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PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE CANADIAN BANKING INDUSTRY: DO GENDER AND MANAGERIAL STATUS MATTER?

This study investigates whether gender and managerial status act as significant correlates of participation in voluntary training. Our theoretical foundation rests on human capital and systemic discrimination theories. Data come from the computerized records of a bank's employees. In short, results show that both gender and managerial status have a differential impact on participation in voluntary training: women participate more than men and manager's participation is higher than non-managers' participation. Also, individual characteristics and productivity-related variables impact differently on participation by gender and managerial status.

Introduction

In the last decade, due to deregulation, banking in numerous countries has evolved into a customer-focused industry (Karr, 1994). In the early 1990s, in Canada and elsewhere, governments reformed all laws and regulations pertaining to financial institutions (Harris and Pigott, 1997). This deregulation has created more competition from national markets as well as international markets. For instance, Canadian banks now have to compete with the ING Bank, an international bank that offers insurance, banking and asset management services in Europe, Asia-Pacific, North and South America. Furthermore, unlike traditional banks, ING does not have physical branches; it provides its services via the Internet and other office technologies. Thus, compared to other industries, banking is increasingly international.

The increased competition, in turn, has forced banks to change from being low-cost producers, to developing and offering value-added services in various financial areas. Quality of service has become the ultimate factor differentiating one organization from another and, indeed, determines whether or not it will survive (Combs and Bourne, 1995). This focus on customer services has had, among other things, the effect of making the various roles and responsibilities of banking sector workers more complex. This has created a need for new skills and knowledge or competencies.

In organizations, competencies can be developed through mandatory and voluntary training activities (Goldstein and Ford, 2002; Noe, 2004; Wexley and Latham, 2002). Mandatory or internal training refers to employer-provided training or the supply of training whereas voluntary or external training refers to the demand for training or training that an employee can undertake without the employer's approval. Voluntary training is growing rapidly across the globe mainly because the responsibility for the learning process is increasingly being placed on the individual. In Canada, in

response to the new deregulated environment, many banks have opted for a blended training approach. They developed their internal supply of training and facilitated access to voluntary training by forming partnerships with colleges and universities as well as the Canadian Bankers Association. However, little is known about those who participate in these voluntary training activities.

Several economic investigations based on national surveys have focused on the correlates of participation in mandatory training, including Miller (1994) and Wooden and VandenHeuvel (1997) for Australia; Booth (1991), Green (1993) and Greenhalgh and Stewart (1987) for Great Britain; Oosterbeek (1998) for the Netherlands; and Altonji and Spletzer (1991) and Veum (1996) for the USA. In short, results have consistently shown that younger and more highly educated workers are more likely to receive training from their employers, as are workers in larger firms. Furthermore, training probabilities differ by gender, with male workers receiving, in general, more training from their employer than female workers. With regard to voluntary training, very little empirical literature exists. Findings from a study conducted by Miller (1994) have indicated that, all things being equal, women undertake more voluntary training than men. One possible explanation of this effect is that firms have a discriminatory attitude that forces women to gain competencies through voluntary training.

The aim of this study is to investigate the correlates of participation in voluntary training in the Canadian banking industry. In our analyses, we choose to differentiate female workers from male workers because this industry is a major employer of women and new opportunities have developed for female professionals with the deregulation of financial services. We also choose to differentiate managers from non-managers because, as Noe (1996, p.123) noted, "in most companies, managers have more opportunities for salary progression and career advancement than employees in other positions." Furthermore, compared to non-managers, managers receive more of the mandatory training expenditures in both U.S. (Dolezalek, 2004; Galvin, 2002, 2003) and Canadian organizations (Harris-Lalonde, 2001 in Saks and Haccoun 2004).

Our theoretical foundation rests on human capital theory (Becker, 1962) and systemic discrimination theory (see Chicha, 1997; Doeringer and Piore, 1971; England, Farkas, Kilbourne and Dou, 1988). Human capital theory is "a ready-made model of who is likely to demand and to be provided with training" (Green, 1993, p. 103). It postulates that workers invest in training to increase their productivity, and thus to enhance their benefits, in particular salaries and promotions. A worker's decision to participate in training is therefore based on an analysis of the expected return on investment. And correlatively, the factors which contribute to increasing training costs or reducing benefits have a negative impact on participation in training. In short, human capital theory suggests that, like other investments, training decisions are influenced by economic incentives. Most empirical studies investigating the supply and demand of training have used this theory.

Our reasoning is also based on systemic discrimination theory which provides an explanation for employment inequalities between men and women. From this theoretical perspective, the gender gaps observed are due to discrimination against women in terms of organizational behaviour, practices and decision-making processes (Doeringer and Piore, 1971). This discrimination is based on the fact that employers hold stereotypes regarding the gender-based roles of workers. For example, some employers tend to consider women's salary to be secondary income since men are perceived to be the main providers for their family, which gives their work greater prestige and greater value compared to that of women (Chicha, 1997). Also according to Chicha, employers, in general, tend to perceive women as less motivated and less attached to their organization because of the time they devote to family responsibilities, which justifies lower salaries. Similarly, Cobb-Clark and Dunlop (1999) suggest that employers are generally less inclined to offer promotions to married women with children due to career interruptions caused by family obligations while married men with children deserve to obtain greater total compensation (e.g., salaries, training, promotion opportunities) because they are eager to invest more in

their career since they have to support their family. In short, the existence of organizational stereotypes regarding women's social role accounts for female workers' low return on investments in schooling, work experience, organizational tenure and training. Empirical results have shown that, after having controlled for the variables of human capital, women are promoted less often, earn less than men and the return on their investments is lower (see Renaud and Vallée, 2005; Christofides and Swidinsky, 1994).

Empirical Strategy

According to human capital theory, a first general equation of voluntary training participation can be specified as follows:

$$T_i = \forall_0 + \forall_1 X_i + \forall_2 S_i + \forall_3 M_i + 0_{Ti} \quad (1)$$

where T_i represents the training participation for individual *i*, and is a function of X_i which is a vector of frequently used control variables that include individual characteristics and productivity-related explanatory variables (age, schooling, organizational tenure, part-time status and hourly wage rate) for individual *i*, S_i is gender (1=female), M_i is managerial status,. $\forall_0$ is a constant and 0_{Ti} is a random component of the equation. Age, schooling, organizational tenure, part-time status and hourly wage rate are all expected to be negatively related to training participation because as they increase, an individual's perception of the marginal utility of training should decrease. For gender, women in general receive less mandatory training from their employer than do men (Booth, 1991; Green, 1993; Miller, 1994). Researchers have suggested that this difference can be explained by systemic discrimination. As a result, in a context of mandatory training only, women's human capital, all things being equal, is less than men's human capital. In line with human capital theory, voluntary training can then be seen as a necessary strategy for women to catch up. Hence, women are expected to participate more in voluntary training than men and $\forall_2$ should be positive. As for managerial status, managers are expected to have a greater desire to engage in voluntary training than non-managers because they expect that training increases their chance of getting promotions, which are more lucrative at the management level than at the non-management level. Thus, $\forall_3$ is expected to be positive.

Based on systemic discrimination theory, Equation 1 is broken down by gender and takes the following forms:

$$T_{Fi} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{Fi} + \beta_3 M_{Fi} + 0_{TFi} \quad (2)$$
$$T_{Mi} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 X_{Mi} + \gamma_3 M_{Mi} + 0_{TMi} \quad (3)$$

where T_{Fi} and T_{Mi} represent the training participation for individual female and male *i* respectively and are a function of X_{Fi} and X_{Mi} which are vectors of individual characteristics for individual female and male *i*, M_{Fi} and M_{Mi} are managerial status, β_0 and γ_0 are constants and 0_{TFi} and 0_{TMi} are the error term of each equation. Following Equations 2 and 3, managerial status is expected to have a differential impact on participation in voluntary training based on gender. The difference in training participation between female managers and female non-managers is expected to be greater than the difference between male managers and male non-managers. This hypothesis can be explained by the fact that, although women have made significant progress in the banking industry, it appears that they are still confined to lower managerial levels (Culpan, Akdag and Cindogvlu, 1992). Furthermore, at a certain level of the hierarchical structure, women no longer have access to promotions and mandatory training (Renaud and Vallée, 2005). They thus make up for this disadvantage by participating in voluntary training. Hence, the category of female managers is the one with the most incentive to engage in voluntary training. Accordingly, β_3 should be greater than γ_3.

Equation 1 can also be rewritten by managerial status and then takes the following forms:

$$T_{MAi} = \delta_0 + \delta_1 X_{MAi} + \delta_2 S_{MAi} + 0_{TMAi} \quad (4)$$

$$T_{NMAi} = \zeta_0 + \zeta_1 X_{NMAi} + \zeta_2 S_{NMAi} + 0_{TNMAi} \quad (5)$$

where T_{MAi} and T_{NMAi} represent the training participation for managers and non-managers *i* respectively and are a function of X_{MAi} and X_{NMAi} which are vectors of individual characteristics for managers and non-managers *i*, S_{MAi} and S_{NMAi} are gender, δ_0 and ζ_0 are constants and 0_{TMAi} and 0_{TNMAi} are the error term of each equation. Following Equations 4 and 5, gender is expected to have a differential impact on participation in voluntary training based on managerial status. The difference in training participation between female managers and male managers is expected to be smaller than the difference between female non-managers and male non-managers. As an explanation, one could argue that compared with male managers, female managers are more likely to use voluntary training in order to enhance their human capital because of the glass ceiling and its negative impact on access to mandatory training. Moreover, male non-managers can be divided into two groups who perceive low utility in voluntary training: part-timers with low attachment to their employers (for example students) and young professionals on the "management career track" who receive, in general, extensive mandatory training. On the contrary, female non-managers in banking usually stay longer in non-management positions and receive very little career-development mandatory training. Thus, if they want to progress, they necessarily have to engage in voluntary training. In addition, in the banking industry in general, there are very few male non-managers compared to female non-managers (Renaud and Vallée, 2005). Hence, δ_2 should be smaller than ζ_2.

To sum up, based on both human capital theory and systemic discrimination theory, it is expected that female managers should be the ones who have the most interest in voluntary training and male non-managers the ones who have the least. However, one question still remains: within each category, what are the productivity-related and individual characteristics that are associated with participation in voluntary training? To answer this question, Equations 2 to 5 have to be rewritten by gender and managerial status and take the following form:

$$T_{FMAi} = \eta_0 + \eta_1 X_{FMAi} + 0_{TFMAi} \quad (6)$$

$$T_{FNMAi} = \theta_0 + \theta_1 X_{FNMAi} + 0_{TFNMAi} \quad (7)$$

$$T_{MMAi} = \iota_0 + \iota_1 X_{MMAi} + 0_{TMMAi} \quad (8)$$

$$T_{MNMAi} = \kappa_0 + \kappa_1 X_{MNMAi} + 0_{TMNMAi} \quad (9)$$

where T_{FMAi} , T_{FNMAi} , T_{MMAi} and T_{MNMAi} are, respectively, training participation for a female manager, training participation for a female non-manager, training participation for a male manager and training participation for a male non-manager.

Data

The data used to test our equations empirically come from a large Canadian bank that has numerous branches across Canada as well as in several countries. In order to face the challenges associated with the deregulation of the Canadian financial markets and increasing international competition, in 1996, the bank established a partnership with Canadian universities to facilitate access to voluntary training opportunities taken by employees on their personal time. The bank's involvement was limited to reimbursing tuition fees and instructional material. This is a clear case of voluntary training which is on the demand side of training. Qualitative information collected from the employer confirmed that participation in the program was completely voluntary as the organization's first objective was to

develop employees' responsibility for their own human capital. Since the beginning of the program, some employees have actively participated while others have not. Data were retrieved from the computerized records of the employees for 1998, that is, three years (January 1996 to December 1998) after the voluntary training partnership was established. Data provide information on 1923 employees, representing roughly 20 percent of the bank's total workforce. A random probability sampling procedure was used by the financial institution to make up this sample.

Training participation is measured using a dummy variable coded 1 if an employee had completed one voluntary training activity or more from January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1998, and otherwise is coded 0. This coding implies the use of logistic regression analysis. Gender is measured by a dummy variable coded 1 for women, and 0 for men. Managerial status is measured by a dummy variable coded 1 for manager, and 0 for non-manager. Individual characteristics and productivity-related explanatory variables used in this study include age, schooling, organizational tenure, part-time status and hourly wage rate. Age is measured by three age dummy-variables. These are coded 1 if the employee is aged between 30-39, 40-49 or over 50, and otherwise are coded 0. The reference group is made up of employees aged under 30. Schooling is assessed by a set of four educational binary variables. They are coded 1 if the employee has a community college degree, a university certificate, an undergraduate degree, a master's and/or a Ph.D. degree, and otherwise are coded 0. The reference group is composed of the employees who have a high school education or less. Organizational tenure is measured using a continuous variable expressed in years. Part-time status is measured by a dummy variable coded 1 for part-timers, and otherwise is coded 0. Finally, hourly wage rate is measured using a continuous variable expressed in dollars.

Table 1

Mean sample characteristics of employees

	Full sample N=1923	Women N=1519	Men N=404	Managers N=869	Non-managers N=1054
Training participation	0.20	0.22	0.14	0.25	0.16
Employee is a woman	0.79			0.61	0.94
Employee is a manager	0.45	0.35	0.84		
Age 30-39	0.35	0.36	0.32	0.35	0.34
Age 40-49	0.39	0.41	0.33	0.41	0.38
Age 50 and over	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.13
College	0.17	0.17	0.18	0.15	0.19
University certificate	0.07	0.06	0.13	0.11	0.04
Undergraduate degree	0.16	0.09	0.40	0.30	0.04
Master or more	0.03	0.01	0.08	0.05	0.00
Organizational tenure	13.41	13.93	11.46	14.60	12.43
Part-time status	0.36	0.43	0.07	0.04	0.62
Hourly wage rate	17.55	15.57	24.99	23.43	12.70

Table 1 reports mean sample characteristics of all employees used in subsequent analyses. It also provides mean by gender and managerial status (women, men, managers, non-managers). This table reveals that 20 percent of employees participated in voluntary training during the first three years of the voluntary training program. Our sample includes 79 percent of women and 45 percent of managers. An examination of the distributions for voluntary training participation reveals differences between women

and men and between managers and non-managers: 22 percent participation rate for women compared to 14 percent for men, 25 percent participation rate for managers compared to 16 percent for non-managers.

Empirical Results

Table 2 reports training-equation estimates for the full sample and separate estimates for women and men, managers and non-managers and related sub-categories. Results from Equation 1 first indicate that, as predicted, women participate more than men ($\forall_2 = 0.471$, $p < 0.01$). A possible explanation is that women, because of systemic discrimination in mandatory training, have to engage in voluntary training to compensate for their lack of competencies. Second, findings show that managers' participation is higher than non-managers' participation ($\forall_3 = 1.017$, $p < 0.01$). This result is in line with the view that returns on participation are higher for managers than they are for non-managers.

The hypothesis that the difference in training participation between female managers and female non-managers is greater than the difference between male managers and male non-managers finds empirical support from Equation 2 and 3 estimates: $\beta_3 = 1.108$ and is greater than γ_3, which equals 0.851. These results suggest the presence of a glass ceiling in the organization under study. One could argue that women's limited access to mandatory training leads them to adopt voluntary training as a parallel strategy.

Results from Equation 4 and Equation 5 show that gender has a differential impact on participation in voluntary training based on managerial status: The difference in training participation between female managers and male managers ($\delta_2 = 0.265$) is smaller than the difference between female non-managers and male non-managers ($\zeta_2 = 0.978$). These results suggest that systemic discrimination against women regarding promotion and training begins to manifest itself at the lower levels of the organizational structure. These results also support the hypothesis that women use voluntary training to compensate for the lack of mandatory training to the extent that they believe that they have a chance to get a promotion.

The purpose of Equations 6 to 9 was to answer the following question: In general and within each category, what are the individual and productivity-related characteristics associated with participation in voluntary training? In short, the results indicate different patterns of determinants according to managerial status and gender[1]. Age and hourly wage rate are significantly related to participation in voluntary training and produce more constant effects across the sub-categories. On the other hand, the other variables under study are related quite differently to participation in voluntary training by sub-category. Our results are explained in detail below, one variable at a time.

In regard to age, in Equation 1, all things being equal, individuals aged 50 and over participate significantly less than individuals in all other age categories. This result is in line with human capital theory. Estimates vary slightly across the four sub-categories under study (Equations 6 to 9). An examination of significant estimates only shows that age is a stronger predictor of male managers' participation in voluntary training than of employees in all other sub-categories. Estimates suggest that male managers aged 50 and over are the ones who see the least benefits in participating in voluntary training. Also, the difference between age 50 and over estimates from Equation 6 and Equation 8 gives empirical credence to the presence of systemic discrimination. Up until age 50, women's participation rate is higher than that of men. These results support the hypothesis that women view voluntary training as a strategy that allows them to get around the limited access to mandatory training.

[1] The results from Equation 9 should be looked at with caution given the small number of observations.

Table 2

Voluntary training estimates from logistic regressions

	Equation 1 Full sample	Equation 2 Women	Equation 3 Men	Equation 4 Managers	Equation 5 Non-managers	Equation 6 Female managers	Equation 7 Female non-managers	Equation 8 Male managers	Equation 9 Male non-managers
Age 30-39	0.140	0.110	0.018	0.473	0.025	0.732	- 0.041	- 0.031	2.816
Age 40-49	- 0.015	- 0.041	- 0.498	0.408	- 0.354	0.775	- 0.425	- 0.723	1.093
Age 50 and over	- 1.390 **	- 1.269 **	- 3.061 **	- 1.807 **	- 0.972 **	- 1.340 *	- 1.026 **	- 3.297 **	- 16.069
College	- 0.179	- 0.219	0.134	- 0.340	- 0.040	- 0.431	- 0.071	0.034	1.921
University certificate	0.209	0.295	0.225	0.431	- 0.370	0.534 *	- 0.213	0.461	- 21.000
Undergraduate degree	- 0.639 **	- 1.079 **	0.208	- 0.353	- 0.843	- 0.830 **	- 0.746	0.280	- 19.869
Master or more	- 2.318 **	- 20.123	- 0.615	- 1.853 *	- 19.365	- 19.721	- 19.819	- 0.512	- 14.362
Organizational tenure	0.046 **	0.031 **	0.126 **	0.075 **	0.007	0.050 **	0.005	0.134 **	0.238
Part-time status	- 0.173	- 0.168	- 1.108	- 0.871 *	0.114	- 0.920 *	0.172	- 19.039	- 4.374 *
Hourly wage rate	- 0.029 *	- 0.032	- 0.054 *	- 0.055 **	0.119 *	- 0.057 **	0.141 *	- 0.054 *	- 1.852 *
Employee is a woman	0.471 **			0.265	0.978 *				
Employee is a manager	1.017 **	1.108 **	0.851						
Constant	- 2.147 **	- 1.391 **	- 2.537 **	- 1.224 **	- 4.018 **	- 0.723	- 3.278 **	- 1.728 **	17.682 *
NagerKerke R^2	0.136 **	0.127 **	0.210 **	0.245 **	0.036 **	0.227 **	0.028 *	0.212 **	0.483
N	1918	1516	402	868	1050	531	985	337	65

* : $p < 0.05$; ** : $p < 0.01$ (one-tailed tests)

As regards schooling, results from Equation 1 offer moderate support for our general hypothesis: Only the undergraduate degree level and higher are significant and negative. Moreover, the results of Equations 6 to 9 indicate that this variable is significantly associated with female managers only. In other words, female managers who hold a master's degree or higher are significantly less inclined to participate in voluntary training than female managers with an undergraduate degree, and those who hold an undergraduate degree are significantly less inclined to undertake training than those who hold a university certificate. These results are in line with human capital theory which predicts that interest in training decreases as individuals increase their capital through education. Moreover, systemic discrimination theory is also a reasonable explanation because the link is not found in men. Therefore, it is plausible that, regardless of male managers' level of schooling, the firm offers training to them so that they will have the required competencies to advance in the hierarchical structure. On the other hand, women's limited access to mandatory training encourages those who hold a university certificate or an undergraduate degree to continue their training on a voluntary basis in order to compensate for the lack of mandatory training.

Contrary to the general hypothesis put forward, organizational tenure is positively associated with the probability of participating in voluntary training, except for non-managers. This result could be explained by the compensatory nature of voluntary training. According to human capital theory, the greater organizational tenure individuals have, the lower the marginal utility of training activities given the remaining number of years they have to work. Thus, individuals will be less and less inclined to undertake training in order to enhance their human capital. Similarly, beyond a certain number of years, the firm is increasingly reluctant to offer training to them. Since training demand follows the same curve as training supply, the demand for compensatory training (voluntary training) remains steady regardless of the number of years of service in the firm.

Organizational tenure produces also a stronger effect on male managers than on female managers. A plausible explanation is that, through the career of managers, the firm's training supply (mandatory training) decreases more rapidly than the managers' training demand (for a lateral movement, promotions, or a career change, for example). Therefore, the greater the managers' organizational tenure in the firm, the less their training needs are met by the firm, and the more likely they are to resort to voluntary training. However, because of women's limited access to mandatory training, the gap between training supply and training demand is greater for women. Given the joint effect of systemic discrimination and gradual decrease in training supply throughout the years of service, the probability of resorting to voluntary training increases more considerably for men since women already use voluntary training as a parallel strategy from the beginning of their career.

The variable of part-time status is only significantly associated with participation in Equations 6 and 9, that is, for female managers and male non-managers. The negative link is in line with our prediction based on human capital theory. A negative effect was also found for male non-managers. However, the results show that part-time status is not linked with the participation of female non-managers. The explanation could be that women do not work part-time out of preference and therefore part-time status cannot be viewed as an indicator of women's attachment to the firm.

Lastly, for the variable hourly wage rate, the results of Equation 1 indicate a negative relation with participation in voluntary training, as suggested by human capital theory. Moreover, all things being equal, the higher the salary the individuals earn, the less they participate in voluntary training. This negative effect is more marked for male non-managers than for male and female managers. Thus, it seems that the more individuals increase their salaries – for example, through promotions-, the higher their marginal productivity for the firm, which in return probably encourages the firm to invest in training these individuals. Consequently, individuals are less interested in pursuing voluntary training. On the other hand, the hourly wage rate exerts a positive influence on female non-managers' participation in voluntary training. These results suggest that as female non-managers are promoted to higher-level positions, they

gradually see the opportunity to gain access to a managerial position. To this end, they tend to enhance their human capital through voluntary training since they are generally disadvantaged in the context of mandatory training. From a different perspective, it is also plausible that, given the decreasing opportunities to get a promotion because of discrimination, female non-managers decide to invest in voluntary training in order to enhance their value on the market and their inter-organizational mobility.

Conclusion

A review of the literature on voluntary training in organizational settings reveals that very little knowledge has been acquired on the subject, in particular as regards the characteristics of the participants in this type of training. Our study aimed at identifying the correlates of participation in voluntary training based on gender and managerial status, and therefore we examined four sub-categories: female managers, male managers, female non-managers and male non-managers. Our goal was to better understand the motivations of these different categories of employees to participate in this type of training.

The results showed that the probability of participating in voluntary training varies according to gender and managerial status. This probability is explained in particular by the differential effect produced by the individuals' productivity-related characteristics (age, schooling, organizational status, part-time status, and hourly wage rate) according to gender and managerial status. In line with human capital theory, it can be suggested that male managers, female managers, male non-managers and female non-managers participate in voluntary training in different proportions not only because of their different characteristics but also because of their different assessments of the marginal utility of voluntary training. These results point to the importance of pursuing research on the determinants of voluntary training by examining separately the four sub-categories of employees.

The positive effect of managerial status as well as the negative effect of age, hourly wage rate and part-time status are in line with the predictions of human capital theory. It thus seems that individuals participate in voluntary training in order to increase their productivity, and consequently, their benefits (e.g., promotions, salaries). Similarly, the significant effect generally shown by the level of schooling suggests that the marginal utility of voluntary training decreases with the level of schooling. In other words, it seems that the higher the workers' level of schooling, the smaller the gap between the individuals' training needs (i.e. total training demand) and training supply (mandatory training).

Moreover, the results highlight the differential gender-based effect on voluntary participation produced by the variables, i.e. managerial status, age, hourly wage rate, schooling and organizational tenure. These differential effects support systemic discrimination theory. Although the banking industry is predominantly female, the results suggest that systemic discrimination against women regarding promotion exists at the lower levels of the hierarchical structure, coupled with a glass ceiling phenomenon at the managerial levels. This discrimination has the effect of limiting women's access to mandatory training. They thus consider voluntary training as a parallel strategy to compensate for the lack of mandatory training, as long as they believe that voluntary training has a marginal utility. Therefore, women tend to undertake voluntary training when they believe that this training will help them to get a promotion, or when they think that it will help them to enhance their inter-organizational mobility and thus increase their salaries.

As regards the validity of our model, the variables selected explain, in proportions of 13 percent to 25 percent, the individuals' decision whether or not to participate in voluntary training. These variables are more useful in explaining the participation of managers (25 percent) than of non-managers (4 percent). Our model's variables also help to better account for men's decisions to participate (21 percent) than women's decision to participate (13 percent). This suggests that future research should refine the

explanatory model and include other variables such as participation in mandatory training, hierarchical level, and perceived opportunities for promotion. Future research could also seek to answer the following questions: To what extent does voluntary training compensate for the lack of mandatory training? To what extent do women perceive that they are being discriminated against as regards promotion? To what extent is voluntary training used to get a promotion or to enhance organizational mobility? What are the constraints related to voluntary training? Are these constraints more prevalent among women or men, among managers or non-managers, and so on?

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