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Article abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between the union commitment of faculty members and a number of factors, including job satisfaction, general union beliefs, attitude towards the university, work aspects and demographic characteristics. The results show that faculty members are committed to both the university and the Association. Dissatisfaction with the university administration fosters union commitment whereas negative attitudes towards unions in general reduce that commitment. Demographic characteristics and work aspects have little influence on the faculty commitment to the Faculty Association.

Determinants of Union Commitment Among University Faculty

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This paper investigates the relationship between the union commitment of faculty members and a number of factors, including job satisfaction, general union beliefs, attitude towards the university, work aspects and demographic characteristics. The results show that faculty members are committed to both the university and the Association. Dissatisfaction with the university administration fosters union commitment whereas negative attitudes towards unions in general reduce that commitment. Demographic characteristics and work aspects have little influence on the faculty commitment to the Faculty Association.

The arrival of trade unionism to North American universities in the late sixties and early seventies led to increased research on the impact of collective bargaining on the universities and their faculty. At the time, the research attention was to analyze the relationship between faculty unionism and factors such as academic freedom, monetary and fringe benefits, and existing collegial mechanisms (Beatty, 1975; Boivin, 1975; Woods, 1975; Begin, 1978). Other researchers looked at the attitudinal militancy of faculty members (Feuille and Blandin, 1976) and at the incidence of faculty union strikes (Aussieker, 1977). Another issue that has also received some attention is the attitudes of faculty members towards the scope of collective bargaining (Ponak and Thompson, 1979).

A literature search for more recent studies on faculty unionism however shows that very little has been written in this area since the publication of the above studies¹. Most of the recent studies have instead chose to examine the impact of unionism on elementary and high school teachers

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¹ A notable exception is the study by Walker and Lawler (1986), examining how the voting intent of faculty members during the certification election is influenced by the strategies and activities of the two competing unions trying to represent them.

(Greer and Brown, 1982; Harris, Raush and Ryan, 1982; Delaney, 1986; Ohtsu and Verma, 1987; Easton, 1988). The lack of current research on faculty unionism is somewhat surprising because the impact of unionism on faculty members is not a one-shot event, but a continuing process changing over time. While the earlier research has undoubtedly clarified some of the issues associated with the arrival of faculty unions, there are still numerous questions that remain to be answered. For example, it is still not clear whether faculty unions have accepted the legitimacy of strikes as a bargaining weapon. Recent strikes at the University of Saskatchewan and at Dalhousie University, lasting for duration previously unheard of², may indeed be pointing to a more militant faculty union. Another issue of interest is whether faculty strikes have been successful in terms of producing settlements that are favorable to the faculty. At another level, there is also the question regarding the faculty member's attitude towards the Faculty Association, and the factors that influence this attitude.

It is this last question that the present study addresses. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which the commitment of faculty members to their union is dependent upon their job satisfaction, general union beliefs, attitude towards the university, work aspects, and demographic characteristics. The present study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, since so little is known about the way university faculty view their union, the findings of this paper should provide us with a better understanding of this particular perception. Second, the studies that analyzed union commitment have included engineers, technicians, and non-professional white collar employees in their samples (Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson and Spiller, 1980; Gordon, Beauvais and Ladd, 1984). How do these individuals differ from the university faculty in terms of their commitment to the local union? The results of this study should provide us with a basis for comparing university faculty to other types of workers.

Third, Gordon and al. (1980) found that union commitment and its related components are all strongly correlated with a *unidimensional* measure of beliefs toward unions in general. Recent studies on general union beliefs (McShane, 1985; Fiorito, 1987) have shown that these beliefs can be categorized into several factors, each representing a distinctive aspect of union beliefs. For example, Fiorito (1987) suggests that these beliefs can be divided into union negative image. Thus, unlike the earlier commitment studies, the present study includes several dimensions of union beliefs into the model. This in turn allows us to determine whether such fine distinctions are necessary insofar as identifying the determinants of union commitment is concerned.

² For example, the strike at the University of Saskatchewan ended after 12 days, when back-to-work legislation was enacted by the government.

The next section reviews the literature on union commitment. In the third section, the data collection and the variables used in the estimating equation are discussed. Following this, the empirical results are presented, and the last section deals with the concluding remarks.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON UNION COMMITMENT

To date, it appears that there are three major studies that have attempted to identify the correlates of union commitment, and they include the studies by Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson and Spiller (1980); Ladd, Gordon, Beauvais and Morgan (1982); and Gordon, Beauvais and Ladd (1984). In all these studies, union commitment was found to consist of four dimensions (or factors). The first factor, denoted as «union loyalty», reflects the pride of belonging to the union and the perception that there are benefits in becoming a union member. The second factor, denoted as «responsibility to the union», measures the willingness of the union member to carry out day-to-day activities in order to protect the welfare of the union. The third factor, entitled «willingness to work for the union», denotes the willingness of the union member to do extra work for the union. The last factor, denoted as «belief in unionism», reflects the member's belief in the institution of organized labour.

Gordon and al. (1980) using a sample of white collar non-professional employees correlated the four commitment factors with six sets of variables, including the respondent's demographic characteristics, socialization influences, union affiliation, union participation, job satisfaction and union attitudes. The results show that the correlates of union commitment tend to vary according to the particular commitment factor examined. The correlates for both union loyalty and belief in unionism are however somewhat similar, in that their best predictor is socialization influences, defined as those sources of influence (such as friends) that may affect an individual's view of unions. For the other two dimensions of commitment, the results indicate that union participation is their most significant predictor. Common across all four dimensions is the finding that the demographic characteristics of the worker do not play a major role in explaining union commitment. Of the several demographic characteristics included in the analysis, only gender was statistically significant suggesting that female workers are more loyal to their union whereas male workers tend to be more involved in union activities.

The Gordon and al. study (1980) also found that union members who are dissatisfied with «bread and butter» issues and/or with management are more likely to be participate in union activities. These same individuals are

also more likely to have stronger beliefs in unionism. Interestingly, satisfaction with the union is only significantly correlated with union loyalty. In other words, those who are satisfied with the union tend to be more loyal to the union but at the same time, they are no more inclined to participate in union activities than the dissatisfied members. The results also showed a positive relationship between union attitudes and the four commitment measures, thus indicating that workers with positive views of unions in general are likely to be more committed union members.

The two subsequent studies of union commitment by Ladd and al. (1982) and Gordon and al. (1984) focused exclusively on the correlation between various aspects of satisfaction and the union commitment of engineers and technicians. The results show that although engineers and technicians from a particular union are rather similar in terms of their commitment to the union, the factors affecting this commitment are however different for these two groups of workers. For example, in the technician sample, all five measures of satisfaction were significantly correlated with union loyalty whereas for the engineers, only satisfaction with management and satisfaction with the union mattered. On the other hand, the engineers' willingness to work for the union is affected by four of the five satisfaction dimensions whereas for the technicians, their willingness to work for the union are affected by only one satisfaction dimension, namely the extent to which they are dissatisfied with management.

From the above studies, it therefore appears that union commitment is a complex phenomenon affected by satisfaction and attitudinal factors, and possibly by demographic factors. Rather than attempting to examine all the potential variables that can be derived from these factors, the present study limits itself to five sets of independent variables, focusing primarily on attitudes towards unions in general, attitudes towards the workplace, demographic characteristics, work aspects, and job satisfaction. The present study also differs from previous commitment research in terms of the analytical method used. In all three studies discussed earlier, the findings are based upon bivariate correlations between the various union commitment measures and the sets of independent variables under study. In this paper, the proposed method is that of multivariate regression analysis, which therefore allows us to determine whether the variables found to be statistically significant under correlation analysis still maintain their statistical significance under regression analysis.

DATA AND VARIABLE MEASUREMENTS

Data

The data for this study were collected from a mail-back questionnaire sent to all members of the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association, four weeks after the striking faculty were legislated back to work. The questionnaire contains about 90 items, and it asks the respondents to rate on a seven-point scale their commitment to the Faculty Association, their satisfaction with various job aspects, their beliefs in unions in general, and their commitment to the university³. The respondents were also asked a number of questions relating to their demographic characteristics and work situations⁴.

A total of 456 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 48 percent. A total of 41 questionnaires were however unusable, and they were therefore deleted from the final sample. Approximately 84,8 percent of the respondents were male faculty. In terms of academic ranks, 52,8 percent of the respondents were full professors, 27,7 percent were associate professors, and the remaining 19,5 percent were at the assistant professor level or less. In terms of salary, 31,7 percent of the respondents earned less than \$50 000 annually, 50,4 percent earned between \$50 000 and \$70 000, and the remaining 17,9 percent made over \$70 000. A comparison of the characteristics of the respondents to those of the population shows that the respondent group is quite similar to the University of Saskatchewan faculty as a whole.

Variables

In this study, four dependent variables are included for analysis, consisting of an overall commitment measure and its three principal components. The overall commitment (COMMIT) of the faculty towards the Faculty Association is a composite index of 12 items, borrowed from Gordon and al. (1980). A factor analysis was performed on these items, and the results showed that the overall union commitment of the faculty can be broken down into three factors, reflecting the «union loyalty», «willingness

³ A copy of the questionnaire is available upon request.

⁴ The questionnaire also had a number of questions about the strike, including whether the respondent voted for the strike, the reasons why the respondent voted against the strike, and whether the respondent felt that the strike achieved its objective.

to work for the union», and «responsibilities towards the union» components found in the study by Gordon and al. (1980). These factors accounted for 48,8, 9,7 and 8,2 percent of the variance respectively.

The first factor (LOYALTY) consists of six items ($\alpha = 0,89$) and it provides a measure of the faculty member's loyalty towards the Association. The second factor (WILLING) consists of three items ($\alpha = 0,86$) and it is indicative of the willingness of the faculty member to do extra work for the Association (for example, to serve on a committee of the Association). The third factor (RESP) is captured by three items ($\alpha = 0,57$), and it measures the willingness of the faculty member to carry out duties that are normally expected of union members (for example, to help a colleague use the grievance procedure). These three factors together with COMMIT form the four dependent variables to be estimated in this paper.

There are twenty explanatory variables in the proposed estimating equation, and they are divided into five categories. The first category represents the faculty's attitudes towards unions in general. The three variables included in this category are derived from a factor analysis performed on ten items developed by Fiorito (1987). These variables are comparable to Fiorito's, and they account for 41,7, 19,9 and 10 percent of the variance respectively. The factor UNEG consists of four items ($\alpha = 0,85$), and it reflects the extent to which the faculty member agrees with the negative image of unions — that is, with the view that unions are detrimental to society. The second factor, UPOL, consists of three items ($\alpha = 0,83$) and it reflects the perception of the faculty member regarding the amount of political power unions have. The third factor, UWORK, is a three-item variable ($\alpha = 0,75$) and it relates to the faculty's attitudes towards how much workers benefit from unionization.

The second category of variables measures the faculty member's attitude toward the university as a workplace. Only one variable (UNIV) is included in this category, and it is a composite index of 8 organizational commitment items derived from Werbel and Gould (1984) and Buchanan (1974)⁵. Higher values for this variable are associated with greater faculty commitment to the university.

The demographic characteristics of the respondent are captured by six variables. The variable, MALE, is a dummy variable which is equal to 1 if the respondent is a male faculty, and 0 otherwise. MARRIED is also a

⁵ A factor analysis on the 8 items yielded two components, with the second factor consisting of only two items. For this reason, it was decided to combine all 8 items into a single factor.

binary variable, and it is set to 1 if the respondent is married. There are four «age» dummy variables, representing those faculty less than 30 years old (AGELT30), those between 31 and 40 years old (AGE3140), those between 41 and 50 years old (AGE4150) and those between 51 and 60 years old (AGE5160)⁶.

The various aspects of work are measured by six variables. SIZE represents the number of faculty members in the respondent's department or college, if it is non-departmentalized. SUPER is a dummy variable, and it takes on the value of 1 if the respondent is in a supervisory position, such as department head. The annual earnings of the faculty member are represented by four dummy variables — SLT40, S4050, S5060, and S6070. They correspond to annual salary of less than \$40 000, between \$40 000 and \$50 000, between \$50 000 and \$60 000, and between \$60 000 and \$70 000 respectively⁷.

In the questionnaire sent to the faculty members, there were 17 items that dealt with various facets of job satisfaction. From these items, four variables were identified through factor analysis, explaining 36,8, 11,6, 8,3 and 6,4 percent of the variance respectively. The first factor (JADMIN) consists of five items ($\alpha = 0,94$) and it measures the faculty's satisfaction with the performance of the university administrators. The second factor (JWORK) consists of six items ($\alpha = 0,74$) measuring the faculty member's satisfaction with various aspects of work, such as class size, pay and administrative duties. The third factor (JREC) is a three-item variable ($\alpha = 0,74$) and it measures the extent to which the individual faculty member is satisfied with the amount of recognition received for work done. The last factor (JRES) included three items ($\alpha = 0,62$) and it relates to the faculty member's satisfaction with existing research facilities (for example, the availability of computer facilities).

The estimating equation proposed in this paper therefore consists of 6 variables relating to various facets of work, 6 demographic variables, and 8 attitudinal variables representing union beliefs, commitment to the university, and job satisfaction. Of the 8 attitudinal variables, 7 are derived from factor analysis. Mathematically, the proposed estimating equation can be expressed as:

⁶ Faculty members who are 61 years old and over are therefore the control group.

⁷ The control group is those faculty members making in excess of \$70 000 annually. Another variable that can be included in the «work aspect» category is the academic rank of the faculty member. However, because of the very high correlation between academic rank and salary, it is not possible to include both sets of variables without running into multicollinearity problem. The results presented in this paper are based upon the «salary» specification. Results based upon the «academic rank» specification are available upon request, and they are very similar to those presented in Table 1.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Commitment} = & a_0 + a_1\text{UNEG} + a_2\text{UPOL} + a_3\text{UWORK} + a_4\text{UNIV} \\
 & + a_5\text{AGELT30} \\
 & + a_6\text{AGE3140} + a_7\text{AGE4150} + a_8\text{AGE5160} \\
 & + a_9\text{MALE} + a_{10}\text{MARRIED} \\
 & + a_{11}\text{SIZE} + a_{12}\text{SUPER} + a_{13}\text{SLT40} \\
 & + a_{14}\text{S4050} + a_{15}\text{S5060} \\
 & + a_{16}\text{S6070} + a_{17}\text{JADMIN} + a_{18}\text{JWORK} \\
 & + a_{19}\text{JREC} + a_{20}\text{JRES}.
 \end{aligned}$$

Four sets of results are estimated for the above equation, with each set corresponding to a particular measure of union commitment.

THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The empirical results, using the OLS regression technique, are reported in Table 1. The first set of estimates represents the results for overall union commitment as the dependent variable. The results show that all three measures of union beliefs (UNEG, UPOL and UWORK) are statistically significant in explaining the overall commitment of the faculty members towards the Faculty Association. Specifically, the evidence suggests that faculty members who hold a negative view of unions are less committed to the Association, whereas those who believe in unions' political strength and/or unions' workplace instrumentality are more committed union members.

The estimate for UNIV is statistically significant, and the positive sign for its estimated coefficient suggests that faculty members who are committed to the university are also likely to be committed union members. This result is indicative of dual allegiance among faculty members, thereby corroborating with the findings of several studies (Martin, 1981; Gordon and al., 1984) that found allegiance to the union to be positively correlated with allegiance to the employer, in samples of public sector workers, engineers and technicians. Faculty members are therefore similar to these workers, at least in terms of their commitment to both the union and the employer.

Of the 12 variables representing work aspects and demographic characteristics, only three (AGELT30, AGE3140, S5060) are statistically significant. To test whether these 12 variables combined have any significant impact on overall union commitment, a partial F-test was carried out, producing an F value of 1,93 which is not significant at the ,01 level with (12 403) degrees of freedom. Work aspects and demographic characteristics as a group are therefore not related to overall union commitment. This finding is consistent with those of previous commitment research.

Table 1
Determinants of Union Commitment

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Dependent Variables</i>			
	<i>COMMIT</i>	<i>LOYALTY</i>	<i>WILLING</i>	<i>RESP</i>
UNEG	-1,12**	-0,65**	-2,89**	-0,17**
UPOL	0,80**	0,59**	0,07	0,14**
UWORK	0,23*	0,11	0,06	0,06*
UNIV	0,16**	0,05	0,05	0,06**
MALE	1,60	0,27	1,13*	0,11
MARRIED	-1,59	-1,12	-0,31	-0,22
AGELT30	-7,67**	-2,90	-3,55**	-1,05
AGE3140	-3,34*	-1,12	-1,78*	-0,54
AGE4150	-1,72	0,10	-1,35*	-0,45
AGE5160	-1,04	0,04	-0,65	-0,44
SIZE	0,03	0,02	0,02	8,08 E-06
SUPER	-0,54	-0,57	-0,15	0,17
SLT40	2,49	0,17	2,02**	-0,03
S4050	2,61	0,32	1,87**	0,42
S5060	3,22**	0,89	1,62**	0,69
S6070	1,96	0,84	0,80	0,32
JADMIN	-0,40**	-0,19**	-0,16**	-0,04*
JWORK	0,01	-0,02	0,01	0,01
JREC	-0,05	0,06	-0,08	-0,04
JRES	-0,44**	-0,20**	-0,09	-0,15**
Intercept	18,20**	-3,68	6,47**	15,78**
Corrected R ²	0,64	0,66	0,36	0,30

The sample size is 415 observations. Significance is denoted by * at the ,05 level and ** at the ,01 level.

Looking at the individual variables, the results show that young faculty members (that is, those who are less than 40 years old) are less committed to the Association than older faculty. A possible explanation for this evidence is that because faculty members below the age of 40 are a minority group in the Association⁸, the latter may be less sensitive to the needs of younger faculty, focusing instead on issues (for example, early retirement) that reflect the wishes of the majority group. It is therefore not surprising that younger faculty members are less committed to the Association.

⁸ On the basis of the sample used in this paper, 27,5 percent of the faculty members are below 40 years of age.

Of the four job satisfaction variables included in the estimating equation, two (JADMIN and JRES) are statistically significant. The F-test produced an F-value of 11,58 which is significant at the ,01 level with (4 411) degrees of freedom. In other words, the four satisfaction measures combined do have an impact on the faculty's commitment to the Association. As expected, the negative sign on JADMIN implies that respondents who are satisfied with the performance of the university administrators are less likely to be committed union members. Thus, insofar as the determinants of overall union commitment are concerned, the impact of commitment to the university and satisfaction with the university administrators operates in the opposite direction.

The results also show that faculty members who are satisfied with the university's research facilities are less likely to be committed union members. If the perception is that it is the university administration and not the Faculty Association which is responsible for the existing research facilities, then satisfaction with existing facilities should drive the university faculty closer to the administration than to the Faculty Association, thus explaining the estimated inverse relationship between union commitment and satisfaction with the research facilities. The estimated results for JWORK and JREC suggest that satisfaction with work and with recognition received have no bearing on the faculty's overall commitment to the Association. With hindsight, the non-significance of the variable JREC is to be expected. The amount of recognition an individual faculty member receives is often a professional issue involving communication between colleagues, and this is independent of the activities of the Faculty Association.

The estimates for the «union loyalty» equation are presented in column 2 of Table 1. The most significant difference between this set of estimates and that of column 1 is the loss of statistical significance for UWORK. In other words, faculty members who are loyal to the Faculty Association are unaffected by whether or not they believe in the ability of unions to provide tangible benefits to their members. A possible explanation for this result is that faculty members make the distinction between the workplace instrumentality of the Faculty Association and that of unions in general, so that the latter has no bearing on their loyalty towards the Association. Alternatively, it may be argued that it takes more than just tangible benefits to instill a sense of loyalty among faculty members. The results also show that none of the demographic variables are statistically significant. Thus, in comparison to the «overall commitment» estimates, it appears that the loyalty of the faculty is even less likely to be influenced by work and demographic factors.

Column 3 of Table 1 reports the results for the «willingness to work for the union» measure. The estimated results for UNEG, UPOL and UWORK suggest that union beliefs have an impact on the dependent variable only to the extent that those faculty members who hold negative views of unions are unlikely to do extra work for the Faculty Association. Faculty members who believe in unions' political power and/or unions' workplace instrumentality are however no more likely to do extra work for the Association than those who believe otherwise.

Unlike the findings of previous estimates, the present set of estimates gives more prominence to the demographic and work variables. Seven of 12 variables are statistically significant, indicating that the age, gender and salary of the faculty members do have an impact on their willingness to do extra work for the Association. These results together with the loss of statistical significance for UPOL and UWORK therefore suggest that perceptual factors alone may not be enough to explain why some faculty members have greater interest in working for the union than others. The results also show that only one satisfaction variable (JADMIN) is statistically significant, thereby providing additional support for the view that perceptual factors play a lesser role in explaining the willingness of the faculty members to serve on the Association's committees or to run for the Executive of the Association.

The last column of Table 1 presents the results for the «Responsibilities» equation. The results are comparable to the «overall commitment» results, except for the complete loss of statistical significance for AGELT30, AGE3140, and S5060. The willingness of the faculty members to perform normal union activities (for example, to read the collective agreement contract and to become knowledgeable about it) is therefore solely affected by perceptual factors. Hence, where is no substantial personal costs involved in the union activities, perceptual factors play a more important role than in cases where the activities involve time and cost for the faculty member.

Viewing the four regression results as a set, the conclusion is that satisfaction with the Administration (JADMIN) and negative beliefs about unions (UNEG) are the two variables that matter across all dimensions of union commitment. Since the other two measures of union beliefs (UPOL and UWORK) are not always statistically significant, differentiating between the various measures of union beliefs therefore adds to our understanding of union commitment. For example, previous research using a single measure of union beliefs have found this variable to be statistically significant in all the equations estimated. On the basis of the evidence presented in

this paper, it may be argued that the underlying cause for the earlier results is the membership's negative view of unions and not the members' belief in union political strength or union workplace instrumentality.

The overall results of the paper also suggest that the determinants of the faculty's willingness to do extra work for the Association are somewhat different from the determinants of the other union commitment measures. In the latter case, demographic and work factors play a less important role and perceptual factors a more important role than in the former case.

Finally, a number of the estimated results are consistent with the findings of previous research. In both the present study and past research, it was found that satisfaction with the administration (or management) is likely to lead to less union commitment. Male union members are found to be more willing to participate in extra union activities. However, for the other measures of union commitment, demographic and work factors do not matter and this is comparable to past results. Because of these similarities in results, one may therefore speculate that the behaviour of faculty members is not much different from the behaviour of other workers, at least regarding their commitment to the union.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to identify the faculty's commitment to the Faculty Association, using a sample of 415 faculty members from the University of Saskatchewan. The major findings of the study are as follows: First, being committed to the university as a workplace organization does not preclude a faculty member from being committed to the Association. A possible explanation for this dual commitment is that faculty members on the average may not perceive the activities of the Association to be detrimental to the university life.

Second, even though faculty members may be dissatisfied with various aspects of their work, dissatisfaction with the administration is the most important source of dissatisfaction that induces the faculty members to become committed union members. The Faculty Association can therefore be viewed as a vehicle through which the faculty members hope to alter the attitudes and performance of the administrators. Third, the way the faculty members view unions in general does determine the extent of their commitment to the Faculty Association. This is particularly true for faculty members who hold a negative image of unions.

Fourth, the results suggest that in general demographic characteristics and work factors are not important in explaining the faculty's commitment to the Association. This same conclusion was reached in other commitment studies, which therefore indicates that faculty members as a group are not unlike other types of workers regarding their commitment to the union.

Fifth, the results also show that for the faculty members to participate in union activities that are beyond what is normally expected of union members, perceptual factors alone may not be enough. This is where background factors play an important role, and the empirical evidence suggest that for a given level of earnings, younger faculty members are less likely to participate in these activities. On the other hand, after controlling for age, male faculty and lower paid faculty are more willing participants.

While the present study has increased our understanding of the faculty involvement in the collective bargaining process, further research in this area is still warranted. Since the present study is based upon a sample of individuals drawn from a single institution, additional studies are needed to determine the generalizability of the above conclusions. This is especially important considering that the questionnaires used in this study were sent four weeks after the faculty were legislated back to work. Given the unique circumstance under which the questionnaires were sent, it is conceivable that the responses of the faculty would have been different under other circumstances. For example, the occurrence of the strike may have pushed some «neutral» faculty members to take a more specific stance towards the Association, but it is not clear as to which direction the strike has affected the faculty members' commitment towards the Association. It is also likely that the strike polarized the faculty members, thus causing a greater variability in responses than one would expect under more normal circumstances. Given the uniqueness of the present study, the reader should therefore be cautioned about the generalizability of the results. On the positive side, however, the strike most likely increased the response rate to the survey.

Another problem is that the present study did not examine the influence of socialization factors (Gordon and al. 1980) on the faculty commitment to the Association. It may therefore be worthwhile to include these factors in future research. Finally, because of the two recent strikes at the University of Saskatchewan and at Dalhousie University, it would be interesting to find out whether university faculty in general are becoming more militant and whether faculty strikes have been successful.

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Déterminants de l'activité syndicale des professeurs d'université

Même si le syndicalisme est bien établi chez les professeurs d'université au Canada, peu de recherches y ont été consacrées au cours des dernières années. Les enseignants des cycles élémentaire et secondaire ont plutôt retenu l'attention des chercheurs. Afin de remplir ce vacuum apparent, cet article a pour objet d'étudier les rapports entre le degré d'engagement syndical d'un corps professoral universitaire et divers facteurs comme la satisfaction au travail, la confiance en la valeur de l'action syndicale, le comportement des professeurs à l'égard de l'institution d'enseignement elle-même, certains aspects du travail et les caractéristiques démographiques.

Pour obtenir les données nécessaires, on a fait parvenir un questionnaire à tous les membres de l'Association des professeurs de l'Université de la Saskatchewan et cela quatre semaines seulement après qu'ils aient été forcés de rentrer au travail par l'adoption d'une loi spéciale. Ce document, qu'ils devaient retourner par courrier, comprenait 90 questions par lesquelles on s'enquerrait de leurs caractéristiques démographiques, de leurs conditions de travail et de différents aspects de leur comportement. On a reçu 456 questionnaires, ce qui donnait un taux de retour de 48 pour cent. De ceux-ci, 42 étaient inutilisables et, par conséquent, il a fallu les mettre de côté. Dans l'ensemble, les caractéristiques des répondants étaient tout à fait comparables à celles du corps professoral en général.

Les questions portant sur l'engagement syndical ont fait l'objet d'une analyse de facteurs dont les résultats démontrent que, règle générale, celui-ci, en ce qui concerne le corps professoral, peut se décomposer en trois éléments reflétant «la loyauté envers le syndicat», «la volonté de travailler pour le syndicat» et «le sens des responsabilités à son endroit», composantes tirées de l'étude de Gordon et al. (1980). Ces trois éléments, de même que la variable de l'engagement syndical, forment les quatre variables dépendantes analysées dans le présent article.

En utilisant la technique de régression (OLS), les résultats démontrent que les professeurs qui ont une opinion négative du syndicalisme sont moins favorables à l'Association, alors que ceux qui croient en la puissance politique des syndicats sont des membres plus militants. Les professeurs très attachés à l'Université sont aussi possiblement des syndicalistes engagés, ce qui sous-entend que les professeurs ne perçoivent pas que l'activité de l'Association puisse être dommageable au milieu universitaire. En tant que groupe, les caractéristiques démographiques et la spécificité du travail ne semblent pas avoir une influence significative sur l'engagement syndical. La satisfaction au travail des professeurs a, cependant, un impact considérable. En particulier, les résultats indiquent que ceux qui sont mécontents de la performance administrative de l'Université sont davantage militants dans l'Association. Fait intéressant, les professeurs qui sont satisfaits des ressources en matière de recherche sont des membres moins fervents. On peut expliquer cette situation par le fait que les professeurs peuvent estimer que l'administration de l'Université, et non l'Association est responsable des ressources allouées à la recherche.

Enfin, les conclusions de l'enquête démontrent que les déterminants qui influencent la variable relative à «la volonté de travailler pour le syndicat» diffèrent de ceux qui ont un impact sur les autres variables dépendantes. Contrairement à ces derniers cas, il semble que les variables portant sur les données démographiques et sur la spécificité du travail jouent un rôle prépondérant comme explication des fluctuations dans la variable se rapportant à la «volonté» des professeurs de travailler pour le syndicat. Les résultats laissent voir que, les autres facteurs demeurant constants, les professeurs plus âgés, de sexe masculin et moins rémunérés sont davantage enclins à prendre une part active aux affaires syndicales.