Document généré le 12 oct. 2024 05:43

Relations industrielles
Industrial Relations

Who Will Help? Willingness to Work for the Union

Sarosh Kuruvilla et Jack Fiorito

Volume 49, numéro 3, 1994

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/050959ar
DOI : https://doi.org/10.7202/050959ar

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Éditeur(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (imprimé)
1703-8138 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

Kuruvilla, S. & Fiorito, J. (1994). Who Will Help? Willingness to Work for the Union. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, *49*(3), 548–575. https://doi.org/10.7202/050959ar

Résumé de l'article

Cet article présente et vérifie un modèle de la propension des syndiqués à participer aux activités syndicales. Malgré les positions théoriques largement divergentes quant à la meilleure structure syndicale et au meilleur système de gestion pour l'efficacité, il y a consensus sur le fait que l'activisme croissant des syndiqués est vital, dans l'environnement d'aujourd'hui, pour le succès de l'organisation, de la négociation et de la représentation politique. D'un côté plus pratique, tous les syndicats ont admis ce besoin pour un activisme accru de leurs membres. Cependant, les syndiqués sont largement apathiques. Par exemple, les résultats d'une enquête internationale auprès de travailleurs dans dix sept pays (tableau 1) suggèrent que le niveau de participation volontaire des syndiqués dans les activités syndicales est très bas. Nous prétendons que de tels niveaux d'apathie exigent une compréhension des processus sous-jacents à la propension des syndiqués de participer aux activités syndicales.

Nous soutenons que les syndicats doivent augmenter la propension générale de leurs membres à participer aux activités syndicales plutôt que de se concentrer sur les niveaux actuels de participation. Les syndicats se sont déjà largement attardés aux niveaux actuels de participation tels la présence aux assemblées syndicales et le fait de servir comme officier de syndicat. Le problème avec cette approche est que les niveaux actuels de participation peuvent résulter de plusieurs contraintes qui ne sont pas du contrôle du syndicat. Pensons par exemple aux problèmes de transport, aux responsabilités eu égard aux enfants, etc. Mais, de façon plus importante, le fait d'étudier la participation actuelle ne fournit pas d'information sur la propension des membres à participer aux diverses actions syndicales. Cependant, le syndicat a le contrôle sur le fait qu'il fournisse ou non à ses membres l'occasion de participer et, si cela est vrai, alors sa principale difficulté est alors de générer cette propension à participer.

La première partie de cet article fournit un recul essentiel en rappelant le débat sur les structures syndicales et l'efficacité. Cela met en évidence l'importance du concept « propension à travailler » pour le syndicat. La seconde partie fait le tour de la littérature existante sur la propension des membres à travailler pour leur syndicat, sur la participation au syndicat et des différentes théories utilisées. Ensuite, nous proposons des hypothèses spécifiques basées sur la théorie et les recherches antérieures qui suggèrent un modèle en deux étapes incorporant plusieurs variables indépendantes d'attitudes d'engagement qui elles mènent à la propension à travailler pour le syndicat. La partie suivante contient des propos méthodologiques eu égard à l'estimation du modèle. Les données ont été colligées à partir d'un grand échantillon de professionnels syndiqués en Suède. Cela est utilisé pour vérifier le modèle général de la propension de travailler pour les syndicats. Même si les données utilisées sont suédoises et malgré les différences considérables entre les systèmes de relations du travail en Suède et en Amérique du Nord, les syndicats suédois connaissent les mêmes problèmes d'activisme de leurs membres qu'en Amérique du Nord (les niveaux d'apathie sont très élevés). Les résultats obtenus suggèrent que la propension d'un membre à travailler pour son syndicat dépend de façon critique de son attitude d'engagement envers son syndicat.

Cette propension est aussi fonction de son statut d'emploi, de son degré d'insatisfaction au travail et du point de vue des personnes autour de lui. Cependant, les attitudes d'engagement constituent le plus important prédicteur de la propension d'un membre à travailler pour son syndicat. L'engagement envers le syndicat dépend de façon critique de cinq variables : la satisfaction envers les efforts du syndicat de négocier des hausses de salaires et d'avantages sociaux, la satisfaction eu égard à la démocratie syndicale interne, l'effort syndical à la socialisation des membres, les efforts du syndicat à fournir des postes de responsabilité aux membres expérimentés et les croyances générales qu'a le membre de ce qu'un syndicat fait.

L'implication des résultats est que l'engagement croissant des membres envers leur syndicat et leur propension à participer activement dépendent largement de ce que les syndicats font tant pour la construction de leur image au plan national ou sociétal que de leurs politiques spécifiques de relations avec les membres au niveau de la section locale. La construction de l'image tant aux niveaux global que local, l'information régulière aux membres, une démocratie syndicale accrue, les relations internes syndicat-membres et les programmes d'accueil des nouveaux membres sont autant de facteurs critiques pour accroître l'activisme des membres.

Tous droits réservés © Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval, 1994

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

https://www.erudit.org/fr/

Who Will Help?
Willingness to Work for the Union

Sarosh Kuruvilla
and
Jack Fiorito

This paper proposes and tests a model of a critical union commitment dimension: "Willingness to work" for the union. Organization and social psychological theories, along with previous empirical research, are used to develop the conceptual model, measures, and predictions. These predictions are tested via a two-stage regression model, using data from a large sample of Swedish professional union members. As predicted, both attitudinal commitment and subjective norms are critical influences on the individual's willingness to work on behalf of the union.

"And who will help me bake the bread?" asked the Little Red Hen. "Not I" said the duck. "Not I" said the pig. "Not I" said the dog. "And who will help me eat the bread?" asked the Little Red Hen. "I will" said the duck. "I will" said the pig. "I will" said the dog.

— From *The Little Red Hen*, a children's story

The purpose of this paper is to develop and test a model of the union member's willingness to work on behalf of the union. "Willingness to work" has been identified as a distinct and important dimension of union commitment (Gordon, et al. 1980), and more broadly, of organizational commitment. Numerous studies have explored the measurement and dimensionality of union commitment, but as yet the literature reveals little consensus on the

* KURUVILLA, S., New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

FIORITO, J., College of Business, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida.

** We thank Jan Bröms and Anders Leion for help in data collection. This project was funded by a grant from Arbetsmiljöfonden, Stockholm, to Sarosh Kuruvilla. We also thank two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments.

determinants of the member's willingness to work for the union (Fullagar and Barling 1987).

The concept of union commitment, and specifically, willingness to work on behalf of the union, is important for several reasons. As both voluntary associations and bureaucracies, unions depend upon their members to act voluntarily in particular ways which facilitate the achievement of organizational goals. They depend upon "muscle" — an active membership — to neutralize financial and staffing advantages of employers in the economic sphere and well-financed opposition groups in the political realm. They depend as well upon an active membership to carry out day-to-day administrative tasks such as grievance handling and safety committee work, which are necessary for effective representation.

Given the decline in union density in most advanced industrial societies (Troy 1990), unions all over face the need for increased member activism. Union membership has declined in both countries with traditionally high levels of union density (e.g., Sweden), and countries with traditionally low levels of union density (e.g., U.S.). To counter the decline, in the U.S., unions have publicly reaffirmed the necessity of membership involvement and participation in general terms (AFL-CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work 1985) and in conjunction with specific member activism programs (e.g., "one-on-one" programs; Zack 1985) which involve mobilizing the rank-and-file in pursuit of both organizing and political goals.

Drawing on previous empirical studies, the extensive organizational literature, and social psychological theories on the formation of behavioral intentions, this paper proposes a conceptual model. Using questionnaire data from a large sample of Swedish union members, measures for key constructs are developed and the model is tested empirically. Although Sweden currently maintains a high level of union density (exceeding 80%), recent successes of conservative political forces and an effective push for decentralized bargaining by the central employer's federation in the name of responding to intensified global competition (Katz 1993) have contributed to eroding unionization levels and wage solidarity policies. (More detail on these developments is provided below.) Swedish unions thus face challenges in many ways similar to those elsewhere (Abrahamsson 1992:2-3), including the challenge of activating a predominantly passive membership in order to revitalize the labor movement, forestall further decline, and possibly regain lost ground. For Swedish unions, the problem of instilling in members a willingness to work on behalf of the union is no less pressing, and the context is not so unique as one might assume at first blush.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WILLINGNESS TO WORK

Despite the dire need for increased membership involvement, actual levels of voluntary union membership activity in most countries are abysmally low. For example, data from an international survey of workers in nineteen countries (Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research: World Values Survey 1983-84) reveals that the percentage of union members who indicate willingness to do unpaid voluntary work for the union was below ten percent in 85% of the countries investigated. Table 1 reports these figures.

TABLE 1

Willingness to do Unpaid Voluntary Work for Trade Unions[a]

Country	*No. of Respondents Interviewed*	*No. of Union Members*	*Percent of Respondents Who Are Union Members*	*Percent of Union Members Who Would Do Unpaid Voluntary Work For The Union*
FRANCE	1122	104	9.2	4.94
U. K.	1203	276	22.9	7.91
GERMANY	1281	259	20.2	7.91
ITALY	1149	187	16.3	15.70
NETHERLANDS	1191	186	15.6	4.49
DENMARK	1126	394	35.0	4.50
BELGIUM	1089	338	31.0	3.04
SPAIN	1999	159	8.0	3.04
IRELAND	1132	296	26.1	4.96
N. IRELAND	302	65	21.5	3.17
USA	2302	310	13.5	4.72
CANADA	1232	230	18.7	6.97
JAPAN	1064	183	17.2	12.22
MEXICO	1794	208	11.6	5.50
S. AFRICA	1535	187	12.2	1.00
AUSTRALIA	1228	243	19.8	4.74
NORWAY	1135	295	26.0	14.30
SWEDEN	954	494	51.8	1.64
ICELAND	927	289	31.2	5.26

[a] Data from World Values Survey 1983-1984, available through the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.

As Table 1 indicates, with the exceptions of Norway, Italy, and Japan, less than eight percent of union members indicated a willingness to do unpaid voluntary work for the union. The mean percentage was 6.1. This table probably raises as many questions as it answers, given that we do not measure the opportunity available for such participation, or the necessity of members to do unpaid voluntary work, but the table serves to illustrate the low percentage of union members apparently willing to do work for the union and is suggestive of a general membership apathy that apparently transcends national boundaries.

The concept of members' or employees' willingness to work is relevant to most organizations. In the case of business organizations, the management and organizations literature has devoted considerable attention to the determinants of employees' attitudinal and behavioral commitment to their organizations (Mottaz 1989; Mueller and Price 1990). However, despite the voluntary nature of union organizations, little attention has focussed on the determinants of the willingness of members to work for their unions. Yet, aside from the considerable practical significance of the concept for unions, "willingness to work" is also important from a more theoretical point of view. As Heckscher noted in his bold call for drastic changes in the internal structure of unions:

> Two competing visions of worker representation underlie much of the debate today, as they have for the past century or more. On the one hand, unions can be viewed as voluntary associations based on the active participation of their members; on the other, they can be seen as disciplined organizations managing a long-term battle with employers. In fact, they must be both (1988:16).

Earlier writers, such as Taft (1973) referred to this dilemma in similar terms, asserting that a union must be a "town meeting" and an "army" at the same time. As Heckscher (1988) suggested, the debate continues, with one side contending that the decline of unions stems directly from bureaucratization within the labor movement and a consequent loss of internal democracy. The demise of internal democracy, it is argued, has resulted in a loss of public support and an uncommitted membership which is unwilling to put forth the effort necessary to revitalize its own organizations (e.g., Benson 1986). On the other side are those who argue that unions need to be more "business-like," professional, or in a word sometimes avoided for its negative connotations, more *bureaucratic*. In this view, unions could better serve their members, and thereby increase member support and their appeal to prospective members, through more efficient administration (Barbash 1969; Bok and Dunlop 1970).

Kochan (1979:153-160) reconciled these views by distinguishing short- and long-term effects, arguing that bureaucratization enhances short-term effectiveness but diminishes member commitment and thereby long-term effectiveness. He prescribed "modern administrative techniques" (1979:159)

as a means of overcoming anti-democratic tendencies of complex union structures.[1] Kochan's reconciliation suggests potential common ground between the two sides. Both sides appear to favor active member involvement, although the two would clearly differ as to the extent to which the membership should control day-to-day operations of the union. The "pro-democracy school" would favor a relatively flat organizational structure with provisions for close membership oversight of union officials, whereas the "pro-bureaucracy school" would favor membership input: 1) On broad policy issues with substantial latitude for officers and staff to determine specific means of implementing policies toward achieving members' and organizational goals; and, 2) In carrying out the specific acts identified as necessary for goal attainment. These different views might explain a superficially curious situation: Pro-democracy types (e.g., Benson 1986) lambast union leadership for autocratic tendencies while union leadership calls for greater membership involvement and participation (AFL-CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work 1985).

There is, nonetheless, consensus that participation is vital. McShane (1986) suggested a basis for this consensus. Taking an "organizational perspective," McShane argued that the survival of an organization depends on how well its members fulfill certain roles:

> For the local labor organization, these organizationally required acts include holding union office, attending and actively participating in general membership meetings, representing the union in local conventions, voting on the strike vote and ratification, helping out with the monthly newsletter, and participating in other local activities (1986:72).

Membership inactivity in this view is more a concern as a threat to union effectiveness than as a threat to internal union democracy (1986:73). Hence the pro-democracy school favors member participation as a manifestation of democracy, while the pro-bureaucracy school stresses the necessity of participation for organizational effectiveness.

McShane's (1986) stress upon *active* rather than *passive* participation is particularly noteworthy. Active participation in forms such as union committee service clearly aligns more closely with the concept of participation which directly contributes to organizational goal attainment than does more passive activity such as attending general membership meetings. Heckscher (1988:25) noted that even the largest U.S. national unions' staffs which number in the hundreds or perhaps a thousand persons (Clark 1988) are no match for business organizations whose employees often number in the tens and even hundreds

1 To illustrate, one such technique might be the use of questionnaires and computerized data analysis to assess members' views on issues.

of thousands. Unless they are activated on behalf of the union, the union's members are more akin to the business's small shareholders or even customers (they are both in a sense) — outside the bureaucracy.

In McShane's (1986) terms, the member's *willingness* to participate is also important. While actual participation may be constrained by personal limitations such as child care responsibilities or transportation difficulties over which the union has little control, the union clearly has substantial control over the provision of opportunities for participation. Its principal difficulty, then, is in generating a willingness to participate among the members. The notion of willingness to participate, in turn, directs our attention away from actual participation and toward the antecedent concept of *union commitment.* Gordon et al. (1980:480) observed: "Since the ability of union locals to attain their goals is generally based on the members' loyalty, belief in the objectives of organized labor, and willingness to perform services voluntarily, commitment is a part of the very fabric of unions."

The focus on the willingness to participate rather than actual participation is consistent with theoretical notions behind the concept of union commitment and the measurement of intentions rather than the measurement of behavior in the social sciences. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest that intentions cause behavior, but behavior is constrained by a number of other factors as well. Hence, in turnover research, researchers typically measure respondents' intentions to leave the organization, rather than examining why people left, since people leave for many, often idiosyncratic reasons (e.g., a spouse's job change). Since the organization can do little to counter many such influences, the policy implication is that it must focus its effort to reduce leaving intentions. In the union situation, actual participation of union members often depends on factors outside the unions' control. For instance, a committed member may not be able to take part in an organizing drive due to child care responsibilities. Similarly, union members may not be able to attend union meetings held in the evenings due to transportation difficulties, or other obligations. Although unions may be able to provide special programs to facilitate participation for some classes of individuals (e.g., coordinating car-pooling, providing child care during meetings), the union's more general challenge is to create a willingness to participate that motivates members to overcome (when possible) their individual barriers to activism.

A number of studies have found that the union behavioral intentions is the best predictor of actual behavior. For instance, Kuruvilla and Sverke (1993) showed that willingness to participate is a strong determinant of actual participation. McShane (1986) also showed that the willingness to participate in union administration is the most important determinant of actual participation. The correlation between willingness to work for the union and actual

participation in the present study is also high ($r = .54$, $p < .001$), and a regression equation for the determinants of participation suggests that willingness to work for the union is the strongest predictor of participation (see footnote 9). Thus, by focusing on the willingness to work for the union, we address the point in the participation process where the union may have the greatest influence.

Various polls indicate that the vast majority of union members are satisfied with their unions, and would vote for union representation if given the opportunity (Fiorito, Gallagher, and Fukami 1988; Hills 1985; Kochan, Katz, and McKersie 1986). Loyalty and belief in the organization's goals are important, to be sure, and are manifested in these polls, but willingness to work for the organization is a distinct practical and conceptual issue of considerable importance.

EMPIRICAL AND CONCEPTUAL LITERATURE

Empirical evidence is scant with respect to the determinants of the willingness to participate in union activity. Some evidence does exist, although variations in measures and methods make it difficult to draw firm conclusions. Glick, Mirvis, and Harder (1977) reported no relationship between two measures of willingness to participate in the union (willingness to attend meetings and willingness to serve on a variety of union committees) and perceived union leadership support for member participation, although the willingness to participate was correlated ($r = .19$, $p < .001$) with one measure of general opinions about unionism. Neither willingness-to-participate measures was related to most demographic variables, although males were more likely than females to express a willingness to attend union meetings.

Findings by Gordon et al. (1980) indicated that a multi-item measure of willingness to work for the union (which included various participatory intentions with respect to the local union) was correlated with both present and previous participation, early socialization into the union, beliefs in the goals of organized labor, attitudes toward the local union, and tenure in the union. McShane's (1986) results, using path analysis, suggested that willingness to participate (in union administration) was determined by job involvement, the perceived value of unions (a measure analogous to general beliefs about union instrumentality), interest in union business, and certain demographic variables including seniority, employment status, and education. Moreover, willingness to participate in union administration was a critical determinant of one measure of administrative participation.

Willingness to work has been identified as a distinct dimension of union commitment (Gordon et al. 1980). Although Gordon et al. (1980) suggested

that union commitment has four dimensions (loyalty, responsibility to the union, willingness to work for the union, beliefs in unionism), more recent research by Friedman and Harvey (1986) indicated that two dimensions, "union commitment attitudes and opinions," and "pro union behavioral intentions," underlie union commitment. Klandermans (1989) also suggested two dimensions: "loyalty and beliefs" and "willingness to work."

This view of the dimensionality of union commitment suggests that union commitment consists of two different phenomena, i.e., attitudes (e.g., loyalty and beliefs) and behavioral intentions (e.g., willingness to work). This is consistent with the concepts of attitudinal commitment and behavioral commitment in the organizational or management literature. In that literature, an affective response resulting from the evaluation of the work situation is termed attitudinal commitment (Mottaz 1989). Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, has been typically operationalized as behavioral intentions — intent to leave or intent to stay in turnover research (Mottaz 1989, Bluedorn 1982, Mueller and Price 1990). Therefore, an understanding of the determinants of the willingness to work for the union should take into account the distinction and the relationship between union attitudinal commitment and behavioral commitment (behavioral intentions), hitherto ignored in the industrial relations literature.

The link between attitudinal and behavioral commitment is well developed in the organizational literature, however. The bulk of the organizational literature has been concerned with the influence of attitudinal commitment on behavioral commitment (Bluedorn 1982; Mobley, et al. 1979; Steers 1977), although some research in this area focusses on the effect of commitment behaviors on attitudes (Salancik and Pfeffer 1978). Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) clarified the direction of the relationship between attitudes and behaviors, arguing that they may be mutually reinforcing. The large number of studies in the organizational literature (see Mottaz, 1989, for a brief review) present a basis for us to develop similar linkages between union attitudinal commitment and behavioral commitment measured by the willingness to work for the union.

Another perspective that can further explicate the link between attitudinal commitment and behavioral intentions is provided by Fishbein and Ajzen in their Theory of Reasoned Action (1975). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest that behavioral intentions are the weighted sum of two variables, attitude toward the object (in this case, the union) and subjective norms, that is, by perceptions of what one's important referents want that person to do with respect to the union and one's motivation to act in conformity with the views of the referents. Intentions, thus formed by attitudes and subjective norms, cause behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). Attitudes themselves are determined

by beliefs, which are in turn dependent on exposure to information, which modifies currently held beliefs or creates new ones. Montgomery (1989) applied Fishbein and Ajzens's theory to the study of voting intentions in union representation elections, and found evidence for the role of both attitudes and subjective norms in predicting voting intentions.

We emphasize here behavioral intentions of union members connected with their willingness to work for the union. Although general willingness to work for the union has not previously been the focus of empirical modeling efforts, the organizational literature, prior research and the Fishbein and Ajzen theory provide the basis for theoretical propositions, which are developed in the empirical specification section.

EMPIRICAL SPECIFICATION

The prior literature reviewed direct our attention to a number of variables that could predict, directly or indirectly, the willingness to work for the union. Given that there is support for a causal relationship between attitudinal and behavioral commitment in the organizational/management literature (Mottaz 1989), we estimate a model consisting of two structural equations. First, the determinants of Union Attitudinal Commitment are investigated. Second, the determinants of Willingness to Work are modeled. The measures used and hypothesis are described below, while descriptive statistics for all variables are provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Summary Variable Definitions and Descriptive Statistics

Variable Definition	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
Satisfaction with Union Performance on Bread and Butter Issues (USATBNB) A four-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring satisfaction with the union in terms of pay, benefits, working conditions and job security (alpha = .65).	2.78	.63
Satisfaction with Union Performance on Internal Democracy (USATREL) A four-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring satisfaction with internal union-member relations (alpha = .72).	3.18	.71

TABLE 2 (continued)

Summary Variable Definitions and Descriptive Statistics

Variable Definition	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
General Beliefs about Unions (GENBEL) An 8-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring favorable beliefs about unions ($\alpha = .90$).	3.16	.46
Socialization (SOCIAL) A 3-item 2-point scale measuring occurrence (1 = did not happen, 2 = happened) of union socialization activities ($\alpha = .56$).	2.46	.49
Previous Union Participation (PPART) A 10-item 2-point scale (0 = no, 1 = yes) measuring previous union participation ($\alpha = .86$).	1.39	.29
Reading Union Newsletters (NEWS) A single-item 2-point scale (0 = no, 1 = yes) measuring whether respondents read union newsletters regularly in the past.	.19	.39
Subjective Norms-(REFERENTS) A 4-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring favorable views of friends and coworkers about the union ($\alpha = .59$)	2.85	.55
Job Satisfaction (JOBSAT) A 12-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring job satisfaction ($\alpha = .83$).	3.44	.61
Employment Status (FULLTIME) (0 = Employed Part-time 1 = Employed Full-time).	.84	.37
Dependent Variables		
Union Attitudinal Commitment (UCATT) A 5-item 5-point scale Likert-type scale measuring attitudinal commitment to the union ($\alpha = .80$).	3.41	.61
Willingness to Work for the Union (WTW) A 3-item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring willingness to work for the union ($\alpha = .81$). Includes the following items; I would be willing to exert extra effort to make the union successful; I would be willing to stand for union office; It is my duty as a union member to help other members.	2.84	.86

Determinants of Union Attitudinal Commitment

Union attitudinal commitment (UCATT) is measured via a five-item Likert-style composite scale. Items included reflect feelings of pride about the union, loyalty toward the union, and positive feelings toward the union and values it is perceived to represent. The general stress in this composite's items is on attitudes rather than behavioral intentions, and it is thus similar to Friedman and Harvey's (1986) attitudinal dimension of union commitment.

There is some consensus in the literature that support for unionization or commitment to the union is a result of some rational calculus on the part of the union member. (See Sverke [1992] for a review of the relevant literature). The union member must feel that there is a payoff to participating in union activity, i.e., the benefits of participation must exceed the cost. The union member must also feel that the union is capable of delivering the goods i.e., be effective, in both its "well disciplined army" and its "town meeting" dimensions. We assess this aspect by the use of two measures. One measure is the individual member's satisfaction with the union's performance on bread and butter issues such as wages, benefits, and job security (USATBNB). It is expected that members who are more satisfied with their union's performance on this dimension will have higher attitudinal commitment. This variable is measured by a four-item Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) measuring satisfaction with union performance in wages, benefits, and job security.

The second measure, satisfaction with union-member relations (USATREL) measures the extent to which members are satisfied with the union's efforts to be internally democratic. This measure consists of a four-item Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) containing statements that the union listens to its members, encourages members to voice their concerns, and is responsive to member concerns. A positive relationship between this measure and union attitudinal commitment is expected. Therefore,

> *Hypothesis 1*: Members who are more satisfied with the union's performance regarding bread and butter issues and internal democracy issues will have higher attitudinal commitment to the union.

The previous literature (e.g., Fullagar and Barling 1987; Gordon et al. 1980) suggest that various beliefs about unions, prior experiences with the union, and information sources are determinants of union commitment attitudes. The inclusion of information sources, prior experiences, and beliefs is consistent with the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory as well. General beliefs about unions (GENBEL) are measured with an eight-item Likert-style scale. Items included encompass both "big labor image" (e.g., autocracy, excess

power) and "union instrumentality" (e.g., effectiveness in wage bargaining; Kochan 1979). For the composite, items were combined so that higher values Cfor the composite indicate more favorable beliefs about unions.[2] Thus,

> *Hypothesis 2*: Members with more favorable beliefs about unions will evidence greater attitudinal commitment to their unions.

The empirical and conceptual literature (Gordon et al. 1980, Fishbein and Ajzen 1975:133) call for relationships between experience and information about the union with union attitudes.[3] Although our data do not contain measures of beliefs about each member's union, but only unions in general, the data do contain responses concerning the member's sources of information about the member's union. These various information sources include information gained via union socialization activities at the time of joining, information gained from regular news publications[4] of the union, and information gained from previous participation or prior experience in union activities.

---

2 Fiorito et al. (1988) noted that general attitudes toward unions appear to influence own-union opinions to some extent. Also see Getman et al. (1976), and Youngblood et al. (1984). Note however, in the previous literature cited here, measures of "general attitude" towards unions are actually measures of "general beliefs" about unions. Fishbein and Ajzen suggested that comparable levels of specificity are most appropriate when predicting attitudes towards an object, i.e., beliefs about a specific union should be most predictive of attitudes toward that union. Lacking a measure of the respondent's beliefs about his/her union, we hypothesize that general beliefs about unions influence attitudes toward a specific union. Fishbein and Ajzen noted that attitudes toward a class of objects are generally related (though not always strongly) to attitudes toward a specific object in that class. Exceptions occur when that specific object behaves in a manner that is contrary to the behavior of most other objects in that class, or if that object has some attribute that is significantly different from the other objects in that class. For instance, it is possible that members may view unions favorably, but may not have positive attitudes about the ("old") Teamsters.

3 Fishbein and Ajzen's formulation argues for a more complex relationship between information and belief formation. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975:134) suggested that at least three different processes underlie belief formation. Beliefs may be formed by accepting information provided by an outside source (informational belief). Beliefs are also formed via direct experiences with an object (descriptive belief). Finally, beliefs are formed by inferences about the object made from prior descriptive beliefs or inferences (inferential belief). Our measures are consistent with Fishbein and Ajzen's descriptive and informational beliefs. Note however, in the absence of beliefs about each individual union in our data, we link information sources directly to commitment attitudes in our model, and in that respect, we deviate from Fishbein and Ajzen's framework.

4 There is a potential problem of causality here, since it is possible that only committed members read union publications on a regular basis. However, it is also possible that there is a cyclical effect between regular information access and commitment; committed members read more and that increases their commitment. Our expectation that reading union publications will be positively related to union commitment attitudes is therefore consistent with the cyclical perspective. Since our commitment measures refer to current views and our reading measure refers to past behavior, our specification stresses that part of the cycle in which causality flows from behavior (reading) to attitude (commitment).

Socialization into the union (SOCIAL) is measured by a three-item Likert-style scale combining items indicating the extent to which union orientation programs provided information to the respondent about the union, the respondent's steward and other union officials, and the extent to which assistance was received from other members. A single-item Likert-style scale measures the extent to which the respondent has read union newsletters (NEWS) in the past. A ten-item two-point (yes/no) scale combines responses to questions about previous union participation (PPART), including items on holding union office, voting in elections, attending meetings, etc., in years prior to the two years preceding the survey. Each of the above measures assesses the extent to which the respondent has used or been exposed to information from the respective information source. Given the nature of these sources of information, we expect greater use will lead to higher levels of attitudinal commitment to the union. Thus,

Hypothesis 3: Members with more information about the union will evidence higher attitudinal commitment to the union.

Determinants of Willingness to Work

Willingness to Work (WTW) is measured via a three-item Likert-style composite scale. Items included reflect a willingness to serve as a union official, disposition to help other members, and expend extra effort to make the union successful. All three items stress general behavioral intentions in respect of the union rather than attitudes toward the union. It is important to note that while each of the items concern specific behaviors, when put together, they represent a general readiness to work for the union in different ways. In terms of the dimensions of commitment, note that Willingness to Work falls within "behavioral intentions", or behavioral commitment as termed in the organizational literature. The argument here is that union attitudinal commitment leads to behavioral intentions, but behavioral intentions are also influenced by subjective norms.

Given the causal link noted above, Willingness to Work is modeled as a function of union commitment attitudes. In addition, consistent with Fishbein and Ajzen's notions of the link between attitudinal commitment and behavioral intentions, we expect subjective norms will influence the willingness to participate in union activity. Our measure of subjective norms (REFERENTS) includes the views of persons who could be categorized as important referents of the union member i.e., friends and co-workers (Montgomery 1989; Zalesny 1985). Note that our measure of subjective norms differs from Fishbein and Ajzen's formulations in that we do not have direct measures of the importance of the referents nor the motivations of the respondent to comply with those referents' expectations. The measure of subjective norms is a four-item

Likert-style composite scale. For this measure, included items indicate the degree to which friends and coworkers approve of the local union, and the degree to which they talk about union activities outside of the work setting. Thus,

Hypothesis 4: Members with higher levels of attitudinal commitment to the union will be more likely to express a greater willingness to work for the union; and,

Hypothesis 5: Members who have important referents who view the union favorably are more likely to express a greater willingness to work for the union.

Other factors are liable to affect the willingness to work for the union, although not examined in previous literature. We include a measure of whether the person works full-time (value=1) or part-time (value=0) (FULLTIME). It is possible for part-time workers to have positive attitudes about the union, but their incentive to participate in union activity may be blunted considerably by their lesser "stake" in the job (Strauss 1977). Therefore,

Hypothesis 6: Fulltime workers will express a greater willingness to work than part time workers.

In addition, given the fairly consistent negative relationship between job satisfaction and union participation in previous research, we include a measure of job satisfaction (JOBSAT) as a predictor in this analysis. Job satisfaction is a twelve-item composite of Likert-style scales covering a broad range of job facets (adapted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire) including pay, promotions, autonomy, and work itself. In Klandermans' (1984) terms, job dissatisfaction is viewed as an incentive to induce participation in unions to alter the sources of dissatisfaction, i.e, in the sense of "frustration-aggression" linkage. Therefore, a negative relationship is expected, i.e.,

Hypothesis 7: Members who are more satisfied with their jobs will be less inclined to express a willingness to work for the union.

Estimation Issues

Estimation of the willingness to work equation is complicated by the inclusion of an endogenous explanatory variable (union attitudinal commitment) in the equation. Since it is possible that union attitudinal commitment could be correlated with the error term in the willingness to work equation, ordinary least squares estimation would produce biased results. To correct this problem, two-stage least squares (2SLS) is utilized: The predicted values from the union commitment attitude equation ($\hat{\text{UCATT}}$), are used to estimate Willingness to Work.

The models tested in this paper take the following functional form:

Eq. 1) $UCATT = a_o + a_1USATBNB + a_2USATREL + a_3GENBEL + a_4SOCIAL + a_5NEWS + a_6PPART + u$; and, Eq. 2) $WTW = b_o + b_1 \hat{}UCCATT + b_2REFERENTS + b_3FULLTIME + b_4JOBSAT + V$, where the variables are as defined above and u and v are error terms (subscripts for individuals omitted).

Using the 2SLS procedure above does not answer an important empirical question: I.e., in empirical terms, do the determinants of union attitudinal commitment affect the willingness to work directly (not merely through attitudinal commitment)? Since much of the previous research assumes a stage-wise process (e.g., Fishbein and Ajzen [1975] suggest that determinants of attitudes affect intentions only via attitude) we estimate an alternative model to test this proposition. The information needed is obtained by estimating Equation 3, where the variables in Equation 1 (union attitudinal commitment equation) are included as predictors in equation 2 (willingness to work equation). If the stage-wise relationship implicit in attitudinal research is to be supported, then the attitudinal predictors should not show any significant effect on willingness to work once attitudinal commitment is controlled. The model is estimated as follows:

Eq. 3) $WTW = c_o + c_1UCATT + C_2REFERENTS + c_3FULLTIME + c_4JOBSAT + C_5USATBNB + C_6USATREL + c_7GENBEL + c_8SOCIAL + c_9PPART + c_{10}NEWS + w$,

where w is an error term and remaining terms are defined as before.

To examine the possibility that the relationship between attitudinal commitment and the willingness to work for the union is predominantly explained by common methods variance (they are taken from the same questionnaire), the items making up both scales were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis, using principle components and varimax rotation. The factor analysis yielded two factors, with all the attitudinal items loading on the union attitudinal commitment dimension, and all the behavioral intention items loading on to the willingness to work for the union dimension,[5] suggesting that they are largely distinct from each other.

DATA

Data were collected in 1987-88 through the use of questionnaires. The sample consists of a national cross-section of professional union members from Swedish unions affiliated with *Centralorganizationen* SACO, the

5 These results are available from the authors.

Swedish trade union federation of professional employees. The professions represented in the sample are diverse and include twenty-six different occupations such as university professors, doctors, lawyers, clergymen, military officers, economists, psychologists, and other professionals. The questionnaire, which was translated into Swedish using the methods of translation-back translation, was sent to respondents along with a covering letter from SACO's Research Director. The letter explained the purposes of the study to respondents and guaranteed anonymity of responses. Respondents were encouraged to tear off any identifying information in the questionnaire, including the questionnaire number, before returning the completed questionnaires to the union office in the stamped envelope provided. The response rate was 66%. Analysis of the characteristics of respondents and nonrespondents do not indicate any systematic difference between the two. The sample size, after case-wise deletions for missing values, is 1331. More detailed descriptions of the sample and data collection procedures are available from the authors.

The Swedish Industrial Relations System

Since this paper uses Swedish data, a description of Swedish industrial relations is germane in that it provides the appropriate context for the study. Since 1956, collective bargaining has been highly centralized in Sweden. The SAF-LO agreement set the economy-wide "frame," and included both wage increases and various stipulations about nonwage issues. The sectoral and firm level agreements adopted the wage increases in the frame agreement, and negotiated additional firm or sector specific nonwage issues in addition. Although there has always been some amount of wage drift, this pattern of collective bargaining allowed the unions to successfully pursue their policy of wage solidarity, whereby wage differentials between higher paid and lower paid workers would gradually narrow. These arrangements, and the close relationship between the LO (the blue collar labor federation) and the Social Democratic Party ensured the strength and influence of the Swedish labor movement. At its height, Swedish union density exceeded 85% of the nonagricultural workforce.

This long period of relative stability and high membership levels required unions to have large administrative organizations to service members and carry out myriad union activities in research, political action, education, international relations, and social welfare. While this was true of LO and TCO (the white collar federation), whose membership levels exceeded 2.2 million and 1.3 million respectively in 1985, it was less true of SACO (the professional union federation), with only 300,000 members.

Since 1984, there has been a decline in centralized collective bargaining, as employers asserted the need for wages to reflect the economic conditions

of individual firms. National wage bargaining was replaced by industry level bargaining in 1988, and beginning in 1990, collective bargaining has been relatively decentralized (Katz 1993). Katz suggested that workplace level bargaining has resulted in more flexible pay systems, and an abandonment of the Swedish policy of wage solidarity. The SAF (the Swedish employers federation) has also seen declines in its membership ranks, and has since closed down its collective bargaining department stating that centralized bargaining is defunct (EIRR 1993:12). More than half of the Swedes think that wage negotiations should occur at the workplace (*Dagens Nyheter* 1992). Bergström (1992) suggests that Swedes have changed their view of themselves, and their receptivity to market-oriented reform, as a result of a number of forces including the trend towards internationalization and pending membership in the European community.

The recent election victory of the Conservatives has accelerated the decline of the Swedish collective bargaining model, with various labor institutions under severe attack by the government. Union membership has been declining in Sweden since 1986, and the new conservative government of Carl Bildt has successfully attacked established labor institutions, signifying a loss of political power for the labor movement.

Unions have still not developed clear strategies in terms of how to respond to this negative political and economic climate that is eroding their membership levels and political influence. Apart from reductions in the number of employees in the unions, there have been a rash of mergers (e.g., the metal workers and the mineworkers), and the LO is considering plans to restructure by reducing the number of national unions in its fold from 22 to 10 (EIRR 1993). This is because several smaller national unions are too small to afford fully paid researchers and staff to deal with the political problems of their branches (EIRR 1993). Another idea that is being considered is to reduce the national federation into a research organization from which national unions can buy services, now that it no longer has a role in wage bargaining. The suggestion that the LO is gradually being reduced to a much less prominent role, more comparable to the federations in the U.S., Canada, Britain, and Germany, may come as a surprise to outsiders, but reflects the realities of the Swedish labor movement today.

It is in the context of the hostile environment facing Swedish unions that Ahlen (1992) calls for increased membership activism in Sweden. Abrahamsson (1992) and Ahlen (1992) suggest that unions have to rely increasingly on the allegiance and voluntary efforts of their memberships. Additional evidence supporting the need for increased member activism can be seen in the new interest in the concept of union commitment and burgeoning research on the subject in Sweden. A new stream of Swedish union

commitment can be seen in the work of Ahlen (1992), Kuruvilla and Sverke (1993), Sverke and Abrahamsson (1993), and Sverke and Kuruvilla (1993). Given that the Swedish industrial relations environment is beginning to look more like those of North America and the common concern with member activism, and implicitly, the underlying psychology of union members' behavioral intentions, the data have considerable relevance for North America.

RESULTS

Table 3 provides the results of the 2SLS model (Equations 1 and 2), and the alternative model (Equation 3). For the first equation (i.e., union attitudinal commitment), all predictors are significant and have the expected signs.

Satisfaction with the union's record on both bread and butter issues, and internal democracy issues were strongly related ($p < .001$) to the development of attitudinal union commitment. Parallel to the repeated findings in the organizational literature that job satisfaction affects organizational commitment, these results indicate that union satisfaction influences union attitudinal commitment to a significant extent. The standardized regression coefficients (not shown) indicate that satisfaction with internal member-union relations was more important than satisfaction with union performance on bread and butter issues in affecting attitudinal commitment to the union.

General beliefs about unions was positively and significantly ($p < .001$), related to attitudinal commitment, and the standardized regression coefficients indicate that it is the strongest predictor. It would appear that views of unions in general significantly affect own-union perceptions as noted previously by Fiorito et al. (1988:302). However, this result should be interpreted with some caution, since the causality could be reversed. That is, it is possible that an individuals' beliefs about unions in general is influenced considerably by his/her experience and attitudes about one's own union. As expected, socialization efforts appear to positively impact attitudinal commitment ($p < .01$), consistent with previous research (Gallagher and Clark 1989:59), while previous participation is strongly related ($p < .001$) to attitudinal commitment towards the union. The results suggest that regular reading of union newsletters appears to increase attitudes of commitment ($p < .001$), although, as noted, the causality here could be two-way: That is, it is possible that people read union newsletters regularly because they are committed. Note however, that our measure of reading newsletters refers expressly to *past* reading of union newsletters. Thus, the results for the various information sources overall do highlight the importance of information sources in affecting union attitudinal commitment.

Turning to Equation 2, in accordance with the model, the predicted value from the union attitudinal commitment equation (ˆKUCATT), is a significant

TABLE 3

2SLS Estimates for Determinants of Union Attitudinal Commitment and Willingness to Work for the Union (Unstandardized Coefficients, Standard Errors in Parenthesis)

VARIABLE	*Union Attitudinal Commitment* *EQ:1*	*Willingness to Work* *EQ:2*	Willingness to Work *EQ:3*
USATBNB	.124***		−.133***
	(.028)		(.038)
USATREL	.209***		−.088**
	(.017)		(.032)
GENBEL	.621***		.161**
	(.025)		(.054)
SOCIAL	.055**		.022
	(.014)		(.025)
PPART	.359***		.846***
	(.039)		(.074)
NEWS	.104***		−.008
	(.028)		(.052)
UCATT			.615***
			(.046)
^UCATT		.831***	
		(.046)	
REFERENTS		.334***	.219***
		(.045)	(.043)
JOBSAT		−.196***	−.099**
		(.034)	(.023)
FULLTIME		.241***	.210***
		(.059)	(.053)
R^2	.545	.221	.381
Adjusted R^2	.543	.219	.376
N	1331	1331	1331

*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05 (two-tailed tests)

predictor of Willingness to Work ($p < .001$). As expected, the measure of subjective norms was positively related to willingness to work. A test for equality of the standardized coefficients[6] of ^UCATT and the subjective norms variable indicates rejection ($df = 2,1327$, $F = 171.33$, $p < .001$), suggesting that

6 To compensate for differences in scales, the independent variables were standardized prior to estimation for this test. The test is actually conducted for the differences in unstandardized coefficients using standardized data, and hence the standardized and unstandardized coefficients are identical. This procedure is followed for other similar tests reported below.

attitudes of commitment are more important than subjective norm variables in affecting Willingness to Work for the union.[7] However, it is also possible that our results understate the relationship between the subjective norms variable and the willingness to work, due to attenuation as a result of low reliability (the Cronbach's alpha for REFERENTS is only .59). Nevertheless, the views of important referents appears to significantly impact the willingness to work for the union.

As hypothesized, job satisfaction is negatively and significantly related to Willingness to Work ($p < .001$), suggesting that dissatisfaction with work acts as a powerful incentive in increasing willingness to participate in union activity in order to alleviate that dissatisfaction. This incentive effect is ignored by Fishbein and Ajzen, who propose that only attitudes and subjective norms affect behavioral intentions, but is consistent, however, with research results in the social psychological literature — frustration — aggression perspectives noted by Klandermans (1984). Full-time workers were more likely to express a willingness to work for the union ($p < .001$), probably due to a greater stake in their jobs than part-timers. In sum, the results of the 2SLS procedure appear to provide strong overall support for the model.

An examination of the results of Equation 3 is revealing, however. As Table 3 indicates, the coefficients of some attitudinal predictors, i.e., socialization and reading union publications exhibit nonsignificant effects on willingness to work once attitudinal commitment is controlled. It seems that these variables affect Willingness to Work *only* via their effects on commitment attitudes, as expected, and consistent with Fishbein and Ajzen's model. Notable exceptions however, are the union satisfaction variables, the general belief variable, and the previous union participation variable.

In particular, the relationships between the union satisfaction variables and Willingness to Work are negative ($p < .001$), suggesting that union satisfaction variables appear to impact the Willingness to Work indirectly via

---

7 Note that the subjective norm variable includes the attitudes of *both* friends and co-workers. We have combined them for the purposes of increasing the reliability of the measure. However, it is possible that the attitudes and opinions of friends and co-workers exert different influences on the attitudes of the respondent towards the union. To examine this possibility, we estimated the WTW equation with attitudes of friends and co-workers included as separate variables. Both variables were positively and significantly related to WTW. However, the opinions of friends appear to be far more important than that of co-workers in influencing WTW. A test for equality of the standardized regression coefficients of attitudes of friends and co-workers variables indicates rejection ($df = 1,1333$, $F = 29.43$, $p < .001$). The *relatively* weak co-worker effect may stem from the professional occupations in the sample. Professionals are known for a more "cosmopolitan" reference group of co-workers. "Local" co-workers may be less important, and may be the reference group the questions in the survey suggested to respondents. On the other hand, friends may simply be a more important reference group than co-workers. In any case, co-workers' views appear to matter, even if less than those of friends.

commitment attitudes and directly as well. Although both variables were positively linked to commitment attitudes, they are *negatively* linked to CWillingness to Work.[8] This result is logically consistent, since committed union members with high levels of satisfaction with the union are less likely to want to actively work for the union if they perceive that the union is functioning well in both its "well disciplined army" and "town meeting" dimensions. Apparently, a "complacency effect" emerges at this stage. In addition, given that the sample consists of highly educated professionals such as lawyers, government officers, physicians, this result makes intuitive sense, since professionals are often more committed to their professions and have less time to devote to union activity, especially if they feel that their union leadership is doing a good job. Union participation may be status-enhancing for lower level occupation incumbents, but status-diminishing for incumbents of higher level occupations, and thus there is further reason to suspect that this result is sensitive to the sample. Further, the Swedish practice of engaging professional staff to do work that in other countries is done voluntarily by members (though this practice is declining) may partially explain this result.

The previous participation variable is strongly significant despite controlling for Union Commitment Attitudes. This result, though at odds with the stage-wise model, may suggest that previous participation plays a role beyond being an information source about the union that is relevant to willingness to work. One plausible explanation is that the experience of participation not only provides information about the union that affects the formation of attitudes of commitment, but also results in a positive emotional state about participation in the union per se. A second possibility is that past participation proxies the respondent's perceptions of his or her current ability to participate, e.g., an inverse indicator of one's domestic responsibilities. Either or both possibilities may account for the effects noted here.

General Beliefs about unions was also significantly related to Willingness To Work, after controlling for commitment attitudes. It would appear that one's beliefs about unions generally not only influence one's attitudes toward a particular union, but also influence one's willingness to work for the union directly.

---

8 Given that this result may be seen as counterintuitive by North American readers, we examined the possibility that this result may be a statistical artifact caused by multicollinearity in the data. However, our investigations do not suggest that multicollinearity is a significant problem in equation 3. First, the correlation between the two union satisfaction variables is moderate ($r = .47$, $p < .001$). Even though these variables are correlated, they both remain significant in the equation, suggesting that each explains unique variance in our willingness to work measure. Second, we estimated the same equation after alternately dropping each union satisfaction variable, with no appreciable change in signs or significance levels. A technical appendix showing correlations between variables are available from the authors on request.

The hypothesized determinants of Willingness to Work remain significant once attitudinal commitment is controlled. The link between attitudinal commitment to the union and a willingness to work for the union therefore, is complex, since some determinants of union attitudinal commitment impact the willingness to work for the union directly, as well as through attitudinal Ccommitment, and there are logical explanations for these links.[9]

CONCLUSIONS

This paper examined the determinants of a members' willingness to work for the union using a model developed from prior research, and the organizational and psychological literature. The results are generally consistent with the model proposed, providing support for specific predictions that beliefs and information source variables affect union attitudinal commitment, and subjective norms and attitudinal commitment predict intentions (willingness to work for the union). Additional results also support Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) predictions that intentions cause behavior, i.e., willingness to work for the union causes actual participation (see footnote 9). This implies that future research on union participation, and especially research that seeks to identify determinants of union participation should focus on the determinants of behavioral intentions given the high correlation between willingness to work for the union and actual participation.

The model used permits us to draw a causal link between two dimensions of union commitment i.e., union attitudinal commitment and willingness to work. Although previous research has suggested that the dimensions of union commitment are related (e.g., Gordon et al. 1980; Friedman and Harvey 1986), they did not specify any causal direction. In addition, the model used here high-

---

9 Given that Fishbein and Ajzen's model indicates that intentions cause behavior, we estimated a model of current union participation, using the predicted value of the WTW equation, and other demographic control variables. Estimating current union participation yields the following standardized regression equation (subscripts omitted): Current Participation = .50 ^WTW + .01 Age + .05 Gender −.06 Education + .07 Tenure. All but the coefficient on the age variable are significant at the .05 level (two-tailed test). As the standardized coefficients indicate, ^WTW is the most important predictor of current participation. Note also that the bivariate correlation (corrected for unreliability) between WTW and current participation is .54.

We also estimated a participation equation with all the variables listed in equation 3, except our previous participation variable. This was done in order to examine whether the result would change if we substituted current union participation instead of willingness to work as the dependent variable. The signs for the union satisfaction variables in this equation remained negative and significant. There were no other changes in the sign or significance of other variables. Consequently, we are led to conclude that the negative signs for the union satisfaction variables are a "real" result, and not a statistical artifact. The fact that the respondents are professionals in a Swedish context may explain this result, as discussed in the text.

lights the causal link between concepts such as union satisfaction, union attitudinal commitment and willingness to work, that was notably absent in the literature.

However, at odds with our expectations are the relationships noted between previous union participation, union satisfaction, general union beliefs, and willingness to work. Previous participation appears to affect willingness to work for the union directly, and through attitudes of commitment. This result is, however, consistent with alternate interpretations of past participation's meaning noted above and with a cyclical relationship between commitment and participation noted by Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982).

The results for the union satisfaction variables indicate that satisfaction with the union increases one's attitudes of commitment with the union, but satisfied members are less likely to want to be willing to work for the union. At first blush, this result would appear to create a dilemma for unions, since it suggests that if unions are effective in bargaining and do a good job of meeting member expectations, that is a deterrent to the members' willingness to work. But meeting member expectations is only part of the story, as unions have to be effective on other dimensions as well. In addition, this result may reflect traditional administrative practices of Swedish unions and the professional status of our respondents. Swedish unions typically have large paid administrative and organizing staffs that do much of the work that is done on a voluntary basis in German or U.S. unions. Further, it may reflect that professionals are less likely to be interested in union work. On the other hand, the results suggest that members who were active in union affairs in the past are most likely to exhibit a willingness to work for the union.

The results also imply that for unions who wish to increase the willingness of members to participate in union affairs, a key precondition is to create a more positive image amongst its members i.e. increase their attitudinal commitment. This applies to image building efforts at the aggregate level (e.g., the "Union Yes" ad campaign in the U.S.) as indicated by the strong effect for our general beliefs variable, and at the local level, directly to the specific union in question. At this level, it would appear that this could be done via increased socialization activities and more effective communication to members via written media. Written media may be of relatively great importance among the professional types in this sample, as compared to union members generally, but overall labor force trends toward more white collar and professional employment suggest the more general importance of this communication form.

The subjective norms variable suggests the importance of creating a social context in which co-workers and friends of union members also view unions favorably. Here the importance of aggregate-level image building

efforts is also relevant, but so too are more localized efforts such as local union community involvement projects.

Swedish data have been used to test a general model of the willingness to work for one's union in this paper. Although there are several differences between Swedish and North American industrial relations such as differences in union density, structure of bargaining, and labor legislation, the market- oriented reforms of the conservative government in Sweden have resulted in an environment that appears hostile to the Swedish labor movement, and has also accelerated the decentralization of industrial relations along more North American lines. Unions in Sweden, as much as unions in North America, face an environment where they must depend on the voluntary efforts of their members to an increasing extent. Given that the need for increased member activism transcends national boundaries, this analysis of union members' willingness to work for the union has broad relevance.

REFERENCES

ABRAHAMSSON, B. 1992. "Union Structural Change." Paper presented at the Symposium on Emerging Union Structures: An International Comparison. Clark University, 9-10 March 1992.

AFL-CIO COMMITTEE ON THE EVOLUTION OF WORK. 1985. *The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions.* Washington, D.C.: AFL-CIO.

AHLÈN, K. 1992. "Union Legitimacy: Members Perceptions of Union Government." Paper presented at the Symposium on Emerging Union Structures: An International Comparison. Clark University, 9-10 March 1992.

BARBASH, J. 1969. "Rationalization in the American Union." *Essays in Industrial Relations Theory.* G.G. Somers, ed. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 147-162.

BENSON, H. 1986. "The Fight for Union Democracy." *Unions in Transition: Entering the Twentieth Century.* S.M. Lipset, ed. San Francisco: Institute For Contemporary Studies, 323-372.

BERGSTRÖM, H. 1992. "Pressures behind the Swedish Health Reforms." *Viewpoint Sweden*, Vol. 12.

BOK, D.C., and J.T. DUNLOP. 1970. *Labor and the American Community.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

BLUEDORN, A.C. 1982. "A Unified Model of Turnover from Organizations." *Human Relations*, Vol. 35, 135-153.

CLARK, P.F. 1988. "The Employment of Professional Staff Among American Unions: Changes, Trends, and Implications." *Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual Meetings of the Industrial Relations Research Association.* Madison: IRRA, 596-597.

DAGENS NYHETER. 1992. "Förhandla Lokalkt." 19th August, Stockholm.

EIRR. 1993. *European Industrial Relations Review*. October and December 1993.

FIORITO, J., D.G. GALLAGHER, and C.V. FUKAMI. 1988. "Satisfaction with Union Representation." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 294-307.

FISHBEIN, M., and I. AJZEN. 1975. *Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley.

FRIEDMAN, L., and R.J. HARVEY. 1986. "Factors of Union Commitment: The Case for a Lower Dimensionality." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 71, No. 3, 371-376.

FULLAGAR, C., and J. BARLING. 1987. "Toward a Model of Union Commitment." *Advances in Industrial and Labor Relations*. D. Lewin, D.B. Lipsky, and D. Sockell, eds. Connecticut: JAI Press, Vol. 4, 43-78.

FULLAGAR, C., and J. BARLING. 1989. "A Longitudinal Test of a Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Union Loyalty." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74, No. 2, 213-227.

GALLAGHER, D.G., and P.F. CLARK. 1989. "Research on Union Commitment: Implications for Labor." *Labor Studies Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 52-71.

GETMAN, J.G., S.B. GOLDBERG, and J.B. HERMAN. 1976. *Union Representation Elections: Law and Reality*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

GLICK, W., P. MIRVIS, and D. HARDER. 1977. "Union Satisfaction and Participation." *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 145-151.

GORDON, M.E., J.W. PHILPOT, R.E. BURT, C.A. THOMPSON, and E.E. SPILLER. 1980. "Commitment to the Union: Development of a Measure and an Examination of its Correlates." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 65, No. 4, 479-499.

HECKSCHER, C.C. 1988. *The New Unionism*. New York: Basic Books.

HILLS, S.M. 1985. "The Attitudes of Union and Non Union Workers Toward Union Representation." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 360-373.

KATZ, H.C. 1993. "The Decentralization of Collective Bargaining: A Literature Review and Comparative Analysis." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 47, No. 1, 3-22.

KLANDERMANS, B. 1984. "Mobilization and Participation: Social-psychological Expansions of Resource Mobilization Theory." *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 49, No. 5, 583-600.

KLANDERMANS, B. 1989. "Union Commitment: Replications and Testing in the Dutch Context." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74, No. 6, 869-875.

KOCHAN, T.A. 1979. "How American Workers View Labor Unions." *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 102, No. 4, 23-31.

KOCHAN, T.A., H.C. KATZ, and R.B. MCKERSIE. 1986. *The Transformation of American Industrial Relations*. New York: Basic Books.

KURUVILLA, S., and M. SVERKE. 1993. "Two Dimensions of Union Commitment Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action." *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, Vol. 1, 1-16.

MCSHANE, S.L. 1986. "A Path Analysis of Participation in Union Administration." *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 72-79.

MOBLEY, W.H., R. GRIFFITH, H. HAND, and B. MEGLINO. 1979. "Review and Conceptual Analysis of the Employee Turnover Process." *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 86, 493-522.

MONTGOMERY, R. 1989. "The Influence of Attitudes and Normative Pressures on Voting Decisions in a Union Representative Election." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* Vol. 42, No. 2, 262-279.

MOTTAZ, C.J. 1989. An Analysis of the Relationship Between Attitudinal and Behavioral Commitment." *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 143-158.

MOWDAY, R.T., L.W. PORTER, and R.M. STEERS. 1982. *Employee-Organization Linkages*. New York: Academic Press.

MUELLER, C.W., and J.L. PRICE. 1990. "Economic, Psychological, and Sociological Determinants of Voluntary Turnover." *The Journal of Behavioral Economics*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 321-355.

SALANCIK, G.R., and J. PFEFFER. 1978. "A Social Information Processing Approach to Job Attitudes and Task Design." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 224-235.

STEERS, R. 1977. "Antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational Commitment." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22, 46-56.

STRAUSS, G. 1977. "Union Government in the U.S.: Research Past and Future." *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 216-242.

SVERKE, M. 1992. "Toward a New Definition of Union Commitment: The Impact of Instrumental and Value Rationality." Paper presented at the Symposium on Emerging Union Structures: An International Comparison. Clark University, 9-10 March 1992.

SVERKE, M., and S. KURUVILLA. 1993. "The Union Commitment Dimensionality Debate Revisited." Paper presented at the Comparative Research on Union Commitment Conference. Amsterdam, June, 21-23, 1993.

SVERKE M., and B. ABRAHAMSSON. 1993. *Union Commitment: A Conceptualization Based on Instrumental and Value Rationality*. Research Report. Swedish Center for Working Life.

TAFT, P. 1973. "Internal Union Structure and Functions." *The Next Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Relations*. G.G. Somers, ed. Madison: IRRA.

TROY, L. 1990. "Is the U.S. Unique in the Decline of Private Sector Unionism?" *Journal of Labor Research*, Vol. XI, No. 2, 112-143.

VIKLUND, B. 1988. "Industrial Relations in Sweden in the 1990's. *Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Meetings of the Industrial Relations Research Association*. Madison: IRRA, 330-342.

YOUNGBLOOD, S. A., A.S. DENISI, J.L. MOLLESTON, and W. MOBLEY. 1984. "The Impact of Work Environment, Instrumentality Beliefs, Perceived Labor Union Image, and Subjective Norms on Union Voting Intentions." *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 576-590.

ZACK, G. 1985. "Talking Union... One-on-One Keeps Solidarity Alive." *AFL-CIO News*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 5.

ZALESNY, M.D. 1985. "Comparison of Economic and Noneconomic Factors in Predicting Faculty Vote Preference in a Union Representation Election." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 70, No. 2, 243-246.

Aide demandée
Propension à travailler pour le syndicat

Cet article présente et vérifie un modèle de la propension des syndiqués à participer aux activités syndicales. Malgré les positions théoriques largement divergentes quant à la meilleure structure syndicale et au meilleur système de gestion pour l'efficacité, il y a consensus sur le fait que l'activisme croissant des syndiqués est vital, dans l'environnement d'aujourd'hui, pour le succès de l'organisation, de la négociation et de la représentation politique. D'un côté plus pratique, tous les syndicats ont admis ce besoin pour un activisme accru de leurs membres. Cependant, les syndiqués sont largement apathiques. Par exemple, les résultats d'une enquête internationale auprès de travailleurs dans dix sept pays (tableau 1) suggèrent que le niveau de participation volontaire des syndiqués dans les activités syndicales est très bas. Nous prétendons que de tels niveaux d'apathie exige une compréhension des processus sous-jacents à la propension des syndiqués de participer aux activités syndicales.

Nous soutenons que les syndicats doivent augmenter la propension générale de leurs membres à participer aux activités syndicales plutôt que de se concentrer sur les niveaux actuels de participation. Les syndicats se sont déjà largement attardés aux niveaux actuels de participation tels la présence aux assemblées syndicales et le fait de servir comme officier de syndicat. Le problème avec cette approche est que les niveaux actuels de participation peuvent résulter de plusieurs contraintes qui ne sont pas du contrôle du syndicat. Pensons par exemple aux problèmes de transport, aux responsabilités eu égard aux enfants, etc. Mais, de façon plus importante, le fait d'étudier la participation actuelle ne fournit pas d'information sur la propension des membres à participer aux diverses actions syndicales. Cependant, le syndicat a le contrôle sur le fait qu'il fournisse ou non à ses membres l'occasion de participer et, si cela est vrai, alors sa principale difficulté est alors de générer cette propension à participer.

La première partie de cet article fournit un recul essentiel en rappelant le débat sur les structures syndicales et l'efficacité. Cela met en évidence l'importance du concept « propension à travailler » pour le syndicat. La seconde partie fait le tour de la littérature existante sur la propension des membres à travailler pour leur syndicat, sur la participation au syndicat et des différentes théories utilisées. Ensuite, nous proposons des hypothèses spécifiques basées sur la théorie et les recherches antérieures qui suggèrent un modèle en deux étapes incorporant plusieurs variables indépendantes

d'attitudes d'engagement qui elles mènent à la propension à travailler pour le syndicat. La partie suivante contient des propos méthodologiques eu égard à l'estimation du modèle.

Les données ont été colligées à partir d'un grand échantillon de professionnels syndiqués en Suède. Cela est utilisé pour vérifier le modèle général de la propension de travailler pour les syndicats. Même si les données utilisées sont suédoises et malgré les différences considérables entre les systèmes de relations du travail en Suède et en Amérique du Nord, les syndicats suédois connaissent les mêmes problèmes d'activisme de leurs membres qu'en Amérique du Nord (les niveaux d'apathie sont très élevés).

Les résultats obtenus suggèrent que la propension d'un membre à travailler pour son syndicat dépend de façon critique de son attitude d'engagement envers son syndicat. Cette propension est aussi fonction de son statut d'emploi, de son degré d'insatisfaction au travail et du point de vue des personnes autour de lui. Cependant, les attitudes d'engagement constituent le plus important prédicteur de la propension d'un membre à travailler pour son syndicat.

L'engagement envers le syndicat dépend de façon critique de cinq variables : la satisfaction envers les efforts du syndicat de négocier des hausses de salaires et d'avantages sociaux, la satisfaction eu égard à la démocratie syndicale interne, l'effort syndical à la socialisation des membres, les efforts du syndicat à fournir des postes de responsabilité aux membres expérimentés et les croyances générales qu'a le membre de ce qu'un syndicat fait.

L'implication des résultats est que l'engagement croissant des membres envers leur syndicat et leur propension à participer activement dépendent largement de ce que les syndicats font tant pour la construction de leur image au plan national ou sociétal que de leurs politiques spécifiques de relations avec les membres au niveau de la section locale. La construction de l'image tant aux niveaux global que local, l'information régulière aux membres, une démocratie syndicale accrue, les relations internes syndicat-membres et les programmes d'accueil des nouveaux membres sont autant de facteurs critiques pour accroître l'activisme des membres.