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**WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONISM:
THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON PROPENSITY
TO UNIONISE AND PARTICIPATION
IN TRADE UNION ACTIVITY**

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ABSTRACT

Women workers, typically, are disadvantaged in the workplace and in the trade union movement. In an attempt to explain the relationship of female employees to the unions, this thesis investigates the significance of gender for an employee's involvement in trade unionism. The importance of the sex variable for both the individual's union membership choice and rate of participation in trade union activity is explored. The aim of the study is to reach a better understanding of the most important influences on women's position in the unions, and thereby provide some insight into the apparent failure of the trade union movement to gain equality for women with men in the employment sphere.

Chapters two and three depict women's situation in the workplace and in the trade unions, in order to illustrate the importance of the study. Chapters four and five present a theoretical framework for the empirical analyses, discussed in chapters six to nine, concerning influences on the employee's propensity to unionise and union participation. Both crosstabulations and discriminant analyses are employed to establish the most important determinants of these two variables. Influences on the worker's attitudes to trade unionism are also discussed.

Chapters ten and eleven present the results of a survey of nine large trade unions, conducted in an attempt to account for the inadequacies of the independent variables used in the quantitative analyses to explain fully the relationships explored. The thesis concludes that the lower level of involvement of women workers in trade unionism may be explained mainly in terms of differences between the sexes in hours worked, earnings and industrial relations traditions in male and female-dominated work. Also, however, significantly lower favourability to trade unions expressed by the women workers is found to contribute to the

male / female union membership and union participation differentials. The thesis argues, in chapter twelve, that this apparent difference in satisfaction with trade unions between the men and women studied is, most probably, a result of traditional union culture, particularly the male-domination of the unions, and the unequal position of women in the trade union movement.

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LIST OF MAIN ABBREVIATIONS

AEU:	Amalgamated Engineering Union
AEEU:	Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union
BIFU:	Banking, Insurance and Finance Union
EOC:	Equal Opportunities Commission
GMB:	GMB
MSF:	Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union
NAS / UWT:	National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NALGO:	National and Local Government Officers' Association
NUPE:	National Union of Public Employees
TGWU:	Transport and General Workers' Union
TUC:	Trades Union Congress
USDAW:	Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Although women now comprise almost half of the British workforce, they remain disadvantaged in the labour market, in terms of both earnings and occupational status. The problems of low pay and limited employment opportunities still characterise women's economic activity in the 1990s. Moreover, the position of women in the work sphere appears to parallel that in the trade union movement, as women are grossly under-represented throughout trade union structures (Labour Research Department, 1991). In order to address effectively the secondary status of women in the workplace, clearly, it is necessary to understand all of the factors which have historically contributed to this social and economic problem. It is argued here that, as one of the main social mechanisms designed to bring about change in favour of employees in the workplace, the trade union movement has a vital role to play in explaining women's employment situation.

Women's position relative to that of men in employment, and the apparent ineffectiveness of the trade unions in tackling sex discrimination at work, is probably best illustrated by a comparison of the average weekly pay of male and female workers - full-time female employees earn only around three-quarters of that of their male counterparts (Department of Employment, 1992). However, over a century has passed since, in 1888, the trade union movement called for equal pay for men and women (Boston, 1987). Two main

explanations may be advanced for this apparent failure of the trade unions to help women gain equality in the workplace. It may be argued that trade unions have neglected to organise women workers, most probably, as a result of the traditional male-domination of the unions. Alternatively, female workers themselves may not have been interested in trade unionism. For instance, Schur and Kruse (1992) believe that this could be explained in terms of women's socialisation, which tends to encourage passivity, the "masculine culture" of unions (Milkman, 1990) or the perception by women that paid employment is secondary to their role in the home. In an attempt to determine whether the approach of the unions to female employees or a lack of interest among women workers provides the better explanation of women's relationship to the trade union movement, this thesis has two primary aims:

- (i) to determine whether or not *ceteris paribus* women workers are less interested in joining trade unions than male employees, and
- (ii) to explain the relatively low participation rate in trade union activity which has been shown to be exhibited by women (Gordon *et al*, 1980).

Women's interest in union membership is investigated by an analysis of the significance of gender for the employee's union membership decision; that is, whether or not sex is associated with the decision to join a trade union or to 'free ride'. Clearly, this is an important issue for the trade union movement. As Chaison and Dhavale (1992) point out, free riders may threaten the perceived legitimacy of a union to represent workers in a particular employment organisation. Also, free riders are, of course, a conveniently-placed source of union membership, as they are easy to contact, and there is likely to be little employer opposition to their organisation.

Influences upon the employee's participation in trade union activity are investigated by an analysis of the worker's frequency of attendance at union meetings. This is of vital

importance to the trade unions, too, as involvement in union activities by members is, of course, crucial to union organisation.

Also, the thesis attempts to establish whether or not the most significant influences on a worker's involvement in trade unionism vary with gender and / or hours worked by the employee. This goes further than previous research in this area, which has tended to consider only the importance of sex and part-time working for union membership for a sample of both male and female employees.

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter two reviews the literature concerned with the nature of women's participation in the labour market. The reasons which have been advanced to explain women's disadvantaged position at work, which have been well documented elsewhere (Kanter, 1976; Aldred, 1981; Dale, 1984; Sharpe, 1984; Beechey, 1987 *et al*), are not considered here. Rather, this chapter focuses upon employment segregation by sex, the predominance of women in part-time work and the continuing disparity in male and female earnings, for the purposes of depicting most effectively the main characteristics of women's economic activity. This chapter, then, attempts to outline the primary reason why the organisation of women workers by the trade union movement is of such importance.

Chapter three provides a background to the study of women's position in the trade unions by considering the approach taken by the unions, as indicated by the annual conference reports of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), to the introduction of the equal pay and sex discrimination legislation. This presents a brief overview of the recent history of the unions' involvement in tackling sex discrimination in the workplace. This chapter then discusses a concept used in economics literature, termed the 'insider / outsider distinction' (Lindbeck and Snower, 1984), in an attempt to illustrate the nature of women's representation in the trade unions. It is argued that women are 'outsiders' in terms of the level of influence they exert in the trade union movement. Chapter three goes on to present evidence for this conclusion from a review of the literature concerned with women's position in the unions. Hence, chapters two and three strive to depict the disadvantage suffered by women in both the workplace and the trade unions.

Chapter four discusses the body of research aimed at establishing the primary determinants of trade union membership. It is argued here that the literature in this area

can be regarded as adopting three main forms, which can be interpreted as relating to influences upon the probability of union membership (both the opportunity and propensity to unionise), the individual's union membership choice (when the opportunity to join a union is held constant), and the interest in unionisation of workers in non-union employment organisations. Although, as noted, this thesis is concerned mainly with the second of these research issues - who will join a union and who will 'free ride' - the literature pertaining to the other areas of research is also discussed here, as the results and theories discussed therein provide valuable insights for the study of the individual's union membership decision.

Macroeconomic factors and personal and work characteristics most commonly found to be of importance for union membership are discussed. In addition, the literature which has analysed women's satisfaction with and commitment to work is reviewed, in an attempt to ascertain whether or not women's attitudes to work could help explain their low level of representation in the unions. Also, it is argued in chapter four that organisation by trade unions themselves may play a more important role in the employee's union membership choice than previous research concerning the determinants of union membership would suggest.

Chapter five reviews the literature, from the United States, on participation in union activity, and satisfaction with and commitment to the union. Of course, the results may not be applicable to this country, as it has been suggested that union membership among British employees may be more likely to be founded on ideology than that of their American counterparts (Fiorito *et al*, 1988). However, the lack of British literature in this area appears to justify a consideration of research in the United States here.

Chapters six and seven present an empirical analysis of the employee's propensity to unionise, using a section of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey, which was conducted in 1986 as part of the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative (Gallie,

1989). In chapter six, crosstabulations are used in order to show the relationships between union membership choice and each of the independent variables analysed. Sex is revealed to be associated with the propensity to unionise, but the importance of this variable is greatly reduced when controlling for the predominance of women in part-time employment, although it is still statistically significant. Using discriminant analyses, chapter seven goes on to reveal the relative importance of each of the variables studied for the employee's propensity to unionise. Gender is not found to be a determinant of the individual's union membership decision, but the best predictors of propensity to unionise do appear to vary according to the employee's sex and whether or not he or she works on a full-time or part-time basis. However, a greater disparity is found between the full-time and part-time women workers than between the full-time male and female employees. The variables included in the study, though, do not appear to provide an adequate explanation of the difference in propensity to unionise exhibited by the women working full-time and part-time.

Chapters eight and nine follow a similar pattern of analyses to that described above, but with a measure of participation in trade union activity - frequency of attendance at union meetings - as the dependent variable. With respect to the significance of sex for union participation, the crosstabulation results in chapter eight mirror those obtained from the analysis of union membership: gender is associated with involvement in union activity, though when only full-time employees are considered the significance of sex is substantially reduced. Sex is not revealed to be an important predictor of attendance at union meetings by the discriminant analysis in chapter nine, although, as this variable is found to be correlated with a number of the discriminating variables, gender could be entering the discriminant model indirectly. Chapter nine goes on to show that the set of best predictors of union participation varies according to the sex and hours worked of the union members analysed. However, in contrast to the results obtained from the discriminant analyses with propensity to unionise as the dependent variable, the most

significant influences on the full-time male and female employees are not particularly similar.

The analyses in chapter nine do not appear to provide an adequate explanation of the differences found between the male and female employees, and between the full-time and part-time women workers, in the employee's rate of participation in union activity. However, favourability to trade unions and perceptions of union influence are revealed to be important indicators of union participation for all employees. Chapter nine, therefore, concludes with an examination, using discriminant analyses, of the most important influences on attitudes to trade unionism. As expected, political ideology, the employee's assessment of his or her own social class and union membership are found to be particularly important in determining these attitudes.

Chapters seven and nine both show that the lower propensity to unionise and union participation rates of women compared to men can, at least in part, be explained by the former's lower favourability to trade unions. When controlling for the fact that the women were significantly less likely to feel favourable to trade unions than the men studied, the male / female differentials in union membership and union participation are shown to be substantially reduced. However, women workers were as likely as men to believe that unions should influence pay and work. Thus, it appeared that women were as likely to believe in the principles of trade unionism as men, but were generally less satisfied with trade unions. This suggested that unions may, perhaps, be perceived by women workers as not particularly relevant to their position in the workplace. Therefore, chapters ten and eleven, using qualitative evidence to complement the previous quantitative analysis, attempt to present an overview of the approach to women workers adopted by a number of large public and private-sector trade unions, with both male and female-dominated memberships.

Chapter ten discusses attempts made by the trade unions to encourage women to become union members. This chapter outlines some of the recruitment initiatives of these unions and discusses their national policies relating to issues likely to be of particular importance to women in employment. The presence of a policy developed at a national level on a particular problem is regarded as an indication of union concern with that issue, although it is recognised that union practices may not always follow union policy. Chapter eleven then considers the unions' attempts to encourage women's involvement in union hierarchy. Changes to forms of union organisation and to union structure are discussed. The final chapter draws on the literature reviewed, the empirical results and the qualitative analysis in the thesis to advance a number of conclusions on women's relationship to the trade unions. This chapter also outlines a number of implications of the results for trade union policy, and suggests future research work concerning involvement in trade unionism likely to be of particular value.

CHAPTER 2

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Introduction

The study of women's and of men's employment has exhibited a number of widely different characteristics. Perhaps most importantly, there has been a general concern with factors influencing female labour market participation, which has been largely absent in research relating to male employment. Although distinct features of male waged labour have been well researched, men's engagement in paid employment has rarely been questioned, albeit with the exception of older male workers (Parnes, 1988; Rones, 1988; Laczko and Phillipson, 1991 *et al*).

Moreover, as Sharpe (1984) points out, analyses of men's relationship to work has tended to be defined in terms of job-related characteristics. This contrasts with research in the field of women's employment, which has frequently been devoted to in-depth analyses of women's relationship to paid work and the home. The focus has been on women's domestic circumstances and how these affect their employment situation. Past research into women's economic activity, then, appears to have been largely premised on the belief that " ... women's employment cannot be understood without reference to their roles as wives and mothers and the work this involves." (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 3) It is argued here that this approach to the study of female employment is still the most convincing today.

The theory discussed above is based primarily upon the different effects of lifecycle changes for men's and for women's employment (Brown, 1976; Martin and Roberts, 1984 *et al*). Women's continuing adoption of primary responsibility for domestic arrangements and childrearing means that, as Martin and Roberts (1984: 192) state, "In one sense ... women do not participate in the labour market on the same terms as men over their lifetime ... " Martin and Roberts go on to assert that this often results in women advancing themselves as employees under conditions, such as part-time employment, which may well reinforce their disadvantaged position in the labour market.

As Sharpe (1984: 48) concludes from a study involving interviews with 120 women workers with children, paid employment for working mothers " ... is qualitatively different from that of most other women and men." This is because, she states, work for women with children offers only a limited number of opportunities, low pay, low skill and low status. Thus, although it is clear, as Martin and Roberts (1984) point out, that women should not be treated as a homogeneous group, it is also evident that, in general, the nature of female employment is distinguishable from that of men and that this difference can, at least in part, be attributed to the differing roles assumed by men and women within the domestic sphere.

However, there is no attempt made here to present a detailed analysis of the relationship between work in the home and paid employment, which has already been widely discussed (Myrdal and Klein, 1968; Martin and Roberts, 1984; Sharpe, 1984 *et al*). Although references are made to women's domestic commitments and the importance of these for female employment is fully recognised, this chapter aims to depict the situation of women in the world of work more broadly, in terms also of other influences on female economic activity. Attitudes prevalent in society as a whole and social norms in the workplace, as well as the failure of the law to redress the male / female earnings differential, are identified as particularly important factors in the maintenance of women's disadvantaged position in the workplace.

Today, women's participation in the labour market remains characterised not only by their low earnings level relative to that of men, but by their high concentration in a comparatively small range of occupations and within part-time employment. It is these features of female employment which appear to describe best women's position at work. Thus, in order to illustrate the status of women in the labour force, this chapter discusses in turn these interrelated issues of employment segregation, the prevalence of part-time employment among female workers and the persistence of inequality in earnings between men and women.

Employment Segregation

Bradley (1989) defines segregation as the formation of two separate labour markets for men and women that are not in competition with each other. Hakim (1979) distinguishes two forms of this segregation: horizontal and vertical. The former relates to the sextyping of work, while vertical segregation is the concentration of men in higher grades within different occupations and industries.

The actual extent and form of employment segregation has been shown to be dependent upon time and place. For example, the introduction of power-driven machinery led to a reversal of traditional roles in the cotton industry as women became weavers and men spinners (Bradley, 1989). More recently, evidence of the feminisation of previously male-dominated industries has included retail pharmacy dispensers and building society clerks (Craig *et al*, 1985). Segregation, then, as Dale (1984) points out, is a dynamic process, subject to historical events and geographical area.

Measures of Employment Segregation

It is important to note that the degree of segregation is also dependent upon the measure used. Various indices of segregation have been defined, each with its own particular strengths and weaknesses, frequently offering widely differing results. Hakim (1978) used decennial population censuses for 1901 to 1971 in an attempt to measure any change in occupational segmentation. She compared the observed proportion of women in each occupation with the proportion expected were there no segregation by sex¹. Hakim concludes that job segregation declined slowly over the first half of the century up to 1961, with a decreased rate of change in the period 1961 to 1971.

In order to assess the effect of the equal opportunities legislation, Hakim (1981) also looked at trends in job segregation over the period 1970 to 1979. She discovered a clear

movement towards integration attributable to the legislation between 1973 and 1977, but a pattern of increasing segregation between 1977 and 1979. By looking at the average change per decade and per annum in the index of horizontal segregation, Hakim calculated that the size of the fall in job segregation between 1973 and 1977 appeared to show that the legislation led to a three-fold or four-fold increase in the pace of change observed in the earlier part of the century. However, this pattern of decline was found to be almost completely reversed between 1977 and 1979. By 1979, Hakim states, the index had virtually returned to its 1970 value.

Although, as she points out, technical changes in the measurement of segregation, stemming from her use of the Labour Force Survey, may account for this, Hakim (1981) emphasises the role of the recession and unemployment, accompanied by the increase in the birth rate in 1977, in largely explaining the trend. She argues that rising unemployment may have affected attitudes concerning women's "right to work", especially in typically male jobs (Hakim, 1981: 525). Hakim points out that registered female unemployment rose at a considerably higher rate than that for men between 1974 and 1980. Although the size of this difference is diminished, this still holds true when taking account of unregistered unemployment among women. Hakim, then, believes that the recession may have led to women's participation in paid employment being more closely questioned than it had been in the early 1970s. In addition, Hakim (1981) sees the reversal of the trend in job segregation after 1977 as due, in part, to the increasing birth rate at this time. She argues that this will have enhanced the trend of the late 1970s towards increasing, typically female-dominated, part-time employment, especially among married women. Thus, Hakim concludes that rising unemployment, accompanied by a change in public opinion on women's employment and a fall in job opportunities, and the growing participation in part-time work, may well have influenced the pattern of job segregation between 1977 and 1979.

However, the sex ratio index has been strongly criticised, in particular, for being affected by the composition of the total labour force (Siltanen, 1990a, 1990b; Tzannatos, 1990). Siltanen illustrates this argument by showing that when absolute segregation is assumed for the period 1901 to 1979 - that is, the level of segregation is held constant - the sex ratio index declines, although, of course, as a measure of occupational segregation, it should remain unchanged. Thus, the sex ratio index varies with women's participation in the labour market and not merely with changes in occupational segregation. In addition, the index is criticised by Siltanen for lacking gender symmetry. That is, there are contradictory results obtained from the index, depending upon the sex on which the calculations are based.

Siltanen (1990a: 12) suggests a "rough" alternative to the sex ratio index of a standardised index. This could be achieved, she argues, by multiplying the sex ratio index by the female proportion of the labour force. Then, the index would have a range of 0 to 1, independent of the level of female participation, and the same results would be obtained for calculations regardless of the sex to which they relate. By using this standardised sex ratio index, Siltanen finds results for the first half of this century which are consistent with those found by Hakim (1979, 1981) of declining segregation. However, contrary to the conclusions drawn from the sex ratio index, Siltanen finds a peak in occupational integration in 1961 and a rise in segregation from 1961 to 1979, with a short-lived decline in segregation between 1973 and 1977. Thus, the 1977 to 1979 results of increasing segregation, which Hakim (1981) concludes are a reversal of a long-standing trend towards integration, are viewed by Siltanen (1990a) as, in fact, consistent with the post-1961 results of increasing occupational segregation.

However, Siltanen (1990a) emphasises that the standardised sex ratio index findings cannot be accepted at face value, due to technical problems with the censuses and Labour Force Survey data which she uses. Most importantly, there is a significant lack of consistency in

both the definition of part-time employment used by the censuses and in the occupational coding employed by the Labour Force Surveys.

Hence, varied conclusions as to the degree of employment segmentation over time are advanced in the literature. Nonetheless, there is a consistent finding of relatively little long-term change in the level of segregation following the introduction of the equal opportunities legislation. Excluding the nine per cent of women for whom comparison was impossible, as they worked alone, the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 27) found that of the remaining 3,047 female employees studied, 63 per cent worked only with other women. This figure rose to 70 per cent when only female manual workers were considered (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 27). Sloane (1990:127), using New Earnings Survey data, in a sample restricted to occupations where there were at least ten men or women, found a ratio of 'men's' to 'women's' occupations of 3:2. It is evident, then, that horizontal employment segregation by sex remains widespread.

With respect to vertical segregation, Hakim (1978: 1266) applied the sex ratio index to ten "broadly-comparable" categories of work obtained from an analysis by Bain and Price (1972) of 1911 to 1961 census data, updated to incorporate the figures for 1971. She concludes that there is a trend towards women's over-representation in lower grades and under-representation in higher grades, in both blue and white-collar occupations. Thus, there would seem to be a pattern of increasing vertical occupational segregation. Siltanen (1990a) concludes that no index is capable of measuring vertical segregation, although she believes that some developments have been made towards this (Tuma and Hannan, 1984; James and Taeuber, 1985; Blackburn and Marsh, 1989).

Reasons Advanced for the Persistence of Employment Segregation

A number of explanations have been advanced for the degree of segregation described above. In past research there has been a tendency to categorise variables identified as significant into two broad groups, relating to the supply-side and the demand-side of the labour market (Craig *et al*, 1985; Rimmer, 1991). The former is concerned with the decision-making processes of the individual, whereas demand-side factors relate to the recruitment and promotion decisions of employers.

However, not only are employers and employees influenced by a very similar set of factors, but a circular process also appears to exist, whereby the attitudes they possess relating to gender operate so as to reinforce each other. Thus, it should be noted that caution must be taken when separately considering factors influencing the supply and demand of labour with respect to employment segregation by sex, as these two categories may be too intimately related to justify such a clear dichotomy. It is argued here that there would seem to be two main sets of variables acting upon employers and employees to maintain employment segmentation. These two groups of factors, which overlap significantly, relate to the structure of society itself and to custom and practice within the work sphere.

As noted earlier in this chapter, it is clear that society operates so that the main responsibility for domestic labour and childcare still typically lies with its female members, which can limit the opportunities available to women workers (Sharpe, 1984 *et al*). Moreover, social norms in the workplace, which frequently mirror the distribution of labour outside the field of employment, reinforce this differentiation in work. Female workers often perform commercialised forms of the work traditionally done by women in the home (Davies, 1975; Dale, 1984). In addition, it has also been argued that women " ... carry into the workplace their status as subordinate individuals ... " (Phillips and Taylor, 1980: 79) Thus, both the division of labour in the domestic sphere and women's secondary status in society will affect their position in employment and contribute to employment segregation.

The dual labour market theories pertaining to the origins of segregation in the labour market, which are well documented elsewhere (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Gordon, 1972; Rubery, 1978; Reich *et al*, 1980), are not discussed here. These arguments typically relate to the construction of primary and secondary sectors of employment. There has been a particular concern also with analysis of "the divisive potential of labour market segmentation", in its separation of primary and secondary workers (Armstrong, 1982: 29). However, it may perhaps be argued that the steps taken by employers which have contributed to segregated work were only possible because legitimisation of these actions could be found with reference to the operation of society.

With respect to the attitudes and behaviour of employees, Kanter (1976) refers to structural conditions, particularly those relating to hierarchical arrangements, as influencing job segregation. She conducted interviews with women in professional and managerial positions and secretaries and secretarial supervisors. Kanter concludes that the positions of women and men in the workplace can be explained in terms of a number of structural variables: "the opportunity structure; the power structure and the sex ratio." (Kanter, 1976: 416)

Kanter (1976) argues that hierarchical systems define the movement of people within organisations; for example, the individuals who will advance within a firm. Also, organisational systems, she believes, define power networks which determine people's areas of influence. In addition, Kanter states, personal characteristics, such as sex or race, will define the nature of segregation in different jobs and workplaces. The basis for her argument is that women, who, due to discrimination, are more likely than men to be found at the bottom of the workplace hierarchy, may behave differently to male workers because of the low status of their position. This is because, she states, "Those who are disadvantageously placed limit their aspirations and are less likely to be perceived as promotable ... " (Kanter, 1976: 419) Thus, " ... a social structural effect may be misleadingly interpreted as a sex difference." (Kanter, 1976: 419)

Kanter (1976) believes that position within the organisational hierarchy can explain the behaviour of both men and women. She stresses, then, the importance of hierarchical arrangements in the maintenance of sexual divisions of labour. However, with respect to understanding women's career aspirations, Nowak and Ward (1989) argue that both structural and motivational factors need to be taken into account. They studied a sample of female managers and potential managers in an attempt to determine significant influences upon women's attitudes to their career.

There are clearly difficulties, as Nowak and Ward (1989) point out, with extrapolating from their research to all women in employment since the managerial women on whom the study focuses may well express a greater interest in pursuing careers than other female workers. However, their conclusion that structural factors alone do not account for women's work attitudes is still of considerable interest here.

Nowak and Ward (1989) found that socialisation, structural and human capital variables are all important in understanding women's career aspirations. These were defined as those variables relating respectively to women's domestic circumstances, the characteristics of a woman's workplace and the investment a woman has made in her career, such as her educational achievements. All three aspects were of significance to the work attitudes of the women studied. Thus, it seems clear that characteristics of her working life, her present domestic situation and her earlier socialisation will all be influential in shaping a woman's opinions on advancement in the work sphere.

Employment experience and domestic commitments were also found to be significant factors in decisions made by employees in research into labour use in smaller firms in the early 1980s. Craig *et al* (1985) conducted interviews with management in firms, most of which had less than 100 employees, in six different industries. A sample of 48 employees, 38 women and ten men, in firms in three of the survey industries were also interviewed.

Although the size of the sample of employees, which focuses on female manual workers, limits the significance of their findings, it is interesting to note here the reasons Craig *et al* (1985) advance for variation in the labour supply of men and women. They discovered a link between the perceptions women have about their employment opportunities and their expectations regarding their work. They found a "self-reinforcing process" whereby, "... women's awareness of the relatively low pay in jobs available to them ... shape their expectations." (Craig *et al*, 1985: 89) Such a conclusion is also reached by Burchell and Rubery (1990: 583), who state that "The expectations and attitudes of the labour force will be structured by their perceptions and experience of job market opportunities."

In addition, women appear to be strongly influenced by socialisation as to male and female roles, in that they express a clear belief that men require a wage with which they are able to support a family (Craig *et al*, 1985). Craig *et al* assert, therefore, that family responsibilities and limited opportunities in employment affect women's position in the work sphere. However, employment segmentation by sex may also be maintained by attitudes prevailing among male employees, who, as Dale (1984) points out, may resist the entry of women into traditionally male occupations. Moreover, there is some evidence to suggest that the possibility of worker resistance to any change in the *status quo* may be taken into account in employers' decisions relating to the use of different types of labour (Stevenson, 1975; Craig *et al*, 1985; Hunter and MacInnes, 1991).

Craig *et al* (1985) also found that social norms play an important part in the segregation of women and men at work. Although actual practices varied considerably across different firms and industries, custom and practice was revealed to affect views about appropriate male and female work. Once a job became either predominantly male or female, it became associated with that sex and, hence, occupational segregation was maintained.

The importance of social norms in the use of labour is also stressed by, among others, Armstrong (1982) and Game and Pringle (1983). Armstrong spent seven months, between

1978 and 1979, observing the organisation of work in two factories, which employed 350 manual workers and 650 shopfloor workers respectively. Two-thirds of the blue-collar workforce were women. Of approximately 1,000 shopfloor jobs, only about twelve were done by both women and men. Armstrong (1982: 32) found that women were excluded from traditional craft work and often from capital-intensive jobs, though, he argues, the female workers were skilled "in a real sense." He notes that the distinct segregation of manual work in both organisations studied " ... constituted a taken-for-granted feature of factory life." (Armstrong, 1982: 32) Thus, the tradition of the work being performed by one sex seems to have led to an acceptance of such work organisation as the norm. This was also observed by Game and Pringle (1983) in a study of segregation across a wide range of industries. They found the only variable common to each industry was the existence of a distinction between male and female work. Game and Pringle argue that tasks did not differ, but, rather, minor differences in job content were used to justify different job gradings. They conclude that male and female employment is distinguished by the meaning given to particular work and not by the actual attributes of that work. This is supported by Burchell and Rubery (1990), who argue that job characteristics and terms of employment are influenced by the type of labour used. Thus, " ... women's jobs may be low paid because they are feminised and not feminised because they are low paid." (Burchell and Rubery, 1990: 552) Firms, then, choose different jobs at particular pay levels, work tasks and so on, based on preconceived ideas about labour segmentation.

Employers' prejudices with regard to gender, particularly in relation to what they believe women can and cannot do, have also been found to play a significant role in explaining employment segregation (Hunter and MacInnes, 1991). These biased notions of male and female capabilities and attitudes are discussed more fully in the following section of this chapter concerning part-time employment.

In summary, then, three broad sets of closely interrelated factors appear to account for the continuance of employment segregation by sex. These relate to the structure of society, the

social norms experienced in the workplace and the self-reinforcing nature of employment segmentation itself. The preconceptions relating to the roles of men and women affected by the above are also important in the analysis of women in part-time employment.

Women's Participation in Part-time Employment

Women's increasing participation in paid work during the 1960s and 1970s in large part took the form of part-time employment. More than one million part-time jobs were created in the 1970s alone, so that one employee in five in Britain was working on a part-time basis by 1980 (Beechey and Perkins, 1987). This figure had risen to one in four by June 1991 (Department of Employment, 1992: 66). By the Department of Employment definition of part-time work - less than 30 hours per week or less than 25 hours in education - there were 5.5 million part-time employees in Britain in 1992, 82 per cent of whom were women (Labour Research Department, 1992a: 1).

Traditionally, part-time employment has been concentrated in low-status, female-dominated jobs, typically in education, health and welfare, clerical, cleaning and so on. A Department of Employment survey of eight private-sector companies, conducted in 1991, found that 43 per cent of female employees work part-time, compared to five per cent of male workers (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992). This survey also discovered that only 16.5 per cent of employees in the top five occupational categories studied were employed on a part-time basis. Sidaway and Wareing conclude, though, that higher occupational groups, including those at managerial level, are not necessarily unsuitable for part-time work.

Although it has been shown that part-timers typically do not earn less per unit of time or output than full-time workers, they have been found to be concentrated in low-paying establishments and industries (Craig *et al*, 1985; Hunter and MacInnes, 1991). Even within female employment, a disproportionately high percentage of part-timers are found in the lowest grades (Martin and Roberts, 1984; Robinson and Wallace, 1984). Economics literature has also clearly shown that there is a significant earnings differential between full-time and part-time employees (Main, 1988, 1991). Using data from the New Earnings Survey, the Labour Research Department (1992a) found that average hourly earnings for

female part-time employees, at £4.40, was only 74.5 per cent of that of female full-time workers in April 1990.

The percentage of female employees working part-time, Beechey and Perkins (1987) note, has varied substantially across different industries. For instance, in manufacturing in 1968, 30.6 per cent of women employees in the food, drink and tobacco industry worked part-time, compared to 10.3 per cent in the clothing industry. Beechey and Perkins (1987: 26) conclude, then, that " ... there is no simple correlation between areas of 'traditionally' female employment and part-time working ... "

With respect to demand-side factors, this chapter is not concerned with analysis of the economic reasons advanced for employers' preferences for part-time work². Rather, it focuses on the type of labour typically used in part-time employment and employers' attitudes towards part-time workers.

In their study of part-time work in the manufacturing industry in Coventry, Beechey and Perkins (1987) analysed the attitudes of employers to part-time and full-time employment. The industries included in their research all employed relatively large numbers of part-time women workers, though the extent of their dependence on these employees varied from industry to industry. Beechey and Perkins' most crucial finding appears to be that many employers " ... held very definite conceptions relating to gender ... ", with the result that work organisation was dependent upon the sex of the workforce concerned. They found nothing inherent in jobs which led to their construction on a part-time rather than a full-time basis, but, rather, gender played the most significant role in such differentiation.

This is effectively illustrated by Beechey and Perkins (1987) in their study of manual work in the health service. Hospital portering, which was done exclusively by men, was organised into a three-shift system. In contrast, the domestic manual work, done by women only, was organised entirely on a part-time basis. However, the jobs possessed the same

characteristics; for instance, of requiring 24-hour coverage. Thus, even where jobs have the same requirements, their construction as part-time or full-time appears to be dependent upon gender. Beechey and Perkins (1987: 76) found that throughout the industries studied "Employers use gender-differentiated ways of meeting a labour shortage or attaining flexibility."

Beechey and Perkins (1987) also discovered different employers' attitudes to full-time and part-time employees. In particular, " ... part-time women workers are defined in terms of their domestic responsibilities." (Beechey and Perkins, 1987: 118) The managers interviewed by Beechey and Perkins discussed at length the domestic circumstances of part-timers, but not of full-time women workers. Thus, Beechey and Perkins conclude that the construction of many of women's jobs as part-time in Britain is due to the fact that they are female-dominated. Most importantly, the consequences of such construction are almost always detrimental to women's status in the workplace. Managers were found to regard women workers as unconcerned with doing interesting work or with seeking promotion.

This is supported by Craig *et al* (1985) and by a study conducted into the use of non-standard labour³ by Hunter and MacInnes (1991). The latter found that employers strongly believed that women were more inclined to work part-time than were men. Hunter and MacInnes found that employers perceived part-timers as less stable with regard to their long-term commitment to work and, hence, not suitable to be considered for advancement within the work hierarchy. They argue that

Because of their peripheral commitment to the labour market, they (part-timers and temporary workers) were seen as more suitable for *jobs* which were peripheral in terms of hours worked, continuity of employment, pay and benefits or career prospects.

Hunter and MacInnes, 1991: 56 (Original emphasis)

Thus, it seems clear that the attitudes of employers are particularly important in maintaining the low-status of part-time, typically female, employees. However, other influences which act to maintain this position of part-timers in the labour market are suggested by an analysis comparing part-time working in Britain, France and the United States. Dex and Walters (1989) found that not only are British female employees significantly more likely to work part-time than their counterparts in France or America, they also tend to be in lower occupational groups. Eighteen per cent of women workers in Britain were employed in the top four categories, as defined by the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984), compared to 29 per cent in France. These four occupational groups included professional, teaching, nursing and intermediate non-manual employment. Dex and Walters discovered that in all three societies part-time workers had lower status and worse conditions than full-timers, but in France and the United States part-timers had better occupational opportunities than in Britain.

Dex and Walters (1989) explain the differences between Britain, France and the United States in terms of labour legislation, tax and day-care policies, which differ in each society. Dale (1984) also believes that part-time employment has been encouraged in Britain by *inter alia* changes to national insurance contribution rules and the lower employment protection provided by statute for part-timers.

However, varying attitudes in each country may also partly account for the different positions of women workers in Britain and America. Using British and United States data from the 1988 International Social Survey Programme on Women and the Family (conducted in Britain in 1989), Scott and Duncombe (1991) found significantly different patterns in attitudes relating to gender roles across these countries. They identified three different aspects of a 'gender-role index': 'role-conflict', 'role-segregation' and 'role-combination'. Interviewees were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with nine statements covering these three issues. Scott and Duncombe then categorised responses into 'egalitarian' or 'traditional' attitudes. For example, 59 per cent of the 1,221 British

respondents, compared to 66 per cent of the 1,333 interviewees in the United States, agreed with the statement that "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work." (Scott and Duncombe, 1991: 10, 15) Thus, the United States view is seen to be significantly more egalitarian here ($p < 0.05$).

Although the index measuring egalitarian and traditional responses revealed no difference between the British and American respondents overall, they were found to be egalitarian or traditional in different areas studied. For instance, the British were more egalitarian in their attitude to mothers working in principle, but were more concerned than their American counterparts that, in practice, working may conflict with women's family responsibilities, particularly with respect to the care of pre-school children. Thus, the egalitarian and traditional dichotomy may be too simplistic to describe effectively different attitudes - opinion, rather, appears to differ according to the area of women's employment or domestic responsibilities considered. However, it is clear from the research by Scott and Duncombe (1991) that in Britain traditional beliefs concerning women's roles in the workplace and in the home remain widespread. This supports similar findings by Dex and Shaw (1986), who studied women's attitudes using both the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) and the American National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience.

It is interesting to note that Scott and Duncombe (1991) found women in both countries to be generally more egalitarian than men. This is consistent with results obtained by the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984), which discovered, from a subsample of 799 husbands, that even within married couples male and female opinions differ, with men consistently more likely to express traditional attitudes to women in paid employment.

Thus, not only attitudes of employers, but also government policies in Britain, for instance, regarding childcare provision, and attitudes prevailing in society, help maintain the disproportionately high percentage of women in part-time employment. Moreover, these influences on the nature of women's participation in the labour market also appear to act to sustain the low occupational status of part-time workers.

Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Legislation

The extent of employment segregation and the concentration of women in part-time working, then, clearly operate so as to reinforce women's low position at work. This secondary status of women is illustrated by the differential between male and female earnings levels, which, although slowly declining throughout the last two decades, remains substantial, as shown in tables one and two.

Table 1: Average gross hourly earnings of full-time employees on adult rates, excluding the effects of overtime, in Great Britain, 1970 - 1992. (Includes men aged 21 years and over and women aged 18 years and over until 1983.)

Year (April)	Women's earnings as a percentage of men's
1970	63.1
1972	64.71
1974	65.86
1976	73.47
1978	72.23
1980	71.77
1982	71.89
1984	73.35
1986	74.13
1988	74.87
1990	76.63
1992	78.76

Source: Department of Employment, *Employment Gazettes*, 1970 - 1992.

Table 2: Average weekly earnings of full-time employees on adult rates, excluding the effects of overtime, in Great Britain, 1972 - 1992. (Includes men aged 21 years and over and women aged 18 years and over until 1983.)

Year (April)	Women's earnings as a percentage of men's
1972	55.86
1974	56.39
1976	64.34
1978	63.30
1980	63.29
1982	64.08
1984	65.55
1986	66.12
1988	66.80
1990	68.17
1992	70.88

Source: Department of Employment, *Employment Gazettes*, 1972 - 1992.

Although the tables above show earnings for full-time workers only, clearly, if part-time employees were also included, for the reasons discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the male / female earnings differential would be considerably larger. Moreover, as average overtime hours are greater for male employees than for female workers (Spence, 1992), if, in addition, overtime was taken into account, the difference in male and female pay would, of course, be even more substantial.

This persistent inequality in earnings has been maintained in the face of legislation, introduced in the early 1970s and further developed in the 1980s, ostensibly aimed at bringing about equality. The question arises, then, as to why the equal pay and sex discrimination law has failed to achieve its primary objective.

The sex discrimination law is contained in the Sex Discrimination Acts of 1975 and 1986, as supplemented and amended by the Employment Acts of 1989 and 1990, and regulations thereunder, together with the Equal Pay Act (1970) and Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations (1983)⁴. Also, the law here is subject to the EEC rules contained in Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, EEC Directives and decisions of the European Court of Justice.

Section one of the Sex Discrimination Act provides for two definitions of discrimination. Direct discrimination occurs where an individual or institution treats a woman, because of her sex, "less favourably" than they would a man, while indirect discrimination concerns the application of a practice described by the Equal Opportunities Commission as "fair in form, but unfair in its impact." (EOC, 1988: 1) Although a brief review of the principal technical weaknesses made in the drafting of the law is given here, there is no attempt to discuss in detail the well documented shortcomings of the substantive and procedural law (Atkins and Hoggett, 1984; Pannick, 1985; Ellis, 1988; Townshend-Smith, 1989 *et al*). Rather, this chapter focuses on the concept of equal opportunities, upon which the sex discrimination legislation is based, in order to assess the fundamental reasons for the failure of the law.

With respect to the law on equal pay, the statutory provisions, such as those relating to the defences of 'material difference' and 'material factor', have been criticised as extremely ambiguous (see Jefferson, 1990). Also, the disproportionate number of detailed exceptions to the Sex Discrimination Act have been deemed unjustified, and the law in this field has been described as complex and inaccessible (Pannick, 1985; Ellis, 1988; Townshend-Smith, 1989 *et al*). It has been argued, too, that the legislation has left too wide a scope for

the exercise of discretion by judges and Industrial Tribunals, who could not be expected to give effect to the spirit of the law and abandon traditional attitudes (Rendel, 1978; Wedderburn, 1986 *et al*).

The relationship between the two Acts, the nature of which appears to be unduly complex, has also been criticised (Ellis, 1988). The legislation has been described as much too fragmented, and a consolidating act, which has been called for by the EOC (EOC, 1988), would be likely to improve considerably access to the law (Jefferson, 1990). However, as Jefferson asserts, applicants would still be unlikely to take legal action without the support either of their union, as in the well-known equal value case of *Hayward v. Cammell Laird Shipbuilders*⁵, or the EOC. The absence of both provision for legal aid for representation in Industrial Tribunal cases and of class actions in British equal opportunities legislation mean that redress to the law can be complex and expensive. As Creighton (1976) emphasises, there can only be a marginal impact on the wider problems of sex discrimination at the workplace and in society exerted by individual action alone, however effective such action taken.

Thus, the substantive and procedural law, clearly, need to be reformed. However, it has been argued that there are also problems inherent within the philosophy upon which the equal opportunities legislation is based. This has been criticised as being concerned merely with the rules of entry into the labour market and not with the outcome of these rules (Townshend-Smith, 1989). Townshend-Smith asserts that the concept of 'meritocratic individualism', that is, the treatment of individuals on merit, which is reflected in the law on direct discrimination, fails to take account of discrimination which has previously hindered women from gaining the qualifications or experience regarded as meritorious. Thus, he believes that there is a greater concern for equality of opportunity than equality of results.

However, this argument may well undervalue the radical nature of the existing legislation. An overly critical approach to the concept of equal opportunities may obscure its potential for effecting change. Williams (1962: 121) states that

It (the concept of equal opportunities) requires not merely that there should be no exclusion from access on grounds other than those appropriate or rational for the good in question, but that the grounds considered appropriate for the good should themselves be such that people from all sections of society have an equal chance of satisfying them.

As O'Donovan and Szyszczak (1988: 4) point out, if this is correct then equality of opportunities would entail "equality of life chances." Thus, it would appear that "The basic issue is how equality is defined." (O'Donovan and Szyszczak, 1988: 17)

This would seem to be most evident from an analysis of the concept of indirect discrimination. Ellis (1988) believes that this represents the acceptance by the legislature that equality of opportunity is unattainable unless members of society are allowed to compete from an identical base. Indirect discrimination, then, as Palmer and Poulton (1987) argue, in legal terms, may be of considerable potential significance. Of course, the importance of the role of the concept of indirect discrimination in equal opportunities legislation means that its interpretation is crucial. However, there is a clear divergence between the above definition of this concept and its legal construction. Arguably, this is, primarily, a consequence of the intention of the legislature. As Richards (1976) points out, the legislation was designed only as a first step towards equality, to encourage voluntary measures in pursuit of equal opportunities. This is evident from the *White Paper Equality for Women* (1974: 1), upon which the Sex Discrimination Act was based, which describes the role for which legislation was intended in the promotion of equal opportunities as "limited but indispensable".

The White Paper goes on to state that

there are wide areas in which the Government itself can do little. Here it must invite individual men and women to give effect to the spirit of the laws rather than their letter.

Equality for Women, 1974: 1

The question which arises here is whether reformation in the design of the anti-discrimination legislation would result in sufficient protection for women, or whether legislation is simply an inevitably inadequate device for addressing discriminatory policies and practices. Certainly, the Disabled Alliance and Low Pay Unit do not believe that the law relating to discrimination on the grounds of disability *per se* has failed, but, rather, that the present system should be reformed and the enforcement procedures strengthened (Lonsdale and Walker, 1984). The efficacy of such an approach is discernible from a consideration of the law relating to age discrimination in the United States, which appears to have been much more rigorously enforced than the sex discrimination legislation in Britain (Buck and Fitzpatrick, 1986). Thus, it may be argued that not only is more extensive legislation covering sex discrimination required, but what legal protection exists must be strengthened. The crucial question is how this can be best accomplished.

Ellis (1988) and Pannick (1985), among others, conclude that, in order to overcome gender stereotyping, the introduction of positive action schemes is necessary. Pannick cites the use of such schemes in other legal systems, such as Australia⁶, and in international law, as evidence of the acceptability of positive action. However, although the Sex Discrimination Act (Ss. 47 and 48), as amended by the Sex Discrimination Act (1986), permits some form of positive action⁷, the Local Government Act (1988), which prohibits the consideration by local authorities of "non-commercial" matters within contract relations, indicates the lack of Government support for these schemes. It seems clear, though, that the present statutory

framework, by amendment and supplementation, could be improved through the extension of positive action, particularly, as Ellis (1988: 12) points out, because positive action operates so as to transfer emphasis away from individuals and to focus on a more "organisational structural perspective."

Thus, where the concept of equal opportunities is interpreted as entailing different treatment, that is, as incorporating not merely formal equality, but substantial equality, then significant gains could be made for women in employment where the law is extended. However, any form of anti-discrimination law, which will always be reliant on political and social construction, is likely to be hindered by prejudicial attitudes which reflect the fact that sex discrimination is to be found entrenched in the structures of society. This is clear from the initial formulation of the sex discrimination legislation in Britain, as well as from the decisions emanating from the courts and Industrial Tribunals under this law.

Thus, as Atkins and Hoggett (1984) argue, the weaknesses in the enforcement machinery relating to the sex discrimination law are not a result of inadvertent negligence, but are integral to the way the parameters of the legal framework were originally determined. Responsibility for the failure of the sex discrimination legislation, then, cannot lie with deficiencies in the substantive or procedural law, or even with the concept of equal opportunities alone. Rather, more importantly, the legislature and judiciary, arguably reflecting widespread attitudes in society as a whole, failed to give effect to the spirit of the law.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to depict women's position in the employment sphere in terms of employment segregation by sex, the predominance of female employees in part-time work and the male / female earnings differential. A number of interrelated factors have been identified as primarily responsible for the persistence of these features of female employment.

With respect to employment segregation, this chapter has considered a number of factors which affect both employees and employers. These are the closely linked issues of the unequal division of labour in the home, custom and practice within the workplace and the deep-rooted prejudices held throughout society itself. Most importantly, it has been argued here that there exists a vicious circle, whereby current norms in employment shape both employees' and employers' perceptions of work suitable for men and women.

The primary factors which appear to contribute to the maintenance of employment segregation are similar to those which have resulted in the high proportion of women in part-time employment. However, also, comparisons of the situation of women in Britain, France and the United States have shown that state policies have influenced the growth of part-time work among female employees in this country (Dale, 1984; Dex and Walters, 1989).

It has been argued here, too, that the absence of a political will in Britain to help women in the workplace has been primarily to blame for the inability of the sex discrimination and equal pay legislation to redress effectively the differential between male and female earnings. The following chapter illustrates the apparent parallel failure of the trade union movement to force the change women have needed to gain equality with men in the workplace.

Endnotes

1. For example, in 1901, 88 per cent of women worked in occupations where they contributed more than their share of the work force, at 29 per cent. If the ratio of male to female workers in these occupations had mirrored that of the total labour force, then these occupations would be expected to account for only 33 per cent of the female work force. Thus, 2.7 times as many women as expected were found in these occupations. The index then has the value of 2.7 (Hakim, 1978: 1265-1266).
2. For a detailed discussion of the characteristics of establishments which typically use part-time employment, see Blanchflower and Corry (1987).
3. Non-standard labour is defined as all forms of employment other than that which is permanent and full-time (more than 30 hours per week) (Hunter and MacInnes, 1991).
4. Failure to adhere to the EOC Codes of Practice is not in itself unlawful but may be taken into account in court or at an Industrial Tribunal hearing (s.56(A) (10) Sex Discrimination Act 1975.) Where the Code is not observed, there may be a presumption of discrimination (Palmer and Poulton, 1987).
5. 1984 IRLR 463
6. See O'Donnell and Hall (1988).
7. Where the number of employees of one sex involved in a certain type of work within the preceding twelve months was "comparatively small", then only women, or men, can be encouraged to take up an opportunity in that work. However, the limitations of this provision are clear: it applies only to that "particular work", and the term

"comparatively small" is left undefined. Certainly, the use made of the law here has been shown to have been extremely limited (Snell *et al*, 1981).

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Introduction

Although not in proportion to their enhanced numbers in the labour market, women's increased participation in the workforce has been accompanied by an increase in female trade union membership. Throughout the 1960s this rise in female participation in the labour force and in the trade unions was particularly marked among married women and within the white-collar unions. Between 1964 and 1970 women accounted for 70 per cent of the increase in members of unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC) (Boston, 1987: 265). Although this can be partly accounted for by the two female-dominated unions NALGO and NUPE joining the TUC, the rise in female membership can still be seen to have been dramatic (Hunt, 1982). Using data from the 1991 Labour Force Survey, Beatson and Butcher (1993) suggest that women now form two-fifths of trade union membership.

However, women's lack of advancement in the work sphere has been paralleled by their position within the trade union movement. Women's participation rates in trade union activity have not increased in accordance with their membership, leaving women grossly under-represented in official and lay positions at both local and national level. In a survey of 37 TUC-affiliated unions, with a total of 7.8 million members, the Labour Research

Department (1991: 4) found that, in 1990, only about one-fifth of national executive committee members, delegates to union conferences, TUC delegations and national full-time officials were female. However, women constituted approximately 31 per cent of union membership in the same year (Labour Research Department, 1991). In summary, the higher the position in the union hierarchy, the less likely the incumbent is to be female (Breitenbach, 1982).

Some of the reasons advanced to explain women's position in the trade union movement today are outlined here. Although it is necessary to recognise that this position reflects women's status in society as a whole, it is argued that social attitudes alone cannot explain the under-representation of women within the trade unions.

In order to provide a background for the discussion of women's participation in the unions, the involvement of the trade union movement, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, in the development of the equal pay legislation is briefly outlined. Before going on to analyse women's position in the trade union movement, the 'insider / outsider distinction' theory of trade union behaviour (Lindbeck and Snower, 1984) is first discussed in an attempt to provide a better understanding of the reasons behind women's under-representation in the unions.

Background

The first official appeal for legislation made by the trade union movement came in 1963, when a motion was passed by the TUC calling for the next Labour Government not only to ratify the ILO Convention 100 on equal pay, as had been demanded in the past, but also to implement equal pay law¹. This was particularly significant as it heralded a move away from the trade unions' traditional insistence that collective bargaining was preferable to legal intervention. Thus, the unions' call for the introduction of employment law in this field contrasted sharply with the philosophy of a movement which had always tended to discourage involvement by the law.

Aldred (1981) has advanced a number of possible reasons for the emphasis placed on legal change by the unions. He suggests, for instance, that trade unions may have felt that the disproportionately high percentage of women in small workplaces would make their organisation particularly difficult. However, he also asserts that there may have been a reluctance within the trade union movement to accept equal pay and other employment matters relating especially to women as trade union issues. Alternatively, he argues, although union leaders may have recognised the need for equal pay, this subject, in fact, commanded little real membership support.

Clearly, then, identifying one particular reason for the trade unions' apparent failure to organise and negotiate effectively on behalf of female workers is extremely problematic. However, whatever the main source of this lack of success, as Coote and Kellner (1980) argue, the trade union movement's cry for legislation is open to interpretation as not only an admission of defeat, but, in part, a shrinking from its responsibility towards its female membership. It is conceivable that the trade union movement felt that this particular input into policy decision-making could alleviate it of its obligation to negotiate for equality in the workplace.

This belief, arguably, is supported by the apparent lack of direct action taken at the workplace by the trade union movement during the 1960s. Although some gains were clearly made in the 1950s and 1960s - for instance, in the former decade some success was achieved through a campaign for equal pay in the civil service, teaching and local government (TUC Annual Report, 1967: 458) - there does not appear to have been a great deal of advancement in this area. Although the first TUC call for equal pay was made in 1888, only 11 per cent of the nearly nine million women in employment had equal pay by 1969 (TUC Annual Report, 1969: 509). In the period leading up to the introduction of the law, the most significant national level action taken by the trade union movement seems to have been to put pressure on the Government for change.

It is, in fact, after the passing of the law that the greater number of demands for trade union action appear to be made. It may be argued that there are two possible reasons for this pattern of events. It may have been that the introduction of the law, in rendering the trade union movement devoid of its traditional public action for equal pay, forced the unions to call for more direct action, in order to be seen to be actively pursuing the interests of their growing female membership. Alternatively, the long period of implementation of the law, and its obvious failure to bring about equal pay, may have led to an increased awareness among the trade unions that legislation alone was not going to herald the end of earnings inequality. [Although there had always been some recognition within the trade union movement that equal pay legislation would not inevitably lead to complete equality for women workers (TUC Annual Report, 1965: 411).]

Following the Labour Party election victory in 1964, in pursuance of its manifesto promise of the right to equal pay for equal work, tripartite discussions, with the TUC, CBI and the Government began in July 1965. Although progress towards the introduction of the legislation appears to have been slow, industrial action in pursuit of equal pay would seem to have been accepted as a matter for individual unions only, and not an issue warranting action on a larger scale (TUC Annual Report, 1969: 172).

However, that some trade unions were not pursuing very vigorously the trade union movement's ostensible goal of equal pay is evident in an admission appearing in the report of the TUC Annual Conference of 1969. In response to a statement made to the TUC by the then Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity, that the trade union movement must give a higher priority to equal pay, the TUC states that

They (the TUC General Executive) accepted that, to a limited extent, there might be some substance in the implied criticism that some unions could accord greater priority to equal pay in negotiations.

TUC Annual Report, 1969: 173

Indeed, there appears to have been considerable variation in the attitudes of individual trade unions to equal pay. Even by the late 1960s, there was no one definition of equal pay accepted throughout the trade union movement.

In May 1968 the TUC undertook an inquiry into trade union objectives in relation to equal pay. TUC-affiliated unions were asked whether their goal was equal pay for the same work or equal pay for equal value. 49 unions replied with usable questionnaires, representing 976,000 female members. [Total female membership of affiliated unions was estimated by the TUC at approximately one and three-quarter million at the time (TUC Annual Report, 1969).] Sixteen of the trade unions (representing 42,000 women members) said they would accept either of the above interpretations of equal pay, nine unions (representing 54,000 women members) asserted that they would not want anything other than equal pay for equal work and the remaining 27 unions (representing 880,000 women members) stated that they would only be satisfied with equal pay for equal value. In explaining this variation in definitions used by trade unions, the TUC states that interpretations will presumably depend upon " ... whether their (the unions') main aim is to safeguard the position of their male members or to gain parity for their women members." (TUC Annual Report, 1969:

176) There was recognition, therefore, that some trade unions were not acting in the best interests of their female members.

With respect to the progress made by individual unions towards equal pay, 28 unions reported that some advancement had been achieved. However, nineteen unions, with a total of 126,000 female members, " ... could see little prospect of progress towards equal pay or in narrowing the differentials." (TUC Annual Report, 1969: 176)

Regarding the women members themselves, the industrial action of female machinists at Ford's Dagenham, in June 1968, has been described as one of the most significant influences upon them (Boston, 1987). The women withdrew their labour in response to the refusal of management to accept their skilled status as equal to that of a particular male grade. The three-week action resulted in a recognition of their status at 92 per cent of that grade. As a result of this dispute, the National Joint Action Campaign Committee for Women's Equal Rights (NJACCWER) was formed and an equal pay demonstration organised on 18 May 1969. A year later the Equal Pay Act (1970) was passed.

The TUC had argued for equal pay for work of equal value, within a two-year implementation period, while the employers had advanced equal pay for equal work with seven years for its introduction. The Government chose five years for implementation and equal pay for equal work. There was, in addition, an array of defences open to employers and avoiding action to lessen the impact of the law was common; such action, Dickens (1989) asserts, at times being taken with union collusion. Certainly, it was argued at the 1969 TUC Conference that negotiations by trade unions were taking place which were not in accordance with the goal of equal pay. It was advanced that there was evidence that agreements on minimum earnings had been negotiated on different levels for men and for women, with the female rate at about 75 per cent of that of men (TUC Annual Report, 1969). Unions which did not pursue equal pay before the legislation could perhaps not be expected to change their position with the passing of the new law.

The trade unions' response to the legislation appears to have varied enormously. Some trade unions already had equal opportunities policies, while others seem to have resisted any moves toward equality (Boston, 1987). Even after the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and the Equal Pay Act (1970) came fully into force, Boston (1987) argues that some trade unions were reluctant to use the law. She points out that some unions were still asserting the superiority of collective bargaining for bringing about change. Thus, it would seem that the traditional union condemnation of legal intervention was used by some trade unions to justify their failure to use the law to its full potential. However, as Boston states, even where there was no evidence of overt discrimination in union agreements or rule books, women were still under-represented in the workplace and in the union.

Discussion on equal pay in the unions, though, did not cease with the introduction of the legislation. There is evidence to suggest that the trade union movement was fully aware of the potential for evasive action being taken by employers (TUC Annual Report, 1970: 722). However, the TUC failed to persuade the Conservative Government to make an order under clause nine of the Equal Pay Act, which would have provided women with a statutory entitlement to be paid 90 per cent of the appropriate male earnings level from the end of 1973². The TUC did, nevertheless, successfully object to some amendments being made to the Equal Pay Act by the Sex Discrimination Act (TUC Annual Report, 1975: 72).

By 1975 the trade union movement clearly recognised the limitations of the law. The TUC Conference of that year carried a resolution asserting that legislation alone would not eliminate the earnings differential between male and female workers (TUC Annual Report, 1976: 112). Although the TUC continued to press the Government to legislate for equal pay for work of equal value³, throughout the 1970s and 1980s direct action taken by the trade union movement in pursuit of equality appears to have been concentrated, largely, in raising consciousness within Government and among employers, trade unionists and women themselves.

However, although their numbers in trade unions increased, there would appear to have been relatively little real improvement in women's disadvantaged position within the trade union movement. The implication, then, would appear to be that, as Milkman (1985) argues, union recruitment of women is necessary but not sufficient for their effective representation. Women's active participation in union activity may be as important, perhaps even more important, for their advancement in the trade unions and in the workplace as union membership. The crucial question which arises, then, is how can women's low levels of involvement in trade unionism be explained?

The Insider / Outsider Distinction

Some insight into this issue may be gained by considering a concept advanced within the literature concerned with the modelling of trade union behaviour. This field of research has advanced a number of different theories relating to the influence of unions on pay determination (see Oswald, 1986 for summary). The respective weaknesses of the models proposed have been well documented elsewhere (Blanchflower and Corry, 1987; Hunter, 1988; Oswald, 1986; Turnbull, 1988a; 1988b) and this paper does not aim to continue this discussion. Rather, the focus is on the analysis of a theory central to the seniority union model advanced by Oswald (1984, 1985).

The idea of interest here, proposed by Lindbeck and Snower (1984), and adopted and developed by, among others, Oswald (1984, 1985) and Carruth and Oswald (1987), is known as the 'insider / outsider distinction'. Essentially, this is founded on the belief that there are 'insiders' and 'outsiders' to the collective bargaining process, that is, respectively, those who can and those who cannot exert influence over union decision-making and union and employer negotiations.

In broad terms, the insider / outsider distinction attempts to explain why, in certain circumstances, increased aggregate demand may raise wages rather than employment. As with other standard models of union behaviour, it assumes that unions bargain over wages and employment only. Carruth and Oswald (1987) argue that once they all have jobs, insiders will then be unconcerned with the level of employment (or the risk of unemployment) and will negotiate over wages alone. Only in periods of particularly high product prices will it be profitable for insiders and the firm to allow in outsiders and let employment rise above the level of current union membership. Hence, if insiders are defined as union members, it is the existing membership which will determine the union's preferences regarding levels of employment and wages.

However, as Hunter (1988) points out, this model fails to explain why outsiders cannot affect pay by working at lower rates. It also ignores the possibility of altruism on the part of the insiders - an omission which Turnbull (1988a: 58) argues is inconsistent with ostensible union objectives of "egalitarianism, collectivism and solidarity."

Oswald (1984, 1985) has argued that it is seniority which distinguishes insiders and outsiders, as exemplified by the policy of Last In First Out (LIFO) in decisions regarding redundancies. The union is assumed to be perfectly democratic with decisions made by a majority voting procedure. Union priorities, then, are those of the median seniority voter, who, Oswald (1984, 1985) argues, will be unconcerned with employment levels, since he knows his job to be secure.

However, Turnbull (1988a) has strongly criticised the assumptions underlying the model advanced by Oswald (1984, 1985). Turnbull (1988a: 54) stresses that the seniority theory is inconsistent with actual union behaviour, which, he states, Oswald incorrectly believes

can be completely described by the written contents of collective agreements, without any reference to, or evaluation of, actual labour-management practices.

Turnbull (1988a) asserts that policies actually used in choosing workers for redundancy or lay-off are unknown. He also emphasises that union membership is segregated by *inter alia* occupation and skill and is not the homogeneous group it is presumed to be in the Oswald (1984, 1985) model. Turnbull (1988a: 60) points out that, often, practice has been shown to be to dismiss specific employee groups, such as part-time workers or married women. He also argues that management have, in fact, been able to use their own selection criteria, often leading to redundancies among the old and unskilled (Turnbull, 1988c). Thus, the median seniority voter cannot know that his job is definitely secure. In addition, trade unions may not favour LIFO because of its potentially divisive nature - the interests of

junior and senior members will inevitably clash - and union leadership is unlikely to want to appear to be acting against the interests of some union members. Turnbull (1988a) also criticises Oswald (1984, 1985) as ignoring the "internal politics" of the trade union, which he believes is crucial because it is here that worker conflicts are resolved (Turnbull, 1988a: 67).

Turnbull (1988a, 1988b) points out that economic approaches to describing union behaviour have ignored the decision-making process by which the collective bargaining result is obtained. He describes the economic models as "devoid of behavioural content" with respect to the study of union wage and policy formation (Turnbull, 1988b: 103). He stresses, too, that employees are concerned not only with wages and employment, as the models depict, but, also, with conditions relating to work, such as status and equity.

Turnbull (1988b) argues that, in over-emphasising exchange relations, models of union behaviour have failed to recognise the importance of the social relations of production. As a result, he believes that the models " ... mis-specify both the union's objective function and the determinants of union activity." (Turnbull, 1988b: 100) Turnbull believes that both different levels of union activity and managerially-defined work relations and organisation must be taken into account in analysing union behaviour.

Whether insiders and outsiders are defined in terms of union membership or seniority, it would appear, then, that analysis of the assumptions made in the modelling of union behaviour exposes current theory as overly-simplistic in its depiction of union behaviour. However, from an industrial relations perspective, the insider / outsider distinction is still of considerable interest with respect to the study of trade unionism because it raises a crucial question - "who runs the union?" (Hunter, 1988: 213).

It is arguable that it is the criteria by which insiders and outsiders have been defined that undermines the validity of the insider / outsider distinction. Although the simplifying

assumptions made in the economic modelling of union behaviour appear difficult to justify, the value of the insider / outsider concept should not be under-estimated. The trade union can be more realistically regarded as a political organisation with heterogeneous membership (Booth, 1984), but union behaviour still understood to be dependent upon who controls the collective bargaining process, as determined by the insider / outsider distinction.

If this approach is taken, the distinction can be seen to be important for two main reasons. First, it clearly helps explain the disadvantaged position of certain sectors of the workforce in the trade union movement, as influence in decision-making is shown to be unequally shared. In addition, it raises a caveat for the study of the individual employee's relationship to trade unionism - that the analysis of trade union membership and participation rates in union activity are not necessarily sufficient to explain fully the status of workers in the trade unions. This is because these two features of the trade union relationship may not always accurately depict the ability of the worker to exert influence in the collective bargaining process - a matter clearly identified as crucial to holding power and status in the trade union and indeed, the workplace.

It is argued here that the notion of insiders and outsiders is particularly relevant to the consideration of women and trade unionism. Women may be seen to be outsiders both in the sense of having lower membership rates than male workers and with respect to the fact that they typically exhibit lower participation levels in trade union activity (Labour Research Department, 1991; Beatson and Butcher, 1993 *et al*). The insider / outsider distinction is particularly useful for understanding women's low status in the unions if the theory is extended to take account of social relations in the workplace and in the unions, as Turner (1988a) has suggested. If the union's internal politics are considered, then, clearly, the culture of trade unions, which has been described as characterised by the "mystique of a kind of male brotherhood" (Mackie and Pattullo, 1977: 173), helps explain women's position as outsiders. The reasons advanced for women's low involvement in trade

unionism are considered here with particular reference to women's status in the workplace and in the trade union movement itself, both closely related to that in society as a whole.

Women's Position in the Trade Unions

It seems clear that the reasons advanced to explain women's status in the workplace also contribute to the under-representation of women within the trade union movement. Not only does women's work in the home appear to affect adversely their position in the unions (Coote and Kellner, 1980; Sharpe, 1984 *et al*), but those aspects of paid employment which characterise women's participation in the labour force, such as employment segmentation and part-time work, also militate against equal union representation of women with men (Hunt, 1982; Sharpe, 1984 *et al*).

Moreover, it has been argued that women's status in the labour market itself reinforces their position in trade unions (Coote and Kellner, 1980; Milkman, 1985). A vicious circle appears to arise, then, as the failure of women workers to gain equal representation in the unions, and thereby effectively utilise the trade union movement as a means to implement change in the workplace, contributes to their low status in employment, which in turn sustains women's disadvantaged position in the unions.

With respect to the organisation of employment, job segregation by sex and the predominance of women in part-time work have been identified as particularly important in the development and maintenance of the under-representation of women in unions (Aldred, 1981; Hunt, 1982; Sharpe, 1984; Martin and Roberts, 1984). There is also evidence to suggest that, as noted in the previous chapter, the sexual division of labour has been actively sustained by trade unions themselves, in their resistance to the introduction of women in traditionally male-dominated employment (Dale, 1984).

The relationship between occupational segregation and union representation, though, is not a straightforward one. The Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) found that, although in non-manual employment women who worked with both sexes were more likely to have union representation than female employees who worked with women

alone, the opposite was true for those women in manual jobs. Martin and Roberts explain this with reference to the high level of unionisation in the public sector, in which a large proportion of the segregated female manual work would be likely to be found. This is supported by findings from the 1991 Labour Force Survey (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 679).

Generally, however, as Hunt (1982) points out, women are concentrated in areas of work typically without a tradition of trade union membership, such as white-collar service work. Moreover, segregation would appear to make women's representation especially problematic as female workers are often represented by men, who may have little knowledge of their employment (Aldred, 1981). This is emphasised by Hunt (1982: 165), who claims that the experience and results of the merger of the National Federation of Women Workers and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers showed that problems women workers have " ... are not necessarily understood or communicated to male representatives ... " Hence, employment segregation is likely to have a negative effect on the quality of women's representation in the unions.

The high proportion of women in part-time employment also appears to contribute to the under-representation of women within the unions. Female workers employed on a full-time basis are significantly more likely to belong to a union than female part-timers. The 1991 Labour Force Survey revealed a union density of 39 per cent for full-time women workers, compared to only 23 per cent for female part-time employees (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 677).

Moreover, full-time women workers are more likely to be active within their union than their part-time counterparts. Seven per cent of female full-time workers and only two per cent of women part-timers in the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) had ever held a union position. The characteristics of female employment, then, which contribute to women's disadvantaged position in the workplace, also help explain

women's participation in the unions. Moreover, it has been argued that the low status of women at work itself is, in part, responsible for women's low involvement in trade unionism. Coote and Kellner (1980) look to women's position in the workplace, which they see as closely related to that in society, to explain low female participation rates in trade union activity. They argue that what is involved in such activity, for instance, attendance at meetings and public speaking, is often alien to women. As support for their beliefs, Coote and Kellner refer to the finding by Stageman (1980) that 44 per cent of the 185 women she studied, in five union branches, stated that "feeling more confident" would encourage their participation. Stageman emphasises that union hierarchies parallel those in the workplace, with women tending to be found in the lowest positions. Thus, "Women are accustomed to behaving differentially towards men and expecting little or no advancement." (Coote and Kellner, 1980: 9) This, Coote and Kellner (1980: 9) argue, will inevitably affect women's "aspirations and expectations" in relation to their union.

Coote and Kellner (1980) conclude, then, that women's position in the trade unions reflects that in the workplace because women's aspirations will inevitably be shaped by their low status at work. This close relationship between union participation by women and their status in the workplace is also identified by Milkman (1985). She believes that "Unaccustomed to wielding power in the rest of their lives ... women members often decline to enter the competition at all." (Milkman, 1985: 306)

With regard to the trade union movement itself, as Brown (1976: 37) has stated, in studying union membership levels it is vital to consider what union involvement actually means for particular individuals. As Sharpe (1984) stresses, trade union membership and participation within current trade union structures may well appear particularly irrelevant to women workers. She points out that collective bargaining has in the past focused particularly on the concept of a 'family wage'. This has been based on the notion that a man needs a wage sufficient to support a family, and women's paid employment is only marginal. This has led, Sharpe believes, to trade unions largely ignoring issues central to

women's involvement in the labour market, such as maternity leave, as the unions have been slow to accept these as important subjects over which to bargain.

Beechey (1987) has also identified union culture as discouraging female union activity. Davies (1975: 153), too, believes that, with respect to women members, " ... there has been a long tradition of unhelpfulness on the part of male trade unionists." Hunt (1982) points out that male stewards in some cases have failed to follow their own union's policy concerning equality issues, as they themselves do not support the principles involved. Also, as Coote and Kellner (1980) state, a female trade unionist must comply with conditions for union activity established by men, although male and female experiences and orientations may well differ substantially.

Sharpe (1984: 67) stresses that the practical problems of participation in union activity, without family support, for women workers with children renders involvement in trade unionism "almost impossible". She also found a reluctance among the female employees she interviewed to adopt responsibilities relating to the union in addition to their domestic work. The proportion of women (20 per cent) in the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 56), who stated that the inconvenient times at which they were held were the main reason for their non-attendance at union meetings, also indicates the significance of women's domestic arrangements for their participation in the unions.

As in the study of women's relationship to paid employment, then, women's participation in trade unionism cannot be fully understood without reference to their primary caring role in the home. Thus, there is general agreement in the literature that it is necessary for trade unions to recognise that women need special attention to overcome the barriers to advancement which they face at work and in the unions - obstacles which are closely linked to women's secondary status in society and their subsequent lack of opportunities and confidence to participate.

Summary

The first section of this chapter attempted to show that the trade union movement's response to the development of the sex discrimination legislation appears to illustrate a general lack of will within the unions to fight for equality with men for women workers. It has been advanced here that this may be a result of women's low level of participation in trade unionism. That is, arguably, women must be represented in the trade unions at all levels before their interests are fully recognised. A concept developed primarily within the economics literature concerning trade union behaviour - the 'insider / outsider distinction' - has been discussed here in order to try to explain women's low involvement in the unions. It is argued that this theory can help illustrate women's disadvantaged position in the trade union movement, as they can be seen to be 'outsiders' in terms of the influence they are able to exert within the unions. The insider / outsider distinction, then, highlights the need for women to gain real influence in the decision-making processes in the unions.

This chapter has gone on to show that the characteristics of female employment contribute to their disadvantaged position in the trade union movement, in turn, sustaining their relatively poor employment situation. Employment segregation, for instance, may adversely affect the representation of women, as trade union representatives, who are likely to be male, may have little or no experience of their work. Also, the unions themselves have been identified as failing to encourage participation by women workers *inter alia* by their reluctance to accept issues of particular concern to women workers as subjects over which to bargain with employers.

Thus, their status in both the workplace and the trade union movement appears to reflect a need for women to participate more fully in the unions. Chapters four and five go on to discuss the literature concerned with modelling the main influences acting upon the probability that an individual will belong to a union and factors determining levels of

involvement in trade union activity, with particular reference to the importance which has been attributed to gender here.

Endnotes

1. The Government continued to argue that it was their policy only to ratify ILO Conventions which existing British policy was already in accordance with.
2. The Government argued that such an order would have too serious an effect on inflation.
3. The call for equal pay for work of equal value was supported by the failure of the Government to comply with the ILO Convention 100, which it had ratified in 1980, and later, with the EEC Equal Pay Directive 75/117.

CHAPTER 4

INFLUENCES ON THE PROPENSITY TO UNIONISE

Introduction

There has been a long debate over the significance of different types of influence on trade union membership. However, it would appear that the literature, with some notable exceptions from the United States on satisfaction with and commitment to trade unions (Glick *et al*, 1977; Kochan, 1979; Gordon *et al*, 1980; Fiorito *et al*, 1988; Fullagar and Barling, 1989 *et al*), has neglected to examine the relationship between a worker and union as a whole. It is argued here that this relationship cannot be fully explained only by analysis of either trends in union density or individual membership choice. This thesis aims to analyse influences upon the individual employee's decision to join a union and what determines his or her level of participation in the union, with particular reference to the significance of gender.

This chapter reviews the literature relating to the employee's union membership decision, and chapter five discusses the United States literature on union participation and satisfaction with and commitment to the union, in order to try to understand the influences upon levels of involvement in trade unionism. Particular attention should be made here to the date of the literature, as changes in the composition of the workforce, and in attitudes prevalent in society, in particular, seem likely to affect the relevance of the results obtained from the older research for an understanding of women's involvement in trade unionism today.

An attempt is made here to construct a theoretical framework within which the potentially significant factors relating to the individual's decision-making process concerning union membership and participation can be analysed. This is important so that any substantial differences between male and female employees in the significant variables can be identified and possible consequences for the employee / union relationship assessed.

In discussing influences on union membership choice, it is necessary first to distinguish between supply and demand factors, which seem at times confused in the literature relating to this area. That is, factors affecting the presence of a trade union and those having an influence on individuals have not always been clearly distinguished. However, such a differentiation is essential to understand the propensity to join a union, with which this thesis is concerned, as opposed to the ability to do so. Much of the research has attempted to examine the determinants of union membership across employees in unionised and non-unionised establishments or industries in the samples used (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Elsheikh and Bain, 1980; Antos *et al*, 1980; Hirsch and Berger, 1984; Bain and Elias, 1985; Booth, 1986 *et al*). As a result, although conclusions have been drawn here as to the importance of variables, such as gender, for the employee's interest in unionisation, frequently, it is not clear whether the variables found to be significantly associated with union membership are related to the individual's propensity to unionise or his or her opportunity to join a union. It may be argued that this literature can generally be most usefully regarded as examining the union status of jobs.

In contrast, research concerning the union status of individuals has considered the union membership choice of employees in unionised workplaces only (Guest and Dewe, 1988; Green, 1990; Chaison and Dhavale, 1992). It is argued here that, as this research controls for the individual's opportunity to become a union member, it provides a more reliable indicator of variables influencing the worker's decision to join a union than the literature discussed above.

Studies which have been concerned with workers' voting behaviour in union elections, such as that by Kochan (1980), Leigh and Hills (1987) and Schur and Kruse (1992), in the United States, are also of considerable interest here, as they allow an examination of the factors affecting a worker's union membership choice without having to take account of the effect the presence of a trade union may have on these influences.

This thesis is concerned primarily with the individual's union membership decision. That is, given the opportunity to belong to a union, as indicated by the presence of a union at his or her workplace, who will join a union and who will choose to 'free ride'. However, reference is made to the United States literature on employees' voting intent in union elections and to the literature concerned mainly with explaining unionisation between different jobs, as the results and theoretical discussions on influences on union membership included in this research provide interesting insights for the present study.

It should be noted that 'propensity to unionise' has been used in the literature to denote both desire for unionisation at a non-union workplace (Kochan, 1980) and union membership choice in a workplace with a recognised trade union (Green, 1990). Here, the latter meaning is adopted for this term.

Determinants of the opportunity to unionise which have been discussed in the literature are macroeconomic factors, such as the level of employment and price and wage inflation, structural effects, such as changes in occupation and industry distribution (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Bain and Price, 1983 *et al*), and the political climate, illustrated in the industrial relations context through legal reforms (Freeman and Pelletier, 1990) and by government support generally for union recognition (Bain and Price, 1983). These influences on unionisation have been well documented and this thesis does not attempt to present any further analysis of the variables acting upon the ability and incentive of the trade unions to organise.

The most commonly discussed influences on union membership have been macroeconomic factors, in particular, unemployment, and the employee's work and personal characteristics. These latter two categories of variable are difficult to distinguish. One way of dividing them, however, is to consider work characteristics as factors which can all relate to one group of workers. In contrast, personal characteristics, though relating to work, may be deemed those variables the combination of which will always be unique to each employee.

Those work characteristics variables commonly identified in the literature as of significance are number of hours worked, the degree of employment segregation by sex, permanence of job, earnings and size of establishment. The personal characteristics most frequently included in the research are sex, age, marital status and / or head of household status, number of dependents, education and race. Region, too, has been found to be significantly related to union membership. This variable, though, may measure the employee's area of residence or place of work; that is, this could be regarded as either a personal or work characteristic. Here the 'area' variable is included in the consideration of the former, for the sake of continuity, as the data set on which the empirical analysis on propensity to unionise, presented in chapters six and seven, is based records the respondent's area of residence.

Kochan (1980) has argued that attitudes to work, such as satisfaction with and commitment to work, may also affect the support of employees for unionisation. It is argued in this thesis, too, that characteristics of trade union organisation may be important for union membership choice. However, the literature has in general tended to neglect the part played by trade unions themselves in the employee's union membership decision. Where this has been considered, the research has frequently focused on the importance of union leadership (Undy *et al*, 1981) and recruitment (Kelly and Heery, 1989; Mason and Bain, 1990) to the exclusion of any consideration of the union as a whole. For instance, the union's policies and practices, and, therefore, its ostensible priorities, which could reasonably be assumed

to have some influence on the decision-making processes of different types of employee groups, do not appear to have been widely discussed in studies concerned with the probability of trade union membership.

Thus, in attempting to determine the significant influences on the individual's propensity to unionise, not only macroeconomic factors and the employee's work and personal characteristics must be analysed, but, arguably, the worker's attitudes to work and the characteristics of the trade union at his or her workplace must also be examined.

Macroeconomic Factors

Unemployment

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) analysed variations in unionisation between industries using membership records of unions which recruited in more than one industry. 36 industries were included in the study, which considered the years 1951, 1961 and 1971. Although Bain and Elsheikh do not draw a clear distinction between opportunity and propensity to unionise, their study is still of interest here as they discuss the likely impact of a number of the variables outlined above on individual workers.

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) argue that high unemployment will be likely to result in a greater reluctance among employees to join trade unions, as they will be more likely to fear alienating their employer and thereby losing their jobs. Also, as union power declines, workers may come to feel that membership is of less value to them. Bain and Elsheikh assert, then, that the higher the unemployment level in an industry relative to other industries, the lower its level of unionisation is likely to be. They do not consider, though, that workers may perceive their union membership as more important in periods of high unemployment as they foresee a role for the union in either fighting against job losses or, at least, in negotiating for favourable terms of redundancy or lay-off. Disney (1990), for instance, believes that the threat of redundancy or of a reduction in living standards is likely to encourage union membership. Bain and Elsheikh, in fact, found unemployment to have a significant impact on inter-industry unionisation only in one of the three years which they studied, 1971.

Bain and Price (1983) argue that in the short-term, when union subscriptions are typically small or even nothing, the unemployed may still receive union benefits and information regarding potential employment, so union membership may not fall too dramatically. However, they conclude that long-term high unemployment will have a negative effect on membership levels, as individuals will lose touch with their union and have little incentive

to continue their membership. Bain and Price point to the decline in union density in the early 1980s as evidence for this relationship.

Elias (1990), using work histories data from the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative, found a negative relationship between union membership and a period of unemployment in the year of employment observed in the individual's work history. He concludes that

if a respondent has recently experienced, or is about to experience a spell of unemployment, the probability that they will belong to a trade union during the dominant employment event in that year is correspondingly reduced by between six and nine per cent.

Elias, 1990: 21

Thus, it seems clear from the research findings to date that, as unemployment rises, potential and actual union membership will fall, since the unemployed, at least in the long-term, will tend to see little or no reason for remaining or becoming a union member. However, it should be noted that there is some evidence to suggest that the relationship between the individual's union membership choice and unemployment may vary according to the union to which the employee belongs. Kelly and Bailey (1989), who surveyed 31 TUC-affiliated trade unions, found that those unions with the highest unemployed membership were professional or occupational unions, which were likely to be more able to provide the unemployed with private services, for instance, relating to potential employment, than the general unions studied.

Inflation

Bain and Price (1980) believe that price inflation, defined as the rate of change in retail prices, will be likely to encourage union membership as workers perceive an increased threat to their standard of living. However, they believe that the relationship between wages and prices may affect the significance of the impact of price inflation on unionisation if workers think in real, as opposed to money, terms. Hence, factors affecting the economy as a whole can influence workers not only indirectly by their effect on trade unions, but they may also have an impact on the individual's decision-making process relating to trade union membership.

Personal Characteristics

Sex

As Bain and Elsheikh (1979: 140) point out, there has been a tendency to assume that women have a lower propensity to unionise than men because of the nature of their employment, which may be interrupted for family reasons and because " ... they generally are secondary earners whose pay ... merely supplements the earnings of their husbands." Bain and Elsheikh found that the significance of sex varied between the three years - 1951, 1961 and 1971 - considered in their study. Although significantly related to union membership in 1951, the impact of gender was seen to have decreased by 1961 until it was no longer significant in 1971. Bain and Elsheikh attempt to explain this by reference to the increase in the number of older women in the workforce up to 1971. They argue that the age effect will have cancelled out the sex effect in their multiple regression analysis, although they do state that changing attitudes may have contributed to the reduced importance of the sex variable by 1971. Bain and Elsheikh report that in both 1951 and 1961 the level of unionisation among women workers as a proportion of male workers was about 48 per cent, compared to 55 per cent in 1971.

The inter-establishment analysis of Elsheikh and Bain (1980), which was conducted to supplement their earlier inter-industry study discussed above, found no significant relationship between union membership and gender for white-collar workers. However, sex was significant for manual workers and among white-collar and manual employees when examined together. Although when Elsheikh and Bain introduced a union recognition regressor the importance of sex for union membership was reduced, this variable remained significant.

Bain and Price (1983) believe that the contrasting results, with respect to gender, obtained in the inter-industry and inter-establishment studies above may well be explained by the characteristics of the establishments in which manual female employees are concentrated;

for instance, women workers are more likely than male employees to be found in small employment organisations. Bain and Price (1983) conclude that women's lower unionisation levels are largely attributable to the nature of their distribution across industries and occupations. In support of this, they point to the increase in female union membership and density from 1969 to 1979, which they argue was influenced by the changes in the distribution of female employment during this period, especially in the public sector. Bain and Price, then, believe that the increase in female trade union membership is attributable primarily to the factors which have contributed to the growth in trade unionism during the 1970s.

In the United States, Antos *et al* (1980) used a number of different explanatory variables to analyse male and female unionisation. They first examined the impact of race, sex, education, age and part-time and full-time work on the probability of union membership. Then, occupational and industrial status variables were added in the belief that any reduction in the "net" differential between the sexes would indicate the effect of the newly introduced factors. Antos *et al* argue that their results indicate that occupation and industry differences account for a significant proportion of the male / female unionisation differential. However, they conclude that a substantial part of the difference remains unexplained, which "... may reflect discrimination or simply unmeasured differences affecting unionisation." (Antos *et al*, 1980: 169)

With regard to the support of employees for unionisation in non-union workplaces, Kochan (1980) found that women were significantly more willing to join unions than men, although this difference for manual, but not for white-collar workers, disappeared when controlling for gender differences in employment. Kochan concludes that women experience more conditions at work which lead to unionisation than do men. He argues that the change in attitudes corresponding to the changing role of women in society primarily accounts for the fact that there is no evidence to suggest that women are less interested in unionisation than

men. These findings are supported by research by Leigh and Hills (1987) and Schur and Kruse (1992), also conducted in the United States.

Leigh and Hills (1987), using data from the 1980 and 1982 National Longitudinal Surveys, on young men and young women, respectively, and Schur and Kruse (1992), who used information obtained from a 1984 telephone survey of 1,449 union members and non-members, both found female employees in non-union workplaces to be slightly more likely than male workers to indicate a desire for union representation. Leigh and Hills conclude that, in the private-sector, lower union membership levels among women reflect their more limited opportunities to obtain union jobs. They believe that, although this could be a result of stronger employer opposition to unionisation in female-dominated employment, it is more likely to be a consequence of the relative lack of attention paid to women's organisation by trade unions. Leigh and Hills argue that unions may have perceived higher costs in organising female employees, as they exhibit a higher labour turnover than male workers, or union leaders may have lacked understanding of women's needs in predominantly female work. Alternatively, Leigh and Hills point out, women workers may be concentrated in smaller and more capital-intensive firms.

Leigh and Hills (1987) conclude that women workers are more likely to be unionised in the public than the private-sector primarily because they have been more able to obtain union jobs in the former. Schur and Kruse (1992), also, believe that women are less likely to be union members than men because they have had less opportunity to join a union. They argue that, although domestic commitments, as indicated by marital status and the presence of children under eighteen in the respondent's household, were not found to be associated with unionisation voting intent, women's family responsibilities may make unions more reluctant to organise female workers, as they are less likely to be active in the union.

In Britain, Green (1990) argues, too, that women are not less interested in joining unions than men. Using data from the 1983 General Household Survey, Green examined levels of

union membership for manual and non-manual workers, while taking account of what he termed 'union availability', represented by the presence of a recognised union at the respondent's workplace. With respect to manual employees, Green found that when controlling for the fact that women workers were less likely to have a recognised union at their place of work than men, gender was not significantly related to union membership. That is, for manual employees, the women did not exhibit a lower propensity to unionise than the men studied. Also, for the non-manual workers, when taking account of union availability, gender was associated with union membership only at the ten per cent significance level.

Thus, as Green (1990) points out, previous research, such as that by Bain and Elias (1985), which has suggested that women are less interested in union membership than men, may reflect, in fact, only a lower opportunity to unionise among female employees. Green argues that the association between gender and the presence of a union at an employee's workplace is likely to be a result of male-domination of the trade union movement and a resulting lack of attention paid to the organisation of women workers by unions in the past.

However, in the United States, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) found that, as a group, 'free riders' were more likely to be women than men. They used data from the 1988 Current Population Survey to examine 9,725 employees who were covered by collective agreements, but who could not be compelled to join the union or pay union dues. Nineteen per cent of this sample were identified as free riders, as they made no financial contribution to the union. Chaison and Dhavale conclude, though, that the greater percentage of women than men not in a union could be explained, at least in part, in terms of the jobs occupied by the female employees. Women were more likely to be found in occupations with large numbers of free riders, such as in jobs with a professional speciality. Also, the women had lower weekly earnings than the men studied and free riders were found to have significantly lower pay than union members. Thus, the research to date, from Britain and the United

States, would appear to suggest that women are not less interested in unionisation than men, but have less opportunity to join trade unions, or, at least, are more likely to be found in occupations without a tradition of high union density.

Area

Region has been shown to be related to the probability of union membership, but there appears to be little empirical evidence to suggest that this may play a part in the employee's unionisation decision. Bain and Elsheikh (1979), Bain and Elias (1985), Booth (1986) and Beaumont and Harris (1989), among others, have all discovered a positive relationship between union membership and the North in Britain¹. Gallie (1989) and Elias (1990), both using the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative, also found area to be associated with union membership in this country.

Regional differences in union membership, as Beaumont and Harris (1989) point out, have largely been assumed to reflect differences in industrial structures. However, using data from the 1984 Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (Millward and Stevens, 1986), they found that these structural factors alone could not explain fully the North / South divide in union recognition in this country. They argue that, in fact, there are different influences contributing to "the culture of unionism" in the North and South in Britain (Beaumont and Harris, 1989: 423). Beaumont and Harris argue, too, that the industrial relations structures of the dominant industries in a region will influence both employers and employees in other industries in that area, resulting in similar practices in each industry. This may be regarded as consistent with the finding by Naylor and Gregg (1989: 14), who conducted an inter-industry establishment study of union membership in Britain, that the region variable can act as a proxy for "the regional strength of social custom effects." Thus, it would appear that an employee's propensity to unionise may be affected by the social norms of his or her area of residence or workplace.

Age

A number of different theories have been advanced to explain the relationship between the probability of union membership and age. Bain and Elsheikh (1979) claim that older workers have been more exposed to trade unionism and, therefore, are more likely to be unionised than younger workers. In analysing the pattern of unionisation across different industries, they found that the probability of union membership increased with the number of jobs held by the individual. This is supported by Booth (1986). Also, Bain and Elias (1985) found that, when work experience was taken into account, age lost its significance. Hence, they view their findings as supporting the argument of Bain and Elsheikh regarding the 'exposure effect' described above. However, Bain and Price (1983) argue that there may be no direct relationship between age and trade union membership. They point out that, in fact, it may be that high unionisation results in union benefits which lower labour turnover in an industry. Also, it has been suggested that union membership increases job tenure by providing employees with a means by which to express dissatisfaction, as an alternative to quitting their employment (Freeman and Medoff, 1984 *et al*).

Thus, age may not influence an employee's union membership choice, but older workers may have had a greater opportunity to join a union than younger employees. Indeed, when considering only workers with a union at their workplace, Guest and Dewe (1988) found younger employees (under 25) and older workers (over 54) had a higher propensity to unionise than those in the middle age groups studied. In the United States, however, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) did not find age to be associated with free rider or union membership status. It would appear to be difficult, therefore, to draw conclusions as to the effect of age on the individual's union membership decision.

Domestic Commitments

With respect to marital status and family responsibilities, as defined by the number of dependents a worker has, similarly to Scoville (1971) in the United States, Bain and Elias (1985) found that these do not affect the probability of unionisation among men and women in Britain. Perhaps more usefully than the marital status variable today, Booth (1986) tested the importance of a 'head of household status' variable for the likelihood of union membership. She found this variable to be unrelated to union membership for both men and women. Green (1990), also, revealed that neither marital status nor number of dependents was related to union membership choice, when controlling for union availability.

Education

Antos *et al* (1980) and Hirsch and Berger (1984), in the United States, found no relationship between the probability of unionisation and education. Bain and Elias (1985), though, argue that the impact of education is not clear. They believe that education may have a negative effect on unionisation since educated workers have more individual bargaining power, which can be used where collective agreements do not decide pay. Bain and Elias discovered that male, but not female, workers with a degree or similar professional qualification were less likely to be union members. The main exception was teachers, among whom there is a high level of unionisation. Booth (1986), however, found education to be related only to unionisation for full-time women workers in Britain.

Hundley (1988) argues, though, that, in fact, it is the educational qualifications required for a job which are most strongly associated with union membership. However, he believes that his analysis may not be applicable to workers in Britain. Also, neither Guest and Dewe (1988) in this country nor Chaison and Dhavale (1992) in the United States found a significant relationship between education and union membership choice. Thus, education may have an effect on the likelihood that a job has union coverage, although contradictory

results seem to have been obtained here, but there is little empirical evidence to suggest that education has a significant impact on the propensity to unionise.

Ethnicity

Neither Bain and Elias (1985) nor Booth (1986) found a relationship between race and the probability of union membership. However, Kochan (1980), in the United States, discovered race to be the only demographic variable related to support for unionisation among workers in non-union workplaces: blacks and other non-whites were found to be more willing to join trade unions than white workers. Thus, race may not influence whether or not a worker is employed in an organisation with union coverage, but may have an impact on desire for unionisation, although caution should clearly be taken when generalising the results above, obtained in the United States, to Britain. There does not appear to have been any analysis of the effect of race on the worker's union membership decision, while holding opportunity to unionise constant.

Work Characteristics

Employment Status

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) assert that work, and those matters relating to work, such as trade unionism, " ... are likely to be less central to the life-interests of part-time workers than of full-time workers ... " Bain and Elsheikh do not explain how they have reached this conclusion. It would seem that they believe that it is implicit in part-time working that the employee is intrinsically less interested in employment than the full-time worker. Their conclusion neglects to consider different reasons for working part-time, but it seems reasonable to assume that Bain and Elsheikh view the main explanation as resting with the domestic responsibilities of the, typically female, part-timer. It is argued here that these do not necessarily mean that work is of less importance to a part-time than a full-time worker.

In fact, Bain and Elsheikh (1979) found that part-time employment was not a significant variable in their inter-industry analysis. They explain this result in terms of the small number of part-time employees in the sample used and the way the part-timers were distributed throughout the industries studied. Bain and Price (1983) conclude that, although part-time employment may not explain variation between industries, it may help to account for the lower level of unionisation within a particular industry or occupation.

Both the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) and Green (1990) found part-time workers were less likely to have a union they could join at their workplace than full-timers. The Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 54) found that 69 per cent of full-time female employees had a union at their workplace representing their job, compared to only 50 per cent of women part-time workers. Thus, although even when taking the lower opportunity to unionise of part-time employees into account, Martin and Roberts report that the full-time workers were still significantly more likely to belong to a union than the part-timers studied, availability of trade unions to full-time and part-time workers clearly cannot be ignored. Moreover, trade unions may well

place less importance on recruitment among part-time workers, as their organisation may be relatively more costly. Indeed, Green points out that there has been thought to be a low incentive for unions to organise part-time workers. The launch of a number of recruitment campaigns aimed specifically at part-time employees in the 1980s, arguably, may point to a realisation by the trade union movement that this group of workers has been neglected in the past. Some union initiatives in this area are discussed in chapters ten and eleven.

Employment Segregation

As discussed in chapter three, occupational segregation has also been advanced to explain the unionisation differential between men and women. For instance, Elias (1990: 24) found that when controlling for gender-related differences in job conditions, the significance of sex for union membership is substantially reduced. With regard to manual employment, as noted in chapter two, results from the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) revealed that women who worked mainly with other female employees were more likely to be in a union than other women workers. Martin and Roberts conclude that this is mainly due to the high concentration of female-dominated work in the highly unionised public sector.

Moreover, employment segregation has been shown to contribute to women's under-representation in the trade unions (Hunt, 1982; Martin and Roberts, 1984), which in turn may affect women's propensity to join a union. This under-representation of women in union positions is important in examining union membership among women because, in the words of Hunt (1982: 167), "The presence of women in the capacity of lay representatives and full-time officials symbolises clearly that it is a union that caters for women." Presumably, this is based on the belief that women will judge the priority given to equal opportunities by the unions by looking towards internal union practices, in part, exemplified by the number of women involved in union decision-making. Arguably, this is supported by research, using data from the 1991 Labour Force Survey, which found that

women workers in male-dominated industries are significantly less likely to be in a union than their male colleagues, although the union density of men and women is not significantly different in employment in which women predominate (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 679). Clearly, where there are only a small minority of women, female employees will be likely to be represented by male trade unionists, who, as Hunt (1982) has stressed, may be reluctant, in some instances, to see issues particularly concerning women as union priorities. Thus, occupational segregation by sex appears to result not only in women being concentrated in areas of employment with a relatively low opportunity to unionise, as, among others, Green (1990) has shown, but it is also likely to affect adversely their representation in the unions and possibly, therefore, their desire for union membership.

Earnings

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) argue that, although increases in wages may be credited by workers to unions, hence encouraging membership through what Bain and Elsheikh describe as the "credit effect", it is not clear whether wage levels are a result or a cause of unionisation. Bain and Elias (1985), in their examination of the variation in unionisation between individuals, found a non-linear relationship between earnings and union membership. As earnings increased, so did the probability of unionisation, but at a decreasing rate. Bain and Elias explain this with reference to the costs and benefits of union membership. Although union subscriptions decrease as a proportion of earnings as the latter increases, employers' opposition to, or discouragement of, union membership will tend to rise as the employee's position in the work hierarchy improves. Bain and Elias (1985) believe that individuals at the bottom will tend to benefit most from trade union membership. This explanation, then, would seem to assume that the direction of causality is primarily from earnings to unionisation.

Booth (1986) found a positive relationship between the level of earnings and the probability of unionisation, which increases, she states, towards the middle of the earnings range for

male workers, and for full-time female workers. She believes that the most likely explanation for this is that individuals will join trade unions as they perceive them as able to provide higher wages. This appears to be supported by results from the United States obtained by Chaison and Dhavale (1992), who found free riders to be significantly lower paid than union members. It may be, then, that the employee's propensity to unionise is likely to increase with wages, but at a decreasing rate.

Occupational Status

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) found considerable differences between unionisation among white-collar and manual workers, and that skilled manual employees were more likely to be unionised than the unskilled. Also, Booth (1986) found managerial men and women less prone to unionise. In the United States, Kochan (1980) found white-collar workers somewhat less likely to desire unionisation than manual workers in non-unionised workplaces, because, he believes, the former will experience less job-related conditions that lead employees in general to unionise. Bain and Price (1983) argue that, although white-collar workers may be less likely to unionise than manual employees, because of differences in ideologies between these two groups, employer opposition is likely to be especially important in explaining low union membership levels among white-collar employees. Also, they believe that the relatively low degree of employment concentration among white-collar employees will have a negative impact on their unionisation. Thus, it would appear that his or her occupational status is likely to affect both the employee's opportunity and propensity to unionise.

Size of Establishment

Bain and Elsheikh (1979) point out that the treatment of employees as groups of workers, as opposed to individuals, will encourage union membership in larger establishments. Kochan (1980), though, found that workers in very small and very large establishments in the United States were less willing to join trade unions; the former because of the interpersonal relationship between workers and employers, and the latter because of the presence of sophisticated personnel.

However, Gallie (1989), using data from the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative, found that size of establishment was more important for employer policies relating to trade unions than to the worker's union membership decision. Establishment size was revealed to have a positive effect on employers' favourability to trade unions. Green (1990), too, found organisation size increased the likelihood that an organisation was unionised. As Gallie and Bain and Price (1983), among others, point out, in larger workplaces employers will tend to favour unions as a means of communication with their workforce. Also, unions will, of course, be attracted to the benefits of economies of scale derived from organising in large companies. Thus, size of establishment may have more significance for an employee's opportunity to unionise than his or her propensity to do so.

Attitudes to Work

Kochan (1980: 143) believes that the desire to unionise in the United States arises from the " ... perception or dissatisfaction or unmet expectations with the job or work environment ... " He argues that workers will want to become trade union members where this dissatisfaction is accompanied by the belief that unionisation can improve working conditions. Indeed, Kochan found dissatisfaction to be the most significant variable with respect to the worker's unionisation decision. However, Kochan qualifies his argument by stating that problems must be severe to inspire a majority to unionise. He believes that job dissatisfaction is, in fact, merely the initial stimulus for union membership. Kochan concludes that most workers in the United States join trade unions not for ideological reasons, but because they view union membership as a route to improving conditions with which they are not satisfied.

Kochan (1980) also identifies the employee's commitment to work as an important variable in the individual's desire for unionisation. He argues that a worker will have to be sufficiently committed to his or her job to attempt to change it as an alternative to looking for employment elsewhere. Although he admits that there is no empirical evidence to support this belief, he argues that workers, such as part-timers, who do not feel that their employment in an establishment is long-term, will be less willing to join a trade union. Why Kochan (1980: 145) sees part-timers as not having the condition he specifies as necessary for unionisation of " a long-term time horizon" and a willingness " ... to invest the energy and resources necessary to unionise ... " is not clear.

Thus, Kochan argues that dissatisfaction with the work environment and commitment to work are important determinants of the worker's desire to unionise. This is a particularly important finding for the analysis of gender and unionisation, as a number of studies have pointed to relatively high levels of satisfaction with work among women (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Agassi, 1979; Martin and Roberts, 1984). In addition, it has been argued

that women tend to have a low commitment to paid employment (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Brown, 1976).

Could these reported gender-related differences in attitudes to work, then, explain the male / female union membership differential? In attempting to answer this question, the literature concerning the attitudes of women to paid work is reviewed here. This is in order to examine the evidence advanced concerning the significance of gender for work attitudes.

Women's Attitudes to Paid Work

Satisfaction with Work

One of the most detailed studies in this field appears to have been conducted by Agassi (1979), who interviewed 761 women across three different occupational groups in Israel, West Germany and the United States. In Britain, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) and the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) have also provided insights into women's attitudes to work.

Agassi (1979) attempted to construct a variable "satisfaction with work" by the use of three alternative variants, to various purposes. These variants were "overt satisfaction or dissatisfaction", "levels of composite satisfaction" and "superficial satisfaction". She asked one direct question relating to satisfaction and six controlling ones. The former asked respondents directly how satisfied they were with their present job. This was to elicit, Agassi (1979: 69) states, the interviewee's own feelings, given her awareness of her " ... knowledge, skills, age, seniority and the limitations of time and place caused by familial and domestic obligations." Agassi (1979: 69) argues that the controlling questions were necessary because asking questions relating to satisfaction " ... may make the interviewee feel defensive and thus unwittingly invite overoptimistic evaluations." Agassi does not explain why she believes this might be the case.

With respect to overt satisfaction or dissatisfaction, an average of 86 per cent of the three groups responded positively to "very" or "somewhat" satisfied to the direct question. Also, for four of the questions rating their indirect assertion of satisfaction, again, the women generally expressed satisfaction. However, with respect to the question, "If your daughter were looking for a job, would you advise her to apply [for a position in your workplace?]", 52 per cent replied negatively and only 31 per cent of the entire sample saw their job as suitable for their sons.

Agassi (1979) establishes a composite picture of job satisfaction using all seven questions, attributing double weight to the four levels of the response to the first, direct question. She does not offer any justification for this particular distribution of weights across the questions asked. Agassi (1979: 75) found that 39 per cent of employees had a relatively low satisfaction score and about 38 per cent and 23 per cent had medium and high scores respectively. The interpretation of these results by Agassi is briefly discussed here.

Agassi (1979) accords the question on advising the respondent's daughter to apply for her job particular importance. She recognises that in answering this question women will consider the circumstances, especially the education, of their daughters in rating their jobs as suitable or unsuitable for them. However, Agassi (1979: 72) maintains that "Only women who are genuinely satisfied with their jobs will advise their daughters to follow in their footsteps." It may be argued, though, that here respondents were merely expressing dissatisfaction with their education or other personal circumstances. That is to say, respondents will not only consider their daughter's circumstances, but will take into account their own situation relative to that of their children. The first and direct question, Agassi (1979) believes, will be answered by respondents with respect to their own situation. She does not explain why this should be ignored by the women in the control questions. Thus, it is argued here that an expression asserting higher aspirations for one's children cannot reasonably be interpreted as a significant expression of job dissatisfaction. Indeed, 80 per cent of the women answered positively that they would advise a "good friend" to apply if an opening for a job like that of the respondent became available. Hence, although Agassi (1979: 72) recognises that "... she [the mother] desires only the best for her daughter ...", and it is accepted here that, clearly, there is some dissatisfaction with their own life experiences shown in the women's responses, she places an apparently unwarranted importance on negative answers to this particular question.

The reason that Agassi (1979: 254) stresses the dissatisfaction of the women workers is made clear by the advancement in her conclusion that "Women still have resigned, passive,

and uncritical work attitudes which reinforce their acquiescence with their qualitatively poorer work life." That is, Agassi appears to equate expressions of satisfaction with passivity and, if not the failure to recognise its existence, the submission of women to discrimination in the workplace.

However, another question posed by Agassi (1979), which may provide some insight into women's apparently high levels of satisfaction with work, related to paid employment and housework. This question was designed to establish the degree of satisfaction with the respondent's present job " ... compared to the other kind of work that all the interviewed women were familiar with: housework." (Agassi, 1979: 71) 54 per cent of interviewees liked their employment more than housework, 32 per cent felt the same way about both and fourteen per cent liked their jobs less, although with considerable differences across the nine groups studied, distinguished by countries and occupational categories (Agassi, 1979: 71). The first of these figures rose to 70 per cent for office workers, as a woman's preference for paid work increased with the quality of her job task; a finding which is consistent with results obtained by the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 64)

The results obtained by Agassi (1979) can be seen to be particularly important if the question above is regarded as relating not only to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work content, but to the desirability of working outside the home. The importance of this lies in, as Sharpe (1984) states, the fact that women may have a sense of 'choice' in working, which is absent in men's lives. For some women, working is not dependent on economic factors. Also, as Sharpe believes, an over-emphasis on working for money " ... is too simplistic and ignores the role of work in women's lives ... " (Sharpe, 1984: 219) Economic necessity, then, may compel women to enter paid employment, but this should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the majority of women still have the experience of work in the home with which to compare their situation in the workplace. Since the burden of domestic responsibilities remain primarily with women in British society, men are

unlikely to have had any comparable experience, notwithstanding periods of unemployment. Thus, there may be a relationship between levels of satisfaction expressed by women, which tend to be higher than that asserted by men (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Agassi, 1982), and women's dissatisfaction with work in the home. That is to say, women's greater satisfaction with paid employment may, in part, be a reflection of their inevitable comparisons between their dual work roles in society: in the workplace and in the home.

Beynon and Blackburn (1972) studied the work attitudes of 231 workers in one firm. They measured satisfaction by examining discrepancies between expectations and actual rewards. For the purposes of establishing these discrepancies, Beynon and Blackburn asked respondents what they rated as the "most important", and then the "best catered for" aspects of their present job. Using this analysis, full-time and part-time women were the most well-satisfied and men working day-shift the most dissatisfied.

Beynon and Blackburn (1972) discovered that, when respondents were asked to rate particular job aspects as "good", "average" or "poor", to ascertain satisfaction or dissatisfaction for each of the work features studied, part-time women workers indicated particularly high levels of satisfaction. Beynon and Blackburn attribute the satisfaction expressed by the part-timers as due " ... in part, to low expectations following from low involvement in work ... ", which they believe will also be true for full-time female employees (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972: 69).

Beynon and Blackburn (1972) explain the greater dissatisfaction indicated by men by asserting that responses will reflect how important the work aspects are to the individual.

They conclude that

because of their greater commitment to work through economic necessity (and social convention of the man being the 'breadwinner') we would expect men to be more critical than women.

Beynon and Blackburn, 1972: 64

Hence, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) regard women's expressions of satisfaction as being linked to what they believe is women's lower commitment to work, although they produce little evidence of this lower commitment. Their examination of men's and women's commitment to work is returned to later in this chapter.

The Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 74), also, found generally high levels of job satisfaction among women workers: 55 per cent of the women studied were "very satisfied" and 36 per cent were "fairly satisfied" on a scale of one to five, with no significant difference between full-time and part-time employees. Women, though, were shown to express more satisfaction with the extrinsic aspects of their work, such as the people they worked with, than intrinsic features, such as the "opportunity to use your abilities" (Martin and Roberts, 1984:73).

The research to date, then, has shown relatively high levels of satisfaction with paid employment among female workers. Thus, if Kochan (1980) is correct in suggesting that dissatisfaction with work will encourage support for unionisation, then it may be advanced that the satisfaction levels expressed by women workers could, at least in part, account for their disproportionately low levels of union membership.

Commitment to Work

Brown (1976: 33) states that for the majority of women doing manual and routine clerical work the demands and rewards of paid work will not be likely to result in their paid employment becoming more important to them than their "central life interest": their family responsibilities. Beynon and Blackburn (1972), too, assume that for women workers without dependent children, and who are unlikely to have them in the future, work will have more significance than for women with children, for whom work is likely to be unimportant. Agassi (1979: 50) concludes from her study that levels of commitment to employment tend to be higher among women with older children and women who have returned to work after childbirth. She goes on to state, though, that this commitment is not related only to age and family status.

Agassi (1979) attempted to elicit information on commitment to work by asking two questions relating to the respondent's future plans concerning work and what would be the choice of alternatives to regular employment if the employee's present economic necessity to work ceased. Agassi (1979: 52) then composed a variable, "commitment to work", based on responses to these two questions. She found that 15.6 per cent, 34.6 per cent and 49.8 per cent of the sample respectively had a low, medium and high commitment to employment (Agassi, 1979: 53). Agassi (1979: 53) discovered, then, that, with the exception of the German industrial group, " ... the percentage of women with high commitment is considerably greater than of those with low commitment."

Dex (1988), too, stresses the level of commitment of women to work. She states that "Many women have an extraordinary attachment to paid employment." (Dex, 1988: 86) The Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) found that women's response to unemployment was similar to that of men. Dex (1988: 86) point outs that " ... the loss of work, as Coyle (1984) demonstrates, has often highlighted women's genuine attachment to work." What evidence, then, has been advanced for the conclusions of Brown (1976)

and Beynon and Blackburn (1972) that women exhibit relatively low levels of commitment to paid employment?

With respect to the commitment of a worker to his or her employment organisation, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) asked respondents how badly they would feel if forced to leave their company for another job with the same pay and conditions. In analysing commitment to work, Beynon and Blackburn (1972: 53) hoped this question " ... would reveal the extent to which the worker had become involved in the firm, beyond the level of his work role." The results were as follows: 35.9 per cent of day-men, 52.2 per cent of night-men, 47.7 per cent of full-time women and 52.6 per cent of part-time women would feel "very badly" or "quite badly" about leaving their firm (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972: 53).

Thus, part-time women were among the most committed and involved in their work using the above analysis. Nevertheless, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) state that the involvement in work of female part-timers was "extremely low". Beynon and Blackburn also regard the consistently more sympathetic perceptions of management by part-time female employees as due to their shorter working periods and " ... more importantly, their related family roles." It is not clear how they have reached this conclusion.

Beynon and Blackburn (1972) argue that women's low commitment to work is illustrated by the fact that they rate promotion prospects low down the list of important aspects of work² and 31 per cent of full-time women and 22 per cent of part-time women rated a "good trade union branch" as least important. However, they do not explain how they establish a direct relationship between promotion opportunities and commitment to work. They imply that an individual who considers advancement at work important will inevitably have a higher commitment to employment than a worker who does not rate promotion so highly; clearly, however, the latter may have numerous reasons for expressing little interest in this aspect of work. In addition, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) ignore the fact that attaching little importance to the trade union branch may merely reflect past, possibly

unfavourable, experiences of trade unionism. It would not be surprising to find that if women felt that trade unions did not deal with the issues which concerned them most, they would rate a trade union branch at their workplace as of little importance. Again, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) do not attempt to explain why this should be connected to commitment to work. In fact, 17.2 per cent of day-men and 10.9 per cent of night-men also ranked a good trade union branch as least important, while there was extremely little difference between the men and women in relation to the position of importance of a good shop steward³. A case study of women factory workers by Westwood (1984), indeed, found that the employee's contact with their shop steward was considered important, while the trade union branch at the workplace was perceived by the women to be of less significance.

The research by Beynon and Blackburn (1972), then, may provide a useful study of differences in men's and women's attitudes to work, but the interpretation of the data they present, clearly, should be viewed with caution. Thus, there appears to have been little empirical evidence advanced to suggest a low commitment to paid employment among women workers. Rather, this notion that female employees tend to have a relatively weak attachment to work has been, almost without exception, based on qualitative arguments relating to the relationship between women's role in the workplace and in the home. From the literature in this field, then, arguably, women's commitment to work is unlikely to contribute to their relatively low involvement in trade unionism.

Summary and Conclusions

As this chapter has attempted to show, those variables most consistently identified as influential in the worker's union membership decision have been concerned with macroeconomic effects and the personal and work characteristics of the employee. Unemployment and price inflation have been found to be, respectively, negatively and positively related to the probability of union membership.

With regard to personal characteristics, sex, area and age have been shown to be significantly associated with union membership, although contradictory results have been obtained here. Gender has been revealed to be negatively related to the probability of an employee belonging to a union, although taking account of differences in women's and men's work characteristics (Elias, 1990 *et al*) and union availability (Green, 1990) has been shown to decrease the importance of this variable. Also, in the United States, women have been found to be more likely to be free riders than male employees, but this may, in large part, be attributable to gender differences in earnings and industrial relations traditions at work (Chaison and Dhavale, 1992).

The relationship between age and the probability of union membership is not clear from the research to date. Work experience, rather than age itself, may be associated with the likelihood of being in a union, or it may be that unionisation decreases the labour turnover in an industry (Bain and Price, 1983). Particularly interesting for the present study is the finding that domestic commitments are not related to either the probability of union membership (Bain and Elias, 1985; Booth, 1986) or the propensity to unionise (Green, 1990).

Those work characteristics which appear to have been identified as most important in influencing the employee's probability of being a union member are employment status (whether a worker is employed on a part-time or full-time basis), employment segregation

by sex, earnings, occupational status and establishment size. Part-time employees have been shown to be both less likely to have a union at their workplace and to have a lower propensity to unionise (Martin and Roberts, 1984; Green, 1990). With respect to employment segregation, it has been shown that the work characteristics typical of female employment contribute to their low union membership (Elias, 1990). Also, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) found women to be more likely to be in occupations with a high percentage of free riders. However, it has also been argued that women in female-dominated employment exhibit a higher likelihood of belonging to a union than other women, mainly due to the distribution of women workers in the highly unionised public sector (Martin and Roberts, 1984). It has been argued, too, that employment segregation may be detrimental to the union representation of women, as union representatives, who are typically male, are likely to have little experience of their work (Hunt, 1982).

With regard to the earnings variable, the direction of causality of the union membership and wage relationship (whether union membership encourages higher wages or vice versa) is not clear from the research concerned primarily with the union status of jobs. However, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) found free riders to have a significantly lower earnings level than union members in the United States. Low pay, then, would appear to have a negative effect on the employee's propensity to unionise. Also, non-manual employment has been shown to be negatively related to both the worker's opportunity to unionise and desire for unionisation. Establishment size would seem to be most likely to influence the worker's ability to join a union than his or her union membership decision.

Attitudes to work have also been advanced as influencing the individual's desire for union membership. In the United States, it has been suggested that both dissatisfaction with work and a certain level of commitment to one's employment organisation are necessary for a worker to join a union (Kochan, 1980). It has been argued in this chapter, therefore, that the higher levels of satisfaction with paid work expressed by women may contribute to the relatively low union membership levels among female employees. Although it has been

asserted that women have a lower commitment to work than male employees (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Brown, 1976), it has been argued here that, in fact, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that this is the case. Thus, the male / female union membership differential would seem to be unlikely to be explained in terms of a difference in commitment to work exhibited by men and women.

Thus, the research to date has examined the significance of a number of variables for union membership, relating to the personal characteristics of the individual employee and to his or her employment, and to attitudes to work. However, there has been little analysis of the role played by trade unions themselves in the employee's union membership decision.

Trade Union Characteristics

For instance, Kelly and Heery (1989) believe that too little attention has been paid to the impact of union recruitment on membership levels. They argue that there is a possibility that the allocation of resources to recruitment would significantly increase union membership, notwithstanding low inflation and high unemployment. In support of their argument, they cite Voos (1984)⁴ and Goldfield (1987), who, Kelly and Heery state, have advanced that the decline in union density in the United States is partially due to the lack of trade union recruitment and organisation there.

Kelly and Heery (1989) regard union organisational structure as vital to the effectiveness of recruitment. This is supported by Mason and Bain (1990), who conducted a study into the recruitment practices of 56 trade unions in Britain. Most importantly, for the present study, they conclude that trade unions have neglected to include women in recruitment campaigns. Although female employees may have been targeted indirectly in campaigns relating to part-timers and other groups, only four of the unions they surveyed targeted them specifically. Thus, there is some evidence to suggest that women's lower unionisation levels could be

contributed to by trade unions themselves, through, for instance, their failure to initiate recruitment relating to women employees.

It is difficult to understand why there has been so little analysis of the significance of the trade union movement itself in the union membership decision of the individual. It is possible that this would prove to be of considerable importance in explaining the unionisation differential between men and women. Using data from the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative, chapters six and seven attempt to analyse the importance of the variables discussed above and some additional personal and work characteristics for the propensity to unionise. Also, attitudes to work and to trade unionism, as well as characteristics of the trade union at the respondent's workplace, are considered in an attempt to determine the impact of gender on union membership choice.

Endnotes

1. Although the North / South divide discussed in the literature, typically, has not been clearly defined, the North considered in the literature generally refers to the North of England.
2. This finding is supported by the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 73).
3. Rated as 'least important' by 3.1 per cent and 6.5 per cent of day-men and night-men respectively and 4.6 per cent and 5.1 per cent of the full-time and part-time women workers respectively (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972: 62).
4. Voos (1984), who studied the financial statements for 1955 - 1977 for 20 unions in the private sector in the United States, in fact, rejects the argument that trade unions have not been sufficiently committed to growth. He found that unions' "... real expenditures per organizable worker remained relatively constant" over the period he examined (Voos, 1984: 62). He does believe, though, that union resources allocated to organising did not increase at a sufficient rate to counteract the changes in the unions' environment which contributed to their decline. However, Block (1980: 102), in contrast, does suggest that in the United States, in the traditional areas of union organisation, such as manufacturing and mining, unions have been partly responsible for the fall in union membership as they have failed to prioritise organisation.

CHAPTER 5

INFLUENCES ON UNION SATISFACTION, COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Introduction

This chapter attempts to outline the research, which appears, largely, to have been conducted in the United States, relating to the employee's involvement in trade union activity and satisfaction with and commitment to his or her trade union. This is in order to analyse the importance of gender for the union and worker relationship as a whole, with which this thesis is concerned. Women are not only less likely to belong to a union than men, but they also exhibit lower participation rates in union activity, as discussed in chapter three. Thus, it is argued here that, for the purposes of explaining women's relationship to the trade union movement, influences on both union membership choice and involvement in trade unionism must be considered.

The employee's satisfaction with trade unionism is first discussed and the chapter then goes on to consider loyalty and commitment to one's trade union. The relationships found between union participation and both satisfaction with and commitment to the union are examined. Particular reference is made to the differences exhibited by male and female employees, with respect to union satisfaction and union loyalty. Finally, the literature concerning the individual's commitment to his or her union and company is briefly considered. There is no attempt here to review the literature concerned with the implications

for union democracy of participation by members in union government (see Nicholson *et al*, 1981 and references cited therein), which is outwith the scope of the present study.

Satisfaction with Trade Unionism

A substantial body of research has been conducted into the individual worker's satisfaction with his or her employment. What influences the level of an employee's overall satisfaction with work as well as the different facets of that satisfaction have been discussed in detail (Handyside and Speak, 1964; Kacmar and Ferris, 1989; Steffy and Jones, 1990 *et al*). However, there has been little discussion of the worker's satisfaction with his or her trade union or with the trade union movement as a whole. Arguably, though, this may be of considerable importance to the analysis of the employee's propensity to unionise and his or her rate of participation in trade union activity.

Kochan (1979), using the 1977 United States Quality of Employment Survey, studied workers' expectations of trade unions and their assessment of union performance. Respondents were asked to rank a number of employment issues in order of how important they thought they should be for the unions. They were then required to rate the union's efficiency in dealing with these matters. "Bread and butter" issues, such as wages and job security, were given a high priority and Kochan found that union satisfaction was highest among those workers who were satisfied with their union's performance in these areas.

Overall, Kochan (1979) revealed that workers were generally satisfied with their union. To a direct question on this, 25 per cent of the union members studied were very satisfied, 48 per cent expressed satisfaction and seventeen per cent and ten per cent were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied respectively. Kochan found no demographic variable which had a significant effect on the respondent's satisfaction scores.

Glick *et al* (1977) conducted a survey of 185 engineering union members, in one organisation, in an attempt to analyse union satisfaction and willingness to participate in union activity. They examined the relationships between three dependent variables, union satisfaction, willingness to attend union meetings and willingness to represent the union,

and a range of independent variables, including demographic characteristics, attitudes to trade unionism, perceptions of union activities and individual attributes. Only the respondents' expressed willingness to participate in union activity, and not their actual participation rates, were included in the study.

Demographic variables generally were not associated with either union satisfaction or with willingness to participate, though women were found to be somewhat less satisfied and less likely to want to be involved in the union than their male counterparts. However, this cannot be interpreted as a general indicator of the importance of gender because, as Glick *et al* (1977) point out, women comprised only a small proportion of the sample of employees, and were under-represented in the union jobs and leadership.

Although positive, weak correlations were discovered between attitudes to trade unionism and to both union satisfaction and willingness to participate in the union. Respondents' assessments of the union's activities and leadership were highly correlated with satisfaction with the union, though were not linked to the participation variable. Thus, members' satisfaction with their union was related primarily to perceptions of union activities, and not to either demographic variables or attitudes to the trade union movement as a whole.

However, as Fiorito *et al* (1988) point out, generalising from the research by Glick *et al* (1977) is difficult due to the size of the employee sample used and with its limitation to a single occupation and local trade union. Fiorito *et al* also criticise the statistical analysis used by Glick *et al*, which relied on the use of bivariate correlations between total union satisfaction and a number of variables specified as independent. However, it is argued here that the study conducted by Fiorito *et al* is itself open to criticism.

Fiorito *et al* (1988), using the same source of data as that employed by Kochan (1979), the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey, examined variation in overall union satisfaction for 228 union members. They tested overall satisfaction with union representation with the use

of a model designed to measure " ... discrepancies between union members' expectations and perceived union performance in specific respects", which they term "facet discrepancies" (Fiorito *et al*, 1988: 297). Total satisfaction was established from summing the facet discrepancies identified as relevant by the authors. Fiorito *et al* weighted the different facets, using an average weighting scheme, to establish a measure of satisfaction for each respondent. In addition, they took into account a "residual" for facets not measured due to the impossibility of including all pertinent factors. Unfortunately, they do not explain how the average weights were established and how the residual was determined. Clearly, this summing of scores for categorical variables, for each facet discrepancy (the difference between what the respondent expects and what he or she believes the union achieves for each aspect of work and the union studied), may lead to a somewhat unreliable result.

Fiorito *et al* (1988) adopted the discrepancy theories used in the evaluation of job satisfaction by Lawler (1973) and Locke (1976) to analyse three facets of union satisfaction, similar to those identified by Kochan (1979). These they describe as "bread and butter", "quality of work" and "member-union relations" (Fiorito *et al*, 1988: 298). The first of these issues covered wages and other material benefits, while the latter two related to the respondent's participation and interest in work and the trade union respectively. Fiorito *et al* (1988) hypothesised that discrepancies between expectations and outcomes for any of the above aspects of work would lead to lower overall satisfaction.

The study by Fiorito *et al* (1988) also included a number of other variables which could affect union satisfaction scores. These were related to demographics, orientation to work, job content, job satisfaction, beliefs about trade unionism generally and level of participation in union activity. These were incorporated in the study, Fiorito *et al* (1988) argue, in order to examine whether or not they could explain variance in total union satisfaction, after the inclusion of the facet discrepancies measures.

As Fiorito *et al* (1988) had predicted, negative signs, with highly significant coefficients, were obtained for both the "bread and butter" and "member-union relations" facets. This, they argue, indicated that as expectations were met for each of these facets the level of total satisfaction was raised. The coefficient was not significant for the "quality of work" facet¹. Thus, overall union satisfaction was found to be related to differences in expectations of and perceived union performance on traditional concerns in the workplace, such as employment benefits and on aspects of the union itself, such as union leadership. Fiorito *et al* (1988) state that their model accounted for 53 per cent of the variation in overall satisfaction with the union.

However, Fiorito *et al* (1988) present a somewhat confusing analysis of the application of the discrepancy theory. In fact, they state that

the results indicate that separate measures of both expectations and perceived outcomes better account for variation in satisfaction than do measures of discrepancies between expectations and perceived outcomes.

Fiorito *et al*, 1988: 301

Thus, Fiorito *et al* (1988) seem to be implying that the discrepancy theory is actually of limited utility in determining overall satisfaction. Although they criticise Kochan (1979) for failing to analyse the relationship between union satisfaction and differences between expectations and perceptions of union performance, it would appear that Fiorito *et al*'s own results suggest that the use of the discrepancy theory is of little value in this particular context.

With regard to the additional predictors used by Fiorito *et al* (1988), these were found to have only a small effect on union satisfaction. However, this does not seem surprising, as the sample size in the study by Fiorito *et al*, arguably, appeared to be too small for the

effects of the number of predictor variables included in their analysis to be shown clearly. Fiorito *et al* found satisfaction to be lower for workers employed in an organisation for a longer time period and for those not favourable to trade unions in general. In a study designed to construct a model of commitment to the union, which is discussed in the following section of this chapter, Gordon *et al* (1980), though, found satisfaction to be unrelated to "Belief in Unionism".

Fiorito *et al* (1988) go on to discuss the relationships between union satisfaction and the separate measures of expectations and perceptions of union performance studied. Here, they draw an analogy between the job satisfaction literature, which identifies expectations as related to "job inputs", such as education, and union satisfaction theories and "union inputs", such as participation and membership subscriptions. Fiorito *et al* found that variations in perceived outcomes were much more important for explaining union satisfaction than expectations of union performance.

Fiorito *et al* (1988) attempt to use their supplementary predictors, discussed above, to help explain variation in these expectations and perceived outcomes. Although they do not explain in any detail the effects of the predictors included in the model, mainly due to data limitations, they do advance a number of tentative conclusions. For instance, they report a tendency for job satisfaction measures to negatively affect expectations " ... indicating that as predictors of expectations these variables reflect need deprivation." (Fiorito *et al*, 1988: 303) Expectations were also negatively influenced by negative views of unions, whereas union participation had a positive impact here.

With respect to perceptions of union performance, both job satisfaction and union participation variables had a positive effect on how well the respondent believed the union performed. Fiorito *et al* (1988) attempt to explain these results by suggesting that the positive relationship found to exist between job satisfaction and union satisfaction may be a

consequence of workers attributing the union with the power to negatively or positively affect conditions of employment.

Thus, the research by Fiorito et al (1988) supports that of Glick et al (1977) in a number of respects. Both studies revealed union satisfaction to be related to perceptions of union activities and to job satisfaction. With respect to the latter variable, though, as Freeman and Medoff (1984) point out, it is not clear whether dissatisfaction with their job affects employees' views of their union or whether a poor union performance reduces job satisfaction.

Gordon *et al* (1980) found respondents expressing satisfaction with management also showed satisfaction with the union. This research sampled nonprofessional, white-collar employees, in right-to-work states. Gordon *et al* (1980: 491) go on to state that their results

suggest that organized workers tend to have greater expectations of management than of the union with regard to improving conditions that satisfy their needs.

In a later study of unionised engineers and technicians and nonprofessional workers, all employed in the same organisation, Gordon *et al* (1984) found job satisfaction and union satisfaction to be significantly correlated in the technician sample, while they were unrelated for the engineers. Gordon *et al* suggest that this may be due to different perceptions of union responsibility for work rewards. For instance, engineers may view their profession, and not the trade union, as responsible for employment benefits.

With respect to participation in union activity and union satisfaction, Gordon *et al* (1980) found that the latter was correlated only with 'Union Loyalty', and not with any of the other commitment factors, which included "Willingness to Work for the Union". Gordon *et al* attempt to explain this result by reference to the possible "opposite participative tendencies"

of respondents. That it is to say, the consequences of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the union will differ between individuals. For instance, whereas satisfaction with the union may lead to union activism among some members, with others this may lead to complacency.

With respect to the relationship between union satisfaction and willingness to participate in union activity, Glick *et al* (1977) also discovered that these variables tended to be positively or negatively correlated, depending upon the individual attributes of the respondents, such as his or her need for involvement in decision-making. Thus, Glick *et al* (1977:150) suggest that

participation and satisfaction represent different aspects of union effectiveness: satisfaction reflects on the union and its ability to serve its members; participation reflects on the membership and their needs to influence decisions in the union.

It would appear, then, that, although participation affects satisfaction with the union, union satisfaction does not so influence participation. Union satisfaction, therefore, does not seem to be a reliable predictor of participation in union activity. Although both Gordon *et al* (1980) and Glick *et al* (1977) suggest that his or her involvement in trade unionism will reflect the individual's desire to exert control over the union's decision-making processes, it is argued here that, in fact, there are likely to be a number of other factors which influence union participation. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The literature, then, consistently points to a close relationship between satisfaction with union performance on traditional collective bargaining issues, such as pay, and union satisfaction generally (Kochan, 1979; Fiorito *et al*, 1988). Also, Fiorito *et al* have discovered that how the employee perceives the efficiency of the union is more important for union satisfaction than his or her expectations of the union.

Unfortunately, there appears to be no relevant literature in this area pertaining to workers and the trade union movement in Britain. The use of research from the United States is, as always, problematic due to the differing orientation of American trade unionism. Comparison here, clearly, is open to question. As Fiorito *et al* (1988: 302) point out, there is an "instrumental orientation of U.S. unions" which distinguishes them from their British counterparts. Thus, workers' perceptions of their union in the United States may well differ from those of employees in this country. This absence of discussion on British worker satisfaction with trade unions is mirrored in the literature concerning the employee's commitment to trade unions, which is discussed in the following section.

Loyalty and Commitment to Trade Unionism

With respect to the relatively recent research on union loyalty and commitment, the most significant contribution seems to be that made by Gordon *et al* (1980) in the United States. Their study constructed a four-factor 'commitment scale', including a measure of union participation, from a sample of nonprofessional, white-collar employees. This model of union commitment has been tested and developed by several other researchers in the United States.

The research by Gordon *et al* (1980) is particularly interesting, as it signifies a move away from the traditional approach of discussing union commitment in the context of commitment to the employment organisation, to studying union commitment directly. Although they use the literature relating to organisational commitment as a basis for the structure of their research, Gordon *et al* also develop measures for union commitment scores specifically. The study analysed members of four local unions in a right-to-work state in the United States, where it was illegal for the sampled workers to take strike action. An attitude survey was undertaken using a questionnaire designed to identify the levels of commitment, attitudes towards the union, membership satisfaction and personal history of the respondents. The 48 items used to measure overall commitment to the union were factor analysed. The four factors of union commitment used were correlates of: "Union Loyalty", "Responsibility to the Union", "Willingness to Work for the Union" and "Belief in Unionism" (Gordon *et al*, 1980: 485 - 487).

With respect to loyalty shown to the union, Gordon *et al* (1980) found that scores here were most closely associated with socialisation influences; the worker's first year of membership of the union was especially important. Union loyalty tended to be higher among respondents who reported having positive feelings in relation to the union about this time. Those who did not feel "pressurised" to join the union also had higher union loyalty scores. In addition, loyalty to the union was positively related to having friends and co-

workers who were favourable to the union. Particularly interesting to note here was that Gordon *et al* (1980: 489) discovered that " ... females tended to have higher union loyalty scores than males."

With regard to Responsibility to the Union, a willingness to use the grievance procedure and participation in union activity were the two most important determinants of scores here. Not surprisingly, Gordon *et al* (1980) found that the higher the score relating to willingness to exert effort on behalf of the union, that is, Willingness to Work for the Union, the higher the union activity rate reported by the respondent. Male employees were found to have higher Responsibility to the Union and Willingness to Work for the Union scores than the women workers studied.

Dissatisfaction with basic employment issues, such as pay, described by Gordon *et al* (1980: 491) as "lower order satisfaction needs", led to members expressing a higher degree of willingness to participate in union activity. The organisation of labour, then, as Gordon *et al* state, was more important to those workers who felt that their needs were not met by the work environment and who were dissatisfied with management. However, Willingness to Work for the Union and Belief in Unionism were both unrelated to the expression of higher order needs. As Gordon *et al* (1980) point out, this finding is consistent with the research by Kochan (1979), discussed earlier in this chapter, which revealed that workers tend to perceive unions as vehicles for the satisfaction of "bread and butter" issues.

Gordon *et al* (1980) also examined a commitment factor termed 'Belief in Unionism', which was designed to measure feelings of attachment to the union having an ideological basis. This factor introduced the concept of a possible moral commitment to the union. Members who indicated a belief in the goals of organised labour tended to have the higher scores here. Socialisation was also a particularly significant variable for the Belief in Unionism score.

Gordon *et al* (1980: 490) conclude that

a member's reported initial belief about the goals of organized labour was the best predictor of later feelings of overall union commitment.

Hence, beliefs relating to the collective organisation of labour are stressed by Gordon *et al* (1980) as particularly important for the total union commitment score. However, they also state that "... the benefits they [unions] provide their members, emerged as the most important basis for commitment." (Gordon *et al*, 1980: 494) Those members expressing most loyalty, perceived considerable benefits emanating from the trade union.

In relation to other variables, personal attributes, such as job grade, tenure or race, were found to be unrelated to union commitment. The exception was sex - the only demographic variable shown to be correlated with commitment. Women tended to express higher degrees of union loyalty, but to be less active in the trade union than their male counterparts. Gordon *et al* (1980: 495) explain the higher activity rates of males, with respect to female members, in terms of women's "customary family obligations."

Union loyalty is also analysed by Fullagar and Barling (1989) who constructed a model, tested by longitudinal data, designed to establish the antecedents and outcomes of this factor of union commitment. The sample used by the authors consisted of male black and white members of a large multiracial trade union in South Africa. They found that "Union loyalty had a significant effect on behavioural participation regardless of the race of blue-collar workers." (Fullagar and Barling, 1989: 221)

Fullagar and Barling (1989: 223) state that the differences they identified within the groups of worker "... may produce different process models of attachment to labor organizations." They argue that this may be revealed *inter alia* in "... the different belief systems that predicted union loyalty for Black and for White workers." Consistent with the

results of Gordon *et al* (1980), Fullagar and Barling found an association between socialisation variables and union loyalty. Socialisation, they believe, is essential for members without trade union experience.

However, the relationship between antecedents and attitudes concerning union loyalty, Fullagar and Barling (1989) argue, are moderated by perceptions of union instrumentality. For instance, dissatisfaction with the work environment will have an impact on union loyalty only where the union is regarded as potentially instrumental in improving the relevant employment conditions. This was not the case, though, for all of the exogenous variables identified as affecting union loyalty, which Fullagar and Barling (1989: 224) attribute to "... inadequacies in the conceptualization and operationalization of union instrumentality." What exactly Fullagar and Barling mean by this is not clear. This appears to leave unexplained the differing impact of the "union instrumentality factor" on the variables identified as influencing union loyalty².

To complete the present review of the literature on commitment to trade unionism, the research concerned with testing the validity of the model developed by Gordon *et al* (1980) is briefly considered here. This allows the reliability of the above results to be assessed. Lastly, the utility of models designed to predict a worker's commitment to his or her employment organisation for the purposes of determining commitment to the union is briefly discussed.

Support for Gordon et al's (1980) Union Commitment Scale

Both Ladd *et al* (1982) and Fullagar (1986) have tested the stability and dimensionality of the union commitment scale constructed by Gordon *et al* (1980). The former conducted their research on a sample of nonprofessional and professional white-collar members, while Fullagar tested the commitment measure for blue-collar workers. Research by Ladd *et al* is particularly interesting as it examines the generalisability of the Gordon *et al* model. This is achieved by the analysis of two distinct groups of employee while union conditions are held constant, as both categories of worker tested belonged to the same professional association.

As in the study by Gordon *et al* (1980), Ladd *et al* (1982) tested workers in right-to-work states who were forbidden by law to strike. Their results show that the "... factor structures for professional and nonprofessional members of the same union were virtually identical." (Ladd *et al*, 1982: 643) Hence, Ladd *et al*'s findings seem to imply that the Gordon *et al* model may be applied to union members regardless of occupational grouping.

The commitment scale developed by Gordon *et al* (1980) has been further validated by Fullagar (1986: 134), who found that the overall commitment measure correlated "significantly and predictably" with union participation rates. He argues, however, that this gives no indication of the direction of causality of this relationship; union commitment may be either a result or a cause of involvement in union activity. Fullagar goes on to state that the influences upon attitudes towards trade unionism must be explained for a fuller understanding of union commitment between different groups in the workforce. Indeed, it may well be that what generates commitment to the trade union for a certain category of worker may be very different for another. As Fullagar (1986: 135) argues, "... commitment could be engendered either by "protective" motivations for greater job security or by "aggressive" needs", in relation to powerlessness and / or alienation.

The factor structure of union commitment by Gordon *et al* (1980) has also been considered by two more recent studies. Thacker *et al* (1989) retested the commitment scale for a sample

of blue-collar workers in a large public utility company. Their attitude survey measured union commitment and union participation and tenure. Thacker *et al* conclude that a modification of the four-factor solution by Gordon *et al* is the best fitting structure. They suggest that allowing the four factors to be correlated produces the most convincing results. They also state that the combination of the four factors into an overall union-commitment variable is justifiable, although they add that this may depend on the research being conducted. In addition, they warn that other models may in fact produce a better fit here and that model misspecification is still possible.

Tetrick *et al* (1989) examined the Gordon *et al* (1980) model in a time series analysis. They found the four factors relating to commitment to the union to be "stable and reliable across time." (Tetrick *et al*, 1989: 821) The loadings, variances and covariances of the factors were shown not to change over a period of eight months. Thus, there is a considerable amount of evidence suggesting that the Gordon *et al* model of union commitment is a reliable measure of this aspect of the worker / union relationship.

Commitment to Company and Union

Having discussed union commitment specifically, it is necessary to assess the relationship between this aspect of worker commitment and commitment to the employment organisation. Fukami and Larson (1984) attempt to determine whether or not the application of the same antecedent factors can predict both company and union commitment, using the organisational commitment model of Mowday *et al* (1982). The influences on commitment were identified as personal characteristics, role-related variables, work experiences and structural characteristics. Fukami and Larson found that, although the above model predicted commitment to the company, it was shown to be less appropriate for the prediction of union commitment, which it was, in fact, designed to measure. They discovered that the impact of the personal characteristics included in the study differed significantly for company and union commitment. Fukami and Larson explain the

relationships between these two forms of commitment by reference to day-to-day work experiences. They conclude that early experiences and attitudes towards trade unionism were more important for the union commitment measure than personal characteristics, which influenced company commitment.

The relationship between union and company commitment has also been examined by Barling *et al* (1990). They attempt to assess the value of employing the organisational commitment model of Mowday *et al* (1982) for the determination of predictors of commitment to company and union. A study of 100 members of a white-collar union in a single employment organisation was conducted in order to test the impact of the work experience and personal characteristics which have been empirically associated with either one or both of these aspects of commitment. Multiple regression analyses revealed divergent predictors of company and union commitment, suggesting that the use of one model is inappropriate for the examination of both these forms of commitment.

Barling *et al* (1990) found no differences for male and female union members, though, as they point out, the significance of this finding is limited by the small size of their sample of employees. Barling *et al* explain the difference between their results and that of Gordon *et al* (1980) here with reference to the nature of the industrial relations of the employment organisation which they (Barling *et al*) studied. At the time the research was conducted the union was involved in an industrial dispute, leading Barling *et al* to suggest that the absence of differences attributable to gender may be accounted for by the hostile relations between management and labour having a moderating effect on the significance of sex. Thus, the literature relating to both union commitment and commitment to the employment organisation does not appear to provide any further evidence concerning the significance of gender for union participation.

Summary and Conclusions

Union satisfaction, then, has been shown to be related to job satisfaction, especially with respect to extrinsic aspects of work, such as wages. In addition, satisfaction with the union has been linked to perceptions of union activities, what Fiorito *et al* (1988) term "member-union relations" and to attitudes to trade unionism generally, though contradictory results have been obtained for the importance of the latter. Also, evidence has been advanced to suggest that participation in union activity may influence an employee's satisfaction with his or her union. Fiorito *et al* argue that participation may lead to an increased awareness of union influence and achievement. However, there appears to be no evidence to suggest that union satisfaction affects levels of involvement in the trade union. Thus, it would seem that the analysis of members' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their union is not a critical determinant of their rate of participation in union activity.

For the present study, it is particularly important to note that previous research has not found any significant difference between male and female employees with respect to union satisfaction. However, the research to date has only distinguished male and female workers in order to determine whether sex influences union satisfaction. The studies do not seem to have differentiated between men and women for the purposes of examining whether or not the set of variables determining union satisfaction for men are different to that for female employees. As job satisfaction and union participation have been shown to differ for male and female employees, as discussed in chapters three and four, then, the link drawn between these variables and union satisfaction may indicate that the research has failed to explore fully the importance of gender here. Indeed, the size and distribution of men and women in the employee samples studied by both Glick *et al* (1977) and Fiorito *et al* (1988)³ mean that no conclusions from their research can reasonably be drawn on the significance of this variable.

Commitment to the union has been revealed to be linked particularly to socialisation factors relating to trade unionism, perceived benefits from the union and to gender. Fullagar and Barling (1989) reveal that how the worker perceives the instrumentality of the union in influencing conditions will moderate the impact of the influences upon and outcomes of an employee's loyalty to the union. This is consistent with the finding by Gordon *et al* (1980) that union loyalty scores are positively related to perceptions of substantial rewards from trade union membership. This is clearly an important result for the study of women's relationship to trade unionism. If women perceive trade unions as not concerned with their problems, then women's commitment to the unions will be seen to be lower than that of male workers studied.

Although they scored more highly than the male employees on the measure of union loyalty, Gordon *et al* (1980) found women workers to be less likely to participate in the union. They assume that the low involvement in trade unionism exhibited by the women will be a result of the family commitments of the female employees. It may be argued, however, that the role played by women's domestic responsibilities should not be regarded as the sole explanatory factor in determining women's participation in the unions. Although, as discussed in chapter three, these may well play an important part in women's under-representation in the trade union movement, socialisation and perceptions relating to the work environment and to trade unionism may also make a significant contribution to women's lower activity rates.

Although the United States studies discussed above have tested and retested the stability of the four-factor commitment structure designed by Gordon *et al* (1980), it is argued here that the research should focus not only on the causes and consequences of union commitment, but should attempt to assess these with respect to different groups of worker; for instance, gender-related differences remain only partially understood.

Framework for the Empirical Research

The review of the literature is now complete and the framework which will be used to guide the empirical part of the thesis may be outlined. Previous research has identified a number of sets of independent variables which may be expected to be of importance in determining both an employee's union membership decision and rate of participation in trade union activity. These include:

1. **Macroeconomic factors: unemployment and price inflation;**
2. **Personal characteristics: sex, area, age, domestic commitments and education;**
3. **Work characteristics: employment status, employment segregation, earnings, occupational status and size of establishment;**
4. **Attitudes to work: satisfaction with and commitment to work, and**
5. **Attitudes to trade unionism and characteristics of the trade union at the employee's workplace.**

The effect of each of these variables, with the exception of the set of macroeconomic factors, on involvement in trade unionism (separated into the union membership decision and union participation) is considered separately for three sample groups: full-time male workers, full-time female employees and female part-timers. This is in order to determine whether or not the set of independent variables which are most important for the dependent variables listed above differ for men and women, or for full-time and part-time women workers. This also allows an exploration of the nature of the influence of each of the independent variables on union membership and participation for these employee categories. This empirical analysis is discussed in chapters six to nine, at the end of which

it should be possible to draw conclusions on the effect of gender for the employee's propensity to unionise and to participate in trade union activity.

Endnotes

1. Fiorito *et al* (1988) point out, though, that the data they used was relatively dated and that the quality of work issues, of which they believe workers have become more conscious, may well be found to be of more importance in later studies .
2. Indeed, the authors seem confused as to how this factor actually affects the impact of each variable. For instance, although they state that union instrumentality does affect the work ethic beliefs and union loyalty relationship, they contradict this in the following paragraph, advancing that union instrumentality does not so affect this relationship (Fullagar and Barling, 1989: 224).
3. Only approximately 64 of the 228 union members studied by Fiorito *et al* (1988) were women (mean = 0.28; 0 = male, 1 = female) (Fiorito *et al*, 1988: 300).

CHAPTER 6

GENDER AND PROPENSITY TO UNIONISE: INITIAL EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Introduction

The Social Change and Economic Life Initiative

The Social Change and Economic Life Initiative is based upon three major surveys funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The first of these, the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey, consists of 6,111 interviews conducted throughout six urban labour markets, between June and November 1986. Respondents were chosen by a stratified random sample from the non-institutional population of individuals aged between 20 and 60. Though questions unique to each area were asked, approximately two-thirds of the questionnaire established a core set of variables which could be compared across all six local labour markets.

Fieldwork was conducted for the second study, the Employers' Survey, between October 1986 and February 1987. This consists of approximately 1,300 interviews with employers of respondents in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey. Questions differed for public and private employers and according to organisational size, as well as across different industries, as the study was designed to produce comparable questions for all types of employer.

Between March and July 1987 the Household and Community Survey was carried out on about one-third of the respondents of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey for each area. For this follow-up study, partners of the original interviewees were also included. This third survey provides up-dated information on the life and work histories recorded in the initial study.

In order to include 150 respondents who were unemployed in each area for the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey, a random booster sample was drawn. This was necessary for all localities with the exception of Kirkcaldy, in which the original sample provided a sufficient proportion of unemployed. Similarly, the Household and Community Survey was designed to include 75 respondents in each locality who had been unemployed at the time of the first study.

The six areas chosen were Aberdeen, Coventry, Kirkcaldy, Northampton, Rochdale and Swindon, defined in terms of the 1984 Travel to Work Areas specified by the Department of Employment. These areas were selected for the purposes of providing substantially different labour market conditions. The social and economic histories of each area provide contrasting patterns of employment in a number of respects. In broad terms, Aberdeen, Northampton and Swindon have in recent years exhibited relatively low levels of unemployment, compared to unemployment rates well above the national average in Coventry, Kirkcaldy and Rochdale (Gallie and Vogler, 1989: 2). Data for all three main surveys were collected by oral interview and telephone survey.

The Work Attitudes and Histories Survey

For the purposes of examining the worker's relationship to trade unionism, a detailed analysis of a component of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey was undertaken, using the SPSSX software package. The life and work histories section of this survey was not considered, primarily so as to maintain manageability of the data set used. Thus, only that part of the survey which considered the characteristics and attitudes of the respondent at the time the interview took place was analysed. Therefore, though, for the sake of simplicity, the information studied here is referred to by the survey's full title, in fact, only a section of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey was examined. At the time of the survey, in 1986, trade union density¹ in the United Kingdom was approximately 43 per cent, having declined steadily since 1979 (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 675). At this time, as now, trade unions faced increasing opposition from the Conservative Government and employers (Smith and Morton, 1993).

Respondents of the survey comprised 3,650 employees, equally divided between the sexes. However, for the present study, only 57 per cent of the employees surveyed were analysed - those workers who had a trade union "or similar" at their workplace for their kind of work. This subgroup was chosen so that influences on the union / worker relationship could be investigated using a sample in which the opportunity to unionise of all employees was ostensibly comparable. This allowed the study to focus on the worker's propensity to join a trade union, as opposed to his or her ability to do so. Unfortunately, it was not clear whether the union present at the employee's workplace was recognised for collective bargaining, or any other purposes, by the interviewee's employer. However, it would seem reasonable to assume that the trade union at his or her workplace referred to by the respondent would, most probably, be a recognised union.

Whether or not the respondent's job was covered by a closed shop was not considered here, as that part of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey analysed for the present study did not ask a direct question relating to this. Thus, clearly, union membership choice for all

employees was not entirely voluntary. However, in order to indicate the presence of a closed shop situation which was the primary reason for the employee's union membership status, whether or not the respondent belonged to a union mainly because this was a "condition of the job" was crosstabulated against each of the survey variables. Where a significant association was found, reference is made here to the potential influence of the closed shop on the relationship between the survey variable under analysis and the respondent's union membership choice. Thus, all of the respondents covered by a closed shop were not identified in the analysis here. However, those employees whose union membership resulted primarily from a closed shop situation at work are distinguished both from those members who had joined their union even though this was not a condition of their job, and from workers covered by a closed shop but who belonged to their union mainly for other reasons.

Only 2 per cent of employees who were union members did not have a trade union at their place of work. This group was excluded from the study here, which was interested only in those variables which could be identified as acting upon the union membership decision of the majority. For the sake of brevity, those respondents having a trade union at their workplace for their type of work are hereafter referred to merely as employees. Of the 2,071 workers in this subgroup, 53 per cent (1,096) were full-time male workers and 30 per cent (621) and seventeen per cent (354) were full-time and part-time female employees respectively. The division of workers into these groups revealed differences between the sexes and controlled for the predominance of women in part-time employment. Only 0.5 per cent of the sample were male workers who were employed on a part-time basis.

Variables from the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey which were likely to be influential in the worker's decision to join or not join a trade union were divided into the five distinct, though interrelated, groups identified in chapter four. Thus, personal and work characteristics, attitudes to work, attitudes to trade unionism and characteristics of the trade union at the respondent's workplace were considered separately. The associations between

the employee's propensity to unionise and these variables were first examined individually by crosstabulating each against trade union membership. Predictions concerning the relationships which were expected and the results of this analysis are presented here for each of the variable groups.

The study aimed to establish not only the nature of the effect of each of the variables on the worker's trade union membership decision, but, also, whether or not the influences upon the worker's propensity to unionise differed across the employee groups examined. Of course, their sample sizes were likely to affect the significance levels obtained for the variables for each of the worker categories (Marsh, 1988). Thus, reference is made here, also, to the actual percentage found in each response category when appropriate.

As the work histories data included in the survey were not analysed here, the macroeconomic factors identified as important for union membership choice could not be incorporated into the present study. Also, with respect to personal and work characteristics, those variables which have been included in previous analyses of trade union membership but which are absent from the study presented here are education, domestic commitments, ethnicity, occupational status and size of establishment in which the respondent was employed. These variables were not considered in the present analysis because of both limitations in and difficulties with the application of the data set used.

No direct questions on the respondent's educational qualifications² or on the size of establishment in which he or she worked were asked in the part of the Work Histories and Attitudes Survey considered in the present study. Although this section of the survey did ask respondents to give details of the members of their households, such as the age and relationship of each member to the interviewee, which would, of course, have indicated marital status and number of dependents, technical problems arose with the analysis of the questions involved here, and these variables had to be excluded from the analysis³. With respect to the ethnicity variable, less than two per cent of workers in the Work Attitudes and

Histories Survey were not classified as White. Thus, the size of the subgroup of the remaining interviewees, clearly, would have been too small to justify conclusions being drawn on the importance of race for the propensity to unionise here.

However, the personal characteristics variables which were excluded, as noted in chapter four, have previously been shown to be of little significance in determining trade union membership choice. Also, with regard to the size of establishment variable, although Kochan (1980) has identified establishment size as significantly related to the desire for unionisation in a non-union workplace, Gallie (1989) found this variable to be a better predictor of employers' attitudes to trade unionism than the employee's propensity to unionise. Similarly, occupational status appears to have been identified as a predictor of the union status of jobs, but there is little empirical evidence to suggest that this may affect the employee's union membership decision. Thus, it is argued here that the variables absent from the present analysis are unlikely to affect significantly the reliability of the results obtained.

In addition, there is no attempt made here to examine the effect of either satisfaction with work or commitment to one's own employment organisation on the propensity to unionise. As noted, the present study considered only employees with a trade union at their workplace. Thus, clearly, any measure of job satisfaction or commitment to work is likely to be influenced by past union performance. Thus, although the significance of the employee's satisfaction with and commitment to his or her employment organisation for participation in trade union activity is analysed, in chapter nine, it was not possible to assess the impact of these variables on union membership choice. Therefore, with respect to attitudes to work, only the respondent's commitment to paid employment in general is examined here.

Personal Characteristics

The personal characteristics from the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey which were expected to be associated with the propensity to unionise, for the reasons outlined below, were:

1. Sex
2. Area of residence
3. Age
4. Whether or not the respondent thought of himself or herself as belonging to a social class and, if so, which one.
5. Which political party the respondent would vote for if a general election were to be held tomorrow.

Associations Predicted Between Personal Characteristics and Propensity to Unionise

Sex

The perception of women as 'secondary earners', with a low commitment to paid employment, has led to an assumption that women have a lower propensity to unionise than men (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979 *et al*). However, an analysis of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey by Elias (1990) found that controlling for variation in the characteristics of male and female employment decreases the effect of *sex per se* on union membership. Moreover, Green (1990), using data from the 1983 General Household Survey, found that full-time women workers did not have a lower propensity to unionise than men, but, rather, were less likely to have a recognised union at their workplace. In the United States, too, women have been shown to be no less interested in unionisation, in non-union workplaces, than male workers (Kochan, 1980; Leigh and Hills, 1987; Schur and Kruse, 1992). However, also in the United States, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) found women to be more likely to be free riders than male employees, although this may have been, at least in part, attributable to the lower earnings level of female workers, and the fact that women were more likely to be in occupations with a large number of free riders. Thus, as the study here considered union membership, while controlling for opportunity to unionise, as indicated by the presence of a union at the respondent's workplace, it was hypothesised that the level of union membership for full-time employees would be lower for women than men, but that this differential would be likely to be associated with gender-related differences in occupational characteristics.

Area

Previous analysis of the respondents to the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey has shown that the effect of area on trade union membership is substantially reduced when a number of controls are included in the study, in particular, public and private ownership and favourability to trade unionism (Gallie, 1989; Elias, 1990). However, area was still revealed to have an association with union membership which could not be explained by reference to the other variables analysed (Gallie, 1989). Also, previous British studies have found region to be significantly related to the probability of unionisation (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Bain and Elias, 1985; Booth, 1986; Beaumont and Harris, 1989).

Although these studies have consistently found a positive relationship between union membership and the North, as defined in chapter four, this could not provide any insight for the present study, because, as Beaumont and Harris (1989) point out, levels of unionisation have also been found to vary within regions. In addition, there appears to be little empirical evidence to suggest that the area variable is associated with propensity to unionise, although, as this has been regarded as representing social custom in a region (Beaumont and Harris, 1989; Naylor and Gregg, 1989 *et al*), this may have some impact on the individual's union membership decision. It was hypothesised here that area would be related to propensity to unionise, with union membership depending largely upon the industrial relations traditions of the respondent's area of residence. However, it was not within the scope of the present study to determine which of the regions analysed would exhibit the highest levels of union membership.

Age

Although there is some empirical evidence to suggest that age may be associated with the probability of union membership, there has been some debate over the nature of this relationship (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Bain and Price, 1983; Bain and Elias, 1985 *et al*). Guest and Dewe (1988) found the propensity to unionise of workers under 25 and over 54 to be higher than that of the other employees they studied, which they attributed to the significance of marital status for union membership in their analysis. However, Green (1990) did not find a significant relationship between marital status and the employee's union membership decision. Also, Chaison and Dhavale (1992), in the United States, did not find age to be associated with the choice between union membership and free rider status. Thus, although it appeared difficult to predict the association between age and union membership, it was expected here that age would not influence the employee's propensity to unionise.

Self-Assessed Class Membership and Political Preference

It was predicted that both those who perceived themselves to be working class and those who reported that they would vote for the Labour Party in a general election would have a higher probability of being a trade union member than those employees who regarded themselves as middle-class, or who expressed a preference for a party further to the right of the political spectrum. This expectation was based primarily upon the long-standing relationship between the Working Class, the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement, and the link drawn between class consciousness and union membership (Lockwood, 1989). The debate concerning the importance of the manual / non-manual worker distinction for the determination of class and union membership (Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Kochan, 1980; Booth, 1986; Gallie, 1989) is not relevant here, as the social class variable included in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey measured only the respondent's perception of his or her class.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Personal Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership

Sex

Women workers were significantly less likely to be union members than the male employees studied: 81.5 per cent of the full-time male workers reported belonging to a trade union "or similar", compared to 77 per cent of the full-time female employees ($p < 0.05$), and 58 per cent of the female part-timers. Thus, crosstabulating union membership against sex appeared to reveal that the women studied had a lower propensity to unionise than the men, but that this difference was substantially reduced when controlling for the predominance of women in part-time employment. The results above are presented in tables three and four, below.

However, full-time male employees who belonged to a union were significantly more likely than full-time female workers to be in a union mainly because membership was a condition of their job. Approximately nineteen per cent of men were union members primarily for this reason, compared to fourteen per cent of women ($p < 0.05$). Eighteen per cent of part-time female employees belonged to a union mainly because membership was a condition of their job. These results, clearly, suggest that the full-time women workers were less likely to occupy jobs covered by a closed shop than the male employees, which would, of course, contribute to the male / female union membership differential revealed here. This finding is consistent with results obtained by Chaison and Dhavale (1992) in the United States. They found women to be more likely to be free riders than men, but a significantly greater percentage of female employees occupied jobs where there were large numbers of free riders. Thus, the industrial relations traditions in their areas of employment, in large part, may account for gender differences in levels of union membership which are revealed even when controlling for the presence of a trade union at the employee's workplace.

Table 3: Sex Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Employees.

Sex	% Union Membership (N)	
Male	81.5	(1096)
Female	76.6	(621)
Chi-square = 5.71	$p = 0.0168$	df = 1

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

Table 4: Employment Status Against Trade Union Membership for Female Employees.

Employment Status	% Union Membership (N)	
Full-time	76.6	(621)
Part-time	57.9	(354)
Chi-square = 37.60	$p = 0.0000$	df = 1

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

The results of the crosstabulations of personal characteristics against trade union membership for each of the female employee groups studied are presented in tables five and six. The corresponding results for the male workers are produced in table 32 in appendix one.

Area

Area was significantly associated with trade union membership for all employee groups. For full-time male employees, Aberdeen, Coventry, Rochdale and Kirkcaldy had the highest union membership levels, of between 82 and 86 per cent. A similar pattern was found for the full-time women workers, though, with the exception of Coventry (where 84 per cent of the female employees were union members), lower membership levels were recorded in each area. For the full-time workers, then, union membership was lowest among employees in Northampton and Swindon.

The female part-timers revealed a slightly different pattern, though Coventry and Kirkcaldy still exhibited the highest membership levels. The size of the part-time female employee sample, however, suggested that significance should not be attached to the variation shown here between the full-time and part-time employees. The results above, then, indicate that the influence on the propensity to unionise of the area variable did not vary substantially for male and female workers, or for women in full-time or part-time employment. As noted earlier, it was not possible to assess the traditions of industrial relations or macroeconomic features of the areas studied here. The results above, though, may be interpreted as suggesting that region may influence not only patterns of union recognition, but, perhaps, may have an impact on employees' individual union membership decisions also.

Age

In order to ascertain the importance of this variable for the employee's union membership decision, the age variable was recoded into four categories, each with a range of ten years. For both categories of full-time worker, age was significantly associated with trade union membership. Although age was not significantly related to union membership for female part-timers, those in the 31 to 40 age group were shown to be least likely to belong to a union. 49 per cent of the 120 part-time women workers in this age category were union members, compared to an average of 62.5 per cent for the remaining 234 women in this employee group.

For full-time employees, those in the 20 to 30 age group were the least likely to be union members. Although age was not significantly associated with union membership for those full-time male workers aged between 31 and 60, an association between age and union membership was found for those full-time female employees aged between 51 and 60, who were considerably more likely to be union members than the younger women. 87.5 per cent of women in the highest age group belonged to a union, compared to 76 per cent of women aged between 31 and 50, a difference just outwith the conventional five per cent level.

Unfortunately, from the part of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey analysed here, it was not possible to examine whether or not this higher unionisation among older women was related to work experience, exposure to trade unionism or to domestic commitments. However, the above results do indicate that the impact of age on propensity to unionise appears to differ for men and women. In addition, the results seem to suggest that age may be of less significance in determining union membership for female part-timers than for full-time women workers.

Self-Assessed Class Membership and Political Preference

As expected, those who regarded themselves as working class and who reported a political preference for the Labour Party exhibited significantly higher levels of union membership than the other respondents; this was true for all worker categories. For the full-time male and female employee groups, the union membership differential between those who would vote Conservative and who would vote Labour was approximately 22 per cent and seventeen per cent respectively. As would be expected, then, political ideology seems to play an important role in the individual's union membership decision. The results here would suggest that the significance of this variable may not have been given adequate consideration by previous research in this area.

The social class variable was significantly associated with whether or not the employee was in a union primarily as a condition of his or her job for full-time male employees and for part-time female workers. Approximately fourteen per cent of working class men were in a union mainly for this reason, compared to 7.5 per cent of those male respondents who regarded themselves as middle-class. Similar results were obtained for the full-time and part-time women workers, though these were not significant for the former. Thus, not surprisingly, employees who perceived themselves as working class were found to be more likely to occupy jobs with an apparently strong tradition of trade unionism.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Area	Aberdeen	72.1 (111)	0.0040
	Coventry	84.3 (102)	
	Kirkcaldy	80.2 (116)	
	Northampton	66.3 (101)	
	Rochdale	84.3 (115)	
	Swindon	69.7 (76)	
Age	20 - 30	72.1 (208)	0.0302
	31 - 40	77.5 (151)	
	41 - 50	75.3 (166)	
	51 - 60	87.5 (96)	
Self-assessed class membership	None	76.8 (431)	0.0944
	Middle class	65.8 (76)	
	Working class	84.2 (101)	
	Other class	60.0 (5)	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative	72.0 (93)	0.0024
	Labour	88.6 (184)	
	Alliance	79.3 (29)	
	Liberal	80.0 (60)	
	SDP	75.5 (53)	
	SNP	58.8 (17)	

Table 5: Personal Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Area	Aberdeen	48.4 (62)	0.0146
	Coventry	68.4 (57)	
	Kirkcaldy	67.2 (58)	
	Northampton	43.8 (73)	
	Rochdale	60.0 (60)	
	Swindon	65.9 (44)	
Age	20 - 30	63.8 (47)	0.1191
	31 - 40	49.2 (120)	
	41 - 50	63.1 (103)	
	51 - 60	60.7 (84)	
Self-assessed class membership	None	54.0 (237)	0.0108
	Middle class	46.2 (39)	
	Working class	73.6 (72)	
	Other class	100.0 (2)	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative	38.3 (47)	0.0019
	Labour	70.7 (123)	
	Alliance	57.1 (14)	
	Liberal	51.3 (39)	
	SDP	54.2 (24)	
	SNP	25.0 (8)	

Table 6: Personal Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Part-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Work Characteristics

Variables relating to aspects of work in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey which were expected to be associated with the propensity to unionise were:

1. Whether or not the respondent was employed on a full-time or part-time basis (for more or less than 30 hours per week respectively).
2. The approximate sex ratio in the type of job done by the employee - whether the respondent's job was done exclusively or mainly by men, equally by men and women or exclusively or mainly by women.
3. Whether the respondent's job was temporary (lasting less than 12 months), fixed-term (lasting between one and three years) or permanent (with no fixed period of ending).
4. Weekly pay and hourly earnings.
5. Whether or not the respondent's job involved shift-work, frequent night-work or clocking in / signing on.

Associations Predicted Between Work Characteristics and Propensity to Unionise

Employment Status

The traditional view of part-timers, which appears to be based on the assumption that they have a lower commitment to work than full-time employees, has been that part-time workers are particularly difficult to unionise (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Bain and Elsheikh, 1979; Bain and Price, 1983). Both Martin and Roberts (1984) and Green (1990) found part-timers to be less likely to belong to a union than full-time employees, even when controlling for union availability. Thus, it was expected that workers who regarded themselves as employed on a full-time basis would be significantly more likely to be union members than part-time employees.

Employment Segregation

It was predicted that male-dominated employment would be positively associated with union membership, although, in part, this would be attributable to a greater percentage of interviewees in work done mainly by men who belonged to a union primarily as membership was a condition of their job. Also, it was expected that women workers in employment dominated by their own sex would be more likely to belong to a union than those female respondents occupied in jobs done mainly or exclusively by men. This was based primarily on evidence from the 1991 Labour Force Survey that women in male-dominated work are less likely than their male counterparts to be in a union (Beatson and Butcher, 1993).

Earnings

It has been advanced that, as earnings increase, so does the probability of unionisation, but at a decreasing rate (Bain and Elias, 1985; Booth, 1986). That is, the relationship between union membership and earnings is non-linear. However, there would appear to be little empirical evidence relating to the effect of earnings on propensity to unionise, although theoretical discussions by, among others, Bain and Elsheikh (1979), Bain and Elias and Booth do provide some insight into the possible impact of wages on the individual's union membership decision in Britain. As noted in chapter four, Bain and Elias argue that the benefits of union membership will decrease as the employee's earnings increase, as his or her employer's opposition to unionisation is likely to increase as the individual moves up the work hierarchy. Both Bain and Elsheikh, and Booth, though, believe that workers may well credit unions with providing higher wages. Also, in the United States, Chaison and Dhavale (1992) found free riders to be significantly lower paid than union members. Thus, it was hypothesised that earnings would be significantly associated with propensity to unionise, with the likelihood of union membership increasing with wages, but at a decreasing rate.

How Permanent His or Her Employer Regarded the Respondent's Job

Kochan (1980) has suggested that a certain level of commitment to his or her work is necessary before an employee will join a trade union. Hence, an important influence on the employee's union membership decision was expected to be whether or not he or she occupied a permanent job. Those who perceived their jobs to be permanent were expected to be significantly more likely to belong to a union than employees who believed their jobs to be temporary. This was based on the assumption that workers who regarded themselves as employed on a permanent basis would be more highly committed to their work.

Features of the Respondent's Job

It was predicted that shift-working, clocking in / signing on and frequent nightwork would all be positively associated with the propensity to unionise. With regard to the former two variables, this was based, primarily, on the belief that these employment features are likely to be characteristic of work done by unskilled or semi-skilled employees, who have been found to be more likely to belong to a union than managerial staff (Booth, 1986). Also, Naylor and Gregg (1989: 14) have interpreted the presence of shift-working as representing the existence of a "continuous production process", which is likely to encourage a desire for unionisation.

Evidence suggesting that frequent night-work is positively related to age, which in turn has been linked to union membership choice, resulted in the expectation that night-work may also be associated with the propensity to unionise (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Bain and Elsheikh, 1979).

Results of the Crosstabulation of Work Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership

Employment status - whether or not a respondent worked full-time or part-time - and the ratio of men to women in the type of job done by the employee were crosstabulated against union membership for all workers considered as a single group. The latter variable and all other variables in the analysis were then tested for each of the three categories of worker distinguished by employment status and sex.

Employment Status

Over 97 per cent of the part-time workers in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey analysed here were women. Crosstabulating trade union membership against sex for full-time employees only decreased the male / female union membership differential from 11.5 per cent to four per cent: the percentage of women workers studied who were union members increased from 70 per cent to 77 per cent, while the proportion of male employees who belonged to a union remained the same, at 81.5 per cent. Thus, when controlling for employment status, the difference in the union membership levels of male and female employees was substantially reduced, though this remained statistically significant.

When women workers were considered alone, 77 per cent of the full-time employees belonged to a union, compared to 58 per cent of the part-timers ($p < 0.0001$). Thus, as both the Women and Employment Survey (Martin and Roberts, 1984) and Green (1990) found, even when controlling for the fact that part-time workers are less likely to have a trade union at their workplace than full-timers, part-time female employees still appear to be significantly less likely to belong to a union.

Employment Segregation

As table seven, below, indicates, the ratio of men to women in the type of job done by the respondent was found to be significantly associated with trade union membership. 82 per cent of employees working exclusively or mainly with men were union members, compared to 75 per cent of employees who worked with an equal ratio of men to women, and 69 per cent of those who worked exclusively or mainly with women. However, employees in male-dominated employment were significantly more likely to be in a union primarily as membership was a condition of their job. Approximately sixteen per cent of respondents in work done mainly or exclusively by men were in the union primarily for this reason, compared to ten per cent of workers in jobs done equally by both sexes, and ten per cent of interviewees in female-dominated employment. Thus, work done mainly by men, as expected, appeared to be most likely to be covered by a closed shop situation.

Employment segregation by sex, though, was not significantly associated with union membership when the employee groups were analysed separately; this was so even when this variable was recoded into only three response categories. However, the results here were difficult to interpret, as the degree of segregation by sex exhibited by the workers studied was so pronounced that only a relatively small number of respondents were employed in jobs either done exclusively or mainly by the opposite sex or equally by both men and women.

Results obtained from the crosstabulations of the remaining work characteristics variables against trade union membership for both of the female employee groups are given in tables eight and nine. The results for the male workers are presented in table 33 in appendix one.

Table 7: Employment Segregation Against Trade Union Membership for All Employees.

Response	% Union Membership (N)	
Exclusively by men	83.0	(523)
Mainly by men	80.0	(425)
Equally by men and women	75.3	(417)
Mainly by women	70.7	(495)
Exclusively by women	64.8	(216)
Chi-square=40.25	$p=0.0000$	df=4

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

Earnings

Weekly pay and hourly earnings were significantly associated with union membership for all employee groups, with the exception of female part-timers. Full-time employees whose earnings fell in either of the extremes of the weekly pay and hourly earnings ranges were less likely to be union members than those whose reported wage level was closer to the average for the sample of employees studied. This would appear to support the proposition that, even in workplaces with union coverage, workers may join unions as their wages increase, as they attribute higher wages to the union's presence (Booth, 1986), but as the employee moves up the work hierarchy, employer opposition to his or her union membership will decrease his or her interest in unionisation (Bain and Elias, 1985).

The relationship between wages and union membership for the female part-time workers was not clear, due to the nature of the distribution of workers in this group across the earnings categories. As expected, female part-timers were heavily concentrated in the lowest pay brackets, and were almost entirely unrepresented in the higher categories.

How Permanent His or Her Employer Regarded the Respondent's Job

How permanent the employer regarded the respondent's job was the only work characteristic significantly associated with the propensity to unionise for all categories of worker. For each group, permanent workers were considerably more likely to be union members than those employees who were employed on a temporary basis. This was particularly marked for the full-time male employees: 83 per cent of permanent workers in this group were union members, compared to 56 per cent and 50 per cent of temporary and fixed-term employees respectively. Thus, a certain level of commitment to his or her employment would appear to be necessary to inspire an employee to join a union, as opposed to 'free ride'. However, the results for the work commitment variable examined here may also be interpreted as suggesting that the commitment of his or her employer to the long-term employment of a worker is crucial, too, in determining the individual's union membership choice.

Features of the Respondent's Job

Shift-working, clocking in / signing on and night-work were all significantly associated with the propensity to unionise for all workers considered as one group and for full-time male employees ($p < 0.05$). Also, these variables were all significantly related to whether or not the respondent was in a union primarily because membership was a condition of his job for full-time male employees. Thus, the relationships between shift-working, clocking in / signing on and frequent nightwork and union membership for the male worker group may have been, at least in part, due to the level of union density in jobs with these characteristics. Employees responding positively to the questions on these aspects of work were more likely to be in a union than the other workers studied. With respect to clocking in or signing on, though not significant, this was also true for the female employee groups analysed. However, it was not possible to draw conclusions on the importance of shift-

working or night-work for the women workers, as only a small percentage of female employees were in jobs with these characteristics.

The association between frequent nightwork and union membership for the male employees studied could not be attributed to the link between age and nightwork, advanced by Beynon and Blackburn (1972), as age was found not to be significantly associated with frequent night-work for this employee group.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job	31.8 (22)	0.0000
	Fixed-term job	77.4 (31)	
	Permanent job	78.1 (558)	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70	60.9 (23)	0.0420
	70 - 130	75.1 (277)	
	130 - 190	79.9 (139)	
	190 - 250	90.0 (60)	
	250 - 310	83.3 (12)	
	310 - 370	-	
	370 - 430	-	
	430 - 490	-	
	490 - 550	-	
550 - 610	-		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2	64.6 (48)	0.0315
	2.2 - 3.7	76.5 (289)	
	3.7 - 5.2	80.0 (105)	
	5.2 - 6.7	84.8 (46)	
	6.7 - 8.2	100 (17)	
	8.2 - 9.7	83.3 (6)	
	9.7 - 11.2	100 (1)	
	11.2 - 12.7	0.0 (1)	
	12.7 - 14.2	-	
14.2 - 15.7	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes	80.0 (120)	0.3290
	No	75.8 (500)	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes	76.6 (64)	0.3290
	No	76.6 (556)	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes	80.9 (230)	0.0545
	No	74.1 (390)	

Table 8: Work Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Female Employees

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job	40.0 (25)	0.0140
	Fixed-term job	33.3 (18)	
	Permanent job	60.5 (306)	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70	56.5 (223)	0.1467
	70 - 130	73.2 (56)	
	130 - 190	100.0 (2)	
	190 - 250	33.3 (3)	
	250 - 310	100.0 (1)	
	310 - 370	-	
	370 - 430	-	
	430 - 490	-	
	490 - 550	50.0 (2)	
550 - 610	-		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2	60.2 (98)	0.3613
	2.2 - 3.7	56.7 (141)	
	3.7 - 5.2	68.8 (32)	
	5.2 - 6.7	87.5 (8)	
	6.7 - 8.2	50.0 (6)	
	8.2 - 9.7	100.0 (1)	
	9.7 - 11.2	-	
	11.2 - 12.7	-	
	12.7 - 14.2	0.0 (1)	
14.2 - 15.7	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes	61.5 (65)	0.4982
	No	56.9 (288)	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes	54.7 (53)	0.5911
	No	58.7 (300)	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes	63.9 (122)	0.1049
	No	55.0 (231)	

Table 9: Work Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Part-time
Female Employees

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Commitment to Work

In order to measure the level of commitment of the respondent to paid employment generally, the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey asked respondents:

If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work, not necessarily in your present job, or would you stop working?

This variable was crosstabulated against trade union membership for male and female full-time workers and for female part-timers in order to assess their importance for the propensity to unionise of each group. The results of the crosstabulation of the above variable against trade union membership are presented in tables 34 to 36 in appendix one.

Associations Predicted Between Commitment to Work and Propensity to Unionise

The assumption that workers employed on a part-time basis, and women workers generally, are less committed to paid employment has been advanced by Beynon and Blackburn (1972), who believe that part-time workers, and female employees, will regard their paid work as relatively unimportant, compared to their role in the home. From the literature in this field, then, it could be expected that commitment to work would be associated with trade union membership, and that part-time employees would exhibit lower levels of such commitment than full-time workers, although the *a priori* basis for this prediction is, as argued in chapter four, far from convincing.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Commitment to Work Against Trade Union Membership

The variable measuring the employee's commitment to paid employment in general was not related to union membership for the workers studied here, with the exception of the full-time female employee group. However, the relationship exhibited between union membership and this variable for the full-time women workers was not that which was expected. 81 per cent of women in this group who would stop work if there was no financial need for them to have a paid job were union members, compared to 74 per cent of those women who would continue in paid employment. Although not significant at the conventional five per cent level, a similar relationship was revealed for the part-time female employees: 61 per cent of those who would stop working belonged to a trade union, compared to 55 per cent of those who would carry on in paid employment. Thus, the women who appeared to have the lowest commitment to work were the most likely to be union members.

Arguably, the findings here may be explained in terms of the type of work likely to be done by employees who would stop working if they were to become comfortably off and / or with reference to gender roles in society. Employees who stated that they would stop working, clearly, were likely to be in paid employment primarily for financial reasons; that is, their work would tend to have little intrinsic value for them. It is this type of often blue-collar, manual work, which is most likely to be associated with a desire for unionisation (Kochan, 1980). Moreover, women are more likely than men to state that they would leave paid employment in these circumstances because, unlike men, they often have a domestic role which they can return to on a full-time basis outside the workplace; the family and work 'dual' roles of women are well documented elsewhere (Martin and Roberts, 1984; Sharpe, 1984 *et al*).

Trade Union Characteristics

The variables concerning the employee's attitudes to trade unionism and those relating to features of the trade union at the respondent's workplace, as well as to the employee's socialisation, which were identified from the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey as potentially important for the individual's union membership decision are listed below. Where a single union is referred to, as opposed to trade unions generally, the union is to be regarded as that at the respondent's workplace.

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

1. How favourable the respondent was to trade unions.
2. How much influence the respondent believed trade unions should have over pay.
3. How much influence the respondent believed trade unions should have over work organisation.

Perceptions of Union Influence

4. How much influence the respondent believed that the trade union had over his or her pay.
5. How much influence the respondent believed the trade union had over the way in which work was organised.

Features of Trade Union Organisation at Respondent's Workplace

6. Whether or not at the respondent's place of work, there were shop stewards or employee representatives for people doing his or her kind of work.

Socialisation Factors

7. How favourable the respondent's partner was to trade unions.
8. How favourable his or her father was to trade unions at the time the respondent obtained his or her first job.

Associations Predicted Between Trade Union Characteristics and Propensity to Unionise

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

How favourable the respondent was to trade unions generally was expected to be positively related to trade union membership. Those employees who appeared to support the principles of trade unionism, clearly, were more likely to be union members than those who were unsympathetic to the trade union movement. How much influence the respondent believed that the trade unions should have over pay and work organisation was similarly predicted to be positively related to union membership.

Perceptions of Union Influence

It was predicted that the worker's perceptions regarding the extent of the union's influence over pay and work organisation would be strongly associated with his or her propensity to unionise. It was expected that workers who believed that trade unions were influential in the determination of pay and in the organisation of work would be more likely to belong to a trade union than those who regarded the trade union as unable to exert such power.

Features of Trade Union Organisation at the Respondent's Workplace

It was predicted that the presence of shop stewards or employee representatives at the respondent's workplace would encourage union membership, as they would be likely to raise awareness of trade unionism, and enhance the level of unionisation at the interviewee's place of employment.

Socialisation Factors

A similar relationship for trade union membership and both the respondent's father's and partner's favourability to trade unions was expected. It was predicted, though, that the association for these two variables would not be as strong as for the variables relating to the interviewee's own feelings. It was hypothesised that the interviewee's partner's favourability to unions would be more important in influencing his or her participation rate in union activity, which is analysed in chapters eight and nine, than for his or her propensity to unionise.

With respect to the female respondents, the results obtained from the crosstabulations of the trade union characteristics described above against trade union membership are given in tables ten and eleven. The results for the full-time male employees are presented in table 37 in appendix one.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

As expected, how favourably the respondent regarded trade unions in general was positively and significantly related to trade union membership for all employee groups. For instance, 95 per cent of the male workers who viewed unions "very favourably" were union members, compared to 47.5 per cent of those who were "not at all favourable" to trade unionism. How much influence the interviewee believed that trade unions should have over pay and work organisation was also significantly related to trade union membership, again, for all three worker categories.

The variable 'favourability to unions' was strongly associated with that measuring political preference. Those respondents who would vote for the Labour Party were significantly more likely to be favourable to trade unions. However, it was not clear whether union membership was a result or cause of the employee's favourability to trade unions or belief in the principles of trade unionism.

Perceptions of Union Influence

The level of influence the respondent believed that the trade union at his or her workplace had over pay and over work organisation was related to union membership for both full-time worker categories. 90.5 per cent of male employees and 85 per cent of full-time female workers who reported that trade unions had a lot of influence over pay belonged to a union, compared to 81.5 per cent of men and 65 per cent of women who perceived trade unions to have no influence at all. Although not significant, similar results were obtained for the female part-timers. Again, however, the direction of causality of the relationship between

union membership and the worker's perception of the influence the trade union at his or her workplace could exert was not clear.

Features of Trade Union Organisation at the Respondent's Workplace

The presence of workplace representatives was positively related to union membership for all employees studied. This variable was particularly strongly associated with union membership for full-time workers: 87.5 per cent and 81 per cent of male and female full-time employees who had workplace representatives for their job belonged to a trade union, compared to 58 per cent and 65 per cent of those men and women respectively without such representation.

Socialisation Factors

How favourable the respondent's partner was to trade unions was significantly related to trade union membership only for the women workers studied. This was a particularly important variable with respect to the union membership of female part-timers: 69 per cent of those whose partners were "very favourable" to trade unions belonged to a union, compared to 43 per cent of those whose partners viewed unions "not at all favourably". This is consistent with the assertion by Sharpe (1984), discussed in chapter three, that for women workers with children, family support is vital to allow involvement in trade unionism. Although Sharpe referred to participation in union activity, the above result would suggest that this may also be true for the union membership choice of many women.

How favourable the respondent's father was to trade unions at the time the employee obtained his or her first job was not associated with union membership for any of the employee groups. Earlier socialisation, then, may not be as important in determining propensity to unionise as present influences on the employee.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	94.5 (73)	0.0000
	Quite favourable	84.5 (194)	
	No strong feelings	75.2 (218)	
	Not very favourable	62.7 (110)	
	Not at all favourable	33.3 (24)	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence	86.9 (260)	0.0000
	Some influence	74.8 (286)	
	Not much influence	57.6 (33)	
	None at all	52.9 (17)	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence	95.2 (105)	0.0000
	Some influence	79.9 (294)	
	Not much influence	68.6 (102)	
	None at all	62.0 (100)	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence	84.7 (170)	0.0004
	Some influence	81.1 (270)	
	Not much influence	66.4 (113)	
	None at all	64.3 (28)	
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	Lot of influence	85.0 (60)	0.0001
	Some influence	85.4 (198)	
	Not much influence	77.8 (198)	
	None at all	64.6 (130)	

Table 10: Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Female Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes	81.3 (497)	0.0004
	No	65.3 (101)	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	86.4 (88)	0.0230
	Quite favourable	78.0 (109)	
	No strong feelings	80.6 (103)	
	Not very favourable	64.8 (71)	
	Not at all favourable	75.0 (32)	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable	74.8 (111)	0.3284
	Quite favourable	77.7 (112)	
	No strong feelings	76.3 (135)	
	Not very favourable	77.4 (53)	
	Not at all favourable	66.0 (47)	

Table 10 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	88.9 (36)	0.0000
	Quite favourable	64.2 (95)	
	No strong feelings	56.0 (125)	
	Not very favourable	42.0 (81)	
	Not at all favourable	43.8 (16)	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence	81.9 (105)	0.0000
	Some influence	53.5 (187)	
	Not much influence	31.8 (22)	
	None at all	14.3 (14)	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence	84.1 (44)	0.0001
	Some influence	63.1 (157)	
	Not much influence	48.3 (58)	
	None at all	44.1 (68)	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence	63.1 (103)	0.3210
	Some influence	64.7 (139)	
	Not much influence	52.5 (59)	
	None at all	50.0 (14)	
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	Lot of influence	65.8 (38)	0.2784
	Some influence	64.6 (96)	
	Not much influence	58.9 (95)	
	None at all	51.7 (87)	

Table 11: Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Part-time Female Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes	66.5 (200)	0.0212
	No	53.7 (123)	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	69.4 (62)	0.0011
	Quite favourable	69.3 (75)	
	No strong feelings	52.7 (74)	
	Not very favourable	40.7 (54)	
	Not at all favourable	42.9 (42)	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable	65.3 (72)	0.6029
	Quite favourable	57.4 (61)	
	No strong feelings	52.7 (55)	
	Not very favourable	66.7 (27)	
	Not at all favourable	58.8 (34)	

**Table 11 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership
for Part-time Female Employees.**

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Summary of Results

Personal Characteristics

Analysis of the personal characteristics variables revealed that gender was related to union membership, with women exhibiting a significantly lower propensity to unionise than the male respondents, although this difference was substantially reduced when taking account of the predominance of women in part-time employment. However, the significantly greater percentage of full-time male employees in a union mainly because membership was a condition of their job suggested that the difference in levels of union membership between the full-time male and female worker groups could be attributable, at least in part, to industrial relations practices at their workplaces. The union membership differential between full-time and part-time women workers, though, could not be explained in these terms, as employment status was not significantly related to whether or not the female union members belonged to a union primarily as this was a condition of their job. When employees were distinguished by employment status and sex, the union membership decision of all three employee groups was significantly associated with the same set of personal characteristics: the area in which the respondent lived, age, perception of social class and political preference: the only exception to this was the age variable in the case of female part-timers.

Work Characteristics

With respect to the work characteristics studied, it was revealed that the propensity to unionise of full-time male and female employees was affected by a similar, although not identical, set of variables. However, the group of work characteristics significantly associated with the union membership decision of full-time and part-time women workers was markedly different. With the exception of the variable measuring job permanency, work characteristics did not appear to influence the union membership choice of part-time

female employees. The importance of this disparity between the full-time and part-time women workers is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Commitment to Work

With regard to the commitment to work variable, the analysis revealed that this did not differ significantly either between the male and female workers or between the full-time and part-time female employees. The male / female union membership differential, then, could not be explained in terms of a variation in male and female commitment to paid employment. Women's attachment to work was shown to be at least as strong as that of the men surveyed.

Trade Union Characteristics

The propensity to unionise of all three groups of employee studied was affected by a different set of trade union characteristics, although the respondent's attitudes to trade unions generally were associated with union membership choice for all categories of worker analysed. The directions of causality of the relationships between the employee's propensity to unionise and the attitudes to trade unionism variables, though, could not be determined from the analyses here. Again, the variables significant for each full-time employee group varied less than that between the full-time and part-time women workers.

However, for both categories of women worker, but not for the male employees, the respondent's partner's favourability to unions was significantly related to propensity to unionise. This would suggest that influences in the domestic sphere may be more important for the union membership decision of women than men. The importance of the variables relating to attitudes to trade unionism is returned to in chapter seven, which attempts to

assess the relative significance of the variables discussed above for the propensity to unionise.

Endnotes

1. Defined as the " ... total union membership expressed as a percentage of the civilian workforce in employment (workforce in employment minus the armed forces)" (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 675).
2. Interviewees were asked what qualifications would be needed by someone applying for their job today. However, clearly, this would provide only an indication of the respondent's own qualifications. For instance, part-time female employees who return to work after a break for childrearing tend to suffer from downward occupational mobility (Dex, 1987), and, therefore, they may be much more highly qualified than responses to the above question would suggest.
3. With respect to the variables concerning the respondent's domestic circumstances, the coding schedule relating to that part of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey analysed here did not appear to correspond with the data. Also, the large number of variables pertaining to domestic commitments would have added considerably to the complexity of the statistical analyses.

CHAPTER 7

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER FOR THE PROPENSITY TO UNIONISE

Introduction

The individual analysis of the significance of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey variables considered here for the propensity to unionise revealed that, even after controlling for the predominance of women in part-time employment, sex was significantly related to union membership choice. It was also found that the set of variables associated with union membership varied across employee groups distinguished by sex and employment status (whether or not a worker was employed on a full-time or part-time basis).

Discriminant analysis was performed in an attempt to answer two primary questions remaining for the present study:

- (i) when controlling for all other variables, is sex still related to the propensity to unionise, and
- (ii) what are the best predictors of union membership for the employee groups described above?

Thus, in order to determine the *relative* importance of the variables to each other, a two-group discriminant analysis was performed with trade union membership as the response

variable for all employees with a trade union at their workplace for their type of work. That is, the analysis was conducted with propensity to unionise as the dependent variable. Unfortunately, whether or not the employee was in a union primarily because his or her job was covered by a closed shop could not be examined here, as this variable, of course, was applicable only to union members.

Discriminant analysis is designed to establish whether or not statistically significant differences can be found between groups of cases. It allows a number of variables to be considered simultaneously, and forms a linear combination of these variables, known as the discriminant function equation, to represent the nature of the group differences established.

A stepwise procedure was used here, with those variables which had the largest Mahalanobis' Distance - a generalised measure of distance between the two groups tested, weighted by the sample sizes - chosen for inclusion in the discriminant function. To avoid violating the assumption made by discriminant analysis that all predictor variables have a linear association with the response variable, dummy variables were created for all nominal, non-dichotomous variables. Although this statistical technique also assumes that all explanatory variables have a multivariate normal distribution, a small number of dichotomous variables were included here, as it has been suggested that the discriminant function still performs adequately in this situation (Norusis, 1989; Diekhoff, 1992).

Missing data were found to be randomly spread throughout cases and predictor variables, and did not appear to pose a threat to the reliability of the study. Prior predictions of trade union membership were not included in the analysis procedure, although the percentage of cases in the sample likely to fall into each group was known. Such a specification is appropriate only where the sample has been randomly chosen from the population, which the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey respondents, clearly, were not, having been selected from six pre-defined geographical areas.

Although these statistical techniques are commonly used in social science research, probit and logit regression analyses were not employed here, as the large number of explanatory variables examined would have resulted in an extremely complex model fitting procedure. The number of interaction terms would have been too great for the use of probit and logit to be practical.

Discriminant analysis was first performed for all employees, considered as a single group, using only personal characteristics as predictor variables, and then with the variables measuring work characteristics, trade union characteristics and commitment to work, described in the previous chapter, added in turn. Those variables thereby identified as important predictors of union membership were then examined in order to determine whether or not they could account for the union membership differential between the sexes. Sex was crosstabulated against union membership, while controlling for each of the discriminating variables found to be significantly related to gender. Separate discriminant analyses were then performed for full-time male employees, full-time female workers and for female part-timers, for the purpose of establishing how the best indicators of union membership varied across these employee groups.

Which of the discriminating variables were most important in determining the worker's propensity to unionise was determined by the discriminant function coefficients of the explanatory variables entered into the discriminant models. These discriminant coefficients indicate the order of importance of independent variables when these variables are standardised (Chatfield and Collins, 1980), as all of the explanatory variables were in the discriminant analyses discussed here. The contribution made by an independent variable to the discriminant model is indicated by the Wilks' Lambda statistic corresponding to that variable; the smaller the value of this measurement, the less important the variable added to the model.

Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees

The analysis of the personal characteristics alone, revealed sex to be one of the most important predictors of union membership. When the coefficients of the independent variables which were entered into the discriminant equation were standardised, to control for the variation in their means and standard deviations, sex exhibited the second largest discriminant function coefficient ($r = 0.54$), only slightly smaller in magnitude than that for political preference ($r = -0.57$). Other predictors of the propensity to unionise were age and self-assessed class membership. 62 per cent of the "grouped" cases overall were classified correctly, with these cases evenly spread between union members and non-members. 50 per cent of the cases would, of course, have been classified accurately by chance alone; thus, 24 per cent of the 50 per cent of variance between the groups left unexplained was accounted for by the analysis.

When work characteristics were also included in the analysis, the correct classification rate improved to 69 per cent overall. Particularly interesting for the study here was that sex was immediately displaced from the discriminant function equation. That is, sex appeared to be a significant predictor of the propensity to unionise only when personal characteristics were considered alone, although when work characteristics were added, all other personal characteristics variables remained in the discriminant function equation.

This finding would seem to indicate that the work characteristics studied were particularly highly correlated with sex. This was supported by the correlation matrix of the personal and work characteristics included in the analysis. This revealed sex to be correlated with employment status ($r = 0.45$), employment segregation ($r = 0.80$) and with weekly and hourly earnings ($r = 0.51$ and $r = 0.41$ respectively). This would imply that the structure of employment and the work characteristics typically exhibited by male and female employees were more important in predicting union membership choice than the sex variable. This is consistent with the argument advanced by Green (1990) that the significance attributed to

the sex variable in previous analyses of trade union membership (Bain and Elias, 1985 *et al*) may reflect gender-differences in work characteristics which have a negative effect on women's opportunity to join a union.

However, a number of problems may arise from attributing importance to the magnitude of correlation coefficients without the use of graphical methods to examine data. For instance, if the relationship between two variables is curved, then the correlation coefficient may be artificially low (Gore and Altman, 1982). Scatter plots and other forms of graphical analyses were not employed here, primarily because of the nature of the variables used, which were, of course, categorical, as opposed to continuous. For categorical variables, a scatter plot would not be informative, as it would consist simply of a regular lattice of points, each corresponding to a particular combination of responses to the variables examined. The conclusions drawn from the correlation matrices, then, should be viewed with caution.

Those work characteristics revealed to be important predictors of union membership were:

- (i) weekly pay;
- (ii) how permanent his or her employer regarded the respondent's job, and
- (iii) whether or not the respondent's job involved clocking in / signing on.

A discriminant analysis was then performed with the variables designed to measure the employee's attitudes to trade unionism and characteristics of the trade union at the interviewee's workplace added to the list of explanatory variables. The introduction of these variables displaced weekly pay as the most important predictor of union membership by 'favourability to trade unions'. The variable measuring the influence interviewees thought unions had over pay was also entered into the model. Overall, 78 per cent of cases were classified correctly.

Finally, the discriminant analysis was performed with all those variables identified in the previous chapter considered as explanatory variables, including that measuring commitment to work. The results of this analysis are given in table twelve.

When all variables were analysed, the best predictors of the union membership decision were found to be:

- (i) favourability to trade unions;
- (ii) influence trade unions should have over pay;
- (iii) weekly pay, and
- (iv) how permanent his or her employer regarded the respondent's job.

Thus, for all employees studied as a single group, favourability to trade unions in general was the most important predictor of the propensity to unionise, followed by how much influence the respondent believed unions should have over pay. Consistent with previous findings, which are discussed in chapters four and six, pay and the permanency of the respondent's job were also revealed to be significant in determining union membership choice. Although sex was not included in the discriminant function equation, this variable was correlated with weekly pay ($r = 0.51$), suggesting that it may have been entered into the discriminant model indirectly.

81 per cent of union members and 70 per cent of non-members were grouped accurately, giving an overall correct classification rate of 78 per cent. In order to determine whether or not they measured different traits or whether some of these variables represented the same underlying constructs, a correlation matrix of the above discriminating variables was examined. This suggested that union members and non-members did indeed vary in the distinct respects described above, as there was no correlation between the variables.

However, as discussed above, their correlation coefficients could not be regarded as reliable measures of association for the variables studied. Hence, in order to determine whether or not they could explain the male / female union membership differential, those variables identified as important predictors of union membership by the discriminant analysis were crosstabulated against sex. This appeared to provide a better indicator of the associations between sex and the discriminating variables than the relevant correlation coefficients, for the reasons outlined above.

Discussion

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

For the purposes of examining whether or not gender-related differences in attitudes to trade unionism could help explain differences in the union membership levels of the men and women studied, sex was crosstabulated against 'favourability to trade unions' and how much influence the respondent thought unions should have over pay and work organisation. This analysis revealed that the favourability to trade unions of the workers studied varied significantly according to sex ($p < 0.0001$). This was true even after controlling for employment status. When only full-time employees were analysed, 53 per cent of male workers were "very" or "quite favourable" to unions, compared to 43 per cent of female employees. Sixteen per cent and 22 per cent of male and female respondents respectively were "not very" or "not at all favourable" to unions.

The influence trade unions should have over pay was also significantly different for the male and female interviewees ($p < 0.05$), even after taking account of the predominance of women in part-time work. However, here, women were more likely than the male respondents to believe unions should have influence over pay. 92 per cent of full-time women workers felt trade unions should have "a lot" or "some" influence, compared to 89 per cent of the full-time male employees. Only three per cent of full-time female employees thought unions should have no influence at all, compared to seven per cent of the male workers. The respondents, though, did not differ significantly in how much they thought unions should influence work organisation.

Thus, although women were significantly more likely to believe that trade unions should influence pay, they were less favourable to trade unions than men. When the variable 'favourability to trade unions' was held constant for the full-time workers surveyed, sex was not significantly related to union membership. Hence, the fact that the women workers

tended to be less sympathetic to trade unions than the men analysed, appeared to have a considerable influence on the male / female union membership differential.

It appeared, then, that the difference in union membership levels of the men and women surveyed was not related to belief in trade unionism in general, but, rather, to the respondent's perceptions of trade unions, as measured by the variable 'favourability to trade unions'. This result seemed to suggest that the different union membership levels of men and women could perhaps be explained in terms of different perceptions of union instrumentality. Thus, although these variables were not included in the discriminant function equation as important predictors of union membership, the relationships between sex and the variables measuring how much influence the respondent thought unions did have over pay and work organisation were also examined.

Perceptions of Union Influence

In order to determine whether or not the male / female union membership differential could be explained with reference to how much influence men and women workers thought unions did have over pay and work organisation, these variables were crosstabulated against sex, while controlling for employment status. It was revealed that the variable 'how much influence workplace trade unions did have over work organisation' was not associated with sex. However, women were significantly more likely to believe that unions did have influence over pay: 76 per cent of full-time female employees thought unions did influence pay, compared to 72 per cent of full-time male workers. Crosstabulating sex against union membership, when controlling for this variable, revealed that the male employees who believed unions did influence pay were significantly more likely to belong to a trade union than the women who felt the same way. 83 per cent of women respondents who thought unions had influence over pay, and 88 per cent of the men who believed so, were union members. Thus, believing unions did have influence over pay appeared to be more likely to lead to unionisation among men than women. It seemed clear, then, that the

different union membership levels of men and women could not be accounted for by gender-related differences in perceptions of union instrumentality.

Those other survey variables revealed to be important in predicting propensity to unionise by the discriminant analysis were the employee's weekly pay and the permanency of his or her job.

Earnings

As expected, a significant association was found between sex and weekly pay. With respect to the full-time workers studied, the mean weekly pay, including overtime, of female employees was £134.57, compared to £200.32 for male workers. Thus, the female workers earned on average approximately only 67 per cent of male weekly pay. (When controlling for earnings from overtime, women earned approximately 69 per cent of male weekly.) Including overtime, the mean weekly pay and hourly earnings of female part-timers was £52.75.

When controlling for these gender-related differences in weekly pay, by crosstabulating sex against union membership only for full-time employees within the same pay categories, sex was no longer significantly related to union membership. Thus, the results appeared to suggest that the male / female pay differential may contribute to the lower union membership among women than men. This finding is consistent with results, discussed in chapter six, obtained in the United States by Chaison and Dhavale (1992).

How Permanent His or Her Employer Regarded the Respondent's Job

When controlling for the predominance of women in part-time work, this variable was found to be related to sex only at the ten per cent significance level: 91 per cent of the full-time female workers and 94 per cent of the full-time male employees, respectively, had permanent jobs. When only full-time employees with a permanent job were analysed, sex was still significantly associated with union membership. 83 per cent of the male workers were union members, compared to 78 per cent of the female employees - a slightly larger union membership differential than that obtained when full-time workers were not distinguished by how permanent their employer regarded their job. Thus, the higher percentage of male than female full-time employees in a permanent job did not appear to contribute to the difference in their union membership levels.

The results indicated by the discriminant analysis and subsequent crosstabulations, then, appeared to suggest that the employee's sex was not, in itself, an important predictor of union membership. Rather, significant gender-related differences in the variable 'favourability to trade unions' and the male / female pay differential seemed of greater significance.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Favourability to trade unions	0.369	0.514	0.840	0.0000
Influence trade unions should have over pay	0.315	0.637	0.878	0.0000
Weekly pay within lowest quartile	0.283	0.368	0.816	0.0000
How permanent employer sees job	-0.220	-0.230	0.790	0.0000

Table 12: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

p : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

Results of the Discriminant Analyses Performed for Each Employee Group

In an attempt to establish whether or not the best predictors of union membership varied according to the sex and / or employment status of the group of employees studied, a separate discriminant analysis was performed for full-time male workers, full-time female workers and for female part-timers.

Full-time Male Employees

Those variables which made the largest contribution to the prediction of union membership for this employee group were those relating to the respondent's attitudes to trade unions and to how much influence he believed unions had over pay and work organisation. Union membership was found to be most strongly related to:

- (i) influence trade unions should have over pay;
- (ii) favourability to trade unions;
- (iii) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation;
- (iv) influence of trade unions over pay received;
- (v) how permanent his or her employer regarded the respondent's job, and
- (vi) political preference.

The correct classification rate was 80 per cent for grouped cases overall, with 82 per cent of union members and 70 per cent of non-members respectively accurately predicted. The results of this analysis are given in table thirteen. All variables entered into the model exhibited a significance level of less than 0.0001 when crosstabulated against union membership. A correlation matrix suggested that a number of the variables listed above may be correlated. The influence the employee thought unions should have over pay appeared to be correlated with both how much influence he believed that they did have over pay ($r = 0.49$) and with political preference ($r = 0.34$). Also, how much influence respondents

thought unions had over work organisation was correlated with how much influence they thought unions had over pay ($r = 0.40$).

Full-time Female Employees

Although the interviewee's attitudes to trade unionism were also important for full-time female employees, age and the variable measuring commitment to paid employment were significant too. The best predictors of trade union membership among this group were:

- (i) influence trade unions should have over pay;
- (ii) favourability to trade unions;
- (iii) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation;
- (iv) age;
- (v) keep working if comfortably off, and
- (vi) weekly pay.

Overall, 74 per cent of cases were grouped accurately, with 78 per cent of union members and 61 per cent of non-members classified correctly. All variables listed above reached the conventional level of significance for the chi-square test when crosstabulated against trade union membership. Only weekly pay and how much influence the respondent thought unions should have over pay appeared to be correlated ($r = 0.39$).

Part-time Female Employees

For part-time female workers, the interviewee's own feelings concerning trade unionism were not as important for the discriminant model as they were for the full-time employees, although the variable 'favourability to trade unions' did make the second largest contribution. Union membership among part-time female employees was found to be related to:

- (i) presence of workplace representatives for the respondent's job;
- (ii) favourability to trade unions;
- (iii) at first job how favourable to trade unions was father, and
- (iv) political preference.

The above variables all reached the 0.05 level of significance when crosstabulated against union membership, with the exception of the variable measuring the respondent's father's attitude to trade unions when she got her first job, which reached a significance level of ten per cent. 74 per cent of union members and 64 per cent of non-members were classified correctly, resulting in 70 per cent of cases being grouped accurately. None of the variables listed above were correlated. The results of the discriminant analysis for full-time and part-time female employees are presented in tables fourteen and fifteen respectively.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Influence trade unions should have over pay	0.394	0.723	0.843	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.328	0.539	0.806	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.287	0.600	0.780	0.0000
Influence of trade unions over pay received	0.247	0.585	0.758	0.0000
How permanent employer sees job	-0.216	-0.194	0.772	0.0000
Party would vote for tomorrow - Conservative	0.197	0.252	0.751	0.0000

Table 13: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Male Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

p : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Influence trade unions should have over pay	0.490	0.687	0.893	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.428	0.550	0.861	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.378	0.621	0.838	0.0000
Age	-0.332	-0.209	0.824	0.0000
Keep working if comfortably off	0.215	0.085	0.805	0.0000
Weekly pay within lowest quartile	0.214	0.244	0.798	0.0000

Table 14: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Female Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

p : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Presence of workplace representatives	0.506	0.459	0.921	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.454	0.366	0.844	0.0000
At first job how trade union favourable was father	-0.449	-0.082	0.792	0.0000
Party would vote for tomorrow - Conservative	0.307	0.310	0.819	0.0000

Table 15: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Part-time Female Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

p : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

Discussion

It was clear from the crosstabulations of the survey variables against propensity to unionise and the discriminant analyses that influences on the worker's union membership decision varied across employee groups distinguished by sex and employment status. However, the results revealed that there was a more substantial difference between full-time and part-time women workers than between full-time male and female employees.

The discriminant function coefficients corresponding to the variables entered into the discriminant models for each of the worker categories indicated that for full-time employees, believing in the principles of trade unionism and being favourable to trade unions were the most important determinants of union membership¹. However, for part-time women workers, the presence of workplace representatives for their job were more important than the employee's own feelings towards trade unions.

These results would seem to suggest that for female part-timers, influences exerted at the workplace are of particular importance to their union membership choice. This contrasts with those factors identified as especially significant for the propensity to unionise of full-time workers, which appear to be primarily concerned with the employee's own attitudes towards trade unionism.

In an attempt to determine whether or not the variables identified as important predictors of union membership for the full-time and part-time women workers studied could help explain the difference in their union membership levels, these variables were first crosstabulated against employment status. Those variables which were found to be significantly associated with whether or not female respondents worked on a full-time or part-time basis were then held constant, while union membership was crosstabulated against the employment status variable for all women workers.

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

With respect to the attitudes to trade unions variables, which were most important for the union membership of the full-time female employees, only the variable 'how much influence should trade unions have over pay' was associated with employment status for the women workers. Full-time female employees were significantly more likely to believe unions should have "a lot" of influence over pay than the female part-timers. Approximately 44 per cent of female full-time workers thought unions should have a lot of influence, compared to 32 per cent of the part-timers. However, 48 per cent of the former employee group and 57 per cent of the part-time female employees, respectively, believed unions should have some influence. Thus, the female employees differed more significantly in whether or not they believed unions should have "a lot" or only "some" influence than in whether or not they thought unions should have any influence at all. Four per cent of the female part-timers believed unions should have no influence, compared to three per cent of the full-time female workers. Those variables measuring the respondent's attitudes to trade unionism, then, did not, in fact, differ substantially for the full-time and part-time women workers.

Whether or not the respondent would want to continue or stop paid employment if there was no financial need for her to work was also not associated with the worker's employment status. However, both the age and earnings level of the women workers were significantly related to whether or not interviewees were employed on a full-time or part-time basis at the conventional five per cent level.

Age

The full-time female employees were considerably more likely than the part-timers to be aged between 20 and 30: 33 per cent of the former workers were in this age group, compared to only thirteen per cent of the part-time employees. 24 per cent and 34 per cent of full-time and part-time women workers, respectively, were aged between 31 and 40 and fifteen per cent of female full-timers and 24 per cent of part-timers were in the 51 to 60 age group.

When employment status and union membership were crosstabulated, while controlling for this difference in the age distribution of the women workers studied here, a particularly interesting interaction was revealed between the variables age, union membership and whether or not the employee worked full-time or part-time. Although too few female part-timers were aged between 20 and 30 for reliable results to be obtained for this age group, the union membership differential between full-time and part-time women workers varied substantially across the remaining age categories. With respect to those aged between 31 and 40, 77.5 per cent of the full-time female employees belonged to a union, compared to only 49 per cent of the part-timers - a differential of 28 per cent. Similar results were obtained when crosstabulating employment status against union membership for the women workers in the 51 to 60 age category, though only 180 female employees were sampled here, so the findings should be viewed with some caution. However, the difference in the union membership levels of the women according to their employment status was substantially reduced when considering only those female respondents aged between 41 and 50. Here, 75 per cent of full-time women workers and 63 per cent of the female part-timers were in a union - a differential of only twelve per cent. Clearly, part-time women workers aged between 31 and 40 were particularly unlikely to belong to a union. Controlling for the concentration of the part-time female employees in this age group substantially decreased the union membership differential between the full-time and part-time women workers. However, their age distribution in the sample of employees studied

here, obviously, could not fully account for the difference in the union membership levels of the women studied.

Earnings

The weekly pay variable, of course, could not provide a reasonable comparison of earnings between the full-time and part-time female workers. Therefore, as weekly pay was likely to be closely related to hourly earnings, the latter was used in the study of the importance of earnings for the union membership of the female respondents. The analysis revealed hourly earnings to be significantly associated with employment status for the women workers. Full-time female employees earned on average £3.64 per hour, compared to an average of £2.86 per hour for female part-timers.

The study revealed that those part-time women workers with hourly earnings of between £2.20 and £3.70 were considerably less likely to be in a union than full-timers in this earnings category ($p < 0.0001$). 76.5 per cent of female full-time employees in this group were union members, compared to 57 per cent of the part-time women workers - a union membership differential of 19.5 per cent. Reliable results could not be obtained for the other women workers interviewed, as part-time female employees were so highly concentrated in the £2.20 to £3.70 earnings range. Thus, the earnings differential existing between full-time and part-time women workers, clearly, could not help explain the difference in their union membership levels.

With regard to the variable most important for the union membership decision of the female part-timers, full-time women workers were significantly more likely to state that they had union representatives at their workplace than the part-time female employees ($p < 0.0001$).

Presence of Workplace Representatives

Approximately 71 per cent of female full-time employees had union representatives at work, compared to 45 per cent of female part-timers. Of course, as the data used here relied on the accuracy of the worker's own knowledge, this result may have reflected the fact that full-time employees could reasonably be expected to be more likely than part-timers to be aware of the existence of union representatives at their workplace. Thus, the findings should, perhaps, be more accurately interpreted as indicating that the presence of union representatives, *of whom the employee was conscious*, was significantly different for the full-time and part-time women workers.

However, when controlling for the presence of union representatives at the respondent's workplace, employment status was still significantly associated with union membership for the female employees studied. The union membership differential between these worker groups, though, at 14.5 per cent for employees with union representatives at work and eleven per cent for the remaining respondents, was considerably lower than the nineteen per cent differential obtained before controlling for this variable. Thus, the fact that female part-timers were less likely to have workplace representatives at their work, or at least to be aware of the presence of such representatives, appeared to contribute to, although not wholly explain, the difference in union membership levels exhibited by the full-time and part-time women workers.

Thus, as the interviewee's political preference was not related to employment status for the female employees studied, the presence of workplace representatives appeared to be the only variable examined here which could be shown to contribute to the different union membership levels of full-time and part-time women workers. Clearly, the set of variables analysed could not provide an adequate explanation of the union membership differential between female full-time employees and part-timers. It is argued here that *inter alia* the policies and practices of the unions themselves with respect to part-time workers may help explain their low unionisation levels. Chapters ten and eleven include a consideration of the

approach to part-time workers taken by some of the largest unions in Britain in recent years.

Endnotes

1. As the variable 'favourability to trade unions' was arguably likely to be particularly closely related to union membership, the discriminant analysis was performed for each of the employee groups, with this variable removed from the list of predictor variables. However, neither the variables entered into the discriminant model nor their order of importance changed substantially. When all variables measuring the respondent's own attitudes to trade unions, that is 'favourability to trade unions' and how much influence the respondent thought unions should have, were excluded from the list of predictor variables, only small changes were made to the discriminant function models for the full-time employees, and the discriminant function remained unaltered for the part-time female employees. For both full-time male and female employees, the influence they thought unions did have over pay and work organisation and their political preference became most important for the prediction of their union membership.

CHAPTER 8

GENDER AND UNION PARTICIPATION: INITIAL EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Introduction

In chapter four, the proposition was advanced that, in order to understand fully the worker's relationship to trade unionism, it is necessary to examine not only influences on the employee's union membership decision, but, also, determinants of participation in trade union activity by union members. As the study discussed here was particularly concerned with the importance of gender for that relationship, this chapter attempts to establish whether or not sex is significantly related to the employee's involvement in trade unionism. In order to determine levels of union participation, the pattern of analyses described in chapter six was repeated with 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' as the dependent variable. Survey responses for this variable were 'frequent', 'sometime' and 'not at all'.

Again, only employees with a trade union at their workplace for their type of work were used in the analysis. No respondents who did not belong to a trade union attended union meetings. Thus, all employees included were trade union members at the time of the survey. This reduced the size of the sample of employees studied to 1,581, comprised of 893 full-time and seven part-time male employees, 476 full-time female workers and 205 female part-timers. As in the study of union membership, variables were analysed in groups of personal characteristics, work characteristics, attitudes to work and attitudes to trade unionism and characteristics of the trade union at the respondent's workplace. As

Fullagar (1986) has advanced, the set of determinants of commitment to the trade union may vary across different employee groups. Thus, for the purposes of this study, separate analyses were also conducted for full-time male workers, full-time female employees and for female part-timers. Although all variables used in the analysis of union membership were employed in the examination of participation in union activity, a number of other variables from the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey, which are listed below, were also included.

Personal Characteristics

1. Whether or not the respondent regarded domestic commitments as the 'main difficulty' he or she might face if trying to get a better job with either his or her current employer or with a different employer over the next two years.

Work Characteristics

1. Whether relations between employees and employers in the respondent's workplace were regarded by the employee to be difficult or harmonious.

Attitudes to Work

Attitudes to work were measured here by considering both satisfaction with work and commitment both to the job currently occupied by the respondent and to paid employment generally.

Satisfaction with Work

The Work Attitudes and Histories Survey attempted to assess satisfaction with work by asking respondents to indicate on a scale of zero to ten how satisfied they were with specific aspects of their work. A score of zero represented "very dissatisfied", five points, that the interviewee had "no strong feelings" and ten points, that respondents were "very satisfied". Interviewees were then asked to indicate, on the same scale, how satisfied they were with their present job overall. In order to simplify the presentation of the results, these variables were recoded to give three levels of satisfaction. 0 to 3 indicated that respondents were dissatisfied, 4 to 6 that they had no particularly strong feelings and 7 to 10 that interviewees were satisfied. The results obtained from this and the original coding scheme did not vary significantly.

The employee's level of general satisfaction was assessed, in addition, by the creation of a new variable, which was constructed by combining the respondent's scores obtained from the questions on particular work characteristics. This variable was also coded into three categories, using the original coding scheme for the questions on which it was based. Of course, this 'combined satisfaction score' would only be a truly reliable measure of total satisfaction with work if the respondent regarded each of the aspects of employment studied as equally important. However, this new variable was, nevertheless, included in the study here, in an attempt to provide an indication of overall satisfaction with work which was not based on a direct expression of satisfaction given by the interviewee, which Agassi (1979) has argued will tend to lead to artificially high satisfaction levels.

The employment features on which interviewees were asked to rate their satisfaction were:

1. promotion prospects;
2. total pay, including overtime and bonuses;
3. relations with the supervisor or manager at the respondent's workplace;
4. job security;

5. being able to use one's own initiative;
6. the ability and efficiency of management;
7. the actual work itself, and
8. hours worked.

Commitment to Work

In order to measure the respondent's commitment to his or her employment organisation, the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey asked respondents the following question:

If there were plenty of jobs available, would you wish to change your job?

Both this variable and that measuring the employee's commitment to work generally were examined in the study of union participation here.

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

1. The respondent's present employer's attitude to trade unions.
2. What was the respondent's employer's attitude to trade unions when the employee first joined a trade union.

The relationships between the variable 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' and the survey variables and the relationships between the latter and trade union membership, generally, were expected to be similar. The associations which were expected between both sex and the variables which were added to the study and the 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' variable are discussed below.

Associations Predicted Between the Survey Variables and 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'

Sex

In attempting to model commitment to the union and involvement in trade unionism, Gordon *et al* (1980), in the United States, found sex to be the only personal characteristic related to union commitment. Female union members exhibited significantly lower participation rates than their male counterparts, which is explained by Gordon *et al* in terms of women's domestic commitments. Thus, it was expected that sex would be related to the employee's level of involvement in union activity, with participation rates of female employees significantly lower than that of male workers.

Domestic Commitments

As discussed above, and in chapter five, domestic commitments have been advanced as the main reason for women's, and particularly part-timers', low involvement in trade unions. Thus, the survey question on whether or not the respondent's domestic commitments would be the main difficulty he or she might face if looking for a better job was included in the analysis of participation in union activity, as a measure of the importance of domestic commitments for the interviewee. It was expected that those employees with domestic commitments which they felt would adversely affect the possibility of improving their employment situation would be particularly unlikely to attend union meetings.

Employee / Employer Relations

Gordon *et al* (1980: 492) found dissatisfaction with management to be positively related to the employee's willingness " ... to fulfill their normal obligations to the union as well as perform special duties on behalf of the local." Thus, workers who regarded the relationship between employees and employers at their workplace to be difficult were expected to be more likely to attend union meetings than workers who believed these relations to be harmonious.

Satisfaction with Work

Gordon *et al* (1980), consistent with findings by Kochan (1979), discovered that dissatisfaction with "bread and butter" issues at work, in particular, pay and management, tended to lead to high levels of willingness to participate in union activity. Thus, it was hypothesised that dissatisfaction with pay, the ability / efficiency of management and possibly, job security, would be positively related to attendance at union meetings.

Commitment to Employment Organisation

It was predicted that those workers expressing commitment to their present job would have a higher probability of attending union meetings than the other respondents. This was based primarily upon the argument advanced by Kochan (1980), who has suggested that, with respect to willingness to join a trade union, workers will need to be sufficiently committed to their employment before they will be committed to changing their work environment.

Employer's Attitude when Employee First Joined a Trade Union

This variable was expected to be related to participation in union activity, though the nature of the relationship was difficult to predict. Although those union members whose employer had encouraged trade unions when he or she first joined were, perhaps, more likely to have become and remained involved in union activity, employees whose employer had discouraged union membership at this time were possibly more likely to exhibit a higher commitment to the union, as demonstrated by their willingness to join in the face of employer disapproval.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Personal Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'

Sex, employment status and employment segregation were crosstabulated against 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' for all employees considered as one group. Employment segmentation and all other variables were analysed separately for full-time male workers, full-time female employees and for female part-timers. The results of this analysis for the latter two employee groups are given in tables seventeen and eighteen respectively. The corresponding results for the male workers are presented in table 38 in appendix two.

Sex

As predicted, sex was significantly related to the employee's rate of attendance at union meetings. Approximately 21 per cent of male workers frequently went to meetings, compared to thirteen per cent of female employees. About 43 per cent of male employees and 52 per cent of female employees never attended meetings. When controlling for the predominance of women in part-time employment, the importance of gender for participation rates in union activity was substantially reduced, although the significance level reached was still just outwith the conventional five per cent level ($p = 0.0649$). 44 per cent of full-time male employees never attended meetings, compared to 49 per cent of full-time female workers. The results of the crosstabulation of sex against 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' are given below.

Table 16: Sex Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'.

Sex (N)	Frequent	Sometime	Not at all
Male (758)	21.5	35.8	42.7
Female (567)	12.9	35.3	51.9
Chi-square = 19.35	$p = 0.0001$	df = 2	

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

Area

Area was significantly associated with the dependent variable only for full-time female workers. Respondents in Coventry were particularly likely to attend union meetings frequently. However, the results could not be regarded as reliable, as the size of the sample of full-time female workers who were union members resulted in only a small number of cases within each response category

Age

Age was not significantly associated with 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' for either of the female employee groups. Although the results cannot be regarded as conclusive, as there were only a relatively small number of interviewees in each response category, there was no support here, then, for the suggestion that women are less likely to participate in union activity during their childrearing years (Ledwith *et al*, 1990). Full-time male workers in the 31 to 50 age group were significantly more likely to attend union meetings than the younger or older male workers studied. 40 per cent of workers in the

middle two age categories never attended meetings, compared to 44 per cent of those in the 20 to 30 age category and 54 per cent of those respondents aged between 51 and 60. Thus, the oldest male workers were particularly unlikely to be active in the union.

Self-Assessed Class Membership

This variable was also related to the dependent variable only for the full-time male workers. The analysis revealed that the male union members who regarded themselves as middle class were the most likely to go to union meetings. 74 per cent of these respondents went frequently or sometimes, compared to 61 per cent of those members who saw themselves as working class. Thus, although those employees who perceived themselves as middle class were significantly less likely to belong to a trade union than those who regarded themselves as working class, the union members who saw themselves as middle-class appeared to be more likely to participate in union activity. Those who did not perceive themselves as belonging to any class were the least likely to attend union meetings.

Political Preference

The relationship between the 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' variable and the employee's political preference was as expected, although, again, this was significant only for the full-time male workers. Those employees who asserted that they would vote for the Labour Party, if a General Election were held tomorrow, were significantly more likely to attend union meetings. Approximately 64 per cent of full-time male employees, who would vote for the Labour Party attended union meetings, compared to 51 per cent of those who would vote Conservative. Although not significant, similar results were obtained for both groups of female employee.

Domestic Commitments

Whether or not respondents regarded domestic commitments as the main difficulty they would have in getting a better job was not related to 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' for any of the employee groups studied. However, it was not clear whether this revealed that these commitments were, in fact, not important for participation in union activity or whether the particular variable analysed was not a reliable measure of the importance of domestic commitments for the respondent.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Area	Aberdeen (74)	16.2	43.2	40.5	0.0072
	Coventry (64)	20.3	48.4	31.3	
	Kirkcaldy (82)	14.6	26.8	58.5	
	Northampton (54)	13.0	27.8	59.3	
	Rochdale (79)	11.4	34.2	54.4	
	Swindon (43)	14.0	55.8	30.2	
Age	20 - 30 (126)	12.7	37.3	50.0	0.6030
	31 - 40 (97)	14.4	35.1	50.5	
	41 - 50 (104)	17.3	44.2	38.5	
	51 - 60 (69)	15.9	34.8	49.3	
Self-assessed class membership	No (273)	13.6	35.2	51.3	0.2798
	Middle class (42)	21.4	42.9	35.7	
	Working class (72)	16.7	47.2	36.1	
	Other class (3)	-	33.3	66.7	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative (53)	11.3	35.8	52.8	0.3435
	Labour (138)	17.4	39.9	42.8	
	Alliance (23)	34.8	26.1	39.1	
	Liberal (37)	10.8	40.5	48.6	
	SDP (39)	12.8	38.5	48.7	
	SNP (8)	37.5	37.5	25.0	
Domestic commitments	Yes (21)	14.3	47.6	38.1	0.6286
	No (345)	14.8	36.8	48.4	

Table 17: Personal Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-Time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Area	Aberdeen (27)	7.4	25.9	66.7	0.9790
	Coventry (31)	9.7	29.0	61.3	
	Kirkcaldy (32)	9.4	28.1	62.5	
	Northampton (29)	10.3	20.7	69.0	
	Rochdale (30)	3.3	33.3	63.3	
	Swindon (22)	9.1	36.4	54.5	
Age	20 - 30 (27)	14.8	22.2	63.0	0.2737
	31 - 40 (51)	3.9	35.3	60.8	
	41 - 50 (54)	13.0	27.8	59.3	
	51 - 60 (39)	2.6	25.6	71.8	
Self-assessed class membership	No (104)	6.7	27.9	65.4	0.3902
	Middle class (15)	20.0	13.3	66.7	
	Working class (46)	8.7	39.1	52.2	
	Other class (2)	-	-	100.0	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative (14)	-	35.7	64.3	0.5711
	Labour (73)	13.7	24.7	61.6	
	Alliance (8)	-	50.0	50.0	
	Liberal (17)	-	47.1	52.9	
	SDP (9)	11.1	33.3	55.6	
	SNP (1)	-	-	100.0	
Domestic commitments	Yes (32)	12.5	31.3	56.3	0.3244
	No (124)	6.5	26.6	66.9	

Table 18: Personal Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Part-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Work Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'

Employment Status

As noted, full-time workers were significantly more likely to attend union meetings than part-timers: 54 per cent of full-time employees went to meetings frequently or sometimes, compared to 44 per cent of part-time workers. Thus, respondents employed on a part-time basis were not only significantly less likely to belong to a trade union, but those part-timers who were union members were considerably less likely to participate in union activity. The results of the crosstabulation of employment status against the variable 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' are presented in table nineteen, below.

Table 19: Employment Status Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for All Employees.

Employment Status (N)	Frequent	Sometime	Not at all
Full-time (1149)	19.3	36.5	44.2
Part-time (176)	8.0	29.5	62.5
Chi-square = 24.07	$p = 0.0000$		df = 2

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

Employment Segregation

The relationship between employment segregation and union participation was, also, as expected: 57 per cent of those employees who worked exclusively or mainly with men attended union meetings frequently or sometimes, compared to 47 per cent of workers in jobs done exclusively or mainly by women. The results of this crosstabulation are given below.

Table 20: Employment Segregation Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for All Employees.

Response (N)	Frequent	Sometime	Not at all
Exclusively with men (375)	20.0	33.9	46.1
Mainly with men (286)	22.4	36.7	40.9
Equal ratio of men to women (247)	18.6	41.3	40.1
Mainly with women (296)	13.2	34.5	52.4
Exclusively with women (119)	10.1	29.4	60.5
Chi-square = 27.36	$p = 0.0006$		df = 8

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

Employment segregation was not significantly related to union participation for any of the employee groups. However, as in the study of union membership, too few respondents worked exclusively or mainly with the opposite sex for conclusions to be drawn here.

How Permanent His or Her Employer Regarded the Respondent's Job

Whether or not the interviewee was employed on a permanent basis, as opposed to a temporary or short-term one, was not significantly related to his or her frequency of attendance at union meetings for any of the employee groups. However, as permanent employees were most likely to be union members, considering only those non-permanent workers who belonged to a union reduced the size of this sample of employees to 70. Thus, the findings here should clearly be viewed with caution.

Employee / Employer Relations

How difficult or harmonious the respondent believed the relationship between employees and employers were at his workplace was strongly associated with attendance at union meetings for both groups of full-time workers, but not for female part-timers. 47 per cent of full-time male employees and 35 per cent of full-time female workers who regarded relations as "very difficult" attended union meetings frequently, compared to fourteen per cent and eleven per cent respectively of those respondents who perceived these relations to be "very harmonious". As predicted, then, difficult employee / employer relations were positively related to participation in union activity.

Kochan (1980) has asserted that part-timers are unlikely to have a sufficient level of commitment to work for the resolution of any dissatisfaction they might have with the work environment: that is, they are unlikely to exhibit involvement in trade unionism. Although the results for the female part-time workers here could be regarded as supporting this argument, in fact, the distribution of responses for this group was such that no conclusions could be drawn from the findings for this employee group. Only five female part-time workers regarded employee / employer relations at their workplace as "very difficult" and only 26 saw these as "somewhat difficult". Thus, the results only indicated that the female part-time employees appeared to be more satisfied with employee / employer relations at

their workplace than the full-time workers studied. It was not clear, then, whether or not dissatisfaction with employee / employer relations was less likely to result in involvement in trade unionism among part-timers than full-time employees.

Earnings

Weekly pay was significantly related to attendance at union meetings for both groups of full-time worker and hourly earnings for full-time male employees and part-time female workers. As for union membership, those employees whose pay fell near the mean of the earnings range for the employees studied were more likely to attend meetings than those with earnings within the extremes of this range.

Features of the Respondent's Job

Whether or not the respondent's job involved shift-working, clocking in / signing on or frequent night-work was not significantly associated with attendance at union meetings for the employees studied, with the exception of shift-working, which was negatively related to participation in union activity for the full-time female employees. 68 per cent of full-time female workers whose jobs involved shift-work never attended union meetings, compared to 41 per cent of the other respondents in this employee group. However, the results here may not be reliable, as only 84 full-time female employees analysed were occupied in jobs involving shift-work.

For the female workers, the results of the crosstabulations of work characteristics against frequency of attendance at union meetings are given in tables 21 and 22. The results for the male employees are given in table 39 in appendix two.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job (7)	14.3	57.1	28.6	0.7666
	Fixed-term job (20)	10.0	35.0	55.0	
	Permanent job (364)	15.1	37.9	47.0	
Employee / employer relations	Very difficult (23)	34.8	13.0	52.2	0.0185
	Somewhat difficult (97)	16.5	37.1	46.4	
	Quite harmonious (211)	13.3	43.1	43.6	
	Very harmonious (53)	11.3	30.2	58.5	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70 (14)	7.1	64.3	28.6	0.0042
	70 - 130 (206)	10.7	33.0	56.3	
	130 - 190 (111)	18.0	43.2	38.7	
	190 - 250 (54)	27.8	37.0	35.2	
	250 - 310 (10)	10.0	60.0	30.0	
	310 - 370 (0)	-	-	-	
	370 - 430 (1)	-	-	100.0	
	430 - 490 (0)	-	-	-	
	490 - 550 (0)	-	-	-	
550 - 610 (0)	-	-	-		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2 (30)	6.7	50.0	43.3	0.1486
	2.2 - 3.7 (220)	12.7	33.6	53.6	
	3.7 - 5.2 (84)	17.9	41.7	40.5	
	5.2 - 6.7 (39)	20.5	46.2	33.3	
	6.7 - 8.2 (17)	29.4	29.4	41.2	
	8.2 - 9.7 (5)	20.0	60.0	20.0	
	9.7 - 11.2 (1)	-	100.0	-	
	11.2 - 12.7 (0)	-	-	-	
	12.7 - 14.2 (0)	-	-	-	
14.2 - 15.7 (0)	-	-	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes (84)	2.4	29.8	67.9	0.0000
	No (311)	18.3	40.2	41.5	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes (41)	9.8	31.7	58.5	0.2769
	No (354)	15.5	38.7	45.8	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes (153)	15.7	41.2	43.1	0.4748
	No (243)	14.4	36.2	49.4	

Table 21: Work Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job (9)	11.1	33.3	55.6	0.8434
	Fixed-term job (2)	-	-	100.0	
	Permanent job (156)	8.3	28.8	62.8	
Employee / employer relations	Very difficult (5)	-	20.0	80.0	0.6264
	Somewhat difficult (26)	7.7	26.9	65.4	
	Quite harmonious (106)	10.4	27.4	62.3	
	Very harmonious (29)	-	34.5	65.5	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70 (125)	8.0	25.6	66.4	0.0811
	70 - 130 (41)	7.3	36.6	56.1	
	130 - 190 (2)	-	50.0	50.0	
	190 - 250 (1)	-	100.0	-	
	250 - 310 (1)	100.0	-	-	
	310 - 370 (0)	-	-	-	
	370 - 430 (0)	-	-	-	
	430 - 490 (0)	-	-	-	
	490 - 550 (1)	-	-	100.0	
550 - 610 (0)	-	-	-		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2 (58)	13.8	13.8	72.4	0.0009
	2.2 - 3.7 (80)	5.0	31.3	63.8	
	3.7 - 5.2 (22)	4.5	54.5	40.9	
	5.2 - 6.7 (7)	-	28.6	71.4	
	6.7 - 8.2 (3)	-	66.7	33.3	
	8.2 - 9.7 (1)	100.0	-	-	
	9.7 - 11.2(0)	-	-	-	
	11.2 - 12.7 (0)	-	-	-	
	12.7 - 14.2 (0)	-	-	-	
14.2 - 15.7 (0)	-	-	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes (37)	5.4	32.4	62.2	0.7124
	No (133)	9.0	27.8	63.2	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes (27)	11.1	33.3	55.6	0.6463
	No (144)	7.6	27.8	64.6	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes (69)	8.7	21.7	69.6	0.2568
	No (102)	7.8	33.3	58.8	

Table 22: Work Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Part-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Attitudes to Work Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'

Satisfaction with Work

Only satisfaction expressed with the ability / efficiency of management for full-time female workers and dissatisfaction with hours worked for part-time female employees were significantly associated with the worker's frequency of attendance at union meetings at the conventional five per cent level. 23 per cent of full-time female workers who were dissatisfied with the ability / efficiency of management attended meetings frequently, compared to eleven per cent of those respondents who were satisfied with this aspect of work.

With respect to female part-timers, only five workers were dissatisfied with hours worked and only 20 had no strong feelings about it. Thus, the distribution of workers across the response categories here meant that no conclusions could justifiably be drawn from the findings. The employee's dissatisfaction with his or her work environment, then, did not appear to be an important predictor of participation in union activity. The results of the crosstabulations of the satisfaction with work variables and 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' are given in tables 40 to 42 in appendix two.

Commitment to Work

The variables measuring commitment to work were not related to participation in union activity for any of the employee groups studied. Thus, the level of commitment to work expressed by the employee himself or herself did not appear to be related to union membership or involvement in union activity. The results of the analysis of the commitment to work variables are presented in tables 43 to 45 in appendix two.

Results of the Crosstabulation of Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings'

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

The most important reason given by the employee for his or her union membership was significantly related to attendance at union meetings for full-time male employees and for part-time female workers. For both of these groups, those who belonged to a union "to help create a more just society" were the most likely to attend trade union meetings frequently, followed by those who were union members "to show solidarity". Those employees who belonged to a union because they believed it was "a condition of the job" or because "everyone else was a member" were the least likely to attend union meetings; approximately half of the full-time male workers who belonged to a union for either of the latter two reasons never went to meetings. Thus, those who were union members primarily for ideological reasons appeared to exhibit the highest participation rates, followed by those respondents who belonged to the union because of the benefits they believed this brought - "to help get better pay or conditions" or to protect them from future problems. Although not significant, similar results were obtained for the full-time female employees.

The respondent's favourability to trade unions was also significantly associated with the 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' variable, for all worker categories examined. However, whether participation in union activity was a cause or result of the interviewee's sympathy with the trade unions was not clear. These results were similar to those obtained from the analyses of union participation and the variables measuring the influence the employee believed unions should have over pay and work organisation. Attendance at union meetings was positively related to believing unions should have influence over work organisation for full-time female employees and to believing unions should influence both pay and work organisation for full-time male workers. Approximately 41 per cent of male workers surveyed who believed unions should have "a lot" or "some" influence over pay

never attended union meetings, compared to 65 per cent of those respondents who felt unions should have "a little" or no influence.

Perceptions of Union Influence

How much influence the interviewee thought that the union at his or her workplace had over pay and work organisation was significantly associated with the rate of union participation of both groups of full-time worker, but not for the female part-timers. Approximately 41 per cent of full-time male workers and 38 per cent of full-time female employees who believed that unions did influence work organisation never attended union meetings, compared to 65 per cent and 57 per cent of male and female respondents respectively who thought that the trade unions had "not much" or no influence. Thus, the results appeared to indicate that believing unions could effect change in the work environment was positively related to participation in union activity. However, again, the direction of causality of the relationship between the dependent variable here and the employee's perception of union influence was not clear.

Features of Trade Union Organisation at the Respondent's Workplace

The presence of workplace representatives for the interviewee's job appeared to encourage participation in the union. This variable was significantly related to the frequency with which both groups of full-time employee attended union meetings. A particularly strong association was found here for male workers: approximately 39 per cent of those employees who had workplace representatives for their job never went to meetings, compared to 72 per cent of the other male respondents.

The respondent's present employer's attitude to trade unions also appeared to be associated with attendance at union meetings for all employee groups, although significance was just

outwith the conventional five per cent level for the full-time male employees and for the female part-timers ($p = 0.0681$ and $p = 0.0537$ respectively). However, the relationship exhibited here was not that which was expected. Those workers whose employers encouraged union membership were less likely to attend union meetings than interviewees with employers who merely accepted or discouraged membership. For instance, 51 per cent of those full-time female workers who reported that their employer encouraged union membership never attended meetings, compared to 43 per cent and 39 per cent of those with employers who only accepted or discouraged it respectively. Similar results were obtained for the variable measuring the attitude to trade unions of his or her employer when the respondent first joined a trade union.

Socialisation Factors

The respondent's partner's favourability to trade unions was significantly related to the 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' variable for all employee groups. However, the nature of this relationship appeared difficult to determine. The association found here may, of course, indicate only that individuals choose partners of a similar political disposition to themselves.

How favourable the employee's father was to trade unions at the time the respondent got his or her first job was not significantly related to union participation rates for any of the worker categories.

The results of the above analyses for the female employees are given in tables 23 and 24 and in table 46 in appendix two for the male workers.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Most important reason for being in union	Condition of job (45)	11.1	37.8	51.1	0.1509
	To create just society (31)	29.0	51.6	19.4	
	Show solidarity (25)	20.0	36.0	44.0	
	Pay and conditions (81)	17.3	30.9	51.9	
	Everyone else (14)	7.1	28.6	64.3	
	Future Problems (195)	12.8	40.5	46.7	
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (64)	34.4	40.6	25.0	0.0000
	Quite favourable (136)	15.4	48.5	36.0	
	No strong feelings (132)	8.3	29.5	62.1	
	Not very favourable (55)	9.1	32.7	58.2	
	Not at all favourable (7)	-	28.6	71.4	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence (197)	17.3	35.0	47.7	0.1644
	Some influence (173)	14.5	42.8	42.8	
	Not much influence (14)	-	28.6	71.4	
	None at all (7)	-	28.6	71.4	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence (86)	24.4	36.0	39.5	0.0023
	Some influence (199)	16.6	39.7	43.7	
	Not much influence (62)	6.5	41.9	51.6	
	None at all (46)	2.2	30.4	67.4	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence (123)	17.1	39.0	43.9	0.1064
	Some influence (180)	17.2	41.1	41.7	
	Not much influence (62)	8.1	29.0	62.9	
	None at all (16)	6.3	37.5	56.3	
Workplace trade unions influence over work organisation	Lot of influence (45)	20.0	42.2	37.8	0.0292
	Some influence (145)	17.9	44.8	37.2	
	Not much influence (131)	12.2	34.4	53.4	
	None at all (65)	10.8	29.2	60.0	

Table 23: Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union

Meetings' for Full-time Female Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes (338)	16.9	39.1	44.1	0.0042
	No (55)	3.6	30.9	65.5	
Present employer's attitude to trade unions	Encouraging (153)	7.2	41.8	51.0	0.0066
	Accepting (209)	20.1	36.8	43.1	
	Discouraging (18)	33.3	27.8	38.9	
	Unaffected (7)	-	57.1	42.9	
Employer's attitude when first joined a trade union	Encouraging (155)	9.0	36.1	54.8	0.0608
	Accepting (200)	18.5	40.0	41.5	
	Discouraging (17)	23.5	29.4	47.1	
	Unaffected (14)	21.4	50.0	28.6	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (68)	25.0	47.1	27.9	0.0073
	Quite favourable (70)	15.7	25.7	58.6	
	No strong feelings (70)	10.0	38.6	51.4	
	Not very favourable (40)	7.5	47.5	45.0	
	Not at all favourable (19)	10.5	31.6	57.9	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable (69)	23.2	44.9	31.9	0.1158
	Quite favourable (73)	12.3	37.0	50.7	
	No strong feelings (90)	14.4	37.8	47.8	
	Not very favourable (33)	18.2	36.4	45.5	
	Not at all favourable (25)	16.0	28.0	56.0	

Table 23 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Most important reason for being in union	Condition of job (32)	3.1	21.9	75.0	0.0135
	To create just society (14)	28.6	21.4	50.0	
	Show solidarity (5)	20.0	80.0	-	
	Pay and conditions (33)	15.2	21.2	63.6	
	Everyone else (9)	-	22.2	77.8	
	Future problems (75)	4.0	34.7	61.3	
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (25)	36.0	24.0	40.0	0.0000
	Quite favourable (52)	9.6	32.7	57.7	
	No strong feelings (59)	-	32.2	67.8	
	Not very favourable (28)	-	25.0	75.0	
	Not at all favourable (6)	-	-	100.0	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence (73)	13.7	26.0	60.3	0.3177
	Some influence (81)	3.7	33.3	63.0	
	Not much influence (6)	16.7	33.3	50.0	
	None at all (2)	-	-	100.0	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence (33)	15.2	33.3	51.5	0.6345
	Some influence (81)	6.2	27.2	66.7	
	Not much influence (24)	8.3	33.3	58.3	
	None at all (24)	4.2	29.2	66.7	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence (53)	13.2	20.8	66.0	0.1976
	Some influence (74)	5.4	39.2	55.4	
	Not much influence (27)	11.1	25.9	63.0	
	None at all (7)	-	14.3	85.7	
Workplace trade unions influence over work organisation	Lot of influence (23)	13.0	21.7	65.2	0.2040
	Some influence (49)	4.1	30.6	65.3	
	Not much influence (49)	16.3	32.7	51.0	
	None at all (38)	2.6	28.9	68.4	

Table 24: Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union

Meetings' for Part-time Female Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes (113)	9.7	31.9	58.4	0.1912
	No (52)	5.8	21.2	73.1	
Present employer's attitude to trade unions	Encouraging (68)	5.9	22.1	72.1	0.0537
	Accepting (90)	7.8	35.6	56.7	
	Discouraging (6)	33.3	33.3	33.3	
	Unaffected (4)	25.0	-	75.0	
Employer's attitude when first joined a trade union	Encouraging (66)	3.0	24.4	72.7	0.0214
	Accepting (87)	9.2	34.5	56.3	
	Discouraging (5)	40.0	20.0	40.0	
	Unaffected (3)	33.3	33.3	33.3	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (36)	22.2	19.4	58.3	0.0211
	Quite favourable (42)	9.5	33.3	57.1	
	No strong feelings (33)	-	36.4	63.6	
	Not very favourable (19)	-	36.8	63.2	
	Not at all favourable (14)	7.1	7.1	85.7	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable (41)	17.1	31.7	51.2	0.5323
	Quite favourable (26)	3.8	26.9	69.2	
	No strong feelings (25)	8.0	20.0	72.0	
	Not very favourable (15)	-	33.3	66.7	
	Not at all favourable (15)	6.7	26.7	66.7	

Table 24 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Part-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

Summary of Results

Personal Characteristics

The crosstabulation of the survey variables with the respondent's frequency of attendance at union meetings revealed that gender was related to participation rates in union activity, but that the significance of this relationship was greatly reduced after controlling for the predominance of women in part-time work. Thus, the relationship between sex and participation in union activity clearly mirrored that between sex and union membership.

Although associated with union participation for full-time male workers, age, self-assessed class membership and political ideology did not appear to influence women's involvement in trade union activity, though the sample sizes here mean that these results cannot be regarded as conclusive. Also, the variable measuring domestic commitments was not associated with 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' for any of the employee groups studied. However, this variable offered only an indirect assessment of family responsibilities and, therefore, may not have been a reliable indicator of the respondents' domestic commitments.

Work Characteristics

The work characteristics variables did not tend to be associated with the union participation rate of the employees studied, although results in some instances were difficult to interpret due to the distribution of interviewees across response categories. As discussed above, those female workers employed on a part-time basis were significantly less likely to attend union meetings than full-time workers. However, there was no evidence to support the argument advanced by Kochan (1980) that this may be due to a lower commitment to work among part-time employees. The lower involvement of female part-timers in trade unionism may have been, at least in part, a reflection of their role in the home, as suggested by

Sharpe (1984) *et al.* However, this may also be linked to policies and practices of unions themselves regarding recruitment and participation in the unions, which are discussed in chapters ten and eleven.

For both full-time worker groups, difficult employee / employer relations at the respondent's workplace were associated with participation in union activity, but not for the female part-timers, who were particularly unlikely to regard such relations as difficult. The results also revealed that not only were employees with earnings which were not in the extremes of the pay range for the respondents studied more likely to belong to a union, they were more likely to attend union meetings than those with either particularly low or high pay.

Attitudes to Work

Neither satisfaction with work nor commitment to work were found to be significantly related to participation in union activity. The results, therefore, did not appear to support the findings by Gordon *et al* (1980), who discovered that dissatisfaction with the work environment, especially with what Gordon *et al* term "lower order needs", such as pay, was especially likely to lead to a willingness to participate in union activity. This may, in part, be due to the fact that the research by Gordon *et al* was conducted in the United States, where, it has been argued, as discussed in chapter five, workers are less likely than British employees to have an ideological attachment to their union (Fiorito *et al*, 1988).

Trade Union Characteristics

Indeed, the analysis of union participation and attitudes to trade unionism suggested that the commitment of many British workers to trade union activity has a clear ideological basis. Those respondents who had joined a union for reasons relating to principles of equity and solidarity were most likely to attend union meetings. This was consistent with the findings for the variables measuring favourability to trade unions and how much influence interviewees thought unions should have over pay and work organisation. Believing unions were able to exercise influence in the workplace was also significantly associated with union participation, with those employees who believed unions did have influence more likely to be active in the union. Thus, it would seem that believing in the principles of trade unionism and in union instrumentality was particularly important in determining participation rates in union activity. However, whether or not union participation was a result or cause of these attitudes to trade unionism was not clear.

As measured by the respondent's father's favourability to trade unions at the time the employee got his or her first job, earlier socialisation was not found to be related to involvement in trade unionism.

The set of trade union characteristics variables associated with union participation did not vary across the employee groups as significantly as in the analysis of union membership. In particular, influences on union participation for full-time and part-time women workers did not appear to differ so greatly as the influences studied on their propensity to unionise. Although the variables measuring how much influence the respondent believed unions did have over pay and work organisation were both significantly related to attendance at union meetings for full-time workers, but not for female part-timers, neither sex nor employment status were significantly associated with this dependent variable.

The relative importance of the variables studied here for union participation is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 9

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER FOR UNION PARTICIPATION

Introduction

In order to determine the significance of gender for participation rates in trade unionism with respect to the other survey variables analysed, a step-wise discriminant analysis was performed for all employees considered as one group, with the sets of variables identified in the previous chapter successively added to the list of predictor variables. As in chapter seven, concerning union membership, the relationship between sex and union participation was then examined, while controlling for those variables revealed to be the most important predictors of attendance at union meetings by the discriminant analysis. A separate discriminant analysis was also conducted for full-time male workers, full-time female employees and for female part-timers, for the purposes of establishing the best predictors of union involvement for each of these employee groups.

As the response variable 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' offered three possible responses, a three-group discriminant analysis was performed. This resulted in two discriminant function equations, representing differences between groups one and two - those attending meetings 'frequently' or 'sometimes' - and between groups two and three - interviewees attending meetings 'sometimes' or 'not at all'. The best model for prediction of the dependent variable is always offered by the first function, as this provides the greatest overall average separation of the groups (Diekhoff, 1992). Although the same

variables are entered into both the first and second discriminant function equations, their order of importance is different for each. As the first function explains the most variability between the groups, reference is made here only to the best predictors for this function. The second discriminant function is always uncorrelated to the first. The relative explanatory power of the functions are given by the eigenvalues relating to each: the larger the eigenvalue, the greater the percentage of variance explained by the corresponding function.

Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees

When only personal characteristics variables were included in the discriminant analysis as independent variables, sex was found to be an important indicator of an employee's level of participation in trade union activity. The most important predictor was political preference, followed by self-assessed class membership and then sex. The overall correct classification rate was 45 per cent. Of course, as a three-group discriminant analysis was performed, 33 per cent of cases analysed would have been grouped correctly by chance alone.

As in the study of union membership, when work characteristics variables were also included in the analysis sex was immediately displaced from the discriminant function equation. The overall correct classification rate was 43 per cent. Those work characteristics entered into the discriminant model were hourly earnings, employment status and employee / employer relations at the interviewee's workplace. As in the analysis concerning the employee's propensity to unionise, which considered all employees, a number of the work characteristics of the union members studied here were correlated with sex. Employment status ($r = 0.41$), employment segregation ($r = 0.78$), weekly pay ($r = 0.47$) and hourly earnings ($r = 0.38$) all appeared to be significantly correlated with this variable.

When the attitudes to trade unions variables and the characteristics of the trade union at the respondent's workplace were also added to the discriminant analysis, the best predictor of the respondent's frequency of attendance at union meetings became favourability to trade unions. Other union characteristics variables entered into the model were:

- (i) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation, and
- (ii) whether or not the respondent belonged to a trade union "to help create a more just society".

Overall, 50 per cent of cases were classified correctly. When all variables, including those measuring attitudes to work, were considered as explanatory variables, the most important predictors of participation in union activity were found to be:

- (i) favourability to trade unions;
- (ii) weekly pay;
- (iii) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation;
- (iv) whether or not the respondent belonged to a trade union "to help create a more just society";
- (v) whether or not the respondent would change jobs if plenty were available, and
- (vi) self-assessed class membership.

50 per cent of cases were classified correctly, an improvement of seventeen percentage points on that which would have been classified accurately by chance alone. 59 per cent of those employees who attended union meetings frequently, 34 per cent of those who attended sometimes and 58 per cent of employees who never attended meetings respectively were predicted correctly. The variables identified as important predictors of union membership listed above were not correlated.

Participation in union activity, then, was positively related to being favourable to unions and believing in the principles of trade unionism, as well as to feeling that trade unions could influence work organisation. Also, involvement in trade unionism was shown to be associated with pay, expressed commitment to one's employment organisation and to self-assessed class membership. Although sex was not entered into the discriminant function equation, this variable appeared to be correlated with weekly pay ($r = 0.47$) and favourability to trade unions ($r = 0.49$), suggesting that gender may have been included in the discriminant model indirectly. The eigenvalues given for each of the functions (0.175 for the first function and 0.027 for the second function) indicated that 87 per cent of the

variance explained between the groups was accounted for by the first discriminant function and thirteen per cent by the second function. The results of the analysis above are given in table 25.

For the reasons described in chapter seven, the correlation coefficients of the variables analysed here could not be regarded as reliable measures of their association. Therefore, the variables entered into the discriminant model were crosstabulated against sex for all employees and then for full-time workers only; that is, controlling for employment status. This analysis was conducted in order to determine whether or not these variables could account for the difference in union participation exhibited by male and female employees.

Discussion

The crosstabulations of sex against the variables identified as important for predicting attendance at union meetings by the discriminant analysis revealed 'favourability to trade unions', weekly pay, 'reason for being in a union' and expressed commitment to the employment organisation as significantly related to gender, even after controlling for the predominance of women in part-time employment. For the women workers studied, only weekly pay was significantly related to employment status at the conventional five per cent level, though the main reason for the employee's union membership was associated with employment status at the ten per cent significance level.

Attitudes to Trade Unionism

With respect to the 'favourability to trade unions' variable, for those employees who either had no strong feelings about unions or who were unfavourable to them, sex was not significantly associated with union participation. However, for employees who were "very" or "quite" favourable to unions, sex was related to the dependent variable at the five per cent significance level. Approximately 67 per cent of male workers who were favourable to unions attended meetings, compared to 62 per cent of the female employees studied. However, when controlling for employment status, for those employees who were favourable to unions, sex was associated with 'frequency of attendance at union meetings' only at the ten per cent significance level. Thus, the results here appeared to parallel those found with respect to the sex and union membership relationship: women's lower favourability to unions seemed to make a significant contribution to the male / female differential in union participation.

When considering only those workers who had joined a union mainly "to show solidarity", sex was not related to attendance at union meetings. However, the small number of

respondents here meant that the results could not be regarded as reliable: only 89 interviewees were in a union primarily for this reason.

Earnings

When controlling for weekly pay sex was no longer significantly related to union participation, for the full-time workers studied. However, sex was still significantly associated with this dependent variable when taking account of hourly earnings for full-time employees, though this was not the case when controlling for the predominance of women in part-time work. Thus, gender differences in earnings appeared, at least in part, to explain the male / female differential in union participation.

Commitment to Employment Organisation

The crosstabulation of sex against commitment to the employment organisation revealed that female union members were more likely to be committed to their present firm than the male interviewees ($p < 0.05$). Approximately 62 per cent of the women studied would not leave their present employment organisation if plenty of jobs were available, compared to 55 per cent of the men analysed. When controlling for this variable, sex was significantly associated with attendance at union meetings, at the conventional five per cent level, only for those employees who would *not* wish to change jobs if plenty were available. Approximately 57 per cent of the male workers and 45 per cent of the female employees who would not leave their present employment organisation attended union meetings. Thus, although women were, in fact, more committed to their present employer, commitment to one's employment organisation appeared to be more likely to be positively related to union participation among the male respondents than the female employees. The employee's commitment to his or her employment organisation, then, could not help explain the male / female differential in rates of union participation.

Thus, in determining whether or not the variables estimated as important for predicting participation in union activity by the discriminant analysis could help account for the difference in male and female levels of involvement in trade unionism, the employee's favourability to trade unions and pay were revealed to be of particular significance. After controlling for these variables and for employment status, sex was no longer significantly associated with union participation. These results are similar to those revealed by the analysis of the relationship between sex and union membership, discussed in chapter seven.

The study of the employee's favourability to trade unions and commitment to his or her employment organisation seemed to indicate that the variables established by the discriminant analysis as important in determining union participation may have a more significant impact on the involvement in trade unionism of the male than the female respondents. This is supported by the results of the discriminant analysis, discussed in the following section of this chapter, performed for each of the employee groups categorised by sex and employment status.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	<i>P</i>
Favourability to trade unions	$r_1=0.658$ $r_2 =0.785$	$r_1=0.235$ $r_2 =0.230$	0.901	0.0000
Weekly pay within lowest quartile	$r_1=0.388$ $r_2 =0.328$	$r_1=-0.233$ $r_2 =-0.134$	0.869	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	$r_1=0.298$ $r_2 =0.418$	$r_1=-0.310$ $r_2 =-0.234$	0.885	0.0000
Reason in union - to create a more just society	$r_1=-0.270$ $r_2 =-0.416$	$r_1=-0.020$ $r_2 =-0.101$	0.848	0.0000
Wish to change jobs if plenty	$r_1=-0.198$ $r_2 =-0.199$	$r_1=0.115$ $r_2 =0.156$	0.842	0.0000
Self-assessed class membership	$r_1=0.168$ $r_2 =0.305$	$r_1=-0.227$ $r_2 =-0.157$	0.855	0.0000

Table 25: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

Results of the Discriminant Analyses Performed for Each Employee Group

The best predictors of the worker's participation rate in union activity varied across all three employee groups. The results of the analyses here are given in tables 26 to 28.

Full-time Male Workers

The most important indicators of their participation rate in union activity for the male respondents were being favourable to trade unions and believing unions did have influence over conditions of work. For this employee group, attendance at union meetings was related to:

- (i) favourability to trade unions;
- (ii) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation;
- (iii) weekly pay;
- (iv) being a union member to "help create a more just society", and
- (v) whether or not the respondent would change jobs if plenty were available.

The correct classification rate overall was 50 per cent. 85.5 per cent of the variance was explained by the first discriminant function. The correlation matrix of the discriminating variables listed above suggested that there was no correlation between these variables.

Full-time Female Workers

Similarly, the most important predictor of involvement in trade unionism for the full-time female employees was favourability to unions. Union participation for the full-time women workers was also related to whether or not their job involved shift-working. These were the only variables which reached the critical F value for inclusion in the discriminant model. 54 per cent of cases overall were grouped accurately. Here, 93 per cent of the variance was explained by the first function. Again, the variables entered into the discriminant function equation did not appear to be correlated.

Part-time Female Workers

For part-time female employees, participation in union activity was also associated with their favourability to trade unions, though whether or not the interviewee's weekly pay fell within the lowest quartile of the earnings range was most important. Whether or not the employee joined the union "to show solidarity" was also entered into the model. 68 per cent of cases were predicted correctly for this group. The two discriminant functions established for part-time female workers explained a more even percentage of the variance between the groups analysed than for the full-time employees. Here, 67 per cent of the variance was accounted for by the first function and 33 per cent by the second. Only the main reason given by the employee for her union membership and her 'favourability to trade unions' were found to be correlated ($r = 0.33$).

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	<i>P</i>
Favourability to trade unions	$r_1=0.647$ $r_2 =0.739$	$r_1=-0.320$ $r_2 =-0.384$	0.911	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	$r_1=0.437$ $r_2 =0.526$	$r_1=0.356$ $r_2 =0.209$	0.885	0.0000
Weekly pay within middle two quartiles	$r_1=0.359$ $r_2 =0.246$	$r_1=-0.134$ $r_2 =0.366$	0.831	0.0000
Reason in union - to create a more just society	$r_1=-0.308$ $r_2 =-0.418$	$r_1=0.040$ $r_2 =0.170$	0.840	0.0000
Wish to change jobs if plenty available	$r_1=-0.284$ $r_2 =-0.262$	$r_1=-0.063$ $r_2 =-0.106$	0.850	0.0000

Table 26: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Male Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Favourability to trade unions	$r_1=0.836$ $r_2 =0.816$	$r_1=0.092$ $r_2 =0.145$	0.905	0.0000
Job involves: frequent shift work	$r_1=-0.487$ $r_2 =-0.487$	$r_1=-0.348$ $r_2 =-0.336$	0.854	0.0000

Table 27: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Female Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	<i>P</i>
Weekly pay within lowest quartile	$r_1=0.626$ $r_2=0.576$	$r_1=-0.576$ $r_2=-0.476$	0.912	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	$r_1=0.580$ $r_2=0.689$	$r_1=0.832$ $r_2=0.724$	0.789	0.0000
Reason in trade union - to show solidarity	$r_1=-0.483$ $r_2=-0.496$	$r_1=0.470$ $r_2=0.252$	0.741	0.0000

Table 28: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Part-time Female Employees.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

***P*:** Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

Discussion

Thus, the nature of the variation between the employee groups was not comparable to that revealed in the analysis of union membership: the discriminant models obtained for both categories of full-time worker were not particularly similar. However, the small number of variables which reached the critical F value for inclusion in the discriminant models for the two female employee groups may be interpreted as suggesting that the participation rate in union activity by women workers was not well explained by the independent variables. This is supported by the relatively low correct classification rates for the discriminant analysis here. It may perhaps be argued that the absence of variables designed to measure either the family responsibilities of the women workers and / or the nature of trade unions themselves, considered in chapter three, may have contributed to this result. This is more fully discussed later in this chapter.

The findings from the discriminant analyses did suggest, however, that the respondent's 'favourability to trade unions' was an important predictor of union participation for all of the employee groups studied. As expected, attitudes to trade unionism, then, were associated with both union membership and rates of participation in union activity. However, as noted in chapters six and eight, it was not possible to determine the directions of causality of the relationships between the dependent and independent variables here.

In an attempt to establish which variables were most important for the formation of the employee's attitudes to trade unions, and particularly whether or not sex was a significant determinant of these attitudes, separate discriminant analyses were performed with union membership and the survey variables described in the previous section included as independent variables, with how much influence should unions have over pay and work organisation and 'favourability to trade unions' as dependent variables. For the former two variables, a composite variable - 'union influence' - was created by adding together responses measuring the influence respondents thought unions should have over pay and

over work organisation. This new variable was established in an attempt to indicate the extent to which interviewees were sympathetic to the principles of trade unionism. Of course, those survey variables applicable only to union members were removed from the analysis: that is, the main reason why the employee was a union member and the respondent's employer's attitude when he or she first joined a trade union were excluded from the list of predictor variables.

Results of the Discriminant Analyses Performed with 'Union Influence' as the Dependent Variable

When all employees were considered, sex was not identified as an important predictor of the 'union influence' variable. Those variables revealed to be most important in determining the employee's beliefs concerning the principles of trade unionism were the influence respondents believed unions did have over work organisation and 'favourability to trade unions'. A correlation matrix indicated that those variables entered into the discriminant model were not correlated. When the employees were divided into three groups according to their employment status and sex, these were also the two most important predictors of the 'union influence' variable for the full-time worker categories. The magnitudes of the coefficients for the discriminating variables indicated that these variables were considerably more important for the discriminant models than the other predictor variables included in the functions.

Whether or not the respondent was a trade union member made the third largest contribution to the discriminant model for all employees considered as one group, and for the full-time male workers. However, this variable was not entered into the discriminant function equation for full-time female employees, although it was the fifth most important predictor of the union influence variable for female part-timers. For the part-time female employees 'favourability to trade unions' was most significant, followed by 'area', and then satisfaction / dissatisfaction with actual work. Approximately 70 per cent of the cases in each employee group were classified correctly.

Thus, union membership appeared to be more strongly associated with attitudes to trade unionism for men than women. When 'favourability to trade unions' was removed from the list of predictor variables, the discriminating variables did not change significantly, although political preference entered the discriminant models for both categories of female worker. The results of the above analyses are given in tables 47 to 50 in appendix three.

Believing in the principles of trade unionism, then, appeared to be most closely related to the perception of unions as able to effect change in the work environment and to favourability to trade unions. In order to determine the most important predictors of favourability to trade unions, this variable was also analysed using discriminant analyses.

Results of the Discriminant Analyses Performed with 'Favourability to Trade Unions' as the Dependent Variable

When all employees were studied as one group, 'favourability to trade unions' was the only response variable considered here which led to gender being entered into the discriminant model, when all other independent variables were also considered. The six best predictors of 'favourability to trade unions' were:

- (i) union membership;
- (ii) political preference;
- (iii) the respondent's partner's favourability to trade unions;
- (iv) sex;
- (v) at first job how favourable to trade unions was father, and
- (vi) influence of trade unions over pay received.

The overall correct classification rate here was 55 per cent, spread evenly between the discriminating groups. Only sex and hourly earnings were correlated ($r = 0.39$). Thus, sex was found to be an important predictor of favourability to trade unions. However, whether or not the employee belonged to a trade union and his or her political ideology were of more significance in determining this dependent variable.

Political preference and union membership were also the most important predictors of the 'favourability to trade unions' variable for both of the full-time employee groups. Political preference made the most significant contribution to the discriminant model for female part-timers, too, but union membership, although entered into the discriminant function equation, appeared to be of less importance for this category of worker.

Full-time Male Workers

Other variables entered into the discriminant model for full-time male employees were:

- (i) how favourable to trade unions was partner;
- (ii) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation, and
- (iii) self-assessed class membership.

Full-time Female Workers

For full-time female workers, other variables identified as important predictors of 'favourability to trade unions' were:

- (i) workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation;
- (ii) at first job how favourable to trade unions was father;
- (iii) area, and
- (iv) self-assessed class membership.

Part-time Female Workers

For female part-timers, other variables included in the discriminant function equation were:

- (i) at first job how favourable to trade unions was father;
- (ii) self-assessed class membership;
- (iii) union membership, and
- (iv) age.

Correct classification rates exceeded 50 per cent for all of the employee groups. None of the discriminating variables for any of the employee groups were correlated. The results of the above analyses are presented in tables 51 to 54 in appendix three.

For all of the worker categories, then, political ideology and self-assessed class membership were found to be important for the respondent's favourability to trade unions. For the full-time workers, as expected, union membership also appeared to be associated with the employee's favourability to trade unions. How much influence the respondent believed the union(s) at his or her workplace had over work organisation was important here, too, for the full-time employee groups. For the male workers, their favourability to unions was also found to be associated with that of their partner's, and for the women workers favourability to trade unions was related to earlier socialisation, as indicated by their father's attitudes to trade unions.

Conclusions

Thus, sex did not appear to be an important predictor of the employee's beliefs concerning the principles of trade unionism. The results here suggested that the most important determinants of this variable were the influence respondents thought unions had over work organisation and favourability to trade unions. Union membership was also an important predictor of attitudes to trade unionism for the full-time male workers, but not for the full-time female employees. This is consistent with the crosstabulation results discussed in chapter seven, which found a stronger association between believing in the principles of trade unionism and union membership for men than women.

With respect to the employee's favourability to trade unions, as expected from the results discussed earlier in this chapter and in chapter seven, sex was revealed to be an important predictor of this variable. In order to investigate further the relationship between sex, union membership and favourability to trade unions, sex was crosstabulated against the favourability to trade unions variable, while controlling for union membership. When only union members were considered, men were still significantly more favourable to unions than women ($p < 0.05$), even when controlling for employment status. Hence, the union membership differential between the sexes could not account for the difference in their favourability to trade unions. However, when only non-members were considered sex was no longer significantly associated with the employee's favourability to trade unions. This may suggest that union membership is more likely to lead to favourability to unions among men than women. Alternatively, it may be that men are more likely to join unions primarily as a result of their attitudes towards trade unions.

Following the crosstabulations and discriminant analyses in this and the previous three chapters, then, a number of important questions clearly remained for the present study, relating to the relationship between sex and favourability to trade unions, as well as to the employee's propensity to unionise and level of involvement in trade union activity.

The analyses here have shown women to have a significantly lower propensity to unionise than men, and to be less likely to attend union meetings, even after controlling for the predominance of women in part-time work. The results of the discriminant analyses and crosstabulations have suggested that these results could be explained, in large part, in terms of the lower favourability to trade unions expressed by the women studied and the male / female earnings differential. Discriminant analyses also revealed that the best predictors of union membership choice and involvement in trade union activity varied according to the employee's sex and employment status. However, with respect to the propensity to unionise, a greater difference was found between the full-time and part-time women workers than between the full-time male and female employees. This was not the case for union participation, though, as the most important influences on attendance at union meetings varied substantially across all of the employee groups.

The variables analysed here, however, could not provide an adequate explanation of either the association between sex and favourability to trade unions or the union membership and union participation differentials between full-time and part-time women workers. That is, it appeared that women's lower favourability to trade unions, and the differences revealed between the full-time and part-time female employees, could best be explained in terms of one or more variables which had not been included in that part of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey analysed. It is argued here that these variables are most likely to relate to women's domestic commitments, and to the approach adopted by the trade unions themselves to women workers.

With regard to women's lower favourability to trade unions, the results of the present study would appear to suggest that this reflects a greater dissatisfaction with trade unions among women than men, as female respondents were no less likely than the male interviewees to believe in the principles of trade unionism. Unfortunately, the employee's satisfaction with his or her union was not measured directly by the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey. Moreover, it would seem to be difficult to draw reliable conclusions from previous

research, discussed in chapter five, on the importance of gender for union satisfaction. It is argued here that the finding that women are less favourable to trade unions than men can, most probably, be best explained in terms of union practices and the culture of the trade union movement in general. The traditional male-domination of the trade unions, and the resulting forms of union organisation, which have been developed by men, may, perhaps, have led to the perception by women workers that trade unions are not responsive to their needs. For instance, as discussed in chapter three, women can still be seen to be 'outsiders' in terms of their level of representation in the trade union movement.

With respect to the union membership choice of full-time and part-time women workers, family responsibilities, which have been assessed by the employee's marital status and number of dependents, have generally not been found to be related to either the union status of jobs (Booth, 1986) or to the worker's propensity to unionise (Green, 1990), or, in the United States, to interest in unionisation among employees in non-union workplaces (Schur and Kruse, 1992). However, Schur and Kruse have argued that, as women's family commitments tend to have a negative effect on women's participation in trade union activity, the organisation of women workers may be less attractive to the unions. Also, Booth believes that if unions perceive women's involvement in the labour market as short-term, then they may be less likely to recruit actively women workers. Green believes, too, that trade unions may well have been less committed to the organisation of part-timers. Thus, the typically heavier domestic commitments of female part-timers (Martin and Roberts, 1984), and the approach of the trade unions to the organisation of this group of workers may, in large part, explain the union membership differential between the full-time and part-time female employees.

With respect to women's rate of participation in trade union activity, the Women and Employment Survey found full-time female employees aged between 30 and 59 with no children under sixteen to be most likely to attend union meetings regularly (Martin and Roberts, 1984: 56). Similarly, Sharpe (1984) and Ledwith *et al* (1990) discovered

women's role in the home and family support to be important in determining women's union participation. The domestic commitments of part-time female employees, then, are also likely to contribute significantly to the different levels of involvement in trade unionism exhibited by the full-time and part-time women workers.

Women's family responsibilities, and particularly those of female part-timers and the unions' approach to their organisation, then, seem likely to play an important role in both women's lower favourability to trade unions and differences in the propensity to unionise and involvement in trade union activity exhibited by the full-time and part-time female workers. Chapters ten and eleven attempt to explore further this hypothesis through a survey of the approach to women workers adopted, in recent years, by a number of large trade unions in Britain.

CHAPTER 10

TRADE UNIONS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Introduction

This chapter attempts to evaluate the approach of the unions to women workers today, by reviewing the initiatives of a number of large trade unions aimed at recruiting women into membership. The development by these unions of national policies concerning a number of employment matters likely to be of particular interest to women workers are then discussed. The following chapter considers attempts made by each of the trade unions to ensure women are represented in the union at workplace level and within the union hierarchy. Chapters ten and eleven, then, assess the approach adopted by the trade unions to encourage women into the unions and to facilitate their representation in trade union structures.

Nine TUC-affiliated trade unions were chosen for the analysis described above. The unions were selected primarily on the basis of size of membership and number of female members - both male and female-dominated unions were included - but also for reasons of access to suitable interviewees. The seven largest trade unions in Britain at the time of the study were analysed - TGWU, GMB, NALGO, AEU, MSF, NUPE and USDAW - as well as BIFU and NAS / UWT. Thus, although only a relatively small number of trade unions were included, these unions had a combined membership of approximately 5.5 million in 1990 (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8), representing approximately 60 per cent of all

union members at that time (Beatson and Butcher, 1993: 676). As a large-scale survey of the trade union movement was not practicable, this approach allowed the study to focus on unions which were most likely to have the resources available to exhibit examples of 'best practice' in the field of equal opportunities for women. In this way, the study attempted to present the most comprehensive coverage of the different types of policy and action developed by the trade unions in this area within the limitations imposed by the research context.

Interviews were conducted with a full-time officer from each union during the last three months of 1992. In the case of NALGO and TGWU, the position of the interviewee was that of full-time Women's Officer for Scotland. With respect to GMB, NUPE, USDAW and BIFU, the officers interviewed had a responsibility for equal opportunities, in addition to their duties as union organisers. The remaining interviewees were all senior full-time officers. The interviews were semi-structured, with similar questions asked in each, though with some variation according to the nature of the union's membership and area of organisation. The list of standard questions asked in each interview is given in appendix four. The National Women's Officers and Research Departments at the national headquarters of the unions included in the study were also contacted for further information.

This chapter first describes each of the unions studied here. The attempts of these unions to recruit women into their membership are then briefly discussed. The chapter goes on to consider whether or not the unions, at national level, have developed specific policies on a number of employment matters likely to be of particular concern to women workers, including forms of atypical 'flexible' employment, equal and low pay, homeworking, childcare, maternity and paternity leave, the recruitment, training and promotion of women, sex bias in collective agreements, women's health and sexual harassment in the workplace. The strategies established by the unions to deal with these issues are also considered. The main sources of the discussion on union practices are guidelines issued by the unions to

their negotiators. For the purposes of providing a comparison with union approaches of a decade ago, this chapter includes reference to a survey conducted in the early 1980s by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), of the equal opportunities policies of 52 trade unions (EOC, 1983).

Of course, as Ball (1990: 4) has distinguished between employers who merely adopt "statements or slogans" on equal opportunities and those who encourage " ... an active *process* of attempting to root out sources of discrimination" (original emphasis), similarly, unions may boast policies concerning equality, which are not reflected in union practices. For example, of course, not all trade union officials will pursue the goal of equal opportunities as vigorously as national union policy may demand. However, it is argued here that the development of a specific policy represents, at least, a recognition within a union that the matter concerned is a trade union issue.

Also, as Ball (1990: 4) asserts, there are clearly " ... equal opportunities *policies, practices* and *outcomes*." (original emphasis) However, there is no attempt made here to analyse fully the achievements of the unions in the areas of work discussed. This is due, in part, to the difficulties inherent in determining the progress made towards equal opportunities in the workplace by trade unions, which result primarily from the complexity of union structures and bargaining levels. For instance, achievements cited by a union in only one service organised by that union need not be representative of the union's overall success with respect to the issue concerned. Also, the outcomes of union demands to employers and government, clearly, are not necessarily a measure of effort exerted on the part of the unions, with which this thesis is most concerned.

Profile of the Trade Unions Studied

TGWU

The Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) organises in a wide variety of different industries. TGWU's membership is approximately 1.25 million - 18.3 per cent of whom were women in December 1992, an increase from 17.5 per cent in 1991 (personal communication, Research Officer, TGWU, March 1993).

GMB

Similarly to TGWU, the General Workers' Union (GMB) organises in both the private and public sectors, in the food and drink, hotel and catering, engineering, local government, gas, water and chemicals and security industries. In 1989, the union, as GMBATU, amalgamated with the Association of Professional, Executive and Computer Staff (APEX), and in 1991 GMB merged again, with the Tailors and Garment Workers' Union (TGWU), which had an 80 per cent female membership. Both APEX and TGWU have their own sections within GMB.

In 1990, GMB's membership stood at approximately 870, 000, with 30.8 per cent women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8). This percentage of female union membership had increased to 42.0 per cent by 1992 (GMB, 1992a).

NALGO

The National and Local Government Officer's Association (NALGO) organises in local government, the electricity and gas industries, the National Health Service, the water service and in transport and universities. It is the largest solely white-collar union in the world (NALGO Members' Handbook, NALGO, c.1986). In 1989, NALGO had about 750, 400 members, of whom 53.1 per cent were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8).

AEU

The Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU) merged with the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union (EETPU, previously, ETU) in 1991, forming the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU). Reference is made here to both AEEU and AEU. In 1990, 14.2 per cent of AEEU's 741, 600 members were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8). However, the latter figure had declined to approximately 702, 000 by 1992 (AEU, 1992), though with the percentage of women members unchanged. Female membership of the joint union, AEU, which has only recently begun to be monitored, is estimated at between ten and fifteen per cent (personal communication, Research Officer, AEU, February 1993). AEEU allowed women to join the union only in 1942.

MSF

The Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union (MSF), which was formed from a merger of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS) and the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Staffs Union (TASS) in 1988, organises within shipbuilding, finance, manufacturing, the National Health Service, the tobacco and

engineering industries and in universities. In 1990, it had 653, 000 members, of whom 21.4 per cent were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8).

NUPE

The National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) organises in the health service, local government and in universities. The union had 603, 000 members in 1990, 71.3 per cent of whom were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8). Two-thirds of NUPE members are part-time women workers in the public services (*Positively Part-Time*, NUPE, c.1990).

USDAW

The Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) organises in retail distribution, the food and confectionary industries, baking, hairdressing, mail order and in catering and laundries. The union's main area of organisation, though, is the Co-operative movement, with which it has national agreements covering approximately 130, 000 workers (Upchurch and Donnelly, 1992: 61). USDAW had a membership of around 407, 200 in 1990, of whom 61.7 per cent were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8), though this figure had fallen to 59.3 per cent in 1992 and membership to approximately 343, 200 (USDAW's responses to South East Regional TUC questionnaire on women's representation, 1992).

BIFU

The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union (BIFU) organises in these three industries. In 1990, 55.4 per cent of the union's 170, 500 members were women (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8). At the beginning of 1993, 57.1 per cent of the union's membership was recorded as female (personal communication, Research Officer BIFU, February 1992).

NAS / UWT

The National Association of Schoolmasters merged with the Union of Women Teachers in 1970 to form the NAS / UWT. The union organises solely within education. In 1990, its membership was approximately 118, 000, of whom 43.7 per cent were female (Labour Research Department, 1991: 8). This latter figure had risen to 52.7 per cent by the beginning of 1993 (personal communication, National Women's Officer, NAS / UWT, February 1993).

Recruiting Women into the Union

All of the unions studied here have distributed recruitment literature specifically targeting women workers and / or part-time employees, who are, of course, predominantly female. Without exception, the unions also have either reduced subscriptions especially for part-timers or subscriptions banded according to earnings. As this study focused on union policy at a national level, there is no review here of recruitment strategies at regional or branch level. However, the Labour Research Department (1991), which surveyed 100 branches of 37 TUC-affiliated trade unions, found that almost none of the branches it studied had conducted campaigns specifically to recruit women. Even at national level, the Labour Research Department (1991: 26) found recruitment to be "rather ad hoc".

As the Labour Research Department (1991) found, the present survey of nine unions revealed that recruitment campaigns aimed at women workers tend to be conducted around particular issues of interest to women. For instance, NUPE has used its health pack and USDAW its 'women and health get-togethers', which are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, in recruiting women into the union. Other unions have focused on their campaigns for improved rights for part-timers, especially NUPE and BIFU, or equal pay and low pay, for instance, NALGO and USDAW.

TGWU has launched a strategy for women's recruitment as part of its *Link-Up* campaign, begun in 1987. The Labour Research Department (1991) describes this as involving *inter alia* new recruitment literature, women-only recruitment teams and new bargaining priorities for the union. Also, TGWU publishes a quarterly journal for its women members, and other unions, such as AEU and NUPE, have devoted issues of their journals to matters of particular concern to women members.

Thus, all of the unions analysed here have developed some form of specific recruitment of women members. In addition, many of the unions have attempted to ensure that their

publications reflect more closely the proportion of their membership who are female. This was stressed by both the full-time officer for USDAW and TGWU's Women's Organiser in Scotland. The latter stated that "There is a conscious effort to look at the image of the union." Thus, the unions appear to be trying to attract women, not only through particular recruitment campaigns, but also by striving to ensure that women perceive the unions as relevant to female workers.

Equal Opportunities in the Workplace

Part-time Working

A survey of 52 trade unions by the EOC found seventeen of the unions analysed had special policies relating to part-time workers, with ten of the unions negotiating for *pro rata* benefits with full-time employees (EOC, 1983). Without exception, the nine unions studied here have developed specific national policies, as well as negotiating guidelines, tackling the disadvantaged position of part-timers in the workplace. NUPE, for instance, has started a campaign, *Positively Part-Time*, in an attempt to gain improvements in pay and conditions for its members working on a part-time basis. Both NUPE and NALGO have developed negotiating priorities relating to part-timers, which are outlined in ten-point charters. Also, TGWU has in recent years initiated campaigns - first the *Living Wage* and then the *Link Up* campaign - which have been concerned, in part, with the pay and conditions of part-time employees. The issues on which the unions have bargained over on behalf of part-time employees, though, have differed according to their areas of organisation. For instance, BIFU and MSF have campaigned in the finance industry for access for part-time workers to fringe benefits at work, such as employee mortgage subsidies, whereas NUPE, GMB and USDAW have concentrated mainly on gaining *pro rata* entitlement for part-timers with full-time employees to employment conditions such as holidays and tea breaks.

This union concern with workers employed on a part-time basis is likely to be, in large part, a reflection of the increase in part-time employment in the economy as a whole. Trade unions, clearly, will have to bargain on behalf of part-timers in order to attract these employees for the purposes of maintaining membership levels. Examples of improvements in employment conditions for part-time employees which the unions claim have been achieved as a result of collective bargaining are discussed in appendix five, and to exemplify union goals on part-timers' rights, NUPE's Ten Point Charter is reproduced in appendix six.

Job Sharing

GMB defines job sharing as "the division of one full-time job between two people", with the working week divided between the two employees involved according to the needs of the employees and employer (GMB, c.1990a: 20). The EOC (1983) found only four unions in its study of 52 trade unions with specific policies on job sharing, though little information was supplied on this issue by the trade unions in this survey.

All of the unions analysed here have a policy on job sharing, with the exception of AEU. The unions appear to approve of the concept of job sharing and to encourage its introduction, but with several conditions concerning its implementation and operation. GMB regards job sharing as having a number of important advantages over part-time employment. These include generally better pay, more security and equal access to training with full-time workers. GMB believes job sharing could be of particular benefit to women returning from maternity leave, enabling them to continue their careers, and to those with caring responsibilities. GMB's negotiating guidelines on this issue state that agreements with employers concerning job sharing should include *inter alia* employment benefits, and training and promotion on an equal basis with full-time employees for job sharers (*Negotiators' Guide to Flexible Working*, GMB, c.1990a). Similar negotiating guidelines are laid down by MSF, NUPE, BIFU, NAS / UWT and TGWU. MSF also states specifically that job sharing should be available to male and female workers and the take-up rate of the scheme monitored (MSF, c.1991).

Term-time Working

Term-time working involves parents working only during the school term, with some of the time away from work being unpaid leave. Only GMB, MSF and BIFU appear to have developed specific policies at a national level relating to this type of employment arrangement. However, TGWU, NUPE and USDAW claim to have local policies and agreements on term-time working. As with job sharing, the unions tend to approve of term-time working primarily as a means of allowing workers with childcare responsibilities to continue to work.

GMB's negotiating guidelines on term-time working call *inter alia* for salaries of term-time workers to be calculated on a yearly basis so that women's statutory maternity pay is not adversely affected. The negotiators' checklist issued by GMB is similar to that produced by BIFU (BIFU, 1990) and the MSF (MSF, c.1991).

Career Breaks

GMB defines career breaks as allowing " ... women and men to take a break from their paid work while their children are of pre-school age without affecting their career." (GMB, c.1990a: 28) All of the unions studied, with the exception of AEU, have established policies relating to such schemes. For instance, GMB aims to negotiate for career breaks of up to five years and for schemes available to employees for the purposes of caring for any dependent, and not just a child. TGWU policy is to demand that "During extended unpaid leave the employee's status, continuity of employment and benefits should be protected." (TGWU, 1989a: 16).

NAS / UWT has outlined particularly tough guidelines to its negotiators. It calls for breaks to be up to seven years in length, with flexible working arrangements, such as part-time employment, to be available on the employee's return. It is also the union's policy to

demand opportunities for employees to maintain contact with their employer during the break and to have assistance for developing confidence on returning to work and re-training where necessary (*Managed Career Breaks in Teaching: Policy Statement*, NAS / UWT, c.1990).

Thus, the majority of the trade unions were aware of the potential of flexible forms of employment for the careers of workers with children or other dependents. The national policy of the unions was, generally, to support the development of such arrangements, while attempting to ensure that employees' rights were not adversely affected by their adoption. Examples of a number of career break schemes in the finance sector, where they appear to have been most widely available, are given in appendix seven.

Low Pay and Equal Pay

The EOC survey of 52 trade unions found that the view typically held by unions was that equal pay had been achieved in the "formal sense" (EOC, 1983: 30). However, unions in the EOC study tended to regard progress in this area as severely hampered by the extent of employment segregation by sex and the discrimination faced by women in the recruitment and promotion of employees. The present survey revealed a similar picture.

The problem of low pay among female employees and of sex discrimination in pay grades have been tackled by the unions in a number of different ways. The trade unions have fought these issues through

- (i) Industrial Tribunals and the courts;
- (ii) collective bargaining;
- (iii) the distribution of information to members concerning their rights, and
- (iv) the support of outside agencies, such as the Low Pay Unit and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

All of the unions analysed have a policy of helping women members to take legal action in pursuance of equal pay. Examples of successful cases supported by the unions, however, are not cited here, as these are not necessarily a reliable indicator of union effort exerted on equal pay, with which the survey discussed here was most concerned.

In June 1991, TGWU held a conference on equal pay, which launched a campaign by the union for equal pay for work of equal value, targeting a number of key sectors in the economy. TGWU is presently attempting to develop "a more systematic approach to equality bargaining" (personal communication, Research Officer, TGWU, March, 1993). This has involved the submission to employers of a number of claims of equal pay, as well as a demand for the establishment of 'national equality sub-committees'. Examples of the results from this campaign include an equality working party in the Chemicals Industry Association and two joint equality groups at Fords. TGWU regards these joint equality committees as a means by which to devise positive action programmes for women workers.

Both BIFU and NALGO appear to have focused upon job evaluation schemes in their areas of organisation. BIFU claims that the union intends to challenge these schemes, but recognises that claims are likely to be extremely long drawn-out (*The Hay Job Evaluation Scheme and Equal Pay*, BIFU, 1992a: 16). NALGO, too, claims that it hopes to challenge job evaluation schemes in its services in future negotiations (*What's Your Job Worth: Equal pay for work of equal value: Guidelines to Branches*, NALGO, c.1991). Thus, these unions appear to regard reforms in job evaluation schemes as on their *long-term* bargaining agenda only.

However, despite national policy, equal pay claims may not be vigorously pursued by full-time officers. The National Women's Officer for AEU (AEU, 1991: 2) claims to have discovered

a complacency on behalf of some district officials in terms of achieving equal pay, pursuing equal pay for work of equal value claims and promoting equal opportunities.

Also, TGWU's Women's Organiser for Scotland pointed out that union negotiators may accept a quick settlement on equal pay as an easy alternative to litigation.

Thus, the national policy of all of the unions is to support both negotiation and litigation in pursuance of equal pay for women with men. However, it was not possible to determine from the present survey the attention paid to equality in earnings by union officials or lay representatives at regional or local level.

The Scottish Women's Organiser for TGWU stressed, too, that the unions " ... need to tackle women's perception of their own worth." For instance, TGWU supported a successful equal pay claim brought by a group of women machinists, who had previously not regarded their training as equivalent to that of an apprenticeship. At the TGWU Conference on equal pay, in June 1991, a union officer asserted that

I have yet to have a woman come to me and say I have an equal value case.

You have to tell people that they have a case.

TGWU, 1991a: 21

Thus, it would appear that a vital part of any campaign for equal pay must be to educate women workers themselves. All of the unions here have distributed information, typically

as part of a recruitment drive, on the right to equal pay for work of equal value. However, unions may well have to seek out cases actively in order to encourage women to pursue equal pay with union support.

Inequality in earnings, though, may not be the most important issue, with respect to pay, for many female employees. Three out of the nine interviewees, from NAS / UWT, NUPE and BIFU, believe that low pay is a bigger problem for women workers than equal pay. In addition, the NUPE officer stated that, primarily because of contracting out in the public sector, the main concern for female employees is job security and, in fact, pay is a secondary issue. Presently, the wage levels of almost two million women workers, approximately two-thirds of whom work part-time, are under threat from the abolition of the Wages Councils, proposed in section 28 of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Bill (1992). TGWU, USDAW and GMB, in particular, claim that this has become an important issue for them. Some examples of union attempts to bargain for equal pay and to fight the removal of the Wages Councils are given in appendix eight.

Homeworking

The EOC survey of 52 trade unions found that most of the unions studied did not have members who were homeworkers. Hence, only five per cent of the trade unions included in the analysis had special policies relating to homeworking (EOC, 1983). This finding is similar to that obtained from the present study. Only GMB, BIFU and MSF have developed a national policy on homeworkers.

Most of the unions analysed here represent only very small numbers of these workers. For instance, NALGO, though organising some telecommunications workers, has not established a specific policy on homeworking as the percentage of their membership in this type of employment is so low (personal communication, Research Officer, NALGO, March, 1993). None of the unions record separately which of their members are

homeworkers, though TGWU is presently attempting to establish a membership database, which may take this into account (personal communication, Research Officer, TGWU, March, 1993).

GMB has issued guidelines on homeworking stating that negotiators should try to ensure that women workers have an employment contract, the same benefits as other employees, such as paid annual leave, and compensation for the use of heating and lighting necessary in the home. In addition, GMB's policy is that training and promotion for homeworkers should be negotiated wherever appropriate (GMB, c.1990a). BIFU has issued a report on the implications of homeworking for the union, *Homeworking: Its Potential Applications and its Possible Consequences for BIFU* (BIFU, 1990).

Thus, although tending to assert that this is discussed within the union, the trade unions surveyed here, typically, have not established formal policies or practices relating to homeworking. In part, this no doubt reflects the notorious difficulties inherent in the organisation of homeworkers by trade unions (Boston, 1987: 295-296; Hakim, 1987: 175).

Workplace Nursery Provision

The EOC found that 23 of the 52 unions included in its study had policies concerning the provision of childcare facilities (EOC, 1983). However, the EOC noted that progress here appeared to be extremely limited. Again, similar findings were obtained from the present study. Although all of the nine unions had a specific policy on childcare, there appears to have been little advancement in this area.

BIFU seems to have been particularly active in the matter of childcare. For instance, the union has issued detailed recommendations on the provision of childcare facilities (*Quality Workplace Childcare Provision: A Negotiators Guide*, BIFU, 1991a). Also, BIFU has

developed negotiating guidelines concerned *inter alia* with the maximum child to carer ratio in workplace nurseries and the linking of the cost of the childcare to the employee's income. A similar guide to negotiators has been issued by MSF and GMB. MSF states that it believes that "... nursery provision is an essential prerequisite to equal opportunities in the workplace for women." (MSF, c.1991: 22)

In 1990, GMB launched a *Parent's Charter*, outlining the union's priorities on bargaining issues such as childcare facilities. The union's *Negotiating for the Parent's Charter* (GMB, c.1990b: 1) states that, with respect to women's domestic commitments, "The GMB must negotiate and bring these issues within the collective bargaining arena." The union believes that there are important disadvantages with workplace nurseries, such as problems of taking children to and from the workplace. The GMB document describes the options put forward by GMB as including "publicly funded local authority nurseries, out of school schemes, childminding, childcare payments and flexible working hours." (GMB, c.1990b: 1)

TGWU has highlighted the need for childcare facilities for its members as part of its *Link Up* campaign. The union held a conference solely on this issue in April 1989. TGWU urges its negotiators to assess the demand for childcare provision through a simple questionnaire issued to members, and to encourage employers to investigate different ways of meeting the costs involved. However, as the USDAW officer stated, there appears to have been "more discussion than achievement" on childcare. She emphasised, though, that this issue was now being discussed and debated within the union at annual conference. That is to say, the matter of childcare is now considered at a national level.

As Ron Todd, TGWU General Secretary, stated at the TGWU's Equal Opportunities and Childcare Conference in 1989

At last - you might add at long last - the Transport and General Workers Union is beginning to take the issue of childcare seriously.

TGWU, 1989b: 4

However, the Area Officer for NUPE interviewed believes that childcare in NUPE is "not very high up on the agenda." She feels that Scottish women do not expect childcare from the workplace. Unions, then, may have to change the attitudes of women workers themselves, in order to encourage demands for facilities for the care of children at work. At least at national level, though, the unions now ostensibly recognise the need for adequate childcare facilities for workers in Britain. Some examples of achievements cited by the unions in this area are given in appendix nine.

Maternity / Paternity Pay and Leave

The EOC discovered 25 of the 52 unions in its survey had special policies on maternity arrangements which went above the statutory minimum provisions, and 23 unions negotiated for paternity leave (EOC, 1983). The EOC found that maternity and paternity leave "attracted the broadest approach" (EOC, 1983: 26) from the unions studied. This was also true of the nine unions analysed here; although they all had specific policies on this issue, these differed significantly across the unions surveyed.

GMB guidelines on this matter include instructions to negotiators to claim for maternity leave available to all staff, regardless of time of service, ten days paternity leave, with an option of further unpaid leave for fathers, and three months parental leave for either parent (GMB, c.1990b). Thus, the union's official policy is to negotiate for substantially better

terms for time-off for childcare than those provided by statute. MSF has issued instructions to its negotiators following similar lines, but these also include a claim for time-off for ante-natal care.

BIFU has recently developed a claim which includes a cut in the qualifying period for maternity leave from two years to six months, and up to 63 weeks for occupational maternity leave (BIFU, 1991b). With respect to paternity leave, the union's negotiating guidelines state that 15 days paid leave for the birth of the employee's first child and 20 days for the second child and subsequent children should be claimed for, in addition to time-off for ante-natal classes. BIFU also instructs negotiators to claim for family leave, of 15 days on full pay, to care for a sick child or other dependent or for bereavement (*Maternity, Paternity and Family Leave: A Negotiators' Guide*, BIFU, 1991c).

TGWU recommends that its negotiators should ensure that women on maternity leave should have some form of contact with their workplace during this time, and that employees should have the right to return to the same job. In addition, almost without exception, the unions studied provide information in the form of leaflets to members on maternity leave and pay.

Thus, the demands made on behalf of parents by the unions vary considerably. Although progress on this matter appears to have been somewhat limited, the issue is, at least at national level, now on the unions' agenda. For instance, the USDAW officer believes that the three days paternity leave agreement achieved by the union in one employment organisation " ... would have been laughed at ten years ago." She went on to state that "Changing the agenda takes time, but all of these small steps create a different environment."

Recruitment, Training and Promotion

The EOC (1983) found eleven of the 52 unions it surveyed had special policies on training and sixteen had these on recruitment and promotion of women in the workplace. The EOC discovered unions' negotiating guidelines on the latter two issues related to the monitoring of the sex of employees given appointments, job descriptions and advertisements and the interviewing of job candidates. This is similar to the measures discussed in the policy statements of the trade unions in the present survey. It would seem, though, that the problem of discrimination in recruitment, training and promotion is not given particularly high priority by the unions. For instance, typically, MSF claims to follow recommendations by the Commission for Racial Equality on these issues, but the union has not developed its own negotiating guidelines here.

However, GMB has issued its own checklist to negotiators, suggesting that they try to ensure that at least minimum standards relating to job recruitment are followed. For instance, the union states that job descriptions should not cite higher qualifications than those actually necessary for the job concerned. GMB also provides recommendations for advertising jobs and for non-discriminatory application forms. Similarly, the policy of NAS / UWT is to call for all local authorities to include an equal opportunities statement in job adverts, and the union provides a model code of practice for the recruitment and selection of employees (*Updated guidelines on the negotiation of an Equal Opportunities Policy, NAS / UWT, c.1990*).

With respect to training, GMB states that it is the union's policy to encourage positive action training, that is, training which targets under-represented groups in the workforce. GMB guidelines on this issue call for union negotiators to claim for equal access to training for all employees, including part-timers and shift workers. GMB claims to have succeeded in negotiating positive action training and skills transfer training (*Equality in Action, GMB, 1991*).

NAS / UWT specifies that training should be at times and places to accommodate employees with family responsibilities and that courses should cover a wide range of topics and creche facilities should be provided for workers on training courses (*ERA and Equal Opportunities for the Teacher: A Practical Guide*, NAS / UWT, c.1992).

TGWU has issued a model training agreement, based *inter alia* on the principle of equal opportunities both in access to training and during training (*Ammo: TGWU For Action on Training*, No. 10, TGWU, c.1992). However, with the exception of GMB, there was little evidence that the trade unions were actively seeking to promote positive action training, as provided for by the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) (ss.47-48), discussed in chapter two.

GMB states that rules applying to recruitment should also be followed in relation to the promotion of women at work. The policy of the union is to implement monitoring targets, which should be incorporated into any equal opportunities policy negotiated with an employer. The NAS / UWT Regional Officer for Scotland claimed that ensuring women access to higher posts in education was "very high up on the agenda". The difficulty in obtaining information on union policy and action on the advancement of women in the workplace for the present study, though, would suggest that this issue may not have been prioritised by the trade unions surveyed here.

Sex Bias In Collective Agreements

In 1986 GMB launched what would appear to be a particularly ambitious programme on equal opportunities, *Winning a Fair Deal for Women*, with the aim of eliminating sex discrimination in collective agreements. Annual reports on the progress towards equality in the manufacturing industry, based on surveys of shop stewards and major plants, have been produced since the programme was established. These reports have been monitored by the union's National and Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committees. GMB describes its programme as " ... the most radical attempt yet by a trade union to eliminate sex bias from its collective agreements." (GMB, 1992b: 9)

However, the programme was developed after the union had conducted an overall analysis of its members' wages and conditions. As a result, the initial report concerning the programme is later criticised within the union as

based on removing discrimination from those items within the collective agreements upon which the GMB has historically negotiated. Consequently, it fails to tackle the need to broaden the bargaining agenda.

GMB, 1992b: 1

The union's own review of the programme goes on to state that "The bargaining agenda needs to be redrawn, to produce a more radical, broader and less traditional set of claim items." (GMB, 1992: 1) The second stage of the programme was launched in 1990, raising new issues to be included in the union's campaign. In particular, the provision of childcare, training and the development of non-discriminatory job evaluation schemes have been introduced into the programme.

GMB's campaign appears to be the most formalised consideration of sex discrimination in collective agreements of any of the unions studied here. Most of the unions analysed

claimed to conduct reviews of collective agreements, but there would seem to be little prescribed, regular monitoring of such agreements for the purposes of examining clauses which may be discriminatory.

Women's Health

One of the best examples of the trade unions' growing concern with its female membership has been union action concerning women's health. Although this issue was not included in the EOC survey of trade unions discussed in this chapter (EOC, 1983), all of the nine unions in the present study have a policy of negotiating for paid time-off or workplace facilities for cancer screening and / or have published information for their women members on a number of different health issues.

The AEEU officer interviewed claimed that 80 per cent of the union's female membership was covered by screening agreements. In a letter to all Divisional Organisers, first circulated in April 1986, and reissued in May 1989, he emphasises that the following points should be included in all "domestic wage claims":

- (i) on-site screening or where there is too few employees for this to be practical, the encouragement of female workers to attend medical facilities, and
- (ii) paid time-off for screening and for any following treatment.

The AEEU officer also stated that, if an employer fails to agree to the establishment of some form of screening arrangements, a union official will be sent to the workplace concerned in an attempt to have the union's demands met. Similarly, it is NUPE policy that screening facilities at work should be free to all employees, who should not suffer a loss of pay while attending.

NUPE has published a set of pamphlets distributed in a single pack, *Women's Health Matters: A Guide for NUPE Members* (NUPE, c.1987), which has been used as an education resource by the union's area officers and shop stewards (personal communication, NUPE Area Officer, October, 1992). The leaflets included in the pack give advice on 17 different health concerns relating particularly to women, and contain information on members' rights with respect to time-off for health matters. The Area Officer for NUPE interviewed believes the union's health pack to be of considerable importance in making women aware that " ... there is more to the union than its traditional male image."

USDAW, too, has published information leaflets on health issues relating especially to women. USDAW's policy is comparable with that of NUPE and AEU - to provide information for members, and to negotiate with employers on arrangements for cancer screening. USDAW also encourages negotiators to establish a monitoring procedure to review take-up of the agreement. The officer interviewed from this union regards the negotiation of agreements on cancer screening as a particularly significant change in the union's approach to women workers. She stressed the importance of such agreements for the women concerned, who are more likely to attend cancer screenings if they are allowed paid time-off for this purpose. In addition, USDAW run 'women and health get-togethers' for its members, which, as noted earlier in this chapter, have been used by the union for recruitment purposes.

As well as having a similar specific policy on cancer screening to those of USDAW and NUPE, both BIFU and NAS / UWT have also tackled other issues relating to women's health. BIFU has launched a campaign concerning pregnant women's use of VDUs, calling for all women to have the right not to use these during pregnancy. BIFU claims, too, to have given " ... full legal backing to members suffering from RSI (repetitive strain injury)" (BIFU, 1991b: 2). GMB, MSF and USDAW have all produced guidance to members on RSI, which is defined by the Labour Research Department (1992b: 1) as "a group of

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serious and potentially disabling muscular-skeletal disorders", which tend to result from jobs involving rapid and repetitive movements.

NAS / UWT has issued detailed guidelines to negotiators on ensuring a safe working environment in schools and colleges for its female members. These include, for instance, instructions to negotiators to claim for, at least, annual provision of rubella testing and / or vaccination for pregnant women (*Improving the Health of Women at Work: A Practical Guide*, NAS / UWT, c.1992). Also, the union's policy is to ensure that a senior union officer is in a school within 24 hours of an incident which threatens a union member, when that individual is a woman, the union asserts that the matter is then given very high priority (personal communication, NAS / UWT Regional Officer for Scotland, November, 1992). Some examples of agreements reached by the unions studied here on matters concerning women's health are outlined in appendix ten.

An issue not included in a survey of trade unions undertaken by the EOC (1983) in the early 1980s, then, appears to have become a priority in collective bargaining, as well as a means by which to change women's image of the trade union movement. Another matter of concern for women in the workplace not discussed in the EOC study is that of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Sexual Harassment

The TUC has defined sexual harassment as

any personal comments, looks, suggestions or physical contact that you might find objectionable or offensive and which causes you discomfort at work.

All of the unions in the present survey have established specific policies relating to sexual harassment. Union action in this area appears to take three main forms:

- (i) establishing an agreement with employers relating to the grievance procedure available to sexually harassed employees;
- (ii) educating management and personnel and union officers on dealing with cases of sexual harassment, and
- (iii) supplying information to union members on this matter.

AEEU launched a campaign against sexual harassment in November 1991, with the publication of guidelines for shop stewards and an information leaflet for members. In a letter issued in May 1992, by Gavin Laird, AEEU General Secretary, the union stressed to its full-time officers that a workplace agreement on sexual harassment should be seen as a priority in negotiations with employers. The union instructed that any agreement should make clear that sexual harassment is sex discrimination and will result in disciplinary proceedings. The letter goes on to state that all officials are expected to report on their success in implementing the guidelines to their Divisional Organiser, who in turn will be responsible for reporting to the Divisional Women's Committee and providing an explanation for any lack of progress made. Also, AEEU negotiators' guidelines on this issue recommend a model clause agreement on sexual harassment, to be negotiated with employers (AEEU, c.1991). In addition, they suggest that negotiators should ensure that all members are aware of the fact that sexual harassment is an offence under the union rule book and may be punishable by expulsion. It also recommends that officers should negotiate for a ban on pin-ups in the workplace.

Similarly, GMB has produced a model agreement on sexual harassment, which it states " ... should be a priority in the next round of annual negotiations with employers." (*Sexual Harassment at Work*, GMB, c.1990) It is also NUPE's policy to ensure grievance procedures cover sexual harassment at the workplace. In addition, NUPE tries to encourage

discussion on sexual harassment at branch meetings. A report of the 1992 Women in USDAW National Conference (USDAW, 1992a) states that the union's approach has been to develop policies and guidelines at a local level.

BIFU appears to have done most to train its own officers. By 1991, the union had 24 trained counsellors to advise and support union representatives and members on sexual harassment (BIFU, 1991b). A training course for a further 11 potential counsellors was begun in January 1992. In addition, BIFU has established a national confidential database to help deal with sexual harassment cases, under the control of the union's Equality Officer.

NALGO's negotiating guidelines on sexual harassment (*Stop Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Guidelines for NALGO Branches*, NALGO, 1992) emphasise the need for policy on this issue to have the status of a local agreement and, therefore, be incorporated into members' employment contracts, and be enforceable through formal grievance machinery. Also, it is NALGO policy that at least half of the members of the union investigatory panels involved in sexual harassment cases should be female.

The Equal Opportunities Committee of NAS / UWT, which conducted a nationwide survey of its members on sexual harassment in 1989, states that any policies negotiated with local education authorities " ... must go beyond a token statement of intent and needs to be vigorously monitored." (*Sexual Harassment: Policy Statement*, NAS / UWT, c.1991: 5)

Thus, the unions studied have all established a formal, specific policy on sexual harassment. At least at national level, then, the unions appear to be aware of the need to combat sexual harassment in the workplace and to deal sensitively with complaints from members on this issue.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to illustrate the effort exerted by the trade unions to persuade women workers that they are responsive to their needs in the workplace. It has been shown that the unions studied have developed specific policies on a range of employment matters likely to be of concern to women workers. The size of the sample of trade unions here, though, means that caution should be taken in extrapolating results to the trade union movement as a whole.

Without exception, the trade unions studied here were found to have a specific policy of campaigning for equal pay with full-time workers for part-timers, and for equal access to employment-related benefits. It has been argued here that this is likely to be, at least in part, a prudent response by the unions to the increasing proportion of the workforce employed on a part-time basis. With respect to other atypical, 'flexible' forms of employment, with the exception of the most male-dominated union, AEU, the unions have all developed policies on forms of employment such as job sharing and career breaks which may be particularly beneficial to women workers with caring responsibilities in the home. However, national policies on term-time working have only been developed by three of the nine unions surveyed, GMB, MSF and BIFU, although local agreements have been reached by three of the other unions. The absence of policy here, though, is likely to reflect, at least in part, expectations of considerable employer opposition to the introduction of this type of employment arrangement.

Resistance from employers also seems particularly problematic with respect to bargaining over childcare. Only limited progress, mainly in the finance industry, appears to have been made by the unions here. Also, there was little evidence from the present survey of a commitment among the trade unions to the unionisation of homeworkers. None of the unions studied record the number of their members whose employment is based at home, and only GMB, BIFU and MSF have developed a national policy specifically relating to

homeworking. With respect to parental pay and leave, though, all of the unions have developed a specific policy on these issues, and, without exception, negotiate for considerably better terms for time-off for childcare than those provided by statute.

There was no evidence from the survey that there was any widespread formal monitoring by the unions of collective agreements for discrimination against women workers. Only GMB has developed a specific, comprehensive policy on this issue, although three of the other unions claim to be investigating agreements in particular areas of organisation. With respect to the recruitment, training and promotion of women workers, it has been argued here that, although the unions claim to follow policies either established by themselves or by relevant outside organisations, they do not appear to have been committed to promoting the use of positive action training, provided for by the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), or to the development of strategies concerned with the promotion of women in the workplace.

Two issues on which all of the unions have now developed policies at a national level, but which were not included in the EOC (1983) survey of trade unions conducted approximately ten years ago, relate to women's health and to sexual harassment in the workplace. Action taken by the unions concerning the health of their female members, typically, has included negotiating for paid time-off for cancer screening, support for women claiming compensation for repetitive strain injury and bargaining over work organisation resulting in this form of industrial illness, and the publication of health information leaflets for women members. With respect to sexual harassment, all of the unions have established similar policies on negotiating for this to be recognised as discrimination against women, and for complaints to be treated sensitively. Table 29 illustrates on which of the issues discussed in this chapter each of the trade unions have developed a specific policy.

It is difficult, though, to draw conclusions from the present survey on the overall commitment of the unions to employment matters pertaining especially to women workers,

as no attempt has been made here to assess the attention paid to equal opportunities issues by the unions' full-time officers and lay representatives. However, the above study appears to suggest that there has been a growing concern with work issues most likely to affect women, as it has been shown that the unions have now established specific national policies relating to many of the problems suffered particularly by female employees. The apparent lack of attention of some of the trade unions, though, to issues such as women's advancement at work, may be interpreted as reflecting a failure, in some instances, to promote effectively equal opportunities in employment. The following chapter attempts to assess the approach by the unions to facilitating women's involvement in their own structures.

	TGWU	GMB	NALGO	AEU	MSF
Recruitment of women / part-timers	√	√	√	√	√
Part-time working	√	√	√	√	√
Job sharing	√	√	√	x	√
Term-time working	x	√	x	x	√
Career breaks	√	√	√	x	√
Low / equal pay	√	√	√	√	√
Homeworking	x	√	x	x	√
Workplace nursery provision	√	√	√	√	√
Maternity / paternity pay / leave	√	√	√	√	√
Recruitment, training and promotion	√	√	NA	NA	x
Sex bias in collective agreements	x	√	x	x	x
Health	√	√	√	√	√
Sexual harassment	√	√	√	√	√

Table 29: National Policies Developed by the Trade Unions (continued overleaf)

NA: Not available.

	NUPE	USDAW	BIFU	NAS / UWT
Recruitment of women / part-timers	√	√	√	√
Part-time working	√	√	√	√
Job sharing	√	√	√	√
Term-time working	x	x	√	x
Career breaks	√	√	√	√
Low / equal pay	√	√	√	√
Homework- ing	x	x	√	x
Workplace nursery provision	√	√	√	√
Maternity / paternity pay / leave	√	√	√	√
Recruitment, training and promotion	NA	NA	NA	√
Sex bias in collective agreements	x	x	x	x
Health	√	√	√	√
Sexual harassment	√	√	√	√

Table 29 (continued): National Policies Developed by the Trade Unions

NA: Not available.

CHAPTER 11

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Introduction

The previous chapter has shown that, at least at national level, the unions included in the present survey now recognise a wide range of employment issues likely to be of particular concern to women workers as trade union issues. However, it may be argued that if their own structures and practices are prejudicial to women then trade unions are unlikely to be able to combat effectively discrimination in the workplace. This is because, as Strachan and Sutherland (1989: 232), TGWU's Women's Organiser and Education Officer in Scotland respectively, argue

The capacity to influence change depends on the influence one exerts on the instruments of change - in this case the trade union movement. The degree of influence is often commensurate with the degree of participation, representation and extent to which one's views are considered. For women then it is crucial that they are represented in and enabled to participate fully in the trade union movement.

Before trade unions can effect real change in favour of women at work, then, their internal organisation must truly reflect the needs and priorities of the female employees they purport to represent. Moreover, it may be argued that this is only possible when women themselves

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The previous chapter has shown that, at least at national level, the unions included in the present survey now recognise a wide range of employment issues likely to be of particular concern to women workers as trade union issues. However, it may be argued that if their own structures and practices are prejudicial to women then trade unions are unlikely to be able to combat effectively discrimination in the workplace. This is because, as Strachan and Sutherland (1989: 232), TGWU's Women's Organiser and Education Officer in Scotland respectively, argue

The capacity to influence change depends on the influence one exerts on the instruments of change - in this case the trade union movement. The degree of influence is often commensurate with the degree of participation, representation and extent to which one's views are considered. For women then it is crucial that they are represented in and enabled to participate fully in the trade union movement.

Before trade unions can effect real change in favour of women at work, then, their internal organisation must truly reflect the needs and priorities of the female employees they purport to represent. Moreover, it may be argued that this is only possible when women themselves

are involved in union structures, in numbers which mirror their degree of participation in the labour market. That is, as argued in chapter three, women will remain 'outsiders' in the trade union movement, unless they participate fully in union decision-making. This chapter, therefore, attempts to examine the steps taken by each of the nine unions studied here, described in the previous chapter, to facilitate women's involvement in union activity. Two main levels at which participation in the unions can occur are discussed, relating to involvement in the unions at a local and a national level.

The chapter first considers those main barriers to women's participation in the unions which were highlighted by the union officials interviewed for the present study. Domestic commitments, union culture and their lack of confidence are shown to be obstacles to women's involvement in union activity. It is argued that the absence of variables designed to measure these issues may well account for the failure of the quantitative analysis discussed in chapter nine to explain fully the low involvement in the unions exhibited by women workers. The steps taken by the unions analysed in attempting to overcome these impediments to women's participation in union activity are then outlined.

Three main areas of union action taken, at a local and national level, in order to combat the effects of each of these are discussed in turn. These are, respectively,

- (i) providing childcare arrangements for parents attending union meetings, and ensuring that the times and venues of meetings are convenient for women;
- (ii) recruiting more women into full-time officer posts, and
- (iii) encouraging women to undertake union training.

Clearly, some of these issues are closely linked. For instance, increasing the number of women into union leadership may help other women have the confidence to participate.

This chapter goes on to consider action taken at national level by the unions to promote women's representation. The creation of an equal opportunities structure, the appointment of a National Equality Officer and the establishment of reserved seats for women on national union bodies are all considered. The chapter then offers some conclusions concerning the progress made by the unions towards equality for women with men within their structures.

Barriers to Women's Participation in the Unions

The previous research in this area, discussed in chapter three, and the empirical analysis presented in chapters eight and nine have suggested that women still exhibit lower participation rates in union activity than their male counterparts. However, the discriminant analysis described in chapter nine revealed that those variables included in that part of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey studied here could not fully account for the difference in women's and men's involvement in the unions. That is, those personal, work and trade union characteristics and attitudes to work analysed failed to explain adequately women's low union participation. The question which arises, then, is whether or not the trade union survey here can contribute further to the understanding of women's under-representation in the trade union movement which was afforded by the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey variables described above.

As part of a large-scale study of the union, an USDAW Working Party (USDAW, 1984) surveyed 1,496 members of the union: 1,104 women and 392 men. Approximately 36 per cent of the women and 27.5 per cent of the men had never attended a meeting. Although the sample was not statistically representative, as union officials and lay activists had to be used to contact respondents, some interesting results for the present analysis are briefly discussed here.

The Working Party found that women appeared to be much less confident than men and tended to have less knowledge of the union. Approximately 67 per cent of the women agreed with the statement "I don't have enough confidence to get more involved", compared to about 49 per cent of the male respondents (USDAW, 1984: 9). Also, female respondents were more likely than the men studied to feel that the timing and venue of meetings made their attendance difficult. Approximately 58 per cent of women overall (and 72 per cent of women with children under five) and 49 per cent of men thought the timing of meetings acted as a barrier to their union participation. Approximately 48 per cent of women and 33

per cent of men said the distance necessary to travel for meetings made it difficult for them to attend.

Although the importance of their partners' opinion on their involvement in union activity did not vary significantly for the men and women surveyed, approximately 55 per cent of the female respondents, compared to 45 per cent of the men thought domestic commitments posed problems for attending union meetings. Both their partner's feelings and domestic responsibilities were particularly important for participation by female part-timers.

The USDAW Working Party Report (USDAW, 1984), then, highlighted their lack of confidence in themselves and domestic commitments as especially important in explaining women's lower participation in union activity. The interviews conducted as part of the present survey of nine trade unions indicated that little has changed in the last decade. All of the interviewees were asked 'What do you think are the most important barriers to women's advancement in the trade unions today?' Six of the nine respondents mentioned women's domestic commitments as important obstacles to their involvement in trade unionism, five of the interviewees talked of male-domination of the union and union culture as important here, and four believe that women's lack of confidence contributes to their low rate of participation in union activity.

Domestic Commitments

The USDAW full-time officer interviewed believes that women's domestic commitments mean that encouraging women to become shop stewards is not the union's biggest problem, as this entails involvement in the union at work, but that encouraging women to be active outside the workplace is more difficult. As previous research has shown (Ledwith *et al*, 1990 *et al*), she stated that the female members who are most active in the union are either younger women or women with older children, who have fewer domestic commitments than other female workers. Thus, it would appear that, as BIFU's Scottish Organiser stated, often "Women have too much to do in the home to come along to meetings."

The USDAW officer also feels that for some women their partners are reluctant for them to become involved in the union, as this would mean that they would have to adopt a greater responsibility for domestic life. She believes that working class women, in particular, tend to have traditional husbands, and that women are reluctant to jeopardise their family lives for union participation. This is supported by Ledwith *et al* (1990), who found a positive relationship between women's and their partner's involvement in the union. They studied 80 women activists at different levels in the printing union SOGAT'82 over a three year period. 75 per cent of the 40 women they surveyed who were, as they described, "highly visible" in the union (for instance, lay members on the union's National Executive) had partners who were union members (Ledwith *et al*, 1990: 115). Also, half of this group had a husband who was involved in the union.

The AEEU senior official interviewed also feels that involvement in the union can "threaten the stability of family life for women." Thus, the lack of time and energy of women with family responsibilities does not seem to be the only barrier to their participation in union activity; in addition, many women may have to combat the problem that their involvement in trade unionism may cause considerable disruption to their domestic life.

Union Culture

The nature of the unions and their domination by men were also advanced as presenting problems for women's participation by the union officers interviewed here. For instance, although he cited domestic commitments as very important, the AEEU officer stated that "the biggest problem is men." He went on to say that "The women activists have to have extra qualities, and the men don't assist them." The interviewee from USDAW, too, believes that lack of encouragement from the union is a barrier to involvement by women. She feels that the union is more likely to see a man than a woman as having a future in the union. She believes that the stereotype of a union activist is still that of a man, despite USDAW's majority female membership. GMB's industrial officer with responsibility for equal opportunities in Scotland also feels that there is an impression that a full-time officer needs to be male and middle-class. She described the trade union movement as "a man's world and that hasn't changed."

With respect to full-time officer posts in the unions, the National Women's Officer for AEU has highlighted the reluctance among many male trade unionists to encourage women's representation at this level. She describes AEU as having

an absence of a supportive network for women members. So, women seeking election to full-time office have to be perceived as better than male candidates.

AEU, 1991: 2

TGWU, too, has not only highlighted the way in which union meetings are conducted and women's employment patterns and domestic responsibilities as obstacles to women's participation in the union, but has also recognised that " ... the attitudes and behaviour of some male trade unionists can discourage women's participation." (TGWU, 1991: 10)

The GMB officer expressed disappointment in what she believes is the lack of serious commitment to equal rights in the GMB. She feels that other officers will accept that equal opportunities can be tackled by another official because

lots of them would leave that area. Not that they don't service women, but they do it on their own terms, on their agenda, and not that which would be chosen by the women themselves.

She went on to say that "They (the union's full-time officers) don't take the issue (of equal opportunities) seriously unless you prove yourself as an organiser as well".

Thus, clearly, there are many male trade unionists who are failing to encourage, or who are actively discouraging, women's involvement in trade union activity. There is a vicious circle, then, of male-domination of the union, which appears to present obstacles to women's participation, resulting in low involvement by female members, in turn, sustaining their under-representation in the union.

Lack of Confidence

This absence of women in union leadership also may play a part in women's lack of confidence and, as the MSF senior official interviewed stated, "... women's perceptions of their own role in things." He feels that

Less self-assured women seem very reluctant to play an active part in the union. They look at the more self-assured women and say 'I can't do that'.

The GMB officer also feels that "Women still go out to work with a different consciousness about work than men." Women workers, then, may find it difficult to perceive themselves as having an active role in the union. Indeed, the NUPE full-time officer believes that the

biggest barrier to women's advancement within the union is "other women". She stated that " ... there are a lot of women who think my job shouldn't be done by a woman." Thus, women not only appear to lack the confidence to participate in trade union activity, but also tend to be unlikely to perceive themselves, or indeed perhaps women in general, as active in the union.

The following section of this chapter considers what approaches have been adopted by the unions in order to tackle specifically the barriers to women's union participation outlined above.

Local Level Union Action

Attendance at Union Meetings

The one most significant step taken by the unions to combat the problem of women's domestic commitments preventing them from participating in union activity appears to have been to encourage branches to ensure that the time and venue of union meetings are suitable for women members. This is extremely important for women's representation because, as NAS / UWT's District Organiser for Scotland stated, clearly, "Women cannot develop in the union unless they turn up to meetings and get themselves elected to posts."

It is the stated policy of all of the trade unions studied here that union meetings should be at times and places convenient for women. For instance, AEU has proposed that sex discrimination with respect to venues of branch meetings should be an offence under Rule (AEU, 1991: 4). Also, the unions all encourage the provision of creche facilities at meetings, or the payment of childminding fees to parents. This is crucial because, as Aldred (1981: 110) states, unless meetings can be held at the workplace and in working hours "childcare of some kind becomes essential."

However, in 1988, NUPE found that recent action taken by its branches aimed at increasing women's involvement in the union had been "patchy" (*Women in NUPE: The Agenda for the 90s*, NUPE, 1990: 5). NUPE surveyed 150 of its branches, in an attempt to determine the extent to which the recommendations of its 1982 Working Party Report concerning women's participation had been implemented throughout the union.

The NUPE survey identified a number of important results which indicated a lack of progress made by the branches towards facilitating women's participation:

- (i) only one-sixth of branches arranged creches or paid childcare allowance for parents attending meetings;
- (ii) although most meetings were no longer held in pubs, they still tended to be in the evenings;
- (iii) most branches had neither a Women's Liaison Officer or a Branch Equality Committee, and
- (iv) only about half of the branches regularly communicated with their Divisional Women's Advisory Committee.

Thus, although the unions' national policy may be to encourage women's involvement in all levels of the union, action taken at a local level is likely to vary considerably across individual branches.

In addition, Strachan and Sutherland (1989: 237) point out that "... overly formal meetings, conducted in jargon ... held in the evenings, have rarely inspired women to attend." They believe that unions must find different forms of organisation to attract female members, as "Women recognize the need for structure and organisation but attach less importance to formality." (Strachan and Sutherland, 1989: 238) Thus, the location and timing of meetings are not the only important part of branch organisation which can influence women's level of involvement in the union. The way in which these meetings are conducted and, as NALGO's Women's Officer in Scotland pointed out, the content of meetings must be relevant to women.

Women's meetings and groups in the unions in the present study do appear to be conducted in a more informal way. For instance, USDAW's 'women and health get-togethers' and women's groups in NALGO seem to be conducted less formally than are traditional union

meetings. Women themselves, then, appear to choose relatively informal ways of participating in the union. However, there was little evidence from the unions studied here that there was any widespread move towards a change in their methods of organisation. Arguably, however, the unions may find that this type of reform attracts both more women and more men into the union.

National Level Union Action

Recruiting Women into Full-Time Officer Posts

Women were found to be grossly under-represented in all of the unions studied. For instance, in 1991, only four per cent of full-time officers (FTOs) in TGWU were women. That is, there were only 22 female officials, although if they were represented at this level in proportion to their membership in the union there would have been 80 women officers in TGWU (TGWU, 1991b). The percentage of women FTOs in each union are given in table 30.

TGWU appears to have paid particular attention to the under-representation of women among its FTOs. It has conducted a consultative exercise within the union on women's representation within its lay structures and FTO positions. As part of this exercise, the union has circulated a document entitled *Changing the Face of Full-time Officers*, which is aimed at generating debate on women's involvement at all levels of the union's FTO group. The document at once stresses the need to recruit women members for the union's "organisational survival and growth." (TGWU, 1991b: 2) It also recognises that to increase women's representation among union officers their under-representation throughout the union's lay committee structure must be redressed.

The TGWU document states that, although 68 per cent of the union's FTOs are drawn from the traditional, male-dominated, manufacturing areas, union organisation is strong there and these areas are often those where FTOs are least needed. In contrast, few officers are drawn from the service and white-collar areas of employment organised by the union. Also, only 24 per cent of the union's FTOs are employed in public services, where employment is growing.

The TGWU consultative document goes on to state that

The belief that a FTO job must be seven days a week, 24 hours a day is both detrimental to job performance and discriminatory in that candidates with caring responsibilities are effectively debarred from employment."

TGWU, 1991b: 10

The GMB industrial officer with responsibility for equal opportunities stated, too, that there is "an image that an officer has to work 48 hours and 24." Indeed, previous research into the activities of FTOs has revealed that these positions entail extremely long hours at work (see Kelly and Heery, 1989 and references cited therein).

TGWU's key requirement of a 'lay apprenticeship' for appointment as a FTO is also criticised in its consultative document, which asserts that the definition of this lay apprenticeship, and the limits on women's ability to complete it, must be tackled. The document stresses the need for female FTOs to counter "the traditional male image of trade unionism" (TGWU, 1991b: 12). The document argues that resources should be allocated to growing areas of female employment, which would increase the number of officer posts likely to be taken up by women and may increase women's representation on lay committees. The document advocates the creation of 'targets' for women's representation, linked to their membership, which, it states, " ... would establish clear equality goals for all the representative bodies of the union." (TGWU, 1991b: 14) It also recommends regular monitoring of the union's decision-making bodies to compare the level of women's representation with the targets set.

With respect to the other unions studied, the senior AEEU official interviewed believes that the union is conscious of the fact that there will be more women than men working within the industry in which it organises within the next ten years, due to changes in technology.

As a result, he stated, the union is " ... now attempting to elect more women officials as part of our response to that." The Scottish Organiser for BIFU believes that the union is now recruiting women into the union's "visible jobs". She feels that seeing more women becoming active generates interest among other women. GMB, presently, has a Working Party investigating different ways by which female senior activists can be encouraged to become FTOs. Special training for this purpose had been proposed, although this has not yet been brought before the union's national executive.

However, neither NAS / UWT nor NALGO have developed a specific policy on the recruitment of FTOs, although NALGO asserts that it is aware of the problem that its ratio of male to female officials is approximately five to one (personal communication, Research Officer, NALGO, March, 1993). Also, USDAW claimed to be taking steps to encourage women into FTO posts, but when asked to describe the action taken here the union replied that this information was not available at present (personal communication, Research Officer, USDAW, April, 1993). BIFU claims that there are provisions within the union to ensure that women are represented on all interview panels (personal communication, Research Officer, BIFU, February, 1993).

Thus, the unions in the present survey appear to have made only limited progress in recruiting more female FTOs. They seem, generally, to have failed to develop any effective policies which might begin to redress the under-representation of women at this level within their structures. However, the importance of the presence of women FTOs is stressed by Heery and Kelly (1988). As part of their extensive study of FTOs' activities, conducted in 1986-87, Heery and Kelly surveyed 87 female FTOs, in 39 different trade unions. They found women to be grossly under-represented in FTO positions, but with even less representation of female members among senior union leadership.

The findings by Heery and Kelly (1988) suggest that female FTOs take more interest in issues concerning women than do male officers: 70 per cent of the female respondents in

their sample believed that they prioritised these matters more highly than their male counterparts. Heery and Kelly found that men were less likely to prioritise issues such as sexual harassment, childcare or maternity leave than the female FTOs. Although men did rate as important employment conditions likely to affect women workers in particular, these tended to be more 'traditional' collective bargaining concerns, such as low pay.

However, differences were also found across the female respondents themselves, with younger women tending to pay particular attention to the promotion of equal opportunities. This was also the case with the younger male FTOs, although the effect of age was not as significant for the men studied. The research by Heery and Kelly (1988) also suggests that women are more likely to spend time on recruitment of new members, and are more committed to increasing union participation by female members than are male FTOs.

It may be argued, then, that the unions would be advised to pay greater attention to encouraging more women into FTO positions. As Heery and Kelly (1988) point out, as discussed earlier, this is particularly important as progress towards equality between men and women within the unions' internal government may well encourage policies to assist women, and thereby facilitate their participation within the unions.

TRADE UNION	% WOMEN IN MEMBERSHIP	% WOMEN NATIONAL FTOs	% WOMEN REGIONAL FTOs
TGWU	18.29 ¹	6.7	3.8
GMB	42.0 ¹	11.8	12.0
NALGO	c.55.0	32.0	c.13.4
AEU	14.2 ³	16.67	0
MSF	27.0	23.1	c.6.8
NUPE	71.3 ³	38.5 ³	11.0 ³
USDAW	62.5 ¹	19.1	25.0
BIFU	57.1	23.8 ³	30.0 ³
NAS / UWT	52.75	26.7 ³	6.7 ³

Table 30: Women's Representation in Full-Time Officer Posts.

Source: Labour Research Department (1991) and personal communication from the unions studied.

All figures are for early 1993, unless otherwise indicated.

1. 1992 figure.
2. 1989 figure.
3. 1990 figure.

Women-Only and Equal Opportunities Training

Union education for women appears to have been one of the main methods used by the unions in attempting to overcome women's lack of confidence to participate. All of the unions analysed run courses either on equal opportunities or other issues likely to interest female members particularly, and many have women-only training classes. GMB, for instance, have developed courses for attendance only by women and basic and advanced courses on equal opportunities. Also, all introductory courses for the union's workplace representatives include training on women's rights and bargaining strategies for female workers (GMB, 1992).

If lack of confidence among women does contribute to their relatively low participation in union activity, clearly, union education must help women to become more self-assured and assertive. Most of the unions studied here, therefore, run courses specifically on or including self-assertiveness. For instance, GMB provides education for its women members through 'women's workplace discussion groups', which aim to develop their confidence and increase women's knowledge of the union. Also, AEU's women's weekend schools are aimed primarily at building up women's confidence to enable them to take part in other union activities (personal communication, Research Officer, AEU, February, 1993). Assertiveness training is included in TGWU's basic women's courses, and its education and training programme involves confidence-building exercises (personal communication, Research Officer, TGWU, March, 1993).

Unions are also now establishing childcare arrangements for those attending union training. After GMB had surveyed its courses in 1989, the start time of the union's residential classes were changed, as women's family commitments were highlighted in the survey as particularly problematic for women's attendance. As well as providing creche facilities for children of pre-school age at the college where much of the union's training is done, GMB also holds "family weeks" when parents can attend courses, while older children are looked after. In addition, GMB will pay childminding fees, where necessary, to any parent

attending union training. To encourage women's participation in its courses, GMB has also tried to ensure that these are held nearer to women's homes, by running more classes at a regional level.

Clearly, women will be reluctant to participate fully in the trade unions if they do not understand the processes which are involved in union activities. Arguably, as NUPE's journal issue on women in the union, *Women in NUPE: The Agenda for the 90s* (NUPE, c.1991: 12), states, education is "the key" to women's union participation. However, it may be advanced that unions must not only try to educate women so as to understand traditional union procedures, which have largely been established by men, but they should also encourage women to develop their own practices, so that their affairs can be conducted in a manner women have chosen for themselves, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Women's and Equal Opportunities Structures

The EOC survey of 52 TUC-affiliated trade unions found that only thirteen of the unions studied had special committees dealing with equal opportunities (EOC, 1983). The EOC discovered that these committees tended to be established in either predominantly male unions, such as TGWU, or mainly female unions, for instance, the National Union of Teachers (NUT).

With regard to the present survey of nine unions, by late 1992, all of the unions studied had established some form of special structure relating only to female members, or an equal opportunities structure, concerning equal rights for women and other disadvantaged groups, such as the disabled. However, only GMB, NALGO, AEU, MSF and USDAW hold National Women's Conferences, although some of the TGWU regions also hold such Conferences.

With the exception of AEU, which has a National Women's Forum, all of the unions have established a National Women's Committee or a National Equal Opportunities or Equal Rights Committee. In each of the unions, except USDAW, NAS / UWT and BIFU, these committees are elected from the equal opportunities structure, by the union's divisional or regional women's or equal rights committees, or in the case of NALGO, by the Women's Conference. The equal opportunities committees of USDAW, NAS / UWT and BIFU are directly elected by the unions' governing bodies. For instance, BIFU's National Executive Council elects members from application forms received from the union's branches, while the National Executive of NAS / UWT elects its equal opportunities committee from existing standing committees of the union.

In addition to their separate national committees, all of the unions, except the smallest, NAS / UWT, have established regional or district women's or equal opportunities committees. This includes AEU, which has established 26 new divisional women's committees, which met for the first time in January 1992 (AEU, 1992). In BIFU's case, each of the institutions organised by the union has its own equal rights committee, for example, such a committee exists for the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The activities of the unions' equal opportunities committees include the development of recruitment material aimed at women or other under-represented groups in the union, the publication of information to female members and union officials on issues particularly concerning women and the organisation of meetings and workshops especially for women workers.

At national and regional or district level, the unions have established equal opportunities structures which are clearly similar. However, there appear to be significant differences in the way in which the unions attempt to organise equal opportunities at a local level. The opportunities structures of GMB and TGWU are briefly outlined here in an attempt to

illustrate the forms typically taken for an equal rights structure and a women's structure respectively in the unions studied.

GMB has a National Equal Rights Advisory Committee (NERAC), which meets six times per year. At regional level, GMB holds an annual Regional Equal Rights Conference, with delegates nominated from each branch of the union. Eight members of the Conference are elected to form a Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committee (RERAC). Although seats have been reserved for women on these committees in the past, this practice is to be abolished in 1993, as the union regards women as now well represented through normal voting procedures (personal communication, Research Officer, GMB, April, 1993). RERAC members have responsibility for monitoring the position of women in the union and in the workplace; for instance, the number of women on union training courses and the progress of equal pay cases. In addition, RERACs are expected to try to raise awareness of union activities concerning equal opportunities among the union's membership. RERACs have a duty both to report to the NERAC on their activities and to report back to the region on developments by the NERAC. The NERAC tables motions to the Central Executive Council, on which two of its members sit. GMB has also held a National Equal Rights Conference since 1975 and has an Equal Rights Department, which publishes and advises on equal opportunities.

Similar arrangements to those developed by GMB exist within TGWU, but, as noted, the latter has established a women's structure, separate from other equal opportunities bodies in the union. Since 1983, this women's structure has comprised of a National Women's Advisory Committee (NWAC), elected from lay representatives from the union's eleven regions, each of which also has a women's committee. The NWAC reports to both the General Executive Committee and the Annual Women's Conference.

At branch level, GMB has branch equality officers, who are lay members of the union with responsibility for advancing equal opportunities at a local level within the union and the

workplace, and communicating with their RERAC. GMB has issued guidelines for these officers (*Branch Equality Officers: Guidelines for Activities*, GMB, c.1990), which outline a number of steps they should take to improve the level of women's involvement in the union. These include ensuring the time and place of branch meetings are convenient for women and that the content of the meetings are relevant to women, including those working part-time. Thus, at least in theory, there should exist a lay representative in each GMB branch with responsibility for equal opportunities. In TGWU, at local level, an open structure exists, where there may or may not be a women's committee or a union representative with responsibility for equal opportunities.

Similarly, a relatively informal structure exists at local level within the public sector union NALGO. Most of the union's branches have an equal opportunities or women's officer, for whom training is provided by the union, and a number of branches have also established an equal opportunities or women's committee. NALGO has branch women's groups, too, which it is union policy to support and resource, as the union believes that

Women's groups can stimulate members to participate in the union, learn how to pull the strings and provide each other with a network of support.

Organising for Women: A Brief Guide to How Campaigning for Equal Opportunities for Women is Organised in NALGO, NALGO, 1992: 6

Clearly, then, arrangements made by the unions at local level tend to vary, depending on different organisation by each of the individual branches. Thus, the equal opportunities structures of the unions studied appear to be well-developed at national and regional level, but, not surprisingly, organisation at a local level seems to rely heavily upon individual branch union activists. However, although it recognised the importance of the union's women's structure, a NUPE Women's Working Party, established in 1982, concluded that

developments at the workplace and at union branch level were most important in determining the rate of participation of women in union activity. The report stated that

This is where the basic relationship of the members and the union are established. If this is not satisfactory then the whole structure of our representation and democracy can be undermined.

Women in NUPE: The Agenda for the 90s, NUPE, 1990: 4

Thus, the unions must ensure that women's participation is facilitated at a local level. Close vigilance of branch activities, then, would appear to be an essential prerequisite to improving women's under-representation in the unions at all levels.

Discussion

Separate structures for women clearly entail a risk of the marginalisation within the unions of issues of particular interest to women. This has been the focus of a long-standing debate on the existence of women's conferences and committees. The two main criticisms of separate structures for women have been that

- (i) such structures allow women to have a voice but little real influence in the unions. For example, Boston (1987: 304) states that "History has shown that very little attention has been paid to demands women have made at the women's TUC." Also, separate structures are patronising to women and have the effect of sustaining women's secondary status in the trade union movement (see Hunt, 1982 and Boston, 1987 and references cited therein).

- (ii) Special structures for women are divisive and the interests of female workers should be taken into account in the overall union struggle against employers (or the bourgeoisie) (see Beattie, 1986 and references cited therein).

Those in favour of separate structures have argued that they can act as a "training ground" (Boston, 1987: 304) in which women can gain confidence. Women's committees have been described as vehicles to help women gain greater knowledge of the union, through the distribution of information to female workers on different aspects of union involvement (Miller and McDade, 1993). Boston (1987) argues, too, that there has been no assurance given by the advocates of the abolition of women's organisations that the concerns of women workers will be given adequate consideration within traditional union structures.

In 1980, the TUC Women's Conference passed an amendment that the conference should be abolished only when women have achieved "*total equality* with men in all aspects." (Hunt, 1982: 159) (original emphasis) Boston (1987) argues, though, that, whether or not women or men are ready for equality, what is important is whether or not trade union structures allow women to participate fully and exert influence in the unions. With respect to the TUC, she believes that "new machinery" must be established to achieve such structures, as "neither the abolition of separate sections nor the mere continuation of the present system will give women equality." (Boston, 1987: 305)

The continuing under-representation of women in the trade union movement and the position of women in the workplace would suggest that Boston (1987) is almost certainly correct. However, she does not advance any proposals for the form of union structure which would best facilitate involvement by women. Brietenbach (1982: 67), though, does describe a new approach within the trade unions which could improve women's position. She argues that unions must develop a "coherent policy" on advancing equal opportunities, which so far they have failed to do. As Brietenbach states, such a policy would be more beneficial to women than "the sum of particular gains in individual unions." (Brietenbach,

1982: 67) However, the complexity and diversity of union structures may well militate against the establishment of a single effective strategy which might enable women to exert influence within the trade union movement.

With respect to individual union action, the EOC found that trade unions with equal opportunities structures were those most likely to have developed special policies on matters relating particularly to female members. Ten of the thirteen unions with such structures had special arrangements concerning equal opportunities, compared to nineteen of the remaining 39 unions included in the survey. This is supported by Beattie (1986), who studied two similar education unions, the Federation de l'Education Nationale (FEN) in France and the Centrale de l'Enseignement du Quebec (CEQ) in Quebec, respectively with and without a separate structure for women. Beattie concludes that the presence of a women's structure leads to better developed policies on issues concerning women and is a useful forum for stimulating ideas and discussion on these matters.

Thus, arguably, despite the risk of marginalisation of issues concerning women, the establishment of separate structures within the unions can be regarded as a positive step towards improved representation for women. However, as Boston (1987) stresses, the presence of such structures is unlikely to be sufficient in itself to enable women to participate fully in the unions. Thus, it may be argued that the trade union movement must also strive to develop new forms of organisation which will encourage women's involvement.

Women's and Equality Officers

All of the nine unions in the present study had appointed a National Women's Officer or an Equality Officer by late 1992, though many of the positions had only recently been established. These officers tend to have a broad remit within the unions. Their duties include the development, implementation and monitoring of equal opportunities policies, the provision of information to other union officers and to members, the organisation of education courses and workshops concerning issues pertaining particularly to women and, generally, of raising awareness on equal opportunities within the union.

TGWU, NALGO, GMB, AEU and USDAW also have regional full-time equality officers, although only TGWU and NALGO have a Women's Officer in Scotland. In the case of AEU, the Executive Council has agreed to appoint three Assistant National Women's Officers, but only where they will replace a local official, such as a district secretary or an assistant divisional organiser, who has left the union and where membership does not justify their replacement (AEU, 1991: 2). The three new full-time officers, then, will not incur any net cost to the union. This approach is necessary, the Council has argued, in view of the recession.

The need for such regional officers was emphasised by the industrial officer with responsibility for equal opportunities in GMB. She explained that the union's policy was that all industrial officers should give consideration to issues concerning the women workers in their area of organisation, and that her function was merely one of consciousness raising. However, she believes that time is needed to be "proactive", as opposed to merely "reactive" in terms of equality work, which would only be possible if her duties were solely concerned with promoting equal opportunities.

Thus, Women's Officers appear to be in a unique position, of being able not only to deal with individual cases of discrimination as they arise, but, also, to develop new initiatives to advance women's position in the unions. Arguably, the appointment of a women's officer

is an important symbol of a union's commitment to promoting the representation of women in the union, not least because this clearly indicates a dedication of resources to this issue. It is advanced here, therefore, that if the trade unions are truly determined to improve the position of women in the unions, then they should demonstrate this commitment by the appointment of not only national officers for this purpose but women's officers at a regional level also.

Reserved Seats

The TUC's stance on reserved seats is clear. In 1990, in its *Charter for Equality for Women within Trade Unions*, the TUC included the following paragraph:

Unions should aim to have women represented on decision-making bodies in proportion to their numbers in membership. Targets should be set, with a timetable for achievement. Failure to meet targets should mean that quotas are adopted.

Labour Research Department, 1991: 5

The TUC itself has twelve reserved seats on its General Council and the Scottish TUC has ten (Labour Research Department, 1991: 13). However, only three of the nine unions studied here have reserved seats for women on their main decision-making body: GMB, MSF and NUPE. (Although AEU does not have reserved seats on its Executive Council, which is responsible for the union's government and administration, it does have seven delegates from the Women's Conference on its National Committee, the policy-making body of the union). The proportion of seats on the unions' National Executives reserved for women range from approximately ten to twenty per cent. The percentage of women on the governing bodies of each of the unions analysed, compared to the proportion of their membership who are female, is given in table 31. The total number of seats on the unions'

National Executives are included in this table because, as the Labour Research Department (1991) points out, the election of one extra woman will, of course, substantially increase the apparent representation of female members on the smaller bodies. Thus, caution should be taken in interpreting results from the percentage of women on the unions' national executives alone.

Those four unions with reserved seats on their National Executives also have these seats elsewhere in their structures, such as on their advisory committees and regional and district councils. Indeed, only TGWU, USDAW and NAS / UWT have no reserved seats anywhere within their own structures. However, TGWU does allocate seats for women on delegations to TUC and Labour Party Conferences. USDAW, too, though opposed to reserved seats generally, puts forward women for such seats in other structures (personal communication, USDAW Officer, December, 1992).

Discussion

The issue of reserved seats for women has been a controversial one for trade unions for many years. This is exemplified by the debate which has recently been conducted within TGWU. The union's General Executive Council has made the decision to set targets for women's representation on committees in the union, which must be achieved within two electoral terms, by 1997. It is the responsibility of each of the union's committees to ensure that the targets are met, for instance, by encouraging committee selectors to choose female candidates. If the targets are not reached within this specified time period then the union intends to implement a Rule change, which may well introduce reserved seats for women. Thus, before it will consider the implementation of significant structural changes, TGWU's national executive has allowed four years for women's representation to be improved by voluntary action alone.

The argument against reserved seats for women in TGWU appears to have focused upon the notion that women in such seats will not be in an equal position to that of other representatives (personal communication, Scottish Women's Organiser, TGWU, May, 1993). This is, presumably, based upon the belief that women in reserved seats may not have gained sufficient experience in trade union activities to participate fully in decision-making, or that members of union bodies elected through normal voting procedures may not take women in reserved seats seriously. As Aldred (1981) points out, although they may be listened to, female representatives in reserved seats may still be outvoted. The union's Scottish Women's Organiser, however, believes that it is unlikely that women in reserved seats on union bodies will be in a disadvantaged position. Although she regards the consideration of this issue by the General Executive as a step forwards towards equality in the union, she is sceptical that the targets for women's representation on union committees will be met, and believes that reserved seats will eventually have to be introduced (personal communication, May, 1993).

Critics of reserved seats within the trade unions have also focused on the concept of "tokenism", which, it has been argued, is inherent in such arrangements. For instance, the 1974 NALGO Equal Rights Working Party stated that establishing "... token women's places would be a set-back for the promotion of equal rights ..." (NALGO, 1974: 32), although it does not explain how this conclusion was reached. The Working Party rejected reserved seats on the union's National Executive on the grounds that "... members are elected to represent all of their constituents and not simply those of one sex." (NALGO, 1974: 32). However, this argument, based on some notion of fair representation of all members, is, of course, untenable if one considers that elections through normal union procedures, in reality, result in one sex being grossly under-represented.

Thus, arguments against the introduction of reserved seats for women appear to have focused particularly upon the position of women in such seats relative to members who have been elected through normal procedures, and the quality of representation afforded to

women by these seats. The latter criticism has been based on the notion that reserved seats will result in only a token representation of women, and that women in these seats may fail to represent ordinary union members.

As Aldred (1981) asserts, though, women may need reserved seats in order to gain experience of trade union activities, which women may well find more difficult to gain than men. Although formal equality in union structures may exist, as Aldred argues, in practice, for instance, because of domestic commitments, women may face greater difficulties in gaining positions in the union from which they can move up the union hierarchy. Thus, reserved seats may be required, at least temporarily, in order to facilitate women's representation, by helping women to gain the experience they need to participate fully in union decision-making. This argument is similar to that advanced against the abolition of the women's TUC, which proposes that it should only be abolished when full equality between men and women is reached. That is, action to help women gain equal representation with men is necessary in order to compensate for discrimination faced by women in the past in attempting to gain positions from which they can exert influence in the unions. The removal of reserved seats from GMB's Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committees, which the union claims now have an adequate proportion of women members, appears to exemplify the utility of reserved seats, as vital to help women gain the experience and confidence to participate in union decision-making, so that reserved seats are no longer necessary.

It may, perhaps, be argued that reserved seats entail a lower risk of marginalisation of issues of particular interest to women than do women's conferences or committees. As separate committees tend to have only an advisory status, although they can help women to voice their concerns, they do not guarantee a role for women in actual decision-making. However, this does not appear to be the case with respect to seats designated for women on union bodies such as National Executives, as women in reserved seats tend to have the same voting power as members elected to positions open to both sexes. Reserved seats,

then, may not mean that women are *listened to*, but they do at least guarantee that women, if only in small numbers, have some direct influence on decisions made.

Although, clearly, the sample size means that no conclusions can justifiably be drawn from the present study, a number of general points concerning the use of reserved seats are illustrated by table 31. The proportion of women on the National Executives, particularly of USDAW, but also of NALGO, demonstrates that women can gain significant representation on such bodies, without having seats designated for them. GMB and NUPE (which have ten reserved seats and fifteen other women and five reserved seats and seven other women on their National Executives, respectively), however, appear to support an argument that ensuring women's representation through reserved seats may well encourage other women to come forward and be elected to union bodies at a decision-making level. The position of women in AEU, which has no female representatives on its Executive, seems to highlight the danger of male-dominated trade unions failing to take positive action to secure women's representation.

Table 31 appears to illustrate, then, that designating seats for female members does not militate against their election through normal procedures. That is, there is no evidence to suggest that reserved seats result in the proportion of women on National Executives being restricted to the number of seats allocated for them. Thus, although no analysis of the attitudes of other union members to women in reserved seats is given here, it would seem from the above that, if their representation is measured by sheer numbers of women, designated seats can be an effective means by which to help women gain influence in the trade union movement.

Strachan and Sutherland (1989: 235) describe reserving seats for women on union committees as allowing unions " ... to generate the environment for more women to seek election." Arguably, if unions fail to introduce such measures to encourage women's participation at a decision-making level, then, as the present proportion of women on union

National Executives indicate, women are likely to remain grossly under-represented at this level within the trade union movement.

TRADE UNION	% WOMEN IN MEMBERSHIP	% WOMEN ON NATIONAL EXECUTIVE	NUMBER OF RESERVED SEATS (N)
TGWU	18.29 ¹	7.7 ¹	none (39)
GMB	42.0 ¹	36.2 ¹	10 (69)
NALGO	53.1 ²	42.0 ³	none (75)
AEU	14.2 ³	none	none (11)
MSF	27.0	21.0	4 (38)
NUPE	71.3 ³	46.1 ³	5 (26)
USDAW	62.5 ¹	52.6 ¹	none (19)
BIFU	57.1	17.1	none (35)
NAS / UWT	52.75	17.0	none (41)

Table 31: Women's Representation on the Unions' Governing Bodies.

N: Total number of seats on the National Executive.

Source: Labour Research Department (1991) and personal communication from the unions studied.

All figures are for early 1993, unless otherwise indicated.

1. 1992 figure.
2. 1989 figure.
3. 1990 figure.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has identified three main obstacles to women's involvement at all levels in the unions. These are women's domestic commitments, the male culture of trade unions and, for many women, the lack of confidence to participate. These have been advanced as variables which can improve the explanation of the male / female differential in union participation rates given by those personal, work and trade union characteristics discussed in chapters eight and nine.

The unions have attempted to tackle these issues, respectively, through the provision of childcare at union meetings and changing the times and venues of union activities, recruiting more women into union membership and full-time officer positions and union training aimed at female members. Also, the unions generally appear to be attempting to reform their image of male-domination; for instance, by using more photographs of women trade unionists in their published materials.

This chapter has shown that all of the unions studied, which include the seven largest in this country, have established both a women's or equal opportunities structure and have appointed a Women's or Equality Officer. However, it is important to note that many of the unions have only recently implemented these changes in organisation. Although TGWU established its National Women's Committee in 1983, the union's Women's Organiser in Scotland believes that "The effects of the structural changes are only now emerging." Thus, it may be some time before the importance of separate structures for women's representation in the unions can be ascertained. It may be argued, though, that, as women's structures develop, they are likely to have an increasing influence on the trade unions within which they have been introduced.

It may, perhaps, be predicted that the network of women who have gained confidence and knowledge of the union through these structures are unlikely to be satisfied with only

minimal control in the union. That is, the risk of marginalisation of women's concerns resulting from separate structures, arguably, is likely to be tackled by these structures themselves. Evidence that this is happening within GMB is suggested by a report to the union's 1992 Congress, *Equal Rights in the Year 2000: a new structure for the GMB* (GMB, 1992c). This report stresses the need for the union's equal opportunities and sectional structures to be integrated, in order that the equal rights committees can influence sectional collective bargaining agendas. The report describes the past involvement of the equal rights committees in the sectional bargaining process as "piecemeal" (GMB, 1992c: 2). It proposes that the union's Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committees should become sub-committees of the union's Regional Councils and should also become part of the union rulebook (GMB, 1992c: 4). The report also recommends a two-way relationship between the union's National Equal Rights Advisory Committee and its Central Executive Committee, with both bodies keeping each other informed of its activities.

Thus, it is argued here that, although separate structures alone are unlikely to result in fair representation of women within unions, their establishment is an important step towards this goal. However, clearly, the unions must also facilitate women's involvement through other organisational reforms. It has been argued in this chapter, for instance, that the introduction of reserved seats is one method by which the unions could more quickly and effectively begin to redress women's under-representation at a decision-making level.

Thus, it may be argued that, in the words of Strachan and Sutherland (1989: 242),

where there was ignorance or neglect, there is at least now sensibility and awareness and indeed acceptance that the concerns of women are the concerns of the whole trade union movement.

As tables 30 and 31 in this chapter clearly illustrate, though, women remain grossly under-represented at all levels in the unions. It may also be true, then, that, as the GMB industrial

officer with responsibility for equal opportunities stated, the unions have "wonderful policies, wonderful theories" but "nothing happens fast."

However, a new approach to improving the union representation of women in the public sector seems probable with the merger of the unions, NUPE, NALGO and COHSE into UNISON in July 1993. Given the action by unions to date, the proposal for women's representation in the new union that women should make up two-thirds of the union's national leadership, may be described as a radical new proposition to ensure women are fairly represented. Arguably, the importance attributed to the level of women's representation in UNISON may be regarded as a reflection of the growing recognition of the need for increased participation by women in the trade unions.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This thesis has concentrated upon the significance of gender for two important aspects of the employee's involvement in trade unionism. Both the propensity to unionise of men and women and their rate of participation in trade union activity have been analysed. With respect to the employee's union membership choice, when considering only those workers with a trade union at their workplace for their type of work, sex was found to be strongly associated with the decision to join a trade union. However, when controlling for the predominance of women in part-time work, the importance of sex for the worker's union membership decision was substantially reduced, although this variable remained significant at the conventional five per cent level.

Using crosstabulations and discriminant analysis, the study discovered that, for full-time employees, the male / female union membership differential could best be explained in terms of gender differences in pay, industrial relations practices at the employee's workplace and favourability to trade unions. With respect to the earnings variable, the results supported suggestions regarding the relationship between wages and union membership made by, among others, Booth (1986) and Bain and Elias (1985). Booth has argued that, as wages increase, workers will join unions, as they perceive them as able to increase their earnings. Bain and Elias have stated, though, that, as employees move up the

work hierarchy, their employer's opposition to their union membership is likely to increase. Thus, the probability of union membership increases with wages, but at a decreasing rate. This is consistent with the results obtained here, as union membership was found to increase towards average earnings for the employees studied.

Hence, the relationship between pay, gender and union membership revealed by the present study is not surprising. As women are significantly lower paid than men, as noted in chapter two, female employees, clearly, are less likely than male workers to perceive unions as able to improve their level of earnings. This is consistent with the finding by Chaison and Dhavale (1992), in the United States, that free riders, who are more likely to be women than men, are significantly lower paid than union members. It may be argued that their low pay is also likely to result in a greater reluctance among women than men to pay union subscriptions, however small.

The study also showed that a significantly greater proportion of men than women belonged to a trade union mainly because membership was a condition of their job. This suggested that more male workers were occupied in jobs covered by a closed shop. It appeared, then, that the industrial relations traditions relating to predominantly male employment more strongly encouraged union membership than those characteristic of mainly female work. This is consistent with the finding by Chaison and Dhavale (1992) that women are more likely than men to occupy jobs with a large number of free riders. However, the data set used here did not measure directly whether or not work done by the employee was subject to a closed shop, or the level of trade union density at the respondent's workplace. Therefore, the findings regarding the importance of industrial relations practices at their workplaces for the union membership differential between the men and women studied could not be regarded as conclusive.

The difference in propensity to unionise exhibited by the men and women could also be explained in terms of the significantly lower favourability to trade unions expressed by the

female respondents. Women were as likely as men to believe that trade unions should have influence over pay and work organisation, and to perceive unions as able to exert such influence. However, the low favourability to unions expressed by the female employees appeared to suggest that they were less satisfied with the trade unions than the male employees studied. That is, although men and women did not differ significantly in the extent to which they believed in the principles of trade unionism, and regarded trade unions as instrumental in improving pay and working conditions, women were more likely than men to express disapproval of trade unions generally. It may be argued that these findings indicate that women are less likely than men to perceive the trade unions as responsive to their needs. This is further discussed later in this chapter.

Discriminant analyses, with propensity to unionise as the dependent variable, were also performed separately for full-time male employees, full-time women workers and for female part-timers. This revealed that the most important influences on union membership choice varied across these employee groups. However, there was a greater disparity between the set of discriminating variables for the full-time and part-time women workers than between the full-time male and female employees. The work and personal characteristics and the attitudes to work and to trade unions variables analysed, though, could not explain the difference in propensity to unionise exhibited by the full-time and part-time women workers.

The results of the analyses concerning the employee's participation in trade union activity supported those of, among others, Gordon *et al* (1980), that women are less likely to become involved in trade unionism. Again, the findings suggested that this could be explained, at least in part, by reference to women's lower pay and favourability to trade unions. However, the discriminant analyses, using the groups of variables listed above as explanatory variables, did not explain adequately women's participation in the trade unions. Also, these variables could not account for the significantly lower favourability to trade unions expressed by the women workers.

It was argued that the results above could, perhaps, be understood in terms of the domestic commitments of the female employees studied, and the nature of the trade unions themselves, which were not considered in the statistical analyses. In an attempt to determine whether or not these could account for the union membership differential between the full-time and part-time female employees, and women's lower favourability to trade unions and participation in union activity, a survey of nine large trade unions was undertaken. Thus, a qualitative study was conducted to complement the quantitative analysis of the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey. The trade union survey considered approaches to the recruitment of women and to the promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace by the unions. This revealed that the trade unions have now recognised many of women's concerns in the workplace, such as sexual harassment, which were previously not on the unions' agenda, as collective bargaining issues. However, the findings suggested that the unions have not developed specific, national level policies on some important matters concerning women's advancement in the workplace, such as positive action training.

The trade union study also analysed the steps taken by the unions to facilitate women's representation. This revealed that women are still grossly under-represented at all levels in the unions. The union officers interviewed and the trade union literature reviewed suggested that this is, largely, a result of women's domestic commitments, their lack of confidence to participate and the male culture of trade unions. Although all of the unions studied have established a separate women's or equal opportunities structure, little evidence was found of effective action being taken to improve women's position in the unions, for instance, as full-time officers or in union leadership. Thus, the survey supported the perception of women as 'outsiders' in the trade union movement, in terms of the influence they are able to exert within the unions. Arguably, this could, in large part, explain women's lower favourability to trade unions. It is suggested here that women's under-representation in the trade unions could not have been maintained without collusive action being taken by male trade unionists to retain their level of influence in the unions. It may be argued that this is exemplified by resistance in trade unions, such as in TGWU, to

measures which would be likely to improve swiftly women's position in the unions, such as reserved seats for women on union decision-making bodies. This approach to women in the trade unions, and their inability to gain equality for female employees in the workplace, then, could reasonably be expected to contribute significantly to the level of women's involvement in trade unionism, and to their relatively low favourability to the unions.

Research Limitations

With respect to the analysis of the determinants of the propensity to unionise, the results of the study would, of course, have been more reliable had the influences upon the employee at the time he or she joined a trade union been examined. The work histories data included in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey would have provided much of the information required for such an analysis. However, as the study presented in this thesis was most concerned with the effect of gender, a variable which is not time-dependent, on propensity to unionise, the inclusion of work histories information did not appear to be as important for the analysis here as for research into the determinants of union membership generally. Thus, the additional complexity which would have accompanied the inclusion of the work histories data in the analyses did not appear to be justified for the study here.

As noted in chapter six, a number of variables which could be expected to influence the relationship between sex and union membership were not included in the analysis of the employee's propensity to unionise presented in this thesis. These related to domestic commitments, race, education, occupational status and size of establishment. These variables could not be considered either because they were not included in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey, or because technical problems arose with their analysis, as in the case of the variables concerning the respondent's domestic commitments, as noted in chapter six.

A number of weaknesses can also be identified in the analysis of the employee's rate of participation in trade union activity. The thesis did not consider the theories which have been advanced concerning the importance of participation in the unions by members for union democracy (see Nicholson *et al*, 1981 and references cited therein), or the studies of the characteristics of those who hold union positions, such as shop stewards (Miller and Form, 1963; Batstone *et al*, 1977; Nicholson *et al*, 1980; Marchington and Armstrong, 1983 *et al*). Rather, the study here focused upon the research relating mainly to the

importance of union satisfaction and feelings of loyalty to the trade union for union participation generally. This was in order to concentrate particularly on the importance of attitudes to trade unionism for participation in trade union activity. Also, the employee's involvement in trade unionism was measured solely by reference to the respondent's frequency of attendance at trade union meetings. Thus, the thesis did not distinguish between different forms of participation in the union, which have been highlighted as important by, among others, Nicholson *et al* (1981: 87), who state that

union involvement is better viewed as gradations on a continuum rather than as a dichotomy between active and inactive members.

However, the first step towards greater involvement in union decision-making, for most members, is likely to be participation in union meetings, at which members are elected to union posts. Thus, the concentration upon attendance at trade union meetings is, arguably, justified for the study here, which was interested primarily in women's representation in the unions. If women do not attend union meetings, clearly, they will not be able to gain positions of influence in the unions. In addition, the results of the analysis of the involvement in trade union activity may have been affected by the absence of any investigation of the personal needs of employees for a role in decision-making, which Fiorito *et al* (1988), among others, have suggested are of importance in determining union participation.

The employee's satisfaction with and commitment to his or her trade union were not examined in the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey and, therefore, could not be considered in the study here. However, as noted in chapter five, union satisfaction has previously not been found to be an important determinant of participation in union activity. The inclusion of union satisfaction and commitment, though, would have provided an interesting contribution to the study of the worker and union relationship here.

With respect to the survey of trade unions, a number of important weaknesses may be identified. This study did not investigate, in any depth, the importance of union organisational structures for the development of union policy. Kelly and Heery (1989: 205), though, argue that

The capacity of large organisations to adapt to their environment will depend *inter alia* on the ease with which their control and reward systems can be adjusted to encourage new goals and priorities amongst organisation members.

Kelly and Heery (1989) believe, for instance, that the relatively important role played by its full-time officers in decision-making in the union places the GMB in a better position than the other unions they studied, TGWU, ASTMS and AEU, to alter policies and practices to meet changes in the environment in which they operate. Thus, the unions' structures may affect their ability to develop policies which are responsive to changes in the composition of the labour force, such as an increase in women workers. The importance of this variation in their organisational structures for the unions' approach to the recruitment and representation of women has not been explored here. In addition, the trade union survey examined only union policies developed at a national level. No investigation of the attitudes of full-time officers or lay representatives was attempted. Hence, there was little consideration of the practices of trade unions or of the outcome of union equal opportunities policies. The study here, therefore, presented only a review of ostensible union priorities.

Technical Weaknesses in the Statistical Analyses

The varying sizes of the employee groups studied, distinguished by employment status and sex, were likely to affect the number of variables identified as significantly related to the dependent variable for each of the categories of worker: the larger the sample of employees, the greater the number of variables will be found to be significant using the chi-square test. However, the percentage of employees in each response category were quoted where necessary to illustrate more effectively the importance of a survey variable revealed to be of significance.

In addition, the non-random sample of the population chosen for the Work Attitudes and Histories Survey may have affected the results here. All of the respondents were resident in areas chosen for their particular characteristics, which suggests that it may not be possible to generalise the results of the study to the population as a whole. It is difficult, though, to predict either the importance of this non-randomness in the choice of employees analysed or the nature of its effect on the findings presented.

With respect to the discriminant analyses, a number of problems arose with the interpretation of the results obtained. In some instances, the discriminant function coefficient and the correlation between the discriminating variable and discriminant function indicated a different order of importance for two or more explanatory variables entered into the discriminant model. This is because there is no mathematical relationship between these two different indices, although they both measure the importance of discriminating variables. However, the order of magnitude of the discriminant function coefficient and the correlation between the discriminating variable and discriminant function, typically, was the same. Thus, the small variation in size of these two measurements did not appear to pose a threat to the reliability of the findings.

Another difficulty arose with the interpretation of the results from the discriminant analyses concerning the correlation matrices for the explanatory variables. These could not be

regarded as conclusive evidence of the relationships between these variables, as graphs could not be examined to support the correlations indicated by the matrices, due to the nature of the variables analysed, as noted in chapter seven.

The use of discriminant analyses also limited the importance of the findings as this statistical technique can construct only a linear function. As the relationships between the response and explanatory variables could be non-linear, the discriminant analyses may have failed to identify some important associations. Unfortunately, there was no method which could be employed to overcome this problem, particularly as the analyses were of such high dimensionality.

Although this is a popular statistical technique in social science research, multiple regression was not used in the study here, primarily as this is, of course, a tool designed to predict the value of a continuous measurement, and assumes normality. As noted in chapter seven, probit and logit regression analyses were not employed because of the large number of independent variables, which would have been likely to lead to a slow and somewhat inaccurate process by which the interaction terms were chosen for inclusion in the model. Thus, discriminant analysis, clearly, was more appropriate for the study presented in this thesis, as it is designed specifically to predict group membership.

Implications of Results for Trade Union Policy

With respect to improving women's favourability to trade unions, in order to encourage their membership and participation in the unions, it would appear to be particularly important that the trade unions strive to change women's perceptions of the trade union movement. This would seem to be crucial to improve women's representation in the unions at all levels. It has been argued here that women's domestic commitments are still an important barrier to their participation in the unions, and these must be taken into account in union organisation. For instance, the provision of childcare is vital for women's attendance at union meetings. Also, unions should attempt to make involvement in trade union activity more attractive to women, by breaking down traditional union procedures for meetings. Women should be allowed to develop their own forms of participation. It may be argued that it is vital for participation by female members that trade unions are perceived by women as responsive to their needs. The male-domination of the trade unions and union culture, perpetuated by traditional forms of organisation in the unions, must be reformed, so that trade unions are perceived as relevant by women, as well as men. It has also been suggested here that trade unions should concentrate on increasing the number of women full-time officers, who have been shown to be more likely to prioritise equal opportunities and recruitment than men (Heery and Kelly, 1988). Also, unions should establish a separate women's structure, both national and regional women's or equality officers and reserved seats for women on decision-making bodies, as recommended by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC, 1983).

Also, the unions must develop special measures and devote resources to the organisation of part-time workers. Clearly, the particularly low propensity to unionise of female part-time employees poses an increasing problem for trade unions, especially for those attempting to maintain membership levels in industries employing large numbers of part-timers. This is of growing concern to the trade unions as the ratio of part-time to full-time workers has now increased to one in four, as noted in chapter two. The results here suggest that trade

unions should target specifically part-time employees, and strive to show that union membership is of relevance to those working on a part-time basis¹. This could be achieved, in part, by attempting to facilitate the representation of part-time workers in trade union structures. It may be argued that part-time female employees may well be encouraged to become involved in the unions if they see other part-time workers in union positions. In addition, it is suggested here that trade unions should campaign actively for full-time employment to be more easily accessible to women workers with children. For instance, the provision of childcare at work would be likely to increase considerably the attractiveness of full-time work for mothers in employment. Similarly, the unions should argue vigorously *inter alia* for equal employment protection legislation for full-time and part-time workers, which may well encourage employers to recruit workers on a full-time, as opposed to part-time, basis. The significantly lower pay of free riders discussed in this thesis would suggest, too, that union subscriptions which vary substantially with earnings are likely to be of considerable importance to the union membership decision of low paid workers.

Suggestions for Future Research

What determines an employee's decision to join a trade union or to 'free ride', where there is a trade union recognised for collective bargaining purposes for his or her work, is of vital importance to the trade union movement. Trade unionism is, of course, based upon the principle of solidarity; only when workers organise collectively can trade unions function in an effective manner. Free riders, then, clearly threaten the basis of trade union activity. Thus, more extensive research on the individual's union membership or free rider status would be likely to be of considerable importance for the trade unions. In addition, the results presented in this thesis would appear to suggest that future studies on union membership and participation should distinguish between different types of employee in order to assess influences on these variables. For instance, what determines union membership for blue and white-collar workers, or for full-time and part-time employees, or for men and women, have rarely been considered in the past. Clearly, these cannot be regarded as homogeneous groups, but they tend to exhibit different work characteristics and attitudes to trade unionism, which may well influence the set of factors affecting their level of involvement in trade unionism.

Also, it would appear that more extensive analyses of the British worker and union relationship as a whole are required. For instance, an employee's satisfaction with his or her union, clearly, could be expected to have important consequences for union membership levels. In particular, when an employee changes his or her job, past satisfaction with a trade union is likely to influence significantly his or her resulting new union membership decision. In addition, more research is necessary concerning the priorities and practices of trade unions themselves. For instance, the organisational structures of trade unions need more in-depth examination, in order to understand their significance for the development of union policy. There would seem to be little analysis of decision-making processes and outcomes, although this is, obviously, likely to be of

considerable importance in understanding employee behaviour regarding involvement in trade unionism.

Endnotes

1. Of course, some trade unions may regard part-timers as cheap substitutes for full-time employees and, therefore, may be reluctant to represent workers employed on a part-time basis.

APPENDIX 1

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Area	Aberdeen	82.2 (169)	0.0268
	Coventry	83.6 (232)	
	Kirkcaldy	84.4 (199)	
	Northampton	73.9 (153)	
	Rochdale	85.6 (187)	
	Swindon	76.3 (156)	
Age	20 - 30	75.5 (294)	0.0146
	31 - 40	83.7 (332)	
	41 - 50	85.2 (270)	
	51 - 60	81.5 (200)	
Self-assessed class membership	No	81.4 (688)	0.0125
	Middle class	73.8 (126)	
	Working class	86.1 (259)	
	Other class	90.9 (11)	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative	68.8 (186)	0.0000
	Labour	90.8 (368)	
	Alliance	82.0 (50)	
	Liberal	81.9 (94)	
	SDP	83.3 (96)	
	SNP	70.7 (41)	

Table 32: Personal Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job	56.3 (32)	0.0000
	Fixed-term job	50.0 (34)	
	Permanent job	83.2 (1019)	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70	50.0 (4)	0.0002
	70 - 130	72.8 (158)	
	130 - 190	84.3 (363)	
	190 - 250	86.4 (235)	
	250 - 310	84.5 (110)	
	310 - 370	77.1 (35)	
	370 - 430	77.8 (9)	
	430 - 490	33.3 (3)	
	490 - 550	66.7 (3)	
550 - 610	0.0 (2)		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2	60.0 (20)	0.0007
	2.2 - 3.7	76.9 (303)	
	3.7 - 5.2	88.0 (326)	
	5.2 - 6.7	83.8 (167)	
	6.7 - 8.2	85.2 (61)	
	8.2 - 9.7	70.0 (30)	
	9.7 - 11.2	80.0 (10)	
	11.2 - 12.7	60.0 (5)	
	12.7 - 14.2	-	
14.2 - 15.7	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes	87.9 (306)	0.0007
	No	79.1 (789)	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes	90.7 (225)	0.0001
	No	79.1 (867)	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes	88.5 (513)	0.0000
	No	75.3 (578)	

Table 33: Work Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Male Employees

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work	81.8 (674)	0.6938
	Stop working	80.8 (406)	

Table 34: Commitment to Work Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work	74.3 (374)	0.0455
	Stop working	81.4 (236)	

Table 35: Commitment to Work Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work	55.0 (200)	0.2887
	Stop working	60.7 (150)	

Table 36: Commitment to Work Against Trade Union Membership for Part-time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	94.6 (222)	0.0000
	Quite favourable	87.6 (362)	
	No strong feelings	76.9 (329)	
	Not very favourable	65.7 (140)	
	Not at all favourable	47.5 (40)	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence	91.8 (441)	0.0000
	Some influence	83.9 (510)	
	Not much influence	57.1 (49)	
	None at all	35.1 (74)	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence	91.3 (195)	0.0000
	Some influence	86.8 (547)	
	Not much influence	78.3 (157)	
	None at all	61.1 (175)	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence	90.5 (315)	0.0000
	Some influence	86.3 (451)	
	Not much influence	77.8 (203)	
	None at all	51.5 (97)	
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	Lot of influence	93.0 (100)	0.0000
	Some influence	89.3 (394)	
	Not much influence	84.1 (359)	
	None at all	62.9 (221)	

Table 37: Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Male Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE	% UNION MEMBERSHIP (N)	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes	87.5 (888)	0.0000
	No	57.8 (187)	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable	88.2 (85)	0.5834
	Quite favourable	82.4 (170)	
	No strong feelings	83.0 (341)	
	Not very favourable	79.5 (117)	
	Not at all favourable	84.6 (65)	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable	84.1 (232)	0.5087
	Quite favourable	81.1 (190)	
	No strong feelings	81.0 (248)	
	Not very favourable	77.1 (105)	
	Not at all favourable	77.5 (111)	

Table 37 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against Trade Union Membership for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

APPENDIX 2

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Area	Aberdeen (121)	16.5	38.8	44.6	0.6328
	Coventry (165)	19.4	38.2	42.4	
	Kirkcaldy (147)	22.4	33.3	44.2	
	Northampton (94)	19.1	33.0	47.9	
	Rochdale (137)	24.8	35.0	40.1	
	Swindon (89)	29.2	33.7	37.1	
Age	20 - 30 (194)	23.2	33.0	43.8	0.0363
	31 - 40 (238)	26.1	37.4	36.6	
	41 - 50 (191)	19.4	38.7	41.9	
	51 - 60 (130)	14.6	31.5	53.8	
Self-assessed class membership	None (470)	17.9	34.3	47.9	0.0030
	Middle class (78)	26.9	47.4	25.6	
	Working class (190)	26.8	34.2	38.9	
	Other class (10)	40.0	40.0	20.0	
Party would vote for tomorrow	Conservative (102)	15.7	35.3	49.0	0.0223
	Labour (289)	31.1	32.5	36.3	
	Alliance (33)	18.2	45.5	36.4	
	Liberal (68)	16.2	50.0	33.8	
	SDP (68)	16.2	38.2	45.6	
	SNP (28)	21.4	32.1	46.4	
Domestic commitments	Yes (9)	22.2	44.4	33.3	0.9060
	No (671)	21.8	34.9	43.4	

Table 38: Personal Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
How permanent employer sees job	Temporary job (16)	31.3	31.3	37.5	0.1887
	Fixed-term job (14)	35.7	7.1	57.1	
	Permanent job (714)	21.3	36.3	42.4	
Employee / employer relations	Very difficult (60)	46.7	21.7	31.7	0.0000
	Somewhat difficult(201)	21.9	35.3	42.8	
	Quite harmonious (399)	19.0	38.8	42.1	
	Very harmonious (85)	14.1	29.4	56.5	
Weekly pay (£)	10 - 70 (1)	100.0	-	-	0.0044
	70 - 130 (114)	17.5	28.1	54.5	
	130 - 190 (305)	20.3	33.1	46.4	
	190 - 250 (203)	28.1	37.4	34.5	
	250 - 310 (93)	16.1	46.2	37.6	
	310 - 370 (27)	18.5	40.7	40.7	
	370 - 430 (7)	14.3	57.1	28.6	
	430 - 490 (1)	-	100.0	-	
	490 - 550 (2)	100.0	-	-	
550 - 610 (0)	-	-	-		
Hourly earnings (£)	0.7 - 2.2 (11)	18.2	54.5	27.3	0.0038
	2.2 - 3.7 (231)	19.9	29.0	51.1	
	3.7 - 5.2(287)	23.7	32.8	43.6	
	5.2 - 6.7 (140)	19.3	45.0	35.7	
	6.7 - 8.2 (52)	25.0	34.6	40.4	
	8.2 - 9.7 (21)	14.3	66.7	19.0	
	9.7 - 11.2 (8)	25.0	62.5	12.5	
	11.2 - 12.7 (3)	66.7	33.3	-	
	12.7 - 14.2 (0)	-	-	-	
14.2 - 15.7 (0)	-	-	-		
Job involves: shift work	Yes (230)	26.5	33.0	40.4	0.0973
	No (523)	19.5	36.7	43.8	
Job involves: frequent nightwork	Yes (173)	24.3	34.1	41.6	0.5811
	No (578)	20.6	36.2	43.3	
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	Yes (386)	23.3	34.5	42.2	0.4645
	No (366)	19.7	36.9	43.4	

Table 39: Work Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Promotion prospects	Dissatisfied (199)	22.1	32.7	45.2	0.5194
	No strong feelings (295)	21.0	34.6	44.4	
	Satisfied (253)	22.5	39.1	38.3	
Total pay	Dissatisfied (201)	23.4	39.8	36.8	0.3094
	No strong feelings (229)	19.2	34.5	46.3	
	Satisfied (323)	22.3	33.7	44.0	
Relations with supervisor / manager	Dissatisfied (62)	30.6	30.6	38.7	0.2618
	No strong feelings (178)	24.2	33.1	42.7	
	Satisfied (508)	19.5	37.0	43.5	
Job security	Dissatisfied (103)	28.2	33.0	38.8	0.4379
	No strong feelings (157)	19.1	38.9	42.0	
	Satisfied (490)	21.2	34.9	43.9	
Using own initiative	Dissatisfied (44)	29.5	22.7	47.7	0.2901
	No strong feelings (96)	17.7	40.6	41.7	
	Satisfied (609)	21.5	35.6	42.9	
Ability / efficiency of management	Dissatisfied (181)	28.2	32.0	39.8	0.0693
	No strong feelings (276)	19.9	39.1	40.9	
	Satisfied (286)	18.9	33.9	47.2	
Actual work	Dissatisfied (44)	25.0	27.3	47.7	0.6335
	No strong feelings (170)	23.5	32.9	43.5	
	Satisfied (539)	20.8	37.1	42.1	
Hours worked	Dissatisfied (79)	25.3	34.2	40.5	0.9235
	No strong feelings (165)	20.0	36.4	43.6	
	Satisfied (506)	21.5	35.4	43.1	
Combined satisfaction score	Dissatisfied (41)	22.0	29.3	48.8	0.9128
	No strong feelings (231)	22.1	36.4	41.6	
	Satisfied (458)	21.4	35.2	43.4	
Overall satisfaction	Dissatisfied (55)	27.3	27.3	45.5	0.6438
	No strong feelings (153)	19.6	37.9	42.5	
	Satisfied (545)	21.7	35.8	42.6	

Table 40: Satisfaction with Work Variables Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-Time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response. P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Promotion prospects	Dissatisfied (95)	16.8	40.0	43.2	0.6197
	No strong feelings (164)	12.8	36.0	51.2	
	Satisfied (128)	17.2	39.1	43.8	
Total pay	Dissatisfied (106)	19.8	35.8	44.3	0.5175
	No strong feelings (115)	11.3	40.0	48.7	
	Satisfied (175)	14.3	38.3	47.4	
Relations with supervisor / manager	Dissatisfied (29)	24.1	24.1	51.7	0.3814
	No strong feelings (94)	13.8	36.2	50.0	
	Satisfied (271)	14.0	40.2	45.8	
Job security	Dissatisfied (41)	17.1	31.7	51.2	0.8425
	No strong feelings (76)	17.1	39.5	43.4	
	Satisfied (279)	14.0	38.7	47.3	
Using own initiative	Dissatisfied (35)	17.1	31.4	51.4	0.6928
	No strong feelings (52)	13.5	32.7	53.8	
	Satisfied (307)	15.0	40.1	45.0	
Ability / efficiency of management	Dissatisfied (91)	23.1	27.5	49.5	0.0151
	No strong feelings (141)	14.9	44.7	40.4	
	Satisfied (161)	10.6	38.5	50.9	
Actual work	Dissatisfied (24)	12.5	33.3	54.2	0.8892
	No strong feelings (68)	17.6	35.3	47.1	
	Satisfied (304)	14.5	39.1	46.4	
Hours worked	Dissatisfied (34)	23.5	29.4	47.1	0.0674
	No strong feelings (79)	12.7	50.6	36.7	
	Satisfied (282)	14.5	35.5	50.0	
Combined satisfaction score	Dissatisfied (15)	26.7	13.3	60.0	0.2372
	No strong feelings (109)	17.4	39.4	43.1	
	Satisfied (258)	13.6	38.8	47.7	
Overall satisfaction	Dissatisfied (23)	26.1	13.0	60.9	0.0952
	No strong feelings (68)	11.8	44.1	44.1	
	Satisfied (304)	14.8	38.5	46.7	

Table 41: Satisfaction with Work Variables Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-Time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response. P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Promotion prospects	Dissatisfied (41)	9.8	29.3	61.0	0.5671
	No strong feelings (70)	10.0	31.4	58.6	
	Satisfied (50)	4.0	24.0	72.0	
Total pay	Dissatisfied (23)	13.0	26.1	60.9	0.2792
	No strong feelings (50)	14.0	26.0	60.0	
	Satisfied (96)	4.2	31.3	64.6	
Relations with supervisor / manager	Dissatisfied (8)	12.5	25.0	62.5	0.6404
	No strong feelings (39)	2.6	33.3	64.1	
	Satisfied (123)	9.8	26.8	63.4	
Job security	Dissatisfied (19)	5.3	52.6	42.1	0.0779
	No strong feelings (35)	11.4	34.3	54.3	
	Satisfied (116)	7.8	23.3	69.0	
Using own initiative	Dissatisfied (8)	12.5	37.5	50.0	0.4817
	No strong feelings (22)	-	36.4	63.6	
	Satisfied (139)	9.4	25.9	64.7	
Ability / efficiency of management	Dissatisfied (21)	-	38.1	61.9	0.4625
	No strong feelings (52)	9.6	32.7	57.7	
	Satisfied (95)	9.5	25.3	65.3	
Actual work	Dissatisfied (9)	-	33.3	66.7	0.0878
	No strong feelings (35)	17.1	37.1	45.7	
	Satisfied (127)	6.3	26.0	67.7	
Hours worked	Dissatisfied (5)	-	20.0	80.0	0.0489
	No strong feelings (20)	25.0	30.0	45.0	
	Satisfied (146)	6.2	28.8	65.1	
Combined satisfaction score	Dissatisfied (6)	16.7	33.3	50.0	0.3541
	No strong feelings (32)	9.4	40.6	50.0	
	Satisfied (118)	7.6	24.6	67.8	
Overall satisfaction	Dissatisfied (9)	22.2	44.4	33.3	0.2046
	No strong feelings (24)	4.2	37.5	58.3	
	Satisfied (138)	8.0	26.1	65.9	

Table 42: Satisfaction with Work Variables Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Part-Time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response. P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Wish to change jobs if plenty	Yes (321)	20.9	34.9	44.2	0.9893
	No (399)	21.3	34.8	43.9	
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work (467)	22.1	37.3	40.7	0.3066
	Stop working (274)	20.8	32.8	46.4	

Table 43: Commitment to Work Variables Against Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-Time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Wish to change jobs if plenty	Yes (151)	15.9	39.1	45.0	0.6818
	No (233)	13.7	36.9	49.4	
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work (237)	13.9	38.4	47.7	0.7705
	Stop working (157)	16.6	37.6	45.9	

Table 44: Commitment to Work Variables Against Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-Time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Wish to change jobs if plenty	Yes (65)	12.3	27.7	60.0	0.3220
	No (104)	5.8	28.8	65.4	
Keep working if comfortably off	Continue to work (91)	5.5	27.5	67.0	0.2734
	Stop working (78)	11.5	30.8	57.7	

Table 45: Commitment to Work Variables Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Part-Time Female Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Most important reason for being in union	Condition of job (140)	21.4	25.7	52.9	0.0001
	To create just society (81)	39.5	37.0	23.5	
	Show solidarity (57)	22.8	47.4	29.8	
	Pay and conditions (174)	19.5	39.1	41.4	
	Everyone else (20)	5.0	45.0	50.0	
	Future Problems (275)	18.9	35.6	45.5	
Favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (181)	44.2	29.8	26.0	0.0000
	Quite favourable (269)	19.3	42.8	37.9	
	No strong feelings (214)	9.8	32.2	57.9	
	Not very favourable (77)	13.0	36.4	50.6	
	Not at all favourable (10)	-	10.0	90.0	
Influence trade unions should have over pay	Lot of influence (351)	25.1	34.2	40.7	0.0198
	Some influence (354)	18.9	39.5	41.5	
	Not much influence (22)	18.2	22.7	59.1	
	None at all (21)	14.3	14.3	71.4	
How much should trade unions influence work organisation	Lot of influence (155)	33.5	34.8	31.6	0.0002
	Some influence (404)	21.0	37.1	41.8	
	Not much influence (100)	14.0	34.0	52.0	
	None at all (86)	12.8	32.6	54.7	
Influence of trade unions over pay received	Lot of influence (239)	25.5	35.1	39.3	0.0505
	Some influence (326)	20.6	39.6	39.9	
	Not much influence (140)	20.7	29.3	50.0	
	None at all (40)	10.0	32.5	57.5	
Workplace trade unions influence over work organisation	Lot of influence (80)	33.8	43.8	22.5	0.0000
	Some influence (301)	23.3	38.2	38.5	
	Not much influence (255)	21.2	32.9	45.9	
	None at all (113)	10.6	29.2	60.2	

Table 46: Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union

Meetings' for Full-time Male Employees (continued overleaf)

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

VARIABLE	RESPONSE (N)	FREQ- UENT	SOME- TIME	NOT AT ALL	P
Presence of workplace representatives	Yes (659)	24.0	37.3	38.7	0.0000
	No (89)	5.6	22.5	71.9	
Present employer's attitude to trade unions	Encouraging (275)	23.3	33.5	43.3	0.0681
	Accepting (404)	20.0	38.1	41.8	
	Discouraging (44)	34.1	29.5	36.4	
	Unaffected (19)	5.3	26.3	68.4	
Employer's attitude when first joined a trade union	Encouraging (260)	21.9	31.2	46.9	0.0649
	Accepting (427)	22.0	38.2	39.8	
	Discouraging (35)	28.6	34.3	37.1	
	Unaffected (20)	-	35.0	65.0	
Partner's favourability to trade unions	Very favourable (62)	38.7	29.0	32.3	0.0039
	Quite favourable (120)	27.5	41.7	30.8	
	No strong feelings (248)	21.0	33.5	45.6	
	Not very favourable (80)	18.8	43.8	37.5	
	Not at all favourable (42)	14.3	28.6	57.1	
At first job how trade union favourable was father	Very favourable (172)	26.7	34.3	39.0	0.6664
	Quite favourable (129)	17.1	38.0	45.0	
	No strong feelings (167)	21.6	38.3	40.1	
	Not very favourable (68)	19.1	35.3	45.6	
	Not at all favourable (78)	21.8	32.1	46.2	

Table 46 (continued): Trade Union Characteristics Against 'Frequency of Attendance at Union Meetings' for Full-time Male Employees.

N: Number of valid cases for each response.

P: Significance of chi-square.

APPENDIX 3

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.534	0.610	0.786	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.498	0.613	0.870	0.0000
Union membership	0.274	0.479	0.767	0.0000
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	0.210	0.306	0.740	0.0000
Area: Northampton	0.187	0.256	0.751	0.0000
Job involves: frequent night-work	0.178	0.237	0.733	0.0000

Table 47: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees with 'Union Influence' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.622	0.686	0.798	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.398	0.549	0.729	0.0000
Union membership	0.237	0.460	0.694	0.0000
Sat / dissat - using own initiative	0.187	0.226	0.683	0.0000
Hourly earnings within lowest quartile	-0.181	-0.052	0.669	0.0000
Job involves: clocking in / signing on	0.181	0.303	0.707	0.0000

Table 48: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Male Employees with 'Union Influence' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.606	0.626	0.886	0.0000
Favourability to trade unions	0.604	0.607	0.811	0.0000
Sat / dissat - job security	0.311	0.281	0.782	0.0000
Employee / employer relations	0.248	0.306	0.768	0.0000
Area: Northampton	0.211	0.263	0.760	0.0000
Would change jobs if plenty available	0.194	0.178	0.753	0.0000

Table 49: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Female Employees with 'Union Influence' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	r_1	r_2	WILKS' LAMBDA	p
Favourability to trade unions	0.637	0.619	0.867	0.0000
Area: Northampton	0.380	0.353	0.764	0.0000
Sat / dissat - actual work	0.349	0.414	0.815	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	0.352	0.305	0.764	0.0000
Union membership	0.299	0.435	0.785	0.0000
Keep working if comfortably off	0.304	0.306	0.733	0.0000

Table 50: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Part-time Female Employees with 'Union Influence' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Union membership	$r_1=0.482$ $r_2=0.272$	$r_1=0.495$ $r_2=0.200$	0.919	0.0000
Party would vote for tomorrow - Labour	$r_1=0.422$ $r_2=0.282$	$r_1=-0.592$ $r_2=0.125$	0.823	0.0000
Partner's favourability to trade unions	$r_1=0.264$ $r_2=0.157$	$r_1=0.267$ $r_2=-0.076$	0.780	0.0000
Sex	$r_1=0.226$ $r_2=-0.004$	$r_1=0.227$ $r_2=-0.008$	0.731	0.0000
At first job how trade union favourable was father	$r_1=0.193$ $r_2=-0.030$	$r_1=0.256$ $r_2=-0.059$	0.722	0.0000
Influence of trade unions over pay	$r_1=0.179$ $r_2=-0.067$	$r_1=-0.296$ $r_2=-0.054$	0.704	0.0000

Table 51: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for All Employees with 'Favourability to Trade Unions' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Party would vote for tomorrow - Labour	$r_1 = -0.508$ $r_2 = 0.473$	$r_1 = -0.690$ $r_2 = 0.387$	0.775	0.0000
Union membership	$r_1 = 0.433$ $r_2 = 0.118$	$r_1 = -0.566$ $r_2 = 0.144$	0.912	0.0000
Partner's favourability to trade unions	$r_1 = 0.326$ $r_2 = 0.234$	$r_1 = 0.329$ $r_2 = -0.017$	0.738	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	$r_1 = 0.209$ $r_2 = 0.237$	$r_1 = 0.388$ $r_2 = 0.179$	0.765	0.0000
Self-assessed class membership	$r_1 = 0.433$ $r_2 = -0.521$	$r_1 = 0.206$ $r_2 = 0.549$	0.889	0.0000

Table 52: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Male Employees with 'Favourability to Trade Unions' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Union membership	$r_1=0.426$ $r_2=-0.032$	$r_1=0.533$ $r_2=-0.035$	0.874	0.0000
Party would vote for tomorrow - Labour	$r_1=-0.409$ $r_2=0.047$	$r_1=-0.600$ $r_2=-0.069$	0.918	0.0000
Workplace trade unions' influence over work organisation	$r_1=0.352$ $r_2=-0.080$	$r_1=0.0451$ $r_2=-0.026$	0.816	0.0000
At first job how trade union favourable was father	$r_1=0.342$ $r_2=-0.176$	$r_1=0.359$ $r_2=-0.184$	0.760	0.0000
Area: Kirkcaldy	$r_1=0.196$ $r_2=-0.397$	$r_1=0.057$ $r_2=-0.407$	0.747	0.0000
Self-assessed class membership	$r_1=0.154$ $r_2=-0.471$	$r_1=0.179$ $r_2=-0.457$	0.831	0.0000

Table 53: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Full-time Female Employees with 'Favourability to Trade Unions' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

VARIABLE	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	WILKS' LAMBDA	P
Party would vote for tomorrow - Labour	$r_1 = -0.575$ $r_2 = -0.214$	$r_1 = -0.646$ $r_2 = -0.259$	0.865	0.0000
How favourable is partner to trade unions	$r_1 = 0.417$ $r_2 = -0.318$	$r_1 = 0.419$ $r_2 = -0.235$	0.691	0.0000
Self-assessed class membership	$r_1 = 0.406$ $r_2 = 0.162$	$r_1 = -0.399$ $r_2 = -0.178$	0.767	0.0000
At first job how trade union favourable was father	$r_1 = 0.379$ $r_2 = -0.308$	$r_1 = -0.349$ $r_2 = -0.367$	0.729	0.0000
Union membership	$r_1 = 0.271$ $r_2 = 0.442$	$r_1 = 0.300$ $r_2 = 0.519$	0.808	0.0000
Age	$r_1 = -0.178$ $r_2 = 0.703$	$r_1 = -0.118$ $r_2 = 0.708$	0.835	0.0000

Table 54: Results of the Discriminant Analysis Performed for Part-time Female Employees with 'Favourability to Trade Unions' as the Response Variable.

r_1 : Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficient.

r_2 : Pooled within-groups correlation between discriminating variable and canonical discriminant function.

P : Significance of Wilks' Lambda.

APPENDIX 4

Questionnaire

Equal Opportunities in the Workplace

1. On which of the following has the union developed specific policies at a national level and what priority do you think it gives to these issues?
 - (i) part-time employment;
 - (ii) equal pay and low pay;
 - (iii) flexible forms of working, such as career breaks;
 - (iv) childcare, and
 - (v) maternity and paternity pay and leave.

Equal Opportunities in the Trade Union

Union Structure

2. What percentage of seats on the union's National Executive are occupied by women?
3. In the last five years, what significant structural changes have been made to facilitate women's participation in the union?
4. Are there reserved seats for women on the National Executive or on other union bodies?
5. Does the union have a National Women's Officer or Equality Officer?

Union Policies and Practices

6. What policies have been adopted by the union to increase women's membership and participation in the union?
7. What campaigns have been undertaken by the union for the above purposes?
8. Does the union run women-only training or equal opportunities courses?
9. Have any campaigns been established specifically aimed at recruiting part-time employees or facilitating their involvement in the union?
10. Is there anything not yet discussed, which the union is doing to improve its image with women workers?
11. What do you think are the most important barriers to women's advancement in the trade union today?

APPENDIX 5

Part-time Working

Part of the TGWU *Link Up* campaign has involved an "equality audit" of the terms and conditions of employment of part-timers in local government. This was agreed as part of the 1991 settlement reached by employers and the four unions representing National Health Service ancillary workers - COHSE, GMB, NUPE and TGWU. One of the most important results of this audit has been a new entitlement to sick pay for 540, 000 part-time employees in local government, agreed in the 1992 settlement (*Together*, No.2, TGWU, 1992). In addition, it was proposed, in 1992, that the employers and the unions should establish an "Agenda for the Future" on further issues of equality (*Together*, No.2, TGWU, 1992: 16).

Similarly, GMB has gained improvements for its part-time workers with regard to sickness benefit. The union has successfully negotiated for a reduction in the qualifying period for such benefit from eighteen hours to sixteen hours work per week in a number of employment organisations. Recently, GMB has also gained access to the pension schemes in the supermarket chain ASDA, for all employees working more than twenty hours per week. The qualifying period for entry into the scheme had been 40 hours work per week. GMB claims that it is still negotiating for further reductions in this period.

The proportion of part-time workers in the retailing sector has increased from 35 per cent in 1971 to 48 per cent in 1991, with 60 per cent of workers employed on a part-time basis in food retailing (Labour Research Department, 1992a: 1). Not surprisingly, therefore, USDAW has paid particular attention to campaigning on behalf of part-time employees. For instance, 1989 and 1990 agreements between Tesco and USDAW include *pro rata* pay increases with full-timers for part-time employees and an additional rise for part-timers, as weekly hours of full-time staff had previously been reduced with no decrease in pay.

In the finance industry, BIFU claims to have gained improvements for part-timers in relation to access to pension funds, mortgage subsidies and loan schemes, with some employers agreeing to this under the threat of litigation supported by BIFU (*Full-time rights for part-timers - its about time*, BIFU, c.1990) A report by BIFU into the terms and conditions of part-timers, published in 1990, identifies some success in negotiations with a number of clearing banks, including Barclays and Lloyds, concerning part-timers' rights to concessionary house loans and occupational pension schemes (*Survey of Terms and Conditions for Part-Time, Temporary or Casual Staff*, BIFU, 1990).

The senior officer for MSF interviewed asserted that, despite campaigns, the demands made by the union on behalf of part-timers were only met when MSF began to take specific claims to Industrial Tribunals. In February 1987, MSF won a decision from the Central Arbitration Committee against Norwich Union, which stated that the exclusion of part-time staff from the company's employee mortgage allowance scheme was discriminatory under the Equal Pay Act (1970) and EEC legislation. MSF claims that other major employers, such as the Midland Bank and Royal Insurance Group, then agreed to allow part-timers access to pensions and house purchase schemes (*Working for part-time staff*, MSF, c.1990). (However, although MSF has successfully negotiated for part-timers to be included in pension schemes, this has not been made retrospective. Thus, as the MSF officer pointed out, although some women may have worked for 20 years in the same organisation, this service is not counted in their pension arrangements.)

A number of the unions have also campaigned both the TUC and Labour Party for improved rights for part-time employees. For instance, at the 1985 TUC Conference NUPE called for a report and policy statement on part-time workers and for a TUC campaign to improve part-timers' employment benefits and rights (NUPE, c.1989).

APPENDIX 6

NUPE's Ten Point Charter for a Fair Deal for Part-timers

Demands on Government

- 1 Equal Rights at Work:** part-timers should get the same employment rights as full-timers.
- 2 Fairness in Social Security:** part-timers should be entitled to benefits such as those for unemployment and long term sickness.
- 3 End the National Insurance Trap:** part-timers should not see their take home pay fall as their earnings rise.
- 4 Introduce a Statutory Minimum Wage:** to guarantee part-timers a decent minimum hourly wage.
- 5 Proper childcare:** Facilities to be provided by local councils so parents have real choices about working full-time if they want to.

Demands on Employers

- 6 Equal pension rights:** part-timers should be able to join pension schemes on the same terms as male full-timers.
- 7 Full Sick Pay and Maternity Pay:** part-timers should get the same rights to sick and maternity pay as full-timers with no deduction of statutory payments they don't receive.
- 8 Equal Opportunities:** part-timers should get the same chances for training and promotion as full-timers.
- 9 Equal Conditions:** part-timers should get fair treatment with full-timers on holiday entitlement, tea breaks, bonus schemes and other working conditions.
- 10 Fair Pay:** all jobs, part-time and full-time should be paid their full worth, and that means cutting out discrimination against part-time women workers.

APPENDIX 7

Career Breaks

BIFU has conducted research into career break schemes in the finance industry. The union found that such breaks in paid work have in the past been taken by employees for childcare purposes, although the Co-op and Midland Banks have recently allowed workers to break for voluntary work or for study. Most of these schemes allow a break of five years, with the exception of Barclays, which allows a two-year break, but with the option of part-time work on the employee's return. BIFU's policy is to negotiate for a service requirement of two years before an employee can take such a break, as opposed to the five year qualification period stipulated in some of the existing career break arrangements in the finance sector. Career break schemes presently exist in a number of institutions in this industry, including the Co-op, Barclays and Midland Banks. However, BIFU has discovered that some employers, such as the TSB Bank and Bank of England, have attempted to downgrade their career break schemes by withdrawing the promise of a job at the end of the break. Thus, BIFU stresses that the union will make this assurance of a job a priority in negotiations concerning career breaks.

APPENDIX 8

Equal Pay and Low Pay

USDAW claims that following the case, which it assisted, of *O'Sullivan v. Sainsbury's plc*, in which a female checkout operator successfully claimed equal pay with a warehouseman, the union reached agreements in favour of women workers with a number of other retailers. In February 1991, USDAW and the supermarket chain Tesco agreed to a change in the operation of the job evaluation scheme, resulting in a 17.7 per cent pay rise for the main grade of staff in the company, who were mainly women (*Women in Usdaw - The Agenda for 1991: 1991 ADM Executive Council Statement*, USDAW, 1991: 6). Also, in 1992, the retailer Co-op agreed to the introduction of a new non-discriminatory grading structure (USDAW, 1992a: 4).

The senior MSF officer interviewed believes that one of the most important demands recently made by the union for equal pay has been that made against the insurance company General Accident. MSF successfully brought a claim to the Central Arbitration Committee that this company should provide statistics on men's and women's pay, following the introduction of a performance-related pay scheme. The information received by the union revealed women to be slightly disadvantaged by the scheme; a situation the union claims has now been redressed, primarily through the establishment of a monitoring procedure.

TGWU formally launched its campaign against the removal of the remaining Wages Councils on 30 November 1992. The union is currently seeking legal advice on whether or not the abolition of the Wages Councils would be discriminatory against women under EEC law (*Save the Wages Councils*, TGWU, 1992). Usdaw, too, has begun campaigning work, publishing information for distribution to members, and lobbying Parliament. GMB has launched a number of campaigns at regional level, in particular, in clothing and textile manufacturing.

APPENDIX 9

Workplace Nursery Provision

BIFU claims to have negotiated over 100 workplace nurseries with five different employers, including the Midland Bank. Also, BIFU's National Equal Rights Committee has reviewed a number of nurseries where its members place their children. Where necessary, the union has informed social services and / or negotiators and companies where the nursery has not been of a reasonable standard. TGWU, too, claims to have negotiated nurseries with a number of employers, including British Airways, Leicester City Council and the Wellcome Foundation.

However, progress towards establishing childcare facilities for workers appears to have become slower in the last few years. For instance, a report of BIFU's Equal Rights Committee to the union's 1992 Annual Delegate Conference states that

After initial enthusiasm from a number of finance employers in 1990 - 91 towards workplace nurseries, there has been a marked cooling off in commitment to nursery provision during late 1991 - 92.

BIFU, 1992b: 2

BIFU claims that the Midland Bank has withdrawn their decision to open 300 workplace nurseries, and considerably reduced the number of places which were to be available to staff. Also, the report states that "Plans for partnership nurseries at GRE, the Co-op and Yorkshire Banks have been shelved." (BIFU, 1992b: 2)

APPENDIX 10

Women's Health

NUPE states that national terms and conditions in local government now specify that women should have paid time-off for cancer screening. The union also claims that there exist local "top-up" agreements concerning the use of mobile clinics to provide on-site screening. USDAW, too, claims that over 75 per cent of its members are covered by agreements with employers ensuring access to cancer screening for women, mainly in the form of paid time-off arrangements, but with some on-site facilities (USDAW, c.1990). Examples of companies with agreements on the former in Scotland include the Dumbarton and Clydebank Co-ops and Greggs Bakery.

With respect to tackling repetitive strain injury, GMB, at United Biscuits in Carlisle, and USDAW, at Levis-Strauss, have successfully negotiated modifications to certain jobs. Also, both BIFU, at the Midland Bank, in 1989, and AEEU, at Vauxhall's Luton plant, have won substantial damages for female members suffering from RSI, though the latter case is presently under appeal (Labour Research Department, 1992b).

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