Relations industrielles
Industrial Relations

The Predictors of Unmet Demand for Unions in Non-Union Workplaces: Lessons from Australia

Les prédicteurs de la demande non comblée pour la syndicalisation dans les milieux de travail non syndiqués : une perspective australienne

Los predictores de la demanda insatisfecha de sindicalización en los lugares de trabajo non sindicalizados: una perspectiva australiana

Amanda Pyman, Julian Teicher, Brian Cooper and Peter Holland

Volume 72, Number 2, Spring 2017

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1040401ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/1040401ar

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (print)
1703-8138 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Pyman, A., Teicher, J., Cooper, B. & Holland, P. (2017). The Predictors of Unmet Demand for Unions in Non-Union Workplaces: Lessons from Australia. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, *72*(2), 270–293. https://doi.org/10.7202/1040401ar

Article abstract

In this study, we examine the predictors of unmet demand for unions in non-union workplaces, using the *Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (*AWRPS*). Unmet demand is defined here, as those employees in non-union workplaces who would be likely to join a union if one were available. We argue that this is the first study in Australia to examine the predictors of unmet demand in non-union workplaces, and, that this is an important line of inquiry given a rise in non-union workplaces and never members in Australia, alongside declining union density and membership numbers. Drawing on three strands of existing literature, namely the individual propensity to unionize, the rise and characteristics of non-union workplaces and alternative forms of representation, and, managerial responsiveness to employees and unions, we develop and test four hypotheses.

Our results show, controlling for a range of personal, job and workplace characteristics, that there are two significant predictors of the willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces: perceived union instrumentality (Hypothesis 2) and perceived managerial responsiveness to employees (Hypothesis 4), whereby employees who perceive that managers lack responsiveness are more likely to want to join a union if one were available.

These results show that unions must try to enhance their instrumentality in workplaces and could be more effective in recruiting if they targeted never members. The results also show that unions need to have some gauge (measure) of how responsive managers are to employees, and that they can leverage poor responsiveness of managers for membership gain and the extension of organizing. In the final analysis, an understanding of the predictors of unmet demand for unions in non-union workplaces has implications for Australian unions' servicing and organizing strategies, and for their future growth prospects.

 © DÉPARTEMENT DES RELATIONS INDUSTRIELLES, UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL - ISSN 1703-8138 – RI/IR, 72-2, 2017, 270-293

The Predictors of Unmet Demand for Unions in Non-Union Workplaces: Lessons from Australia

Amanda Pyman, Julian Teicher, Brian Cooper and Peter Holland

The difficulties faced by trade unions in many developed nations have been well documented. Underlying problems of declining union membership and loss of institutional power are two major challenges: the growing numbers of employees and workplaces that are non-union, and, declining instrumentality. If unions are to successfully renew, one lever of power is potential recruits: employees who would like to join a union if one were available. In this paper, we build on the union joining literature by examining, for the first time using Australian data, the predictors of unmet demand for unions in non-union workplaces; that is, people who would be willing to join a union if one were established in their workplace. Controlling for a range of personal, job and workplace characteristics, we find two significant predictors of willingness to join a union if one were available: perceived union instrumentality and a perceived lack of managerial responsiveness to employees.

KEYWORDS: non-union workplaces, unmet demand, willingness to join a union, union instrumentality, managerial responsiveness to employees, union organizing strategy.

Introduction

The difficulties faced by trade unions in Advanced Market Economies (AMEs) (Towers, 1997; Kohler and Jimenez, 2015; Kretsos and Vogiatzoglou, 2015), including a decline in density and membership, reduced bargaining power and political influence (e.g. Gall, 2005), and the rise of 'never members', that is, employees who have never become union members (Bryson and Gomez, 2005;

Amanda Pyman, Professor, Department of Management, Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria, Australia (Amanda.Pyman@deakin.edu.au).

Julian Teicher, Professor, School of Business and Law, CQ University, Melbourne, Australia (Julian.Teicher@cqu.edu.au).

Brian Cooper, Associate Professor, Department of Management, Monash University, Victoria, Australia (Brian.Cooper@monash.edu.au).

Peter Holland, Associate Professor, Department of Management, Monash University, Victoria, Australia (Peter.Holland@monash.edu.au).

Haynes *et al.*, 2008), have been studied extensively. More generally, unions face a problem of declining instrumentality—that is, a perceived decline in efficiency and effectiveness, manifest in concessions on wages and benefits alongside relentless change in labour markets (Lévesque and Murray, 2006). If trade unions in AMEs are to successfully renew and respond to changed circumstances, what needs to be done? One response is to look to new sets of resources and 'levers of power' (Lévesque and Murray, 2006). One lever is 'potential recruits' or unmet demand: employees who would like to join a union but are not union members (Pyman *et al.*, 2009). Examining the unorganized as a potential source of renewal is an important line of inquiry following several decades of largely unsuccessful union revitalization programs in countries like Canada, the US, the UK and Australia.

This paper investigates 'unmet demand'[1] in Australia by focusing on the predictors of employees' willingness to join a union in non-unionized workplaces if a union were available. Using a national survey of employees, the Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey (AWRPS), we address two important research questions: 1- To what extent are non-union members willing to join a union in non-union workplaces?; 2- What predicts non-union members' willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces?

Our paper is organized as follows. Section one provides an overview of trade unions and the institutional framework governing industrial relations in Australia. The second section outlines the theoretical debates relevant to willingness to join a union in unionized and non-unionized workplaces, in order to contextualize the study's objectives and to develop hypotheses. The third section outlines the survey, variables and measures before turning to a summary of the findings and a discussion in sections four and five respectively.

Trade Unions and the Institutional Framework in Australia

The most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016) data estimate that there are 1.6 million union members in Australia (August 2014) with a union density of 15.1% (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016). Both the number of union members and union density have been steadily declining since the 1990s (Teicher *et al.*, 2013). Of particular relevance are the high proportion of never members; 90% of persons aged 15-19 years who have never been a union member and more than half of all other age cohorts who have also never joined a union (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016). These findings underscore the untapped potential for unions to recruit among non-union workplaces and especially younger workers.

Aside from the challenges of declining membership and density, Australian unions have also experienced a fall in the number of working days lost (to disputation), low real wage growth and a steady decline in collective agreements.

The latter is indicative of a declining capacity of unions to engage in collective bargaining (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016). This decline is all the more surprising because Australian unions benefit from a favourable institutional environment that enables unions to compel employers to participate in collective bargaining provided that the union can establish coverage rights and demonstrate that it has members in that workplace.

Having provided an overview of the challenges facing Australian trade unions, we now introduce the evolving institutional framework within which they operate. Historically, the Australian system provided for compulsory conciliation and arbitration. However, in effect, for most of the twentieth century, this was a system where collective bargaining operated at the margins and arbitrated industrial awards were dominant. Beginning in the 1980s, political pressures for greater labour market flexibility have seen the scope for legally binding arbitration vastly reduced and a continuing shift toward a system based on workplace level bargaining in which unions are optional bargaining agents. Whilst there have been some constants, at the national level, there has been nearly continuous legislative innovation since 1996.

The first period of change, 1996-2007, came with the election of a conservative (Liberal-National Party) government and the end of a partnership (Prices and Incomes Accord) between unions and the social democratic (Labor Party) government that was first elected in 1983. The *Workplace Relations Act 2006 (Cth.)*, *inter alia*, weakened unions and industrial tribunals through reforms aimed at creating a more competitive labour market, including: providing for individual contracts that could undercut legislated minimum standards; forcing a further shift to enterprise-level bargaining by restricting the arbitrated award safety net of minimum wages and conditions to 20 'allowable matters'; reducing the capacity for unions to organize and represent workers and bargain collectively; and, creating stronger rights for employers to lockout their workforce. Together, it has been argued that these measures sent a message encouraging employers to adopt hostile anti-union strategies (Wright and Lansbury, 2014; Cooper *et al.*, 2009).

In 2005, the conservative government embarked on a second and more radical wave of labour market re-regulation known as '*Work Choices*'. This legislation decentralized and decollectivized industrial relations further, imposing severe restrictions on union activity and, again, curtailing the powers of industrial tribunals; for example, arbitration was barred even where this was included in a dispute resolution procedure negotiated by the parties and included in their agreement (Stewart, 2006; Wright and Lansbury, 2014).

Following the enactment of '*Work Choices*' and a high profile union campaign led by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) (Muir, 2008), the Australian Labor Party was elected in 2007 and held office until 2013. While the earlier

Accord partnership was not renewed, unions exerted considerable influence in and over labour market regulation deliberations, leading to the passage of a new statute - the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth.)*. Notable changes implemented in the *2009 Act* were: an extended list of National Employment Standards (NES); requirements that enterprise agreements meet a 'better off overall' test[2]; and, restoration of employee unfair dismissal rights (Wright and Lansbury, 2014).

The subsequent defeat of the federal Labor government in 2013 produced a resurgence of discussion of the need for further legislation to curb union activity. However, without a majority in both houses of parliament, the conservative government has been unable to achieve substantive legislative change thus far (Forsyth, 2016). However, re-election of the conservative government in July 2016 has seen a re-affirmation of their commitment to further legislative change. In particular, the recent reports of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the *Workplace Relations Framework* and the Royal Commission into *Trade Union Governance and Corruption* are likely to encourage the government in its efforts to enact new laws that will adversely impact on unions[3] and the institutional framework within which they operate (Forsyth, 2016; Wright, 2016).

This section has provided an overview of the position of Australian trade unions and the evolving institutional framework in which they operate in order to contextualise the central issue of this paper: the predictors of union joining in non-union workplaces in an environment where non-union workplaces are an overwhelming majority and there is an increasing proportion of never members (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016). We now turn to the key theoretical debates that underpin an examination of the predictors of employees' willingness to join in non-union workplaces.

Predictors of Union Joining: Debates

The literature on union membership is substantial. However, for our purposes, three strands are relevant. These strands are: 1- the individual propensity to unionize; 2- the rise and characteristics of non-union workplaces and alternative forms of employee representation (employee voice); and, 3- managerial responsiveness to employees and unions. We consider each of these research strands in turn.

The Individual Propensity to Unionize

There is an extensive literature examining the factors affecting an individual's propensity to unionize in predominantly unionized workplaces (e.g. Adams, 1974; Deery and De Cieri, 1991; Farber and Saks, 1980; Fiorito and Greer, 1982; Kochan, 1979; Charlwood 2002; Cullinane and Dundon, 2014). Charlwood

(2002: 469) summarized this literature into three models encompassing both employee and workplace characteristics: dissonance, utility and political views. As our survey instrument was focused on workplace characteristics and attitudes, we did not include a measure of individuals' political views. On the one hand, the absence of this individual measure may be regarded as a limitation of our empirical work given evidence that political values do influence confidence in unions and given that political views and the link to union joining have been previously examined (Blanden and Machin, 2003; Frangi and Hennebert, 2015; Riley, 1997). On the other hand, this limitation is in part offset by evidence that immediate work attitudes are stronger predictors of willingness to join a union than political beliefs (Charlwood, 2002), and, more generally, by the theory of planned behaviour (Azjen, 1991). Empirical evidence provides strong support for the theory of planned behaviour: that is, intentions to perform behaviours of different kinds can be predicted with high accuracy from attitudes toward the behaviour (Azjen, 1991). We return to this issue of individual attitudes in the conclusion and discussion of future research.

Dissonance theories propound that dissonance between the expectations and the experience of work trigger unionization (Charlwood, 2002; Farber, 1989; Fenwick and Olson, 1986). Dissonance may arise from: a- the work environment and become manifest in job dissatisfaction, income dissatisfaction and/or a perceived lack of justice, and/or b- the desire for influence, based on the perception that unions as a representative mechanism can deliver more effective influence over organizational decision making (Charlwood, 2002: 469). In a study of non-union employees in the US, Leigh (1986) found that the desire for unionism rises sharply with job dissatisfaction and that satisfaction with pay increases is associated with a lower demand for union representation. More recently, using a sample of 3372 unionized and non-unionized manual employees in the US, Friedman *et al.*, (2006) found that career prospects and the work environment were negatively related to employees' desire to join a union, whereas employees' degree of job satisfaction and satisfaction with benefits were positively related to the desire to join a union: that is, those employees who experienced job dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction with benefits were more likely to join a union[4]. More generally, the notion that job dissatisfaction is linked to a desire for representation by a union is well established (e.g. Buttigieg *et al*., 2007); therefore we advance hypothesis 1:

> Job satisfaction in non-union workplaces will be negatively related to willingness to join a union (H1).

Utility theories suggest that the decision to join a union results from a rational calculation of the costs and benefits of unionization (Charlwood, 2002: 470). Individuals' perceptions of union instrumentality are a direct influence on such

a calculation (Charlwood, 2002; Cregan, 2005; Gordon and Long, 1981). The concept of union instrumentality is multi-faceted, with strong links between perceived instrumentality and individual behaviour (union joining decision) being identified consistently (e.g. Gahan, 2012; Brown Johnson and Jarley, 2004; Fiorito, 1987; Lévesque and Murray, 2006; Silverblatt and Amman, 1991).

Union instrumentality is defined as the perceived effectiveness of a union in improving wages and working conditions and can be measured *inter alia* by collective bargaining performance, workplace outcomes and/or union organizing success (Badigannavar and Kelly, 2005; Fiorito and Greer, 1982; Rose and Chaison, 1996). In Britain, Charlwood (2002) found that union instrumentality was the most significant predictor of the willingness to join a trade union. In an Australian study of union joining and leaving, Buttigieg *et al.*, (2007) also found that extrinsic union instrumentality, that is, perceptions of union effectiveness and satisfaction with union services with respect to wages and benefits, was important in explaining union joining and leaving.

While there is empirical support for utility theories and union instrumentality as a driver of the individual joining decision, Bryson (2003) has developed the notion of 'frustrated demand' in which the financial and personal costs of joining outweigh demand and perceived effectiveness. Although this concept may help explain employees' willingness to join in non-union workplaces, for example, if management is perceived to be hostile to union members (personal cost), this construct has not been empirically explored in Australia. However, there is Australian evidence that free riding impedes perceived union instrumentality. Quite simply, instrumental motivations to free ride in a workplace prevail over ideological or personal motivations and organizational characteristics such as organizational size and hours of work in explaining why people do not join unions in Australia (Haynes *et al.*, 2008).

Another potentially important construct relevant to the individual joining decision and linked to union instrumentality is workplace justice. For example, in a rare study of both union and non-union members' individual attitudes toward union membership, Cregan (2005) found that non-union employees were more likely to join if their awareness of workplace injustice was greater. Her cluster analysis also revealed a larger pattern of non-union members who were categorized as: those with pro-union attitudes (collective values including identification with the union and a sense of solidarity) and an intention to join; those who were neutral (understood the benefits of collectivism but were unconvinced that joining was worthwhile); those who were uninformed; those who showed no interest; and, disillusioned former members who viewed the union as ineffective and undemocratic. Cregan (2005) concluded that few members fell into the category of holding anti-union or unitarist views as a reason

for not joining. This finding is akin to D'Art and Turner's (2008) conclusion that a substantial majority of European employees wanted the protection of strong unions and held positive attitudes towards unions.

On the basis of the above literature, we advance hypothesis 2:

> Perceived union instrumentality in non-union workplaces will be positively related to willingness to join a union (H2).

Non-union Workplaces and Alternative Forms of Representation

Alternative forms of employee representation may substitute for unionization, but the evidence is mixed. For example, Belfield and Heywood (2004: 279) found that in the UK, the presence of human resource management[5] and advanced employee involvement schemes were associated with a lower desire for unionization. Similarly, in Canada and the US, Campolieti *et al.*, (2013: 378) found that non-union forms of employee representation were negatively related to the presence of unionization at the workplace. Conversely, Charlwood (2002) found that the presence of alternative voice did not predict reduced willingness to join. A relationship between the presence of alternative forms of representation and unmet demand may be explained by the concept of the 'representation gap' in non-union workplaces; that is, that there is no alternative model of employee representation that employees will accept as an effective substitute for union representation (e.g. Millward *et al.*, 1992). Notwithstanding this explanation, evidence in the UK and Australia has also shown that alternative voice practices (dual channel employee voice), including non-union and/or direct voice, can also complement traditional unionization (e.g. Pyman *et al.*, 2006; Uhe and Perkins, 2007). On balance, we advance hypothesis 3:

> The availability of alternative voice in non-union workplaces will be negatively related to willingness to join a union (H3).

Managerial Responsiveness to Employees

A third important consideration of the willingness to join a union and in explaining unmet demand is managerial responsiveness to employees. We know, for example, that employer choice, defined as employers' decisions as to whether to adopt a 'voice' regime, is a critical determinant of the type and impact of voice practices in workplaces (e.g. Charlwood, 2006; Willman *et al.*, 2006; Bryson *et al.*, 2013).

There is little empirical research addressing the influence of managerial responsiveness on employees' resultant desire for unionization. There is, however, a related body of research that examines the influence of management attitudes to unions on an individual's joining decision (e.g. Bryson and Gomez, 2005; Campolieti *et al.*, 2013; Friedman *et al.*, 2006; Gall, 2005; Pyman *et al.*, 2010).

Importantly, Belfield and Heywood (2004) found that employees in the US and the UK who anticipated or perceived managerial opposition to unions were much less likely to desire or join a union. They also found at the individual level that non-union employees' desire for unionization was lessened if they perceived a high level of influence over information-exchange; a proxy of the industrial relations climate. We argue that information exchange is a proxy for the industrial relations climate in that the industrial relations climate can be understood as the extent to which relations between employers and employees are positive (Pyman *et al.*, 2010). The more employers share information with employees, the more positive relations between employers and employees are likely to be. Similarly, formal HRM practices at the group level, such as team working and performance related pay have also been found to reduce the desire for unionization, whereas utilization of problem-solving practices raised the desire for unionization (Belfield and Heywood, 2004). Related to this, Cregan and Brown (2010) found that the willingness of non-union employees in Australia to participate in joint consultation varied directly with their expectation that a joint consultative committee would lead to more democratic representation. Drawing on these findings, we advance hypothesis 4:

> Perceived managerial responsiveness to employees in non-union workplaces will be negatively related to willingness to join a union (H4).

Data and Methods

Sample and Procedure

The data reported in this paper are drawn from responses to the *2010 Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (*AWRPS*), a national survey that investigated employees' responses and attitudes to workplace participation, representation, and influence. The instrument was based on the *1994-1995 Worker Representation and Participation Survey* conducted in the US (Freeman and Rogers, 1999), the *2001 British Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (Diamond and Freeman, 2002), the *2003 New Zealand Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (Haynes *et al.*, 2003), and a previous *2007 AWRPS* (see Freeman *et al.*, 2007; Teicher *et al.*, 2007). Questions from other country surveys were adapted, to conform to the institutional and demographic contexts in Australia.

A total of 500 employees sampled randomly from residential telephone directories were surveyed nationally using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) over a two-month period in 2010. The sample was limited to Australian residents engaged in paid employment for more than 10 hours[6] per week who had left secondary school. Self-employed persons and company owners were

excluded from the survey. The sample was stratified by Australian state/territory to reflect the geographical distribution of the population as reported in the *ABS Census of Population and Housing*.

In this study, we are focusing on the respondents, just over half of the sample (n = 268 or 54 per cent), who reported that there was no union at their workplace that people doing their type of work could join. Of these respondents, 57 per cent were male and the mean age was 40.05 years (*SD* = 12.00). The mean number of hours worked per week was 38.26 (*SD* = 14.15). The majority of respondents (74 per cent) were non-manual employees, and 78 per cent were employed in the private sector. Two-thirds of respondents (66 per cent) reported that they worked in workplaces with fewer than 50 employees and just under a quarter (23 per cent) in workplaces with 100 or more employees. The mean number of years that employees had worked for their current employer was 5.57 (median = 3, *SD* = 6.75).

Measures

Dependent variable

Willingness to join a union: Following Charlwood (2002), respondents in non-union workplaces were asked: "If a union was formed at your workplace, how likely would you be to join?" Responses were rated on a 4-point ordinal scale ranging from 1 = "not at all likely" to 4 = "very likely."

Independent variables

Perceived union instrumentality: Following Charlwood (2002), employees in non-union workplaces were asked: "Would you be better or worse off with a union that you could join at your workplace, or would it make no difference?" Responses were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = "a lot worse" to 5 = "a lot better."

Job satisfaction: Employees were asked to respond to the statement: "Overall, I am satisfied with my job." Responses were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree". Our measure is an indicator of global job satisfaction. Single-item measures of global job satisfaction are commonly used in large-scale survey research in which an overall assessment of employee attitudes is desired (Spector, 1997). It has also been found that such measures have excellent test-retest reliability and show convergent validity with multi-item measures of job satisfaction (Saari and Judge, 2004).

Perceived managerial responsiveness to employees: Employees were asked to rate the performance of the management at their workplace on a 5-point scale

ranging from 1 = 'failure' to 5 = 'excellent' across six dimensions: 1- concern for employees; 2- giving fair pay increases; 3- willingness to share power and authority; 4- keeping everyone up to date with proposed changes; 5- promoting equal opportunities for all employees; and 6- making work interesting and enjoyable. These items were drawn from the *New Zealand Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (Haynes *et al*., 2003) and are similar to those used by Bryson (2004). A principal components analysis of the six items supported a single-factor, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .88. The scores on the six items were averaged to form a composite measure, with higher scores indicating greater perceived managerial responsiveness.

Presence of alternative voice: Following Willman *et al.* (2006), alternative voice was operationalized by the presence of the following two-way forms of communication between employees and management: daily walk around the workplace by senior management; an 'open door' policy so employees can tell senior management about problems with their supervisors; suggestion schemes; regular hard copies of a workplace newsletter; notice boards; surveys or ballots of employees' views and opinions; email and workplace intranet (including magazines or staff bulletins); regular staff meetings between senior management and employees; team briefings; non-union employee representatives (such as an agent, lawyer or advisor); an employee involvement program (such as quality circles, semi-autonomous or self-directed work groups); a formal grievance or dispute resolution procedure; or, a committee of managers and employees who meet regularly to consult over a range of workplace issues. We constructed an index averaging how often these two-way communication arrangements were reported to be used in the workplace (on a scale from 1 = not at all to 4 = daily). This index has a potential range from 1 to 4, with higher scores representing greater alternative voice in the workplace.

Control variables: Based on the prior literature and a selection of relevant studies (e.g. Charlwood, 2002; D'Art and Turner, 2008; Toubol and Jensen, 2014), we included several control variables in the regression analyses. First, we included gender, age, hours worked per week, occupation and organizational tenure, since these individual employee characteristics have been shown to affect the individual propensity to unionize (Toubol and Jensen, 2014). Gender was coded (1 = male, 0= female) and occupation was coded (1 = non-manual, 0 = manual). Age and organizational tenure were measured in years. We also included organizational characteristics that have been shown to affect individuals' propensity to unionize: workplace size and sector. Workplace size (total number of employees) was coded using a five-point ordinal scale (1 = < 20 employees, 2 = 20-49 employees, 3= 50-99 employees, 4 = 100-499 employees and 5= 500 or more employees). Sector was coded (1 = private, 0 = public/not-for-profit).

Methods of Analysis

Because our dependent variable (willingness to join a union) was ordinal in nature, we used ordered probit regression (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). To facilitate the comparison of effect sizes from independent variables measured with different scales, we standardized (*z*-scored) the predictors prior to analysis. Following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), we found no evidence of multicollinearity among the predictors (see Table 2, all correlations among predictors were under the commonly used .70 threshold). Due to positive skewness, we log transformed organizational tenure; however, this did not change the pattern of results so we retained the non-transformed variable.

Results

Among respondents employed in non-union workplaces, 34 per cent said they were fairly likely or very likely to join if a union were available at their workplace (see Table 1); a finding consistent with previous surveys in Australia (see Teicher *et al.*, 2007). However, only 11 per cent of our sample expressed a strong desire to join a union if given the opportunity. In this regard, we noted that about three-quarters of workers believed that a union would make no difference to them personally, suggesting a high degree of indifference.

TABLE 1
Willingness to Join a Union in Non-Unionized Workplaces (%)

		Per cent
Employees' Responses	Not at all likely	43
	Not very likely	23
	Fairly likely	23
	Very likely	11

N = 268

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations and correlations of the study variables. There were statistically significant correlations between willingness to join a union and perceived union instrumentality, perceived managerial responsiveness to employees, job satisfaction, age, organizational tenure, occupation (manual vs. non-manual), and presence of alternative voice in the workplace. The signs of these coefficients were in the expected direction, and the strongest correlate with willingness to join a union was perceived union instrumentality, followed by perceived managerial responsiveness to employees.

TABLE 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among the Study Variables

Variable		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Willingness to join a union	2.02	1.05											
2	Male	0.57	0.50	.03										
3	Age	40.05	12.00	-.20*	-.18*									
4	Hours worked per week	38.26	14.15	.02	.36*	-.01								
5	Organizational tenure	5.57	6.75	-.19*	-.06	.43*	.01							
6	Non manual	0.74	0.44	-.16*	-.24*	.21*	-.05	.16*						
7	Private sector	0.78	0.42	.11	.15*	-.01	.14*	-.13*	-.15*					
8	Workplace size	2.24	1.42	.01	.04	.12*	.21*	.10	.14*	-.14*				
9	Job satisfaction	4.04	0.98	-.28*	-.11	.03	-.04	.16*	-.01	-.04	-.03			
10	Union instrumentality	3.01	0.87	.52*	-.07	-.14*	.10	-.11	-.08	.02	.03	-.20*		
11	Alternative voice	2.67	0.72	-.15*	-.01	-.06	.10	.13*	.18*	-.23*	.19*	.28*	-.10	
12	Managerial responsiveness	3.60	0.86	-.35*	-.02	-.04	-.15*	.05	.05	-.17*	-.11	.51*	-.36*	.50*

* $p < .05$.

The results of the ordered probit regression analyses predicting the willingness to join a union are shown in Table 3. Following Bryson (2004), we included managerial employees in the analyses because they are likely to be managed by other senior people in an organization and have the right to unionize in Australia. The effect on the results is negligible if managerial employees are excluded from the analysis.

TABLE 3

Results of Ordered Probit Regression Predicting Willingness to Join a Union

		B	SE
Control variables	Male	- .02	(.09)
	Age	-.17	(.09)
	Hours worked	-.16	(.09)
	Non-manual work	-.06	(.08)
	Organizational tenure	-.13	(.11)
	Private sector	.13	(.09)
	Workplace size	.01	(.09)
Independent variables	Job satisfaction	-.15	(.09)
	Perceived union instrumentality	.69*	(.11)
	Alternative voice	.04	(.10)
	Perceived managerial responsiveness	-.27*	(.11)
	-2 Log Likelihood	486.62	
	Nagelkerke Pseudo-R^2	.41	

Notes: *B* = partially standardized regression coefficient. Standard errors in parentheses. N = 268.

* $p < .05$.

Only two predictors of the willingness to join a union were statistically significant at the 95 per cent level of confidence: perceived union instrumentality and perceived managerial responsiveness to employees. Thus, hypotheses two and four were supported and hypotheses one and three were not supported. The positive association between perceived union instrumentality and a willingness to join a union was particularly strong ($B = .69$, $p < .05$), consistent with Charlwood's (2002) research in Britain and the work of Buttigieg *et al.*, (2007) in Australia on union joining and leaving. In terms of managerial responsiveness to employees, as hypothesized, employees' perceptions of the responsiveness of managers were negatively related to willingness to join a union ($B = -.27$, $p < .05$). This finding shows that if employees rated their manager as being poor in responding to employees, they were more likely to join a union if given the opportunity.

Discussion

The initial impetus for this research was a paucity of knowledge on union joining in Australia, and especially on employees' willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces. Gaining this knowledge is important, in view of the Australian evidence of latent unmet demand and an increasing proportion of 'never members' and non-union workplaces (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016). Using a national survey, we addressed two important research questions: 1- To what extent are non-union members willing to join a union in non-union workplaces?; 2- What predicts non-union members' willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces?

Our analyses found that about a third of non-union members were willing to join a union if one were available. After controlling for a range of personal, job and workplace characteristics, only two statistically significant predictors of non-union members' willingness to join a union in a non-union workplace were identified: perceived union instrumentality and perceived managerial responsiveness, with managerial responsiveness working in the opposite direction. That is, a lack of managerial responsiveness to employees was a predictor of non-union members' willingness to join.

Surprisingly, in terms of individual characteristics, holding constant other variables in the model, the level of job satisfaction was not a statistically significant predictor of willingness to join a union, thus failing to provide support for Charlwood's (2002) dissonance model. However, we found that union instrumentality had the strongest influence on willingness to join a union, therefore providing support for Charlwood's (2002) utility model. Interestingly, union instrumentality has also been found to be a significant influence on the desire to join a union in unionized workplaces (e.g. Cregan, 2005; Gall, 2005; Belfield and Heywood, 2004).

The importance of instrumentality as a predictor of non-union members' willingness to join a union highlights a lack of emphasis in the existing research on union renewal regarding the need for unions to convince non-union members that unions can make a material difference to their substantive terms and conditions of employment and to justice and fairness in the workplace. In countries such as Australia, the institutional environment, currently existing under the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth.)*, provides some scope for unions to demonstrate instrumentality through periodic reviews and test cases before the national industrial tribunal (Fair Work Commission), which can change labour standards on matters such as flexible working hours and penalty payments for weekend work. More generally, in an era of declining union influence, unions will find it difficult to demonstrate effectiveness unless they can redefine the considerations that constitute effectiveness in the eyes of the potential recruits (non-unionists).

Interestingly, in terms of organizational (workplace) characteristics, we found that the presence of alternative forms of voice were not predictive of non-union members' willingness to join a union, but the level of perceived managerial responsiveness to employees was. That is, it was found that if employees perceived management to be responsive to their needs, the presence of alternative voice did not add further predictive power of the willingness to join in non-union workplaces. One possible explanation for managerial responsiveness predicting an unwillingness to join a union, but not the presence of alternative voice, may be that voice is mediated by the degree of managerial responsiveness. In other words, the effect of alternative voice may be indirectly transmitted, if responsiveness is an outcome of voice.

Our finding that perceived managerial responsiveness to employees was associated with decreased willingness to join a union is an important contribution to the literature, since few studies have explored this factor, particularly in non-union workplaces. This finding provides confirmatory evidence that management sincerity and authenticity are crucial to employees' positive experiences of work and that these are preconditions for perceived effectiveness of employee voice (e.g. Boxall and Purcell, 2016). Our findings also lend support to the notion that there is a difference between structural voice and the materiality of voice (Couldry, 2010); that is, the forms or channels of voice *vis-à-vis* the substance of voice, the latter relating to how managers actually listen, act and respond to employees' concerns or issues. Similarly, Holland *et al.*, (2012) argued that it is not the specific voice practices that are important (akin to structural voice), but rather employees' direct interactions with management and subsequent perceptions of managerial responsiveness (substance of voice) that are most influential in producing positive employee outcomes, including trust in management. Our results regarding managerial responsiveness may also be linked to the sample characteristics: a greater proportion of non-manual workers in small private sector workplaces in which workers have closer relationships with management and a higher level of influence in the workplace.

One final question arising from the findings is whether managerial responsiveness to employees is a proxy for workplace justice in the workplace. Our survey measure of managerial responsiveness has items that approximate to workplace justice and, as seen in section two, workplace justice has been linked to the individual joining decision (Cregan, 2005). In terms of the scale of perceived managerial responsiveness and the link to justice, and referring directly to the items in the scale (see Measures in section 3), items 1, 4 and 5 equate to distributive, informational and procedural justice; item 2 to distributive and procedural justice; item 3 to employee influence; and, item 6 to intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. Consequently, it could be argued that our measure of perceived

managerial responsiveness to employees brings together influence and justice. This relationship between influence and justice gives rise to the argument that unions can demonstrate instrumentality through a focus on the work itself, and, employees' influence upon organizational decision making. The importance of influence and justice in predicting willingness to join has implications for union servicing and organizing strategies, suggesting a need to monitor and evaluate, or at least gauge on a regular basis, the climate (state of relations) between employer and employees as measured through the extent of managerial responsiveness to employees.

Conclusion

The reasons employees join unions in unionized workplaces has been the subject of longstanding inquiry, but the predictors of joining in non-union workplaces have rarely been studied. As far as we can determine, this is the first study, using Australian data, which examines the predictors of employees' willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces. Previous research has implicitly assumed that the decision-making processes and behaviour associated with union joining are the same across union and non-union workplaces. We challenge this assumption and find that perceived union instrumentality and perceived lack of managerial responsiveness to employees are significant predictors of willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces. We also suggest that in order to enhance their instrumentality in the workplace, unions could be more effective in recruiting if they targeted never members, as experience of unionism is closely linked to perceived effectiveness and thus joining (Bryson and Gomez, 2005).

This study of unmet demand and the predictors of non-union members' willingness to join a union makes important theoretical and practical contributions to the literature. Our contribution to the literature on union joining and 'frustrated demand' is twofold. First, we develop a deeper understanding of unmet demand in Australia[7] by examining the predictors of non-unionized employees' willingness to join a union. Second, we complement research on 'frustrated demand' (Bryson, 2003)[8] and union joining in unionized workplaces, by analysing Australian data on non-unionized workplaces for the first time, and based on the premise that willingness to join a union may not be the same across union and non-union workplaces.

Despite the insights this paper provides into the individual decision to join in non-union workplaces and the subsequent implications for union strategy, it has several limitations that require consideration in future research. First, given the cross-sectional design of the study, causality between an expressed willingness to join and the influence of the selected predictors cannot be conclusively determined. Second, the data gathered were based on intended behaviour (self-report) and could be subject to response biases. Related to this potential bias

is the possibility for common method variance, a frequently identified problem with self-report data (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012). Accordingly, we recommend that a longitudinal study be undertaken in order to strengthen causal inferences and to explore individuals' actual behaviour with regard to union joining, and, with regard to the relevance of workplace factors such as organizational culture, compensation, extent of training provided and trust in management (Kim, Kim and Ali, 2015). Third, while we believe our single-item measures of willingness to join a union and union instrumentality have face validity, we have no data on their reliability. In part, our rationale for using single-item measures was to minimize respondent load and maximize the response rate. Future research could use multi-item measures to address this limitation of a single item measure of willingness to join.

Finally, a related limitation was the exclusion of two variables relevant to this study's findings and veracity: past membership of a union and employees' political or ideological beliefs, which have been found to be a determinant of individual attitudes toward unions (Deery and De Cieri, 1991; Toubol and Jensen, 2014). The earlier *2004 AWRPS* (see Teicher *et al.*, 2007) did include past union membership, but after controlling for instrumentality, it was not found to be a statistically significant predictor (see also Riley, 1997 for a review of similar findings). With regard to political or ideological beliefs, we instead focused on union instrumentality, because, as we noted earlier, prior research shows that proximal attitudinal variables are stronger predictors of willingness to join a union than more distal factors, such as political and ideological beliefs acquired through socialization (Charlwood, 2002). The findings in this paper therefore provide support for Riley's (1997: 283) argument that the "hypothesised mechanisms behind significant correlations between respondent, industry and company specific factors are likely to be psychological in essence, and hence may function through attitudinal factors".

Notes

1 We distinguish here between 'unmet demand' (people in a non-unionized workplace who want to join a union if one were formed) *vis-à-vis* 'frustrated demand' (people in a unionized workplace who want to join a union but do not because the union does not serve their demand).

2 The better off overall test (BOOT) is a test based on the relevant modern award that covers any employees covered by the proposed enterprise agreement. It requires that each 'award covered' employee and each prospective award-covered employee must be better off under the enterprise agreement than they would if the relevant modern award applied to them.

3 Examples of such legislative changes include: recommendation of the introduction of enterprise contracts for small businesses offering employers greater flexibility; reduction of penalty rates in the hospitality and retail sectors; and, new legislation tightening union regulation and governance targeting corrupt behaviour (Pekarek and Gahan, 2016; Wright, 2016).

4 Freidman *et al.*, (2006) used a composite measure of job satisfaction. Respondents rated the degree of satisfaction they experienced based on 9 facets: job, career prospects, work environment, compensation, benefits, immediate supervisor, senior leadership, communication and employee stress.

5 Defined as: workplace group interaction, workplace financial incentives and workplace information sharing (Belfield and Heywood, 2004).

6 The rationale for using a minimum of 10 hours a week in paid employment was to ensure that employees sampled worked more than one day per week (>8 hours), and thus had sufficient workplace experiences to be able to assess work patterns and processes.

7 Defined as the sum of those very likely and fairly likely to join a union if one were formed at their workplace (thus, they did not have a union at their workplace).

8 The concept of 'frustrated demand' describes a situation where the financial and personal costs of joining outweigh demand (Bryson, 2003).

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2016) "Trade Union Membership in their Main Job", *Characteristics of Employment*, 6333.0, Australia, August 2016, released 02/05/17, http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6333.0.

Adams, Roy J. (1974) "Solidarity, Self-interest and the Unionization Differential between Europe and North America", *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 29 (3), p. 497-512.

Azjen, Icek (1991) "The Theory of Planned Behaviour", *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50 (2), p. 179-211.

Badigannavar, Vidu and John Kelly (2005) "Why Are Some Union Organizing Campaigns More Successful Than Others?", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 43 (3), p. 515-535.

Belfield, Clive R. and John S. Heywood (2004) "Do HRM Practices Influence the Desire for Unionization? Evidence across Workers, Workplaces and Co-Workers for Great Britain", *Journal of Labor Research*, 25 (2), p. 279-299.

Blanden, Jo and Stephen Machin (2003) "Cross-Generation Correlations of Union Status for Young People in Britain", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 41 (3), p. 391-415.

Boxall, Peter and John Purcell (2016) *Strategy and Human Resource Management*. 4th edition. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Brown Johnson, Nancy and Paul Jarley (2004) "Justice and Union Participation: An Extension and Test of Mobilization Theory", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 42 (3), p. 543-562.

Bryson, Alex (2003) "Employee Desire for Unionisation in Britain and Its Implications for Union Organising", *Research Discussion Paper 12*. London: Policy Studies Institute.

Bryson, Alex (2004) "Managerial Responsiveness to Union and Non-union Worker Voice in Britain", *Industrial Relations*, 43 (1), p. 213-241.

Bryson, Alex and Rafael Gomez (2005) "Why Have Workers Stopped Joining Unions? The Rise in Never-Membership in Britain", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 43 (1), p. 67-92.

Bryson, Alex, Paul Willman, Rafael Gomez and Tobias Kretschmer (2013) "The Comparative Advantage of Non-union Voice in Britain, 1980-2004", *Industrial Relations*, 52 (1), p. 194-220.

Buttigieg, Donna, Stephen Deery and Rick Iverson (2007) "An Event History Analysis of Union Joining and Leaving", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92 (3), p. 829-839.

Campolieti, Michele, Rafael Gomez and Morley Gunderson (2013) "Does Non-union Employee Representation Act as a Complement or Substitute to Union Voice? Evidence from Canada and the United States", *Industrial Relations*, 52 (1), p. 378-396.

Charlwood, Andy (2002) "Why Do Non-Union Employees Want to Unionize? Evidence from Britain", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 40 (3), p. 463-491.

Charlwood, Andy (2006) "What Determined Employer Voice Choice in Britain in the 20th Century? A Critique of the 'Sound of Silence' Model", *Socio-Economic Review*, 4 (2), p. 301-309.

Cooper, Rae, Bradon Ellem, Cathy Briggs and Diane van den Broek (2009) "Anti-Unionism, Employer Strategy and the Australian State: 1996-2005", *Labour Studies Journal*, 34 (3), p. 339-362.

Couldry, Nick (2010) *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics after Neoliberalism*. London: SAGE Publications.

Cregan, Christina (2005) "Can Organizing Work? An Inductive Analysis of Individual Attitudes toward Union Membership", *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 58 (2), p. 282-304.

Cregan, Christina and Michelle Brown (2010) "The Influence of Union Membership on Workers' Willingness to Participate in Joint Consultation", *Human Relations*, 63 (3), p. 331-348.

Cullinane, Niall and Tony Dundon (2014) "Unitarism and Employer Resistance to Trade Unionism", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25 (18), p. 2573-2590.

D'Art, Daryl and Thomas Turner (2008) "Workers and the Demand for Trade Unions in Europe: Still a Relevant Social Force?", *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 29 (2), p. 165-191.

Deery, Stephen and Helen De Cieri (1991) "Determinants of Trade Union Membership in Australia", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 29 (1), p. 59-73.

Diamond, Wayne and Richard B. Freeman (2002) *"What Workers Want from Workplace Organizations: A Report to the TUC's Promoting Trade Unionism Task Group"*. London: Trades Union Congress (TUC).

Farber, Henry S. (1989) "Trends in Worker Demand for Union Representation". *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, 79 (2), p. 166-171.

Farber, Henry S. and Daniel H. Saks (1980) "Why Employees Want Unions: The Role of Relative Wages and Job Characteristics", *Journal of Political Economy*, 88, p. 349-369.

Fenwick, Rudy and Jon Olson (1986) "Support for Worker Participation: Attitudes Among Union and Non-Union Workers", *American Sociological Review*, 51, p. 505-522.

Fiorito, Jack and Charles Greer (1982) "Determinants of U.S. Unionism: Past Research and Future Needs", *Industrial Relations*, 21 (1), p. 1-32.

Forsyth, Anthony (2016) "Industrial Legislation in Australia in 2015", *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 58 (3), p. 372-387.

Frangi, Lorenzo and Marc-Antonin Hennebert (2015) "Expressing Confidence in Unions in Quebec and the other Canadian Provinces: Similarities and Contrasts in Findings", *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 70 (1), p. 131-156.

Freeman, Richard B., Peter Boxall and Peter Haynes (2007) *What Workers' Say: Employee Voice in the Anglo-American Workplace*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Freeman, Richard B. and Joel Rogers (1999) *What Workers Want?* Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Friedman, Barry A., Steven E. Abraham and Randall K. Thomas (2006) "Factors Related to Employees' Desire to Join and Leave Unions", *Industrial Relations*, 45 (1), p. 102-110.

Gahan, Peter (2012) "Voice within Voice: Members' Voice Responses to Dissatisfaction with their Union", *Industrial Relations*, 51 (1), p. 29-56.

Gall, Gregor (2005) "Organizing the Non-Union Workers as Trade Unionists in the 'New Economy' in Britain", *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 26 (1), p. 41-63.

Gordon, Michael E. and Larry N. Long (1981) "Demographic and Attitudinal Correlates of Union Joining", *Industrial Relations*, 20 (3), p. 306-311.

Haynes, Peter, Peter Boxall and Keith Macky (2003) *"New Zealanders' Influence at Work–Report to the Minister of Labour on the New Zealand Worker Representation and Participation Survey"*. May. Mimeo. Auckland: University of Auckland.

Haynes, Peter, Peter Holland, Amanda Pyman and Julian Teicher (2008) "Free-Riding in Australia", *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 29 (1), p. 7-34.

Holland, Peter, Brian K. Cooper, Amanda Pyman and Julian Teicher (2012) "Trust in Management: The Role of Employee Voice Arrangements and Perceived Managerial Opposition to Unions", *Human Resource Management Journal*, 22 (4), p. 377-391.

Kim, Yoon-Ho, Dong-One Kim and Mohammad Ali (2015) "The Effects of Mutual Trustworthiness between Labour and Management in Adopting High Performance Work Systems", *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 70 (1), p. 36-61.

Kochan, Tom A. 1979. "How American Employees View Labor Unions", *Monthly Labor Review*, 104 (4), p. 23-31.

Kohler, Holm-Detlev and José Pablo Calleja Jimenez (2015) "'They don't represent us!' Opportunities for a Social Movement Unionism Strategy in Spain", *Relations industrielles/ Industrial Relations*, 70 (2), p. 240-261.

Kretsos, Lefteris and Markos Vogiatzoglou (2015) "Lost in the Ocean of Deregulation? The Greek Labour Movement in a Time of Crisis", *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 70 (2), p. 218-239.

Leigh, Duane E. (1986) "Union Preferences, Job Satisfaction, and the Union-Voice Hypothesis", *Industrial Relations*, 25 (1), p. 65-71.

Lévesque, Christian and Gregor Murray (2006) "How Do Unions Renew? Paths to Union Renewal", *Labor Studies Journal*, 31 (3), p. 1-13.

Millward, Neil, Mark Stevens, David Smart and William Hawes (1992) *Workplace Industrial Relations in Transition*. Aldershot: Dartmouth.

Muir, Kathie (2008) *Worth Fighting for*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Pekarek, Andreas and Peter Gahan (2016) "Unions and Collective Bargaining in Australia in 2015", *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 58 (3), p. 356-371.

Podsakoff, Philip, Scott MacKenzie and Nathan Podsakoff (2012) "Sources of Method Bias in Social Science Research and Recommendations on How to Control it", *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65, p. 539-569.

Pyman, Amanda, Brian K. Cooper, Julian Teicher and Peter Holland (2006) "A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Employee Voice Arrangements in Australia", *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37 (5), p. 543-559.

Pyman, Amanda, Julian Teicher, Brian K. Cooper and Peter Holland (2009) "Unmet Demand for Union Membership in Australia", *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 51 (1), p. 5-24.

Pyman, Amanda, Peter Holland, Julian Teicher and Brian K. Cooper (2010) "Industrial Relations Climate, Employee Voice and Managerial Attitudes to Unions: An Australian Study", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 48 (2), p. 460-480.

Riley, Nicola-Maria (1997) "Determinants of Union Membership: A Review", *Labour*, 11 (2), p. 265-301.

Rose, Joseph B. and Gary N. Chaison (1996) "Linking Union Density and Union Effectiveness: The North American Experience", *Industrial Relations*, 35 (1), p. 78-105.

Saari, Lise and Timothy A. Judge (2004) "Employee Attitudes and Job Satisfaction", *Human Resource Management*, 43 (4), p. 395-407.

Silverblatt, Ronnie and Robert I. Amann (1991) "Race, Ethnicity, Union Attitudes and Voting Predilections", *Industrial Relations*, 30 (2), p. 271-285.

Spector, Paul (1997) *Job Satisfaction: Application, Assessment, Cause and Consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stewart, Andrew (2006) "Work Choices in Overview: Big Bang or Slow Burn?", *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 16 (2), p. 5-60.

Tabachnick, Barbara G. and Linda S. Fidell (2007) *Using Multivariate Statistics*. 5th edition, Sydney: Allen Unwin.

Teicher, Julian, Peter Holland and Richard Gough (2013) *Workplace Relations in Australia*. Australia: Cambridge University Press.

Teicher, Julian, Peter Holland, Amanda Pyman and Brian K. Cooper (2007) "Australian Workers: Finding their Voice?" in Peter Boxall, Richard B. Freeman and Peter Haynes (eds.) *Voice and Voicelessness in the Anglo-American World: Continuity and Transformation in Employee Representation*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, p. 125-144.

Toubol, Jonas and Carsten Stroby Jensen (2014) "Why do People Join Trade Unions? The Impact of Workplace Union Density on Recruitment", *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 20 (1), p. 135-154.

Uhe, Milan and Stephen J. Perkins (2007) *The Future of Collective Voice: Event Report*, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Reference 4145, March, London: UK.

Willman, Paul, Alex Bryson and Rafael Gomez (2006) "The Sound of Silence: Which Employers Choose No Employee Voice and Why?", *Socio-Economic Review*, 4, p. 283-329.

SUMMARY

The Predictors of Unmet Demand for Unions in Non-Union Workplaces: Lessons from Australia

In this study, we examine the predictors of unmet demand for unions in non-union workplaces, using the *Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey* (*AWRPS*). Unmet demand is defined here, as those employees in non-union workplaces who would be likely to join a union if one were available. We argue

that this is the first study in Australia to examine the predictors of unmet demand in non-union workplaces, and, that this is an important line of inquiry given a rise in non-union workplaces and never members in Australia, alongside declining union density and membership numbers. Drawing on three strands of existing literature, namely the individual propensity to unionize, the rise and characteristics of non-union workplaces and alternative forms of representation, and, managerial responsiveness to employees and unions, we develop and test four hypotheses.

Our results show, controlling for a range of personal, job and workplace characteristics, that there are two significant predictors of the willingness to join a union in non-union workplaces: perceived union instrumentality (Hypothesis 2) and perceived managerial responsiveness to employees (Hypothesis 4), whereby employees who perceive that managers lack responsiveness are more likely to want to join a union if one were available.

These results show that unions must try to enhance their instrumentality in workplaces and could be more effective in recruiting if they targeted never members. The results also show that unions need to have some gauge (measure) of how responsive managers are to employees, and that they can leverage poor responsiveness of managers for membership gain and the extension of organizing. In the final analysis, an understanding of the predictors of unmet demand for unions in non-union workplaces has implications for Australian unions' servicing and organizing strategies, and for their future growth prospects.

KEYWORDS: non-union workplace, unmet demand, willingness to join a union, union instrumentality, managerial responsiveness to employees, union organizing strategy.

RÉSUMÉ

Les prédicteurs de la demande non comblée pour la syndicalisation dans les milieux de travail non syndiqués : une perspective australienne

Cet article cherche à identifier les prédicteurs de la demande non comblée pour la syndicalisation dans les milieux de travail non syndiqués, en ayant recours à *l'Enquête sur la participation et la représentation des travailleurs australiens* (*Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey-AWRPS*). La demande non comblée correspond ici au désir des employés de milieux non syndiqués d'adhérer à un syndicat si une telle possibilité leur était offerte. Nous croyons que c'est la première étude sur ce sujet en Australie et qu'elle est d'autant d'intérêt qu'on assiste actuellement à une croissance du nombre de milieux non syndiqués ou de milieux où les syndicats sont absents, parallèlement au déclin de la densité syndicale et du nombre de personnes membres d'un syndicat. En s'appuyant sur trois axes de la littérature existante, soit la propension individuelle à joindre un syndicat, la montée et les caractéristiques des milieux non syndiqués et les formes

alternatives de représentation, ainsi que les réactions des directions face aux employés et aux syndicats, nous développons et testons quatre hypothèses.

Nos résultats, après avoir contrôlé une variété de caractéristiques des individus, des emplois et des milieux de travail, font ressortir deux prédicteurs significatifs du désir d'adhérer à un syndicat en milieux non syndiqués : la perception de l'instrumentalité de la syndicalisation (Hypothèse 2) et la perception de la réaction managériale envers les employés et les syndicats (Hypothèse 4), à savoir que les employés qui perçoivent que les gestionnaires n'apportent pas de réponses satisfaisantes à leurs besoins seront plus enclins à vouloir adhérer à un syndicat lorsque cette possibilité leur est offerte.

Ces résultats suggèrent également que les syndicats devraient chercher à mieux faire valoir leur utilité dans les milieux de travail et ils pourraient devenir plus efficaces dans leur recrutement de nouveaux membres s'ils ciblaient davantage les travailleurs qui n'ont jamais été membres d'un syndicat. Ils montrent aussi que les syndicats devraient jauger (mesurer) à quel point les directions répondent aux besoins des employés, et qu'ils pourraient bâtir sur une faible réponse managériale afin d'effectuer des gains en terme de recrutement de membres et d'expansion de l'organisation syndicale. En dernière analyse, la compréhension des prédicteurs de la demande non comblée pour la syndicalisation dans les milieux de travail non syndiqués comporte des implications pour les stratégies d'organisation et d'offre de services des syndicats australiens, ainsi que pour la croissance future des organisations syndicales.

MOTS-CLÉS : milieu non syndiqué, demande non comblée, intérêt envers la syndicalisation, attitude patronale, stratégie syndicale.

RESUMEN

Los predictores de la demanda insatisfecha de sindicalización en los lugares de trabajo non sindicalizados: una perspectiva australiana

En este estudio, se examina los predictores de la demanda de sindicalización insatisfecha en los lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados, utilizando la Encuesta Australiana sobre la representación y la participación de los trabajadores (*Australian Worker Representation* and *Participation Survey - AWRPS*). La demanda insatisfecha es definida aquí como aquellos empleados de lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados que hubieran querido adherir a un sindicato si este estuviera disponible. Se argumenta que este es el primer estudio en Australia que examina los predictores de la demanda insatisfecha en los lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados y que constituye una línea importante de investigación dado el aumento de lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados y de trabajadores jamás sindicalizados en Australia, junto con la disminución de la densidad sindical y de la cantidad de miembros. Nos basamos en tres ejes de la literatura existente, es decir la propensión individual a sindicalizarse,

el alza y las características de los lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados y las formas alternativas de representación, e igualmente, la respuesta patronal a los empleados y sindicatos, para formular y evaluar cuatro hipótesis.

Nuestros resultados, después de haber controlado diversas características de los individuos, de los empleos y de los lugares de trabajo, ponen en evidencia dos predictores significativos del deseo de adherir a un sindicato en los lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados: la percepción de la instrumentalidad de la sindicalización (hipótesis 2) y la percepción de la reacción patronal respecto a los empleados y sindicatos (hipótesis 4), por lo cual, los empleados que perciben que los directivos patronales no aportan respuestas satisfactorias a sus necesidades serán más propensos a querer adherir a un sindicato si la posibilidad se ofrece.

Estos resultados sugieren que los sindicatos deberían intentar de mejorar su instrumentalidad en los lugares de trabajo y que podrían ser más eficaces en el reclutamiento de nuevos miembros si se focalizan sobre todo en los trabajadores que jamás han sido miembros de un sindicato. Se muestra también que los sindicatos deberían poder estimar (medir) hasta qué punto los directivos patronales responden a las necesidades de los empleados, y que ellos podrían tomar ventaja de la respuesta patronal deficiente para mejorar el reclutamiento de miembros y reforzar la expansión de la organización sindical. Por último, la comprensión de los predictores de la demanda de sindicalización insatisfecha en los lugares de trabajo no sindicalizados conlleva implicaciones en cuanto a las estrategias de organización y de oferta de servicios de parte de los sindicatos australianos, y en lo que se refiere al crecimiento futuro de las organizaciones sindicales.

PALABRAS CLAVES: lugares no sindicalizados, demanda insatisfecha, deseo de sindicalizarse, instrumentalidad sindical, respuesta patronal a los empleados, estrategia de organización sindical.