A Phenomenological Study Exploring the Antecedents
of Union Commitment on the Everyday Lived Experiences
of Union Members During a Labor and Management Dispute

By George Michael Dertouzos

B.S. 1977, New York University
M.A. 1978, Columbia University
M.S. 1983, Pace University

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Neal Chalofsky
Associate Professor of Human and Organizational Learning

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George Michael Dertouzos

Dissertation Research Committee:

      Neal Chalofsky, Associate Professor of Human and Organizational

      Learning, Dissertation Director

      Michael Marquardt, Professor of Human and Organizational Learning and

      International Affairs, Committee Member

      Claudia G. Green, Director, Associate Professor of Management and

      Director of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Pace University,

      Committee Member

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Inhye, who demonstrated an inordinate amount of patience and fortitude throughout the project process. The emotional support and frequent reality checks she provided ensured the completion of the dissertation.

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In deep appreciation, I thank Dr. Neal Chalofsky, dissertation chairperson, for his extended support and unflagging patience throughout the dissertation process. His interest in the project and his commitment to ensure its completion provided the necessary direction and motivation to complete the dissertation.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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The concept of union commitment is fundamental to the institutional future of the American labor movement. Unions rely on their members for a plethora of volunteer activities, such as union organizing, collective bargaining, political activism, informational picketing, attendance at union meetings, and running for elective office. However, most research in this area comprises cross-sectional studies of individual attitudes and behavioral intentions. Virtually all of these studies have adopted a quantitative research framework.

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the antecedents of union commitment among 10 San Francisco hotel workers during a major labor dispute between UNITE HERE and the hotel management employer group. Using semistructured interviews, the study sought specific information about how the major antecedents of union commitment identified within the literature arose and developed in the lives of these individuals and about interrelations among these motivational bases as the subjects saw them.

Ten themes were common among the participants: (1) union commitment, (2) employee voice, (3) instrumentality/economic exchange, (4) social exchange, (5) collective bargaining agreement, (6) job satisfaction, (7) upward mobility, (8) social responsibility and immigrant rights, (9) community and political organizing, and (10) union organizing. Research results supported the widely accepted four dimensions underpinning the union commitment construct—union loyalty, responsibility to the

union, willingness to work for the union, and belief in unionism—as well as the premise that union commitment extends beyond economic exchange or social exchange and is embedded in a value-based identification with the goals and the mission of the union. Further, union members derived both intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction from their union affiliation.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the study of union commitment has experienced a resurgence of interest among researchers (Fullagar, Gallagher, Clark, & Carroll, 2004). To a great extent, this increased interest in union commitment can be traced to the steady, but what appears to many in the field of industrial relations as inexorable, decline of unionization in America over the past 60 years. The concept of union commitment is fundamental to the institutional future of the American labor movement. All organizations are dependent upon their members for their growth and ultimate survival. This is especially true of unions, which rely on their members for a plethora of volunteer activities such as union organizing, collective bargaining, political activism, informational picketing, attendance at union meetings, and running for elective office.

In exploring the literature on union commitment, a significant proportion of studies focused on developing a measure of union commitment and defining the dimensions of the construct, while another sizable group of studies explored the antecedents and outcomes of union commitment. Invariably, the literature demonstrates that the consequence of union commitment is greater participation in local union activities and, equally important, that commitment precedes participation in union-sponsored activities, "since commitment is necessary to provide the necessary motivation to participate" (Snape, Redman, & Chan, 2000, p. 205).

Most of the research that has studied union commitment has been directed to cross-sectional studies of individual attitudes and behavioral intentions. Virtually all of

these studies have adopted a quantitative research framework. This study explored member commitment to the union using a qualitative phenomenological approach.

Overview

During the past half century, the American labor movement has suffered a staggering decline in its membership. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008), in 2007 the nation's 15.7 million union members accounted for just 12.1% of all employed wage and salary workers in the United States (p. 1). Although this was a modest improvement from the 12.0% union density ratio posted a year earlier, it was substantially lower than the 20.1% figure recorded in 1983, the first year for which comparable data are available (p. 1). Using alternative time-series data, Fiorito and Jarley (2008) calculated that the current overall union density rate is now roughly one-third of the peak reached in the mid-1950s (p. 3). The decline has been most pronounced within the private sector, in which the union density rate fell below 8% in 2005 and has since continued its downward trajectory (p. 4).

Numerous adverse trends have purportedly contributed to the decimation of American trade unionism. They include the deindustrialization of the national economy, a resurgence of neoconservative public policies, and the increased effectiveness of employer opposition to union certification efforts. But beneath these macro-level forces, labor scholars have discerned an even more troubling development: an erosion in rank-and-file affiliates' participation in the activities of their respective union locals.

Problem Statement

Very few qualitative studies of union commitment have been conducted to date (Cregan, 2005). The decision to approach the subject of union commitment through a qualitative, phenomenological design was based in large part upon the shortcomings of prior empirical research within this topical domain. As will be discussed, the findings of quantitative union commitment studies display a high degree of inconsistency. Investigators have formulated hypotheses from theoretical constructs that do not clearly distinguish among the likely dimensions of union commitment. Moreover, existing models have focused upon a handful of variables, leaving open the likelihood that key antecedents of union commitment have been overlooked.

The bulk of the research in the field has assumed the form of large-scale, cross-sectional surveys. These works are subject to a number of limitations. As Gallagher and Clark (1989) have remarked, while such studies are able to generate statistical associations between independent and dependent variables, they cannot directly capture causal relationships among them. In addition, response rates to mailed union commitment surveys have typically been low. As a consequence, their findings may be distorted by a subject self-selection phenomenon. Lastly, while studies indicate that contextual factors, such as the quality of labor-management relations, exert a strong influence upon union commitment, large-scale surveys cannot adequately control for this source of variance. In the researcher's estimation, rather than mechanically parsing the union commitment/ participation process into analytical units for the purpose of testing or developing predictive models, there is an ongoing need to explore that process from the perspective of the union members who have directly experienced it.

Purpose

This study's purpose was to explore the experience of 10 rank-and-file members of a San Francisco hotel worker's union who had been actively engaged in employer neutrality and card check campaigns during the past 4 years. The researcher elicited, recorded, and interpreted the responses of these study participants to a series of inquiries about their perceptions of union instrumentality, their experience of union support, and their attitudes towards the union movement at large. The researcher delved into the ways in which these perceptions, experiences, and attitudes may have motivated the subjects to voluntarily participate in this form of union activism. The study also sought specific information about how the major antecedents of union commitment identified within the literature arose and developed in the lives of these individuals and about the interrelations among these motivational bases as the subjects saw them.

Research Questions

The overarching research question was as follows: Why do rank-and-file union members sacrifice their own interests to achieve contract provisions that are intended to increase union density? Within this broad question, the study explored a variety of other questions: Were participants motivated by a desire to enhance the collective bargaining power of their union and thereby increase its future instrumental effectiveness? Did perceptions that the union and/or its individual members were concerned about their well-being and valued their activity play a role in their respective decisions to work on neutrality/card check campaigns? Were normative or ideological values/beliefs operative in these participation decisions? Did their past experience have an impact upon their current level of union commitment on any of the four dimensions embodied in Gordon,

4

Philpot, Burt, Thompson, and Spiller's 1980 construct? Perhaps most importantly, what, if anything, was absent from the conceptualization of union commitment that appeared within the relevant literature?

Statement of Potential Significance

This study explored whether it is more meaningful to view member-union relationships in terms of an exchange characterization. Therefore, it considered the extent to which economic change and social exchange underpinned members' willingness to continue their relationship and to participate in their union. This distinction has important implications for union strategy insofar as economic exchange emphasizes the achievements of instrumental gains or benefits for members, and social exchange emphasizes the notion of support and concern by the union.

Furthermore, member-union relationships may be characterized by mutually shared values and political and ideological identification, with members participating in the union out of intrinsic motivation and a concern for the welfare of the union and fellow union and nonunion workers rather than simply because they perceive a beneficial exchange—economic or social. This view seems to suggest that the events occurring in San Francisco during the last negotiations may involve wider social or political issues. Such campaigns may do more than simply address members' instrumental needs in the political arena; they may build a sense of community involvement. Thus, member-union relationships may have an ideological aspect that transcends private exchange theory and encompasses wider notions of community and social justice.

The study's findings may nevertheless prove significant. By exploring the lived experience of rank-and-file members who have already shown intensive union

5

commitment, the study was able to shed light upon a topic that is of vital importance to the future of the American labor movement. The findings were not intended to have predictive power. They should, however, assist in clarifying the nature of union commitment and explaining its salient dimensions, sources, and effects. This, in turn, may provide valuable guidance to labor studies researchers who address union commitment in the future. The findings may also furnish information that will be of use to union policymakers as they seek to reverse the long-term decline of organized labor.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is critically important for establishing a foundation for conducting the study and creating a focus and direction. This study's conceptual framework connects the constructs of exchange theory and union commitment to explore and understand member support for the union (see Figure 1-1). The association and interplay between these two constructs assist in understanding the phenomenon under exploration—specifically, union member support for the labor organization that is contrary to the financial well-being of the members actively and freely engaged in a labor dispute.

The sustained contraction of union density and its perceived connection to reduced member activity has stimulated considerable research into the attitudes and behaviors of the labor movement's individual members (Snape et al., 2000). The focal point of this collective effort has been the concept of "union commitment" (Fullagar et al., 2004, p. 730; Morrow & McElroy, 2006, p. 75). As Tan and Aryee (2002) have observed, the salience of union commitment within labor studies is due in large part to its demonstrated relationship with member participation measured either directly or through

its influence upon the formation of behavioral intentions (p. 716). Since the early 1980s,

a large body of empirical work on union commitment has appeared within the literature.

The findings of these studies have consistently shown that members will not be motivated

to engage in union activity unless they "possess a certain level of commitment"

(Gallagher & Clark, 1989, p. 52).
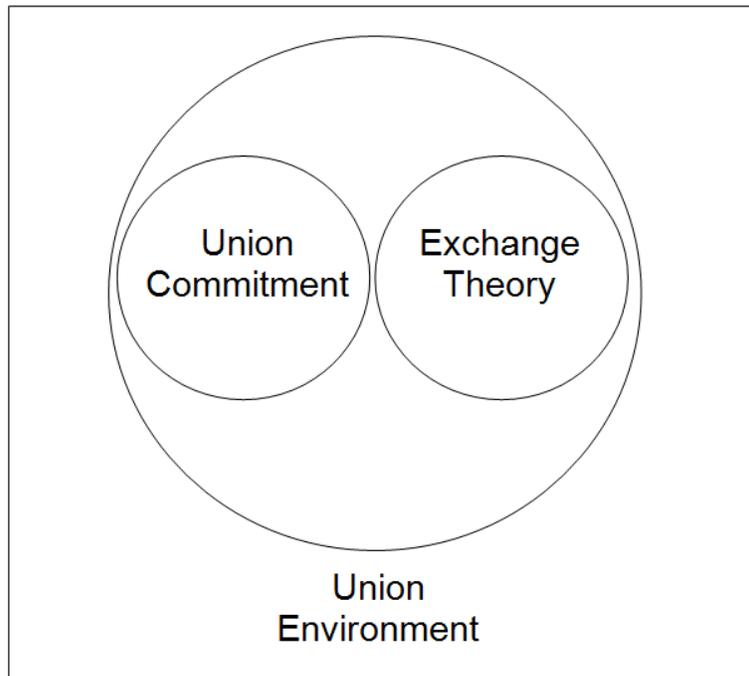
Figure 1-1. Conceptual framework. Adapted from "The antecedents and consequences of union commitment: a meta-analysis," by P. A. Bamberger, A. B. Kluger, and R. Suchard, 1999, *Academy of Management Journal, 42*, p. 307.

Gordon et al.'s union commitment model. As both Bamberger (Bamberger,

Kluger, & Suchard, 1999) and Sverke and Kuruvilla (1995) have remarked, many

investigators have relied upon the definition of union commitment advanced by Michael

Gordon and his associates (Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, & Spiller, 1980) in a

special issue of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Drawing upon organizational

commitment studies, Gordon et al. (1980) proposed that union commitment is composed of four dimensions: (a) union loyalty; (b) feeling of responsibility towards the union; (c) willingness to work for the union; and (d) pro-union attitudes. On the basis of this factor structure, Gordon and his colleagues (1980) devised a 42-item, forced-response survey instrument that remains in widespread use. Nonetheless, their conception of union commitment has been the object of recurrent criticism. For example, in their review of the literature, Snape et al. (2000) stated that Gordon et al. (1980) combined affective identification with the union with perceptions of union capacity to achieve substantive benefits for its members under the factor heading of "loyalty" (p. 208).

Despite continuing disagreements among scholars about the number and nature of the dimensions of union commitment, as Bayazit and his fellow authors have observed (Bayazit, Hammer, & Wazeter, 2004), "There is no dearth of models that describe its antecedents and consequences" (p. 738). Given theoretical fragmentation, it is not surprising that divergent findings have been reported on the relative strength of each of the antecedents that have been used to explain or predict union commitment (Bamberger et al., 1999; Tan & Aryee, 2002).

Bamberger, Kluger, and Suchard's meta-analysis study. Nevertheless, from their examination of research studies published between 1980 and 1996, Bamberger et al. (1999) identified two factors that have been hypothesized as antecedents in many models of union commitment: union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes. Construed as a constituent of the union loyalty dimension in Gordon's original construct, union instrumentality was subsequently defined by Gordon, Barling, and Tetrick (1995) as "the perceived impact of the union on traditional (e.g., benefits and wages) and nontraditional

8

work (e.g., interesting job) conditions" (p. 353). In essence, it amounts to a current or prospective member's perception of how effective the union has been (or is likely to be) in achieving palpable, concrete outcomes that are in his or her personal interest. By contrast, "pro-union attitudes" denotes a member's belief in the desirability of labor unions in general as opposed to reflecting a specific union's performance (Deshpande & Fiorito, 1989, p. 883). As such, it reflects individual variance in normative values and in related ideological beliefs.

Bamberger et al.'s (1999) meta-analysis strongly affirmed that both union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes are direct antecedents of union commitment and suggested that they also mediate the influence of other hypothesized antecedents, notably job satisfaction and commitment to employer organizations in which the union members work.

There is, however, a third factor that Bamberger and his colleagues did not include in their exercise, but that has been identified as an antecedent of union commitment and designated as "union support" (Shore, Tetrick, Sinclair, & Newton, 1994; Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995; Tetrick, 1995; Tetrick, Shore, McClurg, & Vandenberg, 2007). As Shore and her colleagues defined the term, union support embodies "members' global beliefs concerning the extent to which the union values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (p. 971). While beliefs about union support stem from cognitive processes, in contrast to union instrumentality, this variable encompasses affect. The somewhat limited corpus of union commitment studies that have operationalized union support uniformly indicate that it is an antecedent of commitment and that it mediates the influence of instrumentality (Tetrick et al., 2007).

9

Social exchange and economic exchange theory. Researchers who have investigated union support's relationship to union commitment drew the concept from Peter Blau's (1964) work on social exchange and combined it with the norm of reciprocity. In his text *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (1964), Blau distinguished between economic exchanges and social exchanges. As explained in chapter 2, he asserted that while economic exchanges or *deals* are governed by explicit, short-term, and enforceable understandings among the engaged parties, social exchanges entail bonds of felt obligation grounded in implicit role performance expectancies.

According to Snape and Redman (2004), the now customary division between union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes has generated confusion owing to the tendency of researchers to equate the former with economic exchange and the latter with social exchange. More specifically, they argued that the twofold relationship common to union commitment studies is insufficient in that it "fails to clearly distinguish between social exchange and covenantal relationships" (p. 856). Snape and Redman (2004) recommended a threefold characterization of the bonds between unions and their members:

> Economic exchange emphasizes the achievement of instrumental gains or benefits for members, social exchange also emphasizes the provision of support and concern by the union, whereas the covenantal view goes further still in recognizing the value-based social-movement aspects of unions. (p. 856)

Arguably, what Snape and Redman (2004) referred to as the "covenantal view" captures what other scholars intend by the term "pro-union attitudes." Nonetheless, the covenantal relationship spans ideological beliefs about the union in general and intrinsic feelings toward specific individuals, notably fellow union members. In this context, Snape and Redman (2004) cited Allan Flanders' declaration that within the labor movement it is a

"sword of justice rather than a vested interest that generates loyalties and induces sacrifices among its own members" (Flanders, 1975, p. 15).

Above all, what Snape and Redman's (2004) argument about the need for a three-fold characterization of the antecedents of union commitment plainly illustrates is that lines between basic sources of commitment as they have been approached to date are imperfectly drawn. Efforts to discriminate between distinct antecedents have been further undercut by the interrelationships among them. Recent research indicates that the influence of union instrumentality upon commitment is heavily moderated by pro-union attitudes and/or by perceptions of social support. Concurrently, the perceived strength of union support is subject to perceptions about the effectiveness of the union as an instrument for achieving ends that promote the well-being of its members; pro-union attitudes are affected by perceptions that the union has been (and can be) instrumentally effective; pro-union attitudes, in turn, are developed through social interaction with other union members. Given all this, it is understandable that union commitment research is replete with contradictory findings.

Overview of Study Design and Methodology

The study was a qualitative phenomenological exploration of the lived experience of 10 union members. Phenomenology, which originated in the late 19th century as a reaction among European philosophers to the hegemony of positivism, acknowledges the intractable pervasiveness of subjectivity in all forms of inquiry. As Groenwald (2004) has stated, the basic premise of phenomenological research is that "the researcher cannot be detached from his/her own presuppositions and that the researcher should not pretend otherwise" (p. 7). Simply by virtue of selecting union commitment as a topic for

11

exploration, the researcher affirmed his own inherent bias toward the subject, and there is little doubt that the researcher came to it with a set of preconceptions. The seminal task then was to recognize these presumptions (Groenwald, 2004, p. 5).

The participants were selected through purposeful sampling. All of the interview subjects were rank-and-file members of UNITE HERE Local 2, operating within the jurisdiction of San Francisco, California, who had participated in an employer neutrality/card check campaign in which the researcher was personally involved. UNITE HERE was formed in July 2004 from the merging of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (Liddle, 2004).

Data collection involved approximately 20 hours of interviews with 10 participants; all interviews were then transcribed. An interview protocol was used (see Appendix) and consisted of questions about each participant's involvement in and impressions of the last contract negotiations. Field notes were also taken after each interview to document nonverbal cues and provide contextual information.

As the term "hermeneutic" denotes, the process of transforming interview responses into research findings is interpretive rather than analytical (Hyener, 1999, p. 161). The researcher assiduously avoided seizing upon narrow points of correspondences among the accounts of the participants and preserved the integrity of their individual, unique experiences (Groenwald, 2004). Once the interviews were recorded, the researcher interpreted the collected information by carefully reading the transcripts several times, remaining mindful of the continuing need to control the influence of his own biases. Any generalizations that emerged from this process were

qualified to reflect differences across the individual experiences. Proceeding from the perspective of phenomenology and hermeneutics, the researcher interpreted the participants' responses rather than analyzing the data according to a preset procedure. Results were presented in the form of a textural-structural description of each participant and common themes.

Limitations

The phenomenological approach to research involves exploring and gaining insight into how a specific phenomenon is perceived and experienced by individuals exposed to the event. When assessed against standard measures of validity and reliability, the study's findings are bound to be limited. The study sample consisted of 10 informants selected through nonprobabilistic means. Indeed, the subjects were individuals with whom the researcher was personally acquainted. The study's sole information-gathering instrument was an interview protocol that had not been validated. It was intended to elicit self-reported information on a retrospective basis. The validity of the study findings depended in part upon the researcher's untested ability to conduct the interviews and to interpret their results. Plainly, no assurances concerning the validity of the findings or their generalizability can be provided.

Phenomenology, simply stated, is the study of conscious phenomena, that is, an analysis of the way in which things or experiences reveal themselves to individuals. The point of phenomenology is to arrive at the pure and unencumbered vision of what an experience essentially is, from the perspective of the individual. Therefore, information gathered from this study was meant to increase both labor and management's understanding of union commitment based on the personal experiences of union members

13

involved in this labor dispute. Generalizability may be limited to this specific industry and the particular circumstances of this labor dispute.

Definition of Key Terms

Arbitration. A method of settling a labor-management dispute by having an impartial third party, known as an arbitrator, render a decision that is binding on both the union and the employer. There are two types of arbitration: grievance arbitration and interest arbitration (Kochan, 1980; Kochan, Katz, & McKersie, 1986).

Authorization card. A statement solicited from individual employees by a union during an organizing drive. The statement either indicates the employee's desire for an election in which the question is whether there shall be a union, or it authorizes the union to represent the employees for purposes of *collective bargaining* (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Bargaining agent. A union that is the exclusive representative to the employer of all workers, both union and nonunion, in a bargaining unit. An employer may voluntarily recognize a particular union as a bargaining agent for his or her workers, or the question of representation may be settled by a secret-ballot election, conducted by the *National Labor Relations Board* or the appropriate state agency (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Business agent. A full-time officer of a local union who handles grievances, helps enforce contracts, and performs other tasks in the day-to-day operation of a union. To be distinguished from international representative and shop steward (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Collective bargaining. A method of determining terms and conditions of employment by

negotiation between representatives of the employer and union representatives of

the employees. The results of the bargaining are set forth in a *collective*

bargaining agreement. Collective bargaining, which determines terms and

conditions of employment for all workers in a bargaining unit, is to be

distinguished from individual bargaining, which applies to negotiations between a

single employee and the employer (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Collective bargaining agreement. A written contract resulting from negotiation between

an employer or a group of employers and a union or group of unions, which sets

the terms and conditions of employment (such as wages, hours, *fringe benefits*)

and the procedure to be used in settling disputes that may arise during the term of

the contract. Contracts usually are in effect for a specified period (e.g., 1, 2, or 3

years) (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Economic strike. A work stoppage resulting from a dispute over wages, hours, and other

terms of employment. Economic strikers retain employee status, but may be

permanently replaced and are not entitled to bump their replacements upon

termination of the strike. Economic strikers are eligible to vote in a representation

election conducted during the strike unless the election is held more than 12

months after the commencement of the strike (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al.,

1986).

Fringe benefits. Nonwage items and payments received by or credited to workers in

addition to wages, often not in exchange for time worked: for instance,

supplemental unemployment benefits, pensions, vacation and holiday pay, and

health insurance. Although fringe benefits antedate World War II, their growth

was greatly stimulated in the war years because wage rates were frozen. Since

many fringe benefits were not immediately inflationary (some benefits like

pensions involved deferred expenditure), they were authorized by the National

War Labor Board. In recent years, fringe benefits have accounted for an

increasing percentage of worker income and labor costs. According to the Bureau

of National Affairs, the cost of fringe benefits in 1976 came to nearly 36.7% of

annual payrolls. Also called "fringes" (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Good faith bargaining. Negotiations in which two parties meet and confer at reasonable

times, minds open to persuasion, with a view to reaching agreement on new

contract terms. Good faith bargaining does not imply that either party is required

to make concessions or reach agreement on any proposal. Lack of good faith

bargaining is an *unfair labor practice* (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Grievance. An allegation, usually by an individual but sometimes by the union or

management, of misinterpretation or misapplication of a collective bargaining

agreement or of traditional work practices (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Impasse. In negotiation, a state in which no further progress in reaching agreement can be

made. Either party may determine the point at which impasse has been reached. In

the public sector, technical impasse occurs when agreement has not been reached

by a specified number of days before the deadline for budget submission, even

though the parties are continuing to bargain in good faith. In public employment,

impasses are often resolved by the intervention of a neutral third party, such as a

mediator or fact finder (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Job action. Concerted activity by employees on the job designed to put pressure on an

employer without resorting to a strike (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Local union. The organization of members of an international union in a particular plant,

region, or locality. *Craft union* locals, such as those of plumbers and carpenters,

are usually organized by regions or localities, *industrial union* locals by plants.

Often a local union is referred to as simply "local" (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al.,

1986).

Lockout. A suspension of work initiated by the employer as the result of a labor dispute.

A lockout is the employer counterpart of a strike, which is initiated by the

workers. It is used primarily to avert a threatened strike (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et

al., 1986).

Multiemployer bargaining. Collective bargaining involving more than one company in a

given industry and resulting in a master agreement. Multiemployer bargaining

takes various forms: area-wide bargaining, industry-wide bargaining, and regional

bargaining (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act). A federal law passed in 1935 that had the

effect of generally strengthening the position of organized labor. The law, which

created the *National Labor Relations Board* to administer the act, guaranteed

workers the right to organize and join unions, to bargain collectively, and to act in

concert in pursuit of their objectives. It provided for secret-ballot certification

elections and gave the union the right to be the exclusive *bargaining agent* for all

workers in a bargaining unit. The law declared the following to be *unfair labor

practices*: (1) management support of a company union; (2) discharge or

17

discipline of workers for union activities; (3) discrimination against workers for

making complaints to the National Labor Relations Board; (4) refusal to bargain

with employee representatives; and (5) interference with the rights of employees

to act together for mutual aid or protection (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

National Labor Relations Board. A body created by the *National Labor Relations Act* of

1935. The board's primary duties are to hold elections to determine representation

and to interpret and apply the law concerning *unfair labor practices*. The courts

may review the board's decisions on unfair labor practices, but the board's

decisions on representation elections are final (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al.,

1986).

Negotiation. The process by which representatives of labor and management bargain to

set terms and conditions of work: for instance, wages, hours, benefits, working

conditions, and the procedures for handling grievances. The fruits of these

negotiations are usually reduced to writing and comprise the collective bargaining

agreement (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Picketing. Publicizing the existence of a labor dispute by patrolling near the location

where the dispute is taking place, usually with placards that announce the nature

of the dispute and the parties to it; also an attempt to persuade workers to join a

work stoppage or to discourage customers from patronizing a business

establishment or both. When large numbers of workers on strike assemble at a

plant gate to discourage nonstrikers from entering or to prevent delivery of

materials, this is called mass picketing. Organizational or recognition picketing is

an attempt on the part of a union to force the employer to recognize the union or

to persuade the unorganized workers to join the union. Informational picketing

occurs when off-duty employees picket so as to inform the public of the union's

position in a dispute. During informational picketing, passage through the picket

line is not hindered as it is during other forms of picketing (Kochan, 1980;

Kochan et al., 1986).

Unfair labor practice. A practice conducted on the part of either union or management

that violates provisions of national or state labor relations acts. Failing to bargain

in good faith and interference with the administration of a labor organization are

examples of unfair labor practices on the part of management. Failing to bargain

in good faith and engaging in a secondary boycott are examples of unfair labor

practices on the part of unions (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986).

Conclusion

Chapter 1 has provided a framework for presenting the research in a purposeful

manner. In addition, as the title implies, this chapter has outlined, in broad strokes, the

direction the research followed. The ultimate objective of the study was to add to the

body of knowledge and enhance our understanding of the union commitment construct.

Chapter 2, the literature review, presents, evaluates, and interprets relevant prior research.

The body of scholarly research selected for the literature review was diverse in its

viewpoint, while remaining pertinent to the research conducted.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews a range of research on union commitment available from researchers, scholars, and practitioners. It begins by reviewing the historical evolution of union commitment theory in the early 1950s and tracing its development to the present time. Initial research focused on commitment to both the employer and the union, but that theory was eventually discarded and replaced with a more dynamic theory based on delineation of its constituent factors and development of a survey instrument for its measurement. The second section of the chapter discusses how these various factors interact with union commitment. These factors include participation, organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, dual allegiance, employee involvement programs, perceptions of justice and fairness, union governance, socialization, and individual member attributes.

Exchange theories—both social exchange (union support) and economic exchange (union instrumentality)—and their effect on promoting union commitment are reviewed in the third part of this chapter. This theme was considered especially relevant since one goal of the current study was to determine if exchange theory had a moderating role or influence on the relationship between perceptions of union support and union commitment, as well as the relationship between instrumentality and union commitment.

The fourth part of the chapter explores two union commitment models that evolved and contrasts these with social exchange and economic exchange theory.

Overall, the review examines the research on dominant predictors of union commitment and its direct and indirect effects on union member attitudes towards the union.

A thematic and systematic approach was used to identify, select, evaluate, and present available material. In preparing the literature review, an extensive database search—involving ABI/INFORM, Academic Premier, BNA, GDOC, HBRO, JSTOR, Lexus, Nexus, Opinion Archives, ProQuest Research, PsychLit, PsychINFO, and Social Science Abstracts—was conducted in order to identify empirical research on union commitment theories.

Evolution of Union Commitment Theory

"Union commitment is a relatively recent construct," Robert Hoell (2004b) has observed, and it initially "developed predominantly from the organizational commitment research" (p. 269). During the 1950s and early 1960s, a few scholars, such as Stagner (1954), addressed the issue of "dual allegiance" within the context of industrial relations, seeking to determine whether and how workers could maintain loyalty to both their employers' organizations and their unions. Subsequently recast as pioneering contributions to "dual commitment" research, these seminal endeavors did not examine commitment per se, but focused instead upon a narrow conception of loyalty (Angle & Perry, 1986, p. 31).

Early dual allegiance and organizational commitment studies. When the first wave of union/employer dual allegiance studies appeared in the 1950s and 1960s, the predominant approach to organizational commitment in workplace settings was heavily influenced by microeconomic theory and the overarching objective of reducing turnover rates. Becker (1960) of the Chicago School, for example, construed employee

commitment in terms of an individual's desire to remain with a work organization and proposed that worker commitment could be bolstered by the provision of long-term benefits, such as pensions and employee health care programs. Whatever dissatisfaction a worker might experience, his or her vested stake in these benefits would countermand its transformation into voluntary resignations. In this conception, organizational commitment was taken to be overt behaviors grounded in the individual worker's calculation of the economic/material benefits and drawbacks of remaining an organizational member. While economic calculation resonates with what has since been designated as "union instrumentality," as Snape et al. (2000) reported, in itself, economic calculation does not adequately explain union commitment (p. 213).

In 1974, Lyman Porter and his colleagues presented an alternative definition of organizational commitment as "the strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization" (p. 604). They proceeded to explain that organizational commitment can be characterized by "at least" three factors (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a definite desire to maintain organizational membership (p. 604). In contrast to the calculative commitment, Porter et al. (1974) saw organizational attachment as an attitudinal phenomenon, as a matter of sharing the organization's vision and culture. Moreover, commitment was not limited to remaining a member of the organization; it also entailed a willingness or intention to put forth effort.

1980: Gordon et al.'s union commitment model. It was not until the early 1980s that a second and ongoing stage in union commitment studies arose with Gordon et

al.'s (1980) definition of the term, delineation of its constituent factors, and development of a survey instrument for its measurement. Gordon et al. (1980) drew directly upon a model of organizational commitment that had been advanced 6 years earlier by Porter, Steers, Mowaday, and Boulain (1974). Rather than adopting the established approach to organizational commitment as a calculative process based upon an economic exchange, Porter et al. (1974) viewed organizational commitment in terms of attitudes, values, and personal identification. Gordon and his associates (1980) embraced this perspective and put forth a model of union commitment that includes economic, social, and ideological components. Although alternative path models have since been presented, Gordon et al.'s (1980) four-factor construct and union commitment scale (or variations upon it) continue in usage. Recent work has focused on identifying the antecedents of union commitment and establishing the interrelations among them. As Bamberger et al. (1999) found, the majority of these models posit that pro-union attitudes (roughly equivalent to Gordon et al.'s [1980] global beliefs about unionism) and union instrumentality (a component of Gordon et al.'s [1980] "union loyalty" dimension) are major antecedents of union commitment.

Later studies on divergent factors. Research grounded in Gordon et al.'s (1980) model has been the object of criticism from two distinct sources. On the one hand, drawing upon Blau's (1964) ideas about social exchange, Shore, Tetrick, and their associates (1994) have asserted that this construct fails to adequately account for the social dimension of union commitment. Since the mid-1990s, a substantial body of research has been conducted on union support as an antecedent of commitment. This, in turn, has led to investigations of factors accounting for union citizenship behavior (UCB).

23

More recently, Snape and his colleagues (2000) have argued for a reconceptualization of pro-union attitudes based not on individual beliefs about trade unionism, but on covenantal relationships among union members. This line of inquiry has contributed to renewed interest in the subject of justice within both employer organizations and unions.

According to Fullagar et al. (2004), Gordon and his colleagues approached union commitment as an attitudinal constrict accompanied by behavioral intentions (p. 730). They defined union commitment as the extent to which an individual has a desire to retain membership in, exert effort for, and identify with the objectives of his or her union (Gordon et al., 1980). Relying principally on Porter's work, Gordon and his associates developed a four-dimensional model of union commitment (see Figure 2-1). The first component, designated as "union loyalty," reflects the degree to which a union member demonstrates a sense of pride in the union and an awareness of its instrumentality in obtaining benefits for its members. Union loyalty embodies both personal identification and perceptions of instrumentality. The second dimension was labeled by Gordon et al. (1980) as "responsibility to the union" and consists of the extent to which a union member is willing to fulfill the day-to-day obligations and duties of membership in order to protect the interests of the union. This is closely related to a third factor cluster, "willingness to work for the union," i.e., the member's readiness to do special work on behalf of the union and to expend extra energy in service of the union. The final dimension in the model, "belief in unionism," is the degree to which a member believes in the general or global concept of trade unionism. Using responses from a sample of 1,377 white-collar workers drawn from four locals of an international union, Gordon et al. (1980) reported that their model possessed a high degree of construct validity.

┌───┐
│ Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson and Spiller (1980)   │
│   │
│ Union   │
│ Loyalty   │
│   │
│ Belief in   Union   Union   │
│ Unionism   Commitment   Participation │
│   │
│ Willingness to   │
│ work for the   │
│ Union   │
│   │
│ Responsibility to   │
│ the Union   │
└───┘
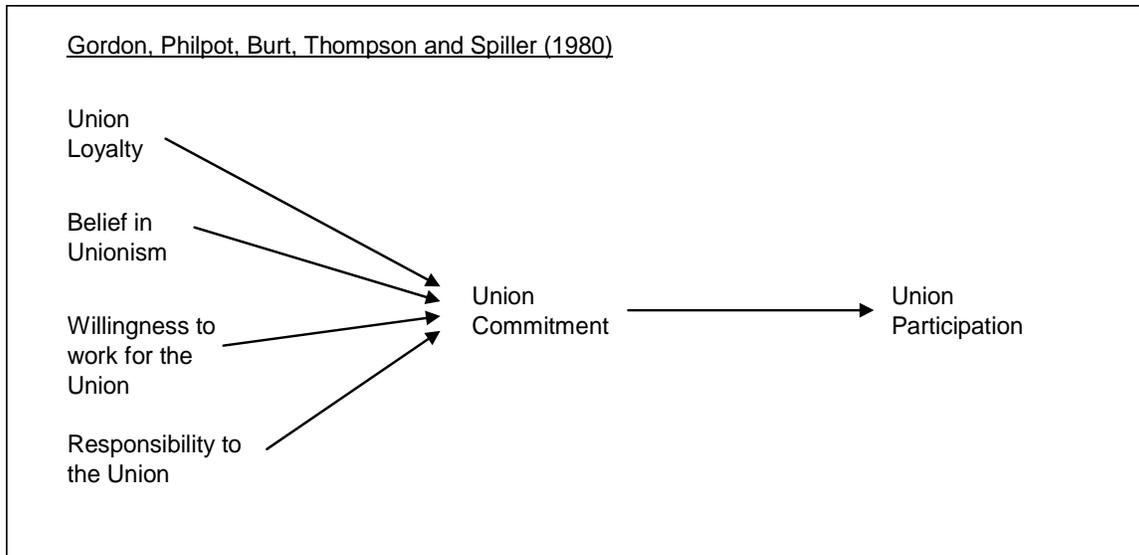
Figure 2-1. Gordon et al.'s model of union commitment antecedents and consequences. Adapted from "Commitment to the union: Development of a measure and an examination of its correlates," by M. E Gordon, J. W. Philpot, R. E. Burt, C. A. Thompson, and W. E. Spiller, 1980, *Journal of Applied Psychology, 65*, p. 479.

Recent work. Since the publication of Gordon et al.'s (1980) monograph, a

number of studies have attempted to replicate the four orthogonal factors in their model

with what Bayazit et al. (2004) recently characterized as "mixed results" (p. 738). For

example, Barling, Fullagar, and Kelloway (1992) found support for Gordon et al.'s

(1980) four-dimensional structure of union commitment (p. 74). But after noting that

virtually all investigations of union commitment conducted between 1980 and 1994 used

Gordon et al.'s (1980) scale in whole or in part, Sverke and Kuruvilla (1995) pointed out

that only half of the 20 studies that tested the conceptual structure of union commitment

replicated Gordon et al.'s (1980) four-factor structure. The remaining evaluations

reported different factor structures, ranging from one to five dimensions (p. 506).

As the subsequent research on union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes

suggests, some scholars have altered Gordon et al.'s (1980) four-factor structure into a

more parsimonious form by merging its dimensions into a single cluster (Snape et al.,

2000). Friedman and Harvey (1986), for example, restructured the Gordon model into two components. They combined its loyalty and belief in unionism dimensions into a single "attitudes and opinions" variable and the responsibility to the union and willingness to work for union dimensions into a single "behavioral intentions" cluster. Using a reasoned action framework, Kelloway and Barling (1993) argued that union loyalty is actually a fundamental antecedent of commitment that influences commitment through its impact upon the responsibility and willingness dimensions of Gordon et al.'s 1980 model. Other scholars have argued that pro-union attitudes should be divided into beliefs about organized labor at large and beliefs about the specific union to which a member belongs (Snape et al., 2000).

Synthesizing the findings of union commitment research studies published between 1980 and 1997, Bamberger et al. (1999) tested the construct validity of three theoretical models of union commitment along with their own integrated model. Bamberger et al. first determined that four factors—pro-union attitudes, union instrumentality, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment—were identified in each of these models as an antecedent of union commitment. In Barling et al.'s (1992) model, all four variables were hypothesized to have a direct impact upon union commitment, which, in turn, was conceptualized as a direct antecedent of member participation. In Newton and Shore's (1992) model, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were posited to have a direct effect upon union commitment, but pro-union attitudes were causally preceded by perceptions of union instrumentality. Iverson and Kuruvilla's (1995) model specified that while pro-union attitudes and instrumentality perceptions have direct effects on union commitment, the impact of job satisfaction is completely

mediated by organizational commitment (Bamberger et al., 1999). Based upon their

assessment of each model's fit with empirical findings derived from a meta-analysis of

the research, Bamberger et al. reported that the best fit was predicted by their own

"integrated model" in which both direct and mediated union commitment effects were

posited for job satisfaction and union instrumentality (see Figure 2-2). It is noteworthy

that none of the models in Bamberger et al.'s 1999 study, including their own, included a

union support variable. What the model testing component of Bamberger et al.'s study

demonstrates is that identified antecedents of union commitment exert a strong influence

on each other, rendering it difficult to disaggregate their individual contributions to

commitment.
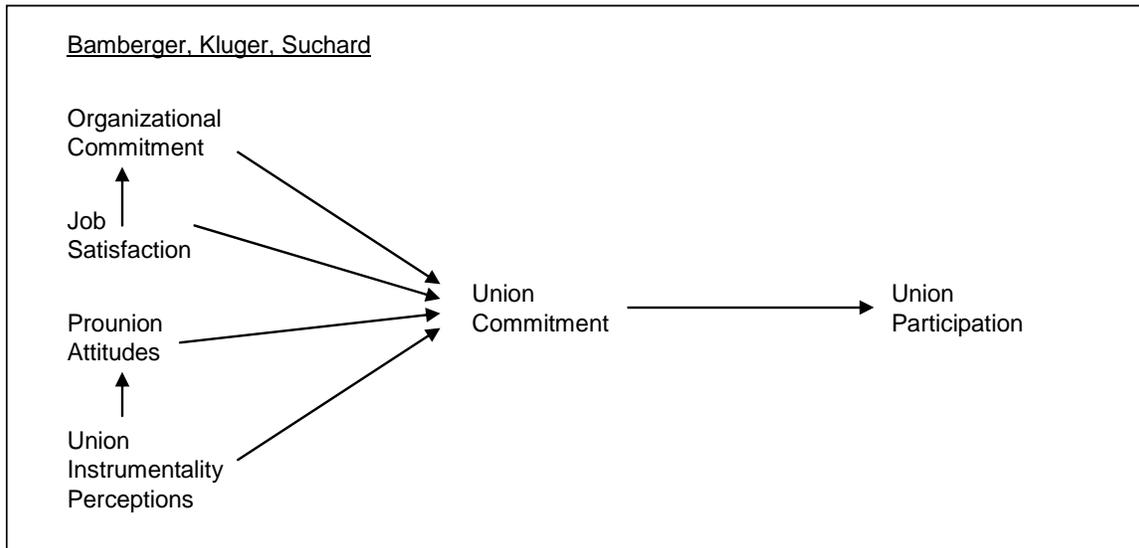
Figure 2-2. Bamberger et al.'s model of union commitment antecedents and
consequences. Adapted from "The antecedents and consequences of union commitment:
a meta-analysis," by P. A. Bamberger, A. B. Kluger, and R. Suchard, 1999, *Academy of
Management Journal,* 42, p. 307.

At the outset of their frequently cited meta-analysis of research on the antecedents

and consequences of union commitment, Peter Bamberger and his colleagues (1999)

cautioned their readers that "the picture that emerges from this body of work is ambiguous both empirically and theoretically" (p. 304). After reporting the results of their statistical exercise, Bamberger et al. (1999) stated that inconsistencies in findings reported across studies reflected problems in construct definition and measurement (p. 313). According to Sverke and Kuruvilla (1995), this topical domain has been plagued by "researchers' inability to specify a precise nomological network for union commitment." They proceeded to explain that "the development of a nomological network involves explicitly defining the concepts in the framework, explaining the relations between the different theoretical structures, and developing propositions of testable relations between the variables" (p. 506).

The Correlations of Union Commitment

Participation and union commitment. As Fullagar et al. (2004) have stated, the salient consequence of union commitment is participation in local union activities (p. 730). Numerous studies, including those analyzed by Bamberger et al. (1999), have consistently reported that a member's level of commitment to his or her union is predictive of active involvement in its affairs. As Fullagar and Barling (1989) have remarked, while it is possible that participation itself generates commitment, "members, in most cases, will not be motivated to engage in action such as participating in union activities . . . unless they already possess a certain level of commitment" (p. 89).

There are, however, studies in which the influence of commitment on participation is not as direct or clear-cut. Several researchers have used Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action to investigate the relationship between union commitment and participation (Sverke & Kuruvilla, 1995; Sverke & Sjoberg, 1994).

They have reported that the relationship between union commitment and participation is mediated by behavioral intentions, which in turn predict actual behavior. It is possible that some union members possess high levels of commitment but are not actively involved in their unions because the formation of specific behavioral intentions is disrupted by alternative considerations. Thus, for example, a member may have a high level of commitment to his or her union but be unable to actively participate in its affairs because of family obligations, educational pursuits, second jobs, and the like.

In one of the few union commitment studies with a longitudinal design, Fullagar and his colleagues (2004) investigated the relationship between union commitment and participation in a sample of 134 members of the National Association of Letter Carriers. They measured the commitment levels and the degree of participation of their subjects in both formal and informal union activities at two sampling junctures separated by a 10-year time span. Fullagar et al. (2004) found that while the initial (or "early") union commitment scores predicted commitment 10 years later, early participation did not predict later participation (p. 734). More important, early pro-union attitudes had a powerful impact upon participation in informal union activities 10 years later, while early participation in informal activities showed no association with either later commitment attitudes or later participation in informal union activities (pp. 734-735). In essence, pro-union attitudes influenced member behavior, but member behavior had no effect on member attitudes. Based on these findings, Fullagar et al. (2004) asserted that the most effective means for unions to promote member engagement in union activities is through intensive socialization of new union affiliates into pro-union attitudes (p. 736).

Gordon et al.'s (1980) four-factor model of union commitment distinguishes between two separate types of behavioral intentions: "responsibility toward the union" and "willingness to work for the union" (p. 482). Although there is a high degree of correlation between these variables, this connotes that union participation may be multidimensional. Thus, in their typology of union members, Newton and Shore (1992) discriminated between "routine" union activities such as meeting attendance and "extra-role" activities that entail the member's sacrifice of time and energy. As Tetrick et al. (2007) recently observed, while some researchers have taken the outcome variable of union participation as a global construct, several studies suggest that union participation is multidimensional and that distinct types of activities have different antecedents.

McShane (1986) was among the first to present evidence that union participation should be approached as a multidimensional phenomenon. In a sample of 600 Canadian members of a public-sector union, McShane used self-report survey data to measure three types of participation: (a) meeting attendance and participation; (b) voting participation; and (c) administrative participation, with the latter reflecting either holding an office or serving on a union committee. The study's independent variables included an array of demographic factors, but McShane also measured a "social integration" factor and a "value of unions" variable in his survey instrument. The former embodied aspects of social exchange/union support, while the latter was roughly equivalent to pro-union attitudes. As McShane hypothesized, the three types of participation measured showed associations with different sets of predictors. Thus, for example, degree of member social integration was positively related to meeting attendance and to voting behavior, but not to administrative participation. By contrast, McShane's "value of unions" factor displayed

statistically significant associations with both meeting and administrative participation, but was negatively related to voting participation.

Building upon McShane's (1986) study, Parks, Gallagher, and Fullagar (1995) distinguished among three forms of participation: "administrative" (holding a union office and serving on formal committees), "intermittent" (participating in regularly scheduled union activities, such as attending meetings and voting), and "supportive." The latter was defined as ongoing engagement in activities intended to assist other union members. They tested this model of union participation with two separate samples, 401 unionized retail workers and 548 unionized nurses. The researchers reported that job-related variables (satisfaction, job tenure, and the like) predicted different types of union participation across both the retail and nursing study groups.

Among scholars who have approached union participation as a multidimensional construct, the most commonly made distinction has pivoted upon "formality," with formal activities (such as meeting attendance and voting) being distinguished from informal activities, notably assistance to other union members. In their study of the impact of early socialization upon union commitment and participation, Fullagar, Clark, Gallagher, and Gordon (1994) noted that most research has concentrated upon the formal dimension of participation while neglecting member engagement in informal behaviors that support either the union as a whole or other members. As a result, these studies tend to suppress the influence of social exchange variables, including union support, on both commitment and participation.

Organizational citizenship behavior and union commitment. Several union commitment scholars have observed that informal participation in union activities closely

31

resembles what the organizational commitment literature has designated as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Fullagar et al., 2004; Fuller & Hester, 2001; Skarlicki & Latham, 1996; Snape & Redman, 2007; Tan & Aryee, 2002; Tetrick et al., 2007). Konovsky and Pugh (1994) found strong associations between social exchange variables and OCB in their study of 473 hospital employees and their supervisors. They noted that "citizenship behaviors occur in a context in which social exchange characterizes the quality of superior-subordinate relationships" (p. 666). Konovsky and Pugh's results affirmed that an employee's level of trust in his or her immediate supervisor would predict employee OCB. This finding is clearly congruent with Blau's (1964) conception of social exchange as a source of affective commitment. It also accords with Snape and Redman's (2007) finding that union support is a stronger antecedent of UCB than perceived instrumentality.

The empirical investigation of the relationship between commitment and citizenship behavior has been furthered by Skarlicki and Latham's (1996) publication of an eight-item scale formulated for use within unions. This device measures two separate dimensions of UCB: OCBO (which is directed toward the interests of the union organization in general) and OCBI (which is directed toward individual union members). Recent studies (Fullagar et al., 2004; Tan & Aryee, 2002) have indicated that OCBI (called "interpersonal helping" or "mutual aid") is more strongly associated with union support than it is with either perceived union instrumentality or pro-union attitudes. Indeed, Fullagar and his colleagues (2004) have argued that prospects for the revitalization of organized labor in the United States are contingent upon promoting

32

"mutual aid" among rank-and-file members and enhancing member trust in union officials (p. 731).

Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and union commitment. Although a wide range of job- and organization-related variables have been posited as predictors of union commitment, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two most prevalent factors within the literature (Bamberger et al., 1999, p. 308). Intuitively, it would appear that both job satisfaction and organizational commitment would display inverse correlations with union commitment. Nevertheless, union commitment research suggests that the connections are more complicated than might be assumed.

As part of their landmark study, Gordon et al. (1980) measured two dimensions of job satisfaction: (a) extrinsic satisfaction with terms of employment, such as wages and benefits, and (b) intrinsic satisfaction with aspects of the work itself, such as the degree of employee autonomy. They found that both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction were positively related to the "loyalty" dimension of their commitment model, but that extrinsic job satisfaction was negatively associated with the other three dimensions of their construct. This suggests the existence of a connection between job satisfaction and perceptions of union instrumentality, but it also reveals that dissatisfaction with conditions of employment is connected to pro-union attitudes and intentions to participate in union activities.

While job satisfaction has been consistently associated with an employee's commitment to his or her work organization, several researchers (Barling et al., 1992; Barling, Wade, & Fullagar, 1990; Deery, Iverson, & Erwin, 1994; Fullagar & Barling,

1989; Magenau, Martin, & Peterson, 1988) have reported either the absence of any meaningful association between job satisfaction and union commitment or, as in Fullagar and Barling (1989), an inverse correlation. When Fuller and Hester (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of findings drawn from studies on the relationship between satisfaction and commitment, they observed that the reported associations were powerfully mediated by the industrial relations climate. Based upon a synthesis of research published between 1980 and 1996, Fuller and Hester noted that in cooperative or harmonious industrial relations settings, job satisfaction modestly predicted union commitment. By contrast, in antagonistic settings, job satisfaction was negatively associated with union commitment. The implications that can be drawn from Fuller and Hester's review are that when harmonious labor relations prevail, union members tend to be satisfied with their jobs and to attribute positive work conditions to the union, which in turn enhances their perceptions of union instrumentality. When the relations between management and workers are characterized by strife, members attribute their job dissatisfaction to management and view the union as a means for redressing these sources of discontent. Under these circumstances, pro-union attitudes and intentions to work on the union's behalf contribute to union commitment.

Iverson and Kuruvilla (1995) have argued that the effects of job satisfaction upon union commitment operate indirectly through organizational commitment. They maintain that job satisfaction affects organizational commitment, which in turn influences union commitment (p. 562). As noted above, the first wave of union "commitment" research investigated dual allegiance, that is, a union member's concurrent feelings of loyalty toward both his work organization and his union (Angle & Perry, 1986). As in the case of

job satisfaction, given that unions are associated with the representation of worker interests against management, it might be expected that organizational commitment would display a negative relationship to union commitment. Nevertheless, in a meta-analysis encompassing 76 samples from research conducted in more than a dozen countries, Reed, Young, and McHugh (1994) reported a modest but still significant and positive correlation between organizational commitment and union commitment. Since then, Carson, Carson, Birkeneier, and Toma (2006) reported a strong connection between the commitment of 189 police officers to their departments and their commitment to a public-sector union.

Dual allegiance and union commitment. Magenau et al. (1988) investigated dual (employer organization and union) and unilateral (union) commitment among shop stewards and rank-and-file union members. They found that the stewards in their study sample had substantially stronger levels of both dual and unilateral commitment than did the rank-and-file members. Dual commitment was associated with positive perceptions of union-management relations, high job satisfaction, and positive perceptions of union decision-making processes. Unilateral commitment was also associated with positive perceptions of union decision-making, as well as with low job satisfaction and high levels of union participation. On the basis of these findings, Magenau et al. (1988) concluded that commitment to a work organization and commitment to the union are independent phenomena, that the former is most strongly predicted by positive social exchanges between members and representatives of management and the latter is a function of positive social exchanges between members and union officials.

Although the first wave of dual allegiance studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s suggested that dual commitment might be a single, unified construct, as Magenau et al.'s (1988) findings and the majority of recent research studies indicate, organizational commitment and union commitment appear to be two distinct, independent constructs (Hoell, 2004a). On the whole, the factors that predict organizational commitment generally do not predict union commitment (Snape et al., 2000). For example, Snape and Chan (2000) reported that while there was a positive correlation between company and union commitment within a sample of utility workers who belonged to a "pro-communist" industrial union in Hong Kong, the antecedents of organizational commitment were substantially different from the factors associated with union commitment.

Akin to research on job satisfaction, several researchers have found that the relationship between organizational and union commitment is mediated by variance in industrial relations. Labor-management harmony is associated with a member's concurrent commitment to his or her work organization and to his or her union (Deery et al., 1994; Magenau et al., 1988). Thus, for example, Angle and Perry (1986) found that the extent of dual commitment among unionized bus drivers varied with interorganizational differences in the labor-management climate. Within their study sample, dual commitment was higher among bus drivers who rated labor-management relations within their company as positive than among subjects who viewed labor-management relations in negative terms.

Specific aspects of management-worker relationships appear to have especially strong effects on union commitment. Although Magenau et al. (1988) reported that union

36

members' perceptions of their work supervisor's behavior had no impact upon their level of commitment to the union, Bemmels' (1995) research suggested that positive perceptions of supervisors are negatively associated with union commitment. In a sample of Canadian shop stewards, Bemmels found lower levels of union commitment among subjects who indicated that their supervisors had consistently shown consideration toward employees.

Employee involvement programs and union commitment. Some union leaders have observed that employee involvement programs (EIPs) offered by work organizations tend to reduce union commitment. EIPs purportedly furnish workers with the opportunity to become involved in managerial decision-making. With a sample of 142 union officials attending a leadership seminar, Hoell (2004a) examined how interpersonal trust and attitudes towards EIPs influenced union commitment. Although participants' global interpersonal trust scores were positively correlated with union commitment, the strength of this relationship did not reach statistical significance. On the other hand, positive attitudes towards involvement in EIPs were negatively associated with union commitment in this sample.

Hoell (2004b) also investigated the impact of EIP exposure to union commitment among 924 rank-and-file union members working at electrical power generator facilities. In this study, Hoell found that while member attitudes towards EIPs were not associated with union commitment, prior participation in an EIP appeared to have a positive effect upon union commitment. Commenting on this result, Hoell speculated that as a consequence of taking part in an EIP, members may have concluded that such programs do not afford any real decision-making power, and that this negative perception led to

stronger levels of union commitment. Hoell also reported that organizational commitment exhibited a decidedly negative relationship with union commitment.

Perceptions of justice and fairness and union commitment. In light of the mixed findings of studies that have examined the connections between job satisfaction or organizational commitment and union commitment, some researchers have focused on specific aspects of workplace and union experience. Much of the recent work in this area has concentrated upon perceptions of justice or fairness at work and within the union.

Buttigieg, Deery, and Iverson (2007) posited that when workers perceived employer decision-making procedures as fair, nonmembers would be less likely to join a union, and union commitment among current members would be reduced. Buttigieg et al. (2007) conducted an event history analysis of union joining and leaving within a sample of Australian bank workers that included nonunion subjects and union members. They reported that when nonunion members believed that they had been treated fairly by management, they were significantly less likely to join a union. On the other hand, perceptions of fair treatment from management had no influence upon current members' intentions to quit the union. The strongest determinant of intention to quit the union was a negative perception of union instrumentality, that is, the sense that the union was ineffective in delivering higher wages, better benefits, improved work conditions, and the like.

In a sample of 109 union employees, Turnley, Bolino, Lester, and Bloodgood (2004) investigated whether "psychological contract breach" by management was associated with union commitment. By "psychological contract breach," Turnley et al. (2004) meant management's failure to live up to its implicit promises to its employees, as

in the case of an unexpected layoff. As their discussion of the term suggests, such actions are perceived as unfair treatment. The researchers found a significant association between perceived contract breaches by employers and commitment to the union. This relationship, however, was highly moderated by an aspect of union instrumentality, that is, the perceived effectiveness of the union in protecting workers' rights.

In a sample of 288 members of three union locals in the Southeastern United States, Johnson and Jarley (2004) surveyed participants' perceptions of workplace injustice and union justice. As hypothesized by the researchers, the disparity between perceptions of unfairness by employers and fair treatment by the union explained a greater portion of the variance in members' union participation than the more traditional measures of job satisfaction and union instrumentality perceptions.

Fuller and Hester (2001) investigated the extent to which procedural and interactional justice in the workplace influenced union participation and whether union support mediated these associations. They defined "procedural justice" as the degree to which the formal decision-making procedures of the work organization were fair, and "interactional justice" as the informal, interpersonal treatment of workers by the organization when those procedures were carried out (honesty, personal respect, and so on). In a study of 615 members of a large steelworkers union local, Fuller and Hester found that union support and union instrumentality were associated with union commitment, and that union support mediated the relationship between justice perceptions and union participation. Thus, when subjects felt that they had been treated unjustly by management, the influence of this factor upon union participation was

affected by the perception that the union cared about their well-being and valued their contributions to the union.

Morrow and McElroy (2006) observed that instrumentality encompassed member perceptions about a union's capacity to achieve specific outcomes and its ability to provide process-based benefits such as effective representation during grievance hearings. In a study of 451 railroad crew workers, Morrow and McElroy found that the union loyalty dimension of Gordon et al.'s (1980) model was not associated with outcome-based instrumentality but was nonetheless strongly related to process-based instrumentality. The researchers concluded that subjects' loyalty to the union was more heavily affected by their perceptions that the union provided them with a strong voice in grievance procedures than it was by the union's capacity to achieve substantive benefits. Morrow and McElroy (2006) recommended that "those seeking to enhance union loyalty may want to focus on how a union can give greater voice to its members and serve as a stronger source of social identity for its membership" (p. 83).

Union governance and union commitment. Complementing studies of how the union's role in achieving just and fair workplace outcomes influences commitment, a substantial number of empirical works have examined the relationship between union governance and leadership variables and rank-and-file union commitment (Snape et al., 2000). In this context, Sverke and Sjoberg (1994) reported that among Swedish public-sector union members, the perceived responsiveness of local union leaders to their input was a predictor of union commitment. Kelloway and Barling (1993) found that responsibility to the union and participation in union activities were positively associated with member perceptions if the shop steward possessed transformational leadership

40

qualities, but they found no correlation between such perceptions and union loyalty. In Magenau et al.'s (1988) study, the degree to which members believed that they had an influence in union decisions was the most significant predictor of union commitment among both activists and rank-and-file members. On the other hand, the perceived effectiveness of shop stewards did not have a significant effect upon the union commitment of rank-and-file members. In Morishima's (1995) examination of the factors that influence the union loyalty of Japanese white-collar and technical workers, the perceived degree of influence over union policy decisions was a significant predictor of loyalty among subjects in both occupational groups.

Although perceived instrumentality has been identified as a major correlate of union commitment, Mellor (1990) reported that declines in union membership may paradoxically result in a net increase in mean levels of commitment among those who remain. In a study of 20 locals affiliated with a large, industrial union, Mellor found that members of those locals that had experienced the most severe membership declines had the highest levels of union commitment within the sample.

Lastly, Skarlicki and Latham (1996) sought to determine whether the training of union officers in the skills necessary for implementing principles of organizational justice would increase UCB among the rank-and-file members of a Canadian union. They found that 3 months after their officers received training, member perceptions of union fairness were higher than those of members in a control group whose leaders had not been trained. As Skarlicki and Latham anticipated, the subjects whose leaders had received training 3 months earlier displayed higher levels of citizenship behaviors towards both the union as a whole and towards their fellow union members. On this basis, the researchers

41

concluded that perceptions of organizational justice within unions are causally related to the citizenship behaviors of rank-and-file members.

Socialization and union commitment. As Snape et al. (2000) remarked in their review of union commitment research, both interpersonal trust among union members as a basis for social exchange/perceived union support and the intensity of pro-union attitudes are outcomes of socialization processes (p. 214). As new members come into the union, personal interaction with affiliates may create effective interpersonal bonds and a sense that the union cares about them and values their contributions. By the same token, through either formal training programs or informal exposure to the norms of individual members, new members may develop stronger pro-union attitudes and beliefs.

Barling, Kelloway, and Bremermann (1991) established that the development of pro-union attitudes that contribute to union commitment precedes individual entrance into organized labor. With a sample of 59 high school and 143 university students, Barling et al. (1991) found that willingness to join a union was associated with subjects' perceptions of their parents' attitudes towards organized labor, suggesting that family socialization contributes to pro-union beliefs.

Numerous studies (Fullagar & Barling, 1989; Fuller & Hester, 1998; Gordon et al., 1980; Kelloway & Barling, 1993; Sverke & Sjoberg, 1994; Tan & Aryee, 2002; Tetrick, 1995) have reported that an individual's commitment to and participation within a union is heavily influenced by socialization after he or she has joined the union. In fact, in Gordon et al.'s (1980) study of 1,377 union members, socialization experiences were the strongest predictors of both union loyalty and belief in unionism. In Fullagar and Barling's (1989) study of union loyalty among 169 Black and 139 White members of a

South African union, early union socialization experience was strongly related to union loyalty within both samples. There is, moreover, some evidence that union commitment is positively related to union tenure and that members become increasingly committed to their unions over time (Barling et al., 1990; Snape & Chan, 2000; Tan & Aryee, 2002). According to Snape et al. (2000), findings from these studies suggest that union socialization is a cumulative process and that its relationship to commitment tends to strengthen across time. Union support perceptions "arise from day-to-day experiences with the union and its agents (other members, stewards, etc.)" (Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995, p. 678), while exposure to the pro-union norms occurs, in large part, through contact with those same agents.

Early socialization of new members appears to be of critical importance to union commitment and participation. Fullagar et al. (1994) examined the influence of shop steward characteristics and early union socialization experiences upon new members' attitudes towards unions and their affective commitment to the union. Surveying 585 members of the National Association of Letter Carriers, they reported substantial evidence that socialization experiences during the first year of union membership had an enduring effect upon union attitudes, which significantly predicted union commitment across time.

From their findings with a sample of unionized workers, Tan and Aryee (2002) also reported that early socialization of new members was critical in the development of pro-union attitudes among new members. They recommended "development of programs, policies and reforms that promote active rank-and-file involvement as a means of creating and sustaining pro-union attitudes" (p. 720). Fullagar et al. (1994)

distinguished between formal and informal socialization of union members. Formal or institutional socialization occurs through orientation and training sessions, while informal socialization occurs through ad hoc exposure to union members and participation in union activities. Fullagar et al. (1994) conducted a longitudinal study of 305 new members of the National Association of Letter Carriers, measuring study variables upon their entrance into the union and 1 year later. They found that informal socialization through interactions with shop stewards and other rank-and-file members was predictive of both affective commitment and behavioral involvement in the union. By contrast, exposure to formal union orientation sessions had no influence upon either of these outcome variables; in fact, institutional socialization appeared to have slightly negative effects on the commitment and participation of new members.

The available research indicates that the relative strength of identified commitment antecedents varies by the length of member tenure in the union. According to Newton and Shore (1992), perceived union instrumentality is likely to have its strongest influence among new members and is the salient determinant of their decisions to join the union. Over time, however, pro-union attitudes tend to supplant instrumentality perceptions as the strongest correlate of union commitment/participation (Newton & Shore, 1992, p. 285).

Newton and Shore speculated that the union commitment of workers who occupied the lower rungs of a company's wage ladder was more heavily affected by instrumentality than by pro-union attitudes in comparison to employees receiving higher pay rates. In this context, Shore et al. (1994) argued that "as a member's economic benefits increase, the non-economic aspects . . . become more salient and the importance

of the affective relationship increases" (p. 976). This suggests that as long as a member's extrinsic needs are not fully satisfied, union instrumentality is more predictive of union commitment, but as these extrinsic needs are met the influence of union instrumentality is reduced and pro-union attitudes become a stronger predictor of commitment. Sinclair and Tetrick (1995) have asserted that while union instrumentality is important for joining and certification decisions, as new members interact with the union and its agents, union support becomes more important than instrumentality as a basis for commitment to the union (p. 678).

Individual member attributes and union commitment. From their meta-analysis of union commitment research, Bamberger et al. (1999) wrote, "The instrumentality-commitment relationship may be stronger in unions with a proportionally greater number of young, low seniority, and female members, but the attitudes-commitment relationship may be stronger in unions with a proportionately greater number of older, high-seniority, and male members" (p. 315). As this observation connotes, individual demographic characteristics may have some impact upon union commitment and the relative strength of its antecedents.

Gender has been the most frequently measured demographic variable in union commitment research. Investigators using the Gordon scale (Gordon et al., 1980; Iverson & Kuruvilla, 1995) have reported that women have higher mean scores on its union loyalty dimension than men, but that men post higher mean scores on the subscales for responsibility towards the union and willingness to work for the union. Snape et al. (2000) have offered a plausible explanation for these findings, asserting that women have more to gain from the "equalizing effects" of unionization but are less able to participate

45

in union activities due to traditional family responsibilities (p. 211). They also speculated that since most union leaders are men, the absence of female role models may undercut union participation by women.

Seeking associations between union commitment and the demographic variables of gender and union tenure, Bayazit et al. (2004) surveyed 4,641 members of a teacher's union and 479 faculty representatives. They found no support for any of their study's gender hypotheses in this sample. On the other hand, they did note that the faculty representatives in the study were more committed to the union than the rank-and-file study participants.

In a study of 539 members from a diverse sample of unions, Mellor, Matthieu, and Swim (1994) found that women's union commitment was negatively related to the degree of decision-making centralization (national versus local unions) and positively associated with the formalization of internal union procedures. By contrast, among the men that Mellor et al. (1994) surveyed, greater centralization of union decision-making was positively correlated with union commitment, while formalization of procedures was not associated with their commitment.

According to Snape et al. (2000), although organizational commitment research has consistently shown that employee age is a predictor of commitment, an analogous finding for union commitment is not evident. Most studies that have included age as an independent variable have not reported significant associations (p. 210).

In those few works that have measured the relationship between formal educational attainment and union commitment, negative associations have been reported. Thus, in Deery et al.'s (1994) study of Australian union members, educational attainment

was inversely correlated with all four dimensions of Gordon et al.'s (1980) union commitment model. From his survey of 1,459 Canadian shop stewards, Bemmels (1995) found that subjects' educational attainment was negatively associated with scores on a three-item union loyalty scale.

Exchange Theory in Union Commitment

Blau: Distinctions between economic exchange and social exchange.

Following a decade of empirical work in which Gordon et al.'s (1980) model dominated union commitment theory, some scholars turned to Peter Blau's (1964) work on social exchange to gain an alternative theoretical perspective. In contrast to Gordon et al.'s (1980) exclusive focus upon individual psychological phenomena, Blau's model directly encompasses interactions between parties. Blau first noted that in economic exchanges, individual agents reach a common understanding in which each of the contracting parties agrees to fulfill specific obligations. These "deals" are narrow and short-term, they can be enforced, and there is no incentive for either party to perform beyond the specified terms. By contrast, social exchanges involve "diffuse future obligations, not precisely specified ones, and the nature of the return cannot be bargained about but must be left to the discretion of the one who makes it" (Blau, 1964, p. 93). Because social exchanges are not enforceable, they entail an element of interpersonal trust that is absent from economic exchanges (p. 113). On this basis, Blau argued that social exchange generates long-term affective attachments, writing that "only social exchange tends to engender feelings of personal obligation, gratitude and trust: purely economic exchange as such does not" (p. 94).

Application of Blau's distinction in union commitment research. Union

commitment researchers like Lynn Shore and Lois Tetrick utilized Blau's distinction and

equated economic exchange with the concept of union instrumentality and social

exchange with the concept of union support (Shore et al., 1994; Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995;

Tetrick, 1995). Instrumentality yields a calculative form of union commitment, while

perceived union support creates effective bonds between a member and other members,

taken individually and collectively as "the union" (Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995, p. 670).

These felt obligations, however, are heavily reinforced by values that are shared among

union members, notably by their common adherence to pro-union attitudes.

Consequently, Blau's dichotomy between economic and social exchange has often been

transmuted into a distinction between union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes.

According to Gordon et al. (1995), as an antecedent of union commitment,

instrumentality is "the perceived impact of the union on traditional (e.g., benefits and

wages) and nontraditional work (e.g., interesting job) conditions" (p. 353). It reflects

union members' cognitive assessments of the costs and benefits associated with union

membership, "specifically whether members view the union presence as improving or

harming benefits and working conditions" (Tetrick et al., 2007, p. 820). To the extent that

members believe that their union has had and will have a positive effect upon work

conditions, they will develop a rational calculative commitment to the union. The

members will fulfill their part of a "deal" with the union by paying dues and adhering to

explicit rules of conduct required of members. In exchange, the union's obligation is to

effectively advance their material interests. The strength of the affiliates' commitment to

the union and, thus, the extent of their participation in union activities is contingent upon

48

their perception that the union has and will continue to "deliver" the goods through contract negotiations and job site interventions (Snape et al., 2000, p. 208). Perceived instrumentality may affect members' attitudes toward the union, but commitment grounded in instrumentality is distinct from normative and ideological factors.

Pro-union attitudes refer to a member's view that organized labor is desirable and that unions perform important and valuable functions within society (McShane, 1986). Commitment to the union grounded in such attitudes is nonspecific and comes about through normative and ideological assumptions that are instilled through socialization processes. Deshpande and Fiorito (1989) investigated the relationship between the specificity of beliefs about the union and the intentions of 622 nonunion members to vote for union certification. They found that the specific beliefs of their study subjects about the union, e.g., that it would act effectively in resolving work grievances, were more strongly related to their intention to vote in favor of its establishment than were global beliefs about trade unionism. Nevertheless, subjects' general beliefs about the value of organized labor did have a significant influence upon voting intentions that was independent of their perceptions of its prospective instrumentality.

Finally, as touched upon above, perceived union support has been operationalized as an antecedent in some recent studies of union commitment. According to Tetrick et al. (2007), as a conceptual antecedent of union commitment, union support reflects the extent to which members believe that the union cares about them and values their contributions. It amounts to a form of social exchange in which members develop a felt obligation to reciprocate the concern that the union has shown toward them by demonstrating their concern for the union's well-being. Union support is normally

49

construed as a global belief about the union as a whole, but it nevertheless develops through interactions with other union members, including officers, shop stewards, and rank-and-file affiliates (Shore et al., 1994, p. 971).

Social exchange and the covenant of good faith. From their review of the research literature on union commitment, Snape et al. (2000) concluded that there is "the possibility, particularly for activists, that the relationship with their union transcends even social exchange and, being based on shared values and ideological identification, becomes a 'covenantal relationship'" (p. 224). As noted earlier, Snape and his colleagues distinguished between union commitment grounded in social exchange (which they later operationalized as union support) and covenantal commitment. Clarifying the term "covenantal" relationship, Snape et al. (2000) stated, "Here, members are prepared to participate in the union out of intrinsic motivation and a genuine concern for the welfare of union and other members, rather than simply because they perceive a favorable exchange, whether economic or social" (p. 224). Snape and his associates drew the concept of covenantal commitment from the work of Graham and Organ (1993) on organizational commitment, and Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch's (1994) study of OCB. Covenantal commitment closely resembles pro-union attitudes, but it also takes into account feelings of solidarity among union members based upon shared values and ideology.

In a sample of 391 British schoolteachers who were members of the National Union of Teachers, Snape and Redman (2004) investigated the influence of three variables of UCB and intention to quit the union. They measured the outcome variable of UCB through an eight-item scale developed by Skarlicki and Latham (1996) using a

single force-response question. The three independent factors in the study were (a) economic exchange (measured as union instrumentality), (b) social exchange (measured as union support), and (c) covenant relationship (measured as pro-union attitudes) (p. 859). They found that among union activists, UCB, whether it was focused on the organization or directed towards individual union members, primarily reflected a covenantal relationship. That is, for pro-union attitudes among rank-and-file members, UCB was predicted by both social exchange (union support) and covenantal relationships (pro-union attitudes). Within the sample as a whole, intent to quit the union was negatively associated with union support and pro-union attitudes, but not with instrumentality (p. 865). In a summary passage, Snape and Redman (2004) wrote:

> Findings suggest that more activist forms of UCB were motivated primarily by general pro-union attitudes, reflecting a perceived covenantal relationship with the union. In contrast, exchange, particularly social exchange, motivations appeared to play more of a role in motivating rank and file UCB and intent to quit the union. (p. 868)

While perceived instrumentality did not display significant associations with either of the study's two outcome variables, it had robust indirect effects on both union support and pro-union attitudes. The researchers concluded that member perceptions of union instrumentality may be a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for union viability (Snape & Redman, 2004, p. 869). Ultimately, the study's findings highlight the strength of the connection between pro-union attitudes and union participation, especially engagement in activities that entail the expenditure of high levels of effort on behalf of the union at large or other union members.

Despite its obvious connection to social exchange, in comparison to union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes, union support has received comparatively little

51

attention from union commitment researchers (Fuller & Hester, 2001, p. 1097). Sinclair

and Tetrick (1995) found that union member perceptions of social support were

positively associated with all four dimensions of Gordon et al.'s (1980) union

commitment scale, while instrumentality displayed a weaker relationship with union

loyalty and no statistically significant associations with responsibility towards the union,

willingness to work for the union, or belief in unionism.

Instrumentality (economic exchange) and union commitment. Snape and

Redman (2007) investigated the influence of perceived union instrumentality and union

support upon OCB and UCB in a sample composed of 423 union members working for

the United Kingdom's Primary Care Trust. They found that union support was strongly

and directly associated with both OCB and UCB, while union instrumentality had far

more modest effects on UCB and no relationship to OCB. Taken collectively, the study

results suggested that "members commit to their unions and to their employer in return

for support and consideration" (Snape & Redman, 2007, p. 370).

Based upon the premise that when a union fulfills the material needs of its

members it thereby signals concern for their well-being, Tetrick et al. (2007) explored the

possibility that perceived union support and union instrumentality were connected to each

other. They constructed a provisional model in which union instrumentality directly

related to perceived union support, while support was related to union loyalty and loyalty

was predictive of participation in union activities. Their study encompassed 229 members

of a union local who completed survey instruments measuring union instrumentality,

support, and loyalty, along with 29 shop stewards who were asked to rate the union

participation levels of a subset of rank-and-file members. The study's results indicated

that union instrumentality was important for developing and maintaining union commitment and union participation, but that union support was also a mediator between instrumentality and union commitment. The findings suggested to Tetrick and her associates that "social exchange elements (i.e., union loyalty and support) of the union-member relationship are more directly related to participation than the economic elements traditionally emphasized in perceptions of instrumentality" (p. 825). Union instrumentality was nevertheless important as a direct predictor of support and a distal antecedent of both union loyalty and participation in union affairs.

Pro-union attitudes and instrumentality. Aside from testing the construct validity of alternative union commitment models, Bamberger et al. (1999) assessed the impact of each of the four antecedents from which these models had been constructed: pro-union attitudes, union instrumentality, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. They reported that pro-union attitudes emerged as the dominant predictor of union commitment through both direct and indirect effects (p. 314) (see Table 2-1). Thereafter, Chan, Snape, and Redman (2004) found that pro-union attitudes were a stronger predictor of union commitment than perceptions of union instrumentality within a sample of Hong Kong firefighters who belonged to a public-sector union.

Table 2-1
*Summary of 15 Meta-Analyses on Relationships Between Different Union Commitment Elements**

Meta-Analysis	Total N	Range of N	K	R	95% CI	Est. Rho	Q
Pro-union attitudes and union instrumentality perceptions	1,433	422–585	3	.39	.34, .43	.45	94.34
Job satisfaction and pro-union attitudes	2,809	169–1,377	5	.13	.09, .17	.17	166.46
Job satisfaction and union instrumentality perceptions[†]	9,006	139–6,651	8	.20	.18, .22	.29	131.87
Job satisfaction and union instrumentality perceptions[‡]	2,355	139–481	7	.11	.07, .15	.14	105.09
Job satisfaction and organizational commitment	4,890	54–1,066	19	.52	.50, .54	.65	86.93
Job satisfaction and union commitment	12,066	100–1,675	34	.06	.04, .08	.08	592.18
Job satisfaction and union participation	4,485	102–629	17	–.12	–.15, –.09	–.16	77.37
Organizational commitment and pro-union attitudes	602	176–426	2	–.06	–.14, .02	–.07	0.11
Organizational commitment and union instrumentality perceptions	683	257–426	2	.14	.06, .21	.17	2.40
Organizational commitment and union participation	5,214	102–1,675	14	.07	.04, .10	.09	366.68
Union commitment and pro-union attitudes	6,564	169–1,675	10	.56	.54, .58	.68	473.20
Union commitment and union instrumentality perceptions	6,429	77–1,675	14	.49	.47, .51	.59	219.25
Union commitment and organizational commitment	17,935	54–6,651	41	.31	.30, .32	.36	1,715.40
Union commitment and organizational commitment	11,284	54–1,459	40	.11	.09, .13	.13	376.02
Union commitment and union participation	11,699	102–1,377	30	.39	.37, .40	.49	436.86
Union participation and pro-union attitudes	1,024	176–426	3	.37	.32, .43	.45	21.83
Union participation and union instrumentality perceptions	3,076	139–721	8	.20	.17, .24	.26	70.68

*Reprinted from "The antecedents and consequences of union commitment: a meta-analysis," by P. A. Bamberger, A. B. Kluger, and R. Suchard, 1999, *Academy of Management Journal, 42*, pp. 304-318.
[†]The analysis included data from approximately 7,000 union members from Japan reported in Gallagher et al. (1988) and Kuruvilla et al. (1990).
[‡]The analysis excluded the Japanese data described above.

Value-based ideology and union commitment versus instrumentality. Several researchers have eschewed "pro-union attitudes" in favor of "affective" or "values-based" or "ideological" or "covenantal" commitment in contradistinction to union instrumentality. Sverke and Sjoberg (1994), for example, discriminated between a "value rationality-based commitment to the union" and an "instrumental rationality-based commitment." The former was construed by Sverke and Sjoberg (1994) as member perceptions that their union possesses values identical to or congruent with their own, and the latter was conceptualized as member perceptions that the union would be effective in advancing their material interests. Using a sample of Swedish white-collar workers, the researchers found that instrumental union commitment was related to the subjects' intentions to remain a union member but not to their intentions to participate in union activities. In effect, higher instrumentality scores predicted passive union membership. By contrast, the perception that the union shared their personal values was strongly associated with both subjects' intentions to remain union members and their intentions to participate in union activities.

Newton and Shore (1992) developed a four-cell typology of union members based on the strength of their normative or values-based commitment to the union and the strength of their instrumental commitment to the union. They characterized members with high levels of normative commitment and low levels of instrumentality as "expressives." Such members, Newton and Shore predicted, would tend to engage in the routine union activities such as meeting attendance. During periods when their union was unable to negotiate and/or provide instrumentally valued benefits, Newton and Shore asserted that these members would nevertheless remain attached to and supportive of the

union. The "identifiers" in Newton and Shore's schema possessed high levels of both normative and instrumental commitment to the union. These members closely identified with the union on the basis of ideology and were also attached to it by the rewards secured by the union. The authors asserted that identifiers were also likely to be active in union affairs and were most apt to participate in activities that demanded a high level of personal sacrifice. "Positive free agents," Newton and Shore wrote, had low levels of both normative and instrumental commitment and a correspondingly weak attachment to their respective unions. These members were the least likely to be engaged in routine or in extra-role union activities. New union members were the most likely to fall under this categorical heading given that they often had yet to form strong perceptions that would encourage attachment. Lastly, among "instrumentals," commitment was based upon self-interest while levels of normative identification were low. Newton and Shore described such members as being most concerned with wages and working conditions and as being more likely to engage in union-related activities requiring little time or personal sacrifice, such as voting in a union election. In a preliminary exercise, Newton and Shore's typology did, in fact, predict the degree and the type of union participation that subjects classified into these four groups would report.

Heshizer and Lund (1997) subsequently utilized Newton and Shore's categorical schema with a sample of 199 union officers and shop stewards. As Newton and Shore had predicted, the "identifiers" and the "expressives" in this study were much more likely than the "positive free agents" and the "instrumentals" to report extensive participation in union activities involving personal sacrifice and/or the expenditure of free time. The "identifiers" in the sample were only slightly more likely to report this type of extra-role

56

behavior than the "expressives" were. Heshizer and Lund's findings indicated that among veteran members who had attained office, the intensity of participation depended far more greatly upon normative or value-based commitment than it did on instrumental commitment and that normative commitment may motivate intensive participation even in the absence of a high level of instrumental commitment.

Sjoberg and Sverke (2001) tested a scale embodying instrumental and ideological union commitment with a sample of 1,170 Swedish blue-collar workers. They found that union members with higher levels of ideological commitment to the union displayed greater participation in both routine and extra-role union activities than those with lower levels of ideological commitment. Moreover, while participants with low instrumental commitment were as likely to report routine activities as the high instrumentality subjects were, they were less likely to exert extra effort on behalf of the union.

Within a mixed sample of 607 union and nonunion Australian workers, Cregan (2005) found clear-cut distinctions between "ideologically committed" and "instrumentally committed" subjects. Among the nonunion members that Cregan surveyed, the predominant reason for not joining the union was the perception that the available union would not be effective in advancing their individual job-related interests. Within the union subset, Cregan found that the strongest reason for both remaining in the union and union activity was the strength of a pro-union ideology. Fields, Masters, and Thacker (1987) also found a strong positive relationship between ideologically based union commitment and support for political causes and candidates that favored organized labor. By contrast, instrumentally based union commitment showed only weak associations with support for pro-union causes and candidates.

Models of Union Commitment

The significance of union commitment research reaches beyond scholarly interests. As union density has declined, American labor leaders have debated alternative strategies for reversing this longstanding trend. In the broadest strokes, the debate has pitted advocates of the "service" or "business" model of labor organizations against proponents of what has come to be called the "organizing model" of trade unionism.

Service model of union commitment. Bamberger et al. (1999) have observed that the service model is congruent with an emphasis upon union instrumentality and that it pivots upon a type of economic exchange. Adherents of this view (Kochan, 1980; Kochan et al., 1986) maintain that member commitment, and hence participation, rests primarily upon the perceptions of current and prospective affiliates concerning union effectiveness in promoting their individual material interests. This can best be accomplished by delivering substantive economic benefits to members. The controlling idea is that members will be more likely to support their respective unions if they are convinced that their expenditures of time and effort will lead to improvements in the wages and benefits that they receive and the conditions of work under which they labor. In this model, union members are viewed as self-interested, utility-maximizing agents who make calculated decisions about how well the union is likely to perform in representing their individual interests (Snape et al., 2000, p. 224). Within this paradigm, the commitment of affiliates to the union amounts to the fulfillment of a contractual obligation; members join unions, pay dues, and abide by regulations to maintain their good standing for the sake of receiving palpable rewards. According to Snape and

Redman (2004), the "business model" is presently regnant within mainstream organized labor (p. 855).

Organizing model of union commitment. By contrast, the organizing model of labor union strategy is closely associated with the commitment antecedent of pro-union attitudes, norms, and values. The emphasis here is on members' active involvement in the development of self-reliant workplace unionism and on addressing issues that go considerably beyond the immediate instrumental needs of individual members (Snape & Redman, 2004, p. 856). The organizing model construes current and prospective members as a collectivity that is bound together primarily by shared values and a common ideology. As Snape et al. (2000) have commented, "The organizing model asks more of members" (p. 224). It requires high levels of local activism and extends the scope of union involvement beyond the workplace into community and political affairs. Union affiliates are expected to exert effort for the greater good without anticipating tangible rewards. The primary means through which union commitment is generated is through socialization into pro-union norms; this may well generate enhanced perceptions of union support or mutual aid. But in the view of Snape and his colleagues, the foundation of the organizing model is a covenant, a moral obligation that unites members through their commitment to transcendent goals.

Scholars who have considered these competing strategies in light of findings from union commitment research have generally endorsed Newton and Shore's (1992) position that unions "need to emphasize both ideological and instrumental issues to promote the kind of active support needed to maintain them" (p. 285). Absent current and future member perceptions that the union can function as a means for concrete gains in which

59

they will ultimately share, members are less likely to maintain (and develop) perceptions of union support, and less likely to undergo effective socialization into pro-union attitudes. But while perceived instrumentality may be a necessary antecedent of commitment and participation, in itself, it may not be sufficient to motivate members to play an active part within their unions (Tetrick, 1995, p. 583). For their part, Snape and his associates favor "the organizing model as the way forward for unions" (2000, p. 224). In their opinion, the revitalization of trade unionism requires "an emphasis on building broader pro-union sentiments across a wider range of actual and potential members" (Snape & Redman, 2004, p. 869).

During the past decade, some unions in the United States and other industrialized countries have shifted away from the entrenched business model and embraced the organizing model (Heery, Simms, Simpson, Delbridge, & Salmon, 1999). Indeed, a substantial number of dissident American labor unions have come together under the umbrella of the "Change to Win Coalition." As this designation connotes, the organizations within the coalition are committed to a new, more activist vision that stands at a considerable remove from the service model orientation of the AFL-CIO (Hurd, 2007).

Member unions of the Change to Win Coalition have been especially active in pursuing the objective of persuading employers to recognize them as the legitimate representative of prospective bargaining units under conditions of employer neutrality during organizing campaigns. The aim of attaining employer neutrality agreements has been coupled with the closely related goal of inducing employers to accept card checks by independent third parties as an alternative to conventional certification elections under

60

the auspices of the National Labor Relations Board. As Eaton and Kriesky (2001) found in their study of 118 certification campaigns, neutrality and card check provisions reduce the frequency of management opposition tactics and substantially increase the likelihood of union recognition (p. 42).

Many if not most employers, however, are averse to entering into such arrangements. Although union officials have characterized neutrality and card check as a process of "bargaining to organize," formal negotiations are normally preceded by the use of comprehensive pressure tactics. These include local union members engaging in job actions at targeted work sites and at sites in which the employer has an interest; the latter often extends to workplaces within the jurisdiction of other local unions. The ongoing campaign for neutrality and card checks is a "grassroots, rank-and-file intensive union building strategy" (Hurd, 2007, p. 2). Union members are called upon to participate in activities in which they will not achieve immediate personal benefits. In fact, their participation involves the sacrifice of time, effort, and, on occasion, economic goods for the sake of advancing the labor movement by expanding its membership.

Conclusion

The literature on union commitment displays an inordinately high degree of theoretical fragmentation and the absence of any scholarly consensus concerning the paths through which hypothesized antecedents influence member commitment and their participation in union activities. There is substantial evidence that perceived union instrumentality, pro-union attitudes, and union support have an impact upon commitment. Nevertheless, the interrelations among these factor clusters have not been clearly specified. Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment exert an influence on

union commitment, but their respective effects are contingent upon contextual factors. As empirical findings have accumulated, researchers have been drawn toward explorations that embody an increasingly diverse range of constructs, many of them drawn from organizational commitment studies and revised for use in union commitment research. At the same time, there is a marked tendency among researchers toward the reformulation of such basic concepts as instrumentality, participation, and socialization into multidimensional constructs.

The current state of scholarship in this subject domain implies that quantitative approaches have not fully captured the complexity of union commitment. As a result, there is a need for qualitative studies of union commitment and participation that may clarify the ambiguous findings reported in the literature and potentially bring to light factors that have not yet received the attention of researchers. It is towards that end that this study was designed. The study's methodology is described in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

The overarching research question of this study was as follows: Why do rank-and-file union members sacrifice their own interests to achieve contract provisions that are intended to increase union density? As discussed in chapter 1, existing, mostly quantitative, studies have come up with contradictory findings. Based on the literature and the specific research question of this study, a qualitative phenomenological research design was chosen. This chapter reviews the phenomenological approach and then outlines the methods used for site and participant selection, data collection, and data analysis within this tradition. It closes with sections that address the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

Study Design: Phenomenology

The phenomenological method involves an investigation of essences, transitioning from the description of separate phenomena to a search for the common essence of the phenomenon. Husserl termed one method "free variation in fantasy" (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). This means varying a given phenomenon in its possible forms, and the elements that remain constant through the different variations is the essence of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). The phenomenological reduction involves a suspension of judgment as to the existence or nonexistence of the content of inexperience (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960).

Phenomenological methods comprise the phenomenological perspectives as well as *epoché* and transcendental reduction. Epoché, a Greek word that means "suspension of judgment" and "bracketing," is used to refer to a methodological attitude, consisting, inter alia, in the effort to distinguish one's own predispositions or prejudices from the essential features of the phenomenon to be described (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). The function of epoché is to enable the researcher to describe the phenomenon as neutrally, objectively, and correctly as possible. Epoché, as the suspension of judgment, is the methodological attitude through which the researcher abstains from prejudices concerning the individual in the dialogue, or interview, as well as the phenomenon described (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). As bracketing, epoché is the suspending of one's prejudgments and prejudices into parentheses while one is sympathetically participating, observing, interpreting, understanding, and describing the phenomenon: an interviewee's lived experience (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). Epoché is an attempt to ensure phenomenology's presuppositionlessness, which means the researcher's awareness of his or her preunderstanding and/or conceptual framework. This awareness permits an open encounter with the phenomenon, as if the researcher experienced it for the first time (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). However, according to Merleau-Panty (1962), the primary thing learned through phenomenological reduction is the impossibility of total reduction. It has also been said that phenomenological reduction does not involve an absence of presuppositions, but the consciousness of one's own presuppositions (Merleau-Panty, 1962).

Moustakas' approach. Moustakas' (1994) approach to phenomenological research was selected because it has systematic steps for data analysis and specific guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. Moustakas' (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is less focused on the researcher's interpretation than is the hermeneutical phenomenology approach, and it is more focused on describing the experiences, as well as epoché, whereby the investigator sets aside his or her experiences as much as possible in order to gain a new perspective of the phenomena under consideration. Moustakas (1994) identified seven steps in this process:

1. Discovering a topic and question rooted in autobiographical meanings and values as well as involving social meanings and significance.

2. Conducting a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature.

3. Constructing a set of criteria to locate appropriate coresearchers.

4. Providing coresearchers with instructions on the nature and purpose of the investigation, and developing an agreement that includes obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and delineating the responsibilities of the primary researcher and research participant, consistent with ethical principles of research.

5. Developing a set of questions or topics to guide the interview process.

6. Conducting and recording a lengthy person-to-person interview that focuses on the topic in question. A follow-up interview may also be needed.

7. Organizing and analyzing the data to facilitate development of individual textual and structural descriptions, a composite textual description, a composite structural description, a synthesis of structural and textural meanings and essences.

In summary, the procedures described by Moustakas (1994) consist of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing one's experiences, and collecting data from multiple individuals who have experienced the phenomenon first hand. In terms of the seventh step of data analysis, the researcher reduces the information to significant statements or quotes, combines the statements into themes, and writes a textual description of the experiences of the persons. Once these steps are completed, the researcher prepares a structural description of their experiences (the context in which the subjects experience the phenomenon) and a combined statement of textual and structural descriptions to convey the essence of the experience.

Phenomenological analysis processes. The phenomenological method combined with hermeneutics—that is, phenomenological hermeneutic—was used to unveil and describe people's lived experiences, or phenomena. This method attempts to describe the phenomenon (and not explain the origins or causes of it) as precisely and completely as possible and to analyze the common essence by phenomenological reduction. This is also called eidetic reduction. To do this, the researcher has to discount what is concrete in order to concentrate on the phenomenon's general, abstract, and essential characteristics (Giorgi, 1973, 1985; Kavale, 1996; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1960). This effort requires an unprejudiced and naïve approach, that is, accepting all data as given (Kavale, 1996; Moustakas, 1994). The researcher strives to understand all relevant data from the phenomenological perspective of those who subjectively experience the phenomenon (Kavale, 1996; Moustakas, 1994). A challenge to the researcher is to apply the phenomenological-hermeneutical method to understand the subjective experience of the

individual who owns the experience and to comprehend the effect this experience has on the individual's life or behavior (Kavale, 1996; Moustakas, 1994).

Key phenomenological concepts and terms. The phenomenological process seeks to make explicit the implicit structure and meanings of human experiences that cannot be revealed by ordinary observation. It is a search for the essence of the experience. It concentrates neither on the subject of experience nor on the object of experience, but on the point of contact at which "being and consciousness meet" (Edie, 1962, p. 19). Key terms in the phenomenological process are defined below.

1. *Transcendental phenomenology***.** Transcendental phenomenology seeks to make explicit the implicit structure and meaning of human experiences (Moustakas, 1994). It is the search for essences that cannot be revealed by ordinary observation. Transcendental phenomenology is the science of essential structures of consciousness or experience. Ultimately, the objective of phenomenology is to arrive at the pure and unencumbered vision of what an experience essentially is. Hence, transcendental phenomenology means study "in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34).

2. *Life world***.** The qualitative research interview in conjunction with phenomenological research methodology has a unique potential for obtaining access to and describing the lived everyday world. Thus, the life world is the world as it is encountered in everyday life and given in direct and immediate experience, independent of prior explanations. "To expand on existing knowledge or create new knowledge, researchers must visit the life world of the individual

and study the way in which he or she experiences phenomenon within the life world in their natural setting" (Edie, 1962, p. 21).

3. *Lived experience.* Lived experience is the phenomenon under investigation. This human experience may be phenomena such as anger, fear, or commitment (Moustakas, 1994). The goal is to reduce individuals' experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence, "to grasp the very nature of the thing" (Van Mannen, 1990, p. 163).

4. *Intentional analysis.* A central tenet of phenomenology, according to Husserl, is that consciousness is always intentional (Moustakas, 1994). For example, human consciousness is always essentially oriented towards a world of emerging meaning. Consciousness is always of something and directed towards something (Moustakas, 1994). Furthermore, Moustakas argued that experiences are constituted by consciousness and thus can be vigorously and systematically studied on the basis of their appearance to consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

5. *Phenomenon***.** The phenomenon is the object or concept being examined.

6. *Bracketing***.** Phenomenological research begins with the "phenomenological reduction" or "epoché," which involves the attempt to put all of one's assumptions about the matter being studied into abeyance, to "bracket" them (Moustakas, 1994). The assumption behind bracketing is that the phenomenological attitude requires researchers to describe something not in terms of what they already know or presume to know about it, but rather based on that which presents itself to their awareness, exactly as it presents itself (Moustakas,

1994). Thus, as formulated in the phenomenological imperative, the goal is to go "back to the things themselves" (Moustakas, 1994).

7. *Epoché.* The basis of phenomenology as a research procedure is the belief that when people ask certain questions, they do so burdened with the mental baggage of assumptions—unquestioned definitions or opinions that separate the researcher from the truth about things (Moustakas, 1994). The essential phenomenological attitude is the temporary suspension of all existing personal biases, beliefs, preconceptions, or assumptions in order to get straight to the pure and unencumbered vision of what a thing essentially is (Moustakas, 1994).

8. *Horizonalization.* In this step of the data analysis process, the researcher lists every significant statement relevant to the topic and gives it equal value (Moustakas, 1994). According to Husserl, an individual's field of awareness always extends beyond the factually given to that which is implied, remembered, and generalized (Moustakas, 1994).

9. *Clusters of meaning.* This step in the phenomenological data analysis process involves the researcher placing the statements of the participants into clusters of meaning units, while removing overlapping and repetitive statements (Moustakas, 1994). When categorizing the clusters of meaning and themes, the researcher validates this data with the original text (Moustakas, 1994).

10. *Eidetic reduction.* Eidetic reduction is the process of abstracting essences from consciousness or experience (Moustakas, 1994). *Eidos* means idea or form (essence) and was utilized by Husserl to designate universal features. Eidetic reduction is the process that leads from the concrete expression of a particular

phenomenon to the universal "pure" essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), eidetic reduction is the methodological path to the meaning of the essences inherent in the phenomenon under investigation. It is accomplished through the use of intuition and reflection. The process of bracketing information is exceedingly important in the eidetic reduction process.

11. *Textual description***.** After completing the first three steps in the phenomenological data analysis process, the researcher prepares a description of the phenomenon from the perspective of the individuals participating in the study (Moustakas, 1994). This text describes "what" the participants experienced (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher accomplishes this step by reducing the information provided by the participants to significant statements, clusters of meaning, and quotes and combines the statements into themes (Moustakas, 1994).

12. *Essential invariant structure.* The objective of the phenomenological data analysis is to reduce the textual *(what)* and structural *(how)* experience of the participants to a succinct description of the phenomenon that represents the experience of the participants in the study (Moustakas, 1994). The invariants that emerge from the participant descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation refer to commonalities present within and between the narratives (Moustakas, 1994). Invariants are identified based on the importance and centrality accorded to them rather than on the frequency with which they occur (Moustakas, 1994).

13. *Imaginative variation*. Imaginative variation augments the process of bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). With this method, the characteristics of the phenomenon

70

under investigation are varied in the imagination by altering its constituent parts in order to test the limits with which it can retain its original identity—so as to discover its variants (Moustakas, 1994).

14. *Structural description.* Information acquired in the preceding steps of the phenomenological data analysis process is utilized to prepare a structural description (the context, conditions, and situations of participants' experience of the phenomenon) and a combined statement of textural and structural descriptions to convey the essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Although these steps are considered distinct components of descriptive phenomenology, each moment of the investigation entails a blend of bracketing, analyzing, intuiting, and describing to produce a true understanding of the phenomenon under study (Moustakas, 1994).

Procedures for Site and Participant Selection

The population interviewed consisted of current rank-and-file members of UNITE HERE Local 2 operating within the jurisdiction of San Francisco. Study participants shared common characteristics and experiences related to economic, social, and political influences affecting individuals striving to improve their financial circumstances in a unionized work environment. Participants were referred to the researcher through professional contacts within the San Francisco hotel industry and volunteered to participate in the research project. The researcher has had extensive prior contact with this union. UNITE HERE was formed in July 2004 as the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) merged with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) (Liddle, 2004). By that time, local chapters of HERE had

already utilized neutrality and card check as their primary organizing method across the country, frequently encountering strident management opposition (Stokes, 2001). Unable to persuade San Francisco hotel owners to accept neutrality/card check, Local 2 members voted overwhelmingly to strike over the inclusion of these provisions in future collective bargaining agreements (Liddle, 2004). This job action was endorsed by Local 2's rank-and-file affiliates, despite the fact that it entailed an immediate loss of wages and benefit coverage. The strikers did not seek enhancements of their own wage/benefit packages but, instead, the establishment of a more effective and fairer means for organizing collective bargaining units and bringing new members into the union's ranks. Ultimately, these pressure tactics succeeded (Raine, 2006) and neutrality/card check provisions were inscribed in contracts reached with hotel owners in 2006 (Hurd, 2007).

According to Moustakas (1994), sample selection must ensure access to the lived experiences related to the study question—in this case, of those who subordinated their personal interests in favor of actions that enlarged their union's membership by participating in an employer neutrality/card check campaign. Hence, the sample was selected from various unionized hotels in the San Francisco area among those who met that criterion and expressed a willingness to participate. This approach is that of "purposeful sampling," as described by Patton (1990):

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling. (p. 169)

The breadth, depth, and richness of each informant are critically important in phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994). An accepted standard is to sample until

redundancy of data is achieved and no new information is forthcoming. The sample size for this study was 10 informants, which met Creswell's (1998) guideline of 10 or more.

Procedures for Data Collection

In line with the research questions, the researcher relied upon the interviewees to articulate the considerations that influenced their respective decisions to subordinate their personal interests in favor of actions that enlarged their union's membership. These considerations could include aspects of union instrumentality and/or union support, but the researcher encouraged the interviewees to identify their motivations in their own terms.

The study utilized an original interview questionnaire comprising preliminary items drawn from the theoretical and empirical union commitment literature (see Appendix). Nevertheless, participants were allowed, and even encouraged, to deviate from the sequence of the protocol. In conducting the interviews, the researcher was guided by Moustakas' (1994) general introduction to qualitative research interviewing and Moustakas' (1994) text on phenomenological research methods. Consistent with the basic tenets of phenomenological research, interviews assumed the form of dialogue between the researcher and each of the study participants (Groenwald, 2004, p. 13) and were open-ended. The researcher's primary role was to allow each participant to recall his or her experiences and venture opinions about their meaning, without attempting to steer the flow of the dialogue into predetermined analytical categories (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). The goal was to have rich, descriptive accounts of the contexts in which participants became involved in union activities and of the reported interaction between the subject and other union members (Groenwald, 2004).

Interview sessions were conducted one-on-one, face-to-face, at a time and place convenient to the participant. The session began with a review of the study and obtaining informed consent. Interviews were recorded on a standard audiotape recorder with the permission of the participant for subsequent transcription onto digital storage. The interview time with the 10 participants totaled 20 hours. Field notes were also taken after each interview to document nonverbal cues and provide context.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed and analyzed according to the systematic methodology of reduction and description. The transcripts and field notes assisted the researcher in describing each interview and the overall sense of the participants' experiences.

Rigorous qualitative data analysis was conducted utilizing the methods outlined by Moustakas (1994). Each transcript was read and reread multiple times by the researcher over a period of 4 months. A detailed analysis of each transcript was completed to identify key concepts and nuances and then distilled to their essential elements to establish meanings. Further, each expression of the experience was rigorously tested to ensure it was a necessary element or constituent to understanding the phenomenon. The process entailed reducing and eliminating overlapping, repetitive, and vague expressions of the participants' experience. The results were presented in the form of a textural-structural description of each participant and common themes.

Efforts to Ensure Trustworthiness

Thomas Kuhn, the influential philosopher of science, stated that it is difficult to evaluate the merits of one research paradigm from the perspective of a different paradigm because of different standards of research (Kuhn, 1996). This is the case with qualitative and quantitative research. Each has its own standards of scientific research, thus making it difficult to judge the merits of one using the criteria of the other.

Several procedures were used to increase the validity of this study:

- Co-researchers reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and also had the opportunity to review the results chapter. None submitted any corrections.

- An independent researcher reviewed a sample of the material and thus served as a type of independent auditor.

- The researcher actively engaged in phenomenological reduction. Through the process of bracketing, the researcher extensively summarized personal experiences related to the research. Personal judgments, biases, and preconceptions related to the research were noted in the researcher's reflective journal.

Human Participants and Ethics Precautions

The institutional review board of The George Washington University approved this study. To protect participants, all attempts were made to maintain their confidentiality. Each participant was provided a pseudonym and identified by it within the transcripts and the dissertation. The reference key for the pseudonyms was stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office and was destroyed after completion of data analysis. The transcripts and related study files were stored on the researcher's desktop

computer. All participants were fully informed about the study and told that participation

was entirely voluntary. All participants provided informed consent.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of 10 rank-and-file members of a San Francisco hotel workers union local who had been actively engaged in employer neutrality and card check campaigns in the previous contract negotiations and to interpret the responses of these study participants to a series of inquiries about their perceptions of union instrumentality, their experience of union support, and their attitudes towards the union movement at large. The researcher delved into the ways in which these perceptions, experiences, and attitudes motivated the subjects to participate voluntarily in this form of union activism. Verbatim excerpts from the interview transcripts are included to back up the themes that developed and provide depth to the findings.

This chapter presents the findings of the study in four sections: (a) demographic information, (b) participant textural-structural descriptions, (c) core themes, and (d) summary.

Demographic Information

In this study, 10 participants were interviewed with a semistructured interview guide. Demographic information was collected for each participant. The age of the participants varied; the youngest was in his late 20s and the oldest was over 60 years of age. The educational level of the participants also varied: one individual graduated from college; another individual attended college but did not graduate; and the remaining eight participants achieved various levels of education. A spectrum of occupations was represented: one cook, four room attendants, one bellmen, two servers, and two

77

housemen. A total of four women and six men participated in the research. All but one of the participants supported families with children. The length of time the individuals were employed in the hotel industry ranged from approximately 10 years to approximately 35 years (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1
Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	Occupation	Years of Service
Hector	Male	Latino	Mid 40s	Cook	15
Ann	Female	African American	Mid 40s	Room attendant	19
Jose	Male	Latino	Mid 40s	Bellman	20
Richard	Male	White	Late 20s	Waiter	10
Calvin	Male	African American	Mid 50s	Houseman	10
Jonathan	Male	White	Late 40s	Houseman	20+
Margaret	Female	African American	Mid 40s	Room attendant	24
Rosary	Female	Asian	Early 30s	Room attendant	12
Jane	Female	Asian	Mid 60s	Room attendant	30+
Edwin	Male	Asian	Mid 50s	Waiter	22

Textural-Structural Descriptions

Textural-structural descriptions were compiled from information that was either provided by the participants during their interviews or gleaned from interactions with the participants during the interview process.

Hector. Hector, a Latino male, arrived on time. He was well groomed, neatly attired, and sported a mustache. His demeanor was open and friendly. He joked that he enjoyed being interviewed since he had an opinion on many subjects. He described himself as a serious person with a sense of humor. These two dimensions of his personality were displayed throughout the interview.

78

Hector was born in Los Angeles and moved to San Francisco 20 years ago for economic reasons. The hospitality employment opportunities in Los Angeles were scarce, and the available jobs did not provide a living wage to raise his young family. He worked in a myriad of low-paying menial and temporary jobs, which provided neither security nor an opportunity to acquire skills to secure a better-paying position. Exploitation was common and ran the gamut from verbal abuse and physical threats to working for employers who ignored the most basic wage and hour regulations.

When relating these events, Hector was neither bitter nor angry; he understood that a business must generate a "little profit" for the owner. He attributed his career challenges to a lack of education and the struggle his father and mother experienced in securing long-term and "good jobs." According to Hector, both parents worked during certain periods when jobs were plentiful. He stated that both his mother and father worked two jobs while "putting money away for a rainy day." He described these circumstances as common for recent immigrants.

He volunteered that even though times were tough for him and his family while growing up, he kept out of trouble and had a "clean record." After settling in San Francisco, Hector learned from relatives already working in the San Francisco hotel industry that hotel jobs offered higher wages, health benefits, retirement benefits, and job security. For Hector, these working conditions and benefits were the reasons for securing a hotel job within a few years after arriving in San Francisco.

Initially, Hector worked as a dishwasher in a unionized San Francisco hotel. It was an entry-level job but, according to Hector, it provided a "foot in the door." Having worked as a short-order cook in Los Angeles, Hector was able to transfer these skills to

an entry-level pantry cook position that allowed him to further develop his culinary skills and eventually be promoted to a tournant cook position.

Hector easily warmed to the subject of unionization of hotel workers. He ascribed the vulnerability of this class of workers less to management avarice or management insensitivity and more to the absence of workers' specialized skills and the cost of operating a hotel. Hector explained that due to these factors and the preponderance of recent immigrants in the industry, a union was necessary to protect the rights of the workers. The union balances the relationship like a "see-saw." If there was no union, the owner would have the employees dangling in the air without ever having their feet "touching the ground." He described this relationship using both hands, moving his left and right hand up and down as riders on opposite ends of a see-saw.

Hector stated he was proud and fortunate to be a union member and supported the union's efforts to expand unionization to nonunion hotels in San Francisco. The benefits won by the union allowed "all employees to improve their lives and the lives of their children." In the workplace, the union presence, according to Hector, ensured an environment free of harassment, threats, and intimidation. Equally important, the union allowed workers to voice their concerns to management without the fear of retaliation; the union improved communication in the hotels because employees were able to voice their ideas and concerns openly.

Because Hector supported the union and believed in the work of the union, he often volunteered to assist the union in demonstrations or political rallies. Hector expressed his understanding of the importance of having friends in political office. Most importantly for Hector, the union was a mechanism to allow the unskilled to move into

the "middle class." "My kids will be professionals and they will have a better life than me." For Hector, the strike he engaged in to hold the line on past negotiated benefits was worth the loss of income and the hardship it posed for his family. Hector maintained that "if the union can do this for me, why not for everyone who works in hotels."

Ann. Ann, a middle-aged African American woman, arrived at the designated meeting place punctually. Neatly attired and carefully groomed, Ann projected an image of someone who was concerned about her appearance. She was attentive and involved during the interview, even though she had just finished her shift and had a 45-minute commute before reaching home and still had to cook for her family. Ann stated she was lucky to have her mother at home to care for her three children once they returned from school, since she worked full-time at the hotel as a housekeeper and worked part-time as an operator at another hotel. Ann laughed when she informed me that today was her day off because she only had to work one job since she was off on "her other job." Ann was divorced and the sole supporter of her family.

Ann indicated that she worked as a room attendant for the past 19 years. The work was "hard," but over the years she developed a system for cleaning her rooms that ensured them passing daily inspection. Ann expressed satisfaction in turning out rooms that management regularly complimented, which resulted in bonus pay. Ann said that when she left a cleaned guest room, "she felt good the guest room was clean and orderly." "There was satisfaction in the work and in knowing the work was done with pride," Ann explained.

Ann was adamant that if it was not for the union, hotel workers would be in a "terrible situation." According to Ann, the union compelled the hotels to pay a "living

81

wage" so workers could "get a better life." When her children were sick, Ann stated she relied on the health benefits and time off benefits the union fought for over the years. Ann was quick to say that most managers at her hotel were decent people and respectful. Nevertheless, she questioned how respectful and decent they would be if the union was not there to protect the rights of union members.

Ann assured me that the union represented the interests of the members while the hotels were pressured by owners to make "bigger and bigger profits," regardless of how it may affect the employees. Compared with employees who did similar work for nonunion companies, Ann's wages were not only higher, but she had also benefits, which the nonunion jobs lacked. Of even greater concern for Ann, the nonunion jobs her friends worked at provided no job security.

After being laid off from a nonunion job and unable to secure regular employment for almost a year, Ann related that she was "one step from living in a homeless shelter." This experience, and the thought of sending her children to live with different family members, was disturbing and unnerving for Ann. "I couldn't sleep, eat but that was okay. But since there was little food in the house, that was not okay because my kids began to feel the strain, and that was driving me crazy." She vowed to never be in that position again.

Unskilled workers were particularly vulnerable to layoffs and work elimination, according to Ann. "If things were slow, the boss would fire someone and the rest of the crew would pick up the slack." If the job was off the books, you could not collect unemployment. Ann explained: "At my place on the ladder, back then, being out of work because there was no prosperity, I could understand, but the favoritism—that was

82

difficult to bear for me." Ann described instances where the "laziest" and "dumbest" employees stayed on because they were friends or family of the boss and the best employees were laid off or fired. The unfairness of the process was "sickening."

Ann stated that her luckiest day was when she secured her union job. It gave her dignity, respect, and stability. According to Ann, the stability and job security that increased with her seniority on the job allowed her to "look ahead" and plan for "my future and the future of my children." For Ann, it was a "real job" that had a good wage, health and retirement benefits, and, most importantly, stability.

Living through the strike was "difficult" but necessary to preserve what the union fought for over the past 20 years of her membership. Ann indicated that she was "fighting for my future and the future of new employees and other people of color and immigrants." Ann expressed a deep concern and affiliation with others who were struggling to raise a family and "stay alive in a tough world." Ann read or heard of abuses in the workplace and remembered when she was in a similar position. The strike was important to Ann because she believed it might make it easier for employees to unionize in the San Francisco hotel industry. This was a sacrifice she was willing to make. For Ann, the union was "in the business to help people who need the help the most."

Jose. Jose, a late middle-aged Filipino man with salt-and-pepper hair and a neatly trimmed moustache, met the researcher at a quiet neighborhood restaurant for a 1½-hour interview. Sporting a blue double-breasted blazer and tan slacks, Jose was impeccably attired—he appeared to take considerable pride in his personal appearance. When complimented on his tie, Jose joked that after 25 years as a bellman, you learn something about "dressing" and "luggage."

Jose was friendly but reserved in demeanor. His responses were direct and thoughtful and conveyed both humor and a sense of inevitability in human affairs. He perceived the world in practical terms and interacted with the world on those terms. When discussing his work, Jose stated that he enjoyed talking with the new guests who visited the hotel for the first time, as well as reuniting with guests who regularly frequented the hotel. He stated, "Finding what you enjoyed about your work and being good at that part made the tough parts of the job livable." For example, he described the cab drivers as "pains in the ass," but in the same breath he recognized that they were also part of the job and were "just trying to make a living."

Jose was proud of his achievements and believed he made the most of a difficult start in life. Jose related that his father worked "hard" to provide for his mother and four siblings. As the oldest child he left school at an early age and worked at various low-paying jobs to assist the family. He communicated this information without anger or bitterness since, through his efforts, he was able to see his sister, the youngest sibling, graduate from college. He attributes this "first for the family" to his securing a bellman's job. As he remarked in a confidential tone of voice, "You [referring to the researcher] been in hotels a long time, the bellmen and doormen make more in tips than most managers in the hotel and it's a cash business." Jose stated he was 25 when he "landed" his first bellman job, and he has worked in his current position for 20 years.

According to Jose, his first bellman position was with a nonunion hotel in San Francisco. He stated he made the best of a difficult situation because the managers expected a "kickback" in his tips, which he reluctantly paid to keep his job. "I was angry with this set-up but I needed the job and I looked for new job." By visiting different

hotels in the city and speaking with the bellmen, he was able to gain employment with another hotel—and this hotel was union. When asked if he had to "kickback" tips to his managers in the new position, Jose wryly stated, "I thought you worked in union hotels."

The move to a unionized hotel was an important event in Jose's life because it demonstrated the importance of "having power" to "protect the rights of employees." For Jose, the union "made the workers equal to management." No longer were his managers expecting "tip money" from the bellmen. The inequities he experienced at his other jobs were opposed by the union. These inequities included favoritism in work scheduling and in layoff and recall. Superior health and retirement benefits and leave policies were available in the unionized hotel. Most importantly for Jose, there was a greater sense of job security and an opportunity to redress issues that arose on the shop floor. He felt like he had a "voice in your job when problems happened on the job."

In a serious tone, Jose explained that for immigrants and poor people, the union was the "ladder for their children to climb into the middle class." He attributed his success in life to his mother and father, his hard work, and his union. Commitment to the union and to unionization was the reason he gave for supporting the strike to preserve his "benefits" and "to make it easier for nonunion hotel workers to join the union." Jose stated with emphasis that "every man and woman should have the right to join a union." He was proud to be a "union member." In addition, for Jose, the union not only strove to create equality of opportunity, but it also increased employee participation in improving the workplace. According to Jose, "In the hotel, management listens to our ideas and makes changes because we are unionized; this would never happen if there was no union."

The strike represented a reaffirmation of union solidarity and "worker rights." Jose reiterated a number of times that the strike "brought out the best in his coworkers." According to Jose, self-sacrifice was required on the part of union workers to give all nonunion workers a chance to "climb" the economic ladder. Unity and community were expressed in Jose's belief that when workers organized, "they were stronger" and "union employees had political power and influence." "The politicians in San Francisco listened when the union president spoke," Jose emphatically stated. Jose reminded me that "the mayor was on the picket line because he wanted our votes." Jose understood the connection between influence at city hall and influence on the picket line.

Richard. Richard, a white man in his late 20s, arrived on time for his interview fashionably dressed. He was groomed stylishly and impeccably and projected an air of self-assurance. Articulate and direct in speech, he nonchalantly reminded the researcher that he was between "acting calls," and he only had an hour for the interview.

Richard worked at his present food server job for almost 10 years. He started "waiting tables" when he was in high school and while attending college. The task of waiting on tables was easy and since Richard considered himself "personable and engaging," the work was lucrative. Most importantly, as Richard admitted, the jobs provided a "steady cash income." After graduating from college, Richard continued to work as a food server while pursuing an acting career in the theater and investing in rental real estate.

He started working in his current position as a food server in a union hotel almost immediately upon graduating from college. He related to the researcher that he "figured out" that a hotel job would provide greater stability in scheduling since it was based on

86

seniority, and the predictability in work assignments would allow him time to pursue acting lessons and respond to "auditions." In addition, the health benefits were also important since most "freestanding restaurants did not offer medical coverage."

Until he joined his current employer, Richard had no real "understanding and knowledge" of the union's role in the workplace. Both his parents held professional positions, and his siblings were in private-sector senior business administrative positions or in investment and finance. Initially, the enthusiasm for the union among his coworkers was difficult for him to understand. However, gradually, he began "to understand why his coworkers held the union in high esteem." As Richard stated, once he understood the "utilitarian function" the union served in the workplace, his appreciation of its role increased dramatically. According to Richard, his attitudes and perceptions of the union underwent a transformation from "bemused indifference to profound respect for their commitment to supporting worker rights."

Richard explained that many of his coworkers were from "lower socioeconomic" backgrounds or "recent immigrants," and the union provided a host of external social services and services internally on the job. The union was there to ensure "fairness" and "respect" for workers. Richard described the union as "leveling the playing field between management and the employees" by creating a "structure" for resolving grievances. The union provided employees who were not accustomed to challenge employer decisions with the means to do so. The union gave a "voice to the voiceless."

When discussing the strike, Richard joked that the "picketing and chanting allowed him to work on his articulation and stage presence." In a more serious vein, he described the strike as an important "unifying community event" that increased solidarity

among the workers. Richard observed that the street demonstrations served to strengthen worker resolve to oppose management's attempt to "eliminate benefits and deny the rights of nonunion employees to join the union." Organizing nonunion workers evolved into an important issue for Richard since he was able to compare his current union position to the nonunion positions he held in the past. Richard related that some employees in these restaurants were too afraid to complain when "unscrupulous" managers asked for "wage kickbacks" or owners failed to properly pay their workers. Personally, Richard hated the practice of "tip sharing" with managers, a practice rampant in freestanding nonunion restaurants. In Richard's assessment, the strike was necessary, and he stated with a theatrical flourish that he "was proud to mount the barricades for employee rights."

Calvin. Calvin, an African American man, arrived for his interview appropriately dressed and attired. Initially nervous and suspicious regarding the purpose of the interview, he settled down and seemed to enjoy expressing his opinions, impressions, and warm feelings towards the union. He emphatically stated that he was proud to be a "union man" and was concerned that my research may have had a sinister purpose to embarrass the union. He proceeded to relate the content of a recent article in the *Chronicle* that "painted" the union in "a bad light" and "twisted" the words of the union employee who was interviewed.

Calvin worked as a houseman in a large, unionized hotel that was popular with tourists. A few months after graduating from high school, he was hired through a family friend and had been in the position for almost 10 years. He described himself as an excellent employee who has never been "written up" on the job. He enjoyed the variety

of work assignments he accomplished each day and the fast pace of the work. He said he "gets on" with his coworkers and enjoyed their company. These factors were important to Calvin since he "spends more time on the job than at home."

Calvin was raised in a family with strong union ties. Both parents were members of a union—a different union than Calvin's. In addition, Calvin related that other family members were also affiliated with a union. As a child, he remembered attending union rallies and demonstrations. As an adult, his family expected him to be a "good union member." The importance of union membership and participating in union activities was openly and regularly discussed at family affairs. He stated that at times, it got "hot" around the dinner table with everyone arguing about the union and management.

Throughout the strike, Calvin worked various "picket lines" at his hotel and at other San Francisco hotels. He stated that it was exciting to be part of a demonstration fighting for worker rights. Calvin related that he was tired at the end of the day but felt proud he was helping other people. A few times during the strike, the union also picketed the nonunion hotels to urge employees to join the union, and Calvin participated in those demonstrations. Calvin believed this activity was an opportunity to "educate" workers on the benefits of joining the union. He was quite serious when he compared this proselytizing to "missionary work." He did smile when he said he was "saving souls." Calvin was certain that one day, he wanted to work full-time for the union.

Jonathan. Jonathan, a white man in his 40s, arrived at the interview punctually. He was neatly groomed and appropriately attired. He spoke in succinct, staccato sentences. He politely and apologetically made clear he was pressed for time and would like to "move on with the interview." My interview with Jonathan was the shortest in

89

time, but his intense loyalty and commitment to the union was palpable. He was never rude but fervently expressed his commitment to the union movement.

From the outset of the interview, he stated either as a ground rule or a warning that he would not countenance "any criticism of the union": "I have been a loyal union soldier for the past 20-odd years and I am committed to worker rights." A houseman throughout his tenure with his present employer, Jonathan attributed his "getting on in life" to the union. He stated, "For the life of me I cannot understand why all workers do not join the union." There is "strength in numbers," he asserted, and only through "union organizing could workers be equal to management." When not volunteering for the union, Jonathan worked as a volunteer in a shelter food kitchen. He believed the union represented the "last best hope for working men and women."

Margaret. Margaret, a middle-aged African American woman, arrived at the interview on time. She was fastidiously groomed and casually attired. Her demeanor was straightforward but polite, and she expressed a genuine interest in the research and in the New York City hotel contract and its provisions.

Margaret lived in San Francisco her entire life. While growing up, her father worked long hours and sometimes worked two jobs to hold the family together. Her mother was an active member of the church and so was Margaret. The church provided Margaret with an opportunity to counsel individuals and direct people to various services provided by the church or the city. She joked that her husband would chide her that someday there would be a "church drive to help husbands." The work she performed at the church was important for her since it provided a creative opportunity to demonstrate "skills" that she was unable to demonstrate at work.

Margaret had been working as a room attendant for almost 24 years. The work, over time, evolved into a routine; nevertheless, Margaret stated that "it has been at least 10 years" since her manager asked her to redo a guest room because it failed inspection. Over the years, Margaret had been selected as employee of the month in recognition for her work. According to Margaret, managers respected her work and often had new room attendants trail her to better understand the cleaning standards of the hotel. For Margaret, the training assignments allowed her to encourage individuals to do their best when the work was most unpleasant. "Many of these young girls don't have skills and they are ashamed of the work, but I tell them they will not find a better-paying job for this type of work."

Margaret had been a union member for 24 years and deeply appreciated what the union had done for her and her family. With each contract, she was able to tick-off the contractual provisions where improvements were achieved over previous contacts. With each contractual enhancement, Margaret believed she was able to perceive "improvements in my life and the life of my coworkers." Margaret was proud of her weekly earnings and the health and retirement benefits the union negotiated on her behalf over the many years she worked in the industry. According to Margaret, when she was not "running a clothes drive or a food drive, she was volunteering for the union." Margaret reminded me that she observed a clear distinction between her church and her union; however, before she made this observation, she stated, "the church helps the community to survive spiritually and the union helps the community to survive financially."

Margaret firmly believed the union provided the means for upward mobility by enhancing worker rights. By providing a living wage and medical and retirement benefits, workers were "able to plan for their children's future and when they got old and retired a retirement check came every month." For the above reasons, unionizing nonunion employees was especially important for Margaret. In addition, her beliefs underpinning this goal were both self-serving and altruistic. She believed that "if all the hotels in San Francisco were union, the union would have greater power during negotiations and if there were too many nonunion hotels, the union would lose power in the negotiations." Margaret was an astute practitioner of community and church organizing and the potential impact these entities had on elected officials. As she succinctly put the case, "Union members vote the union line and get other people to vote the union line."

Rosary. Rosary, a Filipina in her early 30s, arrived for her interview punctually. She was fashionably attired and neatly groomed. Her demeanor was friendly and engaging. The dissertation was of interest to her since she was a union member for almost 12 years.

Rosary lived in the Philippines until she was 18 years old and rejoined her family in the United States. A year after arriving in the country, she married and needed a job. Her intention was to work a year or two as a room attendant and then move on to a different job in the hotel. As the years passed, her seniority increased and transferring to a different position became less and less appealing to her. Besides, Rosary explained, she completed her rooms "quickly and to a high standard." Shortly, through luck and seniority, Rosary was assigned to a floor with suites, which reduced her quota of daily room assignments. She explained that she was fast in turning back guest rooms, and once

she completed her daily room quota, Rosary was able to "buy extra rooms," thereby increasing her weekly earnings. Rosary explained that she and her husband were able to purchase a house in a relatively short period of time with their combined incomes. Equally important, her job provided medical insurance for her family. Her husband worked for a company that did not provide medical coverage.

Rosary's commitment to the union was based on practical considerations—"the union protects my rights and negotiates good contracts"—and social considerations— "wherever there is a union, the jobs are better and employees are treated better." The value of the union was in its instrumentality; that is, as a mechanism for achieving greater gains in wages and benefits and enhancements in work rules. Rosary was committed to the union for these reasons and supported the strike even though it was "an inconvenience" to her. However, her belief that all the hotels in San Francisco should be union was surprisingly strong. When pressed on this issue, Rosary advanced the idea that there was "power in numbers" and if all the hotels were unionized, "a strike would be more successful since all the hotels would be closed."

Jane. Jane, an energetic Chinese woman in her early 60s, arrived at the interview on time. She was neatly attired and well groomed. Initially, the researcher believed the interview would have to be canceled due to Jane's English proficiency. However, it was readily apparent Jane understood the purpose of the interview and was able to respond appropriately to the questions. Jane appeared to be eager to discuss her experience and impressions of the union and how the union assisted immigrants. Language challenges aside, Jane communicated her warm regard for the union with fervor and expression.

According to Jane, the Chinese community supported the union because it assisted Chinese employees who worked in the hotel, restaurant, and garment industries.

Jane stated that she had worked as a room attendant for over 30 years and did not plan to retire until she was 70. With her years of service, Jane was at the top of the seniority list and had the best guest floors. As Jane explained, she had a system for cleaning guest rooms that ensured her assignments were perfect. Her seniority entitled her to all the suite rooms, which were easier to clean. Jane was emphatic that at her age, "regardless of how good I am," the hotel would rather have younger workers. She believed the union protected the older workers who enjoyed work and were not ready to retire. Jane maintained that many older hotel workers she knew could not retire because of the economy and because they were helping their children "pay their mortgage."

Jane described how the union assisted her and other immigrants to learn English when they first started to work in the hotel industry. In addition, over the years, the union was attentive to the needs of recent immigrants, providing legal assistance, resettlement assistance, and contractual language relating leaves of absence to resolve immigration-related legal issues. According to Jane, the union "understands" and "helps" union members to "get comfortable" in the United States by providing counseling and legal assistance. Jane also described the union's role in sensitizing union members to the cultural differences between the different ethnic groups.

Jane entered the workforce at an early age and, based on her responses, she was working without proper authorization at that time. "With no papers and no English, bosses take advantage of you," Jane commented. When asked how bosses took advantage of workers, she replied, "Ten, 12-hour days, no overtime, bounced checks, disrespect by

94

the boss, dangerous machines and factories close, and you get no pay." Sadly, Jane stated that these conditions still exist because people need "money to live." "It is better now," Jane stated, but "bosses" still take advantage of workers. "White bosses, Chinese bosses, Filipino bosses, Spanish bosses—they all want money." When she said money, Jane rubbed her thumb and forefinger together to signify the universal sign for cash.

Jane firmly believed the union improved the working lives of its members and that all workers, especially immigrants, should be union members. During the strike, Jane demonstrated on the picket line with her coworkers, but her sons limited her involvement in union activities by claiming the babysitter was sick and they needed her at home. Parenthetically, Jane related that her sons and daughter, who "all graduated from college," wanted her to retire, but she was adamant that she wanted to continue working. Nevertheless, she did "picket" and she "enjoyed" the "spirit" of the activities. The union's stress on organizing nonunion hotel workers in San Francisco was of particular importance to Jane. Jane perceived this objective as crucial to "helping people who need the most help."

Edwin. Edwin, a middle-aged Filipino man, arrived at the interview punctually. He was neatly groomed and casually but smartly attired. His demeanor was engaging and friendly, revealing a keen interest in the researcher's dissertation and a general interest in graduate work. In the interview, information surfaced that two of his children were attending graduate school, and he was concerned about their employment prospects after graduation. He emphasized the importance of preparing the next generation to achieve a better life than he had created for his family.

Providing the means to assist his children to achieve a better standard of living was critically important for Edwin. As he stated, "My wife and me worked all our lives to make sure our children would attend goods schools and go to college." For Edwin, generational upward mobility was his American dream. "My life is good; my children will have a better life, and my grandchildren will have a better life than my children." The foundation to build this dream was a "good job to provide for your family."

For the past 22 years, Edwin worked as a food server in a hotel covered by a union contract. Prior to securing this position, Edwin worked as a food server in a number of different nonunion restaurants in San Francisco. He stated the tips were very good, but some days he worked only for tips and did not receive an hourly salary. Because of business fluctuations at the restaurant, his weekly earnings varied from week to week. "This was business," and Edwin understood the vagaries of restaurant work. However, what rankled him most was the mandatory tip sharing with the "managers" and occasionally even with the "owner," which are common practices in nonunion restaurants.

The tip-sharing practice was perceived by Edwin as a "kickback to keep your job" and tantamount to "picking his pocket." Unfortunately, he was afraid of being "blacklisted" if he complained or of being fired if he refused to share his tips with the managers. Compounding the situation was the absence of medical benefits for his family. These factors convinced him to either change careers or locate a food server job more to his liking. A friend referred him to his current union job. Edwin joked that "every Christmas he takes care of this person."

In a more serious tone, he admitted his current job allowed him to successfully raise a family, "buy a house, and put my children through college." He spoke appreciatively of the benefits unionization provides: "a good hourly rate, medical benefits, paid sick time, paid vacations, and retirement benefits." He smiled when the researcher asked, "Do you share your tips?" His monosyllabic response was "No!" Edwin proceeded to explain this type of "pick-pocketing" is not "allowed in a union house" and besides, he stated, "the managers and the employees treat each other with respect."

Edwin firmly believed in the advantages provided by a union job, especially in the restaurant industry, which attracts so many "immigrants who are afraid to speak out for their rights" and where "there are so many abuses when it comes to pay and respect." He emphatically stated, "It will only change when the union steps in to protect employee rights." He added as an afterthought, "You know, if you are an immigrant, it is hard to trust the government."

He actively participated in various demonstrations during the day, and in the evening, he sheepishly admitted, "I went back to a nonunion restaurant where they still share tips." He added, "The bills needed to be paid." When the strike was over, Edwin stated, "You appreciate more when you lose it and then get it back." The experience strengthened his belief that all employees should be unionized, and striking for the "right to unionize" was important for him personally.

Themes

In the final step of the data analysis process, information collected from participants was used to identify themes that were recurrent between participant data sets. This step was accomplished by visiting and revisiting the meaning clusters that

97

corresponded to the invariant constituents, and this resulted in the identification of 10 core themes:

1. Union commitment, including union loyalty, responsibility to the union, willingness to work for the union, belief in unionism

2. Employee voice, including grievance resolution and justice

3. Instrumentality/economic exchange

4. Social exchange

5. Collective bargaining agreement, including job security and work rules

6. Job satisfaction, both intrinsic and extrinsic

7. Upward mobility

8. Social responsibility and immigrant rights

9. Community and political organizing

10. Union organizing

1. Union commitment. Research has indicated that union commitment is best characterized by four dimensions. The first is union loyalty, which reflects a sense of pride in belonging to the union and an appreciation for the benefits of union membership. The second is responsibility to the union, which reflects members' willingness to engage in the day-to-day responsibilities of union membership. The third is willingness to work for the union, which refers to members' willingness to engage in activities that go beyond the daily routine of union membership. The final dimension is a belief in unionism, reflecting members' beliefs in the concept of unionism.

Participants illustrated vivid critical incidents that demonstrated commitment to the union across these four dimensions. Their personal sacrifices and direct involvement

98

in supporting the union during the negotiations and resulting strike were borne out in their personal stories.

Pride in union membership and an appreciation for the benefits of union membership were illustrated in participant narratives. Either explicitly stated or implicitly conveyed, participants were proud to be affiliated with the union. Equally important for each participant was the realization that union membership bestowed privileges and benefits that nonunion employees in similarly situated positions did not possess.

> It is hard for someone to understand what it is like working where no union is. There is no protection. If the boss wants to lay you off and ignore seniority, he does it. If it is a slow day, they send you home and it doesn't matter if you are the senior person or not. The contract protects our rights, and that makes me want to support the union. (Ann)

> I am proud to be a union member. Yes, it's the good wages and benefits, but it is also knowing the union fights to protect the workers. The workers matter to the union because the union believes in worker rights. (Hector)

> The strike brought out the best in the workers. There was solidarity because we all believed in the purpose of the strike for the workers and the families. It was important to stand up and demonstrate that past gains were not going to be returned. I was proud to be on the picket line. (Jose)

> Let me say from the beginning, I am proud to be a union man. My family are union people. My mother and father are both in the union. The benefits the union fought for over the years provided my mother and father to raise my brothers and sisters. We always had health benefits, and my children will have health benefits through the union. (Calvin)

Responsibility to the union was conveyed by the participants in a myriad of ways. A common belief emerged from the narratives that each union member was responsible for ensuring that management abided by the contract. Management violations of the contract were perceived as undermining the purpose of unionism, while also eroding the provisions of the contract and the existence of past practices.

Being a union member has responsibilities. The union teaches us to follow the union contract. That management must not be allowed to violate the contract. Respect for the contract is important because if there is no respect for the contract then management will do what it wants. (Jonathan)

It sounds picky, but management must be reminded that the contract must be followed. That past practices must be respected. If not, then all our past work would be ignored. (Margaret)

It is the responsibility of every employee to confront management when it fails to stick to the contract. It is nothing personal, but the benefits and rights in the contract were fought for over many years and members made sacrifices to win them. (Calvin)

I have friends who work in other union hotels. Some of them tell me that almost every day arguments happen over interpretation of the contract. Most time it's management trying to go around a past practice. I am lucky. In my department we have a lot of old-timers who work with management, but that does not mean management can walk all over us. We are responsible to protect our rights. (Rosary)

A genuine willingness to work for the union beyond the day-to-day member responsibilities was a widely held belief among all the participants. Participants distinguished between protecting the contract on the shop floor from management incursions and the responsibility of each union member to participate in union activities when called upon by the union. This was especially true during the strike and demonstrations.

As a tipped employee, I lost a lot of money during the strike. Bills kept on coming in. The strike cost us lost wages and tips, but at the end it was necessary to protect what we negotiated in the past. I did strike duty in the morning and worked in a nonunion restaurant at night. Working in the restaurant reminded me how lucky I was to have a union job. (Edwin)

When you need the union they are there to help you. Problems with your schedule, pay, or work rule, the union always helps. When they need your help, you help. During the strike, I didn't like standing in the cold with a picket sign but I did every day. My kids argued [for me] to stay home. It was my duty to support the union and my coworkers. (Jane)

The union gave me a better life. It allows me to raise my family. When you need to show solidarity, to prove to everyone that you are willing to make sacrifices for long survival of the union, you do it. It felt good [to] be part of some[thing] bigger

than what you do every day at work. People on the street cheered us and gave us the victory sign. (Ann)

I worked harder during the strike than I did at work. While on strike, no one asked me, but where there was a demonstration, I showed up. I volunteered. No one needed to ask. I was proud of my contribution. (Calvin)

No one knew how long you were on the picket line, but no one ever left until the union gave the green light to leave. I was proud of being part of the demonstration, and it brought out the best in everyone. (Jose)

I did my part during the strike, and I was proud to mount the barricades for employee rights. You remember, I am an aspiring actor. For everyone there at the picket line, they had a vested interest in maintaining their standard of living. It was serious business. No acting. (Richard)

A genuine and fundamental belief in the goals of unionism was articulated by all participants. Strong identification with the union's economic, social, political, and theoretical policies was interwoven throughout the interviews. The belief in unionism was frequently expressed in rather dogmatic terms: you "either believed in the union or you don't." The belief in the union was not founded simply on blind faith, but rather on tangible examples of how union policies and ventures assisted "working people."

You support the union and believe in the union because they fight for the rights of working people. People who work at the union full-time spend a lot of time defending members and protecting the contract. We are part of the decision making at the hotel because of the union. Where there is no union, management or the owner can do what they please. The union makes us more equal. (Richard)

Either you believe in the union or you don't. If you believe in what the union stands for, you feel it inside. It all makes sense. Working people have rights, and the union protects those rights. (Calvin)

You have to believe in the union if you are a member and have worked in nonunion places. If you worked for a nonunion employer, you know that the union is important to ensure fairness and avoid mistreatment. The union works for both the hotels and the employees. The union ensures real jobs that pay a living wage and provide benefits. The union is in the business to help people who need the help the most. (Ann)

The union provides services and protects its members. It's part community group, part social services, and the people who run the union have the same attitudes and

101

beliefs about helping people. I do a lot of volunteer work in my community and I see how similar it all is. (Margaret)

Growing up, my grandmother used to say about church: You just have to believe. Well, to be part of the union, you just have to believe in the cause. Either you believe in worker rights or you don't. Either you believe in a living wage or you don't. For some people, supporting the union is un-American; for me, it was the union movement that built America. (Jonathan)

Believing in the union comes from inside of you. Even members who are upset with the union do not stop believing in it. (Hector)

2. Employee voice. Consistently, participants juxtaposed the rights and benefits of union members against the absence of these rights and benefits among nonunion employees. In unionized organizations, employees are able to exercise their voice on immediate issues through grievance procedures and on long-term issues through participation in negotiation committees. Participants believed the grievance procedure increased employee participation and problem solving on the shop floor. Since unionized employees were afforded a legally binding right to voice their concerns, this opportunity translated into greater employee engagement in the organization. Where these mechanisms were absent, employees who desired change would be able to achieve it only by "voting with their feet."

I worked in nonunion restaurants, and respect and dignity were in short supply. Not all the managers or owners were bad in these places. But your opinion was never asked, and if [you] suggested something at the wrong time, God help you. Even if the idea was stupid, you went along with it so not to offend the boss. In a union hotel, you speak up without retaliation. Your opinion is asked. Changes are discussed. It is a better system for everyone. (Hector)

The union made sure employees have an opportunity to be part of the process to solve problems. Or, when a change is being considered, employee involvement is asked. The union gives you voice on the job when problems happen on the job. In the hotel, management listens to our ideas and makes changes because we are unionized; this would never happen if there were no union. (Jose)

102

The union was there to ensure fairness and respect. The role of union in leveling the playing field between management and the employees was important. It provides a forum for employees who were afraid or uncomfortable, a structure to challenge management. It gave a voice to the voiceless. (Richard)

In describing the benefits inherent in a grievance system, participants were also describing, albeit implicitly, the perception of justice on multiple levels of application. Grievance procedures introduced justice systems to the workplace. Participants were sensitive to the various elements in defining perceptions of justice, without actually labeling them. Experiences and beliefs clearly defined the multiple levels with which justice is perceived.

Distributive methods were used to decide relative shares of an outcome. Participant examples generally focused on the establishment of equality among the stakeholders, as expressed through the grievance system. Procedural methods were used to determine how decisions were reached. Participants enumerated steps defined in the grievance provision of their contract and the importance these steps played in ensuring the perception of fairness. Interactional methods were used to communicate between union employees and management. The perception of justice on the job, as stipulated by a contractual grievance procedure, was enhanced, according to participants, when the outcome was communicated to the members. It was believed that due process was ensured due to the transparency of the grievance system. Employee input in the process and the independence of decision makers were identified as important components of all three justice types, an inherent element in the collective bargaining agreements.

The grievance procedure is like a see-saw—it balances the rights of the employees and the hotel. If the hotel goes too far in one direction or if the union goes too far in one direction, the contract balances it out. The contract allows the employees to speak up without fear of retaliation. It improves communication because employees can settle problems. (Hector)

The union and the contract make sure that real justice happens on the job when there is a grievance. The union represents the employee and witnesses are called and an investigation takes place. If the grievance is not settled, it goes to arbitration. People see the process as fair and open. No backroom deals. (Jonathan)

When problems arise or when management wants to change a practice, the union guarantees employees' concerns are heard. In the hotel, management listens to our ideas and makes changes because we are unionized; this would never happen if there was no union. (Jose)

If the union and the hotel cannot settle a grievance, the contract has an arbitration clause that ensures fairness. The grievance is decided by an arbitrator. This is important for people to trust the system. (Calvin)

3. Instrumentality/economic exchange. The role of the union to secure economic enhancements for its members was perceived as a fundamental obligation of the union by all the participants. Economic enhancements were broadly perceived and defined by the participants of this study. Aspects such as higher wages, increased time off, improved health coverage, more generous pensions, or greater educational opportunities were identified as mandatory subjects of bargaining by participants. Participants believed that when the union fulfilled the material needs of its members, it thereby signaled concern for their well-being. However, this perception was tempered by a complementary belief that the union was also enhancing member well-being by increasing union density while simultaneously addressing the economic needs of nonunion employees in the city of San Francisco.

The role of the union to achieve and sustain negotiated enhancement to the union contract was accepted as a "given." The instrumentality of the union to enhance member well-being was a measure of union success for all participants. These felt obligations were heavily reinforced successive gains achieved by the union at the bargaining table. Moreover, these successes at the bargaining table allowed the union to pursue its

104

expansion agenda by demonstrating to current members the tangible benefits of joining

the union.

> It was my luckiest day when I joined the union. A union job pays better than nonunion jobs. I know this for a fact. I worked in nonunion jobs. The money was less, no benefits, no retirement, and no respect. You earn respect by your work, but being a union member makes all the difference between a job and a real job. (Ann)

> Supporting the union during negotiations was important. It shows management there is solidarity in the union. This allows the union to negotiate harder for better wages and benefits. (Jose)

> I learned why my coworkers hold the union in high esteem, and I share that appreciation for the union. The union has a utilitarian function for its members. By supporting the union, the union is able to negotiate in our interests. (Richard)

> The union protects older workers. Regardless of how good I am, the hotel would rather have younger workers. The seniority system protects my rights, and as long as I can do my job, why not work? My pension is there when I want to retire. My union supports me, and I support the union. (Jane)

> I pay my dues and I support the union. In turn, the union negotiates good contracts. The union is involved in the community, also which is important. For me, the union protects my rights and negotiates good contracts. (Rosary)

> In return for your support, the union protects your rights at the job. I worked in a lot of nonunion restaurants where you had to share your tips with the managers or even the owner. This never happens in a union restaurant. The managers and employees treat each other with respect. (Edwin)

4. Social exchange. Supporting the union today and trusting in its ability to create

a better future tomorrow was a universal observation among the participants of this study.

Participants discussed their relationship with the union on a personal, almost intimate

level. They recognized the union on an organizational level, seeing it as channeling

resources to improve the lives of working men and women, and also on an individual

level, where employees of the union execute union strategies.

Their participation in union activities outside of the hotel where they worked was recognized as an integral part of their relationship with the union. For some participants, union community outreach programs mirrored their commitment to enhancing worker rights. In both cases, the work performed by the union and the volunteer work performed by some participants did not result in self-aggrandizement. The work performed was altruistic and appealed to a sense of social and economic justice. However, the participants of this study fervently supported and applauded the union's activities to assist workers economically and politically.

> The work the union does in the community is important for working people. It is similar to my volunteer work. The union works with the churches and community centers on worker rights. It also helps immigrants. It is more social services than bargaining over wages. (Margaret)

> Many of my coworkers are from lower socioeconomic groups, and many are recent immigrants. The union provides community-based services to these groups that assist them to deal with government bureaucracies. Internally, the union assures fairness and dignity for all workers. There is no dollar value placed on these services, but it is part of unifying the members. (Richard)

> Supporting the union during organizing drives demonstrates to people that the union is a force for good. That it is interested in improving working people's lives. Offering legal support to employees who are nonunion and are being abused by their bosses makes you proud to be a union member. The union does more than negotiate good contracts; they fight for the rights of everyone who works. (Calvin)

> Power is important for the union to accomplish its goals of a better contract for its members. The union uses their power to help employees who are not in the union. I remember when the union was handing out leaflets outside of the nonunion restaurant I was working at. The information was about the minimum wage and overtime. I respected them for this information. (Hector)

5. Collective bargaining agreement. Seniority issues cut across several of the economic and noneconomic bargaining issues, according to participants. Seniority may entitle employees to higher pay levels or to overtime, preferences on vacation periods, the

length of vacation, eligibility for promotions and transfers, and insulation against layoffs. Seniority provisions have been shown to positively influence the pay levels of blue-collar workers represented by unions. For these reasons, contractually stipulated seniority systems were a major benefit to study participants. The participants of this study perceived seniority as a method of ensuring fairness and equity on the job.

Layoffs were usually conducted in inverse order of seniority, protecting the most senior worker. The vast majority of union contracts specified layoffs on the basis of departmental seniority; some contracts permitted bumping, whereby a senior employee was entitled to displace a junior employee in another department or job as long as the senior employee was qualified for it. Furthermore, the majority of collective bargaining agreements dictated that seniority was the sole provision for determining the layoff for job retention rights during cutbacks. Participants were adamant: the seniority system ensured an equitable distribution of work and job security.

Study participants, prior to their current union jobs, worked in nonunion companies. Their collective experiences were replete with memories of wage and hour abuses, unfair work practices, the absence of health and welfare benefits, and threatening, abusive, and inequitable management practices.

> The union contract protects the rights of the employees. If you have a contract, you know how much you must be paid, what your vacation rate is, your health benefits, and your pension plan. You know where you stand on these matters and so does the hotel. Most importantly, the contract protects your seniority. Seniority respects the years you worked for the hotel. (Edwin)

> Some employees complain about seniority at the hotel. These are always the younger employees who are just starting out in the hotel. The senior employees are patient with them because we all have to work together. We explain seniority [as] the fairest way of determining work assignments, vacation requests, layoffs, recalls, or holidays. Seniority stops management from playing favorites, something I witnessed repeatedly in nonunion jobs. Who you are does not matter

107

in a layoff; seniority does. To tell you the truth, management prefers seniority for making decisions because it is clean. (Margaret)

Job security based on seniority allows you to plan your life. You know if business is good and you do your job, you cannot be dismissed to make way for a younger employee or a friend of the manager. Everyone must follow the rules of seniority, including the guys who were just hired. (Jose)

I worked as a room attendant for over 30 years. My rooms are the best, and I have all VIP rooms. My seniority protects my right to select these floors, but my skills really keep me on these floors. In the contract, seniority rights are clear and after 30 years on the job, my seniority should be respected. (Jane)

After 10 years with the hotel, I am in the middle of the seniority pack. Where I am in seniority allows me job security, an occasional reduced work week but rarely a layoff, and vacation time and holidays that suit me. Overtime goes to the most senior men, but with retirements, my option to pick up overtime will improve. Seniority as spelled out in the contract protects everyone and keeps everyone honest—employees and management. (Calvin)

6. Job satisfaction. Participants identified two dimensions of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic. Both dimensions were attributed to union membership. Extrinsic job satisfaction involves terms of employment, such as wages and benefits, and intrinsic satisfaction involves aspects of the work itself, such as the degree of employee autonomy and the ability to influence work-related decisions. The evolution of work rules and past practices at the workplace positively affected job satisfaction by creating predictability and consistency in job assignments and seniority rules. Moreover, the work itself— assisting and interacting with guests, creating a warm and friendly work environment, and knowing that one's efforts exceeded guest expectations—were important factors in enhancing intrinsic job satisfaction.

Participants stated that their affiliation with the union increased job satisfaction by creating a work environment that ensured adherence to provisions of the contract, protecting employee wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. The

union contract imposed standards of conduct and influenced management behavior, ensuring respect and dignity for union members. Participants perceived the union as a force for protecting the rights of workers against management excesses and creating a stable work environment.

> As a performer, I enjoy my job. I meet new people who are there to enjoy themselves. Once you determine the level of conversation they desire, it is rather simple to provide great service—that is, if the kitchen is running smoothly. Unlike the nonunion restaurants, [with] issues related to tip sharing and favoritism in assigning tables, in a union restaurant, it is not tolerated. There is fairness in and respect in a union restaurant, which makes coming to work more enjoyable. (Richard)

> After cleaning rooms for 19 years, you develop a system for turning out a quality room every day. I take pride in my work. The guests appreciate my work, and I receive excellent guest comment cards, also tips. Working in a union hotel with a contract, past practices, and seniority, you are protected from the craziness that happens in nonunion hotels, where employees argue over floors, assignments, and days off. In a union hotel, you are not aggravated by that nonsense so you can come to work, do your work, and feel good about what you turn out. (Ann)

> If you are friendly, guests talk to you. As a bellman, it is important to make the guest comfortable as you escort them to their room and describe the room amenities. I enjoy meeting new people, and even though you spend maybe 8 minutes with them, you can have an interesting conversation. The cab drivers can be pains in the ass, but finding what you enjoy about your work and being good at that part made the tough parts of the job livable. What makes coming to work more than a job is not having to deal with the kickbacks that are common in nonunion hotels. It stressed me out when your boss was expecting a portion of your tips. It made me sick. That burden is gone. It makes the job more enjoyable. (Jose)

> Respect is important to me, and I take pride in my work. The work is not glamorous, but my reputation and the reputation of the hotel depend on it. Over the years, I have received commendation letters from my managers and the GM [general manager]. I was selected as employee of the month twice. The hotel selected me as one of the trainers to work with new room attendants. It is important to teach new room attendants how to clean a room, but it is more important to understand the value of the job. Many of these young girls don't have skills and they are ashamed of the work, but I tell them they will not find a better-paying job for this type of work. (Margaret)

7. Upward mobility. In the workforce as a whole, either as a member of a union or represented by a union at their workplace, unionized workers typically earned substantially more than their nonunion counterparts. Unionized workers were also much more likely to have health insurance than nonunion workers, and more likely than nonunion workers to have a pension plan.

As is the case for the workforce as a whole, unionized workers in low-wage occupations earn substantially higher salaries and are much more likely to have health insurance and a pension plan than are nonunion workers in the same occupations. Overall, workers in low-wage occupations are less likely to have health insurance and pensions than the average worker in the total economy, but unionized workers in these same low-wage occupations have huge advantages over their nonunion counterparts.

These sentiments were universally expressed by every participant of this study. Participants described common experiences that cut across gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, and years of service. They knew these observations to be true, having personally experienced the economic differences between working at a union company and working at a nonunion company. Besides comprehensive health care coverage and higher wages, union membership also afforded research participants financial stability and income predictability through contractual seniority rights, which determined lay off and recall rights and assignment of available work. Participants enumerated the tangible improvements in their lives once they started to work at a union hotel.

> Union jobs pay higher wages and offer benefits. I worked in nonunion cleaning jobs and you were paid less, and if you were paid for all your hours 2 weeks in a row, you were lucky. Not until I worked in a union job did I receive medical and dental benefits. When raising a family, these benefits allowed you to plan your future without worrying about medical costs if a child became sick. It is all about

benefits and a living wage. With these in your pocket, you can move your life forward. (Ann)

The union allows all employees to improve their lives and the lives of their children. The union allows unskilled workers to move into the middle class. Nothing is certain in this world. The union provides security, and you can plan your life. Trust me, in nonunion restaurants the wages are a lot lower and forget about benefits. My kids will be professionals, and they will have a better life than me. Yes, when I think about it, I owe the union a lot for what I have in life. (Hector)

Job security and benefits are important for planning your life. Buying a home, a car, your kid's tuition. The union helps working people to step up in life. There are no guarantees in this world, but the union at least gives you hope for the future. (Jose)

If you don't have an education, life is tough. The union helped me get on with my life. It did not make it easy; it gave me base to move forward. (Jonathan)

The union holds management accountable for the workers. They negotiate a living wage with the hotels. This makes me able to plan for my children, and when I retire I know I have a pension to fall back on. Being a union member helps you get out of poverty, but you still have to work hard for a better life. (Margaret)

My life is good, my children will have a better life, and my grandchildren will have a better life than my children. I have children in college and they are doing well. I am proud of them. It's part of the American dream. It all starts with having a good job to plan your life from. Job security and stability is greater in a union job. It is not a perfect world being a union member, but looking back on my life, I owe a lot to this union. (Edwin)

8. Social responsibility and immigrant rights. Study participants perceived themselves as a collectivity bound together primarily by shared values and a common ideology. They recognized that union membership required high levels of local activism and extended the scope of union involvement beyond the workplace and into community and political affairs. They understood that they were expected to exert effort for the greater good without anticipating immediate, tangible personal rewards.

The union in San Francisco had brought greater attention to the strategy of "community-based organizing" that emphasized linking labor unions with social service

111

organizations, immigrant rights groups, and social protest. Despite the structural and

political challenges, immigrant workers have successfully organized in the last decade.

The immigrant experience resonated deeply with the study participants, either due to their

own personal experiences as recent immigrants or due to the experiences of family

members. The desire to assist this group to organize was a potent socially unifying theme

for these study participants—and was a selfless undertaking.

> For immigrants who have little education, a union job is a blessing. Union jobs pay better and have benefits. If you are an immigrant and you speak little English, the union becomes your voice on the job. I know from personal experience that recent immigrants who cannot speak English are at the mercy of their boss. If you have a good boss, you are lucky. If you have a bad boss, your paycheck is never right and benefits are a dream. (Hector)

> The strike was necessary because we were fighting for my future and the future of new employees, and other people of color and immigrants. These individuals are struggling to stay alive in a tough world, and often the only place they can turn to and trust is the union. (Ann)

> The union provides the ladder for poor people and immigrants to climb into the middle class. My parents were immigrants and worked all the time in jobs that paid little money, and there was always someone with their hand out for kickback. This never happens in a union hotel. (Jose)

> All immigrants know that the best job for someone arriving in the U.S. with no skills was a union job. A union job pays more and you have benefits. The bosses leave you alone when there is a union—no harassment. As an immigrant from the Philippines, I know what I am talking about when I tell harassment is common in nonunion places, especially for women. The union holds the hotel accountable and everyone behaves themselves. (Rosary)

> With no papers and English, bosses take advantage of you. They take advantage of you by having you work 10-, 12-hour days, no overtime, bounced checks, disrespect by the bosses, dangerous machines and factories close and you get no pay. It is better now, but it still happens. Bosses still take advantage. People need money to live. (Jane)

> In the restaurant industry, immigrants are abused. The restaurant industry attracts a lot of immigrants who are afraid to speak out for their rights, and there are so many abuses when it comes to pay and respect. It will only change when the union steps in to protect employee rights. You know, if you are an immigrant, it is hard to trust the government. (Edwin)

9. Community and political organizing. Participants appreciated the relationship between community organizing and political organizing in achieving the objective of the union, especially during contract negotiations. Political allies were instrumental for exerting pressure on the multiemployer group to continue negotiations during periods of heightened conflict and to return to the bargaining table during the ensuing strike. To ensure the support of the city council, union members, including participants of this study, engaged in political activities such as distributing campaign literature, soliciting door-to-door, fund raising, participating in get-out-the-vote drives on election day, and staffing telephone message centers.

Identification with the values of the union and a genuine concern for the union and their fellow union members encouraged participants to engage in union-sponsored activities that supported political candidates seeking office. These activities frequently dovetailed with activities sponsored by community-based organizations (e.g., health centers, legal aid centers, churches). Participants expressed a sense of solidarity and a shared ideology when engaged in these activities. The potential to achieve a "better tomorrow for themselves, their coworkers, and future union members" was a strong motivating factor for engaging in these activities. Their participation was often expressed in intrinsic motivational terms (experiencing satisfaction in "helping the less fortunate," "creating a better tomorrow," and "creating a better future for children") rather than in extrinsic motivational terms (higher wages, better benefits, longer vacation time). A genuine commitment to helping individuals, often nonunion individuals, to achieve greater economic security was the objective of their efforts.

> During the strike, the union was able to bring out support from many different groups—students, other unions, politicians, community groups, civil rights

113

groups, actors, and churches. We support their causes, and they support our cause. There is strength in numbers. (Ann)

In unity there is strength. The politicians supported the union during the strike because we supported many on the council when they run for office. The politicians in San Francisco listened when the union president spoke. The mayor was on the picket line because he wanted our votes and the votes of the other groups that supported us during the strike. (Jose)

It is all about politics. We help the politicians get reelected, and they help the union during a union demonstration. (Calvin)

Union members vote the union line and get other people to vote the union line. We canvass and operate phone banks during election time. I learned from my church the importance of organizing the community to make a difference, and I apply what I learned to support my union. The church helps the community to survive spiritually, and the union helps the community to survive financially. (Margaret)

The politicians rely on the hotel union to support them—for example, the mayor. This union is politically savvy. They support a range of groups representing different causes—from gay rights, environmentalists. In turn, these groups support the hotel workers when we need them. It is a cozy relationship that works well in San Francisco. (Richard)

There are a lot of causes in San Francisco, and a lot of people are politically active. The union supports many of these groups. When the union needs a show of force on an important issue, these groups support the union. I volunteer my time to working in a shelter food kitchen. (Jonathan)

10. Union organizing. Union organizing campaigns are highly contentious.

Increasingly, unions and employers fight bitterly over the future of the employment

relationship for the targeted workgroup. Study participants described first hand the

contentiousness of organizing nonunion hotel workers in San Francisco.

The usual catalyst for a union campaign is employees' frustration about their

wages and benefits or their inability to influence outcomes in the workplace. Recognizing

and identifying with the tenuousness of the nonunion worker is a potent motivator for

study participants to engage in union organizing in their free time or participate in union

114

information protests. The recognition by study participants that unionization aims to permanently change the employment relationship by institutionalizing collective bargaining as the method through which managers and employees deal with each other about future wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is a socially laudable objective.

> I have worked in nonunion restaurants, and it is a tough life. Now I work in a union hotel and I would not like to go back to a nonunion restaurant. Knowing the difference, I volunteer my time to help the union organize hotel and restaurants. I am giving back to the community what I gained from the union. (Hector)

> As I told you before, my luckiest day was when I got my union job. Why not share my luck by helping to unionize other employees? Why not invest my time in a great cause? The strike was important because we were fighting to make it easier for people to join the union. (Ann)

> The strike brought out the best in my coworkers. We were demonstrating to reject management's demand for give backs and helping other hotel workers to unionize. Card check was important because it made unionizing easier. When workers organize we are stronger. We have political muscle and we can make change happen. (Jose)

> Even in a nonunion restaurant, I was able to make a go of it. I hated the tip sharing because it was offensive and threatening. I can only imagine how a person who was really vulnerable felt under those circumstances. Knowing this, I surprised myself by the amount of time I volunteered on the picket line. The street demonstrations were an important unifying community event that increased worker solidarity. It was important for us to stand up to management when they demanded to eliminate benefits and to deny the rights of nonunion workers to join the union. (Richard)

> During the strike I often volunteered to picket the nonunion hotels and distribute union literature. It was an opportunity to educate workers on their rights to unionize. Helping workers to better understand the benefits of joining the union is like missionary work—you are saving souls. (Calvin)

> The union's fight to obtain card check was to make it easier for workers to unionize. The union is the last best hope for working men and women. (Jonathan)

> I believe that if all the hotels in San Francisco were union, the union would have greater power during negotiations, and if there were too many nonunion hotels, the union would lose power during negotiations. Card check would have made it easier for workers to join the union. (Margaret)

Unions are a good thing for workers. If all the hotels in San Francisco were unionized, a strike would be more successful since all the hotels would be closed. Power comes from numbers. (Rosary)

During the day I was on the picket line and at night I worked in nonunion restaurant—back to the restaurant where they still shared tips. You appreciate it more when you lose it and then get it back. Every employee should have the right to unionize. (Edwin)

Summary of Findings

As perceived and communicated by the participants of this study, the economic transformation in their lives was a direct result of union membership. It nurtured an immutable belief in the union movement and, in some participants, a missionary zeal to organize nonunion workers in order to extend the benefits of union membership. The desire to proselytize on behalf of the union was shared by all participants to one degree or another.

Chapter 4 has provided the synthesis of data collected from research participants that resulted from the phenomenological reduction process. Ten significant themes emerged from the data and represent the essences of the antecedents of union commitment in the everyday lives of San Francisco hotel workers during a major labor dispute between UNITE HERE and the hotel management employer group. These themes are summarized in Table 4-2. Chapter 5 discusses the study conclusions and recommendations for future research.

Table 4-2
Summary of Themes

Theme	Description
1. Union commitment	Participants recollected vivid and critical incidents that demonstrated commitment to the union across four dimensions: (1) union loyalty, which reflects a sense of pride in belonging to the union and an appreciation for the benefits of union membership; (2) responsibility to the union, which reflects members' willingness to engage in the day-to-day responsibilities of union membership; (3) willingness to work for the union, which refers to members' willingness to engage in activities that go beyond the daily routine of union membership; and (4) belief in unionism, which reflects members' beliefs in the concept of unionism.
2. Employee voice	In unionized organizations, employees are able to exercise their voice on immediate issues through grievance procedures and on long-term issues through participation in contract negotiations. Participants believed the grievance procedures in the union contract increased employee participation and problem solving on the shop floor. Because unionized employees were afforded a legally binding right to communicate their concerns to management without retaliation, this opportunity translated into greater employee engagement in the organization and a willingness to work with management in problem solving. This in turn created an enhanced sense of workplace justice and due process.
3. Instrumentality/ economic exchange	A fundamental obligation of the union, as perceived by all the participants, was the union's role to secure economic enhancements for its members. Economic enhancements were broadly perceived and defined by participants as wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Participants consistently juxtaposed their previous experiences employed in a nonunion setting with their current situation in a union setting and agreed that union representation was better. Without a hint of hyperbole, participants describe their union membership as transforming their economic life, which afforded them an opportunity to plan and organize their lives with a hope for a better tomorrow.
4. Social exchange	Participants perceived union support of them as individuals as an important determinant of their commitment to the union. Member perceptions of the union's concern for their well-being at work, the union's activity in the political arena, and the union's position on social issues were strong motivators that encouraged participants to invest their time and energy in union causes. Shared ideology and a common agenda strengthened union solidarity among participants.
5. Collective bargaining agreement	Seniority issues cut across several of the economic and noneconomic bargaining issues and appear in the vast majority of union contracts. Seniority may entitle employees to higher pay levels or to overtime, preferences on vacation periods, longer vacations, eligibility for promotions and transfers, and insulation against layoffs. For these reasons, participants were ardent supporters of strict seniority guidelines in the workplace. Adherence to seniority rules was perceived as ensuring fairness and equity for determining the distribution of various benefits associated with employment.
6. Job satisfaction	Participants indicated that union influence increased the likelihood that they would experience two dimensions of job satisfaction: extrinsic satisfaction with terms of employment, such as wages and benefits, and intrinsic satisfaction with aspects of the work itself, such as the degree of employee autonomy. Participants associated higher wages, comprehensive health benefits, job

117

Theme	Description
	security, and other benefits to the union and experienced greater satisfaction with these external benefits. In addition, union members experienced more positive feelings towards their work due to the union's contractual involvement in the work setting. This aspect included the union's ability to positively influence how work was performed and the volume of work completed, as well as the union's commitment to justice and dignity for workers.
7. Upward mobility	Consistently, participants described union membership as a path to upward mobility for themselves and their coworkers. Economic stability brought about by job security allowed study participants to plan for their future and the future of their families. A legally binding contract, with all its provisions, replaced the uncertainty inherent in a nonunion environment. The higher wages and benefits afforded by union work provided participants an opportunity for a path out of poverty.
8. Social responsibility and immigrant rights	Participants perceived themselves as a collective unit bound together primarily by shared values and a common ideology. They recognized that union membership required high levels of local activism. The distinction between workplace union activities and community-based activities—especially political activities—was often blurred, since the underpinning ideology was similar: a focus on worker rights and social justice issues. The extension of unionized worker rights into the immigrant community and into the factories and restaurants where they work was a logical progression for the union and was reflected in the interviews. Participants understood that they were expected to exert effort for the greater good of their community without anticipating immediate, tangible personal rewards. Participants drew a connection between engaging in political campaigns that championed social and economic justice issues, immigrant rights, and greater union density and their present and future well-being.
9. Community and political organizing	Participants appreciated the relationship between community organizing and political organizing in achieving the objective of the union, especially during contract negotiations, where the union sought to achieve its objectives by enlisting the support of politicians. The image of Mayor Newsome on television and in the newspapers supporting the union on the picket line was not lost on the members. In turn, when the union asked its members to assist the mayor or the city council at election time, the request appeared as a fair transaction. Issues important to the community where many hotel workers lived were issues the union also supported. Identifying and assisting politicians who also supported these issues was widely supported by the participants of this study.
10. Union organizing	Participants supported increasing union density within the hotel and within all employment sectors in San Francisco. Greater union density was seen as beneficial both intrinsically and extrinsically. Intrinsically, participants strongly believed the union movement, if expanded, would improve the lives of similarly situated individuals and found work promoting the union to be personally satisfying. Extrinsically, the participants recognized the adage of "strength in numbers," i.e., that if the entire hotel industry in San Francisco were unionized, it would level the playing field among the hotels and result in improved contracts. Participants were also aware that by participating in political campaigns they could influence election outcomes favorable to union interests.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An extensive review of the literature from the research disciplines of industrial psychology, organizational development, social psychology, and industrial relations shows a high degree of inconsistency in the domain of union commitment. Investigators have formulated hypotheses from theoretical constructs that do not clearly distinguish among the likely dimensions of union commitment. Moreover, existing models have focused upon a handful of variables, leaving open the likelihood that key antecedents of union commitment have been overlooked. Rather than mechanically parsing the union commitment/participation process into analytical units for the purpose of testing or developing predictive models, this study addressed the need to explore that process from the perspective of the union members who have directly experienced it.

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations derived from this research study on the phenomenon of union commitment and its underlying antecedents from the vantage point of union members' participation in union activities and their perceptions of union instrumentality, their experience of union support, and their attitudes towards the union movement at large. It begins by presenting five conclusions drawn from the study results in the context of the existing literature.

Conclusion 1: Support for a Four-Dimensional Construct of Union Commitment

Research results support the widely accepted four dimensions underpinning the union commitment construct: (a) union loyalty, (b) responsibility to the union, (c) willingness to work for the union, and (d) belief in unionism.

In developing the construct of union commitment, Gordon et al. (1980) relied on a commonly accepted definition of organizational commitment as the variable that binds an individual to the organization. Based on their research, they suggested that union commitment was best characterized by four dimensions: (1) union loyalty, which is a sense of pride in belonging to the union and an appreciation for the benefits of union membership; (2) responsibility to the union, which is members' willingness to engage in the day-to-day responsibilities of union membership; (3) willingness to work for the union, which is members' willingness to engage in activities that go beyond the daily routine of union membership; and (4) a belief in unionism, which is members' beliefs in the concept of unionism.

The current research supports this widely accepted four-part construct defining union commitment. Participants provided the researcher with vivid critical incidents that demonstrated commitment to the union across these four dimensions. Their personal sacrifices and direct involvement in supporting the union during the negotiations and resulting strike were borne out by their personal experiences. The study also revealed that the existence of these four dimensions was generally a precursor to member participation in union activities, as these dimensions were primary motivating factors in the participants' decision to support their union, Local 2, by engaging in activities during the past industrial relations dispute and contract negotiations. In addition, these four dimensions further supported participants' behavioral involvement in the operation and activities of the union, including participating in the democratic union process, discussing union activities with union members, attending union meetings, and assisting in orienting new members to the union and the hotel. The research tends to support the widely held

120

view that union commitment is the primary determinant of union participation (Bamberger et al., 1999; Fuller & Hester, 1998; Gordon et al., 1980).

All participants of this study were proud to identify with their union's objectives for social justice, and this translated into support for the union's efforts to achieve these objectives. Loyalty was explicit when study participants stated that they were proud to be union members and was implicit in their tone of voice or observable enthusiasm for being a part of a larger social movement dedicated to furthering the interests of working men and women striving to raise themselves out of poverty.

The perspective of the 10 participants reflected recognition that the success of the union's efforts to improve working conditions on the shop floor required a day-to-day vigilance by all members to ensure management adhered to contractual provisions. An innate sense of responsibility as stewards of the union contract at the work site is in keeping with Gordon et al.'s (1980) research on the antecedents underpinning union commitment. Research participants perceived challenging contractual violations as their duty to protect negotiated rights for themselves, their coworkers, and future union employees. Their sense of collective bargaining history and memory extended to the past, the present, and the future. This sense of generational history and responsibility is in keeping with the research of Newton and Shore (1992).

In keeping with the Gordon et al. (1980) model of commitment, research participants expressed a genuine willingness to work for the union in a capacity that went beyond the day-to-day responsibilities of union membership. These activities included (a) participating in demonstrations in recognition of nonunion San Francisco hotel workers attempting to organize; (b) volunteering to picket at various hotels in the city;

121

(c) informational leafleting in support of living-wage initiatives; (d) campaigning for candidates recognized by the union as supporting union policies; and (e) identifying and championing programs and policies reflective of their own values and beliefs.

To a significant degree, participants in this study expressed a strong ideological affinity for the underlying concept of unionism. Participants identified with and internalized union ideology and, based on this belief structure, participated in various union activities. A value-based afflation with the union was predicated on congruence between the values of the union and the participants. This ideological identification with the tenets of the union served as a significant factor when describing participant commitment to the union. This finding is similar to the role played by ideology in the antecedents of union commitment in the research of Newton et al. (1992).

Conclusion 2: Value-Based Identification

The research supports the premise that union commitment extends beyond either economic exchange or social exchange and is embedded in a value-based identification with the goals and the mission of the union.

This study identified a nexus between participants' perceptions of instrumentality and pro-union support and their willingness to significantly engage in union activities. The union's ability to negotiate terms and conditions of employment favorable to its members clearly was appreciated by the participants in this study. However, it did not appear to supplant the participant's appreciation for the union's ideological orientation to issues of social justice, economic equality, political activism, and shop floor democracy. This identification with the objectives of the union appears to have created, among participants of this study, an affective commitment to the union—an emotional tie that

122

was equal to or greater than instrumental commitment in motivating research subjects to participate in union activities.

Based upon the premise that when a union fulfills the material needs of its members, it thereby signals concern for their well-being, Tetrick and her colleagues (2007) explored the possibility that perceived union support and union instrumentality were connected to each other. The findings suggested to Tetrick et al. (2007) that "social exchange elements (i.e., union loyalty and support) of the union-member relationship are more directly related to participation than the economic elements traditionally emphasized in perceptions of instrumentality" (p. 825).

Union commitment researchers like Shore et al. (1994) and Tetrick (1995) utilized Blau's (1964) distinction and equated economic exchange with the concept of union instrumentality, and social exchange with the concept of union support (Shore et al., 1994; Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995; Tetrick, 1995). In addition, their research indicates that instrumentality yields a calculative form of union commitment, while perceived union support creates affective bonds between a member and other members, taken individually and collectively as "the union" (Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995, p. 670).

The research supports this finding; however, the data also indicate that commitment to the union is heavily reinforced by values that are shared among union members, notably by their common adherence to pro-union attitudes. Consequently, Blau's (1964) dichotomy between economic and social exchange has often been transmuted into a distinction between union instrumentality and pro-union attitudes.

123

Conclusion 3: Enhanced Union Commitment

Through Both Social and Economic Exchange

The research identified a relationship between social exchange (union support) and economic exchange as promoting and enhancing union commitment.

Participants in the study perceived that both social exchange (union support) and economic exchange (instrumentality) promoted union commitment; one factor did not trump the other, but instead they worked in harmony. The relationship between these two factors did not appear as distinct and immutable functions of the union, but rather they were perceived by the participants of the study as conjoined responsibilities of the union. The economic exchange function of the union (improved wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment) reinforced in the minds of the participants the value the union placed on members' well-being. Conversely, the social exchange function of the union (the perception that the union is committed to the members and cares about them as individuals) reinforced in the minds of the participants the value the union placed on improving their economic well-being. In reaching these conclusions, participants developed a deeper sense of obligation and commitment to the union.

The economic exchange function and the social exchange function of the union were also perceived by participants of this study as embedded in the union's ideology of expanding employee representation in the workplace. Study participants perceived union organizing of nonunion hotel workers in San Francisco as a process of extending the benefits of unionization to individuals who had the most to gain from joining the union. In this context, participants perceived the benefits derived from both the social exchange

124

and economic exchange functions of the union as critical reasons for supporting and participating in union activities.

Participant observations suggest that perceived support for the hotel may also extend or influence increased support for the union. Participants expressed a belief about the extent their union was committed to them and the union's ability to improve the hotel work environment by engaging management to adopt practices favored by the union membership. The participants of this study reported a greater willingness to work for the union and responsibility to the union, related to the union's ability to achieve desired outcomes.

Blau's (1964) model directly considered interactions between parties. Blau first noted that in economic exchanges, individual agents reach a common understanding in which each of the parties in the relationship agrees to fulfill specific obligations. These "deals" are narrow and short-term in nature, they can be enforced, and there is no incentive for either party to perform beyond the specified terms. By contrast, social exchanges involve "diffuse future obligations, not precisely specified ones, and the nature of the return cannot be bargained, but must be left to the discretion of the one who makes it" (Blau, 1964, p. 93). Because social exchanges are not enforceable, they entail an element of interpersonal trust that is absent from economic exchanges (p. 113). On this basis, Blau argued that social exchange generates long-term, affective attachments, writing that "only social exchange tends to engender feelings of personal obligation, gratitude and trust: purely economic exchange as such does not" (p. 94).

Conclusion 4: Job Satisfaction from Union Affiliation

The research supports the premise that union members derive both intrinsic

satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction from their union affiliation.

In interviews when describing the inherent benefits of belonging to the union, study participants clearly distinguished between extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction. For the participants, extrinsic satisfaction stemmed from the union's capacity to negotiate material goods on their behalf. Material goods was defined by participants as higher wages, expanded health benefits, a more generous pension plan, additional holidays, or increases in sick days, personal days, or vacation days. These material enhancements were the "bread-and-butter" expectation of being a union member, according to study participants, and they received great pleasure enumerating the improvements in these areas from one contract negotiation to the next.

Conversely, study participants also recognized the union's influence at the work site and the beneficial effect its presence had on the quality of work life. Quality of work life issues enhanced intrinsic job satisfaction for participants. Quality of work life revolved around issues related to (a) the content and volume of work performed; (b) seniority and its impact on job assignments, layoffs and recall rights, concerns associated with workplace democracy and employee voice, and perceptions of justice and due process when resolving problems; and (c) health, safety, and respect issues. The union's vigilance in mandating and defending these rights ensured a more stable, predictable, and supportive work environment for study participants.

The perspectives of the 10 participants in this study parallel the views of both Bamberger et al. (1999) and Gordon et al. (1980) that, although a wide range of job-

related and organization-related variables have been posited as predictors of union commitment, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two most prevalent factors within the literature. Intuitively, it would appear that both job satisfaction and organizational commitment would display inverse correlations with union commitment. Nevertheless, union commitment research suggests that the connections are more complicated than might be assumed.

Satisfaction with elements of the work itself, such as the degree of employee autonomy when performing work and the ability to influence work-related decisions on how work was performed, were areas of intrinsic job satisfaction identified by participants. Participants praised the union's intervention at the work site and how it ensured an employee voice in decisions that affected their lives.

Negotiated work rules, in combination with the evolution of past practices at the workplace, positively affected intrinsic job satisfaction for study participants by creating predictability and consistency in job assignments, generally through a transparent system of seniority rules. In addition, knowledge of performing work that exceeded guest expectations—whether it was a waiter serving guests, a bellman assisting guests, a housekeeper completing her quota of rooms, or any combination of job classifications creating a warm and friendly guest environment—was an important factor in enhancing intrinsic job satisfaction. According to participants, the imposition of predictable structure and a sense of employee control in daily work routines enhanced their sense of intrinsic job satisfaction when performing their work.

Participants stated that their affiliation with the union increased their job satisfaction by creating a work environment that ensured adherence to provisions of the

contract protecting employee wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. The union contract imposed standards of conduct and influenced management behavior, ensuring respect and dignity for union members. Participants perceived the union as a force for protecting the rights of workers against management excesses and creating a stable work environment.

As part of their landmark study, Gordon et al. (1980) found that both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction were positively related to the "loyalty" dimension of their commitment model, but that extrinsic job satisfaction was negatively associated with the other three dimensions of their construct. This suggests the existence of a connection between job satisfaction and perceptions of union instrumentality, but it also reveals that dissatisfaction with conditions of employment is connected to pro-union attitudes and intentions to participate in union activities.

This research supports Gordon's et al.'s (1980) observation that dissatisfaction with conditions of employment is connected to pro-union attitudes and intentions to participate in union activities and may be attributed, in this instance, to faith in the union's determination to resolve workplace issues. Based on participants' past interactions with their union, they described various workplace examples where the union intervened to correct a work-related problem. These incidents were relayed by the participants with considerable pride in the union's ability to work with management to improve working conditions. Employee dissatisfaction with the employment conditions and the union's ability to achieve a positive response for members with a grievance only enhanced the union's stature and effectiveness in the estimation of the study participants. It appears from conversations with study participants that union member dissatisfaction

with working conditions was to be expected on occasion and did not diminish their

commitment and support for the union, because based on their past experience with the

union, the underlying reasons why employees were dissatisfied would be ameliorated. It

was unclear whether union member support, pro-union attitudes, and willingness to

participate in union activities would remain high if the union were less effective in

rectifying the cause of employee dissatisfaction.

Conclusion 5: Identification with the Union's Social and Economic Agenda

Member commitment to the union is influenced by an ideological identification

with the union's social and economic agenda that transcends intrinsic or

instrumentality considerations.

This research identified an ideological commitment to the union predicated on

values and belief-based bonds, which they internalized, and these bonds were a

motivational factor in their support for and participation in union activities. For study

participants, support for the union was derived from their identification with both the

ideology and the beliefs of the union. Participant discussions during the interview process

often described the necessity of an active union membership, a membership where union

members recognize their collective responsibility for each other's financial and emotional

well-being.

In their review of the research literature on union commitment, Snape et al.

(2000) concluded that there is "the possibility, particularly for activists, that the

relationship with their union transcends even social exchange and, being based on shared

values and ideological identification, becomes a 'covenantal relationship'" (p. 224). The

current study tends to support that observation. Study participants frequently described

129

and defined their relationship with the union as being more than a "business relationship" and more a social alliance between the union and its members to fulfill a shared dream to provide all working people a "foot up" on the "economic ladder." Voluntary participation in union activities, including a unanimous strike vote, is indicative of the personalization of the relationship. The research parallels Snape et al.'s (2000) finding that covenantal commitment closely resembles pro-union attitudes, but it also takes into account feelings of solidarity among union members based upon shared values and ideology.

As noted earlier, Snape and his colleagues (2000) distinguished between union commitment grounded in social exchange (which they would later operationalize as union support) and covenantal commitment. Clarifying the term "covenantal," Snape et al. (2000) stated, "Here, members are prepared to participate in the union out of intrinsic motivation and a genuine concern for the welfare of union and other members rather than simply because they perceive a favorable exchange, whether economic or social" (p. 224).

The research suggests that the covenantal relationship may extend beyond "concern for the welfare of union and other members" to include nonunion members. Interviews with study participants clearly demonstrated a concern for individuals performing similar work under less favorable nonunion circumstances. Within the study group, there was a consensus that the benefits of unionization must be expanded, and it was the responsibility of the union and the membership to achieve this objective. The belief in increasing union density was more ideologically driven than pragmatically driven. Pragmatically, greater union density in the San Francisco hotel sector would enhance union bargaining strength at the negotiating table, but this advantage appeared to

130

be overshadowed by union ideology and a social justice orientation to expand the benefits of unionization to individuals struggling to make a living and raise their families.

The issues of card check and neutrality had a central role in the previous contract negotiations. Card check is a process whereby nonunion employees are able to elect a union without a secret ballot election. Neutrality, on the other hand, is a contractual arrangement between the union and the employer that requires management to assume a neutral position prior to and during the card check process. The two processes benefit nonunion employees by simplifying and expediting the unionization process. For employees already unionized, these provisions have only a marginal immediate personal benefit. Nevertheless, the 10 participants supported the concept of creating a process that allowed nonunion employees to unionize efficiently and were willing to strike over the absence of this provision in the union contract.

Supporting this provision was based on union ideology and social and economic justice considerations, rather than instrumentality considerations. It appears that the participants were guided by a sense of support for the union derived from their identification with the ideology, values, and political orientation of the union. Study participants appeared bound to the union more by an abiding belief in unionism, and less based on the rewards associated with union representation. Coupled with an ideological identification with the tenets of the union movement, participants also viewed the struggles of nonunion employees from the perspective of the immigrant and minority experience. Therefore, participant support for furthering the rights of nonunion employees may also stem from a personal identification with these struggles. All 10

interviews contained personal accounts describing economic and personal injustices by employers in nonunion settings.

The idea of the social and economic agenda taking precedence is not new. In 1975, Flanders wrote:

> Trade unions have always had two faces, sword of justice and vested interest. But it is the second, rather than the first, that is now turned most frequently to public view. More than that, it has become accepted as their normal, natural image by unions themselves. It is this, more than anything else, which has been ultimately responsible for their loss of sympathy. The trade union movement deepened its grip on public life in its aspect as a sword of justice. When it is no longer seen to be this, when it can no longer count on anything but its own power to withstand assault, it becomes extremely vulnerable. *The more so since it is as a sword of justice rather than a vested interest that it generates loyalties and induces sacrifices among its own members, and these are important foundations of its strength and vitality.* (Flanders, 1975, p. 15)

There is much in Flanders' (1975) account that describes the current challenges confronting many unions today. Ideology and a purposeful activism to advance the benefits of a union workplace to nonunion employees were for some participants a life mission and, for others, a social cause worth supporting and participating in. Participant willingness to engage in union activities outside of work—recognition picketing, demonstrations in support of other unions, engaging in job actions to further the rights of nonunion employees—lend support that pro-union attitudes exert a strong, if not stronger, effect on member commitment than do perceptions of instrumentality.

Bamberger et al. (1999) suggested that the service exchange approach with an emphasis on instrumentality does not provide a sufficient basis for engaging member commitment and active involvement in union activities. It appears from this study, supported by the literature (Shore et al., 1994; Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995; Tetrick, 1995),

132

that a strategy based on social exchange pro-union attitudes, member solidarity, and a social purpose would garner greater union member participation in union activities.

Conclusion 6: Commonality of Experiences Shared by the Research Participants

Participants in this study perceived themselves as collectivity bound together primarily by shared values, economic and social experiences, a common ideology, the immigrant experience, and a relentless striving for upward mobility while confronting financial adversity. Keenly aware that union membership obligated local community and political activism, participants willingly and in some cases eagerly extended the scope of union involvement beyond the workplace and into community and political affairs. There was a general expectation arising out of a commonality of shared interests and experiences that they were expected to exert effort for the greater good without anticipating immediate, tangible personal rewards.

Study participants described similar employment experiences in the workplace stemming from working in organizations where job security and health and welfare benefits were nonexistent and where weekly scheduling and payroll abuses were the norm and not the exception. The tenuousness of the employment relationship in these nonunion, menial jobs was also marked by the absence of employee voice to address these problems. Study participants consistently described these positions as "dead end" both in employment opportunities and in securing financial upward mobility.

Participants described shared common experiences related to the vagaries inherent in their standard of living that cut across gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, and years of service, which they associated with the uncertainties of employment in low-skilled jobs. The inability to plan for the future due to the absence of regularly scheduled work,

133

minimum wages that provided a subsistence standard of living, depleted savings associated with medical and dental expenses due to the absence of medical and dental benefits, and recurring debt due to irregular work were all experienced by study participants while working in nonunion jobs.

Suggestions for Future Research and Practice

In drawing conclusions from a single localized union study consisting of 10 participants, it is important to recognize that no two unions are exactly alike. Unions operate differently in different locations and are affected by the political, social, and economic climates. In addition, unions operate differently according to their history and leadership. Even within the same national union, no two locals are the same. In trying to apply the study findings, we must proceed with caution. With this caveat in mind, recommendations are offered for furthering the exploration of the antecedents of union commitment and the effect these variables have on member participation in union activities.

- The influence union members exert on each other at the work site to support the union and engage in union activities poses a rich area of exploration from the perspective of socialization practices. This area of study should include member efforts in socializing new and current members and the role the union has in this process.

- Little is known regarding union member expectations and the perceived psychological contract that exists between union members and their union. When the union violates the psychological contract, what is the effect on member perceptions?

134

- The present research establishes a base for further research. Measurements can be designed to evaluate union efforts to increase membership, support commitment, and support participation predicated on the research described in this paper.

- A broad swath of the literature on union commitment and member attitudes toward their union is narrow in scope. This qualitative study suggests the importance of further exploring, in depth, the nature of the relationship between union members and their union.

- Future research should focus on comparing union activists to rank-and-file members to determine if similar perceptions and behaviors exist. Some areas for comparison include the perceived level of identification with union ideology versus instrumentality and the relative importance of social exchange versus economic exchange.

- Even though the participants were involved in various union activities, there were differences in frequency of participation. Future research should explore the conceptualization and measurement of union participation.

- A longitudinal study utilizing this same population would assist in determining the effects of a constricting city economy and the effects a depressed hotel economy on participant support for the union. This type of environment may shift employee perceptions on the dimensions of social exchange and economic exchange.

- The industrial relations climate in San Francisco has a rich history of member activism, reflecting the activist approach to politics in the city itself. This is especially true in the hotel segment of the economy. Its approach to collective

bargaining is member centered, and it is assertive in representing its members'

interests. Therefore, conducting similar research in a different city would provide

a basis for evaluating the generalizability of the research results.

This research will also assist unions in understanding that commitment is a function of a

union's instrumentality in meeting not only the needs of its members, but also the needs

of the union.

Conclusion

The passage of the Wagner Act in 1935 heralded the potential democratization of

the U.S. workplace through the process of collective bargaining. Individuals interviewed

for this study stated that union membership and active participation in the collective

bargaining process were directly responsible for their improved standard of living and the

opportunity for upward economic and social mobility. Through the collective bargaining

process, study participants realized higher incomes, the reality of equality on the shop

floor, improved working conditions, and a system of due process, which resulted in fair

employee and management relations. The perception of their union as a force for

achieving economic and social justice in both the workplace—through the collective

bargaining process—and in the community—through political organizing—translated

into member support and participation in union activities.

The lifeblood of any union is its membership. Active member participation in

various union activities, informal and formal, ensures greater union growth and societal

influence. Enhanced union commitment increases the likelihood of union member

participation in union activities: holding union office, volunteering for organizing

activities, assisting in political campaigns, and advocating for increased unionization.

The research suggests that an important outcome of commitment is greater member participation in both formal and informal union activities. An enhanced understanding of the underlying dynamics of this process may assist organized labor to reverse the decline of union membership.

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APPENDIX:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. How many years have you worked in the hotel industry?

2. How many years have you worked in unionized hotels in San Francisco?

3. How many years have you been a union member?

4. Are you a delegate or assistant delegate?

5. Were you a union member during the last contract negotiations?

6. What were your most vivid recollections from the last contract negotiations?

7. Were you on strike?

8. Why did you strike?

9. What emotions were you experiencing when you were on strike?

10. What were the issues between the hotels and the union?

11. What do you feel was the most important goal for the union to achieve during contract negotiations?

12. Were card check and neutrality important issues for you?

13. If so, why?

14. Do you believe that the union can change the lives of working men and women?

15. If so, how?

16. Is it important to you that all hotel workers are members of the union?

17. If yes, why?

18. Do you believe your values and the values of the union are the same?