja, I think it would bring a much broader perspective and it would be less narrow and it might open it up a little bit more and allow us to reach more people with more open or the more broader view, I guess” [CAMD1].*

*“We do need those insights because if you look at an agency like FCB they have got a very strong contingent of Black creatives there which are attracted there because they are doing well on those business aspects” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“So, it is very important. I don’t think it is just, “Hey, we need to hire people because the law says so.” We actually need to hire people because we need the ideas and I think that applies to all the agencies that I’ve worked at” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“So, for example, some of the guys in our team who are Black consumers would be able to give us feedback on clothes, on hairstyles, on whether they look affluent enough, whether they’re the right age” [CAMD1].*

*“Everyone thinks differently and it is good to have a collective pool of different thinkers than just the same guys on it all the time” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“And they also have interesting ways of looking at a White world, which is quite cool. But it seems like the White creatives kind of fall flat, which is quite a weird dynamic” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“I guess there would be a lot more, from our side, trust that it is representative and it is a good output” [CAMD1].*

### 3. BBBEE

The creative team no longer worked at the agency. The team members reported that the BBBEE policy was implemented and understood.

*“The creative department it is White top heavy but as soon as you move to accounts and that kind of stuff you start seeing that quotas are quite*

*evenly met, if not more Black than White” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“Look, as far as Agency x goes, there is definitely, they do want to meet their numbers and I can say that just from the kind of internal positions that were made available and the emails that we got from HR, looking for particular candidates; where they specify what they want in that position. I also know that when we left that we were going to be replaced with a Black creative team and it is a mandate for them to kind of get those levels slightly matching” [AA(b)1CW].*

#### 4. Team Selection and Appointment

The agency reported that clients request that they have Black teams to work on products with Black target audiences. Creatives reported that they understand that they do not understand all markets and placed on accounts according to their understanding and cultural context.

*“When you walk into the agency it feels diverse because there are lots of different people walking around. On our account, I think it is pretty White” [CAMD1].*

*“So clients also direct and ask. We did present the 1st round and they said, “No, it is 2 White guys. We want a Black team to work on it” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“I don’t really have the cultural relevance and that, that some of those guys will have, for particular brands” [AA(b)1CW].*

#### **5.2. Background: Agency B**

Brand B (the client) is located in the east of the Johannesburg city centre in an unlikely neighbourhood. Their offices are unassuming and humble, though adequate. Agency B is no more than seven kilometres away from the client’s office and is in a university district and a creative hub. The area is not known for advertising agencies and is far removed from the agency hub located in the Northern Suburbs of Johannesburg. The agency’s offices are small and humble and the reception area is surprisingly understated for an advertising agency.

*“I know that sounds really cheesy but just the way where we are located as well; he feels very strongly about not being in a little Sandton office complex. He prefers to be closer to the city, closer to where everything is happening, in a retail environment and it kind of feels like you are in the hub of everything” [AB(b)CD].*

In-depth interviews were conducted with agency personnel who work on Brand B and client representatives who are responsible for collaborating with the agency for the production of television advertisements. The client Marketing Director was interviewed at his premises. He is a White male in his early forties. The Marketing Director was interviewed with a line of questioning aiming to probe the client’s attitude toward diversity and the client’s perspective on agency diversity and multiculturalism. The interview sought to explore broad themes in relation to both Campaign (a) and Campaign (b). The client has recently appointed a new Marketing Manager - a Black male in his late thirties - and he was interviewed at the client’s premises.

Observations are reported as they relate to emergent themes from the interviews.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count	Code
<b>Client A</b>	<b>CA</b>				
<b>Marketing Director</b>	40-45	Male	White	1	CBCMD
<b>Marketing Manager</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	CBMM1
<b>Agency A</b>	<b>AA</b>				
<b>Managing Director</b>	46-50	Female	White	1	ABMD
<b>Executive Creative Director</b>	36-40	Female	Indian	1	ABECD
<b>TV Producer</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	ABTVPRO D
<b>Strategist</b>	26-30	Female	White	1	ABS
<b>Client Service</b>	40-45	Female	White	1	ABCS1
<b>Client Service</b>	30-35	Female	Coloured	1	ABCS2
<b>Creative Team</b>	<b>AAT1</b>				
<b>Copy Writer</b>	20-25	Male	Black	1	AB(a)1CW
<b>Art Director</b>	26-30	Male	Black	1	AB(a)AD
<b>Creative Director</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	AB(a)CD

Table 9: Agency B Campaign (a) - Output (1) Actors Responsible for Outputs

### 5.2.1.1. Background: Agency B Campaign (a)-Output (1)

Agency B had a different approach to large creative outputs. For large projects the brief is sometimes opened to the whole agency. This was the case for campaign (a), the campaign that was briefed, ‘all agency’. The campaign was not to speak to a specific product, but was rather to illustrate that the brand offers variety. The all agency brief is used to speed up the creative process and when a piece of work is deemed significant enough to warrant such an approach. The entire agency was briefed on the campaign, but the winning team is listed above. The copywriter (AB(a)1CW) was responsible for the conceptualization of the spot.

### 5.2.1.2. Content Analysis: Agency B Campaign (a)-Output (1)

#### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial features eight scenes and a large cast. The majority of the

commercial utilizes wide shots and gives very little face time to individual characters. The opening and closing scenes, however, are medium close ups of individual characters. The final scene has dialogue while the opening scene is voice over driven. The closing scene is vernacular and has subtitles. The opening shot features a Black male between 30 and 25 years of age. The closing shot is a younger Black male, (26-30) of San or Khoi descent, but a Black male within this categorisation. The third scene of a White couple in the car features the couple's faces from two angles: a tight two shot through the cars windscreen and a profile through the side window. The characters they are interacting with, two Black males, receive significantly less screen time. Scene five depicts three Asian males, all framed in a single wide shot. Scene six is a medium close of a White male aged 50+. Scene seven is a group mid shot of a group of five Black males. One character faces camera and is framed as the focal point of the composition. Scene eight is medium close up of a first person narrative (subtitled).

### ***Idealisation***

The commercial aims to depict a diverse cast of characters and makes use of readily identifiable ethnic and race based stereotypes and stylizations a means of communicating this in 45 seconds.

### ***Exoticisation***

Stereotypes are used to create identifiable characters in a short space of time.

### ***Exclusion***

There are only five females in the entire cast, of these two are featured extras and only the White woman (age 30-35) is given any face time and screen exposure. Indians are not shown, but are suggested through location and voice over.

### ***Role Portrayal***

The commercial portrays stereotypical behaviours from stereotyped categorisations. Zimbabweans are shown coming through a hole in the fence, Chinese are shown loading a truck and the Afrikaner is shown driving a bakkie on a farm.



### **Camera Distance**

The commercial is shot mostly in wide shots to allow for large numbers of extras and featured extras. Only the scene of the opening character (male Black 30-35), the White couple, the farmer (White age 50+) and the closing scene (Black, male, 20-25) feature close-ups.

### **Status**

The White couple is portrayed driving a luxury vehicle and engaged in a conversation with three Black men who are standing on the side of the road in a night time scene. A White farmer is depicted driving a bakkie and five Black characters are depicted driving in the back of a bakkie. An Asian individual appears to be conducting business on a mobile phone. There are no clear indicators of personal status.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	25-30	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Female	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Female	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Male	Black	4
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Male	Asian	3
<b>Featured Extras</b>	50+	Male	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Male	Black	17
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Female	Black	4
<b>Voice-over</b>	40	Male	Black	1

Table 10: Agency B Campaign (a)-Output (1) Content Analysis

### 5.2.1.3. Interviews: Agency B Campaign (a)-Output (1)

#### Age

##### 1. Segmentation: Client's influence

The client and the agency reported that commercials and campaigns generally target younger audiences. The agency ECD further reported that the client defines the target but that agencies tend to gravitate to the younger bound of the age band.

*“Although the truth is our ads; are there any products that are targeted to over 40's? I haven't been part of a target market in ages” [AB(a)CD].*

*“So, whilst the consumer base maybe, demographically, for example, and xxxxxx would be 25 to 35, for example, as the sweet spot, we would reflect the lower end of that scale only because that's how people view themselves” [ABECD].*

*“I don't know because the brief always originates at client but I look at most brands and I think that most of them, unless it is xxxxxx or washing powder you are talking to older people; everything else, like deodorants, unless it is a makeup product for a woman with ageing skin or whatever. It is 35 and lower” [ABCS1].*

##### 2. Industry youthfulness in South-Africa age focus

Agency interviewees expressed a South African trend of youthful focus and a youthful creative department. It was noted that this is a local phenomenon.

*“The funny thing about, on this exact point, when you go to Cannes and you see all these people being called up for their awards. Everyone is old and White. There's a very different culture in advertising over there. People work a lot longer at mounting and stuff I think before they get there” [AB(a)CD].*

*“So, I think there's a culture in this country of failure if you don't achieve that role by a certain age. And there's a lot of pressure to do that. I think we need to change that” [ABECD].*

*“The U.K. for example, you could be a 45 year old or 48 year old*

*copywriter and that person would have no problem with it. And the industry respects him for being one of the most seasoned copywriters in the agency. And they harness their skills around copywriting” [ABECD].*

*“I don’t know but I think our country is ageist. Older people are not looked after in this country” [ABCS1].*

*“Maybe, I don’t know, but you go anywhere in the world; even at Cannes, I was fortunate enough to go there this year, and everybody that sits around there are not young, young creatives sitting watching. And all the speakers on the stage are old people. People who have been in the industry for years and people there are admired” [ABCS1].*

*“I think there’s a place for it and I think; even me, I am 39 and I’m going onto 40 but I already start feeling irrelevant, in terms of knowing what’s going on out there, which is why the youth is so important in our business. And I think maybe that is the problem” [ABECD].*

### 3. Agency Age diversity

The agency interviewees reported that the creative department was predominantly young. The ECD reported that this placed too much burden on the experienced staff who tended to be CDs. Creatives reported that they felt they may become irrelevant or out of touch at a given age.

*“It is between I would say 23 to 24 up until like early 40’s; because our traffic lady is in her 40’s” [ABCS1].*

*“So, I think that part of it, the craft side of it, then depends largely on the shoulders of the creative director who’s probably there for the longest period of time. So I think we miss the expertise” [ABECD].*

*“So, if you didn’t keep abreast of that then you will be irrelevant. But I think we miss the experience” [ABECD].*

*“I’ve had that before. We’ve had that before where we’ve had someone who’s like been in the game for 10 to 15 years and working with a young art director or a writer, who’s been in there a year or 2 and it has been explosive; as soon as they get over the issue of, “I’m working with a junior,” or, “I’m too scared to work with a senior.” And they start seeing*

*themselves as equals and just coming up with the idea. It is all about the idea. It has worked brilliantly” [ABECD].*

*“When you get older you tend to not go to the cool places; know the cool music; know what’s hip and what’s happening; you kind of tend to move out of that slightly and we seem to be focusing more on younger people in selling stuff. In marketing we are driving all the new people, coming into the brand and not worrying about the people that have been in the brand” [ABCS1].*

*“The industry has got younger. Ja, cause I think of the studio; there were young people but there were a lot of older people as well. Whereas now, I don’t think anyone here is 40” [ABMD].*

## **Gender**

Agency subjects felt the agency had a good balance of male and female creatives but felt that account management was female dominated.

*“In this agency it is weird. In account management there is always more girls and I don’t know why. They need more testosterone in those places” [AB(a)CD].*

### 1. Segmentation and Targeting: Clients Influence

*“So our role, as clients, is probably, there’s a renaissance for the client role, as a Black client, talking to consumers within a brand that talks to Black consumers” [CBMM1].*

### 2. Insights

Agency interviewees responded that gender diversity provided interesting and useful creative insights.

*“Like, I mean the idea comes from you and you know females, whether you are a guy or not, you know a little bit about females and you can come up with a funny idea that both females and males can relate to. I haven’t heard of a brief that went out to somebody because they were female” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“Ja, because sometimes you think of things that probably as a woman I*

*never would have thought of. Like, “Oh, that’s an interesting way of expressing it. I never thought of it that way” [ABCS2].*

## **Race**

The campaign art director reported that Whiteness may be over-represented in television commercials but felt we have become accustomed to it and that it has become normative.

*“Ja, definitely. I think those stories have been represented by White males for as long as I can remember so it just becomes like rooted in the mind. It becomes natural. I don’t even have to think about it. I don’t see anything wrong with it because I’ve grown up and have been exposed to that kind of messaging” [AB(a)AD].*

### 1. Segmentation and LSM

The creative teams, the agency and the client all reported that the target audience was all of South Africa and as such multicultural.

*“And we are talking about everyone, from Blacks to Whites to everybody; they look forward to seeing the ads” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“Like maybe if it is something from childhood that or across all the ethnic groups; where’s there Ndebele, Zulu, Xhosa, across all of those, there is usually something very common that they all can relate to” [AB(a)AD].*

*“The target audience was South Africans” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“It has got to be something that absolutely appeals to anybody who considers themselves South African. [ABECD]*

*“I think you need to tap into universal insights there; so you need to find things that are common amongst most South Africans and if you can’t, you need to find a few examples of things that resuned with people across the board in South Africa” [ABS].*

*“So, as much as advertising needs to change and transform; marketing needs to transform and there need to be some real decision makers, who aren’t there as tokens, who are really making an impact, making decisions and approving work. But not thinking only for 1 market but to*

*try to gage for both” [ABS].*

*“I am like; how can I via my brand to come up with brand and intrinsics and brand propositions and exciting stuff, that can appeal to all South Africans. So I go for a platform that will be embraced by everybody and that would appeal, as either a new launch or a new flavour or just a piece of creative that everyone would buy and in turn go, “Fuck me, that’s good.”” [CBCMD].*

## 2. Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights

Diversity was widely reported within the agency as a source of creative competitive advantage and was felt to be an agency strength and a source of advantage. It was expressed that in a diverse society diverse teams have an advantage in reaching a diverse audience.

*“Even when you are just sitting having general conversation it helps to hear what a White person thinks of a general topic. It helps to hear what the opinion of a White person, on the topic you are talking about, is” [AA(b)1CW].*

*“Yes, it does because I will come with my way of thinking and it is also good to see, “OK, cool, there’s another way of seeing this thing.” Then you marry the 2 and most of the time something dynamic comes out” [AB(a)AD].*

*“whether it involves an Indian insight or a White insight or a Black insight; you know, anyone can come up with that. It does, like I will be able to come up with deeper insights, when it comes to Black culture, because I’m Black” [AB(a)1CW].*

*“Whereas when you’ve got a very diverse bunch of people who feel free to talk and say what they think and share their experiences and come from very different backgrounds” [ABECD].*

*“So to level the playing fields it is important but from a pure selfish point of view, in terms of what I do for a living and to whom we’re talking to, the market that we are talking to, out there, South Africans. You need a real appreciation of backgrounds and insights. [ABECD].*

*“You can only feel something when it is around you and that is why the diversity in the agency” [ABECD].*

*“And I do believe that diverse teams are able to come with territories or creative platforms that are very different from one another” [CBCMD].*

*“I think it is because we have different(?) communication that reaches South Africa and South Africa is so diverse. So, if you don’t have a diverse set of people working in an agency, you are not going to achieve that result and there are always targets” [ABS].*

### 3. BBBEE

BBBEE was reported as well communicated and implemented by all in the agency and the client felt the agency had done better than other agencies with regards to transformation. Agency staff reported agency diversity as a reason for seeking work in the agency or a reason for accepting a post in the agency. The agency ECD expressed a desire to be a transformational agent in the industry and felt that the agency should reflect the larger national population. The notion of being reflective was echoed by several interviewees.

*“I had many other offers but then, because of their credentials and the kind of work that was coming out, I thought, “Well this is very diverse.” And at that time this is what I was after because I had experienced 2 years in a studio where I was the only Black guy” [AB(a)AD].*

*“We need a copywriter; we need an art director but it has to be a Black kid” [AB(a)CD].*

*“Yes, it is because my team is a Black team so sometimes we will come up with ideas or routes that are like mainly Black orientated naturally so and sometimes those ideas don’t really see the light of day” [AB(a)AD].*

*“Those insights are real; when people actually naturally talk about things that have that point of reference. So that, for me, is the main reason. Otherwise it is just a window dressing” [ABECD].*

*“I think what we do lack, well every agency lacks, and not only this one is that we don’t have enough Black senior people. To find those people is quite tough” [ABCS1].*

*“One thing it is just to hire Black people but it is another to give them the latitude to bring to the table, from a presentation perspective, the work that they believe in and that is what [ABECD] does exceptionally well” [CBMM1].*

*“Because we really are committed to making a difference in our industry and it is an industry that hasn’t changed fast enough so, we are very committed to making that change and to being a truly representative agency” [ABMD].*

*“Because that was the gap for me in the industry. So there are agencies and there were agencies, at that time, that ticked off all the BEE requirements but there was a lot of fronting there. And everyone knew it but I wanted it to be real” [ABECD].*

#### 4. Team Selection and Appointment

The creatives and the agency management reported that the size of the agency afforded a degree of flexibility in the formation of teams. Cross team co-operation and all agency briefs were reported by most staff members.

*“If they have all those little insights then putting those 2 people in 1 team it matters, you know. I don’t know if it is easier to work with; because we work and we also mix, you know if you’re available and the next person is available, even if it is not the set team, people work together and I haven’t heard of struggles to work together because somebody was White, I don’t think so anyway.” [AB(a)1CW]*

*“We would schedule teams together but you are not bound by that. Anyone can work with anyone. It just so happens that a lot of our teams are in relationships with each other so it really works it. They don’t stop working, even when they go home.” [AB(a)CD]*

*“[L]ike the whole agency was part of this brief. So we all gave it a shot. Me and XXXXX, who is my art director on the “XXXX” campaign, we translated the variety into diversely showing the different cultures and races that we have in this country.” [AB(a)CD]*

*“The big cool briefs; xxxxxx campaign went out to the whole agency. Any big xxxx brief. The great stuff; even pitches, when we pitch on stuff we’ll*



*generally open up to the whole agency and then whoever's idea wins that would become the core team.” [AB(a)CD]*

*“But what I find is that sometimes mixing more people in that group certainly helps to come out with something more surprising.” [ABECD]*

#### 5. Advertising schools as a barrier to entry

Advertising colleges were described as a means of earning an internship, but the feeling expressed was that they were overpriced and that more was learnt in the internship than in the college. Only two subjects in the agency did not attend one of Johannesburg's advertising colleges.

*“Definitely because their fees are really expensive so already there's that barrier to entry. Back when I was a student you couldn't get a student loan because it wasn't” [AB(a)CD].*

*“I studied art direction for 3 years. It was really tough because, at the time, these private colleges weren't recognised so finding finance was really difficult. So I worked at various dodgy clubs and pizza places and things” [AB(a)CD].*

#### **5.2.2.1. Background: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (1-4)**

The campaign was initially going to run as a different execution. The marketing team from the client and the agency creatives were divided over the targeting of the campaign and felt the alternate execution was going to alienate the White consumer. The Marketing Manager (CBMM1) felt strongly that the execution was right, but the Marketing Director (CBCMD) felt that the campaign would alienate the White market. The campaign became an 'all agency' brief in an attempt to reach the target audience which was stated as 'all South Africans'. The outputs for the campaign were a series of four, 45 second commercials. The commercials each have a specific product offering attached to them, but the products were associated retrospectively after the creative was developed.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count	Code
<b>Client A</b>	<b>CA</b>				
<b>Marketing Director</b>	40-45	Male	White	1	CBCMD
<b>Marketing Manager</b>	46-50	Female	White	1	CBMM1
<b>Agency A</b>	<b>AA</b>				
<b>Managing Director</b>	46-50	Female	White	1	ABMD
<b>Executive Creative Director</b>	36-40	Female	Indian	1	ABECD
<b>TV Producer</b>	36-40	Female	White	1	ABTVPRO D
<b>Strategist</b>	26-30	Female	White	1	ABS
<b>Client Service</b>	40-45	Female	White	1	ABCS1
<b>Client Service</b>	30-35	Female	Coloured	1	ABCS2
<b>Creative Team</b>	<b>AAT1</b>				
<b>Copy Writer</b>	20-25	Female	White	1	AB(b)1CW
<b>Copy Writer</b>	20-25	Male	Black	1	AB(b)2CW
<b>Art Director</b>	20-25	Male	Black	1	AB(b)AD
<b>Creative Director</b>	30-35	Female	Indian	1	AB(b)CD

Table 11: Agency B Campaign (b) - Output (1-4) Actors Responsible for Outputs

### 5.2.2.2. Content Analysis: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (1)

#### *Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure*

The commercial features a White female (age 30-35) as the major protagonist. She is shot in a variety of mid shots with one slow-motion close up and a close up through a car windscreen. The supporting actor was a Black male (age 26-30) who is introduced by way of a brief close up. The featured extras are introduced by way of a medium tight two shot and the female extra has very little screen presence and her face is obscured by a hat.

#### *Idealisation*

The use of a White female car guard appears to be to create gender and racial diversity in the portrayal of characters.

**Exoticisation**

Not present.

**Exclusion**

There are no White males in the commercial.

**Role Portrayal**

The White woman plays the role of the shopper and the role of car guards is played by Black males and a White female (who is older).

**Camera Distance**

The supporting actor and featured extras are shot in a combination of close up and wide shots with very few mid shots. The lead actor is shot mainly in mid shots.

**Status**

The White protagonist is cast a middle class woman doing the shopping whilst the car guards are cast as Black males and an older White female.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Female	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	26-30	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	36-40	Male	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	40-45	Female	White	1
<b>Voice-over</b>	indistinct	Male	Black	1

**Table 12: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (1) Content Analysis**

### 5.2.2.3. Content Analysis: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (2)

#### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial features and all Black and an all-young cast. There are two major protagonists representing two opposing 'teams'. One of the protagonists is framed in a tight one shot, but most of the commercial is shot in group mid-shots and wide-shots. The two female featured-extras are always shot as background but for the second last shot where they are shot as medium wide two shot. The female extras have no dialogue.

#### ***Idealisation***

Not present.

#### ***Exoticisation***

Not present.

#### ***Exclusion***

There are no White characters in the commercial. There are no characters over thirty.

#### ***Role Portrayal***

The female characters are shown as spectators to the actions of the male characters.

#### ***Camera Distance***

The commercial is shot mainly in wide shots, tight shots are fast paced and there is little time given to tight shots. Single tight shots are shot profile and there is one tight two shot of the two female featured-extras.

#### ***Status***

The entire cast is young and there is little status differentiation.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	20-25	Male	White	1
<b>Protagonist</b>	20-25	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	20-25	Male	Black	4
<b>Featured Extras</b>	20-25	Female	Black	2
<b>Voice-over</b>	Indistinct	Male	Black	1

Table 13: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (2) Content Analysis

#### 5.2.2.4. Content Analysis: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (3)

##### ***Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure***

The commercial features a majority White cast. The major protagonist is a White male (age 10-15). The commercial begins with a slow tracking wide shot inside an airplane cabin. There is a tight profile two shot of the supporting actors who play the parents of the protagonist and the featured extra (age 6-10). There is a close up one shot of the White female supporting actor (20 -25) and a close up two-shot of the parents.

##### ***Idealisation***

Not present.

##### ***Exoticisation***

Not present.

##### ***Exclusion***

There are no Black featured-extras, supporting actors or protagonists. There is no cast member older than 40.

##### ***Role Portrayal***

The commercial portrays a White family and an air hostess. The air hostess is female.

### **Camera Distance**

The commercial makes use of several close ups both in profile and front facing. The supporting actor (White female, age 26-30) has the closest camera distance.

### **Status**

The White family are quintessentially upper middle class White South Africans. The extras are predominantly White. There is little status differentiation other than the role of the air hostess.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	10-15	Male	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	36-40	Male	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	36-40	Female	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	30-35	Female	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	20-25	Female	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	6-10	Male	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Female	White	36-40
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Female	Black	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Male	White	3
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Male	Black	1
<b>Voice-over</b>	Indistinct	Male	Black	1

Table 14: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (3) Content Analysis

#### **5.2.2.5. Content Analysis: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (4)**

##### **Faceism, screen presence, screen exposure**

The commercial makes use of wide shots and there is little face time for the protagonist though significant screen presence. Face time is dedicated to the Black male supporting actor (age 26-30) and the Black female supporting

actor (age 26-30). There is a single close up on the White male featured extra (age 46-50). The female lead character (age 30-35) has significant screen exposure but is featured in wide shots and never in a single close up.

***Idealisation***

Not present.

***Exoticisation***

Not present.

***Exclusion***

There are no older Black characters.

***Role portrayal***

The characters are all displayed as office workers of similar or equal authority.

***Camera Distance***

The commercial is shot primarily in wide shots. The Black female supporting actor and the Black male supporting actor are both shot in solo close up shots. The older White male featured extra (46-50) is also shown in a solo close up.

***Status***

The Black female supporting actor displays some authority over her Black male colleague in telling him to stop participating. There does not appear to be an authority figure in the commercial.

	Age	Gender	Race	Count
<b>Content</b>	<b>TV1</b>			
<b>Protagonist</b>	30-35	Female	White	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	26-30	Male	Black	1
<b>Supporting Actor</b>	26-30	Female	Black	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	46-50	Male	White	1
<b>Featured Extras</b>	30-35	Female	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Female	White	1
<b>Non-featured Extras</b>	Indistinct	Male	White	1
<b>Voice-over</b>	Indistinct	Male	Black	1

Table 15: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (4) Content Analysis

#### 5.2.2.6. Interviews: Agency B Campaign (b)-Output (1)-(4)

##### Age

##### 1. Segmentation: Clients influence

The tendency to gravitate to the lower end of the age band was reported. It was also reported that client targets are never over 40. The client however felt this was a function of the market and not of self-reflection as is expressed in the last excerpt below.

*“So I think that what happens is that when you are looking at 25 to 35, for example, people are thinking they are 25 and you are going to reflect that.” [ABECD]*

*“oh that’s a general thing. We haven’t had a client that was aiming 40 plus.” [ABECD]*

*“It is not the, “Hey, we’re the creative people that understand that.” It is the fact that you are trying to come up with creative concepts for those people because they’ve got the bucks. Not the other way around.” [CBCMD]*



## 2. Industry youthfulness in South-Africa age focus

The uniqueness of the South African industry and the industry attitude toward age was again reported. Older creative team members and agency managers and directors expressed the lack of a specialist career path as an area of concern. The team writer expressed that younger creatives may be inclined to feature younger cast.

*“In South Africa there seems to be a sense of having failed if you haven’t achieved a creative director role or more and I don’t know where that comes from.” [ABECD]*

*“But there are very few people who are proud to say, “I’m a 45 year old writer or art director.” [ABECD]*

*“Who’s going to listen to her?” because, unfortunately, we are an aged society in South Africa. We are not pro it at all. If you are cool and young and you know what’s happening then you are the one”. [ABCS1]*

*“I think, if anything, there’s a herd mentality that says, “Young is in and everybody is there.” And I think that’s the problem because marketers, whether they are at agency level or here, are getting greener, are getting younger and the greener you are the more you reflect your own life and because so many of those people have made it into the working environment, given the countries demographics of that it is such a young country, all attention is being focused there because people are talking to themselves really. And that’s a worry.” [CBMM1]*

*“I think it is a mentality game and, unfortunately, the mentality is something that young people have more now, I don’t know, I guess it makes them more driven.” [AB(a)1CW]*

*“There is no denying if you want to aim towards a younger market then you are going to use younger actors.” [AB(a)1CW]*

## 3. Agency Age diversity

All agency and client respondents reported that the creative teams in the agency are predominantly young. The agency ECD felt reported that teams with a combination of youth and experience worked well .The distinction

between client service and creative in terms of age was reported.

*“Is that because we are so dependent on getting the youth into the business, to have a sense of what’s going on out there, that it makes the older people feel more redundant.” [ABECD]*

*“But I have had people who are seasoned or middleweight writers or art directors working with very junior people and it worked brilliantly.” [ABECD]*

*“Young; this is the young part of the agency; it is the 25, 23; I think there’s even 22 here. So, it is an interesting balance because you’ve got the experience and the wisdom and then you’ve got the gung-ho, “I just want to make it happen,” amazing ideas and, when the 2 meet, there’s quite a lot of magic that happens, you know. And I don’t think you can run any kind of business without some wisdom.” [ABS]*

*“I worry about becoming a dinosaur when you are irrelevant in advertising because I do think you have to be in touch with everything around you and not just news and topical and stuff like that. You have to understand what shoes kids are wearing and what anime they are watching and whatever.” [AB(b)CD]*

*“I don’t know where they go and that is why I say I worry about where do you go after a certain age. I think that either they become, I don’t know many teams that are like older teams; like say a 40 year old and a 40 year old working together.” [AB(b)CD]*

## **Gender**

### **1. Insights**

The presence of gender diversity was viewed as source of insight and creative advantage. The agency has two female CDs. Respondents reported that teams with males and females were likely to create interesting outputs.

*“Ja, because sometimes you think of things that probably as a woman I never would have thought of. Like, “Oh, that’s an interesting way of expressing it. I never thought of it that way.” [ABCS2]*

*“...it is the same thing for me. It is the dynamic of mixing the genders allows for you to get rid of all that other stuff, those other layers.” [AB(b)CD]*

*“And then you’ve got men and women working on it; and it is just awesome because you get insight from both sides.” [AB(b)CD]*

*“I often think that if you put a guy on something that is typically female or a female on something that is typically male maybe you will get something different.” [AB(b)CD]*

### **Race**

The agency ECD and one of the founding members reported that racial diversity was important and stated that he sought to build an agency that reflected the population they sought to advertise to. The need to have Black writer to write 'vernac' advertisements was expressed.

*“So I wanted to create an environment where there was freedom of contribution, freedom of expression because out of that something is born.” [ABECD]*

*“Secondly, I really wanted to create, and the 1st agency, that was really representative of our country.” [ABECD]*

*“It does depend; we were actively searching for Black art directors and writers because, A, we do need people who can do vernac ads, which I cannot do, even if my life depended on it.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“So you do need people in with cultural insights, that your White girl from the North isn’t going to have, and with the language capabilities to speak to a mass market, without sounding like it’s a White girl from the Northern suburbs.” [AB(b)1CW]*

### **Client influence on race**

The client has recently appointed a new Marketing Manager and the dynamic between the agency and the client changed over the course of this campaign. The client is a Black male and feels the agency need to speak to the majority Black consumer more than they have in the past.

*“So that’s what I say, when you say; he’ll sometimes say, “Give this brief to one of the Black guys.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“Now he is suddenly saying to us we need to talk to the Black market, we need to really talk to them. And we go, “Well we have been talking to them.” AB(b)CD*

### 1. Segmentation and LSM

The brand is seeking to shift its positioning. In the past they have not segmented, but have sought to address all of South Africa. Interviews revealed a retrospective approach to segmentation. It was reported that the idea comes first and is then aligned to a product and the products respective segment.

*“At this stage, as many people as possible will often get ‘all agency’ briefs. Mostly, because if it is a good opportunity; so you will find, if it is TV in particular; what xxxxxx likes to do is give everyone the opportunity to work on it.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“It was, “These are our meals; we want a broad all inclusive campaign and then we’ll decide which meals fit on where better.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“Generally it is pretty much the whole of South Africa, I think. I think what Nando’s is trying to do is do something big for their 25th Birthday, where it will include everyone. So it is not necessarily Black or White or Indian or whatever. It is more South African people who understand the different dynamics of our country and can relate to the different things that we all go through.” [AB(b)2CW]*

*“Not really because what happens is we normally, it’s a weird thing with this one, is that we placed the food after the ads had been approved.” [AB(b)2CW]*

*“I think so because what happened is they wanted ads that would speak to all South Africans but obviously you can’t do that in 1 ad.” [AB(b)2CW]*

*“But, like I said, it is mostly White women who eat it but we want to get Black men to eat it then you would cater for an ad that would appeal to Black men without excluding White women because you don’t want to*

*lose the market you already have.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“Which again, all of those scripts, we wrote probably about 30, I’m sure; quite a few went through to client and what did happen was segmenting; this one is going to be great for our Black market; this one is a little bit more White; this one both Black and White people are going to find it universally funny and they can laugh about it.” [AB(b)1CW]*

## 2. Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights

The agency and the creative team on this campaign reported that diversity is a source of creativity. ‘Vernac’ was once again reported as one of the reasons diversity has advantages.

*“So there is a benefit in putting it out to people with different backgrounds. And again, it goes back to the original point, of hiring people of different ages and different backgrounds because that is all the stuff that you put into a melting pot and, for me, the biggest thing is, I always tell the guys, “Surprise me.” [ABECD]*

*“I do need a Black person in the department because I need to understand; they have a better insight in that particular community, regardless of where they are from.” [ABS]*

*“Like I’ve just said, I think, that it shows in our work; in that a lot of the insights and cultural diversity that our country has, is reflected in the work that we do.” [ABMD]*

The ECD reported that hiring people who are not from advertising backgrounds adds an element of diversity.

*“So I put a very diverse bunch of people out there and they came out with solutions that were not ads. And it was exactly what they were looking for.” [ABECD]*

The client reported that the fact that diverse teams may have conflict made the client more comfortable with the creative work presented to them.

*“Within the team they would have had their differences and I think that that’s the benefit of the piece of work that comes out of a multicultural*

*team; is that they've panel- beaten the thing to death, to create that today." [ABAMD]*

*"But it is also a matter of; you get such different ideas because, obviously, our personal experiences are not the same and we are not all going to interpret a brief in the same way. So, I think the nicest thing is that you get a whole variety. Sometimes we sit in reviews and you think, "How the fuck did they think of that?" Or, "Wow, that is a strange way of looking at it." [AB(b)2CW]*

*"I think the biggest thing is that with advertising you don't only speak to 1 person or 1 kind of person. A lot of brands now want to reach into different markets that they've never had before. So sometimes you do need the diversity that we have around here, where you will need someone to help you with a vernac line, for instance, which you wouldn't be able to do if it was an all-White agency, unless you outsourced something or someone." [AB(b)2CW].*

### 3. BBBEE

BBBEE was widely reported by all candidates and not reported negatively in any of the interviews conducted. BBBEE was reported as necessary for compliance and as advantageous to creative outputs. It was reported that everyone knew the rules and that if a position opened in the agency, every effort would be made to fill the spot with a Black candidate first.

*"So the culture of this diverse thing started out as a very conscious thing and now it has become 2nd nature, in terms of how we hire people." [ABECD]*

*"So our 1st port of call is to identify the need and then say, "Is there a Black candidate that can fulfil that need?" And when we've absolutely exhausted all possibilities, amongst the Black candidates, then we'll look to Coloured and Indian and lastly to White candidates." [ABMD]*

*"So, I think that we would never say no to White and Coloured and Indian candidates but we want to be a little microcosm of what our countries' population is like, which is why I think you will see there is every race, creed, even dietary requirement in this agency; young, old,*

*White, Black, Indian, Coloured, women, men. I think we are getting it right. We are keeping a really interesting mix of people.” [ABMD]*

*“I think where I am finding a bit of an obstacle to realising that is that often times the people that vet the ideas, at agency level, and I am not just saying that this is the situation with Black River. I am just talking, in general, about agencies. You find that there is a lot of young Black creatives or Black, Coloured or Indian, you name it, creatives that come into the agency but the people that end up vetting the ideas still have a very, very specific world view.” [CBMM1]*

*“Look, I think they’ve been quicker to adapt to what I, as an individual, expect to come out of an agency than any agency I’ve ever worked with before.” [CBMM1]*

*“We’re looking for a Black art director. Make sure it is a Black person.”  
Or, “When you are getting the interns make sure you get a Black art director or a Black copywriter.” [AB(a)CD]*

#### 4. Team Selection and Appointment

A loose approach to team selection was reported. Also, teams were not all one writer and one director; some teams such as the one working on this campaign have two writers. The concept of inter-team flexibility and collaboration was widely reported.

*“It’s surprising stuff. So the dynamic, the diversity there, even though it is not the intention but when it does fall that way I get very excited that it is a multicultural combination. I prefer that to intentionally getting a Black only team, which is a big thing in the industry. We need a Black team.” [ABECD].*

*“And so it starts becoming more collaborative and, more often than not, that’s how we’ve had 2 writers and an art director or 2 art directors and a writer because it just so happened that the discussion, the brainstorming, the informal session, while they are having a smoke outside or coffee there; happened to be 3 people.” [ABECD].*

Purposefully diverse teams were reported and were discussed as source of creative insights.

*“Ja, Many of them have never travelled outside of South Africa or outside of their area and you put this young, Afrikaans, conservative girl with a young, dynamic, outward, what can we say, like a real exploring mind, Black girl. You put them together and it told that, that creates a magic.” [CBCMD]*

The ‘all agency brief’ was reported as applying to all large or ‘cool’ projects and the concept was largely understood as a source of improved creative outputs.

*“What we do, when big briefs come in, brief everyone and whichever team or group of people comes up with the winning idea then that’s the team that does it or the group that does it.” [CBCMD]*

The conflict that had occurred on the campaign with regards to targeting a more Black audience and the client influence in this decision was expressed.

*“I just felt the timing around this was not appropriate and we got into, “Oh, you don’t understand Black people.” And I said, “You’re right.” Because I am sitting here and the 2 Black okes are presenting the concept and my Black marketing manager, XXXXX, is laughing his fucking head off saying, “You guys have cracked this.” And then you’ve got Indian, White and Coloured people sitting there who don’t get it.” [CBCMD]*

*“There is definitely merit in putting a Black person to create a Black script but then look at a White person might come completely off the wall and do something completely amazing and something completely different.” [ABCS2]*

*“I think it definitely it makes for better work when you’ve got that array, a kind of such a vast array of people. Not just in race and gender but in personality and cultural beliefs and all of that. It is the 1st agency I’ve worked at that is that diverse.” [AB(b)CD]*

*“Or, what you could do is brief it to a White team and put 1 Black copywriter or art director and throw them into the mix; so that you don’t, so you kind of break the format a little bit. So, that is what we do sometimes.” [AB(b)CD]*



*“Or if we are doing an ad that is targeted specifically for a Black market I will be able to find the insights but we still work together.” [AB(b)2CW]*

*“So it went out to ‘all agency’ and everyone had a crack at it and I think it went through another presentation.” [AB(b)1CW]*

*“When it is a big campaign like this; they normally brief the entire agency.” [AB(b)2CW]*

## **Chapter 6: Discussion of Results**

The primary question the research seeks to address is: **What is the relationship between creative-team-level-diversity and the multiculturalism displayed in television commercials?**

Diversity is understood as per Mannix and Neal (2005, p.31) and is taken to mean any source of difference between individuals in a group. However, for the purpose of this study only the factors of age, gender and race are considered.

This chapter is analysed per the questions in Chapter Three and overlays the framework of emergent trends from Chapter Five as a means of understanding the factors that influence multicultural outputs on the factors of age, gender and race. It also affords a better understanding of the factors that affect agency diversity.

### **6.1. What is the relationship between creative teams and age diversity displayed in television commercials?**

#### **6.1.1. Segmentation: Client's influence**

##### **6.1.1a. *The Creative Outputs***

“While the portrayal of older consumers is still open to debate, the literature to date presents an overwhelming case for their under-representation in all forms of advertising“ (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3). Simcock and Sudbury's conclusion was confirmed through the content analysis of the commercials in this study.

Content analysis of the television revealed an under-representation of models over the age of 40. Whilst the age cohort was represented it was under-represented in comparison to under forties, and quite significantly. In all four campaigns the role of the clients' stated target or the clients' approach to segmentation, had a significant impact on the age of characters portrayed in television commercials. Campaigns A(a) and A(b) were both targeted campaigns and were intended to target an age cohort between 20 and 45.

The dynamic that affects this under-representation was more complex than a simple self-representation hypothesis, where youthful agency creative

represent their own world view and social context through the characters they cast and the narratives they tell. This may well have an influence, but the client's role in the youthfulness of characters was significant.

Campaigns A (a) and A (b) had vastly different segmentation and targeting approaches to campaigns B (a) and B (b), yet the approach to age was quite similar across both agencies and clients. There was very little difference between creative teams in terms of attitude toward age or depiction of character age in commercials. The trend was still to exclude characters above forty, particularly in roles with significant screen presence or screen time. This was stated as an influence of client treating and segmentation and not as a function of agency youthfulness and self-depiction.

Simcock and Sudbury (2006) suggested that the exclusion or absence of older characters portrayed in television commercials and in advertising leads to a reinforcement of a youth complex in broader society. This youth complex was reported by agency creative across both agencies, but more widely reported in AA.

Carrigan and Szmigin (2003) found that the exclusion of older characters was discriminatory. However, their primary research concluded that it was not the depiction or exclusion of older people that was the key concern, but rather that the depiction of the population was dominated by a focus on youth (Carrigan & Szmigin, 2003). This was once again found observed across all four campaigns analysed.

Carrigan and Szmigin (2003) and Simcock and Sudbury (2006) suggested that there is an under-representation of older models in advertising. This finding was repeated in the analyses of the four selected campaigns, but the mechanism for the exclusion was reported as the clients' targeting and segmentation and not necessarily the choice of the creative who produced the commercials. Indeed, creative remarked that they never receive a brief where the target audience is over 40 years of age.

There was still a trend to cast females younger than males.

#### **6.1.1b. The Creative Teams**

Across both agencies and all four teams, non-director team members were

under forty years old. Older creative team members were Creative Directors or Executive Creative Directors. This was true for both agencies and all the teams interviewed. Older creatives expressed concerns about a future career path for themselves and felt they began to lose relevance, as they got older. Older creatives reported that clients wanted younger creative teams working on campaigns and felt that the clients' brief was never targeted at an audience older than 40 years of age.

The same was true for both clients, though AAC was more targeted and segmented and thus had campaigns that were targeting different age segments. It was reported that all of these segments centred below 40. AAB claimed the target audience was all South Africans for both campaigns AB(a) and AB(b). However, all commercials featured youthful protagonists and a largely youthful cast.

Client AAC and ABC both stated that younger audiences were targeted. This was explained as a function of buying power and the fact that younger audiences are impressionable and have not developed brand preference yet. Client ABC's CMO (Chief Marketing Officer) expressed that it was not a case of agencies targeting younger audiences, because they were younger, but rather a case of targeting where the money is. Client and agencies reported that the affect is perhaps the corollary of young teams affecting creative outputs. They both reported that perhaps the need to target a youthful market leads to the prevalence of youth in creative teams in the advertising industry.

### **6.1.2. Industry youthfulness in South-Africa age focus**

#### **6.1.2a. *The Creative Outputs***

“Francher's (1973) content analysis of American television advertisements concluded that the under-representation of older people both reflected and reinforced the “youth complex’ (p. 252) that predominates in the USA” (Simcock & Simbury, 2006, p.3). Whilst Francher's work is an older study and based in the USA, agency interviewees in this study reported a similar youth complex. The language of the agency and client with regards the youthfulness of the industry exposed an espoused belief that youthfulness was necessary for the creative insights necessary for effective advertising. Simcock and Sudbury suggested that the exclusion or absence of older characters

portrayed in television commercials and in advertising lead to a reinforcement of a youth complex in broader society (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3). This dynamic might explain what several respondents referred to as a youth obsessed society in South Africa.

Peterson (1995) in Simcock and Sudbury (2006) reported that older models were portrayed less often than young models in advertisements for banks and in the same work by Simcock and Sudbury (2006), Carrigan and Szmigin (1998) found that older models were underrepresented in advertisements for newspapers. This was of interest as the target consumer for both products was older - indeed, for newspapers the titles had an average readership of older than 50 years of age.

This phenomenon was again present, though the products targeted did not have as high a centre of gravity as in banking advertising. Client interviewed expressed that youthful targeting was necessary and they also did not feel that agencies over-represented youthful characters, or represented themselves in commercials, rather they reported that the industry was youthful.

The arguments of Williamson (1978) in Simcock and Sudbury (2006) that the negative effects of age based stereotyping have a societal impact were not reflected. There was very little or no depiction of age based negative stereotyping. This was more in line with the view of Evers (1998), who felt the issue was not negative stereotyping of older characters but total omission: “[T]here is little commercial interest in presenting older people at all’ (p.20)” (Simcock & Sudbury, 2006, p. 3).

#### **6.1.2b. The Creative Teams**

Members of creative teams were all younger than 40 across all four campaigns. This could lead to an organizational or industry wide social categorisation of the industry as a youthful industry, and an alignment of the values of the industry with youthful values or an over emphasis of the value of youthful thinking and ideas. Social categorisation theory could further explain the predominance of younger creatives in advertising agencies. Agency creatives felt that this was peculiar to South Africa and that the global industry was not prone to the same tendencies. The Cannes awards and the prevalence of older creatives at the awards ceremony and older creatives

receiving awards at global advertising awards events was expressed as an example of older creatives being respected and valued internationally by several creative interviewees.

Under-representation of older characters was evident across all campaigns and under-representation of older creative was evident across both agencies and all four accounts. That is not to say that the prevalence of youthfulness in agencies gives rise to an underrepresentation of older characters in television commercials (or that the relationship is in any way causal), but it does highlight the lack of agency age diversity and the correlative lack of age diversity in creative outputs.

It is possible that a youthful bias in advertising agencies leads to the omission of older characters in advertising outputs or a stereotypical representation of older characters when older consumers are explicitly targeted. This was not the case in the four campaigns analysed. Rather, the age homogeneity of teams could be viewed as a factor in the omission of older character - but the relationship is complex and speaks to a broader societal issue that involves the marketing discipline at large and not just the advertising industry.

Across all four campaigns interviews with clients, creative and agency personnel did not give rise to the reporting of age a significant factor of diversity. Diversity was described as valuable asset across all interviewees but age diversity was largely underreported as a source of diversity. The older creatives in South Africa then might be subject to negative stereotyping and either produce work that is aligned to a youthful in group or exit the organisation or the industry. It was reported across all campaigns that agency creative staff feel they need to achieve a creative directorship by the time they are 40 or they need to exit the industry. It was expressed that this leads to a lack of experience in the industry and that the most experienced practitioners find themselves in management roles as Creative Directors, and the lack of a specialist career path was expressed as concern by creatives on campaign A(b).

### **6.1.3. Agency Age diversity**

#### ***6.1.3a. The Creative Teams***

Across all four campaigns and all four creative teams interviewed. The only

member of a core creative team that was older than 35 was the Creative Director responsible for campaign B(a), who was a female Creative Director between the ages of 36 and 40. For both agencies the Executive Creative Directors were older than 35. Both agencies reported that the client service and strategy departments were generally older than the creative departments and described the creative departments as necessarily youthful. A review of the literature on age in organisations in chapter two revealed that occupational age composition can lead to negative stereotypes against older workers in youth dominated industries, and that these negative stereotypes could have detrimental effects on older workers in those industries (Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.607).

A key question arises as to the circulatory nature of a youth focused advertising industry. Kuypers and Bengston's (1973) concept of 'Societal Breakdown Syndrome' suggested that the portrayal as stereotypical or the omission of ageing customers and characters creates a self-perpetuating cycle of ageism through the process of self categorisation and labelling theory.

Indeed, if the advertising agency as an organisation aligns age with declining creative performance, or more accurately perceives youth as necessary for creative outputs then it is possible that the industry become trapped in the cycle of Social Breakdown syndrome as described by Kuypers and Bengston's (1973). Agency creatives reported a decreasing sense of self-worth and an increasing anxiety as they got older.

The effects of an in-group based on an age cohort, are similar to the effects of an in-group based on ethnicity or gender. "For any given person, group categorization may occur on the basis of many different variables, including ethnicity, gender, age, occupation, and economic status. Although each of these group memberships is part of the person's identity or 'self, the momentary salience of any particular membership is highly variable'" (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337).

An age-based in-group enables the mechanisms of self- and social categorisation. Thus, the claims of 'Whiteness theory' become relevant to age as well as gender and race. A youthful in-group may serve as a categorisation mechanism. Cleveland and Festa in Joshi and Roh (2009) stated that older workers who work in in jobs with younger age composition might experience

poor performance ratings and out group categorisation. Joshi and Roh (2009) did conclude that age diversity would result in diminished performance in teams with predominantly youthful work forces.

#### **6.1.4. Conclusion: Age**

Age diversity across all four accounts was limited, if not absent. Various reasons were given for the necessity of youthfulness in advertising age teams. All four campaigns analysed exhibited age-based exclusion.

### **6.2. What is the relationship between gender diversity in creative teams and gender diversity displayed in television commercials?**

#### **6.2.1. Segmentation and Targeting: Client's Influence**

##### **6.2.1a. The Creative Outputs**

The creative outputs across the four campaigns revealed differing levels of gender diversity. Campaign A (a) had a significant male slant and the only two female characters in the commercial do not receive major screen presence or faceism. The creative outputs of A (b) were intended to target male customers and as such only featured male protagonists across the four vignettes (the outputs of the campaign). The question as to whether the maleness of the teams (responsible for the outputs) and the maleness of the outputs are in any way related is a complex question. The creatives interviewed from Agency A reported that clients want male creatives working on male targeted products and female creatives working on female targeted products. The relationship then may be the reverse of a self-reflection or self-projection hypothesis. Clients wish to target an audience and thus request teams that could most effectively reach the designated target.

Agency B campaign B (a) was a single output and featured two male protagonists. The team responsible had a female Creative Director and a male writer and a male Art Director. The commercial showed an underrepresentation of females despite no apparent focus on targeting males over females as the end consumer. Agency B (b) was a series of four vignettes and sought to target 'all of South Africa' with no apparent gender targeting reported. The team responsible was gender diverse with two males and two females. The four vignettes featured two female protagonists and two



male protagonists, and as such the outputs appear to depict a considerable degree of gender diversity and multiculturalism. The approach to gender diversity was across the campaign rather than per single commercial output. This made it difficult to contrast with Agency A campaign A (b), as the multi-vignette output from agency A (campaign A[b]) sought to target males and was as such male oriented and excluded female representation beyond stereotypical portrayals of non-masculine activities (shopping and dance classes).

A review of the literature (as found in chapter two) revealed two divergent schools on the differences in reading of commercial messages across the genders. Cramphorn (2010) espoused the nature and inherent biological difference argument in a classic nature-nurture antithetical debate. On the other side of the debate Stern (1999) argued the opposite end of the nature-nurture continuum, but both arguments agreed that men and woman read commercial messages differently. “If men and women are intrinsically different, then we might expect them to respond differently to different styles of advertising.” (Cramphorn, 2011, p.8). Sterns counter to a biological difference as the underlying reason for a gender based difference to the reading of commercials is captured in the excerpt from Stern 1999) “A key point is that the difference between male and female interpretive strategies based on childhood learning (Crawford and Chaffin 1988) and subsequent experiences can be extended to any differences that separate one group of people from another” (Stern, 1999, p. 4). Both views concluded that males and females read commercials differently and therefore targeting female and male consumers requires different approaches. It follows therefore that campaigns that had gender specific targets would have a different approach. However, Stern’s view that “...neither text nor language is sex-neutral, but instead acts as a vehicle for conveying different cultural expectations and value systems for men and for women (Allen 1987)” (Stern, 1999, p. 4), pointed to an understanding of gender differences that are not only bound in interpretation and decoding of messages, but in cultural expressions that serve as an extension of normative cultural and socialisation mechanisms. Stern (1999) found that the gender discrepancy in the reading of commercial messaging was a function of socialization that is perpetuated once categorisation has become salient. This further means that male dominated industries might tend toward male understanding of gender and male oriented expression of gender

even in outputs that target females. Stern's argument then becomes about the mechanisms that facilitate the salience of gender difference. "Differences in terms of responses to an ad made by one man and two women are considered, and the findings indicate that there are more and subtler differences than those accounted for by the assumption of binary, sex-based oppositional interpretations" (Stern, 1999, p. 4).

Stern's argument suggests that the teams that create commercial messages may be a contributing factor to the salience and persistence of gender differences. The roles of creative teams and the effect of gender-diverse teams versus non-gender-diverse teams on the depiction of gender roles and the inclusion or exclusion of gender diversity in creative outputs becomes significant.

The commercials and campaigns analysed suggest that maleness is still perpetuated in creative outputs and that the outputs of diverse teams were less prone to this male dominance. In fact diverse teams created outputs that reflected the gender diversity present in the teams. This did not suggest a causal relationship between male teams and male oriented outputs, as the outputs of campaign A(b) were targeted at males. However, it does begin to explain the absence of female protagonists in campaign A(a) which was not targeted specifically at men.

Knoll, Eisend and Steinhagen (2011) asserted "the social role of men and woman has changed in many Western societies over the past few years. At the same time, advertisers still depict women and men in tradition-bound roles to promote their products" (Knoll, Eisend, Steinhagen, 2011, p.867).

The role of woman in the commercials analysed appeared to suggest that women are still depicted as bound by stereotypical gender roles. Campaigns A (b) and Campaign B (b) featured woman as shopping and attending dance classes with unwilling male partners. Campaign B(b) 1 featured a female protagonist in one of the vignettes and the protagonist was shown going about the domestic duties of shopping. Output B (b) 4 did show a female protagonist in a corporate office, but dancing was once again prevalent (though this was the basis of the humour). The protagonist was not portrayed as a senior executive in the corporate environment, but rather as a lowly office worker. Men however were not depicted as authoritative in the output.

Furnham and Paltzer (2010) analysed the role of authority and spokespersons in television advertising. Their research concluded that whilst roles are dependent on target audience, (as was the case in the commercials analysed in this research) men are more likely to be cast as authoritative spokespersons, or as product authorities. Women were more likely to be cast as consumers or product users. "...[W]omen were by far more likely to be a user of the product advertised and men far more likely to be portrayed as an authority. This does vary as a function of product category where the advertised product is clearly aimed at one gender or the other" (Furnham, Paltzer, 2010, p.218). The role of woman as product users was not evident in the campaigns analysed. Campaign A(b) was clearly aimed at men and men were reflected as product consumers. Authority was however located with male characters in most of the commercials analysed (where an authoritative figure was present). Commercials A (a) portrayed men as authoritative and women were portrayed only as a means of giving the male protagonist recognition. Campaign B (a) and B (b) were not targeted at men and did not show the product being used or consumed, men however were cast as authoritative figures in campaign B (a) though not in the vignettes of campaign B (b). It is interesting to note once again that campaign B (b) was the most gender diverse of the creative teams analysed.

These findings were in line with the findings of Eisend's (2010) meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising in 64 countries. Furnham and Paltzer (2010) conducted meta-analysis of 30 studies published globally since 2000. Their findings were of particular interest as South Africa provided the area of research for Africa by way of a study conducted by Furnham and Spencer-Bowdage (2002).

Furnham and Spencer-Bowdage found that a difference in portrayal exists where 52.1% of males were voice-overs while only 2.6% of females have provided voice-overs. The commercials analysed, across all four campaigns and all ten outputs, had male announcers. They further found that females in South Africa and Mauritius were most often portrayed in a dependent role. Men were most often in a narrator role. These results were repeated in this study, whilst most of the outputs did not involve 'on camera' dialogue from 'on-screen' characters. Where there was dialogue, it was spoken by males.

### Gender and Age

In South Africa Furnham & Spencer-Bowdage (2002) found 70.4% of women in the *young* age group (more than three times the amount of women in the middle-aged group) and 47.8% of men in the young age group. All woman represented in the study were in the younger age group, there was a total absence of middle aged woman.

The literature revealed an overlapping bias with relation to the depiction of female characters and the age of characters depiction relative to their male counterparts. Furnham and Paltzer (2010) suggested that “[i]t is young, attractive women that appear more often in advertisements with mature men doing the authoritative voice over” (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010, p. 217). This finding was recreated in the analysis of outputs in this research. Across campaigns and outputs woman were repeatedly portrayed as younger than men or their male counterparts. Interestingly campaign B(b) featured two vignettes with female protagonists and the female protagonists were not cast younger than the male supporting actors in the commercials. These commercials were the product of a gender diverse team and the team was led by a female creative director. Woman in the commercials created by male teams responsible for campaigns A(a) and A(b) were cast as young and attractive in comparison to the male protagonists. Eisend (2010) noted that the average age of characters depicted in commercials is lower than the average age of the population and that there was a gender bias with females being represented as younger than males. Eisend (2010) analysed central characters in commercials and found woman to be younger than men but also showed (via meta-analysis) that this trend was decreasing over time. An analysis of the central characters (or protagonists) revealed that most of the protagonists were male. Two female protagonists were present in campaigns B(b) in outputs A(b)1 and A(b)4. Both of these protagonists were 30-35 years old and were not younger than male protagonists across other campaigns analysed. However, intra-commercial age analysis revealed that woman cast as featured extras or supporting actors were cast younger than male characters, particularly in campaigns A(a) and A(b). This was an interesting finding due to the fact that male teams were responsible for the creative outputs of the campaigns in question, and whilst targeting explains exclusion it does not explain age discrepancies in cast.

### **6.2.1b. The Creative Teams**

The approach to gender diversity across the agencies was different. Agency AA had gender homogenous teams in on campaign A (a) and campaign A (b). Both of these teams were male teams, though they did report to a female Executive Creative Director. Both Creative Directors that were in the direct line of creative feedback and were part of the creative teams were male and the teams were all male. Agency B and team B (a) and B (b) were gender diverse. Team B (a) was male but reported to a female creative director and team B (b) had a female copywriter partnered with a male copywriter, a male art director and a female creative director. Both team B (a) and B (b) reported to a male ECD.

The difference in approach to gender diversity in teams could be explained by the difference in approach to segmentation and targeting. The creative team on account A (b) was working on an account that was targeting males and were chosen and allocated to the account on that basis. Indeed, agency A reported that they had 'girl teams' and 'guy teams' and very few teams that were gender diverse. The agency as an organisation is gender diverse and the client service department and strategy departments are largely female and as such less diverse. The creative department was reported as gender diverse, but the accounts analysed were gender homogenous. Interviewees reported gender discrimination largely as a non-issue in both agencies. Agency B had two female creative directors overseeing the two accounts analysed and the teams were resultantly more gender diverse than agency A. Gender discrimination was reported as non-issue in both agencies and was described as largely relegated to the past. However, interviews in both agencies discussed the lack of female ECDs in the industry and the lack of available female talent in the creative departments. Interviewees in both agencies felt that gender targeting may rely on stereotypes, but both male and female respondents discussed gender stereotyping as a useful device for the conveyance of meaning in the brevity of thirty seconds. The outputs of teams showed a correlation between gender diversity in teams and gender based diversity (multiculturalism) in creative outputs.

## 6.2.2. Insights

### 6.2.2a. *The Creative Teams*

All agency team interviewed as well as senior executive creatives, client service staff and clients reported that gender diversity was advantageous to creative outputs in that it introduced a source of alternate or differing insights to the team. Agency B team B(a) and B(b) were gender diverse, but Agency A team A(a) and team A(b) were not gender diverse. Rather, the approach was to allocate teams to gender specific campaigns. That is not to say that agency A was not gender diverse, but the team interviewed were male teams. Team A (b) was a male team on an account at was male targeted. The ECD for agency A (a woman) reported that clients seek teams that represent the targeted audience and as such male teams were place on male-targeted accounts. The arguments for gender diverse teams in the literature focus on the roles diverse insights and perspectives provide for complex problem solving. “Sex composition may be one way of ensuring a better balance of the team skills required for relatively complex tasks, such as case analyses“ (Orlitzky & Benjamin, 2003, p. 130). Orlitzky & Benjamin’s 2003 study concluded that “[b]ased on our findings, sex composition, by itself, explains a significant proportion of the variance of team performance in a student case competition” (Orlitzky & Benjamin, 2003, p. 130). The key to the benefit of diversity in-group creative work, then, is the presence of diverse perspectives and the fact that the diverse opinion can result in a reframing of the problem at hand. The reframing mechanism though, is dependent on the degree of diversity in the group in relation to the matter at hand. The literature then suggested that just as teams could benefit from ethnic and racial diversity they could benefit from gender diversity. It might therefore make sense to have gender diverse teams on male-targeted accounts.

Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) asserted that team level diversity could provide creative impetus through simple exposure to alternate ‘world views’. All creative teams interviewed expressed that gender diversity served as source of enriched understanding and alternate insights that were advantageous for commercial messaging. The approach, however, between agency A and Agency B was different in practice and the correlation between gender diversity in creative outputs and the gender diversity of the teams responsible for the outputs suggests that creative team gender diversity has

an influence on the gender diversity of the outputs.

### **6.3. What is the relationship between ethnic and race diversity in a creative team, and ethnic and racial diversity displayed in television commercials?**

#### **6.3.1. Segmentation**

##### **6.3.1a. *The Creative Outputs***

The four campaigns analysed provide a comparison of differing strategies to targeting and segmentation. Agency A and Client A make use of a segmentation model approach to advertising and as such target different audiences with different outputs. It must be noted that Brand A has a budget almost ten times the size of Brand B in terms of total advertising spend. Client B and Agency B were only beginning to look at segmentation and previously had not segmented the market. Rather, they attempted to reach broader audiences with commercials with broad appeal. Agency B attempted to create commercials that targeted all of “South Africa”. This approach is the approach described by (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999, p. 79) as targeting without alienating. Leigh, Rethans and Whitney (1987) and Whittler and Spira 2002 (in Puntoni, Vanhamme & Visscher, 2011) concluded that viewers who feel they are part of the target audience have more favourable responses to advertising messages. They termed the approach of targeting multiple audiences as “purposeful polysemy” (Puntoni, Vanhamme, & Visscher, 2011, p. 26). The question then arises as to the possibility of creating advertising messages that target viewers authentically with sufficient nuance and insight so as not to appear condescending or contrived, but that remain relevant and effective for diverse South African audiences.

For the South African market, then, one solution might be to micro segment the market. This would lead to the creation of advertising messaging for each segment specifically. Campaign A (a) and A (b) sought to follow a segmentation approach similar to this line of thinking. This approach required significant expenditure as it required multiple commercial outputs. Grier and Brumbaugh (1999) expounded that increasing diversity increased the importance of target marketing. Grier and Brumbaugh (1999) argued that target marketing and segmentation might not be a sufficient solution for

reaching diverse audiences. Rather, they argued that it is possible to create an advertisement that targets multiple consumer segments and as such argued for *purposeful polysemy*. However, they felt that the dangers of targeting multi-cultural audiences with single commercial messages is that “[w]hat may be a soundly crafted ad to the advertiser may be construed as patronizing and exploitive by the target market and as nostalgic and humorous by the non-target market...” (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999, p. 79). Agency B campaigns B(a) and B(b) sought to follow an approach of targeting multicultural and diverse audiences with single campaigns. Campaign B (b) was a multi-output series of four vignettes and sought to target segments across the vignettes though the target audiences were not explicitly segmented. Content analysis revealed, however, that two of the outputs sought to target Black audiences and two of the outputs targeted White audiences. This was reflected in the narrative and the casting of characters for those outputs. Campaign B(a) was a single output campaign and sought to target a diverse audience in a single commercial output. The diversity of the campaign is focused on ethnicity and race, but the campaign makes a point of a diverse cast, though the diversity was restricted to race and ethnicity and did not extend to gender and age. Creative team B(A) reported that the commercial was purposefully cast as diverse as the messaging it intended to communicate. This extended to casting characters of representative ethnicities and casting characters whose ethnicity matched the ethnicity of the characters they portrayed.

Client A and Agency A made use of LSM-based and ethnographic targeting. From a creative outputs perspective the technique of using ethnographic targeting and character portrayal has proved effective. “For example, recent research has found that both felt similarity to an ethnic spokesperson and the perception of being targeted by an advertisement are important mediators of consumer response to ethnic advertising (Aaker, Brumbaugh, and Grier 1999)” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337). For this reason commercials targeting Black audiences, Campaign(a) made use of Black protagonists and largely Black cast.

A review of the literature on the effects of race in television advertisements revealed that spokesperson or protagonist race in a television commercial has an impact on the positive reception of television commercials. “Blacks show better recall of content, and more positive attitudes toward advertisements that



feature Black, rather than White, actors” (Whittler, 1991, p. 54). This finding was confirmed by the portrayal of characters in outputs B (b) 1-4. The outputs were designed to target White and Black audiences across the campaign and rely on the portrayal of White and Black characters across the campaign. Campaign A (b) reflected an attempt to target a multicultural audience on the factor of race. The single commercial for A (a) features a Black protagonist who is featured with significant screen time and screen presence, and camera distance. The team responsible for the commercial was a homogeneously Black team. Campaign A (b) was a multi output campaign and was conceptualised and created by a White team (two White males). Whilst the protagonist in A (b) 2 and A(b) 3 were Black characters the campaign as a whole features more White characters than Black characters. The commercial was not specifically targeted at White consumers and the correlation between the creative team race and the characters portrayed in the commercials would seem evident.

Forehand and Deshpande (2001) argued that ethnic self-awareness leads to greater identification with an endorser of the same ethnicity and thereby increases the likelihood that the viewer would perceive themselves as part of the targeted group. “As such, factors that increase ethnic self-awareness should increase the likelihood that a consumer will feel similar (or dissimilar) to an ethnic endorser and thereby feel targeted (or not targeted) by an advertisement that features the ethnic endorser” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337). It makes sense, therefore, that an effort was made in campaign A (a) to show Black characters in the commercial as the commercial and the campaign sought to target a predominantly Black audience.

Grier and Desphande (2001) argued that distinctiveness is “influenced not only by numeric prevalence, but also by the social status of the group (Grier and Deshpande 2001)” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 338). This finding was echoed in commercial A (a) as the status of the major protagonist (Black male) was intentionally elevated and the commercial aimed to target a Black audience. From an agency perspective the casting of Black characters to address a Black target audience would appear to be a well-founded principle. “Early results indicate that Blacks generated more positive affect toward the advertisement and the models when Black models were included in the advertisement (e.g., Schlinger & Plummer, 1972; Szybillo & Jacoby, 1974).”

(Whittler, Spira, 2002, p.291). Whilst these results have been countered in more recent research (Whittler, 1989), Whittler and Spira (2002) still concluded the following: “[W]e suggest that Blacks may respond more favourably to a Black than to a White model based on in-group versus out-group status” (Whittler, Spira, 2002, p.293).

### **6.3.2. Diverse inputs as creative advantage: Insights**

#### **6.3.2a. *The creative teams***

“The strategy of using ambiguous cues in advertising messages to generate multiple meanings across a heterogeneous audience entails purposeful polysemy” (Puntoni, Vanhamme, & Visscher, 2011, p. 25). One way to effectively achieve purposeful polysemy is to ensure that insights that inform the creative are genuine and informed. This approach is what led the agencies interviewed to value diversity. All agencies interviewed reported that diverse creative teams are a source of creative competitive advantage. Agency B, however, exhibited an approach to diversity that extended to the creative teams themselves. Teams B (a) and B (b) were both racially diverse. Agency A, team A(a) and A(b) were both homogenous teams though the agency was diverse. The difference, then, was in the extension of diversity into the ubiquitous art and copy model of creative teams.

Both agency A and Agency B exhibited a use of language that is best understood through the lens of Whiteness Theory. (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009) Both agencies reported diversity as the presence of Black creatives or Black teams and not as the presence of difference. Both agencies referred to commercial outputs as English or ‘vernac’ (vernacular). This understanding of diversity is perhaps a White understanding of diversity where Whiteness is underreported as a category and as such normative. Diversity provides a counter mechanism to categorisation and stereotype formation and permanence. Hartman, Gerteis and Croll (2009) further explored the White understanding of ethnicity and self as mechanism for the persistence of in-group dominance. “The new work on Whiteness explores how White attitudes and understandings—not about racial others but about themselves and their own status in the society—factor into the perpetuation and legitimation of racial inequalities” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 404).

Agency B had an Indian Executive Creative Director whilst Agency B had a White Executive Creative Director and a White Creative Director for the account (not the campaigns). Client B's Marketing Manager reported that ideas from Black teams do not 'see the light of day', as the Executive Creative Directors and Creative Directors in agencies are still largely White and as such Whiteness serves as a normative barometer of creativity and creative concepts. An over representation of White senior creatives (as evidenced by the analysis of agency personnel) may lead to the persistence of a White in-group in agencies. This echoed Joshi and Roh's (2009) assertion that an overrepresentation of an in-group or the existence of a dominant in-group subculture was likely to lead to stereotyping of the underrepresented or out-group, particularly in the reporting of Black audiences as the 'mass-market' and the references to non-White languages as 'vernac'.

### **6.3.3. BBBEE**

#### **6.3.3a. *The Creative Teams***

Bristor et al. (1995) highlighted the possibility of a relationship between the diversity of advertising creative teams and agency wide diversity and the lack of meaningful multiculturalism in advertising messages. Bristor et al. (1995) went suggested that the solution to the problem lies in diverse recruitment policies. (Bristor, Lee, Hunt, 1995).

This relationship makes attitudes to South Africa BBBEE policy of significant importance in the context of the South African advertising industry. Davis (2002) argued that there is a lack of transformation in the advertising industry itself. "In sum, it appears that a contemporary form of racial separation persists in the advertising business, which serves to constrain entrepreneurial efforts among Black and other ethnic minority entrepreneurs in the industry" (Davis, 2002, p.75).

All agency staff interviewed reported that BBBEE was a strategic issue for the respective agencies. BBBEE was reported as a means of introducing diversity and as a means of providing diverse insights. However, the Chief Marketing Officer from Client A, the Marketing Managers and Marketing Director for Client B reported that the industry had been slow to transform. The Marketing Manager and Marketing Director for Client B claimed that Agency B were the

most transformed agency they had worked with. The ECD for Agency B stated that one of the founding principles for the agency was that the agency should reflect the South African population. Agency A had diversity programmes in place and senior creative staff claimed that Black talent was actively recruited and promoted.

Agency B reported that merit was the decisive factor of hiring but were explicit in reports that Black talent would be given preference. Agency A were less explicit in verbalisations of a BBBEE policy. The merit argument holds in it the kernels of its own demise in the eyes of Whiteness theorists. “Whites may be able to see and understand the ways that Blacks and others have been disadvantaged by the racial system, but they tend instead to attribute their own success to individual effort and hard work.” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009, p. 408). However, Agency’s B explicit race hiring policy mitigated the likelihood of Whiteness and White standards being the normative construct of talent assessment.

The need for corrective measures to address imbalances in what was described as an industry that had been slow to transform was reported by all interviewees across both agencies and all four campaigns as necessary and beneficial. The lack of race diverse staff representation in agency A (the ECD and campaign CD were both White) might have resulted in the lack of integration in the agency creative teams through the mechanisms of social categorisation and Whiteness theory. “Unlike in a balanced setting, in an occupational context dominated by a single demographic group, negative stereotypes about underrepresented groups can influence categorization-based outcomes within work groups (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Larkey, 1996)”(Joshi & Roh, 2009, p.601). Burton and Klemm (2011) expressed the danger of defining diversity as the absence or presence of non-White individuals arguing that such a definition does not lead to multiculturalism and further promulgates Whiteness as a dominant in group. This was evident in the lack of diverse creative teams and the allocation of Black teams to campaigns that target Black audiences. Ward’s view was that in order to address the predominance of Whiteness access to power needs to be extended to diverse non White individuals. This as well as formal diversity programs have been suggested as methods or mechanism of reducing the dominance of Whiteness in organisations” (Ward, 2008, p. 564). Formal diversity plans were in place at

Agency A and Agency B, but whereas in Agency Brace diversity extended to the structure of the team and briefs are opened to the whole agency, Agency A had race homogenous teams and briefs were appointed on the basis of availability and target segment.

### **6.3.4. Team Selection and Appointment**

#### **6.3.4a. The Creative Teams**

“The authors propose that “ethnic self-awareness”—a temporary state during which a person is more sensitive to information related to his or her own ethnicity—moderates consumer response to targeted advertising” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 336). Forehand and Deshpande (2001) proposed that persons become ethnically aware when they engage in a products of social categorisation - such as commercials and their content - based on ethnicity. Importantly, they further posited that an increase in the presence of diverse portrayals in advertising might lead to a reduction in this tendency to categories based on ethnicity.

In the agency context, if teams are placed on accounts based on a target segment that is derived ethnographically, and the team is chosen due to their own ethnography, then the likelihood that ethnic categorisation will occur in the agency will increase. “In general, we posit here that ethnic self-awareness occurs when a person is prompted to categorize him- or herself along ethnic criteria and that this ethnically based categorization may be elicited by the person's enduring traits or social situation or by other environmental cues” (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001, p. 337). Teams in Agency A were assigned to the accounts analysed on the basis of race and gender. The team responsible for campaign A(a) was assigned to the campaign based on the fact that they were a Black team and the target audience was Black. This self categorisation and a tendency to self-portrayal or self-identification is reflected in the creative outputs of the campaign where the majority of the cast are Black. “Thus, when a person is characterized as a group member, individual self-perception is transformed into a collective self-concept, convergent with in-group members and divergent with out-group members (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Turner, 1985, 1987).” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). It is possible that the permanence of the relationship of a creative team and the closeness of the relationship serves as a group formation mechanism, which is more salient than the agency group

as a whole. As the agency teams in Agency A are race homogenous and work on race targeted accounts it may be possible that the group identification is more defined by race than in group identification in the agency as a whole. Agency B's approach to larger diverse creative teams and all agency briefs could facilitate agency wide in group categorisation based on membership of the agency as a group and less informed by race. This might have had an impact on the diversity displayed in creative outputs from Agency B.

The two approaches to diversity within creative teams from the two agencies provided opportunity for comparison. The intra team-diversity present in the creative teams responsible for outputs B(a) and B(b), would appear to have influenced the racial diversity of characters portrayed in creative outputs. Creative team A(a) and A(b) also appear to indicate a relationship between the race of the creative teams and the race of the cast of characters in the creative outputs.

## **Conclusion of Chapter 6**

The research analysed four advertising campaigns across two agencies and included two clients:

Across all four campaigns the age of characters portrayed was skewed toward a youthful portrayal. All of the creative teams working on the campaigns were young and there were no members of the creative teams older than forty. The relationship between team youthfulness and the youthfulness of the portrayal of characters was not comparable across cases, as the similarity across cases made comparison difficult. However, it was clear that the role of the client and the industry focus on targeting youthful consumers has a significant impact on the portrayal of characters in television commercials.

Across all four campaigns, agency wide, gender diversity was reported and observed, but the intra-team diversity in Agency B seemed to suggest a correlation with the portrayal of gender diverse characters in creative outputs.

The contrast between gender homogenous and gender heterogeneous teams was evident across the four campaigns analysed.

The portrayal of race across the four campaigns analysed would suggest that the racial makeup of the team creating the campaign might have an effect on

the portrayal of race in television commercials. The cross case analysis suggested a relationship between the portrayal of racial diversity and the diversity of the creative team creating the advertisement. Also, race homogenous teams seemed to create advertisements that featured more characters of similar race to the team creating the advertisements. The role of segmentation and targeting across the four campaigns was prevalent across the cases and suggested a complex set of influential factors affecting the portrayal of character in television commercials.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

### **7.1. Research Summary**

Content analysis of television commercials, and interviews with creative teams, agencies and clients presented a holistic view of the factors influencing the portrayal of multiculturalism in South African television commercials. The research was exploratory and did not attempt to isolate or identify a causal relationship. Rather, the research sought to understand how creative team diversity, agency diversity and the client's segmentation strategy influence multiculturalism in creative outputs. The emergent themes (as they figured in the interviews as potential indicators of diversity themes) under age, gender and race were used as a framework for analysis and interpretation.

#### **7.1.1. Age**

The client's age banding and targeting was shown to significantly influence the degree to which age diversity is portrayed in television commercials. Findings indicated that age targeting rarely exceeds 40 years of age and as such the industry targets an audience younger than the population. Both companies interviewed expressed that the youth are intentionally targeted, as they are impressionable. Clients expressed that brand decision are made at a young age and therefore it makes financial sense to target younger audiences.

Nearly all participants interviewed expressed a belief that the South African industry had a youthful focus that was not a global phenomenon. A lack of a specialist career path was communicated as a concern for South African creatives who felt they needed to become Creative Directors to have achieved success in the industry. The research revealed that the only creatives interviewed who were older than forty, were creative directors or executive creative directors. There were older staff members in the non-creative departments, but creative departments were dominated by youth. It was reported that this youthfulness may contribute to the age centre of gravity being toward the lower end of the target band provided by client segmentation or targeting. There appears to be a correlation between agency youthfulness and the youthfulness of characters in television commercials. This correlation may be an indication that young creatives project themselves in commercials, or that in order to target young target markets, agencies are forced into



seeking out young creatives. The mechanisms were unclear, but the youthfulness of the industry and the overrepresentation of young characters was prevalent.

### **7.1.2. Gender**

The two agencies analysed and the four campaigns revealed differing approaches to gender based market segmentation and targeting. The research sought to understand whether gender diverse teams created gender diverse outputs; also, whether male homogenous teams reflect more males in creative output.

The findings were that the mechanism was more complex. There was a correlation between diverse teams and diverse outputs, and the male homogenous creative teams did produce commercials that under presented woman and represented woman stereotypically. Also, male homogenous teams represented woman as younger than their male counterparts and gender diverse teams appeared less likely to do so and more likely to feature female protagonists in commercial outputs. The complexity was that agencies and clients attempt to match the creative team to the target audience. Campaign AA (b) provided an example of a campaign where the target audience was male and a male team was selected to target the audience. The outputs from the team were unsurprisingly male dominated, but the mechanism is more complex and circular than simple and linear. Both agencies reported that gender diversity introduced a wealth of insights for creative outputs. Both agencies were gender diverse, but Agency B extended diversity to the creative team level, whilst the teams interviewed in agency A were gender homogenous. The correlation between the gender diversity of outputs and the gender diversity in teams was evident, and team level diversity appears to be a contributing factor to gender diversity in creative outputs.

### **7.1.3. Race**

Two distinct approaches to segmentation were presented in the research and two approaches to team allocation were aligned to these two approaches. Agency A chose to align creative teams to target audiences, thus allocating a Black creative team to a campaign with a Black target audience. LSM (Living

Standards Measure) still provide a euphemistic framework for describing race. Segmentation in the upper end of the market is not described as White and it was reported that LSM 7-10 need not be White. However, LSM 6 and down was often referred to as the mass market and was assigned to Black teams. The conclusion therefore must be that LSM 6 and below is perceived by marketers to be Black.

All creative teams reported that diverse insights were advantageous for creative outputs. It was reported that White male creatives have a narrower experience than their Black counterparts. Black creatives in Agency A felt that they were often placed in Black teams, and were allocated to Black accounts or to create 'vernac' advertisements. Black creatives felt that senior Black creatives were underrepresented.

Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) was viewed as necessary and beneficial in all organisations involved in the study. BBBEE was credited as being the source for the change that is occurring in agencies, though it would appear that client influence is the driving force to agency transformation.

The research involved four creative teams and two agencies. The two agencies presented radically different approaches to team selection or appointment. In practice it would appear that Black teams are assigned to Black accounts and this in turn does not leverage the diversity that agencies claim to value. The client's influence on team appointment to an account was a surprising finding and would seem to be a significant influence. Whiteness theory goes some way to explaining why clients and agencies feel they need to appoint Black teams to Black accounts, but do not overtly or explicitly state the same for the appointment of White teams. White teams, then, were still the normative structure. Agency B, however, had a different approach and sought to infuse creative teams with diversity, even to the point of having more resources on a team than conventionally necessary. The outputs from Agency B suggested a correlation between diverse creative teams and multiculturalism when compared to the outputs from Agency A.

Creative team race diversity appeared to influence the level of multiculturalism in television commercials. The client's approach to segmentation and targeting appeared to have an impact on the portrayal of race, but it also had an impact

on the appointment of creative teams to accounts.

The ubiquity of the two Johannesburg based advertising colleges was evident in the research. In line with Social Categorisation Theory, these schools may have provided a framework for similarity that undermines the advantage of diversity to some degree. The cost of the schools was prohibitive and may have served as a barrier to entry for young Black creatives. It did mean that most of the workforce entering the advertising industry came from similar socio-economic backgrounds regardless of age, gender or race.

#### **7.1.4. Limitations**

The chicken fast food outlet segment is a fast moving consumer good and as such the research only looked at this category of product advertising. The research was limited to a chosen market segment. Chicken brands have their own nuances and the findings may not be applicable outside of the chicken fast food outlet segment.

Only agencies in Johannesburg were interviewed; it is possible that Johannesburg has a different dynamic to other centres in South Africa. The research is very much grounded in a South African context, mainly due to South Africa's unique socio-political landscape. The universality of findings is limited by South Africa's unique business challenges where the majority of the population is not represented proportionally in the workforce.

The study did not look at longitudinal data to establish trends and changes and the effects of those trends and changes on outputs. The research only looked at campaigns that ran over one year or shorter and whilst interviews did reveal that the campaign is part of an ongoing process of client agency relation and transformation. The research was focused on a narrow time frame in order to manage the scope of this project.

Media buying has a significant influence on the content, creative and multiculturalism in television advertisements. It was decided not to conduct interviews with media buyers or media planners. This was in an effort to narrow the scope of the research, but the influence of media planning would seem to be significant from interviews conducted.

The research was exploratory and sought to identify if relationships exist, in

any way, between team diversity, agency diversity and multiculturalism in creative outputs. The research did not in any way seek to uncover causalities.

#### **7.1.5. Recommendations for Practitioners**

Both advertising agencies interviewed expressed almost unanimously that diversity was a source of improved creativity. Agency A(b) illustrated a willingness to open creative briefs to a broader creative team than the traditional art and copy model of team in agencies. If one were to accept that agencies found diversity beneficial for multicultural outputs as was reported, then one could safely recommend that the 'all agency brief' might be an idea worth pursuing for other agencies. The two person creative team may be too small to really introduce diversity into the creative team and as such larger creative teams might serve as a source of diverse insight.

The South African market is largely multicultural. Two approaches were represented in the research; Agency A and Client CA chose to segment the market and deliver targeted messages to consumers. Agency B and Client CB had a significantly lower budget and as such sought to create adverts that appealed to broader audiences. Agency B appeared to provide an argument for diversity as an enabler of purposeful polysemy in advertising messages that may serve as budget maximizing tool for marketers seeking to target multicultural audience in South Africa.

#### ***Advertising schools as a barrier to entry***

"Advertising schools are not representative. The problem of too few Black previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs) embarking on a career in advertising still appears to be a problem, even though it was raised in both of the parliamentary hearings and was one of the primary focus areas of the MAPPPSETA advertising skills needs analysis survey (Duffet, 2011, p. 6281).

All interviewees across all creative team members, with the execution of one art director reported that they had attended either the AAA school or Vega. The ECD for agency b felt that the schools were a factor that reduced diversity in the industry. The fact that the schools were viewed as ticket into the industry and the fact that it seemed difficult to enter the industry without attending one of the schools meant that the schools served as a point of similarity for creatives in the industry.

If the schools are non-representative as reported by Duffet (2011). Then it is possible that the schools serve unwittingly as a source continuing White dominance of the industry. The cost of attending these two schools was reported as prohibitive and the creative director for campaign B (b) reported that getting financing from financial institutions was difficult, as the schools did not offer recognized degrees in the past. This prohibitive cost could have been a factor in the formation of an in-group that was informed by socio economic standing as much as race, and in South Africa the two have previously been interrelated. White middle class over representation may have served as a mechanism for in group formation and Whiteness in the industry. “In many cases, White normativity bolsters and sustains other forms of normativity, such as middle-class or heterosexual norms that emphasize the pursuit of prosperity, safety, reproduction, and respectability (Duggan 2003; Halberstam 2005)” (Ward, 2008, p. 64).

Advertising agencies need to develop means of introducing diversity into the agency beyond the advertising schools. The cost of advertising schools results in a similar candidate as an applicant for an agency position. If agencies truly value diversity they need to seek out talent from a broader talent pool and seek to develop the skills within the organisation.

#### **7.1.6. Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research may seek to explore the relationship between creative team diversity and multicultural outputs on a more causal basis. This research was exploratory and suggested a correlation between creative team diversity and multicultural outputs: this correlation could be explored in a quantitative study. A longitudinal study of agency diversity and BBBEE scores in relation to an audit of creative outputs over a period of years may shed further light on the effect of organizational diversity on the portrayal of diversity in television commercials. Whiteness theory and the language of business presents an opportunity to explore the language of South African advertising organisations with particular reference to the use of normative terms such as ‘vernac’ with reference to all non-White languages.

The impact of advertising colleges on the industry is an area of future research. It would be interesting to track time elapsed between graduation and first-hire post-completion, of an advertising diploma against another more

academic and affordable fields of study such as a Bachelor of Arts. This could explore the necessity of an advertising qualification as a means to enter the industry. The impact of students who struggled to gain access to financing at one of the advertising schools and the effect that has had on diversity in the advertising industry is an area for further research.

A study on the effects of creative team level diversity and creative performance in the South African advertising industry could look at advertising awards and the team that created award winning executions to establish if diverse or homogenous teams produce better creative outputs in South Africa.

The argument as to the whether advertising reflects society or shapes society rages on. Either way the diversity of television commercials in South Africa is an area of interest. If advertising reflects society then one could ask which society advertising is reflecting. If advertising shapes societal perceptions of self and social identity then the exclusion of sections of society becomes problematic.

For the South African advertising agency diversity is a potential source of advantage. Diverse creative teams could allow for richer insights, deeper understanding of diverse markets and multicultural outputs that target segments but do not alienate non-targeted audiences.

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