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TOWARD A MODEL OF UNION COMMITMENT

Clive Fullagar and Julian Barling

Organizational psychology has passed through a dark age of research on organized labor (Gordon and Burt 1981; Gordon and Nurick 1981; Huszczo, Wiggins, and Currie 1984). Since the 1950s, a decade Strauss (1977, 240) referred to as the "Golden Age of research and discussion on union democracy," theorizing and research in psychology has largely avoided the topic of labor and trade unions. Indeed, it has been estimated that no more than one percent of research conducted by industrial and organizational psychologists focuses on labor and trade union issues (Campbell, Daft, and Hulin 1982). This neglect can be attributed to a number of causes. First, as a result of organizational psychologists' traditional identification with management, their theory and methods are often perceived as preventing the consolidation of unions (Gordon and Burt 1981; Huszczo, Wiggins, and Currie 1984; Walker 1979). Second, organizational psychologists have been concerned with serving mainly those organizations capable of sponsoring research. Third, organizational psychologists' inadequate conceptualization of industrial conflict, stemming from the philosophies of scientific management and human relations (Fullager 1983; Gordon and Burt 1981; Kornhauser 1961; Strauss 1977), precludes an adequate focus on industrial relations issues. As a result, organizational psychologists remain largely ignorant about the psychology of unions, while unionists remain skeptical and suspicious

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about research in organizational psychology. As Huszczo, Wiggins, and Currie (1984, 432) pointed out, unionists perceive "the contributions of psychologists, at best, to be unrelated to their needs, at worst to be antithetical to their interests."

This situation is surprising, since many industrial relations theorists acknowledge the important contribution of organizational psychology to the understanding of labor-management relationships. Nevertheless, it is only since the late 1970s that organizational psychologists have undertaken research focusing on organized labor (Gordon and Burt 1981; Huszczo, Wiggins, and Currie 1984; Srinivas 1981; Stagner 1981). This renewed interest among psychologists is evidenced in the formation of various committees within the American Psychological Association, special editions of the *International Review of Applied Psychology* (1981) and the *Journal of Occupational Psychology* (1986), a special section of the *American Psychologist* (1984), and, as we will discuss, a growing body of empirical research—all specifically addressing the topic of psychology's relationship with, and contribution to, labor.

One aspect of organizational theory of particular relevance is the concept of member commitment to unions. Research on union commitment represents an attempt to clarify the relationships between union psychological, behavioral, and attitudinal variables, on the one hand, and union participation, on the other. The central role of union commitment in labor organizations is evident in Gordon and his colleagues' (1980, 480) observation:

> Since the ability of union locals to attain their goals is generally based on the members' loyalty, belief in the objectives of organized labor, and willingness to perform services voluntarily, commitment is part of the very fabric of unions.

Gordon and Nurick (1981) judged that union commitment is a major variable in any applied psychological approach aimed an understanding unions. Investigating commitment in labor organizations should enhance our understanding of the psychological processes involved in unionization; provide unions with research of some practical efficacy; and test the generality of current models of commitment (for example, Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982) in a different social institution, namely, the not-for-profit labor organization. In short, union commitment is a crucial topic for investigation.

In trying to understand the causes and consequences of members' attachment to their unions, previous research has focused almost exclusively on the union membership itself (for example, Brett 1980; Freeman and Medoff 1984). Yet many people who belong to unions do not necessarily do so willingly (as, for example, in organizations with strong union security agreements); and many who do not have the opportunity to join a union would choose to if they could. Focusing exclusively on union members to understand union psychology thus creates a false dichotomy, ignoring the diversity of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of union members and nonmembers alike. In the following review of the literature we will address this problem in more detail.

COMMITMENT AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Although unions have much in common with commercial organizations, they retain unique properties (Strauss 1977). The extent to which the goals of labor organizations differ from those of their commercial counterparts likely affects the nature of membership commitment.

Democracy is one primary objective of many unions (Stein 1972; Strauss and Warner 1977). Union democracy has been defined as the extent of rank-and-file participation in union activities (Seidman et al. 1958). To achieve a democratic ethos and provide grassroots support to its collective actions, the union must maintain not only a political structure that is accessible to control by all members, but also a level of commitment that facilitates participation.

Commitment, therefore, is a crucial facet of organized labor because it can help determine the success and effectiveness of the union in imposing sanctions against the employer and in consolidating its bargaining power. Kanter (1968) has distinguished three types of commitment. First is "continuance commitment," the individual's commitment to participate in the organization and remain a member. This form of commitment reduces organizational turnover. Second, "cohesion commitment" is the individual's commitment to group solidarity, which in turn makes the organization more resistant to external threats. Finally, "control commitment" is the individual's commitment to the ideology of the organization, a commitment that ensures conformity to organizational norms. The success of the union's political economy depends on the extent to which the organization can secure all three types of commitment from its members. One common index of the extent of members' commitment to the union is their involvement in union elections and meetings. Child, Loveridge, and Warner (1973) noted that an understanding of commitment to unions becomes important to unions when they are confronted, for example, by declining attendance at union meetings and elections:

> The general lack of appreciation of member orientations, of the processes leading to their emergence and the way they are acted out through behavior in the union, have been serious omissions, not just of trade union studies, but much of organizational theory in general (p. 75).

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF UNION COMMITMENT

Despite the relevance of commitment to an understanding of union psychology, it was only in 1980 that a serious attempt was made to formalize a definition of union commitment based on data already obtained on organizational commit-

ment. Previous research in the 1950s had investigated allegiance and loyalty to the union (Purcell 1954; Stagner 1954, 1956), but only in the context of members' dual allegiance to both the union and the employer. Furthermore, the definitions of this concept of allegiance were anecdotal and subjective. Purcell (1954, 49), for instance, defined allegiance as "an attitude of favorability towards the . . . union . . . or general approval of [its] over-all policies." Stagner (1954) described the concept in more general terms as the acceptance of membership within a group and the expression of favorable feelings toward the group. He noted that allegiance "has less connotation of depth and intensity" than commitment, but "is more intense than passive membership" (p. 42). Rosen and Rosen (1955) suggested that allegiance is a static phenomenon with little relationship to situational variables.

Other research on labor organizations tended to adopt a distinction between the reasons individuals become members of unions and the development of union loyalty. Stagner (1956), for example, saw involvement in unions as the result of feelings of frustration on the job and the perception of the union as a means for expressing aggression against management.

Commitment to the union, then, was viewed as the outcome of a calculative involvement with the union and a desire for better economic and working conditions, control over benefits, and self-expression and communication with higher management (Sayles and Strauss 1953). None of these early references to union allegiance, however, constituted a systematic exploration and operationalization of the concept of union commitment.

More recently, attempts have been made to apply psychological models and typologies to phenomena related to commitment. For example, an expectancy-value model has been used to explain union support (Allen and Keaveny 1983) and participation (Klandermans 1984). This model suggests commitment is dependent on three types of perceptions: the perceived valence of the outcomes of collective action, such as higher wages, fairer treatment, better working conditions and quality of working life, pickets and strikes, and union dues; the extent of members' expectancy that changes in their effort or participation in union activities will lead to changes in union performance; and the perceived instrumentality of unions in achieving valued outcomes. The model predicts that the higher the positive value attached to outcomes and the stronger the expectancy and instrumentality beliefs associated with having a union, the greater the motivation to support or participate in the union. Although expectancy-value theory has not been directly applied to union commitment, DeCotiis and LeLouarn (1981) have found it to be applicable to the decision to unionize; Laliberte and Barling (1986) have shown that perceived union instrumentality predicts nonunion workers' attitudes toward unions; and Klandermans (1984) has validated the expectancy-value model in studying the willingness to participate in social movements.

Child, Loveridge, and Warner (1973) suggested a schema for understanding membership attachment to labor organizations. Their typology consists of two dimensions: the extent of the member's active involvement in union affairs, and

the degree of congruence between member expectations and the policies of the union. Although this conceptualization of attachment has heuristic value as an explanatory framework within which changes in commitment or attachment can be monitored and analyzed, no empirical research has validated the typology. Nevertheless, the two dimensions are strongly analogous to components of more recent definitions of union commitment.

In 1980 Gordon et al. constructed a measure of union commitment, drawing on more general research into organizational commitment. Theirs constituted the first systematic attempt by organizational psychologists to analyze union commitment. The basis of their conceptual approach was to define commitment as the binding of the individual to the organization, be it union or employer. Their measure of union commitment reflected many of the components identified in previous definitions of organizational commitment (for example, Buchanan 1974; Porter and Smith 1970). It also underscored the importance of the exchange relationship between member and union (defined below; Steers 1977) in the development of commitment. The Gordon et al. definition of union commitment is an attitudinal one because it conceptualizes attitudes of commitment as leading to committed behaviors rather than vice versa. We discuss the distinction between attitudinal and behavioral approaches to commitment in more detail later.

The research by Gordon and his colleagues precipitated three studies that attempted to establish the concurrent and construct validity of their measure of union commitment (Fullager 1986a; Gordon, Beauvais, and Ladd 1984; Ladd et al. 1982). The results of those studies suggest that union commitment subsumes four major constructs, which have been distilled from factor analyses:

1. an attitude of loyalty to the union,
2. a feeling of responsibility to the union,
3. a willingness to exert strong effort on behalf of the union, and
4. a belief in the goals of unionism.

Union loyalty denotes a sense of pride in the union and reflects the exchange relationship highlighted by previous research on organizational commitment (for example, Steers 1977). The union member, in exchange for the gratification of various needs and the provision of benefits, develops attitudes of loyalty to the union. Not surprisingly, union loyalty correlates highly with general satisfaction with the union (Gordon et al. 1980). Thus, to some extent, loyalty indicates a "calculative involvement" (Etzioni 1961; Kidron 1978) in labor organizations (Gordon et al. 1980; Ladd et al. 1982) based on members' perceptions of the union's instrumentality. Finally, loyalty to the union implies a desire to retain union membership. This would support a priori definitions of organizational commitment that emphasize the desire to remain a member of the organization (Porter and Smith 1970).

Responsibility to the union and willingness to exert effort for the union again

reflect Porter and Smith's (1970) notion of organizational commitment, whereby the individual member is prepared to exert a great deal of effort on behalf of the organization and to provide a service to the organization, in this case, the union. Schneider (1985) proposed that the willingness to exert effort beyond that normally required for membership in an organization is the hallmark of commitment. According to Katz's (1964) typology this effort not only involves the fulfillment of dependable role behaviors, but also includes behavior beyond prescribed roles. Responsibility to the union and willingness to exert effort have been found to correlate significantly with behavioral indices of participation in union activities. Specifically, the greater these commitment components, the more likely the individual is to fulfill those routine responsibilities of membership that are necessary for the effectiveness of the union. These responsibilities include making sure that the collective bargaining agreement is upheld; ensuring that shop stewards perform their jobs correctly; making use of the grievance procedure; and so forth (Gordon et al. 1980). In addition, these constructs of union commitment are associated with behavioral participation over and above the required activities. Extra effort thus means helping new members learn about aspects of the agreement that affect them; talking about the union with friends; promoting the values and objectives of the union; and teaching new members how to use the grievance procedure.

Finally, belief in the values and goals of the unions reflects Kanter's (1968) concept of ideological conformity and support. It also reflects Porter and Smith's (1970) definition of commitment as a belief in the values and objectives of the organization.

These four constructs of union commitment—loyalty, responsibility, effort, and belief in union goals—appear to be generalizable across various samples of workers. Both Ladd et al. (1982) and Gordon, Beauvais, and Ladd (1984) have demonstrated the validity of these constructs in samples of engineers, technicians, and nonprofessional workers who were members of white-collar unions. Fullager (1986a) has also shown their stability and generalizability in a sample of blue-collar workers of differing occupational status. Together these three studies support the contention by Gordon et al. (1980) that union commitment is a pervasive attitude that is normally distributed throughout the labor force.

Thus, the relevant research conducted on union commitment has generated a definition of union commitment that is stable, valid, generalizable, and operational. This definition also reflects many of the core characteristics associated with more general concepts of organizational commitment, especially those suggested by Porter and Smith (1970). A reasonable definition of union commitment, therefore, would consist of the following adaptation of Porter and Smith's (1970, 2) description of organizational commitment:

1. a strong loyalty to the union and a desire to remain a member of the union,
2. a feeling of responsibility to the union and a willingness to exert strong effort on behalf of the union, and
3. a belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of both the individual union and organized labor as a whole.

It is insufficient, however, merely to outline an attitudinal definition of union commitment and then investigate the extent and level of these attitudes. It may be that the constructs of union commitment are stable, but the causes and consequences of union commitment vary for different segments of the labor force and for union members of differing occupational status. For instance, pro-union attitudes have been shown to vary with position in the organizational hierarchy as well as with related variables such as the availability of information and effective influence mechanisms (Maxey and Mohrman 1980). Moreover, just because the constructs of commitment are stable across unions and organizations does not mean that the causes and consequences of organizational and union commitment cannot differ. For example, whereas job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively related (Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982), job satisfaction is negatively related to the desire to join a union (Brett 1980). Consequently, it is necessary to develop a model that identifies both the antecedents and outcomes of union commitment across heterogeneous samples of workers.

A MODEL OF UNION COMMITMENT

Before outlining our model of commitment to the union, we must offer a cautionary note. The processes of commitment described below are based mainly on correlational data derived from cross-sectional research in several areas of investigation. First, the research on unionization has established the correlates of various nominal measures of involvement in unions, such as membership levels, voting intention, voting behavior, and attitudes. Union commitment can be viewed as related to these, yet, as noted earlier, we need a broader approach than to focus on union members alone, especially in light of the prevalence of closed-shop agreements in Canada and union-shop agreements in the United States. Second is the research on organizational commitment. Although in this line of research the causal inferences made about antecedents and outcome are largely speculative, the research does serve as a valuable empirical base for the development of a model of union commitment (Fukami and Larson 1984). Finally, there is a considerable amount of psychological and industrial relations research that can provide a theoretical basis for a psychological model of union commitment. Not only has this research demonstrated the relevance and applicability of behavioral science concepts to the field of industrial relations, but also we hope that it will prove another step in redressing the historical neglect by psychologists of labor issues. A model of union commitment is presented in Figure 1.

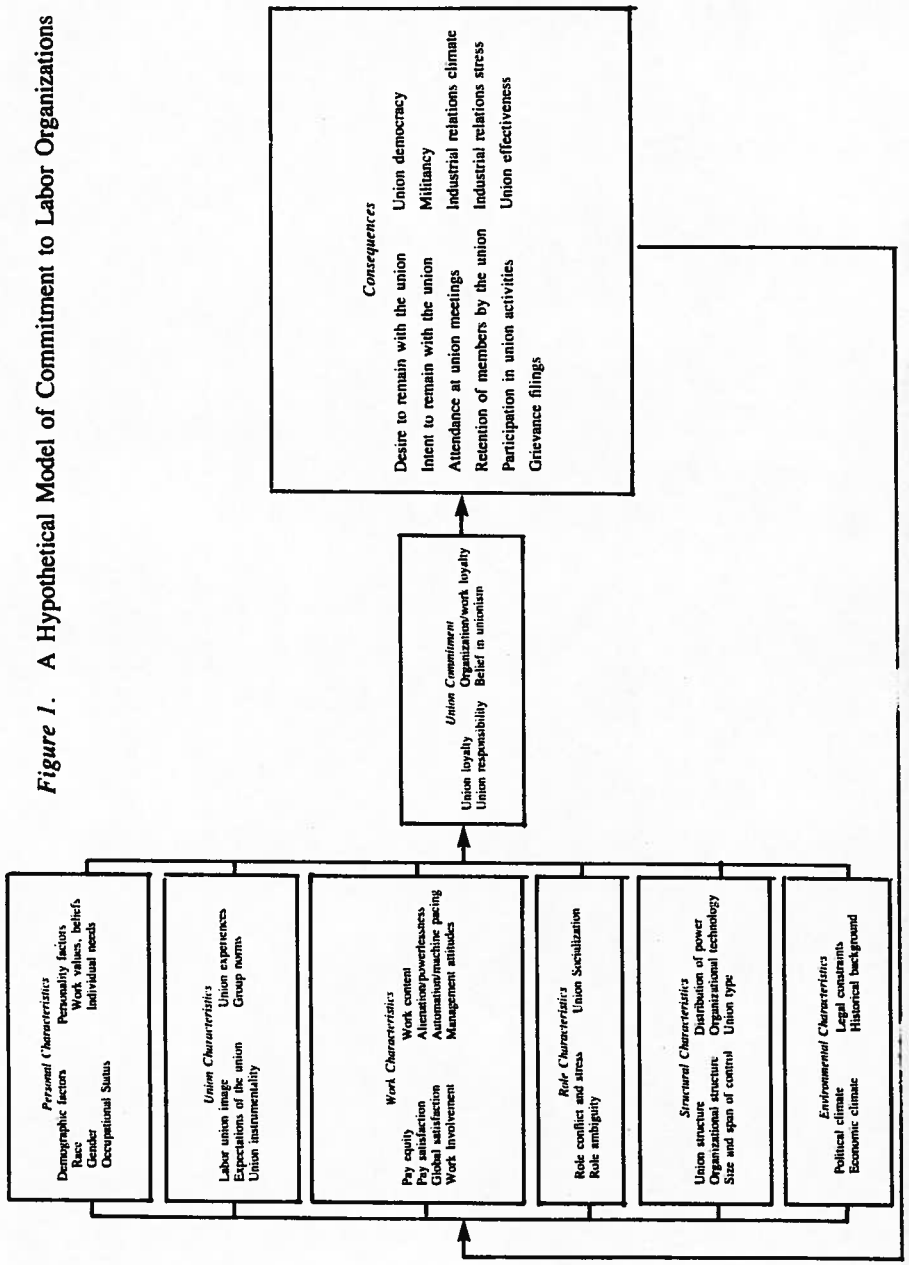

Figure 1. A Hypothetical Model of Commitment to Labor Organizations

Antecedents of Union Commitment

Personal Characteristics

Numerous studies have found personal characteristics to be related to commitment to organizations. Most evidence suggests that organizational commitment is positively related to age and tenure with the organization (Angle and Perry 1981; Hrebiniak 1975; Morris and Sherman 1981) and inversely related to education (Angle and Perry 1981; Morris and Sherman 1981; Morris and Steers 1980; Steers 1977). Moreover, men exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment than women (Angle and Perry 1981; Hrebiniak and Alutto 1972). A few studies have shown positive relationships between organizational commitment and such personal attitudes and motivations as a work ethic (Buchanan 1974; Kidron 1978; Rabinowitz and Hall 1977), work-oriented central life interest (Dubin, Champoux, and Porter 1975), and achievement motivation and higher order need strength (Morris and Sherman 1981; Steers and Spencer 1977). It would appear, then, that personal characteristics must be accounted for in the development of a model of union commitment.

Various studies have attempted to relate the demographic characteristics of union members to several measures of unionization including membership levels, voting intention, voting behavior, and member attitudes toward the union. In particular, variables such as gender, age, tenure, number of dependents, occupational level, income, and urbanization are weakly associated with these measures of unionization (Bigoness 1978; Blinder 1972; Getman, Goldberg, and Herman 1976; Kochan 1978; Uphoff and Dunnette 1956). Most studies, however, suggest that there is little evidence to support the idea of a "union type" (Fullagar 1986b; Gordon et al. 1980).

The only demographic variables that have been found associated with union commitment are members' gender (Gordon et al. 1980) and members' race (Fullagar 1986b). Gordon et al. (1980) also found that female members' expression of union loyalty was more positive than that of male workers. Yet men participate more in union activities than women do. This phenomenon is attributed not to gender per se, but rather diverse causes, such as women's greater experience of gender-role conflict (Chusmir 1982). Family commitments may interfere with full participation in union affairs by women, who experience greater levels and forms (simultaneous rather than sequential) of interrole conflicts than their male counterparts (Hall 1972). This example indicates that a lack of active participation in the union does not preclude strong feelings of attachment to the organization; it also brings into focus the distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment and the possibility that each may have different causes, correlates, and consequences.

As to race, unorganized black workers have been shown to be more willing to join unions than their white counterparts (Kochan 1980, 147). This finding was explained by Buchholz (1978b), who found that black workers had stronger per-

ceptions of oppression and discrimination, fewer opportunities to obtain alternative employment, and fewer opportunities to express higher order needs than white workers. The discrepancy, therefore, is not because of race per se, but because of the racist practices and attitudes that still prevail among employers. Race can be construed as a "marker" variable that denotes the existence of important underlying influences.

In Fullagar's (1986b) research subjects were drawn from a South African, blue-collar labor sample, heterogeneous in terms of race. The author found that race influenced the relationship between loyalty to the union and work and union experiences. Race therefore denoted differences in privilege, job security, wages, union protection, and access to political, organizational, and social institutions for the satisfaction of both lower and higher order needs. Thus, although the four union commitment constructs are stable across professional, nonprofessional, and technical categories of workers (Gordon, Beauvais, and Ladd 1984), and also across black and white workers in skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled occupations (Fullagar 1986a), the antecedents of commitment are moderated by race. The different causes of commitment are a reflection of the varying needs of a divided labor force (such as the one that exists in South Africa).

In formulating a model of union commitment, we must distinguish between demographic variables and personality characteristics as antecedents to union commitment. As noted above, even where demographic variables (such as race) predict commitment, these demographic variables are "marker" variables, merely denoting the existence of important underlying influences. In contrast, personality variables *are* underlying psychological influences. Separating the personal, demographic antecedents from the personality antecedents allows us to consider reciprocal relationships between personality antecedents and union commitment. Obviously, demographic characteristics cannot have a reciprocal relationship with union commitment; for example, while age might influence commitment, it is impossible for commitment to affect age. On the other hand, it is possible that psychological conservatism influences and is in turn influenced by union commitment.

Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) noted the importance of individual values and beliefs in determining initial levels of commitment to the organization. Studies suggest that employees with a strong belief in the value of work and who perceive work as a central life interest are more likely than others to develop high levels of commitment to the employing organization and to identify with the goals and values of the organization (Dubin, Champoux, and Porter 1975; Hall and Schneider 1972; Kidron 1978; Rabinowitz and Hall 1977). Similarly, the literature asserts that union members' beliefs must be compatible with the process of unionization for the members to become involved in the union. Employees with a strong work ethic are more highly committed to their work organizations (Buchanan 1974; Card 1978; Goodale 1973; Hall, Schneider, and Nygren 1970; Hall and Schneider 1972; Hulin and Blood 1968; Kidron 1978). The work

ethic is only one of many belief systems (Buchholz, 1978b), however; and others such as the Marxist belief system may be related to union commitment, particularly since the Marxist work belief has been shown to predict union attitudes (Laliberte and Barling 1986). Commitment, then, is probably related to the beliefs of the individual, which in turn are a product of both the culture of the organization and the culture of the society to which the individual belongs.

The relationship between work values and union commitment is moderated by race (Fullagar 1986b). The work ethic is a more important determinant of union commitment among affluent white workers than among alienated black workers. Among disenfranchised black workers, however, Marxian work beliefs are stronger predictors of union commitment than among privileged white workers. The indication here is that greater perceptions of alienation and exploitation, and a well-developed class consciousness, cause greater loyalty to the union among the less privileged sectors of the blue-collar labor force.

New members entering labor organizations bring with them different goals and needs that they seek to satisfy through trade union membership. As with organizational commitment, the initial levels of union commitment may be associated with members' perceptions of the congruence between their own goals and those of the union and their perceptions of the union as instrumental in the attainment of those goals. For example, in the case of the work organization the higher the need for achievement, the higher the initial levels of organizational commitment (Mowday and McDade 1980). It is likewise possible that power and affiliation needs influence commitment to the union. Glick, Mirvis, and Harder (1977) contended that a complex relationship exists between union satisfaction and participation. Satisfaction is positively correlated with participation among members who express great needs for "decision making, accomplishment, and growth," whereas among union members only weakly holding these needs participation may indicate dissatisfaction with the union. Further research is required to clarify the nature and direction of the relationship between the perceived instrumentality of the union in satisfying member needs and union members' initial levels of commitment. Not only may individual needs have a direct influence on initial commitment, but they may also moderate the relationship between early experiences with the union and union commitment.

Union Characteristics and Perceptions

Several studies have shown that new members of organizations who have realistic expectations of the benefits offered by the organization are less likely to leave voluntarily than those who hold unrealistic beliefs (Wanous 1980). Other research evidence suggests that the extent to which the expectations of new members are met has a direct, albeit limited, influence on commitment (Grusky 1966; Steer 1977). This research parallels research on unions that has indicated a significant and strong relationship between workers' perceptions of the union's

effectiveness in improving work conditions and their decision to vote for or against unionization (Beutell and Biggs 1984; Bigoness and Tosi 1984; Brett 1980; DeCotiis and LeLouarn 1981; Kochan 1979; Youngblood et al. 1984), and between these perceptions and union attitudes in general (Laliberte and Barling 1986). Indeed, union instrumentality is more predictive of union support among both white-collar and blue-collar workers than either intrinsic or extrinsic job satisfaction (Kochan 1979). Kochan (1979) also found that perceptions of union instrumentality were significantly more predictive of voting behavior than the general image workers had of organized labor. Recent research, using path analysis to ascertain causality, has found union instrumentality to be a strong predictor of both attitudes of commitment to the union and behavioral participation in union activities in a sample of unionized, blue-collar workers (Fullagar 1986b).

The initial level of commitment upon joining a union is related to both perceived union instrumentality and union commitment. It is probable that workers who join unions with initially high levels of commitment are more likely than other new members to participate in union activities, such as attending meetings, voting in elections, finding out about union contracts, and engaging in behaviors beyond those expected by the union. These behaviors in themselves may engender commitment and, in turn, further reinforce the new members' commitment attitudes and behaviors. As Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982, 57) commented,

> The likelihood of developing a self-reinforcing cycle of commitment . . . is largely dependent on the opportunity to engage in behaviors that are committing. In other words, the opportunities to provide to new [members] are crucial in determining whether initially high levels of commitment are translated into more stable attachments.

Job Characteristics

From the research conducted on unionization it would appear that there are several job characteristics that might engender union commitment. A prevalent explanation of the process of unionization is that workers join unions because of perceived deprivations and various dissatisfactions with the conditions of their employment (Bigoness 1978; Dubin 1973; Farber and Saks 1980; Fiorito, Gallagher, and Greer 1986; Getman, Goldberg, and Herman 1976; Kochan 1978; Schriesheim 1978; Walker and Lawler 1979; Zalesny 1985). Most of these approaches make the distinction between extrinsic, economic and intrinsic, noneconomic job conditions and satisfaction. For example, LeLouarn (1979) and Schriesheim (1978) reported significant associations between satisfaction with extrinsic factors such as wages and working conditions and union voting behavior. Duncan and Stafford (1980), on the other hand, investigated intrinsic variables such as the degree of autonomy, skill utilization, and machine pacing on the job and found that these factors facilitated unionization. The available evidence suggests that overall job satisfaction is negatively associated with the perceived need for a union (Allen and Keaveny 1983) and that dissatisfaction with extrinsic factors is a more important influence on unionization than dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors. For example, dissatisfaction with wages and job security is strongly associated with union voting behavior (Getman, Goldberg, and Herman 1976). Schriesheim (1978) also found that pro-union voting was more strongly related to satisfaction with extrinsic factors—such as pay, working conditions, job security, and company policy—than to intrinsic factors, such as independence and the opportunity to satisfy higher order needs.

The literature suggests, therefore, that unions cannot, and should not, deal with noneconomic, quality-of-working-life issues (Beer and Driscoll 1977; Kochan, Lipsky, and Dyer 1974; Strauss 1977). The literature are not unequivocal, however. Schriesheim (1978) showed that most of the studies outlined above used measures that questioned only workers' satisfaction with specific extrinsic job characteristics and working conditions. By excluding measures of a sufficient number of noneconomic satisfaction factors, the studies may have caused the economic factors to seem particularly potent and to carry more weight.

Studies examining some intrinsic factors, such as work content and the desire for more influence, have found that these are as important predictors of unionism as extrinsic factors (for example, Bigoness 1978; Garbarino 1975, 1980; Herman 1973; Ladd and Lipset 1973; Walker and Lawler 1979). Specifically, intrinsic aspects of the job such as degree of worker autonomy, skill utilization, machine pacing, worker distrust in decision making, and worker powerlessness are associated with unionization (Duncan and Stafford 1980; Hammer and Berman 1981). Hammer and Berman, for example, showed that worker powerlessness and distrust in managerial decision making are important noneconomic factors in union voting. Interestingly, whereas most studies emphasize a deprivation and dissatisfaction model of unionization, Hammer and Berman view a lack of power as the underlying source of distrust and dissatisfaction with job content, which in turn leads to unionization.

From the studies reviewed above, we can conclude that unionization is related to workers' dissatisfaction with both intrinsic and extrinsic factors of their jobs. The lower the motivating potential of a job and the greater the dissatisfaction with the work environment, the greater the union commitment of workers. Kochan (1979) found that among blue-collar workers dissatisfaction with extrinsic factors was more strongly related to union support than dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors. Nevertheless, he also found dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors such as the nature of work was more strongly associated with the inclination to support a union among white-collar workers than among blue-collar workers. It is possible the unions that organize white-collar workers focus more on improving the intrinsic conditions of work than do unions that organize predominantly blue-collar workers. Thus, white-collar workers who are dissatisfied with intrinsic factors are more likely to support a union in an effort to improve the intrinsic aspects of their work than they are to do so to improve the extrinsic aspects.

Among unionized workers Gordon et al. (1980) found negative or nonsignificant associations between (1) satisfaction of lower and higher order needs and (2) feelings of responsibility to the union, an expressed willingness to work for the union, and a general belief in unionism. The pattern of correlations here suggested that white-collar workers who were dissatisfied with the extrinsic aspects of their job were more willing than other white-collar workers to be actively involved in the union. Similarly, a belief in the goals of organized labor were stronger among those workers who stated that their extrinsic needs were not being satisfied. The satisfaction of intrinsic needs was not associated with either beliefs in organized labor or a willingness to work for the union. This conforms with previous findings (Kochan, Lipsky, and Dyer 1974) that workers do not perceive unions as instrumental in providing jobs with greater challenge, responsibility, or autonomy—in other words, in improving the intrinsic factors of jobs. In addition, the relationship between facets of union commitment and extrinsic or intrinsic job satisfaction does not seem to be moderated by only a simple blue-collar/white-collar distinction. Several factors, such as the nature of the membership and the type of union under investigation, also appear to influence the relationship. For example, Gordon, Beauvais, and Ladd (1984) found that although union loyalty was significantly associated with extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in a sample of technicians, a similar association did not exist for engineers.

The positive relationship between union loyalty and extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction in Gordon et al.'s study (1980) gives rise to two suggestions. First, given the instrumental nature of union loyalty and the *positive* correlation between this factor and satisfaction of both higher and lower order needs, Gordon et al. suggested that white-collar workers "regard union membership and the actions of their bargaining units as important influences on all . . . facets of their employment." Nevertheless, dissatisfaction with extrinsic factors was more strongly associated with "willingness to work for the union" and "belief in unionism" than was dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors. Second, some of the subjects in the Gordon et al. study were involved in a cooperative effort with management aimed at investigating noneconomic issues at the workplace. This effort may have inflated their expectations concerning the satisfaction of intrinsic needs and made the results somewhat atypical.

Recent empirical research has confirmed that dissatisfaction with extrinsic job characteristics predicts union commitment among both black and white union members, and especially among affluent workers (Fullagar 1986b). Among black union members who were more alienated from their jobs, however, dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors was a more significant cause of attitudes of commitment than was dissatisfaction with extrinsic factors. These findings corroborate the perspective in industrial relations that attachment to unions is a consequence of both dissatisfaction *and* perceived deprivation (Begin 1979; Kemerer and Baldridge 1975; Walker and Lawler 1979).

Further differences in the causes of commitment between different segments

of blue-collar workers are such factors as differing decision making processes, compensation, and supervision (Fullagar 1986b). Maxey and Mohrman (1980) found that influence deprivation and job environment, as well as economic variables, were associated with pro-union attitudes among white-collar employees and that these attitudes were moderated by hierarchical position in the work organization.

Kochan (1979) proposed that dissatisfaction with extrinsic job factors may be due to several factors: workers' viewing working conditions as inadequately administered; their viewing absolute levels of working conditions as below some acceptable standard or level (such as the minimum wage); and their judging that inequities exist between their own wages and physical working conditions and those of similar others. Perceptions of equity correlate negatively with the propensity to unionize (Kochan 1979); and measures of wage inequity, such as perceived underpayment or wage differentials between unionized and nonunionized employees, are consistently associated with pro-union attitudes and union membership (Duncan and Stafford 1980; Farber and Saks 1980; Maxey and Mohrman 1980). Although pay inequity per se is unrelated to union commitment (Fukami and Larson 1984), the relationships between these two variables may differ across different levels of occupational status and different types of jobs. For example, perceived inequity in wages is positively and significantly related to the willingness to unionize among white-collar but not blue-collar workers (Kochan 1979). This difference exists despite the fact that dissatisfaction with wages is significantly related to support of the union in both groups (Kochan 1979).

The strong link between intrinsic job satisfaction and union commitment among the South African workers in Fullagar's sample may be the result of those workers' stronger desire to influence the content (the noneconomic factors) of their jobs, particularly since black employees in that country are unable to influence the noneconomic aspects of their working environment through other means, be they more informal, individualistic, or employer-initiated. Using Hirschman's (1970) framework of exit, voice, and loyalty, we could restate this possibility as: Affluent white workers have greater access to the exit-and-entry mechanism than do black workers because the former have greater freedom to choose jobs and move between jobs in the South African context. For the majority of black workers, on the other hand, union "voice" is perhaps the only channel of participation in a democratic process they have.

The inability of the organization or task to satisfy the salient needs of the individual worker, together with inadequacies in organizational structure, are major determinants of alienation (Seeman 1959). Kanungo (1979) believes that alienation and its resultant cognitive states of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement emanate from the inability of the organization or the work to satisfy the salient needs of the individual. Workers might be more predisposed to become committed to labor organizations if they are in alienating work situations, which can be defined as: providing the worker

with no power or control because the pace of work is controlled and mechanized (powerlessness); breaking down and simplifying the work process (meaninglessness); providing insufficient information for the worker to plan and predict his work environment (normlessness); offering the worker little or no potential to satisfy his social needs (isolation); and providing the worker little or no opportunity to self-actualize (self-estrangement). The effects of both job dissatisfaction and alienation are probably moderated, however, by worker perceptions of the union's instrumentality in improving conditions of work to which the organization has been unresponsive (Brett 1980; DeCotiis and LeLouarn 1981; Kochan 1980, 145–46).

A few sociological studies have associated alienation with the process of unionism. Tannenbaum (1952), for example, viewed trade unionism as a response to the worker's sense of alienation from both the job and the larger society. In his view the union provides workers with a collectivity in which they can relate to employers, fellow workers, and their jobs. Unions increase workers' power and control and reduce their feelings of normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. To Tannenbaum, therefore, the union was not merely an economic organization but also a social and ethical system that provided a means for the worker to reestablish the values through which he had found dignity. Blauner (1964) also saw the union as a reform movement that could counteract worker powerlessness. These are yet further examples of union concommitants that are more anecdotal than empirical.

Only two studies have empirically investigated the relationship between job involvement, alienation, or unionization. In the first Pestonjee, Singh, and Singh (1981) found a significant negative correlation between job involvement and attitudes toward unions ($r = -0.58$) in a sample of 200 blue-collar textile workers in Northern India. They concluded that,

> pro-union employees are more involved in union activities and are not in a position to devote much of their time to the job. . . . Alternatively, workers who are frustrated or annoyed by jobs with which they feel no involvement may respond with high union involvement (p. 213).

In the second study, of a sample of blue-collar workers in South Africa, Fullagar (1986b) found the relationship between job involvement and unionization is moderated by the marker variable race, denoting level of privilege. Affluent white union members who were loyal to the union indicated higher levels of job involvement than did black workers whose job involvement scores suggested far greater alienation. The white union members showed no particularly strong sense of alienation from organizational political processes, not surprisingly, since they have traditionally been more integrated into organizational decision-making processes. This finding suggests that the more privileged workers who have greater access to organizational decision making will function similarly as union members and as employees, that is, as is described by the concept of dual allegiance (Martin 1981; Purcell 1960; Stagner 1956). In other words, workers who express

positive attitudes toward their job will also tend to have positive attitudes toward their union (Purcell 1960).

Fukami and Larson (1984) examined dual loyalty with parallel models of union and organizational commitment by using the same antecedent conditions. Although they found that the predictors of organizational commitment did not predict union commitment, organizational commitment was positively and significantly correlated with union commitment. Attempts to ascertain the construct validity and stability of the union commitment concept amongst blue-collar workers have isolated an "organizational/work loyalty" factor that is independent of union loyalty (Fullagar 1986a). The meaning of this factor is that workers view loyalty to work rather than to the union as instrumental to their individual success. This would suggest that the concept of dual allegiance is not inevitable but may instead be moderated by occupational status. Recent research indicates that job involvement is positively related to attitudes of union commitment among affluent white workers, whereas among black union members the two concepts are negatively related (Fullagar 1986b).

Martin (1981) suggested that dual allegiance is moderated by the type of union. Using Walker and Lawler's (1979) distinction between "protective" and "aggressive" unions, Martin speculated that dual allegiance is more characteristic of protective unions consisting of privileged workers than it is of aggressive unions, whose memberships consist of more alienated and economically deprived individuals.

Tannenbaum and Kahn (1958) posited that dual allegiance is also explicable on the assumption that union workers perceive the primary function of their union to be that of protecting their interests on the job. Dual allegiance may be uncommon at the lower, more alienated levels of the organizational hierarchy because there is less opportunity for organizational involvement and the satisfaction of higher order needs (Barling 1983). Thus, dual allegiance may be related to a motivational framework in which organizational and union commitment covary among intrinsically motivated workers but not among extrinsically motivated individuals. Finally, dual loyalty generally exists in workplaces where the labor-management relationship is cooperative and supportive (Bigoness and Tosi 1984; Fukami and Larson 1984).

Role Characteristics

Individual socialization into an organization and the nature and quality of experiences during membership are important correlates of organizational commitment. Most of the research investigating these antecedents has focused on organizational rather than union commitment. Recently, however, Fukami and Larson (1984) identified work experiences as the only significant predictors of *both* organizational and union commitment. Certain individual experiences in the initial stages of organizational socialization may therefore be generalizable to la-

bor organizations and may contribute to the development of a model of union commitment.

The socialization processes that organizations establish for their new members may influence the development of attitudes of commitment (Gordon et al. 1980; Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982). The development of organizational commitment is hypothesized to be dependent on the extent to which the organization inducts the newcomer and transmits important values and norms about behavior through various planned socialization experiences. Despite the theoretical importance of socialization practices in organizations, little research has been conducted to investigate how specific socialization experiences influence individual commitment. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) identified several socialization tactics that influence the degree to which the new member accepts his organizational role, but these relationships have not been tested empirically in the union context.

Although anticipatory socialization experiences (that is, socialization that takes place before the individual has become a member of the organization) have been found to influence attitudes (Feldman 1976; Porter, Lawler, and Hackman 1975; Van Maanen 1977), the more important influence may derive from early socialization experiences once organizational membership starts (Stagner 1956). Early commitment predicts the development of greater organizational commitment (Mowday and McDade 1980). The literature on attitude formation (for example, Kelman 1974; Salancik 1977) also suggests that if employees perform well initially in the roles designated to them by the organization, the employees will develop greater attitudinal commitment. They do so because employees tend to develop attitudes consistent with their behavior.

Early socialization experiences in the organization are consistently and positively correlated with all aspects of commitment to the union (Fullagar 1986b; Gordon et al. 1980). Members who reported that they had positive socialization experiences in their first year were those who expressed the greatest loyalty and sense of responsibility to the union, the greatest willingness to work for the union, and the strongest belief in unionism of all the members surveyed.

Personal interactions with established union and organizational members are the primary avenues whereby new members internalize the implicit mores of the organizational climate and refine their initial expectations concerning the organization and their roles (Van Maanen and Schein 1979). It may be that a process of socialization that involves the new member in role behaviors beyond those usually required by the organization generates greater feelings of attachment through cognitive consonance, whereby attitudes become congruent with behaviors (Salancik 1977; Stagner 1956). Nevertheless, whatever the direction of the attitude-behavior relationship, social involvement and the extent and nature of initial socialization experiences are important correlates of members' attachment to unions (Fukami and Larson 1984; Gordon et al. 1980).

A few studies have highlighted the relationship between commitment and the degree to which initial experiences fulfill expectations concerning the organization (Grusky 1966; Steers 1977). The greater the perceived dependability of the organization in attending to its members' interests, the greater their commitment (Buchanan 1974; Steers 1977). This finding is important in the light of results that suggest a high level of calculative involvement in unions. We already noted that the perceived instrumentality of unions in acquiring benefits, better working conditions, pay, and so forth is an important aspect of the concept of members' commitment to labor organizations.

Role conflict is inversely related to organizational commitment, but the relationship between role ambiguity and commitment remains equivocal (Morris and Koch 1979; Morris and Sherman 1981). In constructing a model of commitment common to both union and employer organizations, Fukami and Larson (1984) found that job scope and stress predicted commitment to the employer, but not to the union. This finding may have resulted from Fukami and Larson's sole concentration on job characteristics pertaining to their subjects' roles in the work organization rather than on the scope, stresses, conflicts, and ambiguities associated with their roles as union members. For example, the conflicting demands placed on workers in their role as a union member or official and in their role as an employee may affect both their union and their work organization commitment. Furthermore, the irregular scheduling of union meetings may introduce conflict between union and family roles that in turn influence union commitment (compare Bluen and Barling 1985; Gullahorn 1956; Nicholson 1976).

Structural Characteristics

Stagner (1962) noted that structural variables may be more important than personal characteristics in influencing such labor issues as union members' participation in managerial decision making. A number of structural characteristics are associated with commitment to organizations in general. These include size, span of control (the number of people reporting to a supervisor), the formalization of rules and procedures, functional dependence, and the decentralization of the organization (Steers 1977; Stevens, Beyer, and Trice 1978). For example, both worker ownership and worker participation in managerial decision making are positively related to organizational commitment (Rhodes and Steers 1981). This parallels Tannenbaum and Kahn's (1958) finding of a positive correlation between the participation of the rank-and-file in union activity and member control over the union. Certain structural characteristics of the union have been shown to influence the extent of union democracy and participation, including not only factors such as size and the span of control, but also the degree of openness in the admission policy, the extent of decentralization in collective bargaining, and the rank-and-file's access to participation in union politics. The

structure of the labor organization likely facilitates member participation and commitment to the extent that the union possesses structures that encourage democracy.

So far we have viewed commitment as a consequence of various deprivations and dissatisfactions experienced by the worker. An alternative approach would be to view union attachment as a response to the unequal distribution of power and control between the workers, or the union, and the employer. Again using Walker and Lawler's (1979) aggressive-protective typology, we can hypothesize that the two categories of union differ in terms of their emphasis on resolving the power imbalance. Aggressive unions represent workers who feel alienated from the political processes of the organization and who seek to rectify the imbalance between management and employees in the authority structure. Protective unions, on the other hand, represent relatively privileged, skilled workers who have greater access to decision-making structures within the work organization and consequently who are less concerned with the distribution of power. It is quite feasible that these different types of union, which reflect differing needs and interests within the labor force, will have members who exhibit varying levels and manifestations of commitment.

Turner (1962) proposed that different types of unions are associated with different styles of government. These differing styles in turn result in varying levels of member participation. For example, high participation levels would be found in "closed" occupational unions, those with rigid membership controls. Within more general, "open" unions that cover a wide range of occupations, a lower level of membership participation would prevail. Again, no data exist on the relationship between union type and commitment, and thus the predicted effects outlined above are merely speculative.

So far our focus has been on the structure of the union and how it impinges on union democracy and membership participation and commitment. The structure of the employing organization also has effects on labor relations (Bacharach and Mitchell 1983). As organizations grow they shift away from direct and personal styles of management to those that are more formalized, standardized, and impersonal. As organizational complexity increases, so does the possibility of union-management conflict (Marginson 1984). When union-management relations are conflictual, there is greater membership loyalty and participation in such union activities as attending meetings, picketing, and other behaviors over and above those required for routine union membership (Barling 1985; Stagner and Eflal 1982).

Studies have indicated that small firms tend to exhibit better labor-management relations because they are less bureaucratic, encourage greater interaction between levels of the organizational hierarchy, and engender more involvement in the organization (Ingham 1970). Not only does the size of the employing organization influence the extent of impersonal supervision and the provision of employee benefits, but it also has an effect on union success. Kochan (1979) has

shown that intermediate-size organizations are more prone to unionization than large or small ones. Moreover, the size of the organization is associated with both employee dissatisfaction (Berger and Cummings 1979; Porter and Lawler 1965) and strike activity (Brett and Goldberg 1979; Britt and Galle 1974; Shorter and Tilly 1974). Bureaucracy, however, does not have a uniform relationship with size (Marginson 1984); large organizations are not necessarily more bureaucratic or centralized. Often an increase in size brings with it greater decentralization and flexibility and fewer bureaucratic properties. Nor is size necessarily related to conflict. Although the incidence of strike activity increases with the size of the organization, quitting and absenteeism (regarded as alternative symptoms of conflict and correlated with commitment) often have a negative or equivocal relationship with size (Ingham 1970).

The effects of the size of employing organization may be exacerbated by technological factors. Nonroutine technologies are associated with higher job variability and greater worker participation. By contrast, routine technologies are characterized by standardized roles, strict supervision, one-way communication, and an overall organizational climate that is not conducive to worker participation. The restrictions imposed within routine technological organizations make organized action through the union the only effective means for workers in these organizations to influence the work process, thereby increasing the likelihood of their commitment to the union.

Another structural characteristic of the organization that may influence commitment is workers' freedom to associate with the union of their choice or with no union. The level and nature of union commitment may differ between companies that have two or more competing labor organizations and companies governed by a single union shop agreement. Research on job choice in organizations has shown that chosen jobs are rated as more attractive, and valued more highly, than jobs for which no choice is offered (Lawler et al. 1975; Vroom and Deci 1971). Similarly, using cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger 1957), one would predict that selecting one out of a number of unions would influence new members' attitudes toward the union. As mentioned previously, one of the important characteristics of behaviors that make them committing is that they must be freely engaged in (Salancik 1977). The presence of a number of unions in any one plant or industry increases the individual worker's freedom of choice. Salancik (1977) avowed that, given a number of alternatives from which to choose, a worker will become behaviorally committed to his final decision in an effort to justify having joined a particular labor organization.

Environmental Characteristics

Market context and sociopolitical variables may also influence members' commitment to labor organizations. Economic downturns, inflation, the extent of unemployment, and changes in employment and wage rates probably influence

commitment levels. Economic recessions are said to produce labor unrest because of employer retrenchments and a climate that facilitates exploitation of labor market conditions. Consequently, a swing in favor of unionization may occur during recessions (Adams and Krislov 1974; Ashenfelter and Pencavel 1969; Moore and Pearce 1976). Unions thrive during periods of low unemployment or rapid employment growth (Ashenfelter and Pencavel 1969; Bain and Elsheikh 1976; Roomkin and Juris 1978). Although several authors' findings contradict these (compare Anderson, O'Reilly, and Busman 1980; Fiorito 1982; Mancke 1971; Moore and Pearce 1976; Sheflin, Troy, and Koeller 1981), they do suggest the probable role of labor market influences in union commitment. To date, however, commitment studies have not focused on these macroeconomic determinants.

The Consequences of Union Commitment

The literature has identified several consequences of organizational commitment: increased tenure (Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979; Steers 1977); a moderate (but equivocal) decline in attendance and absenteeism (Angle and Perry 1981); a significant reduction in turnover (Angle and Perry 1981; Koch and Steers 1977); a decrease in tardiness (Angle and Perry 1981; Koch and Steers 1978; Porter et al. 1974; Steers 1977); and a weak increase in job performance and effort (Porter, Crampon, and Smith 1976; Steers 1977). Although many of these consequences are not directly relevant to labor organizations, they are still relevant to the concept of union commitment. To formulate a causal model of commitment to labor organizations, it is necessary to ascertain the causal nature of the relationship between commitment attitudes and commitment behaviors.

Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) distinguished between behavioral (or social psychological) and attitudinal (or organizational behavioral) approaches to the study of organizational commitment. The behavioral approaches conceptualize attitudes of commitment as the outcome of behaviors enacted by the individual that bind him to the organization (Becker 1960; Salancik 1977; Staw 1977). In other words, committed behaviors determine subsequent attitudes (Salancik and Pfeffer 1977). Much research has supported the hypothesis that commitment behaviors facilitate consonant attitudes (see Salancik 1977, for a review). For example, organizational commitment has been associated with various work behaviors, such as participation in decision making (Rhodes and Steers 1981), supervisor ability or behavior (Michaels and Spector 1982; Morris and Sherman 1981), and role clarity and freedom from conflict (Jamal 1984; Morris and Koch 1979; Welsh and LaVan 1981).

The attitudinal approaches, in direct opposition, view attitudes of commitment as leading to committed behaviors. Here organizational commitment is defined as a combination of both attitudes and behavioral intentions (Angle and Perry 1981; Buchanan 1974; Ferris and Aranya 1983; Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982; Porter and Smith 1970). Research conducted within this approach has attempted to ascertain the various behavioral outcomes of commitment. For example, organizational commitment has been variously related to attendance and absenteeism (Koch and Steers 1978; Larson and Fukami 1985; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979; Steers 1977); tardiness (Angle and Perry 1981); turnover (Angle and Perry 1981; Hom, Katerberg, and Hulin 1979; Koch and Steers 1978; Larson and Fukami 1985; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979; Porter, Crampon, and Smith 1976; Porter et al. 1974; Steers 1977); involvement (Hall and Schneider 1972; Hrebiniak and Alutto 1972; Porter et al. 1974; Stevens, Beyer, and Trice 1978); and performance (Larson and Fukami 1985; Van Maanen 1975). The association found between commitment and job performance, however, has been positive and weak (Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982; Steers 1977). Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982, 36) explained these findings thus:

> Performance is influenced by motivation level, role clarity, and ability. . . . Attitudes like commitment would only be expected to influence one aspect of actual job performance. Hence, we would not expect a strong commitment-performance relationship.

The problem with research in both the behavioral and the attitudinal traditions is that it assumes, without empirical support, the antecedent and consequent nature of the behavioral variables found to be associated with organizational commitment (Bateman and Strasser 1984). The cross-sectional designs and correlational analyses employed in these studies shed little light on the causal relationships that exist between commitment attitudes and behaviors.

Three decades ago Stagner (1956) postulated participation in union activities as causing individual attachment to the union. Since then, however, very little research has investigated the behavioral correlates of union commitment. Gordon et al. (1980) found all the factors of their concept of union commitment to correlate very significantly with participation in such union activities as serving in an elected office, voting, attending general membership meetings, knowing the terms of the union contract, and filing grievances. All four of their union commitment factors also correlated positively with recent participation in activities that were supportive of the union. These findings have been corroborated in subsequent research, in which the four commitment constructs correlated significantly and in the appropriate direction with participation in both formal, essential activities and informal, more peripheral behaviors (Fullagar 1986a). Nevertheless, both these studies used cross-sectional designs that only provide indications of the relationship between union commitment attitudes and behavioral participation in union affairs.

Previous research, therefore, on both organizational and union commitment, has hypothesized causal relationships with behavioral variables on the basis of either theory or intuition. Most of the studies have viewed behavior as a consequence rather than an antecedent of commitment. Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) suggested that the relationship between commitment attitudes and behaviors is most parsimoniously viewed as being reciprocal:

> It is equally reasonable to assume that (a) commitment attitudes lead to committing behaviors that subsequently reinforce and strengthen attitudes, and (b) committing behaviors lead to commitment attitudes and subsequent committing behaviors. The important issue is not whether the commitment process begins with either attitudes or behaviors. Rather what is important is to recognize that the development of commitment may involve the subtle interplay of attitudes and behaviors over time (p. 47).

Recent research has investigated the causal nature of the relationship between commitment attitudes and behavioral participation in such formal union activities as attending union meetings, voting in union elections, knowing the terms of the labor agreement, and filing grievances. To examine the causal effects of union loyalty (a primary dimension of union commitment) on behavioral participation in the union, Fullagar (1986b) computed cross-lagged regression analyses using longitudinal data. These analyses consistently demonstrated the causal effects of attitudes of loyalty to the union on subsequent participation in union affairs. The findings are consistent with the prediction that affective commitment contributes to the development of behavioral indices of commitment; they also support the theoretical causal presumptions about attitudinal commitment (Angle and Perry 1983; Buchanan 1974; Ferris and Aranya 1983; Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982). More specifically, the results indicate the causal direction leads from commitment to the union to union participation (Gordon et al. 1980). Nonetheless, although union loyalty is the major dimension of union commitment and is stable across different unions and workplaces (Barling 1985; Gordon et al. 1980; Ladd et al. 1982), the direction and nature of the relationship between other dimensions of commitment and behavioral participation may be different.

Previous research has indicated that measures of formal union participation (specifically, use of the grievance procedure) are the most effective measures to differentiate between active and inactive union members (Tannenbaum and Kahn 1958). Formal participation strongly correlates with responsibility to the union and willingness to work for the union (Gordon et al. 1980). Indeed, the grievance procedure is central to the collective bargaining process (Allen and Keaveny 1985; Slichter, Healy, and Livernash 1960). Demographic, personality, and attitudinal characteristics do not seem to contribute substantially to the variance in rank-and-file grievance filings (Ash 1970; Kissler 1977; Ronan and Prien 1973; Stagner 1956, 1962; Sulkin and Pranis 1967). One finding that warrants further investigation is that the more committed shop stewards are to the union, the less likely they are to consult with potential grievants and generally engage in filing grievances (Dalton and Todor 1982). Allen and Keaveny (1985) outlined a model that differentiates the characteristics of grievants from those of nongrievants. The model includes employer and union characteristics as well as individual attributes (age, attitudes toward supervisors, the desire to participate in the grievance procedure, attitudes toward the union, and participation in the union). Attitudes toward the union were better predictors of grievance filing than the job and demographic variables. Given the strong relationship between union

commitment and participation in union activities (such as grievance filing), one direction for further research would be to ascertain the influence that union commitment attitudes exert on the decision to file a grievance and satisfaction with grievance resolution.

It would appear, then, that union commitment is associated with union behaviors such as attending union meetings, filing grievances, and various other participative activities. Nevertheless, although there is a consistent relationship between organizational commitment and voluntary turnover, no research exists to indicate whether union commitment *causes* union turnover and retention of members. This is an important issue in organizations where more than one union jostles for membership and in those where workers leave one union to join another. As Katz and Kahn (1978) noted, one characteristic of a successful organization is the ability to attract and retain members. This criterion is as relevant for labor organizations as it is for commercial organizations. If union commitment is predictive of members' participation in essential activities, and if it is influential in determining voluntary performance in actions that ensure the union's attainment of its goals, commitment is a crucial determinant of union success. For example, the union's effectiveness strongly depends on its ability to impose sanctions or threaten to impose sanctions on the employer through boycotts, strikes, or slowdowns. Obviously, the union must be able to count on its members in carrying out these sanctions. Furthermore, the past history of the union's success in negotiating better wages and working conditions will influence members' perceptions of the union's instrumentality. The issue of union effectiveness and its definition need further development. Although Kochan (1980, 175) defined the concept as being guaged by members' assessment of "the substantive achievements in bargaining and the correspondence of these achievements with their personal goals and priorities," additional dimensions of effectiveness, such as the union's ability to attract and maintain a membership, the extent of union democracy, and the development of an effective leadership, warrant further consideration.

Some research has attempted to understand union militancy (attitudinal support for and active participation in organized conflict with management) in terms of the union member's position in the work organization, his social background, and the sources of his job dissatisfaction (Schutt 1982). Militancy can vary from involvement in nationwide boycotts and strikes to local work stoppages and interpersonal conflict with management. Generally, two theories of union militancy have been advanced corresponding to an extrinsic-intrinsic dichotomy: (1) Economic factors such as dissatisfaction with pay and basic working conditions are the sources of discontent which facilitate militancy; or (2) incongruence among members' desire for more control, power and participation, and the constraints of the job and organizational structure produce militancy (Schutt 1982). Regarding the influence of social background Leggett (1968) found working-class consciousness to be associated with active participation in militant activities. An overall understanding of the influences of union commitment attitudes

on member behaviors should include an understanding of these attitudinal effects on militancy. So far the literature has ignored this question.

Although some studies indicate that work attitudes and experiences cause subsequent union attachment (Fullagar 1986b), others suggest the reverse—that unionization influences work attitudes. For example, if the union is instrumental in raising wages and improving working conditions, employee attitudes may well improve as a result (Allen and Keaveny 1983). Alternatively, in alerting their members to the unpleasant aspects of the work, union officials might cause a deterioration in work attitudes (Goldberg 1981). Kochan (1980, 374–76) found that union membership significantly improved workers' satisfaction and their compensation but decreased their satisfaction with job content and resource adequacy. Berger, Olson, and Boudreau (1983) argued that employees' satisfaction with the economic terms of their work will improve if they perceive the union as instrumental in securing tangible gains. At the same time, however, employees' satisfaction with the intrinsic aspects of their work will diminish as the employees become more aware of problems inherent in their work through their experiences as union members. The Berger, Olson, and Boudreau findings also highlight unions' influence in shaping work values. For example, unions generally place greater emphasis on seniority than on achievement as a criterion for advancement (Olson and Berger 1983). Moreover, employees who are consistently promoted year after year will eventually be forced to resign from the union once they come to join the supervisory or managerial ranks. Thus, the more committed the employee is to the union, the less he may value or be satisfied with promotion. An interesting task for future research, therefore, would be to assess whether attitudes of union commitment affect work values and attitudes toward the job and employing organization.

One attitudinal outcome of commitment attitudes is industrial relations climate, a derivative of organizational climate (Dastmalchian, Blyton, and Abdollahyan 1982; Nicholson, 1979). Three basic dimensions of industrial relations climate have been conceptualized: "issue climate," or workers' perceptions of the mechanisms for dealing with problems and the occurrence and satisfactory resolution of industrial relations problems (Nicholson 1979); "interpersonal climate," or workers' perceptions of interactions with members of the "other side" at all levels of the organization (Nicholson 1979); and "union support," or the extent to which workers perceive the organization as being supportive of institutionalized industrial relations (Dastmalchian, Blyton, and Abdollahyan 1982). Interpersonal climate correlates significantly with measures of absenteeism, labor turnover, and perceived union-management disharmony, whereas the issue-climate and union-support dimensions are associated with measures of organizational effectiveness. All three dimensions of industrial relations climate appear to moderate the relationship between behavioral outcomes and organizational effectiveness variables (Dastmalchian, Blyton, and Abdollahyan 1982). In developing future models of union commitment, therefore, industrial relations climate cannot be ignored as an important consequence.

Finally, until recently (Bluen and Barling 1985) the literature largely ignored the psychological consequences of involvement in industrial relations processes. Even Gordon and Nurick's (1981) agenda for future psychological research on union-management relations did not suggest investigating the potentially stressful role of individual involvement in industrial relations. Several stressors are inherent in the union leader's role (Bluen 1984). Union leaders face the dilemma, for example, of maintaining internal union democracy while simultaneously being pressured into adopting a more bureaucratic structure to meet environmental demands (Anderson 1978). Insufficient union budgets can translate into insufficient numbers of union officials, which in turn leads to role overload (Warr 1981). Nicholson (1976) identified several forms of role stress (quantitative and qualitative overload) associated with being a shop steward. Stewards reported high levels of both role ambiguity, having received no clear-cut guidelines or training, and role conflict, having had continually to interact with members of management and the rank-and-file. Union members themselves are subjected to various other sources of stress, such as management victimization, discharge for being a union member, threatened dismissal and plant closure, denial of privileges, and transfer to lower paying jobs (Bluen 1984). Finally, strikes themselves are obviously stressful (Barling and Milligan 1987; Thompson and Borglum 1973). MacBride, Lancee, and Freeman (1981) measured the psychological responses of striking air traffic controllers in Canada and found that during the dispute the subjects exhibited very high levels of psychological distress (such as feelings of worthlessness, depression, and strain) and a marked deterioration of perceived general functioning, physical health, and psychological well-being. Barling and Milligan (1987) also found psychological stress levels among union members to increase after involvement in strike activity. These various examples illustrate that stress may be yet another outcome of participation in unions. Union commitment may act as a buffer to some of these stresses or it may increase role overload (both qualitative and quantitative). Either way, any model of union commitment must consider the stressful outcomes of union involvement.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we have attempted to formulate a model of union commitment based on the findings of a variety of research. One of the major problems with previous research on organizational and union commitment is that it has relied mainly on cross-sectional data. As such, distinctions between the antecedents and consequences of commitment remain speculative. The literature points to a number of relevant variables as significant concomitants of union commitment. These should provide valuable guidelines for future research in ascertaining the nature and direction of the relationship between variables in the commitment process. This research must, however, avoid an overreliance on cross-sectional designs that illuminate associational rather than causal relationships and concen-

trate on longitudinal approaches that will enable a process model of union commitment to be developed.

Research on union commitment has also operated under the assumption that participative behaviors are a consequence rather than an antecedent of commitment attitudes (Gordon et al. 1980). This research has relied on attitudinal measures of both commitment and participation—both of which are susceptible to autocorrelational bias. Future investigators could avoid this source of bias by using more direct observations of behavior. Such research would also be useful in assessing whether perceived behavioral outcomes of union commitment reinforce and even cause the hypothesized antecedents. For example, participation in union activities might cause an awareness of inequalities in the political structures of organizations, which in turn facilitates dissatisfaction and stronger attitudes of attachment to the union. Alternatively, greater behavioral commitment or participation in union affairs might conceivably cause greater conflict among job, family, and union roles. The process of union commitment probably consists of reinforcing feedback loops between attitudes and behaviors, and between outcomes and antecedents (see Figure 1).

Further research will also have to unravel the complexity in the interactions among the antecedent variables of commitment. For example, commitment to "protective" unions results from concerns to increase job security and prevent job dilution, whereas commitment to "aggressive" unions is more a response to a lack of power, a desire for participation, and general alienation. Kochan (1979) demonstrated that extrinsic dissatisfaction is moderated by occupational status. Future studies need not only to ascertain the exact nature of the relationship between the speculated causes of commitment and its consequences, but also to investigate the relationships among the antecedent factors themselves. Only through such research can we determine whether methodological problems limit our knowledge about the process of commitment.

Recent research emphasizes the importance of socialization in the early stages of union membership as a predictor of commitment (Fullagar 1986b; Gordon et al. 1980). Nevertheless, as Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) indicated, we must investigate commitment as a continuous process that develops and fluctuates with union tenure, development, success, and history. Research shows that the employees' stage in their careers influences organizational commitment (Buchanan 1974). Research on union commitment must similarly assess how negotiations, strikes and their outcomes (Barling 1985), the prevailing economic climate, and the union's previous bargaining history (for example, its success in satisfying members' needs) influence attitudes of attachment and participatory behavior. Consistent with the data on organizational commitment, a strength of the proposed model is the wealth of information on the antecedents of union commitment. At the same time, however, there is a paucity of information on the potential consequences of union commitment. Since an understanding of both the causes and consequences of union commitment is required for a comprehensive model of the concept, further research focusing on the consequences of union commitment is overdue.

Another consideration in developing or testing a model is whether the empirical support for the multidimensional nature of union commitment is consistent (Fullagar 1986b; Gordon et al. 1980; Ladd et al. 1982). It is quite possible that the different components of union commitment (which are theoretically and statistically unrelated to one another) have diverse causes and different consequences. For example, personal beliefs about work (for example, Buchholz 1978b) might be more important in predicting beliefs in unionism in general than in predicting loyalty to a specific union. On the other hand, dissatisfaction with supervision and the perceived instrumentality of the union would probably predict loyalty to a specific union more than unionism as a concept. Consequently, a comprehensive model of union commitment must still consider the multidimensional nature of union commitment. In so doing, the model will be extended, and the prediction of commitment and its consequences will be enhanced.

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to illustrate the importance of the concept of union commitment and to develop a model of its antecedents and outcomes. Commitment provides researchers and unions with a measure of member involvement and attachment to labor organizations. An understanding of commitment is important—not only for psychological research on unions, but also for labor leaders who wish to address the deteriorating levels of union participation and increase democratic involvement of rank-and-file members. Measures of commitment could be employed to judge the effectiveness of labor organizations, assess training programs for shop stewards, and ascertain the success of negotiations and the strength of the union (Gordon et al. 1980). Nonetheless, additional research of both a theoretical and an empirical nature will be required to develop a full understanding of the conditions that foster member commitment and the processes through which union commitment grows.

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LABOR UNIONS AND THE U.S. CONGRESS:

PAC ALLOCATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE VOTING

Marick F. Masters and Asghar Zardkoohi

Labor unions have long recognized the practical inseparability of politics and economics. In fact, U.S. unions' record of achievement has often depended as much on what happened in Congress as at the bargaining table. Labor unions have traditionally committed themselves, therefore, to a broad plan of political action. In the 1980s in particular, evidently in response to their difficulties in securing gains in organizing and at the bargaining table, they have stepped up their political activities, especially in electoral politics.

Researchers have begun to pay more attention to labor's political role as it has expanded in recent years. Published studies on the subject fall into four principal categories. First, scholars have analyzed the environmental and organizational variables associated with differences in political "inputs" among unions, especially with respect to political action committee (PAC) contributions and lobbying personnel (Delaney, Fiorito, and Masters 1986; Masters and Delaney 1984, 1985, 1987a). Second, several studies have analyzed the determinants of unions' PAC allocations among legislators and other congressional candidates

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