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Welcome and conference details

The BUIRA team from the Centre for Employment Relations Innovation and Change (CERIC) at the University of Leeds are delighted to welcome you to the 66th Annual BUIRA conference. The conference also marks the end of our three-year term as BUIRA Stewards. We are pleased to offer a varied collection of presentations and plenaries.

The conference will take place at The Carriageworks, Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD. This is right in the City Centre less than a 10-minute walk from Leeds station, and a large number of hotels, bars and restaurants.

We would like to thank our volunteer helpers and chairs who will help with the smooth running of the conference. If you have any questions then please ask a member of the team of one of the helpers. We hope you enjoy the conference, the dinners and Leeds itself. For our first night diner we have organised a meal at one of the city’s famous curry houses, while the main conference dinner will be located at the Lakeside Café in the beautiful setting of Roundhay Park. Transport will be provided.

For those who have the time or inclination, the university has a wonderful sports centre and swimming pool (The Edge), which is just 10 minutes from the conference venue and open to the general public.

BUIRA Stewards: Mark Stuart, Jane Holgate, Chris Forde, Ian Greenwood and Robert MacKenzie
Overview of conference

Wednesday 29 June 2016

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<td>BUIRA study groups</td>
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<td>Plenary: Organising v mobilising and the Fight for $15</td>
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<td>12.00-13.00</td>
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<td>15.00-16.00</td>
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<td>16.15-17.30</td>
<td>Plenary: Current issues in Chinese industrial relations</td>
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<td>19.15-00.00</td>
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<td>10.45-12.00</td>
<td>Plenary: Who pays the living wage? Environmental, organisational and individual considerations</td>
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Conference dinners

We have arranged dinners for Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

The first evening will be at **7.30pm at the Leeds city centre Aagrah**, St Peter's Square, Quarry Hill, Leeds LS9 8AH, [http://www.aagrah.com/restaurants/leeds-city/](http://www.aagrah.com/restaurants/leeds-city/)

And the **official conference dinner will be at the Lakeside Cafe Roundhay Park** on Thursday evening. Transport will be provided to and from the conference venue to the Park. There will be a drinks reception at **7.15pm** on the terrace overlooking the lake (we are expecting/hoping that the weather will be fantastic!).
Transport will be leaving from just around the corner (2 mins) from the conference venue at Portland Gate, O2 Academy (see below).

The first coach will leave at 6pm for those wanting to take a walk in Roundhay Park before dinner. The second coach will be leaving at 6.45pm. Drinks on the terrace at 7.15 and dinner will be served at 8pm.

Return transport will be at 10.30 and 11pm and will drop off at the same point as you were picked up.
Internet

Wifi is available for all at Carrigeworks and there is no password. The network is Leeds Free Wifi-LCC and it takes you to a homepage and you are asked to press accept for the terms and conditions.
PhD workshop: Wednesday 28–Thursday 29 June

Critical friendship in employment relations research

This pre-conference PhD workshop is an exercise in critical friendship where all participants circulate a piece of written work three weeks before the session and then discuss it in a constructive, friendly manner. The session is a unique opportunity to get to know fellow PhD students, exercise critical thinking and receive supportive feedback to research ideas.

The session will be led by Professor Melanie Simms (University of Leicester), Editor in Chief *Work Employment and Society*.

Timetable

Day 1. June 28 2016
Venue: University of Leeds, Baines Wing SR (2.13)
12.00- Critical friendship
18.00 Professor Melanie Simms (University of Leicester)

Day 2. June 29 2016
Venue: Main conference venue
10.00- Critical thinking and research innovation
12.00 Panel discussion
Best Doctoral Student Paper Award sponsored by the British Journal of Industrial Relations

Wiley, the publisher of the British Journal of Industrial Relations, have kindly agreed to sponsor a £250 prize for the best written conference paper at the 2016 BUIRA annual conference. This award is BUIRA’s distinction given to the best doctoral student paper presented at the annual BUIRA conference. Following acceptance of an initial abstract, doctoral students are invited to submit papers ahead of conference that proceed through a blind review process to determine the winner of the competition. The award is typically accompanied by a £250 prize.

The recipient is invited to receive the award at the BUIRA conference dinner held during the annual conference. Doctoral students interested in submitting a paper for this award must have had a paper accepted for presentation at the annual conference and must be a fully paid-up student member of BUIRA. To be considered for the award, papers must be sole authored; should be no longer than 4,000 words, not including references, abstract and appendices. They should be in 12 point font, double spaced with page numbers at the bottom of each page. Papers should begin with a cover page containing the title and an abstract of no more than 200 words outlining the purpose of the paper, the methods used and the main conclusion/argument. Papers can be empirical or theoretical and can cover any general area of employment relations.

Papers should, in general, be clearly structured and contain:

- **Introduction** – that sets out the focus of the paper, its relevance and key research questions
- **Review** – a review of key background literature, the limitations of current debate and the rationale and contribution of the paper (theoretical and historical essays will tend to be structured as an extended review)
- **Methods** – an account of the methods used, why such methods were appropriate and how data were collated and analysed. Quantitative papers should make it clear what techniques were used and set out key measures and variables (dependent, independent, controls etc)
- **Findings** – should analyse relevant data in a way that clearly seeks to address the main research questions/themes of the paper. Where interview quotations are used they should follow recognised conventions. Likewise, quantitative data should be reported in an appropriate tabular format and include key tests of significance.
- **Discussion and conclusions** – this section should draw together the main findings of the paper and relate them back to the key questions animating the paper and how this contributes to wider debate (the conclusion should not simply summarise the findings)
- **References** – to be presented in Harvard format.

The deadline for the submission of papers is: 1 June 2016

Papers should be sent to: Jane Holgate j.holgate@leeds.ac.uk
Invitation to apply to host BUIRA Conference for 2017 and 2018

Deadline for applications: 31st May 2016
Each year, an organising team of BUIRA members hosts the BUIRA Conference. The Executive is keen that all BUIRA members have the opportunity to apply to host the conference.

The BUIRA Executive invites applications from prospective organising teams to host either the 2017 or 2018 conferences. Organising teams must comprise full BUIRA members at the time of application.

This year the conference will be held in Leeds, where a new team of stewards based at the University of Newcastle will take office. Following tradition, the stewards will host the conference in their final year of office, 2019. This means BUIRA is looking for institutions to host the conference in 2017 and 2018.

Written applications of no more than 1000 words in length should contain the following details:
- Names and short biographies of organising team, including a designated lead co-ordinator
- Conference venue location and facilities with projected prices
- Accommodation location/s and facilities with projected prices
- Conference dinner and entertainment proposals with projected prices
- Administrative support
- Projected cost model per delegate.
- Preferred year to host the conference:

Bidding teams will make a short presentation to the BUIRA Executive at the annual conference. The Executive will decide on the successful applications at the same meeting.
The Centre for Employment Relations Innovation and Change (CERIC) is an ambitious research initiative based at the University of Leeds. The Centre draws from the expertise of internationally renowned scholars at Leeds University Business School and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The Centre aims to create a vibrant research environment incorporating established, Doctoral and leading visiting researchers. Our work contributes to contemporary, national and international debates surrounding the changing nature of work, employment and labour markets. It capitalises on the expertise of Centre members to fundamentally engage with societal issues that have explicit practitioner utility and policy relevance. It has previously housed a number of leading academic journals, including Work, Employment and Society and the Industrial Relations Journal, as well as the outgoing BUIRA Stewards.

A distinctive element of the work of the Centre situates understanding of employment processes and outcomes within a broader regulatory and structural context. In empirical terms, the Centre's research is broadly concerned with examining the modernisation of employment relations, and how processes of organisational restructuring and innovation shape patterns of continuity and change in employment relations. It evaluates the consequences of such change for different stakeholders and is committed to developing new strategic and policy relevant visions.

Research is currently focused across six thematic streams: markets, flexibilisation and social protection; changing structures of governance and organisation; employment, skills and occupations; between professions and precarity; voice, representation and social movements; labour mobility, migration and citizenship.

Website: [http://lubswww.leeds.ac.uk/meric/home-page/](http://lubswww.leeds.ac.uk/meric/home-page/)

Twitter: @CERIC_LUBS
Plenary sessions and speakers

**Plenary 1: Organising v mobilizing and the Fight for $15**

**Professor Tony Royle** Tony is Chair of the Human Resource Management Group at the University of York Management School

Tony previously held posts as Professor at the Bradford University Management School, UK; Senior Lecturer at the University of Galway (NUIG), Ireland; and Reader at the Nottingham Business School, UK. Tony is the author of Working for McDonald’s in Europe and co-author of Labour Relations in the Global Fast-Food Industry and has appeared on radio and television in a number of countries. His work has been reported in UK national newspapers such as the Financial Times and in national newspapers in other countries. He regularly acts as an advisor for various media including the BBC and US online media such the New York Times, Huffington Post, Bloomberg and Minyanville.

**Dr Jane McAlevey, Harvard University Law school, Labor and Worklife Program**

Jane is well-known in the American labor movement as the hard-charging organizer who racked up a string of victories at a time when union leaders said winning wasn’t possible. In her book Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell) Jane argues that labor can be revived, but only if the movement acknowledges its mistakes and fully commits to deep organizing, participatory education, militancy, and an approach to workers and their communities that more resembles the campaigns of the 1930s. In short, she advocates whole worker organizing through social movement unionism. She is currently teaching at Harvard University Law School on the Labor and Worklife Program.

**Martin Smith is the National Organiser for GMB**

Martin has a long history as a trade union leader with a specific interest in organizing strategies. He was one of the founders of the TUC’s Organising Academy helping to set up the programme in 1998. Martin has presented on organizing at conferences around the world and can be seen her speaking on organising in Amazon: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XzYtjxySIE

He tweets @MSmithGMB
Plenary 2: Current issues in Chinese industrial relations

Professor Sarosh Kuruvilla, Professor, Industrial Relations, Asian Studies and Public Affairs

Sarosh Kuruvilla is currently Professor of Industrial Relations, Asian Studies and Public Affairs at Cornell University. He is also a Visiting Professor of Employment Relations and Organizational Behaviour at the London School of Economics. He joined Cornell’s faculty in 1990 after obtaining a doctorate in business administration from the University of Iowa in 1989, and after a career as a labor relations manager in the industry in India.

Professor William Brown

Emeritus Professor of Industrial Relations, University of Cambridge. Past member of the Low Pay Commission and of the Council of ACAS. Previously Director of Warwick IRRU. Industrial mediator and arbitrator. Honorary Professor of Renmin University of China. Currently on a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship researching the protection of international labour standards.

Dr Jenny Chan, Lecturer in the Sociology of China; Junior Research Fellow of Kellogg College

Jenny Chan joined the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies at the University of Oxford in September 2014. In 2013-2014 she received the prestigious Great Britain-China Educational Award. Currently she serves as Board Member of the International Sociological Association’s Research Committee on Labor Movements, Editor of the Global Labour Journal, Contributing Editor of the Asia-Pacific Journal, and Editorial Board Member of the Springer Book Series of Work, Organization, and Employment. Dr Chan’s forthcoming book, entitled Dying for an iPhone: Apple, Foxconn, and a New Generation of Chinese Workers (co-authored with Pun Ngai and Mark Selden), is available in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Italian.
Plenary 3: Who pays the living wage? Environmental, organisational and individual considerations

Professor Jane Parker, Professor of Employment Relations and Human Resource Management (HRM) at Massey

Jane Parker is Professor of Employment Relations and Human Resource Management at Massey University in New Zealand. She has been at Massey since 2011 and formerly worked for Warwick University, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Auckland University and AUT University (New Zealand). Jane is Co-Director of the Massey People, Organisation, Work and Employment Research (MPOWER) Group and Co-Editor-in-Chief of Labour and Industry. She has led various ILO-commissioned projects on employment regulation and policy in the Pacific region. Since 2013, she has co-led a university-funded empirical study of the Living Wage in New Zealand.

Professor Edmund Heery, Professor of Employment Relations at Cardiff Business School

Edmund Heery is Professor of Employment Relations at Cardiff Business School. Ed is currently involved with colleagues at Cardiff in research on employers’ organizations, the UK Living Wage, and dispute resolution in Wales. Ed has also recently finished a book reviewing the field of Employment Relations, Framing Work: Unitary, Pluralist and Critical Perspectives in the 21st Century, which will be published by Oxford University Press in September 2016.

Professor Damian Grimshaw, Professor of Employment studies at Manchester Business School and Director of EWERC (European Work and Employment Research Centre).

2015-16 projects include a six-country study on Reducing precarious work in Europe through social dialogue (European Commission), a report for the ILO ‘Global study on wages in major garment producing countries’ and a new 3-year project on ‘Just Work in Greater Manchester’ supported by the Alliance research fund at the University of Manchester.

http://www.research.mbs.ac.uk/ewerc/
List of Abstracts
Portuguese labor austerity measures and the principle of freedom of association – a brief comparative overview

Summary
EU has been touched by an important economic crisis since 2010. Ireland, Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain were affected by this crisis with different intensities. Greece, Portugal and Spain had not only direct economic and financial problems, but also structural labor issues related with huge unemployment rates and an alleged lack of competitiveness of the labor market.

In this economical context, Greek, Portuguese and Spanish governments implemented important changes in their labor rules that were the reason of three different complaints to ILO’s Committee of Freedom of Association. These complaints are the consequence of the declining of labor standards in countries with exceptional crisis situations that can breach ILO’s Conventions no. 87, 98 and 151 in some aspects.

Even though our study will focus mainly on the Portuguese Case, it will be important to identify relevant similarities and differences between these cases.

In fact, Portugal was object of an intervention of the so called “Troika”, which aimed to provide financial help under a Financial Assistance Program. The rules of this program were established in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that included several measures of austerity.

The Portuguese complaint to the ILO’s Committee of Freedom of Association, supported by the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CGTP-IN), was an important consequence of the new rules provided in respect of the MoU, in particular section 7 of Act No. 23/2012 and relevant cut of wages in the public services and public corporate sector. The complaint also included two changes introduced by the 2009 Labor Code reform. However, it is important to point out that a relevant part of the Portuguese Complaint regarding the measures suggested in the MoU had been previously solved by the Portuguese Constitutional Court (PCC). In fact, this Court had ruled that the labor changes were only partly unconstitutional in different judgments.

As above-mentioned, in Portugal most collective agreements are only effective for workers when the government publishes an extensive regulation. According to ILO, only 67% of the Portuguese workers are covered by collective bargaining. However, the density of trade unions is less than 20%. This reveals the lack of causal link between collective agreements and an effective representative collective bargaining.

On the other hand, the Portuguese labor regulation is strongly supported by a very complete Labor Code that provides important legal standards both in Labor and
Employment. Therefore, in Portugal collective agreements do not have the same impact as in Spain, where labor relations are strongly supported by regional collective bargaining.

In fact, employers’ and workers’ lack of interest in each representative class associations is not the result of Labor changes, but of an absence of an effective filiation advantage. Extensive regulations are indeed a major part of the problem regarding the right of association in Portugal. Even though extension regulations were limited, this limitation did not produce relevant results. However Portugal was not the only country that decided to intervene in this area. In Greece, according to Costas Papadimitriou, the extensive regulations were “repealed”. Rethinking the role of extensive regulations is vital for the future of collective bargaining.

Regarding the impact of these austerity measures in the right of freedom association, none of them is relevant to minimize the right of both workers and employers to form and join representative organizations. In the private sector, the labor changes that really threatened this right were considered unconstitutional by PCC. Therefore, the PCC made an important effort to protect the right of freedom of association and collective bargaining in Portugal. Most other rules pointed in the complaint were supported exclusively in a context of economic crisis, since they are or were temporary. For example, the duration of the suspension of overtime payment exceeding the amounts established in the Labor Code and the payment of compensatory leave established in collective agreement for normal work on public holidays in enterprises not required to close on those days ended on January 1st of 2015. On the other hand, cuts of wages will be gradually extinguished in the terms provided by Act No. 159-A/2015 of 30 December 2015.

Also, it should be pointed out that contrary to what happened in Greece and Spain, Portuguese labor changes resulted from a previous agreement between most social partners (both employers and workers). The complainant CGTP-IN was the only social partner not signing the agreement. That fact was even recognize by the Committee in their decision as a “social dialogue effort” by the government.

**Methods adopted**

Study of the complaints of Greece, Spanish and Portuguese unions to ILO’s Committee of Freedom of Association. The approach will be comparative, with focus in the Portuguese complaint. It will be mainly a theoretical overview with a rethink about the future.

**Methods adopted**

The present global economy is more vulnerable to epidemic crisis. However, it is important to assure that crisis periods do not endanger relevant social standards. In the last years some countries tried to react against economic problems using labor law. Greece, Spain and Portugal introduced similar reforms. Nevertheless, in these cases the Committee recognized the role of the social dialogue to protect social standards.

The Portuguese case is an important example that all labor reforms should respect social dialogue. Only this way will it be possible to protect all labor actors in a context of austerity. The PCC (Portuguese Constitutional Court) has proven to have a major role on assuring the freedom of association set by the Portuguese Constitution.
References


Ana Teresa Ribeiro, O art. 7.º da Lei n.º 23/2012 e o Acórdão do Tribunal Constitucional nº 602/2013 – Análise dos efeitos da Lei nova sobre as convenções coletivas em aplicação à data da sua entrada em vigor, Questões Laborais n.º 43, Coimbra Editora, 2013


Beatson, Mark CIPD

**Will the National Living Wage raise productivity in low-paid industries?**

The introduction of the National Living Wage (NLW) on 1 April 2016 is expected to raise the pay of at least 2.7 million million workers. According to a CIPD survey conducted in September 2015, over half of employers expected the NLW to increase their staff costs, with 18% describing the impact as large. The industries most likely to anticipate cost rises were those where low pay is currently most prevalent (retail, hospitality and social care). Almost a third of employers affected by the NLW said they intend to increase efficiency and productivity as part of their response. Turning intentions into business improvement, however, will be difficult. Each of these industries faces potentially disruptive change and tight pressure on costs, which risks crowding out scope for innovation and business improvement. For small firms, in particular, there appear to be major limitations arising from business mind-set, a lack of knowledge of how to improve productivity and of the skills to implement change. Many firms in low-paid industries are, in practice, likely to deal with each year’s rise in the NLW tactically, as a one-off event, when the focus is likely to be on immediate compliance and cutting costs.
Bacon, Nick: CASS Business School

Wass, V., Simms, M. and Hoque, K.

Combining work and care: the impact of workplace supports on the employment of informal carers and their experience of work

The increasing demand for informal care suggests it is important to understand how individuals may successfully combine work and the provision of care. This paper assesses the potential contribution of four workplace supports in helping informal carers - flexible working arrangements, equality practices, work-family organisational culture and trade union representation. We consider the association of each support with the concentration of informal carers in the workplace and aspects of their well-being at work (anxiety-contentment, job satisfaction, managerial support and work-life balance). Drawing on data from the Workplace Employment Relations Study (2011), we find a higher concentration of carers in the workplace where there are equality practices and union recognition in place. Employees who combine work and care report lower levels of well-being (anxiety-contentment, job satisfaction, managerial support and work-life balance) than non-carers across all workplaces. Flexible working arrangements and the absence of a long-hours culture increase well-being for all employees. A long hours culture widens the well-being gap for working carers (significantly reducing job satisfaction for carers) and union recognition reduces the well-being gap for working carers (significantly improving anxiety-contentment and managerial support for carers).

Introduction

Informal care involves the provision of unpaid help to look after or support family members or friends who have a long-term physical or mental illness or disability, or who have problems related to old age (Kröger and Yeandle 2013). It is the dominant form of care provision and is increasingly relied upon to meet the growing demand for care as a result of demographic trends including population ageing and prolonged life expectancy with chronic ill health. The 2011 UK Census for example indicated that approximately one in ten (5.8 million) people in England and Wales provide unpaid care, increasing by 600,000 since 2001, and an increasing proportion of these are providing fifty or more hours of care per week.

A significant amount of informal care is provided by carers who combine this role with employment. Most people become carers while they are in work and approximately half of working age carers are in employment. It is estimated, however, that 58% of carers give up employment and working carers experience in-work disadvantage revealed in negative well-being differentials. Improving informal carers’ employment rates will likely require action to improve carers’ experience of work and reduce the well-being gap between working carers and non-carers.

A range of factors might impact positively on the labour force participation and in-work experience of those providing informal care (Colombo et al. 2011). This paper assesses four workplace supports that may have the potential to alleviate labour market disadvantage associated with informal caring - flexible working arrangements, equality practices, work-
family organisational culture and trade union representation. The analysis draws on matched employer-employee data from the nationally representative 2011 Workplace Employment Relations Study (WERS). We explore whether these workplace supports are associated with the presence and number of informal carers at the workplace and informal carers’ perceived well-being at work. In terms of extending the literature on informal carers’ wellbeing, we consider working carers’ perceptions of anxiety-contentment, job satisfaction, managerial support and work-life balance.

Data and Method
The analysis draws on data from the Workplace Employment Relations Study (WERS) (2011). The survey of managers provides workplace-level details of the range of flexible working arrangements and equality practices, for example, and the survey of employees asks whether respondents provide informal care to family members or friends. The analysis utilises various multivariate regression models to identify and separate the relationship between workplace supports and the outcomes for working carers, while controlling for a range of personal, job-related and workplace characteristics.

Results
The analysis shows that both the presence of any carer and a higher concentration of carers is more likely in workplaces with at least one equality practice and in workplaces with union recognition. The availability of flexible working arrangements and work-family organisational culture are not associated with carer presence in the workplace.

The well-being gap between working carers and non-carers is significant across all measures and remains after including the presence of supports and controlling for the range of workplace characteristics and workforce demographics collected.

Access to flexible working arrangements does not reduce the well-being gap between working carers and non-carers. A long hours culture widens the well-being gaps for working carers and significantly so for job satisfaction. Union recognition has a positive carer-specific effect (it closes the carer gaps) which is significant for both anxiety contentment and managerial support.

Conclusions
The permissive nature of flexible working legislation appears insufficient to increase the employment of carers and reduce well-being gaps between working carers and non-carers.

Addressing long-hours cultures at work may increase the job satisfaction of working carers but is unlikely to help them get into and stay in work.

Increasing the adoption of equality practices may help carers get into and stay in work, and help address gaps in job satisfaction compared to non-carers.

Finally, greater support for union representation may be required to increase the employment of carers and reduce gaps in their experience of work compared to non-carers.

References

Bacon, Nick: CASS Business School

Meryon, M.

Corporate Campaigns in Britain: Scope, Dynamics and Outcomes

Introduction

In recent years, trade unions in Britain have embarked on corporate campaigns to further their interests. Corporate campaigns involve the use of non-traditional tactics as part of a broad-based campaign to pressurise organisations to concede to union demands. Campaigns of this nature are a recognised feature of industrial relations in the US and have been increasingly adopted by unions in Britain and the European mainland.

Corporate ‘leverage’ campaigns by UNITE at Ineos and Crossrail in particular attracted headlines and raised questions concerning the efficacy of existing legislation covering industrial action. In response, the British government commissioned the Carr Report (2014) to consider creating a new offence to deal with these activities. The inconclusive outcome suggests the legislative framework around union protest will likely remain an important issue in the years ahead.

This paper provides an initial assessment of the scope, dynamics and outcomes of recent corporate campaigns in Britain. It has the following three aims to assess and explore: (i) the scope and features of corporate campaigns, (ii) the dynamics and outcomes of campaigns, (iii) and the legislative issues raised.

Corporate Campaigns

Corporate campaigns in the US such as those at Ravenswood and Miami University (Justice of Janitors) became an established industrial relations issue from the late 1980s (Bennett 1996; Perry 1996). As strike action became less effective these campaigns focused on pressurising companies beyond the workplace. Subsequent studies (i) classified the types of campaigns according to scope and issues, (ii) explored the dynamics and outcomes, and (iii) considered the legislative issues.

(i) Scope and issues

Unions use corporate campaigns to pursue a variety of aims. Jarley and Maranto’s (1990) threefold classification distinguishes between organising campaigns to secure or extend union recognition, strike complement campaigns to support wage demands, and strike substitute campaigns to oppose wage concessions or redundancies. Unions appear more successful in organising campaigns and least successful in strike complement campaigns (Jarley and Maranto 1990). The first aim of the paper is to classify the types of recent corporate campaigns in Britain along these lines.

(ii) Dynamics and outcomes of campaigns

Although previous studies report limited evidence of union gains (Jarley and Maranto 1990; Perry 1996) four main factors appear to affect campaign outcomes. First, unions are more
successful if employers are vulnerable, for example, sensitive to adverse publicity, selling products/services direct to the public or government, or stock exchange listed (Dixon and Martin 2012; Perry 1996). Second, unions appear more successful if they escalate campaigns beyond a ‘simple labour dispute’ (Perry 1996). Conflict escalation involves making the employer an example of a broader issue such as unfair to organised labour, corporate outlaw, or profiting from human misery (Jarley and Maranto 1990). Third, union success may also involve outreach to broader constituencies by targeting HQ and investors (Kochan, Katz and McKersie 1986), alliances with social movements (Perry 1996; Heckscher 1988; Martin 2008a,b), and approaches to politicians, state or international agencies. The paper’s second aim is therefore to explore the dynamics and outcomes of campaigns.

Legislative issues

Corporate campaigns raise a variety of legislative issues concerning picketing, targeting individual executives, supply chain targeting, new media, and pressure group involvement. The debate in Britain focused on creating a new offence to deal with these campaigns (Carr Report 2014). The paper’s third aim is to explore the legislative issues raised by corporate campaigns in Britain and consider potential remedies.

Research Method

The paper draws on primary and secondary research into recent corporate campaigns in Britain. This includes primary survey data collected directly from employers involved in 12 campaigns and four illustrative case studies.

Results

Scope and features The majority of recent corporate campaigns have been strike complement campaigns with few organising campaigns. The main issues have been pay and conditions, blacklisting and redundancy.

Dynamics and outcomes Targeted employers are vulnerable in terms of stock market listing and providing goods or services to the general public or the public sector. Most campaigns involved traditional industrial action and all campaigns targeted business premises (demonstrations or blockades). A majority of campaigns targeted directors or non-executive directors. Around half of campaigns sought to harass managers using a variety of methods. Almost all campaigns targeted the employer’s reputation using varied media.

Outreach involved working with other unions and/or politicians, and instigating interventions by civil authorities. In response employers retained lawyers/consultants and/or communicated with employees. Retaliation against employees or union reps was less common.

In terms of outcomes, employers reported some degree of union success in half of cases but regarded themselves as marginally more successful in realising their aims. Corporate campaigns tend towards a zero-sum game although there is occasional evidence of mutual gains.
Employers realised their aims, (i) regardless of vulnerability, (ii) in strike complement campaigns and campaigns on blacklisting, (iii) in the face of direct action against premises, targeting the employer’s directors, targeting the reputation of investors and/or not targeting reputations, (iv) regardless of industrial action, (v) when communicating with employees, and (vi) using conciliation/arbitration. In contrast, unions realised their aims in campaigns against unlisted firms and focused on casualization. Mutual gains emerged in campaigns (i) about redundancy, (ii) targeting group directors, (iii) attacking the reputation of private sector customers, (iv) with civil authority involvement, and (v) involving industrial action not requiring ballots.

Legislative issues and potential remedies

It is suggested that recent legislation appears unlikely to help address the issues raised by corporate campaigns and outlines a range of alternatives.

References

Blissett, Ed: University of Hertfordshire

Fatally Divided: An analysis of the role micro-political divisions played in the unions’ loss of the 1986-87 News International dispute

The paper focuses on the 1986-87 News International dispute which was one of the most bitter and acrimonious industrial disputes of the twentieth century, which lasted over a year and saw the dismissal of over 5,500 union members.

This paper challenges the commonplace explanation for the unions’ lack of success, which asserts that the dispute was unwinnable, whatever tactics the unions had deployed, owing to the combination of technological advancements and the hostile political and institutional environment in which the unions were operating (Melvern, 1986; Gennard, 1990; Gennard and Bain, 1995; Dean, 2007).

In this paper an alternative hypothesis is put forward. It asserts that micro-political factors were the central reason why the unions were unsuccessful in the 1986/87 News International dispute. Specifically, that the long term dysfunctional relationship that existed between the News International senior lay activists and the SOGAT General Secretary, Brenda Dean, played a major part in the unions’ defeat. Additionally it contends that personal enmity that existed between Brenda Dean and NGA General Secretary, Tony Dubbins, contributed significantly to the unions’ loss of the dispute. Finally the paper asserts that Dean’s deep personal loathing of Robert Maxwell, and her considerable regard for Rupert Murdoch, significantly affected how she dealt with News International before and during the dispute.

In order to test this hypothesis extensive research was undertaken, involving in-depth, semi-structured, interviews with print union full-time and lay officers. Some of this fieldwork was undertaken as part of a wider study of policy-making in the British and Australian printing and telecommunication unions (see Blissett, 2014). The majority of the original interviews were conducted in the mid-1990s, with follow-up interviews taking place in the late 2000’s. This paper outlines the findings of this research.
South Africa’s Tripartite Alliance: a fork in the road?

In recent years the industrial relations climate in South Africa has been rocked by two seismic events likely to have profound implications for labour relations generally, organised labour specifically and at all levels, both now and far into the future. Firstly, the tragic events at the Marikana mine in 2012, where striking miners were first fired upon by National Union of Mineworkers leaders and then subsequently even more fatally by the South African Police Service with over 40 strikers killed and at least another 78 injured, was the culmination of a violent industrial relations climate that has endured post-apartheid. Secondly, the decision by the National Union of Metalworkers in South Africa (NUMSA) in 2014 to disaffiliate from the Confederation of South African Trades Unions (COSATU) has brought to prominence the growing debate amongst unions and their members as to whether a formal coalition with the ANC government, made up of a longstanding Tripartite Alliance between the ANC, COSATU as well as the South African Communist Party, continues to be the most effective means of representing members’ interests in the democratic era.

The tragedy of the Marikana incident only exacerbated the ruling ANC’s already troubled relationship with its primary constituency (see, for example, Buhlungu 2005) and has come to epitomise how, in office, it struggles to balance the opposing interests of labour and capital, given its growing preference for market-oriented reform of the economy. For government critics, the enormity of the ‘Marikana massacre’ is such as to represent a historic ‘turning point’ (Alexander 2012) and one that only confirmed the subservience of labour to capital and the potential unravelling of a much lauded post-liberation Labour Settlement. This second crisis highlights emerging debates over the most effective means of representing members’ interests within the established political and economic order. When the trade union’s position becomes increasingly at odds with that of its oldest political ally (that is, the ANC government), which is the more effective? Attempting to mediate the ruling party’s policies and actions from within the formal alliance or to ‘stay honest’ and openly oppose from without? NUMSA chose the latter course through triggering its expulsion from COSATU and so consequently forsaking the Alliance and fracturing the wider labour movement at the macro-level. But this gives rise to two further questions that our paper wishes to address at the micro-level: how well has this momentous decision been received by NUMSA shop stewards ‘on the ground’ and what has been the impact from their perspective of this new-found political independence at a regional and grassroots level?

In an earlier study, Buhlungu et al (2008) highlighted a complex relationship between shop stewards and the policies of their national leadership as well as the ANC government’s policies within COSATU affiliated unions, which included NUMSA amongst their number at that time. There was unambiguous evidence of unity and support for COSATU and the tripartite alliance on certain issues but equally clear indications of ruptures on others.
Nonetheless, one area where grass root solidarity overwhelmingly shone through was in support of COSATU’s continued involvement with the Alliance. So, in light of developments, is this still the prevailing view amongst NUMSA activists or have perceptions of ‘breakaway’ now realigned with those of their national leaders? We seek answers through undertaking a regional study of NUMSA shop stewards’ views involving face to face interviews and completing survey questionnaires with over 100 shop stewards based in the Eastern Cape Province. Our intention is to discover the extent to which such workplace activists still hold union-party alliances within a South African context to be preferable or not and whether NUMSA’s splintering off from the Tripartite Alliance constitutes threat or opportunity when representing members to local employers and regional party officialdom.

This particular study is also informed by other work exploring comparable dilemmas facing national labour movements over their autonomy from, or continued engagement with, ruling parties similarly bent on introducing market reforms to their developing economies. Perhaps foremost amongst these is the detailed study of Burgess (1999 and 2004) in examining Hispanic union federations (Spain, Mexico and Venezuela) and their strategic response to union-party alliances that turn sour under liberalised market reform programmes. Closer to home is the more recent review of selected national union–party relationships across Africa undertaken by Beckman et al. (2010) and one that seeks to address the same tensions experienced by Latin American counterparts. Consequently we see this paper as complementing this mounting body of work and enriching a growing comparative analysis of unions and their federations operating under encompassing political alliances. However, our starting position is fundamentally different from that of these other country studies. Whereas they tend to focus on the challenges, dilemmas and options facing union leaders when alliances ‘go bad’, our attention is drawn to the ‘felt experience’ of grassroots leaders at the sub-national level in the aftermath following formal exit from political alliance.

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Human Resources, Labor Relations, and Occupational Safety: An empirical study of coal-mining firms in China

This paper investigates the relationship between management factors and labor issues, especially human resource (HR) practices and labor relations, and occupational safety in China’s coal-mining firms over the past 60 years. Based on a unique dataset containing 624 observations of accidents at the establishment level, and a case study of two coal mines in Anhui Province, China, it was found that cost-control-oriented HR practices are closely associated with accident severity in terms of casualty numbers, and on the contrary, safety-oriented HR practices are positively related to occupational safety performance. Workers’ unsafe behaviors were found to directly induce fatal accidents. Our study also makes recommendations to China’s coalmining firms in recruitment and selection, training, compensation, and labor relations. Coalmining firms in China should transfer from the traditional personnel management paradigm to a modern HRM system.

Indication to literatures

The occupational safety situation in China’s coal-mining industry is notorious for having the largest number of accidents and casualties among workers reported worldwide (Guo, 2008). Since 2006, under crackdowns by the State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS) and the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety (SACMS), two central government administrations dealing with occupational safety and health, significant progress has been made (Kong, Cai, & Guo, 2010; Kong, Cai, & Zhang, 2011; Xinhua Net, 2015). However, safety records are still strikingly poor compared with those in developed, as well as some developing, countries (Guo, 2008).

During the rapid economic globalization that has taken place since the 1980s, the safety of the production environment around the world has deteriorated steadily (Mogensen, 2006). In particular, Chinese workers and their managers seem to be much more vulnerable and more prone to engage in unsafe behaviors in the workplace for a complex set of reasons, some of which are organizational and managerial problems in general, others specific to China itself, and embedded deeply in the Chinese social, cultural, legal, and political systems. As a result, the official white paper ‘Notice on Improving Firm Safety Production’ (China’s State Council, 2010) called upon all coal-mining firms to ‘strengthen firm safety management’ and make it the top priority.

Prior literature indicates a set of HR practices that are related to occupational safety (e.g., Brenner et al., 2004; Butler & Park, 2005; Lauver, 2004, 2007). However, there is some controversy regarding the contents of these practices and the direction of the relationship between them and occupational safety. Yet, relatively few studies (e.g., Zacharatos, 2001; Zacharatos et al., 2005) have explored the mechanism by which management practices affect safety. On the other hand, an increasing number of research works have discussed coal-mining safety issues in China in recent years, but most have been qualitative in nature (Chen, 2006; Guo, 2008).
The paper will also look into safety science theories. For example, according to Heinrich’s (1959) accident causation chain theory, a disaster occurs at the end of a chain of sequential factors, each triggering the next, in which human error plays a key part. It is logical to think that any interruption to the chain (by taking out any one domino) will stop the successive events, thus preventing an eventual accident in the workplace. Bird (1974) made some modifications to Heinrich’s theory. He argued that workers’ unsafe behaviors and unsafe working conditions serve as direct reasons for accidents, rather than fundamental reasons. According to the systems theory of accident causation (Goetsch, 1996), unsafe behaviors and conditions are located in separate tracks of time and space. When the two tracks cross at the same time and in the same space, however, the energy and accumulation of hazards in the workplace will be released among human beings, making it likely that an accident will happen.

Methods adopted

Two studies were conducted in both quantitative and qualitative ends. In the quantitative study, we examined all severe and extremely severe fatal accidents that occurred in China’s coal-mining industry from 1950 to 2010, as filed in the formal archives of SAWS and SACMS. In particular, we tried to identify those HR practices, and institutional and environmental factors that were closely linked to these accidents, based on a content analysis of each case. Then, we conducted regression analysis to examine the association of these variables with occupational safety. To observe the true effects and magnitudes of human factors that affect workplace safety, we conducted a case study in two state-owned coal mines located in the city of Huaibei in Anhui Province, China. Field studies, interviews and archival analyses were adopted with workers, mine managers, safety officers etc. Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted to obtain additional information after the field study was completed.

Brief conclusion

We found cost-control-oriented HR practices to be closely associated with accidental severity, and to serve as the fundamental reasons for accidents. The positive relationship between safety-oriented HR practices and occupational safety performance has been supported by our field study of two coal mines. Our research supports findings in previous research (e.g., Lai et al., 2011; Lauver, 2007; and Zacharatos et al., 2005) on the relationship between HR practices and occupational safety using Chinese sample, and has also examined the mechanism through which HR practices affect occupational safety. We found workers’ unsafe behaviors play a more important role than unsafe working conditions in predicting occupational losses.

Practically, our paper has important implications for managers and supervising institutions in the coal-mining industry. In terms of HRM, coal-mining firms should transfer from the traditional personnel management paradigm to a modern HRM system, and build a safety-oriented system to safeguard coal miners’ well-being. Coal mine managers should make applicants’ safety qualifications a top selection criterion, aim to attract enough talent to fill special job positions pertaining to safety, and allocate safety personnel more efficiently. Managers should also increase the proportion of training devoted to safety, emphasize
practice and underground operations in training, and use motivational tools to improve training outcomes.

Workers’ compensation should be integrated into the safety management plan, with competitive wages paid to the workers. In particular, managers should increase the percentage of safety wages within the total compensation, with rewards for safety performance and penalties for accidents and violations. Team compensation should be linked to the collective safe behavior of team members. Managers should implement strict regulations on labor protection, occupational disease prevention, and social welfare management. Trade unions should actively participate in the labor conflict resolution process. In addition, more advanced safety equipment and technology should be used in the workplace, to create and maintain safe working conditions for workers.

References


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Cook, Hugh and Jephson, Nick

An enquiry into the morale of junior doctors

In October 2014, talks between the British Medical Association (BMA) and NHS employers over a new contract for junior doctors (a term used to refer to all doctors in training for general practice or specialist consultant roles in hospitals) broke down. At the heart of the dispute were the issues of pay and working hours. The employers have argued that the current contract makes the level of staffing needed to provide adequate patient care at evenings and weekends unaffordable. The BMA has argued that it is unreasonable to expect junior doctors to work long, unsocial hours without extra remuneration and that the proposals would result in junior doctors being expected to work in a way that would jeopardise patient safety.

The BMA balloted for industrial action in November 2015, with 98% of participating BMA members voting to strike. Two one day strikes, without precedent in the UK NHS, took place against a backdrop of continuing negotiations through Acas. However, no agreement was reached. In February 2016 the Secretary of State announced the new contract would be imposed without the BMA’s agreement. The BMA responded by calling a wave of 48 hour strikes. Responding to public concern about the effect of the dispute on junior doctors’ morale, the Secretary of State also announced an enquiry into the morale of junior doctors, to be conducted by Professor Dame Sue Bailey, Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. The enquiry is expected to produce a report in early 2017.

In this context, this paper presents the results of qualitative research into work related mood, emotion and job attitudes among a sample of 25 junior doctors, supplemented by 4 focus groups of doctors participating in industrial action. The research, originally conceived as part of a wider project into subjective well-being at work which has also involved interviews with gardeners, warehouse workers, teachers and IT professionals was designed to further understanding of the way in which workers respond to commonly used psychological measures of subjective wellbeing at work, particularly the role of social norms in shaping responses.

Participants were asked to respond to standard survey measures of subjective wellbeing, specifically instruments for measuring job related affect (Warr, 1990), job satisfaction and life satisfaction. After providing these answers, they were asked to expand on their reasons for answering the questions in the way they had. If the dispute was not mentioned in these answers, prompts were used. They were also asked open ended questions about why they had chosen to become junior doctors and their work-life history to date, in order that their answers could be located in the wider contexts of their lives. Underlying attitudes and social norms around work were investigated by asking questions about work values and whether interview subjects would continue to work in their present job if they had no financial need to work. As such, the data provides an account of the morale of junior doctors, and the ways in which the industrial dispute has affected morale in junior doctors’ own words.
The sample was constructed through the social networks of the researchers. 12 of the participants were at the foundation stage of their training (equivalent to house officers or senior house officers) with the remainder core trainees and/or specialist registrars. Data were subjected to thematic analysis using Nvivo. Themes were identified through an iterative process of analysis, reflection, discussion and further analysis among the research team. At the time of writing this process is still ongoing, but initial themes include:

Morale was low among foundation stage doctors. Low morale could be related to two broad themes. First, the classic causes of work related stress identified by Karasek (1979) of high demands (long hours, demanding workloads) and low control (doctors felt they had little control over either the tasks they would be asked to perform, the volume of tasks they would be expected to carry out, or the hours they would be working). Within this theme, doctors generally differentiated between the expected demands of the job and demands generated by management practices which they deemed to be inefficient, unfair or unnecessary. For example, resentment was expressed about rostering practices which prevent doctors having any control over their free time, centrally imposed targets and training which was deemed to be inadequate (making doctors feel that they lacked the skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the job). Second, the uncertainty and lack of security inherent to the employment contracts of foundation stage doctors; doctors at this stage of their career are uncertain whether they will be able to secure a specialist training post in either the area(s) of medicine they want to work in, or the geographical area of the country that would allow them to maintain important social and familial ties. Frustration with training perceived to be inadequate intensified this insecurity, because doctors felt that it compromised their chances of securing desired training posts in future. This exacerbated feelings of lack of control.

According to doctors own accounts, the experience of the industrial dispute had deepened their commitment to the vocation of medicine, while weakening their commitment to the NHS England as an employer. This strengthened collective identities as medical practitioners, while, perhaps paradoxically further individualising doctors views on their own future careers and career behaviour, with many envisaging future careers outside of NHS England.

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Payslips and their absence - a potential indicator for abusive labour practices

This paper will consider how payslips, and specifically their non-provision by employers, could be used as a predictor for other more significant abuses of workers’ rights, and how this might contribute to improved enforcement and compliance with workers’ rights.

Using data from the Family Resource Survey, the paper will describe the distribution of reported non-provision of payslips, and compare this with other sources of data on labour abuses. The evidence from other studies regarding the significance and likely consequences of employers not providing payslips will be discussed, as will potential problems arising from their provision in digital form.

Non-provision of payslips was identified in papers prepared for the TUC’s Commission on Vulnerable Employment (e.g. Pollert et al 2009, Jayaweera & Anderson 2008) as presenting specific problems, although it did not feature in the CoVE final report. This did, however refer to the possibility of including information on rights and advice with payslips, and problems with their accuracy (Commission for Vulnerable Employment 2008).

Qualitative research evidence suggests that employers’ failure to provide payslips may act as a marker for other abuses of employment rights (for example Clark & Kumarappan, 2011). This paper will examine the legal, administrative and technological context for the provision of payslips, and reviews the literature which includes reports of them being withheld from specific groups of workers.

The payslip is a crucial document, particularly for those with variable earnings. A survey conducted for the National Employment Savings Trust and a study on contract cleaners conducted for the EHRC both found low paid private sector workers checking every payslip. During the course of the preliminary research for a larger project, Key Informants spoke of the importance of the payslip for evidence of payments made or not made, as well as of continuing employment. Provision of payslips features in the Gangmasters Licensing Authority Licensing Standards (although not categorised as “critical”). Interviews with GLA staff have confirmed the importance of payslips as a “canary in the coalmine”. While failure to provide a payslip may not, of itself, constitute informal or undeclared work, it can give rise to the same insecurities faced by workers in such work. These were described by Williams as including absence of health and safety standards, minimum wage, paid holiday or sick pay entitlements, insecurity of employment and low access to credit (Williams 2013).

During a study of migrant domestic workers, the significance of payslips emerged. Workers were anxious to ensure the security of their migration status, and valued the payslip as evidence of compliance, while employers’ reluctance to provide them exposed the employment relationship to the risk of being determined unlawful, and therefore without enforceable rights. It was also found that those who did not receive payslips tended to have lower pay (below the National Minimum Wage), and fewer – if any – breaks, than those
who did. This appeared to be the case even where the payslip was only partial, in that some pay was provided in cash and unrecorded (Clark & Kumarappan, 2011). Williams also identifies the use of partial cover by payslips as a strategy which might involve worker/employer collusion, but also cites the possibility that “informality” or undeclared work may be a means of employers lowering labour costs while rendering workers more compliant (Williams 2013a).

The paper will review the legal context to the right of workers to a payslip, and consider recent developments such as outsourced payroll provision and the use of digital payslips (web accessible, via e-mail or even by SMS). It will also consider the significance of the payslip (or more particularly its absence) as an indication of intention to pay or evade PAYE (and other taxes) – or for entire enterprise’s activities to be rendered invisible to authorities, to render employment contract unenforceable, or to hinder workers in enforcement of their rights. In this context, the absence of payslips suggests a failure to maintain proper records – which is in itself a criminal offence under NMW regulations - as well as potentially leading to barring Directors from holding office. The incidence of failure to provide a payslip as an aspect of claims heard at Employment Tribunals (extracted from the ET Judgements Registry) will be described, as will recent developments post introduction of ET fees.

The paper will also explore the potential for using data from the Family Resource Survey (FRS) to describe the distribution of non-provision and how this compares with other indicators of abuse of workers’ rights. The method of verification of participants’ income from earnings used in the FRS includes consulting the worker’s most recent payslip (where it is available). In recent years, recording the availability of payslips has identified separately those who have no payslip because it is provided electronically by their employer, and those who report that their employer provides no payslip. This permits examination of the demographic, sectoral and occupational distribution of those reporting non-provision. This will be compared those of other possible indicators of worker abuse from the Labour Force Survey (e.g. report of no paid holidays, zero hours contracts).

Conclusion
Non-provision of payslips may not always indicate undeclared work, but will frequently accompany breaches of workers’ rights. Sectors/regions with comparatively high frequency of reported non-provision are likely to be those where workers’ entitlements to pay and paid holidays are being abused.

The growth in provision of payslips by electronic means (web-based, e-mail, SMS) may be reducing the capacity of some workers to check their entitlements in a timely manner, thus blurring the distinction between provision and non-provision.

Dickens has argued that there need to be proactive enforcement approaches to employment regulation, particularly where individuals may not feel themselves able to take action (Dickens 2012). Both she and Colling in the same volume argue that trade unions could have a role in such enforcement. The paper will propose enforcement of the right to a payslip as suitable for such an approach. Providing reliable routes for workers to complain
of non-provision of payslips, and a system of inspection of payslips could both help to identify other abuses of workers’ rights and be of benefit to the exchequer.

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Blacklisting in the construction industry: its history, context and implications

This paper is about blacklisting in the construction industry, outlining its history and drawing out its implications and above all addressing the questions of why blacklisting has been so prevalent in the sector and what is at its roots. It draws on interviews with blacklisted workers and on extensive research carried out on the industry, in part to provide expertise on wages and conditions in the industry for the High Court in relation to compensation claims since 1968.

The paper begins by outlining the current situation in relation to blacklisting, including the discovery in 2009 by the Information Commissioner’s Office of a blacklist run by the Consulting Association, supported and funded by leading contractors. It describes the development of the campaign, including literature produced (e.g. Ewing 2009; Smith and Chamberlain 2015), and the issues this has addressed, largely concerned with the cases themselves, the legal redress possible, and the involvement of the police, the secret service and the trade unions. Little attention has been paid to the nature of the industry, the reasons for the disputes giving rise to blacklisting, and the implications for the industry.

Though there is much evidence of blacklisting in the construction industry over the past hundred years, from the Aims of Industry to the Economic League, the Consulting Association blacklisting dates back to the Barbican Dispute of the 1960s. Drawing on interviews conducted as part of a Leverhulme project, Building Workers Stories, the paper outlines the dispute, the reasons for it - largely attributable to the wage system as well as health and safety issues (including the use of asbestos) – on the part of the workers concerned and the differences between their concerns and those of the government’s Cameron Inquiry into the dispute, focused primarily on tensions between shop stewards and officials and the role of the Communist Party (Wall et al 2012; McGuire et al 2013; Cameron 1967). The paper then describes other disputes on major projects giving rise to blacklisting, including the Isle of Grain, the Jubilee Line and Cross Rail, and identifies the reasons for these, primarily trade union membership, health and safety issues, deskilling, and the wage and employment contract.

The paper goes on to explore the development of each these issues, beginning with the wage system in the industry and the problems with the bonus introduced after the war. In an attempt to understand the employer rationale for blacklisting, the changing nature of industrial relations is assessed, including: divisions between the different trade unions; changes in collective bargaining – such as the establishment of the National Engineering Construction Industry Agreement in the 1980s; changes in the nature of the employers, as the large employers ceased to employ workers; and changes in the workforce, as ‘bogus self-employment’ was promoted. The issue of health and safety has been of especial concern, as evident in off-shore oil and gas extraction, the Barbican and Cross Rail,
particularly challenges to health and safety representatives. The paper outlines the disputes and campaigns related to this issue, including the setting up of the Construction Safety Campaign. Finally the question of deskillling and maintaining a qualified workforce is examined, as evident in the disputes concerning electricians in Manchester Piccadilly, which gave rise to the Information Commission raid (Pattison and Bamford 2014).

The final section of the paper is a critical assessment of the implications of and underlying reasons for blacklisting in the industry, including the loss of committed and highly skilled workers. The major weaknesses of the sector are outlined, including its poor industrial relations record, output-based wage structure, lack of employee representation, exclusion of women, black and Asian ethnic minorities and trade unionists, dramatically declining training record, casual and unregulated employment, and poor working conditions, above all long working hours. That attempts to address some of these issues by those blacklisted has only led to their own exclusion implies an inbuilt aversion to improving conditions and to valuing the workforce. It also means that the industry would be a very different one today, had those committed to its improvement not been excluded. The conclusion drawn is that blacklisting is the result of and results in the enforcement of class divisions in the industry, divisions that can only begin to be broken down if the workforce is valued and respected.

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Regulating the informal economy in the UK

Overview

This paper will explore the prospects for effective regulation in the growing informal economy. A study of working conditions in one sector, the car wash industry, is used to identify the challenges to regulation and to evaluate the likely impact of recent proposals to reform the relevant legislation and enforcement agencies.

Informality and the Challenge to Regulation

The idea of the informal economy has developed rapidly in recent years and has been enriched by research and conceptualisation beyond the field of employment relations (ER) and human resource management (HRM).

Historically, a narrow focus on regulation in formal employment left our subject ill-equipped to deal with the issues raised by informality. Some traction was afforded by the development of debates around the ‘flexible firm’ (Atkinson 1984). Amongst the criticisms of such an approach however was concern that the firm level focus obscured broader, underlying change in the composition of sectors and inter-firm relations.

Change at this level is emphasised in more recent accounts from beyond the bounds of ER and HRM. Definition now focuses on the ‘macro-level’ idea of the ‘informal economy’ and is echoed in other terminology, including the ‘underground’; ‘subterranean’; ‘irregular’; and ‘sharing’ economy (for reviews of the literature, see Chen 2007; Hussmans 2004; Losby et al 2002; Williams 2014). Definitions are overlapping and contested but estimates suggest that economic activity of this kind in the UK accounts for 10-12% of gross domestic product (GDP) and effects about 20% of the population (Refugee Council 2011).

It remains difficult, however, to conceptualize where and how this activity is manifest. There has been an implicit tendency to deploy a kind of dualism, to say that the informal economy can be defined against the formal one. Yet casual empirical observation suggests that informal working happens at the core of formal organisations, as numerous examples of precarious employment practices within parliament and Whitehall amply attest. Moreover, informality is a question of degree and extent rendering definition a messy business. This is recognised in the government’s most recent foray into the issues. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS 2015: 13) distinguishes five different categories of employment practice, from ‘compliant’ (with extant regulations) to ‘criminal’ and suggests that these are likely to be moderated by the strength of the relationship between the employer and the worker.
Exactly where the boundaries between these approaches lie in any particular case is not a straightforward question, however, and they are unlikely to remain static over time. Even targeting groups deemed to ‘vulnerable’ can be problematic. Migrant workers, for example, are clearly at particular risk from criminal activity but not exclusively. Informal working is associated primarily with poverty rather than nationality or ethnicity per se (Katungi et al. 2006).

These features of informal working carry a number of implications for the nature and effectiveness of regulation. First, the scale of informality presents a fundamental challenge to government. To the extent that it is associated with irregular compliance with tax and national insurance, the growth of informal working suggests significant foregone income to the exchequer. It weakens the floor of employment rights, degrading competition and the rubric of the rule of law. “Focal point” theories of legal compliance suggest that agents adjust their behaviour not to what the law provides but to what they expect other agents to do in the light of the law (McAdams & Nadler 2008). Where employers see competitors in the informal economy surviving and flourishing, the pressure they feel to comply with established standards will be lessened.

Yet the capacity to challenge informality is compromised and limited. Union and employee influence has been weakened by reform to collective labour law and to the enforcement of individual statutory rights. Government agencies have sustained cuts to budgets and have been encouraged to limit the ‘burden’ of regulation on ‘good’ employers. Tensions have been evident between policy makers in different departments. Where some see principally risks associated with criminal activity (e.g., the Home Office), others fear threatening routes into formal employment within poor communities.

Considerations of this kind lead to three preliminary research questions. First, how is informal working becoming manifest in the UK? Second, what has been the experience so far of regulation? And third, what are the prospects for more innovative approaches?

**Methods**
The paper addresses these questions using data from an ongoing study of the car wash industry. This context is emblematic growing informality; a once integrated and technology intensive sector has fragmented in the face of competition from informally established and highly labour intensive car wash operations.

The initial phase of research consisted of a multi-method approach to mapping the development of car wash sites in one urban centre. Twenty sites across a single city were logged and observed. Using snowball sampling techniques, a series of direct conversational interviews was conducted with workers. In total twenty interviews were completed on twelve sites, seventeen with workers and three with business owner-workers. More formal interviews were held with representatives of three sector stakeholders (the Petrol Retailer’s Association (PRA); the Car Wash Association (CWA) and a nationally recognised trade supplier of products and equipment to the sector) and a further three interviews were conducted with local authority regulators.

A further phase of research is planned for early 2016, exploring with key stakeholders the anticipated impact of fundamental changes to the regulation of employment standards signaled in last year’s Immigration Bill and the government’s recent consultation exercise (BIS 2015) (see below).

**Findings**

Discussion of findings will focus on growing informality within the car wash industry and the experience of regulation so far.

The car wash sector was traditionally dominated by the main petrol retailers and formally established valeting firms. There were virtually no hand car wash sites up to 2004, products were offered principally through ‘roll-over’ automated washes and to a more limited extent by self-service power washers. By 2013, however, of an estimated 18,500 sites offering car wash services, the vast majority (over 10,000) were informal hand car washes (industry figures).

Our findings did not confirm all prior expectations of changes in this industry. Particularly on sites close to main arterial routes, there were marked signs of formality. These sites could be large, with sizeable workforces serving significant numbers of customers. Many were not ‘pop-up’ sites at all but were ‘hosted’ concessions from large firms on existing garage and supermarket sites. Liveried and protective clothing was often in use and signage was established and often professional. Similarly, the labour process was highly organised. Workers formed teams responsible for key stages in the washing and valeting process and these were overseen by ‘supervisors’ who were exclusively responsible for receiving payments.

These trappings of formality were significant in one key sense. Some entrepreneurs reportedly saw the industry as a route into acceptable business activity. Small car wash sites were linked increasingly by intermediaries and some had taken over valeting companies. Often, however, the formality sat alongside informal and unethical employment practices. Low wages, often below the legal minimum, were reportedly common and environmental
and health and safety regulations were breached routinely. For example, specialist diffusers should be used to apply acid solutions used to clean wheels but rarely were.

Discussion

This is an opportune moment to be discussing regulation of the informal economy. Significant innovations are taking place in the USA, involving the interaction of litigation, lobbying, and political intervention at city and state level. These have been driven by unions and community groups, certainly, but also by political administrations keen to regularise tax revenues from these expanding businesses. To the surprise of many, the current Conservative government in the UK is now driving a potentially significant innovation – the creation of a new Director of Labour Market Enforcement and an expanded, proactive role for the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

This part of the paper will evaluate the likely impact of these reforms in the light of evidence uncovered through the project. Enhanced co-ordination of multi-agency enforcement is likely to be beneficial but much will depend on the scale of resources made available and how action is to be organised. Findings discussed here highlight the difficulties inherent in trying to ‘target’ ‘rogue’ employers: problematic working conditions are apparent in quite formal settings on the premises of major firms. Evidence from the US, meanwhile, suggest that preventing ‘misclassification’ of workers and identifying peak employers (‘employers of record’) are critical in circumstances where inter-firm relations muddy employment relationships.

References


Organising and mobilising in the face of austerity: Building participation and democracy in a local union branch

Summary

This paper presents some preliminary findings from ongoing research on union responses to local council cuts and outsourcing in a local Unison branch. There has been a tendency in the literature to separate organising and mobilising and this paper argues that mobilisation theory, particularly in terms of the processes towards developing collective interests and identity, is fundamental for understanding the possibilities for organising and in turn for union renewal. The paper makes the distinction within organising of internal organising – renewing internal power sources through mobilising existing members, encouraging democracy and participation and external organising – renewing external power sources through extending membership (‘outreach’ work) and building mobilising capacity. The emerging research shows that in order to develop representative legitimacy and mobilising capacity, the local union has had to engage in a process of internal organising focusing on the development of collective interests and identity, triggered by the current austerity programme at the local level.

Literature Review

In most countries in Western Europe unions have recognised the need to respond to falling union density and questions about representative legitimacy, and have to varying degrees accepted the ‘turn to organising’ (Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman, 2013: 56). In times of austerity when there is little prospect of support from employers and the state, unions need to look at what they can do to construct a restated interpretation of unionism that connects with the interests and convictions of a new, changing and diverse workforce. Organising was introduced originally in the US union movement as ‘internal organising’, used to refer to activity within unionised workplaces, with the focus on mobilising current members for union action. The term ‘external organising’ was used to refer to recruitment and outreach work. The ‘organising model’ is now indiscriminately used to refer to both internal organising to mobilise members, and external organising to build support for union representation (Hurd, 2004).

This paper (re)makes the distinction between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ organising and uses mobilisation theory (Kelly, 1998) to understand the social processes of union organising. Collectivism is conceptualised as a socially-constructed, situationally-specific response to injustices and/or constructions of collective identity that are formed and sustained through the processes of interaction (Ibid). Whilst structural factors such as the level of unemployment and the content of labour legislation create a more or less favourable environment for the collectivisation of the workforce, they do not in themselves generate a sense of injustice or identity: those outcomes have to be constructed and framed by activists or other opinion formers. The paper demonstrates the utility of the framing
concept for understanding the ways in which collective interests and identity are or are not developed and sustained, which has important implications for the prospects for organising and in turn union renewal.

Methodology
The research methodology is qualitative and based on participant and non-participant observation in a local Unison branch. The background context for the research is the proposed move to the ‘next generation’ council in Northampton, involving the outsourcing (or ‘rightsourcing’ in the council’s terminology) of the majority of local services. There have been various experiments around outsourcing in local councils, notably in Birmingham and Barnet. Barnet was labelled ‘easyCouncil’ by critics that complained services resembled the low-cost, no frills airlines such as easyJet. Other councils, such as Essex, Southampton City, Suffolk and Staffordshire have taken up the outsourcing model.

However, Northampton County Council (NCC) is taking the process a step further by transferring 3,850 of its 4,000 employees to 4 new dividend-paying service providers which would deliver all the council’s services, including social care for the elderly. In early 2016 the chief executive is pushing through with plans to begin outsourcing services in a move which he says will make a £148 million saving by 2020. Local people have begun to mobilise against the cuts and some fear the plan is a step towards privatisation. Under EU Procurement Law these contracts will have to go out to tender after 3 years, so fears of effective privatisation are well-founded. The ‘commission-only’ model being adopted by NCC is likely to be increasingly replicated in Conservative-controlled shires and urban areas. There is no real reflection as to how these activities will function under this ‘next generation’ council model and a lack of transparency, which makes it difficult for unions to be proactive and respond effectively to these plans.

To date the research has included attendance at branch meetings, the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the co-organisation (with the Regional Organiser and co-author who has been tasked with conducting a review of the branch) of an away day for the union branch stewards and participation in demonstrations and local council cabinet meetings. The next phase of the research will involve shadowing of union stewards and a set of interviews following the review of the branch. The period of research will last for 18 months.

Conclusions
This paper argues that better distinctions need to be made when researching organising between internal and external organising and recognition that underlying both forms are the social processes of developing and maintaining collective interests and identity. In the case of the local Unison branch framing includes developing a sense ‘injustice’ around local government cuts, outsourcing and more broadly austerity and a sense of ‘them and us’ and attributing blame to the local council and more broadly the current government, in order to develop and maintain organising and mobilising capacity.

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Bargaining over learning - a route to employee voice or sub-altern HRM?

Helen Rainbird (2012) suggests that to establish employee voice on training and development in a voluntarist system, three key stages are required. Firstly, recognition by both parties that training and development is an issue. Secondly, recognition by management that it is a joint issue. Thirdly, that resolution achieved around the tension between employer and employee interests in training (see for example Heyes & Stuart 1998). Rainbird describes contrasting outcomes: a restricted resolution provides direct benefit to the employer and limited benefits to the employee; alternatively, an extended resolution is where employees derive direct benefits from training and development. Rainbird contends that an extended resolution is more likely to occur where channels for employee voice exist and mechanisms for reaching resolution are separate from wider mechanisms of collective bargaining (op cit; see also Munro & Rainbird 2000).

The growth in institutions supporting learning including union learning reps (ULRs), workplace learning committees and union-management learning agreements (Stuart 2011; Cassell & Lee 2007) might indicate enhanced union engagement with management on the learning and development theme and new mechanisms through which employee voice on training and development could be advanced. Yet the existence of institutions and codification of responsibilities does not necessarily imply critical engagement that achieves an extended resolution around learning. Indeed, it has been argued that UK union’s activity around the learning advances a narrow neo-liberal state skills agenda (McIlroy 2008), and does not adopt a productivist bargaining strategy but has become a sub-altern HRM that ultimately weakens worker representation (Daniels & McIlroy 2009).

This paper examines these themes empirically through analysis of contemporary bargaining behaviours around the learning theme. Data is taken from a study tracking the development and operation of learning agreements at the workplace over a three year period examining bargaining behaviours and related bargaining strategies. Using an embedded case design, 66 interviews were undertaken with reps, union officials and management involved in the initial negotiation of learning agreements and subsequent workplace bargaining around the delivery of learning activities and outcomes in four workplaces. The paper considers whether and how unions advance learning as a joint issue and achieve an extended resolution on this theme.

Extant literature conceptualises union-management negotiation on training and development as predominantly integrative (Stuart & Wallis 2007; Sutherland & Rainbird 2000), invoking Walton and McKersie’s well known bargaining model (1965). However, the findings illustrate that bargaining behaviours are more mixed with both integrative and distributive elements. Extended resolution is more likely where union reps adopt mixed bargaining behaviours and are actively involved in attitudinal structuring activity (Walton and McKersie op cit) challenging unitarist management perceptions and establishing union-led learning as distinct from employer-led training and development.
References


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‘It Is Either All of Us or None’: The Impact of Subcontracted employment and Worker’s Bargaining Tactics in the Turkish Metalmechanical Industry

After significantly restructuring its economy following a financial collapse in 2001, Turkey has succeeded in attracting the core of Europe’s divested industry. The impact of large foreign owned enterprises and post-crisis privatizations has severely affected the local labour regime; moreover, the emergence of subcontracted employment and a new trade union legislation have sensibly reduced industrial workers’ bargaining powers, already restricted to improving terms of employment through top-down agreement between employer and union delegations. However, against all expectations, the increasingly coercive restrictions on collective bargaining proper of the Turkish Government’s authoritarian flexibilisation labour regime (Çelik, 2015) has met an unprecedented wave of mobilisations on behalf of precarious workers who have successfully managed to break employers’ alliances and stop crucial nodes of industrial production sometimes for several weeks in a row, eventually moving at rank-and-file level beyond legally impaired union structures.

This paper examines two such cases of mobilisations by looking at the controversies surrounding the 2014-2016 Collective Bargain Agreement between metalmechanical trade unions and the M.E.S.S. (the National association of Metal Mechanical Employers). Opposition to the agreement both within and without trade union membership are examined through the Metal Strike declared in 42 plants affiliated with progressive-leaning Birlesik Metal-İş during January 2015; and the chain of lock-ins called by roughly 15 000 metal workers of both senior and junior status, again in opposition to the 2014-2016 CBA but also in defiance of trade union leadership.

The first case - the January 2015 metal sector strike called by Birleşik Metal-İş - explores the potential of rank and file initiative within the checks of legalised union activity as boundaries can be dynamically redefined by State institutions whenever employers are in need of rescue. The second case study - partly a consequence of the metal strike - examines the May 2015 spontaneous lockouts against the Metal İş union and the metal sector CBA it signed. Organised reactively as events unfolded, the lockouts have positively upset thirty-five years of triangulated power between collusive union leaderships, State and employers’ guild, eventually breaking a pattern of centralised negotiation and instead forcing decision making down to new bodies established inside each plant.

Both actions brought mixed results in terms of achievements and replicability. Never the less, they highlight an emerging tactic among the metal-mechanical industry (one of the few sectors where collective bargaining is de-facto centralised at nation-wide level) and its increasingly fragmented Turkish workforce: to reconfigure decision-making fixtures by breaking down centralised negotiation in favour of plant-level deliberation.
Both cases are closely examined through ethnographic observation, chronological reviews as well as extensive interviews with workers and union representatives.

While offering an overview of the specific historical, ethnic and legal hindrances which bind collective bargaining in Turkey to large enterprises and membership to confederate unions, which excludes the growing mass of sub-contracted workers, this study points at the role of both authoritarian flexibilisation and the increasing pace of industrialization brought in by European divestment and assesses the possibility for the coming years to decentralise collective bargaining through rank-and-file organization.

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Evans, Samantha: University of Kent

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Exploring social class differences at work

This paper is part of a wider project that investigates how organisational and individual factors within the workplace contribute to social class differences and inequality. In doing so, it examines the relative impact of objective and subjective indicators of social class on explicit (e.g. salary, occupational status, promotions) and implicit (e.g. career satisfaction, quality of working life, employment conditions and well-being) career and work outcomes. There is increasing recognition that social class differences play a crucial role in social inequality in the workplace, particularly in presenting barriers for lower class individuals in the labour market (Ashley et al, 2015; Côté 2011; Milburn, 2012). Yet there exists relatively little research within the employment relations and management literature which seeks to understand and tackle the issue of social class inequalities in organisations.

One particular challenge for understanding the dynamic nature of social class in the workplace has been a lack of interdisciplinary enquiry. Social class has been studied predominantly by sociologists often drawing on Bourdieu’s (1984) conceptual trilogy of field, capital and habitus (e.g. Savage et al, 2013; Ashley and Empson, 2012). While this has provided considerable knowledge around the definitions of class, the relevance of class, and values and social interactions associated with social class, far less is known about its relationship with individual attitudes and behaviour in specific organisational and workplace settings (Crompton, 2010; Kraus and Stephens, 2012). In addition, few studies use both objective and subjective measurements of class (or any degree of congruence between them). We argue that by adopting a more interdisciplinary approach and combining both measurements in one study we can better understand the nuances of social inequality within organisations to inform both theory and practice. In particular, the findings of our study will improve our understanding of how social class operates within organisations and its contribution to workplace inequality.

This paper focuses on the experiences of employees, particularly those working in class-discrepant positions, which Gray and Kish-Gephart (2013: 692) define as those who work in roles that are above or below their initial social class standing. When employees work in such positions they are argued to experience lower levels of career opportunity and individual wellbeing. Although there has been theoretical development about the contribution of class-discrepant roles to workplace inequality (Gray and Kish-Gephart, 2013), research has yet to empirically explore this. In addition, individuals who traverse class boundaries within organisations are known to engage in passing and shaping, performativity, and class based impression management to facilitate their ‘class travel’ and progress in their careers (Hughes, 2004; Skeggs, 1997). Gray and Kish-Gephart (2013) introduce the concept of ‘class work’ to describe some of these behaviours and theorise that class work perpetuates class differences and inequalities at work. Again, despite their compelling theory of class work and how it may interact with class-discrepancy to
perpetuate class norms in the workplace, there has been no empirical investigation into the types of class work that individuals may engage in, the type of organisational conditions that effect the likelihood of individuals engaging in class work, or how it might serve to maintain class inequality in the workplace.

In this paper we report on preliminary findings from a pilot study exploring the impact of social class and class work on inequality in the workplace. Using mixed methods the study consists of a two-stage methodology to: (1) quantitatively investigate the social class of respondents, identify those in class-discrepant positions, and assess the potential impact on their wellbeing; (2) to qualitatively explore their experiences of social class inequality in the workplace and interviewees’ engagement with class work. Stage one involves a survey designed to capture a range of perspectives on social class from different disciplines. We use a variety of objective and subjective measures to assess social class and calculate class-discrepancy. Affective wellbeing as an indicator of anxiety in the workplace is also measured. Participants are sent an online questionnaire, which takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participation in this study is voluntary, and all participants are asked for permission to use their anonymised data for research. The qualitative study uses interviews to explore and clarify the measurement of social class used within the survey as well as focusing on the notion of class work. Participants are identified from the questionnaire process. Individual experiences of class work are explored using a combination of open-ended interview questions and the critical incident technique. The final submission of this paper would include data and findings collected from both stages of the pilot study.

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Postpartum selves: Indignities and concessions of accessing flexible work

This paper examines contemporary accounts of flexible working presented by women seeking flexible working arrangements and line managers responsible for allowing such working practices. We show how the legislated right to apply for access to flexible working arrangements produce peculiar effects, particularly among women seeking flexible working arrangements following a period of maternity leave. The analysis of contemporary work is juxtaposed with what we consider to be classic ethnographic\(^2\) literatures examining the worlds of work as a mode of constant comparative analysis across time, contexts and registers that get to the heart of relations between experiences and effects of work and home. In this way, we examine whether the experience of contemporary mothers and managers represents a contemporary effect of lives in or out of balance, or whether the effect is commonplace across time. Specifically we examine the experiences as lived across empirical and historical cases in order to elicit whether our contemporary analysis represents a product of a given epoch, mode of political economy, or whether it represents a relative condition of making (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Garfinkel, 1967; Goodman, 1978) and making sense (Durkheim, 2001; Weick, 1993) of social worlds.

The interview accounts represent participants from a diverse range of occupational backgrounds, for example medicine, law, government, nursing, management, insurance, telesales and retail. Previous research has examined the effects of flexible working arrangements, particularly with reference to what may be considered professional roles, such as in broadcasting and journalism (Kanji & Cahusac, 2015), where an opportunity to leave work altogether remained a possibility for those families with economic stability. Indeed, it may be assumed that certain occupational groups are conferred certain advantages when it comes to accessing flexible working; however tensions of accessibility are not as clear cut as this and as has been noted elsewhere, it is in the minuitiae and specificities of accommodating work and family that is considered deleterious for men, women and families (Hochschild, 1989; Williams, 2000). However, from our analysis it is those women and families who need to work, those without sufficient incomes where non-work is an impossibility. It is in this respect that we have been able to draw upon more readily accessible and well-known accounts of work and here we compare contemporary research with three examples of factory work. The comparative historical and contextual accounts are taken from Frederick Engels, Simone Weil and Michael Haraszti. Each of the three accounts are used as a frame from which our paper examines whether family and work experiences have or have not altered across time

\(^2\) We refer to these examples as ethnographic in the sense that these are accounts of 'travellers' in the field, rather than necessarily being labeled as such by the authors or later interlocutors. In doing so we may no methodological claims, nor claims that they follow a particular observational method, rather that these are ways of comprehending everyday cultural practices in relation to far broader social, cultural, economic and political processes.
and contexts of political economy. Engels’ (1969) examination of the ways in which particular kinds of individual and collective behaviour is produced are highlighted as a consequence of broader social forces rather than being a class-based characteristic for our analysis (cf. Sennett & Cobb, 1972; Sennett, 1976). The ways in which class, working women and effects of working women are figured within Engels work provides a background for the ways in which the necessity of flexible work for some has such potent effects. The historical context of newly urbanised and industrialised England, produces particular effects seemingly incompatible with a contemporary analysis, yet the ways in which similarity of the need for work in response to broader social, political and economic pressures remains, even if the relative effects are less severe. Where industrialist reformers such as Owen (1991) point to the broader social effects of labour conditions upon the family as a threat to nation, Engels’ account highlights the ways in which behaviour is manifest as a consequence of conditions outside of the workers control. This is a point well made through Mills (1959), who makes explicit the ways in which factors outside of an individual’s control are taken as their individual problem, as a problem of individual character (Gerth & Mills, 1957). For an examination of contemporary issues surrounding accessing flexible work, we make explicit how forms of alterity within work and management produce effects not too dissimilar to that described by Engels. However, such an analysis whilst pointing to strong contextual and contingent antecedents of behaviour speaks to broad experience, but less clearly to the visceral, embodied experiences of how forms of capital and management impact upon those seeking flexible work and their families.

Within our primary analysis what was crucial to how the process and outcome was experienced was the depth of need to seek flexible work arrangements. Actively seeking flexible working arrangements was not undertaken lightly, only when all other avenues were exhausted were line managers approached and the case made for flexible work. In kind with work describing discretionary activities in social policy, there is a way in which possible rejection is factored into the decision of whether or not to attempt to access services in the first instance (Lipsky, 1980). Within our analysis seeking access was deferred for fear of the consequences such a request would make in terms of work, relationships and career. In turn the precarious nature of the employment relationship appeared, whether real and/or imagined the effect was one of anxiety. In turn the ‘fieldnotes’ (Weil, 1987) and textual representation of experiences of work (1977) point specifically to the role of shame, guilt and diminishment of self as a consequence of work and relations with others. It is in this sense that the indignity of being in a position where assistance is required of the line manager to enable work to be conducted more flexibly comes to the fore. It is here that the vivid visceral accounts of everyday humiliations resonates closely with how women across professional domains in the UK experienced the ‘cap in hand’ transformation of a right to access flexible working arrangements.

The final framing derives from an alternate political system, notably socialist Hungary whereby the resonance of a given form of work and its management produce effects none too dissimilar from that described by Weil. What is significant here is the similarities in terms of the effects of work pressures, a diminishment of perspective, a blaming of workers as a cultural phenomenon and indeed by the women themselves in addition to an analysis from a socialist state which shows the same tendencies and arguably reflect a similar logic of capital. What emerges from our analysis is how closely our contemporary accounts
resonate with those derived from Weil (1977; 1998) and Engels (1969). What is specific about Haraszti for our analysis is the ways in which progress within the career was determined by already existing friendships, networks and quite simply whether or not the face fits. For Haraszti there were particular ways in which factory work could be transformed into a managerial and or political career, so long as a particular line was followed and relationships maintained. In kind with Gouldner’s (1958) classic examination of cosmopolitans and locals, those who had firmly aligned themselves to work were the ones who experienced the greater difficulty with the possibility of detachment. In many respects there are parallels with Weil’s account, but here we unpick those ‘despised’ individuals as Engels and Weil highlight, despised because of the ways in which work has produced them and despised because they work. It is in this case that our contemporary analysis picks up on how a woman seeking flexible working arrangements has no idea how much they were despised when returning from maternity leave as management and colleagues fail to support what for many is a final means of reconciling working arrangements with a newly postpartum home life. Not only is the necessity of accessing flexible work problematic, but once this is (or is not) granted those private perspectives of working life come to the fore as an admonishment of those who sought some form of family-work concession.

In seeking access to FWA based upon familial need, we show how tensions of indignity, concession and resentment resonate with the reality as lived across empirical and historical cases. This further exposes the significance of far bigger forms of ambiguity between the public, the private, of work and home where demarcations have become of themselves a form of organisation for a particular purpose.

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Forde, Chris: University of Leeds

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The role of line managers in managing individual conflict in the workplace: new pressures and old problems

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the way that organisations address and seek to manage workplace conflict and individual employment disputes. The Workplace Employment Relations Study 2011 revealed that more than nine out of ten HR practitioners reported spending time on disciplinary and grievance issues, a greater proportion than training, diversity, appraisals and pay. Similarly, discipline and grievance were the most common issues dealt with by trade union representatives (van Wanrooy et al., 2013). The aim of this paper is to look at how conflict is being managed in British workplaces, and, given the important policy changes outlined above, to look at the ways in which ACAS guidance and advice is used to shape the way in which workplace conflict and individual employment disputes are addressed. We focus in particular on the role of line managers, an area that has received some attention in the broader employment relations and HR literature, but where there remains relatively limited knowledge of the specific role of these managers in the management of conflict.

There has been significant changes in policy around individual conflict in recent years. First, the Gibbons review of dispute resolution in the UK (Gibbons, 2007) focused on the perceived complexity of the statutory three-step procedures for dealing with employee grievances and dismissals. A revised Acas Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance was introduced in 2009 which was substantially shorter, less prescriptive and focussed around a number of key principles. A second theme of policy reform has sound to extend and promote the use of conciliation and mediation (see Saundry and Wibberley, 2014). A final area of policy reform has centred on the law related to unfair dismissal and employment tribunal process. This has included measures introduced in 2012 and 2013 to: extend the qualifying period to claim unfair dismissal from 12 months to 2 years; the introduction of fees for registering an employment tribunal application and for taking such claims to hearing; and the reform of the existing law around compromise agreements, now recast as settlement agreements. Critics of these measures argue that they represent a restriction on access to justice within a system in which the chances of success for claimants was already extremely low (Ewing and Hendy, 2013; Hepple, 2014).

Looking specifically at managers’ responses to managing conflict, Jones and Saundry (2012) found that concerns of possible employment tribunal action (whether real or imagined) had led to managers adopting risk averse approaches to disciplinary and grievance issues. Research conducted by Jordan et al. (2013) found that there was a lack of understanding of the precise nature of employment legislation among managers. Furthermore, notable declines in employment tribunal volumes in recent years have occurred alongside fundamental changes to the nature of workplace employment relations which in turn, have eroded the capacity of organisations to manage conflict. A ‘conflict resolution gap’ has been
created through three main developments: the erosion of structures of employee representation; the changing nature of the HR function; and an apparent lack of confidence and competence among frontline managers when faced with conflict. Saundry and Wibberley (2014) have found that the challenges faced by line managers are rooted in the failure of organisations to see conflict management as strategically important. This means that the role played by managers in addressing and resolving conflict is not seen as a priority.

This paper draws on research conducted between December 2014 and September 2015, undertaken for a project funded by ACAS. The research utilised focus groups and semi-structured interviews to explore the social processes that underpin attitudes to conflict management and the behaviour of key stakeholders in the process. In total, 25 focus groups were completed in three regions – the South of England, the North East and the North West. Ten groups comprised of HR practitioners, eight groups were made up of trade union representatives, four groups of operational managers, including a number employed within SMEs, and three groups comprised employment lawyers. In addition, seven individual interviews were also conducted where focus groups had initially been set up, but where changing commitments of respondents meant that they had been unable to attend. In total, 158 respondents participated in the interviews or focus groups.

The paper found that conditions for conflict had worsened over the last five years. Pressures on funding in the public sector had increased work intensity and created environments in which tensions between staff were more common. Moreover, managers had less time and space in which to communicate with their team and ‘nip’ difficult issues ‘in the bud’. Employee representatives were also under pressure, and their capacity to support informal resolution appeared to be shrinking. There was little sense, from the interviews and focus groups, that conflict and conflict management was a strategic priority for most organisations. There was growing enthusiasm for early identification and resolution of conflict which had been revised to provide a greater focus on informal stages.

However, a key finding of the research was that HR practitioners, union representatives and employment lawyers reported that the confidence and competence of frontline managers was a major barrier to effective conflict management. In smaller workplaces, managers had limited knowledge of, or interest in, employment relations. In larger organisations, managerial caution was not primarily driven by concerns over the law and litigation, but by the potential negative impact on internal relationships, the possibility of criticism from senior management and the potential for retaliatory grievances. Furthermore, the ability to manage conflict, or more broadly, manage people, was not a core competence for most managers. The economic climate also presented challenges to overcoming these competency gaps. In many organisations, managers faced cuts to their own budgets and fewer resources and staff. As a result, their own work had intensified, leaving little time to devote to the management of conflict. Overall, responses to conflict were still dominated by procedural and legal compliance.
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**Activation strategies and role of social partners. The UK and France in comparative perspective**

This paper looks at the role played by trade unions and employers’ organisations in the implementation of the active inclusion strategy in the United Kingdom and France in the context of Europe 2020 sustainable and solidal growth strategy.

Changes in the active labour market policies as well as in the welfare systems have been undertaken in most Western European countries in the past decade in response to domestic pressures to control welfare expenditure and unemployment rates, as well as to comply with the European Employment Strategy. Though reforms of the labour markets and welfare affect directly workers and the regulation of labour in the workplaces, industrial relations actors have rarely been the exclusive objects of analysis in relation to the national employment strategies. The present research would like to look into the role of social partners in the drafting, designing and implementing of reforms aimed at the unemployed. Do social partners play a role in the national attempts of countries to address issues of active inclusion in the labour markets? If so, does social partners’ participation reflect a path dependent pattern or do we see a novel approach that breaks with the traditional country-specific models?

Advocates of the convergence trends in national and industrial relations institutions see differences in the approaches to labour market policies increasingly fading away. Even when institutions retain national-specific characteristics, according to some (B&H 2011) the trajectory of institutional change and the practice and content of institutions might tend to converge. Can this be regarded as valid also when looking at approaches to unemployment underpinned by diametrically opposed values?

Our analysis developed around two main dimensions: one is the content of recent reforms and the discourse used to present and introduce specific change, such as for example that of ‘activation’ or ‘workfare’ and the identification of similarities and differences. The other is the level of involvement of social partners, looking at whether it has been one of consultation only, or negotiations or active participation, if any, and how we can interpret different levels of involvement and coordination of social partners.

The present research uses a comparative qualitative approach to test the possible convergence or divergence of industrial relations’ actors involvement in the definition of national active inclusion strategies.

After a documentary and literature analysis of the trends of reforms in active labour market policies and the various forms of income support in the UK and in France, we have undertaken 20 in depth, semi-structured interviews with trade union, employers’ representatives, experts and policy makers at the national level in both countries.
The UK and France have been selected as representing two opposing models in terms of employment relations structure, social partners’ participation in the definition of national labour market policies.

The analysis of empirical data points at some clear trajectories. In terms of discourse and content, there are major differences between the two countries. Underpinned by a highly individualistic understanding of unemployment, in the UK, workfare and reduction of welfare dependency have been at the centre of the public debate and political agenda. This is mirrored in the prominent reduction of public investments in activation initiatives and substantive cuts to income support.

In France, by contrast, the state retains the responsibility to provide social protection from the risk of unemployment, seen as a collective rather than an individual problem. This is reflected in the commitment to continue investing in a wider array of initiatives and tools to support the job seekers.

In terms of participation, in the UK social partners experience an only marginal involvement in the changes to activation policies, limited to sporadic consultation, in line with the traditional UK liberal model. Though under pressure, in France our empirical analysis points at a still working bipartitism and mechanisms of social partners’ involvement. Despite common pressures, national distinctiveness in active labour market policies and social partners involvement seems to prevail over a convergence trend.

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Brown, J.

Understanding the shape of international health recruitment: New actors, new forms of regulation.

Staffing crises in the NHS have precipitated record levels of debt (Monitor, 2015). Hospitals are under pressure to maintain staffing levels in the midst of severe recruitment shortages across the sector. In particular NHS trusts are struggling to recruit doctors and nurses in sufficient numbers to maintain care standards. This recruitment shortage is not limited to the UK, recent policy papers (EC, 2012) and academic articles (Lozano et al, 2015) have drawn attention to this issue as a European emergency, with the EU estimating that there will be a shortfall of 600,000 nurses and around 1 million health professionals by 2020 (EC, 2012). Across the EU international recruitment is being promoted as a means of addressing the substantial shortage of health professionals (Lozano et al, 2015). This research uses data from a survey of 114 NHS trusts to explore the pattern of international recruitment across the sector, including:

- the exponential growth in the use of internationally recruited nurses between 2012 and 2015,
- the widespread use of agencies,
- the uptake of framework agreements for international recruitment,
- and the extent to which recruitment projects are used to source large numbers of nurses from particular countries like India and the Philippines.

We will locate our research within the wider arena health and migration policy, tracing changes in both from the 1997 labour government to the present day (Bach, 2010; Young 2011: Cangiano et al. 2009; Lozano et al, 2015). This provides the background to contemporary debates about the extent and nature of the use of international recruits within the UK health sector. From 2013 there has been increasing concern about shortages of health professionals, especially nurses. Our analysis suggests that there are four key policy areas that have led to this shortage. First, UK nurses are not satisfied with their working conditions and career opportunities and report higher quit intention than those in other EU countries (Aiken et al., 2013: 147-148). Second, the reduction in training places for nurses has reduced the number of new graduates entering the profession (cite). Third, there have been restrictions placed on the use of agency workers (Monitor, 2015). Fourth, there are significant restrictions on non EU recruitment (Young, 2011). Together these factors leave NHS trusts in the unenviable position of trying to recruit skilled staff in shortage occupations. The Conservative government relaxed restrictions on migrant nurses and made it easier for them to enter the UK following significant lobbying from hospitals, the NMC and private recruitment agencies (GOV, 2015). Many NHS trusts are choosing to focus on international recruitment to address the shortfall despite migration restrictions and the complexity of international recruitment.
Using data from FOI questionnaires to 114 UK NHS trusts it looks at the patterns of international recruitment to the UK. It demonstrates that there has been a seven fold increase in the number of nurses recruited from outside the UK by UK NHS trusts between 2012 and 2015, often using large scale recruitment exercises. The data shows that all 71 of the trusts surveyed who recruited internationally used agency partners to assist them with the recruitment process, a factor that has been known to contribute to the poor treatment of migrating workers (Calenda, 2014). While most NHS trusts that recruited from outside the UK only did so within the EU (45), a substantial minority recruited from both the EU and non EU countries (14) with twelve only conducting direct recruitment internationally from non EU countries.

In addition to the exponential increase in international recruitment, there has been a recent proliferation of framework agreements in this area. These agreements require agencies to maintain particular standards through their international recruitment processes. They use combined purchasing power of NHS buyers to encourage agencies that supply workers to the NHS to comply with legislation and otherwise voluntary codes of practice. We identify that almost half (31) of NHS trusts recruiting internationally use at least one of the framework agreements. Given that they were only introduced within the last 2 years, this means that framework agreements represent an important development that has the potential to govern norms and standards within the sector. We analyse these developments with reference to the experimental governance literature which frames them as non-regulatory forms of governance (Klein, 2008; Sabel and Zeitlin, 2012; McCrudden, 2007; 2012)

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The EU Takeover Directive: A Case Study of Information and Consultation in the European Airline Industry

Summary
This paper analyses the effectiveness of the information and consultation (I&C) provisions contained in the EU Directive on Takeover Bids (2004). The Directive, which promotes takeovers on grounds of restructuring the European economy, exemplifies the development of a neo-liberal approach to corporate regulation at EU level. Though the Commission downplayed the need for fundamental revision when the Directive was re-examined in 2012, the ETUC and TUC had argued for reform on grounds of its weakness in guaranteeing workers’ rights to information and consultation and the frequent non-observance of these rights.

Our research questions, then, were: to what extent has the Directive been effective in providing for employee representative input into corporate restructuring processes? And what changes might be required to make it more effective?

We begin by outlining the broad sweep of I&C provisions in the European context, covering all directives that contain I&C provisions, before considering the impact in the UK of the Takeover Directive as well as the City Code on Takeovers. Recent amendments and revisions to these provisions are assessed, and some of the current debates concerning further reform are summarised, particularly with respect to the right of employee representatives in the target company to append a written ‘opinion’ to the offer document, which the employer may or may not take into account. We then present a case study of a UK takeover in the airline industry, the IAG acquisition of BMI. This case study illustrates the importance of existing historical employment relations processes and structures in takeovers, whilst also suggesting that the criteria for identifying transactions that fall within the remit of the Code need to be addressed.

Literature
Levels of takeover activity in the UK are at the high end of the European scale. The most useful analytical literature that seeks to explain such levels sets out a ‘varieties of capitalism’ framework (Hall and Soskice, 2001). It suggests that broader industrial and financial practices, regulation and business culture are the significant factors influencing takeover activity. However, in the UK, the Kraft/Cadbury takeover forced various reviews of the current regulatory structure, including those by the Takeover Panel (2011), the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS 2012) and the House of Commons (HoC 2010), as well as leading to the Kay (2012) and Cox (2013) reviews. The views of the ETUC (2012) are also central to our paper. We seek to locate I&C processes in takeovers within broader debates about the direction of EU regulation of I&C (Dundon et al. 2014), though we are still developing these theoretical aspects.


**Methods**

Our case study focuses on the acquisition by IAG of BMI from Lufthansa, a transaction approved by the EU Commission in 2012. International Airlines Group (IAG) is the holding company of British Airways (BA), Iberia and Vueling, and is the third largest airline group in Europe based on revenue. We carried out interviews with unions at BA and members of the Takeover Panel in the City, as well as a review of relevant documentation and literature.

**Conclusions**

First, certain aspects of the operation of the Takeovers Directive itself require scrutiny, such as clarifying the offeror’s intentions with respect to the target company and strengthening the significance of appending the employee representatives’ opinion to the offer document. The opinion currently does not open a genuinely consultative process with the offeror. Indeed, a far stronger definition of ‘consultation’ could be inserted into the Directive, along the lines of that adopted in the redundancies and ICE directives.

Second, the criteria for identifying transactions to be investigated by the Takeover Panel may themselves be problematic, as both the BA/Iberia and IAG/ BMI acquisitions fell through the net, the former because it was decided that the offeree was Iberia, a Spanish company not covered by the Code, and the latter because BMI had too few shareholders to qualify for investigation. In such cases, unions have to rely on domestic employment relations processes and structures.

Third, the UK City Code remains a weak instrument in terms of affording employees meaningful I&C rights. The Marcus Report (2012) noted that employee representatives are rarely informed in line with the Directive in countries like the UK, while the Takeover Panel noted that it is difficult for employee representatives to produce an opinion on an approved bid. Whilst recent reviews have improved this situation, better employee protection would require: a shift from a ‘shareholder value’ towards a ‘stakeholder’ approach; the development of regulation designed to allow managers to take defensive measures against hostile bids; and the right for workers to have a meaningful voice or even a veto in the takeover process.

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Brook, P., Carter, B., Green, W. and Whittaker, X.

The making of an active moral economy: the role of the junior doctors’ dispute

This paper explores the dynamic content and manifestation of UK-based junior doctors’ widely shared moral economy of commitment to the British NHS as a publicly funded universal service, free at the point of use. Between 2014 and 2016 this moral economy was transformed from a largely passive and atomised phenomenon into a social movement of mass collective protest by medics. In a fierce campaign ostensibly against the Conservative central government’s attempt to impose a new contract that removes junior doctors’ working-hours safeguards and cuts their pay many medics quickly harnessed their social media networks to mobilise a series of large demonstrations involving tens of thousands throughout England. Under the slogans of Not Fair, Not Safe and Defend Our NHS junior doctors went on strike in January 2016 for the first time since 1975 after 98% voted in favour.

The reasons for this historic struggle are manifold. Junior doctors have long worked dangerously long hours (Walsh, 2013) but now they have reached breaking point as the NHS is in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. This is caused by austerity-driven under-funding, rising patient demand, deep cuts to social care services and chronic clinical staff shortages, including record levels of medics emigrating. At the same time, the Health and Social Care Act (2012) has ushered in wholesale outsourcing much NHS provision in England (Pollock and Price, 2011). Evidence is presented from an ongoing study of junior doctors’ experience of work, employment and career in the NHS based on 35+ in-depth interviews conducted from mid-2014 to early-2016, plus participatory/observational, documentary and social media data from the Save Our Contract campaign.

A moral economy perspective (Bolton and Laser, 2013; Thompson, 1991) is utilised to explore the extent to which early-career medics possess a lay morality (Sayer, 2000) whereby good medical practice (GMC, 2014) is widely understood to be underpinned by a personal commitment to medicine combined with ideological support for the socialised health values of the NHS. Prior to September 2015 a large majority of the interviewees expressed a shared, if passive, moral economy of passionate commitment to NHS values but distress, often anger, at the crisis and privatisation. Their long-term decision to stay in or leave the NHS often included weighing-up whether it will remain a public service available to all. Very few interviewees prior to September 2015 expressed confidence in their own collective capacity to organise and protest through their trade union, the British Medical Association (BMA). However, the latter was transformed with the explosive emergence of the Save Our Contract campaign among English junior doctors. The paper argues that as junior doctors’ shared moral economy of passionate support for NHS values is challenged and tested it is being transformed from a largely atomised and passive commitment into one where the huge majority collectively organise and actively resist. However, many junior
doctors, if not most, struggle to marry a growing commitment to supporting and defending the NHS with planning for a personally sustainable future medical career in the NHS.

References
Greene, Anne-marie: De Montfort University

Miller, S. and Wakelin, M.

When God is a participant in the employment relationship: Reflections on the performance appraisal process in the Methodist Church.

Summary

Ordained clergy within established Church organisations are positioned in an interesting and unusual work context. While the ambiguity around whether or not they should be viewed as employees has been officially resolved by a number of legal rulings establishing them as officeholders and not as employees, it remains the case that much of their work meets the criteria of the standard employment relationship. Part of this involves the presence of human resources policies and processes, similar to those found in more conventional work organisations. In addition, there is significant external and internal pressure within Church contexts to develop more of these policies and processes. This paper considers the working of one such process, namely the introduction of a new performance appraisal system, in one Church context, namely that of the Methodist Church in the UK. We reflect on the way that the presence of God as a participant in the ‘employment’ relationship has affected both the way that policy and process have been developed, and their acceptance by ordained clergy within the Church.

Background debates

This paper engages with the central question of the appropriateness of conventional human resource management practices to unconventional work contexts. Looking at the characteristics of the standard employment relationship (Vosko, 2010), it could be argued that many of them can be applied to the work of ordained clergy (Greene and Robbins, 2015). In addition, there has been considerable pressure for the development of more sophisticated human resource policies within the Methodist Church. This involves both external pressure emerging from legal cases and concern over child safeguarding, and internal pressure to address concerns of ministerial burnout and stress, poor performance and congregation complaints (Simpson, 2012). However, there is also considerable debate about whether church organisations are a special or even unique case, and how one conceives of them as similar to non-ecclesial bodies explains much of the variation in whether and with what degree of confidence, ordained clergy embrace aspects of corporate managerialism or not (Budde, 2008; see also Guerrier and Bond, 2014). Clergy work has a religious calling at its core involving the ‘the embracing of personal sacrifice, and the governance of body and soul...underpinned by a theological and ministerial rationale, and ultimately an eternal dimension’ (Peyton and Gatrell, 2013: 86). For these reasons, the concept of performance appraisal does not sit easily with the lives of ordained clergy who traditionally have been entrusted to work largely unsupervised and in cognisance of the ultimate surveillance of God (ibid: 122; see also Whitehead, 2013 and Guerrier and Bond, 2014). Within the specific context of the Methodist Church as an organisational context and ordained clergy as workers, we therefore look at the role, purpose and nature of performance appraisal drawing on the wide literature in this area (see summary in Newton
and Findlay, 1996) and its applicability to church contexts, drawing in particular on literature in the not-for profit sector (Elden and Sowa, 2011). Using the empirical example of the new system in the Methodist Church, we discuss the potentialities for the development of a context-appropriate performance appraisal process.

**Methods**

This research draws on data from two separate but related research projects. The first was a piece of research conducted by one of the authors in 2014 and commissioned by the Methodist Church to gather views and experiences of the new performance appraisal process from presbyters (i.e. ordinary ministers without Church leadership roles). This involved the analysis of posts to a special Facebook group over a 6-month period, from which 13 presbyters were interviewed (7 women, 6 men) all of which were recorded and verbatim transcribed. The second data set involves interviews with 17 women presbyters which were conducted as part of a wider project undertaken by another of the authors, exploring the work experiences of clergywomen. Within these interviews, views on the performance appraisal process were sought, which provided interesting complementary data. Both projects took an interpretivist approach, using qualitative methods primarily based around semi-structured interviews and content analysis of web-based conversations and written documents. In addition, the third author is a former employee of the Methodist Church, and was involved in the development of the performance appraisal process and is therefore in a good position to comment with authority on aspects of the progeny and implementation of the new process. A large number of documents was also analysed, including policy documents and reports to the Methodist Conference.

**Discussion**

The unusual nature of the ‘employment’ relationship for ordained clergy, where a personal association with God is a key part, is found to have a significant effect on both the way that the performance appraisal process was developed, disseminated and implemented, and its acceptance by ordained clergy within the Methodist Church. In this case, this involved specific variations to conventional performance appraisal concerned with the balance between development and measurement/monitoring, plus most unusually, specific attention to the aesthetics of the written document. We argue that human resource policies and managerial processes can be designed that are sensitive to the nature of clergy work. Therefore, these findings have potential wider implications for looking at managerial processes within other employment contexts especially where a sense of vocation or mission is invoked, where an argument is often made against performance appraisal, for example teaching, nursing, and work in the voluntary sector.

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Grimshaw, Damian: University of Manchester

Swaffield, J

**Doing the right thing? Comparative case-study evidence of implementing and sustaining living wage pay policies in three organisations**

**Summary**

At a time when government policy restricts workers’ employment rights and diminishes social protection, when employers extend their use of zero hours contracts, cost-competitive subcontracting and false self-employment contracting, and trade unions witness further curtailment of authority and freedom, the continued adoption of living wage practices around the UK comes as a surprise. We are not referring here to George Osborne’s mistaken label of a ‘national living wage’ (to be rolled out from April 2016 as a supplement to the minimum wage for workers over 25 years old), but the longer standing UK living wage independently set to meet a basic standard of living and annually updated by the Living Wage Foundation\(^3\) (with a separate rate for London). While other studies have identified the innovative strategies adopted by trade unions in the UK (as well as in the United States and Canada) in campaigning for living wages, this paper investigates the role played by the employer. It asks three questions: what organisational factors motivate the introduction of a living wage?; what characterises an ‘organisationally embedded’ living wage pay policy?; and what HR interventions are necessary to support a sustained management commitment to a living wage? Drawing on three detailed case studies of organisations in York, the paper argues for a more finely engrained analysis of the organisational ethos and HR interventions required to develop and sustain an effective (that is, progressive) living wage policy. The following paragraphs summarise aspects of the literature review, the research method and key findings.

**Literature review**

Empirical studies in the UK, United States and Canada (countries with similarly light-touch regulatory employment models) highlight four reasons for uptake of a living wage. Firstly, trade unions in many instances have been effective in leading or joining broad coalitions of community, religious and charity organisations to fight for higher pay for low-wage workers (e.g. Heery et al. 2012; Holgate 2009; Lopes and Hall 2015). However, campaigns have typically targeted specific workplaces and have not sparked industry-wide change in pay practices, or legislative reform, raising questions about wider diffusion (although see Eaton and Dagg 2004 for responsive change to the law affecting homeworkers in Ontario). Secondly, many studies emphasise the increasing disconnect between growing national wealth and enduring poverty and argue this may have encouraged a greater political willingness among some employers to take on more of the welfare costs of low-wage workers rather than pass them onto the state (Keddy 2015). This argument is particularly evident in cases where employers are embedded in a local economic and/or political environment, associated for example with the city-wide living wage ordinances passed by

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\(^3\) For further details, see http://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-living-wage.
more than 120 local governments across the United States (Luce 2012). A third reason is the more hard-nosed business case that says higher pay ought to improve productivity and cut non-wage costs associated with sickness absenteeism and staff turnover among others. Detailed econometric studies for US cases support this contention (e.g. Pollin et al. 2008; Reich et al. 2005). And a fourth reason is the claim that where low-wage work is under pressure from highly cost competitive forms of subcontracting, employers and workers can forge an effective alliance to raise service fees from client organisations, generating a win-win result of higher pay and higher revenues (Grimshaw 2004; Wright and Brown 2013); client organisations’ ability to pay can therefore be leveraged through an employer-union alliance of interests. Building on these insights, this paper seeks to add new details about the organisational strategy and HR practices that underpin not only the introduction but also the durability over time of a living wage pay policy. Related literature on employer responses to minimum wage rises, especially concerning pay differentials, training investment and outsourcing strategies (e.g. McLaughlin 2009; Weinkopf et al. 2013), provided key insights for the research design and data analysis.

**Research methods**

As part of a wider programme of research on living wages in the city of York funded by the ESRC, this paper draws on three case studies of medium-large employing organisations which introduced a UK living wage – City of York Council, Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Housing Trust and York St. John University (see summary data in table 1). Initial interviews were completed during late 2014 with senior management at all three organisations, including those with responsibilities for operations, human resource management and overall strategy. A second round of interviews is planned for 2016. Interview data were supplemented by information on pay structures, workforce statistics and relevant HR initiatives.

**Table 1. Summary data for three case study organisations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of York Council</th>
<th>Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Housing Trust</th>
<th>YSJ University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly employed workforce</td>
<td>Approx. 3,000</td>
<td>450-500 care workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-wage services outsourced?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade unions?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No – ‘staff council’ for consultation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Living wage introduced?</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>Jan. 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accredited with LW Foundation?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual uprating of LW?</td>
<td>Yes – April</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected findings

A first key issue is the extent to which senior management and the general organisational ethos they represent act as a driver for the development and sustaining of living wage pay policy. Each of the three case studies are distinctive (in different ways) in their strong and visible commitment to fairness, social responsibility and improving lives in the local community. As such, a living wage forms one element of a wider ‘fair employment’ approach, although the cases differ in the degree of paternalist and pluralist industrial relations approaches (including a complete absence of trade unions in one case).

A second issue concerns the varying methods for implementing the living wage into an organisation’s given pay structure. The case studies reveal three approaches and each are interrogated for their diverse impacts on pay differentials (especially distinguishing ‘baseline’ and ‘long-reaching’ ripple effects) and prospects for sustainability: a) deleting bottom pay points until the base rate is at least equal to the living wage; b) implementing bottom-weighted pay settlements in preparation for the introduction of a living wage; and c) reviewing the entire pay structure as part of a job evaluation exercise. The data suggest a critical factor is the extent to which HR managers have the support, resources and commitment to making a living wage policy work, including thinking through a medium-term plan and creative thinking around internal pay structures, and management listen and engage with workers’ views on pay changes.

And a third issue concerns how the wider bundle of HR practices has evolved alongside the new living wage. On the one hand, the data suggest several areas where management may have clawed back labour cost savings (including pay premiums for overtime and weekend working for example or shorter pay bands with automatic seniority pay increments) or turned a blind eye to low pay among subcontracted workers. On the other, the living wage may also be integrated into a reinvigorated ‘internal labour market’ approach where low-wage workers enjoy better access to training opportunities, progression opportunities, control over working hours and job security.

References


Haar, Jarrod: Massey University

Carr, S., Parker, J., Arrowsmith, J. and Jones, H.

A Longitudinal Study of Fair Pay and Outcomes in New Zealand: The Role of a Living Wage Workplace

The Living Wage (LW) has attracted growing interest in a range of liberal market economies including the UK, the US and New Zealand (NZ), fueled by factors such as growing income inequality, the expansion of the working poor through low-paid and precarious work, and renewed interest in CSR (Parker, Arrowsmith, Fells & Prowse, 2016).

The present study builds on a study of the LW in NZ in 2014 and 2015, which includes a sample of low (and higher) income earners – with the former typically excluded from workplace studies. Results from the first of two waves of survey data highlighted the importance of a pivot point around the LW income threshold, suggesting the difference between surviving and thriving occurred around the proposed LW pivot point (Carr, Parker, Arrowsmith & Haar, 2015).

This was found to be important for perceived pay fairness, as well as job-related and general well-being outcomes. We conducted a follow-up study on employee respondents six months later.

In order to maximise completion rates, the survey was designed to be short and simple to answer and predominantly used single-item measures to capture key constructs such as life satisfaction. In total, 259 matched-employees completed the survey in 2014 and 2015, with both samples dominated by females (75%).

Building on the 2014 results, we explore a model where across time pay fairness predicts work-life balance, work outcomes (job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and job empowerment) and well-being outcomes (life satisfaction, low stress, physical well-being, and living with dignity). We also test for work-life balance as a mediator between pay fairness and work and well-being outcomes, utilising the relevant literature (Haar, 2013). Overall, we hypothesize that pay fairness will positively influence perceived work-life balance, which in turn will influence work and well-being outcomes.

Finally, we test the moderating effects of a LW Workplace so as to determine whether working in an organisation paying a LW – irrespective of personal income levels (low or high) – is beneficial for the influence of pay fairness. We suggest that, even though many income earners do not personally benefit from a LW because they already earn above that amount, its provision signals a “social good” (Haar, Spell & O’Driscoll, 2005) that is valued by employees. As such, we hypothesize that this will enhance perceptions of pay fairness and employer ‘branding’ to employees generally, confounding some expectations that raising the lowest rates of pay (LW) prompts consternation and spill-over effects amongst those on higher rates.
Finally, we created residualised measures to capture changes amongst the key variables (pay fairness, work outcomes and well-being outcomes), following Bergh and Fairbank (2002). These were distributed linearly (enabling SEM) and all measures were robust (alpha > .70) and we analysed the residual item data using structural equation modelling (SEM). Overall, the mediation hypothesis was supported and a LW workplace was found to moderate the influence of perceptions of pay fairness on work-life balance. The SEM model, significant paths and overall model fit data, are shown below in Figure 1. Overall, pay fairness is found to predict work-life balance, which in turn predicted work and well-being outcomes. Work-life balance fully mediated the influence of pay fairness on well-being outcomes and partially mediated the influence on work outcomes.

Figure 2 shows the significant interaction effects which show that when residual pay fairness is low, there is a significant difference in work-life balance, with those working in a LW workplace reporting significantly higher work-life balance. However, when pay fairness is high, greater work-life balance is shown for those not working in a LW workplace. This suggests that when changes in pay fairness are small across time, having a workplace providing a LW is beneficial towards employee work-life balance.

This study thus provides longitudinal evidence of the importance of pay fairness, and we show that pay fairness appears to be important in terms of work-life balance and that in turn is the key predictor of work and well-being outcomes. The findings also suggest that LW workplaces may provide a broad social good which employees, whether on or above the LW, see positively, and perceive as a fair and robust mechanism to help all employees and society in general.

References
Figure 1. Study Model (Residuals): Mediation and Moderating Effects

Figure 2. Interaction plot of Pay Fairness Residual and Living Wage Workplace with Work-Life Balance as Dependent Variable
Hall, Tim: The University of East London

The Significance and future of the living wage campaign

The living wage campaign has a claim to being one of the most significant campaigns of the last decade and a half. Since its launch in the UK by Citizens UK in 2001 an estimated £410 million has been won in additional wages and over 2000 organisations have become living wage employers. All of this has been achieved against the backdrop of relentless outsourcing and – from 2008 onwards – unprecedented austerity measures. This paper attempts to understand the success of the campaign and asks what its future direction should be with the imminent introduction of the ‘National living wage’.

The paper draws on primary research undertaken on living wage campaigns in east London since 2010. Specifically the research forms part of a campaign launched in 2015 by the University of East London and The East London Community Organisers (TELCO) to create the first living wage zone in the UK in the Royal Docks, East London. In this respect it represents a piece of action research that aims to provide compelling arguments for organisations to adopt the living wage.

The paper draws on recent literature on the living wage and the impact of community organisations in leading this campaign. It also draws on the literature on community unionism and the ability of trade unions to organise the community. Finally it draws on contemporary communitarian philosophy to frame discussions of justice raised by the concept of a living wage.

The paper argues that the living wage should remain a voluntary commitment and that the campaign itself should remain in the hands of civil society organisations with all attempts on the part of the government to hijack the idea being resisted. The problem with government acting to close the gap between the wage floor and the living wage is not just that this creates a minimum wage that is more than the market can bear but also that the collateral gains from the campaign – i.e. community-creating activity – are lost. The paper concludes by arguing that the campaign should focus on the creation of living wage zones.

References

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Household strategies, welfare, workfare, and resilience in the UK apparel value chain

Research on the labour process has decisively gone beyond the workplace through considerations of local spheres of re/production as well as their linkages to global production networks. Jenkins (2013) for example, while being concerned with the construction of resistance, has emphasised how workers’ links to their households have been used in controlling garment workers’ labour process in India. Highlighting a different aspect, a study of garment workers in the UK (Hammer et al 2015) has shown how a large part of the – highly feminised – workforce is paid less than half the UK’s National Minimum Wage (NMW) and works in very harsh conditions. One interesting finding in this respect concerned the composite nature of wage formation whereby workers, who hold UK citizenship and are thereby free to change jobs, are paid only part of their wages by the employer and ‘make up’ the rest of their ‘wage packet’ through welfare benefits. Employers have consistently claimed that workers demand this kind of arrangement in order to increase flexibility for care and family commitments. Insofar, however, as large parts of the workforce end up in debt – despite or because of this arrangement – this explanation does not seem entirely conclusive.

Historically, the control of wage rates has been difficult in apparel manufacturing as numerous studies have shown. Within the framework of the Human Relations tradition, for example, Cunnison (1966) has explored particular ‘fiddles’ – here in the context of piece rates – that serve as a control device at the same time as they help workers to stabilise their weekly take-home pay. One issue of those studies (amongst others), however, was that they remained fully focused on the workplace. Against this background, evidence of contemporary apparel manufacturing reveals important differences: for a start, wages are paid by the hour. Furthermore, the way the fiddle seems to work very differently, as it relies on workers’ ability to claim benefits and thereby entrenches them in a workfare context. Finally, it is important not to leave the analysis at the workplace and the wage relation, but to look further into how the apparel value chain is based on a division of labour between lead firms, suppliers, manufacturers, on the one hand, on very specific segments of the labour force, women’s labour market positions, and household strategies (Dunaway 2014), on the other.

This paper goes deeper into the relationship between household strategies and the labour process in apparel manufacturing, particularly that part of the sector that serves the Fast Fashion industry, in order to analyse the parameters of this employment relationship (which obviously includes the state in a very explicit role), the survival strategies of garment workers, as well as their options and constraints for resistance or the exercise of mobility power. The paper draws on research on working conditions in apparel manufacturing in the UK and is supplemented by a series of focus group interviews with female garment workers of South Asian origin as well as interviews with advisors and activists in relevant community support groups.
The paper aims to analyse the role of the household, not as a site of production, but in the way the sphere of reproduction is colonised by the labour process. In this respect, it draws on and develops further insights from feminist political economy and geography on the role of the household in global value chains, research that seems crucial in explaining the emergence of a sector that tries to mimic the wage levels of emerging economies. At the same time, this labour process and its particular insertion in global value chains seem dependent on particular migration, welfare and workfare arrangements that partly provide and sustain its workforce.

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Hardy, Vincent: University of Cambridge

The Factory of Development: The Ethiopian Developmental State and its Labour Process

Whilst being a key component of economic development through the accruing of surplus and rents, analysis of the labour process is generally absent from studies of economic development in the global south, or only considered in a circumspect manner (Henderson et al, 2002). The sub-Saharan country of Ethiopia has been experiencing some of the fastest rates of growth in the world over the last decade, with estimates suggesting an average annual GDP growth of 10.6% between 2003/04 and 2010/11 (Gebreeyessus, 2013, p.7). Under the leadership of Meles Zenawi, the leader of the ruling EPRDF party between 1991 and 2012, the country began to implement a modernization strategy based on increased agricultural productivity, and more recently by encouraging investment in labour-intensive manufacturing sectors such as textiles and leather (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2009). Based on fieldwork conducted in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa between April and June 2015, this paper investigates the consequences of rapid manufacturing growth for the labour process through the presentation of findings based on interviews with government officials, trade union leaders, as well as 12 firm managers and 16 line workers in the textile and leather sectors. Applying Albert Hirschmann’s “exit, voice, loyalty” (1970) model I suggest that problems faced by firm managers, unions and workers in pursuing their respective goals stem from an overwhelming resort to “exit” strategies resulting in high turnover rates, wage stagnation and spontaneous and uncoordinated labour actions.

Whilst covered in the mainstream press (see Jobson, 2013 for example) researchers have only recently begun to consider the implications of the transition to labour-intensive manufacturing for workers in Ethiopia – a country whose workforce remains concentrated in the informal and agricultural sectors (ILO, 2013). Through a controlled experiment comparing factory workers with the self-employed in the informal sector, Blattman and Dercon (2012) found for example that manufacturing employment was less conducive to worker’s well-being and health than self-employment. Turnover has also been found to be very high amongst wage labourers in the manufacturing sector (Ibid; Van Wasbeek, 2004). However, research on trade unions and employment in the country have generally taken on either an economic or descriptive perspective, with little consideration given to the individual strategies of firm managers or workers within the labour process and the labour market. Whilst Mains (2011) focused on the experience of unemployment amongst young men in Jimma, providing insights on the particular draw of public sector employment, virtually no research has focused on workers’ perspective and experience of manufacturing work as part of this wider transition to an industrial economy.

In the paper I first trace the industrial relations framework of the country, describing the role the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), the Government and the Ethiopian Employers’ Federation (Bersoufekad, 2003) as well as some recent trends in the economy and the labour market. Ethiopia is characterized by a weak system of collective bargaining, where both the Employers Association and CETU struggle to gain new
membership, whilst the government largely focuses on attracting foreign investment and macroeconomic indicators.

Turning to the perspective of firm managers, who by and large describe Ethiopia’s chief draw as its low labour costs, difficulties are reported with regards to high turnover rates and the poor work discipline of workers, manifested in particular through absenteeism. Spontaneous worker protests and resistance over “trivial” matters such as the quality of free meals offered to workers are also cited as challenges for managers. Trade unions are generally perceived to be either potential partners in managing workers’ wage and other demands, or seen as irrelevant. Managers’ views are echoed by government and union officials who generally perceive CETU to be a mediator between the demands of workers, the developmental targets of the state, and the goals of firm managers to control production. Paying higher wages was rarely referred to as a potential solution to solve problems associated with turnover.

In the final section I discuss workers’ perspective on the labour process and the wider issue of occupational choice. Sixteen workers were interviewed in two factories through an interpreter and were asked about their labour market behaviour, preferences, and experience of their work. One of the factories is foreign-owned and the other, a local firm. Unlike Bourdieu’s findings concerning Algerian workers under French colonialism (1963), I do not find a particular orientation amongst worker towards job security. On the contrary, all workers interviewed reported a desire to become self-employed, an activity generally perceived to be much more lucrative. Some older workers described an experience of piece-work akin to Burawoy’s (1979) notion of “making-out”, but this was an exception amongst workers who, in the two factories, did not see much hope for improved conditions or wage growth in their current job nor expressed attachment to the firm. The high turnover found in the manufacturing sector appears to be the result of a constant churn of new vacancies across the city with workers expressing confidence in their ability to secure employment easily in other manufacturing plants. While wider familial and social networks appear to decrease the ”cost of job loss”, this has not resulted in gains for the trade union movement or greater militancy, with interviewed workers appearing to be very sceptical of the potential benefits associated with trade union membership, even in a firm where union members were active. Moreover, Schaefer and Abebe (2015), in a case study of the cut flower industry, suggest that “exit” options to better paid job also include temporary labour migration to the Middle East for women, who are employed as domestic workers for much higher wages.

Some of the incentives used by managers such as the provision of free meals, a clinic and free transport played a small part in explaining a budding sense of loyalty expressed towards the firm by workers. Non-wage benefits may thus serve a function in a regime of accumulation deriving its competitive advantage from low labour costs, and were indeed frequently resorted to by both local and foreign firms in attempting to retain workers. On the other hand, seemingly arbitrary wage differentials were reported, both across and between firms, particularly between local and foreign-owned firms, with the latter offering much better conditions. Whilst Ethiopia attempts to model itself on China, the level of support from State institutions is very far from the “iron rice-bowl” of Chinese state enterprises (Sundar, 2004). The generous incentives offered to foreign firms as a means to
obtain foreign capital and grow the economy have brought in investors from a number of jurisdictions, particularly attracted by low labour costs, resulting in a relatively chaotic map of industrial relations, with some foreign firms committed to corporate social responsibility (Alderin, 2004) whilst others, mostly locally owned companies, appear to experiment with various forms of paternalism. According to union officials, Chinese-owned firms in particular resist trade union penetration.

Due to a lack of attachment of a particular job or firm – although work itself was considered important in a general sense for workers interviewed – “voice” tactics did not appear to be particularly appealing nor convincing to manufacturing workers in the textile and leather sectors as a strategy to improve their conditions. This is compounded with CETU drastically lacking in capacity and perceiving its role as a mediator rather than an organization representing workers. The disorganized and spontaneous protests of workers reported in a number of factories are channelled and mediated to terms acceptable to managers. In a context where Nikolas Kaldor’s theory on the role of strong manufacturing base to ensure levels of economic development (Chang, 2014), has recently seen a resurgence, implications for the working class in countries where such policies are proposed and enacted deserve more attention. In the case of Ethiopia, the suggestion of this paper is that Hirshmann’s “exit” and “voice” model is useful to understand the labour process in the context of growth in manufacturing. Lack of coordination between the social partners, and high turnover rates in the industrial sector with little government intervention to improve wages appears to have detrimental consequences both for productivity growth and sustainable and equitable distribution of the gains associated with economic growth. Some of these problems could be resolved by governmental actors and trade unions encouraging “voice” strategies to encourage higher productivity and wage growth.

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Can the old and the new mix? Trade unions and the Living Wage.

Summary

This paper is concerned with the relationship between trade unions and collective bargaining and the Living Wage, propounded by the Living Wage Foundation. The latter is a voluntary wage standard, which employers can adopt, becoming accredited by LWF as a Living Wage Employer if they do so. More than 2000 employers had adopted the standard by the end of 2015. The Living Wage is a form of civil regulation of employment, part of a broader movement towards what is sometimes called ‘standards-based HRM’, which differs in character from the negotiated job regulation in which trade unions have traditionally engaged. The paper examines whether these two forms of job regulation are distinct phenomena, operating in separate parts of the economy, whether they exist in tension, or whether they can reinforce one another, with the Living Wage itself becoming the subject of union-based interest representation.

In the first case, the paper is concerned with whether the Living Wage has been adopted in industries and regions with relatively low union density or whether it has been adopted where unions are relatively strong, allowing the new regulation to sit on top of traditional collective agreements. In the second case, the paper considers the degree to which there is tension between the application of the Living Wage and union presence, examining whether the former is associated with union avoidance and whether it has become an object of union attack. In the third case, the paper considers evidence for the hybridization of the Living Wage and trade union representation, such that the former has been incorporated into collective bargaining and promoted through other forms of trade union policy-making. As unions have declined in Britain, the question of the relationship between union-authored and other forms of job regulation has come to the fore. Studies have examined the relationship between unions and HRM and unions and the law and this study will add to this literature by examining the relationship between unions and civil regulation.

Literature

The paper draws upon and will seek to test arguments from two sets of literature. In the first place it makes use of research concerned with the role of ‘new actors’ in employment relations and the growth of voluntary forms of employment regulation. A theme in this literature is the relationship between civil and collective regulation, with some claiming the former displaces the latter while others identify scope for hybridization (cf. Heery et al. 2012; Piore & Safford 2006). The second body of literature is that concerned with community unionism. Work in this vein is often highly prescriptive, making the case for ‘coalitional power’ as a precondition for union revitalization. The analytical thrust of this work is concerned with typifying union-community relationships and identifying the conditions under which they are likely to function effectively (e.g. Holgate 2015).
Method

The paper is based on original research that has taken two main forms. In the first place, the authors have created a dataset of all accredited Living Wage employers and incorporated in this dataset an extensive body of information about these employers taken from their own websites, other publicly available data, and official statistics. This dataset allows the authors to describe the incidence of the Living Wage in the UK economy and to compare the pattern of its distribution with those for union density and collective bargaining. The second method has been an interview survey of the representatives of employer associations and trade unions which have been affected by the Living Wage. The main focus of these interviews to date have been officers of UNISON and UNITE and the employer representatives with which they deal though it is intended to extend the interview programme to USDAW and the GMB in early 2016. About twenty interviews have been conducted so far, supplemented by the collection of extensive documentation.

Conclusion

The research is ongoing and the conference paper will be used to present initial conclusions from the project. The anticipated results are as follows:

1. Living Wage employers are concentrated in parts of the economy where trade unions are relatively absent. They include many small firms, are concentrated in private services, are found in London and the South East and include many recently established businesses. The two forms of regulation therefore have differential patterns of coverage. This finding is not absolute, however, as there is a strong concentration of Living Wage employers in the public sector and in relatively highly unionised industries, such as health and education. There is a zone of interaction therefore in which the two forms of regulation meet.

2. There is some evidence of tension between the Living Wage and trade unions and the research has collected a series of criticisms of this form of standard-based HRM from union representatives. It is also the case that left-leaning unions have launched an alternative, more demanding low-wage standard of £10.00 per hour, modelled on the US Fight for Fifteen campaign.

3. The dominant relationship between the Living Wage and union-based representation that emerged from the interviews, however, is supportive. Unions have bargained to secure the Living Wage for low-paid members, have acted as monitors, ensuring accredited employers pay up, and have incorporated the Living Wage in their own labour market standards. Many unions have themselves become Living Wage employers. One interesting point to note about this cooperative pattern is that it is not based primarily on union-community alliances: unions have simply adopted the standard with limited reference to LWF.

The overall conclusion is that while a complex pattern of Living Wage regulation has emerged in the UK, the old and the new can mix - in the sense that unions can incorporate voluntary standards of this type into their own task of interest representation.
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Gooberman, L. and Hauptmeier, M.

The Petroleum Drivers' Passport: A Case Study of Re-regulation

Summary

The historical trend in the United Kingdom has been to dismantle industry-level collective bargaining and decentralize industrial relations to the level of the enterprise. Increasingly, however, the negative consequences of devolved industrial relations have been identified, particularly for workers and trade unions. A more fragmented system has led to greater inequality of outcome, while employers have been able to escape union recognition where bargaining arrangements are fragmented. In recognition of these problems, commentators have argued for the re-regulation of industry and occupational labour markets (Hayes & Novitz 2014) and in Britain, the TUC has called for the recreation of industry forums, akin to the old Wages Councils. This paper presents the results of a case study of voluntary re-regulation at industry level that has occurred in the oil distribution industry since 2012. A threatened oil-tanker drivers’ strike in that year, prompted the creation of a multi-stakeholder Oil Industry Distribution Forum (OIDF) which has since developed the Petroleum Drivers’ Passport (PDP). The latter is a form of skills-based accreditation that is required if drivers are to access the main oil terminals in the UK and distribute petroleum to users. Its explicit purpose is to raise safety standards within the industry, one of the factors at issue in the 2012 dispute. Since its launch in January 2014, 6500 oil-tanker drivers have been awarded the passport, the majority of the industry’s workforce. The paper will present an analysis of the PDP scheme, identifying its distinguishing characteristics as a form of regulation and identifying the contextual factors that have allowed the scheme to come into being. In short, it will provide case study of re-regulation that potentially has lessons for practice beyond a specific industry.

The paper will draw upon a number of sources of literature. The first is a primarily normative literature, concerned with the issue of trade union revitalization. A notable strand in this literature deals with the organizing and representation of workers in secondary labour markets, characterized by a high degree of precarity. The American literature on workers of this kind, in particular, emphasises the need for unions to organize ‘beyond the enterprise’ and develop both union forms and systems of interest representation that operate at regional, occupational or industry levels (e.g. Milkman 2013). While oil distribution is by no means a secondary labour market, it increasingly displays some of the features of labour markets of this kind and the literature on union representation of precarious work provides a useful device with which to frame the case.

A second body of literature is that dealing with industry-level regulation, the actors that develop it and the circumstances in which it arises. A strand in this literature is concerned with the pressures that lead employers to act collectively and accept the development of multi-employer collective bargaining or other forms of regulation. A recent review of literature of this kind (Barry & Wilkinson 2011) stressed the importance of union threat in
prompting employers to organize collectively and the case will examine whether an explanation of this kind is both necessary and sufficient to explain the emergence of the PDP.

Methods
The paper presents the results of a leading or critical case: the PDP has been chosen for analysis because it is ‘counter to trend’ but complies broadly with heterodox prescription for labour market reform. The case itself, draws upon two main qualitative methods. In the first instance, there has been documentary analysis, which has included a review of the websites of the Oil Industry Distribution Forum, the body that has created the PDP, and its member organizations. Documentary analysis has also included inspection of PDP documentation and reports, such as that by ACAS into the initial dispute, which shed light on the scheme and the circumstances of its creation. The second method has been a programme of interviews with all of the main stakeholders involved in establishing and operating the PDP scheme. Interviews have been conducted with trade union representatives, representatives from oil-distribution companies, the main trade associations, the industry skills body, the body that accredits drivers and training providers, and government agencies, such as ACAS and DECC. The case conforms to the kind of exploratory, policy-relevant case methodology that has been identified as characteristic of UK Industrial Relations research (Brown & Wright 1994).

The main conclusion of the case is that while the PDP originated in industrial action by UNITE, which was a necessary condition for re-regulation, other factors played an important part in generating the scheme. These included: 1) the prior organization of much of the industry into a series of trade associations which were able to commit their members to accept and participate in the scheme; 2) state-level encouragement for the scheme, which fell short of providing it with statutory force but which included financing its initial development; 3) legal pressure on the main industry players to raise safety standards in oil distribution, emanating in part from a stricter inspection regime that flowed from the Buncefield disaster of 2005. In other words, the circumstances were complex and in certain respects industry-specific, limiting scope for direct transfer to other industries. The paper also notes that, while successful re-regulation occurred in the area of safety and training, attempts to extend the multi-employer arrangements to distributional issues, such as pay and pensions, failed. In the absence of a more directive state, re-regulation was confined to an integrative issue in which multiple stakeholders shared a common interest.

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Student attitudes towards trade unions

Summary
This paper adds to academic understanding of how trade unions engage with young people. This is achieved through investigating the attitudes of higher education students towards trade unions. There is currently little academic insight into the views of UK university students towards trade unions and this paper is one of the first to provide qualitative insight into this topic.

Literature
This paper engages with the literature on union renewal and the unionisation of young workers. It is widely accepted that unions have been operating in a hostile environment in the UK since 1979. Many strategies for union renewal have been utilised by unions, with the most prevalent being organising (Simms et al, 2013). Central to union organising has been a focus on recruiting and mobilising under-represented groups, including young workers. Union membership in the UK stands at approximately 6.5 million, with a density level of 25.6 per cent (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014). Only 3.9 per cent of workers aged 16-24 are union members although this figure rises to 19 per cent for those aged 25-34 (ibid). The average age of a trade unionist has been increasing for some time and data from the 2011 Workplace Employment Relations Survey notes the average age to be 48 (Van Wanrooy et al, 2013: 16).

There is a growing body of academic literature which examines the relationship between unions and young people (see Hodder, 2014, Hodder and Kretsos, 2015) but this work tends to focus on single union case studies and the attitudes of trade unionists more broadly towards youth unionisation. Despite calls to investigate the views of students towards unions (Lowe and Rastin, 2000), there is very little work which examines this and the research that does exist often focuses on Australia and North America, and tends to be quantitative in nature (see Griffin and Brown, 2011; Lowe and Rastin, 2000; Oliver 2009; Van Dyke et al, 2007).

Methods
In depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with young higher education students in the UK based in the Midlands (n = 20). Data were analysed using thematic analysis (King, 1998). This approach is centred on the researcher identifying a number of codes which represent themes identified in the fieldwork and occupies a position between content analysis, where codes are all predetermined and their distribution is analysed statistically, and grounded theory, where there is no prior definition of codes. The codes were developed a priori and modified and added to as the research developed.
Conclusions

This paper is one of the first to consider the views of UK higher education students towards trade unions. Data analysis is still being undertaken but will be completed in time for the conference. Preliminary findings suggest that young university students largely do not know what unions do and do not hold anti-union views.

References

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The effects of neo-liberalism on the education sector: An analysis of the rise in stress related illness in education

This study examined the effects of neo-liberalism from the perspective of those employed in the education sector, linked within the context of an analysis of the rise of stress related illness in education. A chief aim was to start to address the fact that little documentation is currently available regarding the impact of workplace stress on support staff and how pressure affects employees at all levels of responsibility. Therefore, this has been illustrated by employing a case study approach; studying stress related injury and its impact on one community - a PFI secondary school of 270 members of staff.

Aims and Objectives

Simply collecting information on the issues of neo-liberalism and stress would result in a depressing project; of little practical use. Therefore the purpose of this research was twofold:

1. Compile data and information in order to recognise stakeholders’ concerns now and in the future and identify workable strategies to reduce stressful practices.
2. Considered how trade unions can support members, ‘diagnosing’ the problem in order to identify/pose a remedy.

Specific Research Questions

1. What are stakeholders’ greatest future concerns for working in the education sector?
2. What main issues do you think contribute to the problem of stress in the workplace?
3. What strategies can be/are implemented to reduce stressful work practices in the education sector?
4. What can trade unions do in the future to support employees and improve working conditions in the education sector?

Methodology

The assignment employed qualitative and quantitative methods. Firstly, to obtain a general overview of stakeholders’ experiences and concerns for the education sector and examine the subject in context, a general “Googledoc” survey was emailed to staff employed in a variety of schools and colleges. This was distributed to employees in differing roles/responsibilities; from senior management, teachers, trainee teachers, support staff through to facilities management and volunteers. Secondly, this assignment was able to consider longitudinal data; the results of the workplace’s joint trade union Stress Surveys of 2012 and 2015. Thirdly, a case study approach was employed and staff of a PFI secondary school were interviewed or contacted by email for their opinions.

Although a fairly small quantity of literature states we are able to perform better by working with stress, the study found numerous examples of the damaging rise of occupational stress. Research indicates teaching to be a profession with one of the highest instances of occupational stress (HSE, 2006). The “Googledoc” survey showed 46% of respondents experienced stress “often” and 21% considered leaving the education sector “often”. The workplace stress survey indicated some reduction in occupational stress; largely due to the work of their Staff Consultative Committee (SCC). Nevertheless, employees in the workplace emphasised that they were working in increasingly difficult circumstances, with feelings of powerlessness, unrealistic workloads and deadlines affecting staff at all levels of responsibility.

What is neo-liberalism and how does austerity perpetuate it?

When growth collapses, the upper classes protect their self-interests economically and politically, with neo-liberalism the perfect vehicle for this (Harvey, 2005). Supporting this is Giroux’s view that neo-liberal austerity leads to the break-up of social relations, including in the education sector – “A Dickensian nightmare” (Giroux, n.d.). Psychologists Against Austerity link the rise in stress related illness to austerity, believing austerity policies harmful, leading to increased mental distress. The research discovered examples of austerity used as a means of perpetuating neo-liberalism. Austerity measures and cuts in funding result in unemployment and reduction in staffing levels (doing more with less); driving education further towards privatisation and a two tier system. A respondent said:

“Lack of appropriate funds to support students and their needs. A narrowing curriculum where, in particular, the arts are considered as ‘extra-curricular’ activities rather than academic subjects. The rise of free schools and selective schools that ear mark students and make for an imbalance within the community.”

Teaching, neo-liberalism and occupational stress

There is evidence to indicate that the introduction of league tables, dispensing of national-level pay bargaining, PFI, HE buy-outs, “creeping privatisation” of state schools, growing use of unqualified teachers, removal of retirement age cap, HRM and competency assessments all result in stress in the workplace.

Findings from 106 respondents showed concerns for the future were cuts to school funding (83%), increased workload (80%) and a reduction in staffing (77%). The main contributory factors were pressure to work intensely/insufficient breaks (63%), lack of communication (59%) and unachievable deadlines (62%). Many experienced stress at work (7% always, 45% often, 45% sometimes and 3% never). Respondents said:

“Government's policy to"' privatise "' education is very worrying. Teachers becoming even more demoralised and leaving the profession.”

“Government's policy to"' privatise "' education is very worrying. Teachers becoming even more demoralised and leaving the profession. The need to embrace "vocational aspects” to education. Lack of creativity. Ageism and discrimination. Cuts to adult learning services. The
creation of a two tier system of education with the resultant lack of opportunity for social mobility. Tick boxing. Lack of clarity from the government re: the future of education.”

Moving beyond occupational stress: Tackling the epidemic

This research was designed to understand what factors contribute to stress and develop strategies to improve the current situation. Suggestions include:

“Publication of managing stress policies. Stress related triggers to be on every dept agenda. Best practices to be rolled out nationally. Changing school accountability processes. For education to stop being a political football. For teachers to be listened to more. For a reinstatement of national terms and conditions of employment.”

Although the workplace survey showed some improvements in 2015 (i.e. less friction and anger between colleagues, less bullying, improved line management and staff consultation) the staff remain anxious.

Conclusion

The research investigated the effects of neo-liberalism from the perspective of those employed in the education sector, linked to an analysis of the rise of stress related illness in education. Much information was found from the perspective of teachers, though little on how this affects support staff; a significant issue that this assignment hopes to highlight and ripe for further research.

Findings established that, amongst other factors, neo-liberalist policies, government reforms and semi-privatisation of the education sector is responsible for wide-spread stress related injury, impacting on all staff. There is no indication of a lessening in pressure, only the further deterioration of working conditions and unemployment in a previously stable sector. Respondents want unions to work collectively, developing coherent national policies and strategies to fight for education, jobs, pay and conditions.

Encouragingly, some methods to relieve occupational stress can be implemented. SCC, working in conjunction with unions can be seen to reduce stressful working practices (i.e. less bullying and friction between colleagues, better communication). With huge databases, unions are best placed to offer guidance/training on coping mechanisms such as Wellness and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - methods which could be taken up by groups and individuals in all categories of work.

References


Unpicking the complexity of struggle in employment relations: The London Underground dispute and the broader political contested terrain.

Summary of literature and research question

The employment relationship can be conceptualised in three fundamentally different ways: unitarism, pluralism and radicalism. These ‘frames of reference’ were outlined by Fox (1973, 1974, 1979, 1985), and since debated by other scholars (Budd & Bhave, 2008; Cradden, 2011; Heery, 2014; Hyman, 1989; Siebert et al. 2015; Watson, 2012; Williams, 2014). From a unitarist perspective, employers and employees are assumed to be united by common objectives and shared values, with conflict and trade unions being viewed as deviant (Cullinane & Dundon, 2013; Fox, 1973, 1974, 1985). Pluralists on the other hand, assume that contestation within organisations is periodically inevitable, due to divergent interests and power imbalances. They view trade unions as a legitimate representative of employees (Williams, 2014). Radicalism criticises both pluralism and unitarism, by arguing that both these perspectives downplay the structural root causes of antagonism and inequality embedded within capitalism as an exploitative profit accumulation system (Watson, 2012).

There are various strains of radicalism, including radical pluralism/materialism and political Marxism (see Dundon & Dobbins, 2015). In this paper we argue that a radical pluralist frame of reference, offering a ‘middle ground’ between pluralism and radicalism, is best equipped to analytically deconstruct the multi-layered complexity of employment relations struggles. Radical pluralists (see Edwards 1986; 2003; 2014; Fox 1974) typically analyse workplace conflict at a deeper level than most pluralists (Ackers, 2014), by considering how issues in the broader societal ‘infrastructure’ are intertwined with micro-level factors (Watson, 2012). Radical pluralists propose that economic, political, cultural and ideological inequalities are all explanatory variables of how employment relations struggles unfold (Dundon & Dobbins, 2015). Unlike radical pluralism, political Marxism assumes that workplace struggles tend to spill over to politicize societal struggle more generally. By contrast, a pluralist/materialist perspective views the capital-labour relations in the workplace as relatively self-contained. Struggles over the labour process can be said to have ‘relative autonomy’ from wider societal and systemic factors and forces (Edwards, 1990).

Past workplace disputes are identified as examples to illustrate such assumptions including the 1984-1985 UK miners’ strike (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996; Rees, 1985; Hyman, 1986; Spence & Stephenson, 2009; Walton, 2013; Phillips, 2013) and a recent strike by the Fire Brigade Union (FBU, 2014; GOV, 2014).

Our core focus is on the multi-faceted, ongoing, London Underground dispute. The paper investigates this dispute at two different levels. At the micro-level, we examine the most visible arena of local struggle between London Underground (LU) and the union for Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), over the closure of ticket offices and the
introduction of a new 24-hour night tube. At the macro-level, we unpick the politicized struggle between employment relations actors over the new Trade Union Bill (GOV, 2015).

The article explores one key research question:

Which frame of reference is best equipped to analyse the multi-layered dynamics of employment relations struggles?

Methodology

To explore this research question and to illustrate the complexity of the London Underground dispute, we examine press and media releases relating to the London Underground dispute and the Trade Union Bill, between October 2010 and November 2015. Fairclough’s dialectical-relational approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) (1995, 2003) is adopted. This approach views language as dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2) and is therefore applicable for scrutinizing the multi-dimensional London Underground struggle.

Conclusions

At the ‘surface level’ of the dispute, we find that London Underground predominantly utilizes the discourse of unitarism to legitimize the restructuring and to delegitimate industrial action. London Underground depicts its restructuring plans as the ‘modernisation of the tube’ (PR\textsuperscript{LU33}) which will ‘radically improve customer service’ (PR\textsuperscript{LU19}). By organizing industrial action, the RMT is accused of causing ‘unnecessary disruption to Londoners’ (PR\textsuperscript{LU}). On the other hand, the RMT union predominantly draws upon the discourse of radicalism and argues that LU’s strategy ‘is wholly about cash-led cuts plans’ (PR\textsuperscript{RMT2}). According to RMT, the union has been ‘forced to take’ (PR\textsuperscript{RMT14}) industrial action ‘to defend jobs, services and safety’ (PR\textsuperscript{RMT14}).

However, we also uncover a deeper layer of contention beneath the surface, illustrated in Figure 1 below. Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London and the Chairman of London Underground, may have used the dispute as a strategy to get proposals for a new Trade Union Bill included in the Conservative Party 2015 election manifesto, and later in the statute book. Boris Johnson has been urging for new strike laws since 2010 (The Telegraph, October 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2010; The Telegraph, May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2011; The Evening Standard, April 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2012), but admitted in 2013 that he had failed (The Telegraph, May 27\textsuperscript{th}, 2013). However, after RMT’s first strike in February 2014, which was organized following a low ballot turnout, David Cameron stated “we know that the time has come to consider what changes we can make” (Prime Minister’s Questions, February 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2014).

Boris Johnson may have been motivated by a desire to weaken RMT’s power in preparation for future projects, for example; his plans for driverless trains (see The Telegraph, 9\textsuperscript{th} October, 2014). Johnson’s actions during the period may also reflect his goal of becoming the next Prime Minister. The Conservative Party’s ‘next leader monthly poll’ highlights the close level of competition between several Conservative politicians (see Goodman, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c).
Alternatively, David Cameron may have always intended to propose a Bill that would restrict unions and decrease the Labour Party’s funding, but decided that 2010 would not be as advantageous as in 2015. In 2010, the Conservatives had just formed a joint coalition with the Liberal Democrats who strongly opposed tighter union laws (The Guardian, 2015), this may have been perceived by Cameron as a barrier. ‘Allowing’ Boris Johnson to provoke a dispute on the London Underground before the 2015 election could strengthen their manifesto and could be used to attack the Labour Party for its relationship with unions (see Prime Minister’s Questions 2014a, 2014b). Equally, during the dispute, the RMT union viewed organizing industrial action over the London Underground’s restructuring proposals as a way of also challenging the Trade Union Bill (RMT London Calling, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c).

Although the study focuses on one specific case, other workplace struggles may also extend deeper beneath the surface and require a materialist analysis of various internal and external forces. For this reason, the study suggests that all employment relations struggles should be examined through a radical pluralist lens.

![Diagram: The multi-layered London Underground dispute]

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Towards a theoretical framework for employment regulation: re-assessing the concept of regulatory space.

Summary

The impact of economic and social changes on the labour market raises new issues in employment relations and regulation. This paper argues that insights on regulatory theories, addressed specifically to employment relations issues, can offer a broader and more heuristic framework to help enhance our understanding of work transformation and regulation.

The paper engages with the existing literature on regulatory theory, linking the discourse to the specific area of employment regulation. The paper considers both legal (Dickens, 2004; Collins, 2000) and managerial (Barry, 2009) perspectives on employment and labour regulation and contributes to the current debates on regulation and specifically the “re”-regulatory narrative concerned with work and employment (Martinez-Lucio and McKenzie, 2004; Dundon et al., 2014).

The paper outlines the existing gap in employment regulation theories, and contends that too much attention has been given by the literature to the perceived (and, it is argued, false) regulation/deregulation dichotomy. By contrast, there has been insufficient analysis of the “spaces” in which labour policy and regulation are formed and influenced. The paper argues that employment regulation cannot be studied solely in its law dimension, but must also be analysed from the point of view of its informal dimension, which contributes to the different ways in which rule-making and legal regulation occurs. The other regulatory dimensions include domains of co-determination, voluntarism and managerial unilateralism. These domains match (and may sometimes overlap with) the role played by law in regulation processes, as they can operate when there is an empty space in the regulatory arena, intentionally or otherwise. Furthermore, in analysing these other instruments of regulation, or self-regulation, the paper stresses the importance of investigating the role of regulatory actors participating in the new regulatory arena.

The paper draws on established regulatory models and discusses how they might be usefully expanded in the industrial relations context. In particular, the paper builds on the theory of regulatory space outlined by Hancher and Moran (1989), and explains how that theory might offer a better understanding of how labour policies are formed and implemented. It contends that regulatory space theory is particularly useful for developing and discussing a multilevel regulatory framework, focusing on regulation at supranational, national and workplace levels. This model may offer useful benefits in terms of understanding why and how employment is regulated; and in organising, managing and directing institutional activity. Increased understanding of regulatory processes may also aid in evaluating the
possibility of coordination and cooperation between the different regulatory levels, and in developing new insights into the study of labour law and industrial relations.

**Methods**

The paper discusses specific issues of theoretical approach to employment regulation and seeks to build on the existing theory and literatures on industrial relations regulation. It is essentially a conceptual paper and represents the first theoretical analysis for a broader doctoral research.

**Conclusion**

In the development of regulatory perspectives on labour law and industrial relations for the future of work regulation it is important to investigate how the regulatory activity effectively occurs and who are the actors and the sources that influence it. In doing so, our research has started from an analysis of the theory of ‘regulatory space’, as a tool that takes account of the role played by actors in the regulatory arena from an institutional perspective. Furthermore, through the lens of regulatory space, the role of the law in employment regulation has been reconsidered.

The analysis develops and articulates a theoretical framework that tries to capture the complexity of multi-level regulation (across three levels: supranational, national and workplace) and the varieties of regulatory mechanisms. The contribution of the proposed framework is to move beyond a traditional understanding of regulation as a legal matter: it encompasses other means of regulation (co-determination, voluntarism and unilateralism) and seeks to recognise agency power, legitimacy and authority in various ways and in different spaces. Therefore, the importance of the four types of regulation is presented and their relevance to employment will be highlighted. The analysis points at the difficulty of finding a hierarchical structure as regulatory authorities (and lobbying groups and spaces) can overlap and the process of regulation cannot be divorced from inherent power relationships that go beyond the overall structure provided by the law.

Finally, the regulatory space perspective leads us to reconsider the process of regulatory change as a mechanism of re-distribution of influence among the actors, rather than the simple absence or removal of legal rules. Accordingly, the analysis of the responses to changes within regulatory processes is considered of important to better understanding employment regulation; hence, the mechanism of transformation and change within the labour market is identified as dynamic, fluid and constantly re-distributing the spaces through which actors, institutions and sources shape employment rules and laws.

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There's only one thing worse than being talked about: a Marxist response to the radical pluralism debate

This paper responds to the recent debate triggered by Peter Ackers' (2014) critique of what he identifies as the 'orthodoxy' of British industrial relations of the last 40 years; namely, 'radical pluralism', represented above all by the work of Paul Edwards (1986; 2003). For Ackers, this current is significantly to blame for the exclusion of industrial relations academics from employer and government policy-making. Moreover, for Ackers, the reason why radical pluralist research is unpopular in such circles is that it contains a residual excess of Marxist thought and categories. Consequently, for Ackers, the route to policy influence for industrial relations lies in expunging Marx entirely from its corpus. In similar vein, McGovern (2014) has criticised the use of terms such as 'contradiction' and 'tension', which are likewise characterised as unwanted intrusions of Marxism into otherwise respectable industrial relations scholarship. These critiques have drawn a firm riposte from Edwards (2014), but thus far no Marxist has responded. What is more, Edwards' own (1986) major theoretical contribution – 'structured antagonism' – was itself a systematic attempt to distance industrial relations from Marxism. Since the ghost of Marx haunts this debate, an explicitly Marxist response seems appropriate. This paper will attempt to outline one, focussing on areas of overlap and difference, and on theoretical directions in industrial relations.

In terms of the radical pluralism debate, it will be argued that Ackers (2014) has correctly identified theoretical elements of Marxist thought within radical pluralism, but that, far from being a weakness, this inheritance actually represents one source of its analytical strength. In particular, the characterisation of the employment relationship as based upon exploitation (Edwards 1986) remains essential to providing explanations of the generation and regeneration of patterns of conflict within workplace relations – an explanatory feature shared with 'core' labour process theory (Thompson 1990; Thompson and Smith 2010). Furthermore, it will be shown that McGovern's critique of the notion of contradiction is misplaced, and that his proposed alternative – 'unintended consequences' – is much inferior. It will also be argued that Edwards' (2014) defence of contradiction, welcome as it is, is nevertheless problematic, and would be strengthened by closer attention to Marxist treatments.

It will be further argued that, contrary to both Edwards' (1986) and Ackers' (2014) concerns, the sidelining of industrial relations research by government and employers is not rooted in theoretical differences: it is fundamentally rooted in class differences. The hegemony of neoliberalism among government and employers ensures that any social science presenting an honest view of the consequences for working people of current state and employer policies is unlikely to find favour.

Within the limits of the format, the paper will also address more general areas of contention between Marxist and mainstream industrial relations, both in the debates of the 1970s and 1980s and more recently. Issues discussed will include conceptions of workplace conflict
and cooperation (Adler 2009; Edwards 1986; Belanger and Edwards 2013; Rattansi 1982); the vexed question of interests (Callinicos 2009; Edwards 1986; Simms and Charlwood 2010); class and class theory (Chibber 2009; Crompton 2008; Hyman 1999; Silver 2012); structure and agency (Callinicos 2009); and gender and ethnicity (Arruzza 2016; Virdee 2014; Vogel 2013). It will be argued that while critiques of Marxism in these areas have often rested on caricatures, the identification of more serious problems has led to a significant new growth of Marxist theory and research (Bidet and Kouvelakis 2007), which warrants serious engagement.

Recent years have seen a major resurgence of interest in Marxism across social research, driven by relentless neoliberalism and war; as demonstrated by *inter alia* the large and largely young attendance at conferences organised by Historical Materialism journal and IIPPE. In industrial relations, however, Marxist theorisation remains marginal. Despite its many insights, Marxism in industrial relations never achieved the level of theoretical sophistication that was seen in other fields (Howell 2005). As a result, it was particularly vulnerable to the critiques that led towards what became the mainstream radical pluralist tradition. Moreover, its relative theoretical weakness in industrial relations means that any redevelopment of Marxist analysis cannot simply revisit previous accounts, but must engage afresh with both classical and contemporary Marxist thought. This paper will argue that such an engagement would be timely and beneficial.

Literatures engaged with: The paper will engage principally with theoretical literature from industrial relations and with recent debates within Marxism. The radical pluralism debate (Ackers 2014; Edwards 2014; McGovern 2014) will be set in the context of the encounter between Marxism and pluralism in 1970s industrial relations (Clegg 1972, 1979; Donovan 1968; Flanders 1975; Hyman 1975), and subsequent developments (Batstone 1988; Darlington 1994). Particular attention will be paid to the attempted theoretical resolution by Edwards (1986; Edwards and Scullion 1982) and his critics (Kelly 1998). A comprehensive overview of recent debates within Marxism can be found in Bidet and Kouvelakis (2009).

**Methods**

This paper will be theoretical in content, based entirely upon secondary sources. No primary data-gathering was involved.

**Conclusion:** The inheritance of Marxist concepts in mainstream industrial relations is not a source of theoretical weakness; rather, it is a source of continuing analytical strength. Nor has the influence of Marxism caused the exclusion of industrial relations research from policy-making; which is rather explained by the hegemony of neoliberalism in government and employer circles. In the face of continuing neoliberal pressure upon working people, serious-minded study of work is likely to meet with disfavour from government and employers. In such circumstances, industrial relations, as a field of social science, should continue its work and find an audience where it may, deploying whatever theoretical resources seem best suited. In this latter regard, Marxism remains a significant source of theoretical resources for understanding industrial relations. However, the relatively weak theorisation of 1970s Marxist industrial relations, and the subsequent removal of some of its key concepts from industrial relations theory, present genuine difficulties for
contemporary analysis. Therefore, a new industrial relations engagement with Marxist thought should be seriously considered.

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Employment challenges for Uttar Pradesh (India) in future: A coherent component analysis

Demographic dividend, associated with increasing proportions of working population to non-working population, is a serious issue of concern for developing as well as developed nations. As the demographic dividend is the accelerated economic growth that may result from a decline in a country’s mortality and fertility and the subsequent change in the age structure of the population leading to open a new window of opportunity of growth. Keeping in view the importance of demographic dividend, the present study projects and further investigates the employment challenges for Uttar Pradesh (the most populated state in India) for the coming 10 years (2011-2026) i.e. how and where the appropriate absorption of increased proportion of labour force can be done to enhance the development of the state.

The population projection is based on the Cohort Component Method which is used for population projection in the training programs of the United Nations Agency for International Development. The study is based on Indian population censuses data for the year 2001 and 2011. The age group wise data has been used for projection for males as well as for females. On the basis of projection of different age group population, this piece of work attempts to suggest the policies needed to have advantage of this demographic dividend. This projection method is based on the components of demographic change, including births, deaths, and migration. The projected population is calculated from survived population (form mortality and survival rates), births (from age specific fertility rates and sex ratio) and net migrants (from migration rates and survived population). When CCM is used as a population projection tool, components of demographic change such as mortality rate, fertility rate and net migration rates, are assumed to be constant throughout the projection period.

The projection results reveal that the population in the states of Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh is witnessed to increase by 40-50 percent during 2001-2026, which is above the national average of 36 percent. The population of Uttar Pradesh is expected to be highest among all the states of the country at almost 249 million in 2026. Twenty two percent of the total population increase in India of 371 million during 2001-26 is anticipated to occur in Uttar Pradesh alone. The projected estimates show that the proportion of the old age population will increase from 6 percent in 2001 to 10 percent in 2026, implying that the population of Uttar Pradesh will be expected to be relatively younger compared to other states. Fifteen years from 2011, Kerala’s population will begin to resemble that of developed countries in terms of a stable age structure, while Uttar Pradesh will still have a very young age structure.

The projection of demographic structure has also been analyzed on the basis of gender in Uttar Pradesh. The different population subgroups are also following the same trend for male and females separately, i.e. from 2001-2026 there is an increase in the proportion of
population subgroup 15-19 for males 52.7% in 2001 to 61.4% in 2026 and for females from 53% in 2001 to 61.1% in 2026. The proportion of male and female population for age group 15-59 (61.45% and 61.18 respectively) is almost same during 2026 but for older age group (60 and above) proportion of females is higher (10.6%) than the males (9.2%) during 2026. On the other hand decline in fertility rates the proportion of the child population of both male as well as females has declined from 41.2% and 40.9% in 2001 to 29.3% and 28.2% during 2026 respectively.

A larger workforce translates into more workers only if there are productive jobs for it. Productive jobs are vital for growth. And a good job is the best form of inclusion. In case of Uttar Pradesh, the potential for a dividend exists but that it will be realized only when incentives will be in place to exploit that potential. More than half of the population depends on agriculture, but the experience of other countries suggests that the number of people dependent on agriculture will have to shrink if per capita incomes in agriculture are to go up substantially. While industry is creating jobs, too many such jobs are low productivity non-contractual jobs in the unorganized sector, offering low incomes, little protection, and no benefits. Service jobs are relatively high productivity, but employment growth in services has been slow in recent years. Given the employment opportunities same as the present era, in 2026 government will not be able to absorb all the working age population and handle the burden of dependents. So, there is a need to meet the gap between the actual and required skill for increasing the employability to reap the demographic dividend.

According to the present situation of state, labour force absorption is less in some parts (especially in eastern region) due to some structural rigidities and in other parts (western region) of the state it is more due to availability of additional resources. So structural imbalances should be corrected along with focus towards employment generation in non-farm (Industry and services) in those areas where inadequacies hinder agriculture growth. The promotion of non-farm activities can help in absorbing both skilled and even semi-skilled labour force in the less developed regions of the state.

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**Social Dialogue in post-Crisis Greece: a Sisyphus Syndrome for Greek social partners’ expectations**

Aim of this paper is to contribute to the current debate on the consequences of joint EC-ECB-IMF Programmes that directly impact on the Greek industrial relation system via an analysis of the changes in the institutional framework of the labour market and the social partnership process.

The paper examines immense transformations in the Greek industrial relations system and evaluates the direction of change in the field of social dialogue. Furthermore, it analyses how the radical changes introduced since 2010, which have amended essential features of Greek labour legislation, have promoted significant implications for the role of social partners.

During the past six years Greece has been faced an enormous change in the fields of employment relations, social dialogue and labour market. Current debate on the consequences of joint EU-ECB-IMF programs has found that exists directly impact on the Greek industrial relation system and especially on social partnership process.

That paper will test the hypothesis that the Memoranda have had a negative impact on the quality of social dialogue in Greece and assess the impact of EC-ECB-IMF Programmes on the current industrial relations landscape in Greece in comparison with the previous situation.

It is widely accepted that social partnership/ social dialogue (SP/SD) procedures have been a vital precondition for the success of economic and social policies. Several studies have found that when a decision-making organization wishes to assure that the continuous involvement of the parties concerned is maintained, it has to convince those parties that its policies have taken into account their interests and opinions.

According to many researchers the main benefits and advantages (added value) of continuous and stable partnership schemes are a shared understanding, a mutual trust and flexibility of approaches.

Thus social partners’ role has been differentiated and included in a new context that was characterized by a more limited role of the state in industrial relations. Furthermore, several developments towards a system of free collective bargaining and voluntary labour disputes settlement has been promoted.

Although, the activation of SD institutions has been delayed in Greece in comparison to other EU countries due to a lack of a long-lasting SD tradition. The implementation of Memoranda I and II includes economic and labour market reforms in wages, collective bargaining, pensions and employment in the public sector.
SD in Greece has been faced many obstacles during the ‘90s due to the long tradition of state intervention in implementing economic and social policies. Nonetheless, SD has been strengthened through the constitution of pertinent institutions.

Social partnership procedures in Greece have been affected by the policies that adopted under the pressures of Memoranda. More specifically, the main legislative initiatives that have been undertaken by the Government are the following: Memorandum I (2010), the “Updated Memorandum” (2010), the Second update of the “Memorandum” (2010), the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy Framework (2011), the Memorandum II (2012), and the Memorandum III (2015).

Finally, using a comparative assessment it examines the impact of EC-ECB-IMF Programmes on the reshape of the national industrial relations system towards highly decentralized collective bargaining, and the abandonment of social dialogue as an essential means to influence economic and social policy.

Due to a huge public debt Greek Government has been obliged to ask for external financing by the EU, ECB and IMF and was committed to implement measures of reform that are described in three Memoranda of Understanding.

The reduced role of social dialogue in the planning and implementation of the austerity measures seems to be combined with several concerns of the abandonment to the European model of social partnership. To justify itself the government claimed that the strong pressure by the lenders left no time enough for SD/SP consultations concerning the bail-out agreement. In other words, international or European institutions (EU, ECB, and IMF) - as representing by the Troika - as well as the Greek government shaped the agenda of reforms without a social partners’ participation.

More specifically, Troika has been anymore the strong partner as its role in the management of the crisis and the reforms in the Greek system of industrial relations is crucial. Thus, monetary forces and fiscal constraints put tripartism aside and Greek government in collaboration with the Troika undertook some policies of reform in labour market (wages, labour market, and social / employment protection).

The new measures regarding employment relations had a direct impact on the national industrial relations system. Due to the Memoranda social partnership have been set aside, in preference to Troika’s monologue and several direct legislative initiatives in circumstances of urgency. In some cases the Troika did not accept social partners’ joint opinions. The strategy and policies pursued by the Government fits more fully the preferences of the troika than the social partners’ ones.

The Government’s initiatives has created a new flexible landscape in the labour market that affects the distribution of power and the role of the professional organisations involved in the Greek industrial relations system.
According to certain authors, the employment and industrial relations landscape in Greece after the memoranda resembles that of a laissez-faire environment, in which the negotiation capacity of social partners has been reduced.

In the new industrial relations landscape there is no incentive for the enterprises to engage in a regulated labour market. Thanks to the new legislative framework employers may undermine the provisions of a collective agreement and regulate the terms and conditions of the employment relation. As the negotiation of workplace regulations will no longer result in arbitration, it is likely that the future employment relations will be introduced by employers through signing individual agreements than collective ones.

In the era of Memoranda, Troika’s monologue has replaced the SP/SD procedures. The future of SD procedures in Greece will depend on the new balance between capital and labour. The latter will be affected by the industrial relations climate, the durability of SP/SD institutions, the social partners’ willingness to participate in SD and the influence of the European social partnership model.

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Limiting trade union bargaining power: The case of Australian academics

Forty-three state-accredited universities operate in Australia and which employ 48,000 academics and 61,000 non-academic staff. About 1.2 million students are enrolled, of whom, some 335,000 (28%) were international students (ABS, 2012). Fees from international students are in the order of $15 billion annually making the higher education sector Australia’s highest service industry export earner and the fourth largest overall after the commodities coal, iron ore and gold (Group of Eight Australia, 2014).

Academic work in Australian universities was largely regulated on a relatively informal, even ad hoc basis until the mid-1980s after which significant change in the industrial relations regulatory framework facilitated the unionisation of the sector and the adoption of collective bargaining as the principal means to determine employment conditions (O’Brien, 1999; O’Brien, 2003). These changes were accompanied by a rapid expansion of the total number of students enrolled in the sector, very marked increases in higher education productivity (as measured by student/staff loads, research higher degree completions and publication outputs), a dramatic collapse in tenure replaced by more ‘flexible’ casual/sessional labour arrangements, the adoption of ‘top-down’ managerialism which challenged the pre-existing collegiate decision-making processes and the commercialisation of course delivery; changes which have manifest in many academics reporting declining satisfaction levels (Gardner, 2012) and often unmanageable workloads (Bexley, Richard and Arkoudis, 2011; see also Trounson, 2015).

Under the (federal) Fair Work Act 2009 (FWA), enterprise bargaining agreements (EBA) apply in all the universities and, whilst theoretically unique, each agreement has pattern bargaining elements (McAlpine, 2007). EBAs are detailed, commonly involving more than one hundred clauses. The principal unions in the sector are the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU). With over 28,000 members the NTEU is the major union in higher education (NTEU, 2015). The Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (AHEIA), which has links with Canada’s Faculty Bargaining Services (FBS) and the UK’s Universities and Colleges Employers’ Association (UCEA), represents most university employers (AHEIA, 2015).

Complex arrangements and processes for the negotiation and approval of EBAs are set out in Part 3-3 of the FWA. The taking of industrial action during the bargaining period, such as bans or restrictions imposed by employees on performing work (including strikes) is closely regulated; far less so action by employers (lockouts). Essentially the Act allows for ‘protected industrial action’ i.e. the parties are immune from civil liability (which can be very significant) provided a series of tests are satisfied, mainly if it is action taken to support claims in relation to an enterprise agreement, the parties are genuinely trying to reach an agreement (good faith bargaining) and, for employees, that it has been authorised by a secret ballot and that at least three days’ written notice of the actions has been provided to the employer. Even if these tests are met, the Fair Work Commission (FWC) (the tripartite
statutory tribunal established under the FWA) can, under section 423 suspend or terminate protected industrial action on its own initiative, or on application, when ‘the action has threatened, is threatening, or would threaten to endanger the life, personal safety, health or welfare of the population or part of it, to cause significant damage to the Australian economy or an important part of it or the action is protracted and is causing, or is going to cause, significant economic harm to the employer or employees who will be covered by the agreement’ (Fair Work Ombudsmen, n.d.). If the FWC determines to terminate the bargaining period, the FWA provides for a period of conciliation (21 or longer by extension) and for the arbitration of a workplace determination under section 266 of the FWA.

So, how have these provisions been applied? Only a few orders have been made by the FWC terminating or suspending industrial action on the basis of threatening the health or life of the population, for instance, a planned 4-hour stoppage of emergency ambulance services which could have increased response times (Ambulance Victoria v. LMHU [2009] FWA 44) and strikes in 2011 by members of the Australian Nurses and Midwifery Federation employed in hospitals in Victoria. The FWC held that sections of the population would be imperilled by the nurses’ action. For academics, however, the tribunal has been prepared to set the test of seriousness at a far lower level. Three cases are relevant. In University of Wollongong v NTEU (1999) AIRC PRS1688 the tribunal suspended a one-month ban on the transmission of students’ results deciding that it adversely affected the welfare of students as it ‘may prejudice their future employment prospects and careers, perhaps irreparably … it will place these students at a disadvantage compared with students at other universities whose results are not delayed’. The Commission concluded that ‘To the extent that this decision places the interests of the students above those of the academic staff, I think that is appropriate’ [para. 16]. McCrystal (2010: 190) found this elevation of the students’ rights to results over the right of tertiary employees to take industrial action an ‘extraordinary interpretation of the “threat to welfare”’. More recently, in University of South Australia v NTEU (2009) FWA 1534 the FWC again suspended protected industrial action banning on the recording and transmission of results. The Commission rejected the argument of the university’s management that the ban would cause stress which would adversely affect the health of the graduating students however decided the ban did threaten the welfare of the 2,300 graduating students. In the final case, the NTEU’s use of bans on students’ results was tested before the Full Bench of the FWC on an appeal in National Tertiary Education Industry Union v Monash University [2013] FWCFB 5982. The decision rejected the union’s attempt to thwart the impact of the earlier cases by the use of a sophisticated committee-based (which included a student representative) process which allowed students to seek exemption from the bans, for example, by those who were eligible to graduate. They also rejected the NTEU’s argument that the bans would not endanger a sufficient part of the population to warrant suspension of the protected industrial action. Instructively, the Full Bench’s decision drew on the evidence of Monash university’s Director, Mental Health and Safer Community Programs (Sally Trembath) and found, inter alia, that:

…the psychological stress produced by the indefinite Results Ban threatens to endanger - that is, imperils - the mental health and welfare of a significant segment of the student body which has a pre-existing vulnerability to mental health disorders arising from their general mental health condition and/or their current personal circumstances ... given Ms Trembath’s evidence that one in four young people suffer from a diagnosable mental health
disorder in any one year, it may be a reasonably substantial proportion of the 13,000 students... We consider therefore that such students are sufficient in number and are collectively affected in a way which permits them to be characterised as ‘part of the population’ [para. 35].

In conclusion, when the *Fair Work Bill 2009* was introduced to parliament the *Explanatory Memorandum* (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2009) stated, inter alia, that ‘the powers in relation to the suspension or termination of protected industrial action are intended to be used in exceptional circumstances and where significant harm is being caused by the action’ [para 1708]. So, despite the intention of the drafters of the legislation, it’s apparent from the case law that the bargaining power of academics in Australia’s universities has been highly constrained by decisions of the Fair Work Commission over the use of academics’ principal lever against management - bans on the transmission of student results. Some commentators suggest that these cases raise ‘serious questions about the capacity of university teachers ...to exert any meaningful pressure on their employer’ (Creighton and Stewart, 2010: 833). More broadly, as McCrystal (2010:195) persuasively argues: ‘The protected industrial action provisions of the FWA are not designed to recognise or respect the right to strike. The premise behind the FWA is that industrial cation is not legitimate ... (it) is a privilege and access to the privilege is tightly controlled ... (which) goes against the requirement in international law in respect of the right to strike’.

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Union organising and full time officers: acquiescence and resistance

Summary
This paper examines the impact on and responses of trade union full time officers to union organising strategies. It considers the shift to organising in the context of TUC efforts to develop strategy for union renewal. Attempting to mimic US and Australian trade union confederations – and assuming that cultural, industrial, economic and political conditions were comparable- TUC affiliates were encouraged to support organising work as one strand of ‘new unionism’, the other being employer partnerships. The implications for full time officers was the requirement for a shift from emphasising servicing of existing union members to organising union workplaces and gaining recognition in non-union settings. However this top down approach to organising, coupled with the lack of identification of objectives, has seen union bureaucracies distort organising work and narrowly define organising work to a focus on recruitment of new members. Consequently the traditional support required by union branches of full time officers is given less of a priority.

Within this context unions develop existing managerial systems and introduce new ways to control and direct the work of full time officers to institutional priorities of recruitment at the expense of those of the membership and lay representatives at the grassroots level. The quandary for full time officers is do they approach their work from the position of accepting managerial direction and institutional priorities for recruitment or do they resist such direction through emphasising the need for representation and organisation of members: consequently being driven by issues emerging within recognised workplaces and existing members. If the former then full time officers would confirm long established concerns that they are driven by priorities of oligarchical interests separate to those of union memberships. If the latter full time officers are aligned more with rank and file interests than those of union bureaucracy. The research finds evidence for both approaches and is labelled prototype and traditional full time officers.

Literature
The paper synthesises classical sociological theories of trade unions with more recent analyses of union organising post new unionism. Specifically it refers to S. and B. Webb and their identification of the existence of a separate paid officer class within trade unions. Michel’s analysis that such developments represent evidence of the existence of an iron law of oligarchy is considered. Recent criticisms of such deterministic positions are noted with Hymans emphasis on the importance of relations and not positions within trade unions and industrial relations. Also Hymans observations of developments which encourage the emergence of a lay union bureaucracy have relevance.

Fairbrother’s theory of union renewal with the advent of new forms of public management an important feature of which is decentralisation of management decision making is given attention given the research focuses on Unison, the largest UK public service union. The paper also engages with contemporary debates on the relevance of organising and
specifically the ‘organising model’. De Turberville’s position that such a model is an outdated irrelevance is counterpoised by Carter’s position that trade unions have largely failed to adopt the ‘organising model’ limiting strategy to recruitment evidence of which can be garnered from the outset.

Methods
The research draws on evidence from a case study of Unison, the largest public sector trade union in the UK. It involved semi-structured interviews with Unison managers at national and regional level, Unison full time officers (Regional Organisers), Unison staff and interviews and focus group discussion with lay representatives. The research is enhanced given it is part auto-ethnographic with the author being a longstanding full time officer.

Conclusion
The shift to organising suggested a reinforcing of ‘bottom up’ participative trade union forms. However the lack of definition of organising objectives, within a context of managerial approaches to trade unionism, saw organising defined in union management efforts to encourage the focus of union work on recruitment. Consequently organising became a top down approach to union work with institutional priorities overriding those of the grassroots rank and file. This position was supported by prototypical full time officers underpinned with the tentacles of bureaucracy extending to some lay activists. In contrast traditional full time officers continued to focus on building union organisation through the day to day issues, increasing with new forms of public management, which face union branches and members. However the ascendancy of the prototype leads to colonisation of union structures and the prospect of further weakening of trade union relevance to workers.

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Changes in salaries and working time in Spain and the UK in times of austerity: a similar trend in working conditions in different institutional contexts?

Summary
This paper analyses the effect of recession and austerity in employee’s working conditions in Spain and the UK, using panel data of EU-SILC on salary and working time. It explores the effect of different contexts (pre-recession, recession and ‘austerity’) in the working conditions of employees in the same job. The aim is to identify the main trends in changes in working conditions in both countries and identify the groups most affected by the changes. The UK has been characterised by having a flexible labour market in which working conditions are more subjected to changes in economic context. Spain, on the other hand, has been traditionally characterised by having more rigid and protected working conditions. Both countries have been strongly hit by the 2008 recession. In the period prior to recession their economies were fueled by the ‘housing boom’, and they adopted several reforms during the ‘austerity’ period. Reforms reinforced flexibility in the UK and led to institutional changes towards greater flexibility in working conditions in Spain. The results confirm some of these differential elements but suggest a common trend in austerity towards, first, a lower salary despite working the same or more hours, and second, a lower salary and less working hours.

Debates
The demise of regulations associated with the standard employment relation have been linked, by several authors, to the expansion of neoliberalism and to the aim of capital to restore profitability since the 1980s (Harvey, 2005). It has also been associated with the reconfiguration of social relations around a restoration of class power and finance-led accumulation (Macartney, 2011; Koch, 2013, Thompson, 2013). As has been pointed out by Arnold and Bongiovi (2013) the key element is that widespread atypical employment and flexible employment arrangements is related to the increasing capacity of employers to reduce or increase employment or wage levels with ease, to increase mobility, to make more ‘elastic’ use of skills, and to introduce nonconventional work arrangements. Associated to that, certain aspects of work and employment are becoming less regulated by institutions and joint regulation and are more being decided unilaterally by the employer (Baccaro and Howell, 2011).

Against this background, the aftermath of the 2007 recession has been a reinforcement of the neoliberal trends mentioned above. While the first phase of the crisis was characterised by fiscal stimuli and/or increased government spending, the shift towards fiscal austerity and the reframing of the causes of the crisis as a product of State intervention and regulation led to a new phase. Heyes (2011) suggests that there has been some convergence in labour and social protections across Europe, and that the dominant trend has been towards less security. The author argues that cross-national differences in labour market policies, in particular the strength of employment legislation, have resulted in
markedly different experiences of the economic crisis, but attacks on employment and social protection appear to be gaining momentum.

This paper analyses changes in working conditions (salary and working time) among employees in the same job between t-1 and t in Spain and the UK. It asks whether they are leading to greater changes in working conditions and, if so, in what direction? The paper analyses these dynamics in two countries situated in different models of capitalism and collective bargaining. The UK is an example of a flexible labour market since the 1980s, has low coverage of collective bargaining, and makes it easy for employers to change working conditions. Spain has been traditionally characterised by having a rigid employment regulation and a high-coverage and co-ordinated system of collective bargaining. The paper also analyses how both models have responded to changes in contexts, such as recession and austerity, that in the case of the UK reinforced an already flexible model, and in Spain led to an institutional change. The paper enhances our knowledge about how different institutional settings in the context of neoliberalism and austerity have led or not to common institutional outputs at the workplace.

**Methodology**

The paper uses the panel data of EU-SILC provided by Eurostat. This is a rotational panel that permits up to 4 year observations per individual. Three time periods have been defined: 1) prerecession (2004/05-2007), recession (2007-2010), and austerity (2010-2013). The analysis has been carried out in three steps. First, I considered main in-work and out-of-work transitions for employees, including changes in salary and working time (and their different combinations), and transitions to self-employment, unemployment and inactivity for each of the periods in both countries, aiming to obtain a complete picture for each period. Second, these situations are considered for those in same job, therefore excluding those affected by a job change and transitions to unemployment and inactivity. Four main categories are defined:

- Increase salary, same/lower working hours
- Increase salary, more hours
- Decrease salary, same/more hours
- Decrease salary, lower hours

This permitted me to characterise the extent and type of changes in working conditions in both countries. The third step, based in a multinomial regression, allows for the identification of which factors (sex, age, educational level, and occupation, working time and type of contract in t-1) correlate with the different categories.

**Findings**

The findings confirm that the British labour market is characterised by greater flexibility in terms of changes in working conditions, and the Spanish one by lower changes and more transitions to unemployment. This is mostly the case in all periods analysed, but substantial changes happen during the austerity period.

The Spanish labour market is characterised by an increase in transitions to unemployment during recession and austerity. However, this increase slows down during austerity.
Crucially, the research also demonstrates how, while in recession minor changes in working conditions are observed, in austerity a deep change in working conditions is observed. Notably, there are important increases in employees affected by salary decreases in the same job, especially in those also experiencing an increase in working hours. At the same time, professionals, associate professionals, and clerks, who were less affected by falls in salary in recession, as well as fulltime workers, tend to be more affected by salary decreases in austerity in contrast to the periods of pre-recession and recession.

In the case of the UK, transitions to unemployment increase in recession and fall slightly in the period defined as austerity. The British labour market adjusted in the recession by increasing and decreasing salaries in parallel with working hours in a similar way. Conversely, in austerity, the groups with salary increases deeply fall while the ones with salary decrease skyrocketed, mainly implying the same or more hours. The change of working conditions is more spread between different groups than in Spain, but the data show that while in recession part-time employment seem to be more affected by salary decrease, this trend includes full-time employees in austerity.

The paper suggests that common changes underlying different institutional settings can be observed. In the case of Spain, in parallel to the increase of unemployment there has been an institutional change in employment regulation that has lead towards more precarious working conditions. These trends, reinforced by public sector cuts, have especially affected high-skilled employees during austerity. In the case of the UK, the effect of the recession seems to have been reinforced by changes at policy level during austerity towards greater flexibility, lower protection in case of transfer of understandings, and job cuts and reinforced pressures towards outsourcing in public sector. Here, while adjustment seem to have been mainly by working hours during recession, in austerity the trend seem more related to lower salaries working the same or more hours. In this regard, we conclude that common institutional outcomes can be identified. These trends imply a deflation of labour costs by reducing salaries and, at the same time, a trend towards marginalisation of work by reducing simultaneously working time and salaries.

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A major dilemma facing public service unions is how to represent their members’ interests concerning the dismantling of traditional ‘pay for grade’ systems in favour of performance related progression. When members’ views are mixed, outright opposition can easily backfire, yet simply providing a grievance service for resulting inequities may dilute broader membership support. It is therefore important for public service unions to identify key negotiating issues that establish some common ground with management, which in many professional public services involves members of the same professional community, while at the same time representing the interests of a large proportion of their members. This paper presents early findings from a panel study of the new performance-related pay (PRP) scheme for classroom teachers in England and Wales, linking teachers’ views of the scheme to information about the quality and collegiality of school management. Tentatively, the latter are associated with more positive views, suggesting that school teachers’ and school leaders’ unions may have a useful bargaining agenda in helping to sustain more collegial styles of management which provide greater opportunities for teacher participation in formulating their schools’ objectives.

From 2013, the government introduced a new performance pay scheme for state school teachers in England and Wales. This paper compares classroom teachers’ views about PRP, and their beliefs about its effects on their performance and that of their schools before the first decisions about pay awards in 2014 with those after its implementation in 2015. We investigate whether perceived opportunities for progression based on pay spine position, and organisational-level characteristics, namely differences in its operation and in management collegiality and quality, affect perceptions of PRP as motivating or divisive. We find that most school teachers have not changed their views on PRP. Pay spine variables are significantly related to their perceptions. There is some evidence that where performance review procedures are less systematic, teachers are more likely to find performance pay divisive, but where teachers participate in development school priorities, they are more likely to find PRP motivating. Finally, good quality leadership, as assessed by government school inspectors (Ofsted, 2015), contributes to teachers finding PRP more motivating and less divisive. This research contributes to the literature on performance pay by systematically examining the effect of management quality. The relation between performance pay and appraisal and quality of management is a major unresolved question. Previous research focuses on either single organisations or pay systems vary across multiple organisational units. Thus a major contribution of this research on schools is that we study the same broad scheme, while examining the effect of local management differences on its operation.
The new performance pay scheme (see DfE, 2014) replaced the former system of automatic annual pay progression up the main pay scale for classroom teachers. It makes pay progression for all teachers dependent upon their performance as evaluated by performance appraisals. It comprises three main elements: (i) replacing annual pay progression for teachers on the ‘Main Scale’ by performance-based progression; (ii) restoring the performance element in progression at the ‘Threshold’ between the Main and the Upper pay scales; and (iii) reinvigorating performance in progression on the Upper pay scale, both of which the School Teachers’ Review Body (2012) believed had lost their performance element since their introduction in 2000.

This study sheds new light on four questions. First, how teachers’ perceptions of performance pay have changed since the new scheme’s introduction, and in particular whether they find it motivating or divisive; second, how this relates to the different opportunities for progression open to teachers; third, how teachers’ perceptions are affected by the operation of performance reviews and by the atmosphere of collegiality in their schools; and fourth, how they are affected by the general quality of leadership within schools. This study can address the latter two questions because schools have considerable independence in their management (Murphy, 2013), so it becomes possible to explore how the same broad pay system works in different school environments. More generally, this research may shed light on the frictions involved in the transition from one type of pay system to another.

If the initial results are borne out by subsequent waves of the study, then it seems that there is an important role for classroom teachers’ and leaders’ unions to represent their members over the more holistic approach to rewards, incentives and collegial management. Such an approach includes performance management which is fair and developmental and a collegial management which involves teachers in decision-making, backed up by strong leadership. Unions can play a key role in pushing for and implementing such a management approach to mitigate potential negative effects of PRP in schools, while also benefiting leaders.

The study is independently funded, but the questionnaire has been administered by the teachers’ unions sending emails to a sample of their membership inviting them to reply via a link to an online confidential questionnaire held at a secure location. So far, two surveys have been carried out, in the spring of 2014 and the spring of 2015, before and after the results of the first awards of pay progression had been made under the new system. In 2014, 4,372 usable replies were received, and in 2015, 1,306, and the panel element comprises 605 individuals. The main focus in this paper is on the panel respondents. Future research will cover the full range of the samples, replies to other questions, and link data on schools from other sources. With the ongoing trend of introducing PRP in the public sector, as witnessed by current proposals to make previously automatic annual pay increases for junior doctors dependent on their performance (Campbell, 2016), we suggest this research is of wider relevance to public sector unions at large.

4 A full account of the survey methods and checks on response balance can be found in Marsden (2015)
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Industrial relations and the medical and dental professions: an emerging research agenda with broader implications.

Despite the medical and dental professions having strong collective identities and being subject to recent regulatory challenges, we are more likely to find studies of these groups in the sociology of professions (Abbott, 1988; Evetts, 2011), organisational studies (Currie et al, 2012) and public administration (Harrison, 2009) than industrial relations (IR) (with a few recent exceptions (Wanchek, 2010). This is not to say that there is no IR debate in healthcare. On the contrary, IR contains a rich and critical literature analysing the manner in which aspects of ‘New Public Management’ (NPM) have led to ‘grade dilution’ (Thornley, 1996:165); gendered outcomes (Khan, 1999) and collective action (e.g. Seiffert and Sibley, 2005) but much of this is grounded in empirical studies of non-medical and dental professions. Does this matter? This paper seeks to argue that it does and suggests a rich research agenda for this group of workers and their effect on colleagues.

To distinguish the characteristics of medics and dentists from other healthcare professionals, and expose the scope of the research agenda, this work builds on Heery et al’s (2008: 7) tabulation of the levels of IR analysis. At each level, actors, processes and outcomes are identified as component elements of the employment relationship. The aim is to bring medics and dentists into sharper relief and extend the study of these actors in IR. This is aided by translating the Heery et al (2008) elements into questions. First, it enables a useful comparison between how IR on the one side, and sociology and organisational studies on the other, examine medics and dentists. Second, when applied to the largest source of IR writings in healthcare – namely workforce ‘modernisation’ – these questions illustrate differences between medics, dentists and the rest of the healthcare workforce.

For example, Heery et al (2008) indicate that key worker actors at workplace level are “work groups, shop stewards and works councillors”. By translating that into the underlying question of, “how do (healthcare) workers organise themselves in the workplace”, we can immediately focus on the significance of the “occupational workgroup” as a basis of power and influence. Likewise, at the industry level, by asking “through what forms do (healthcare) workers pursue their collective interests?” and “through what forms does the state regulate the activities of the (healthcare) workforce”, we can more easily see the overlap that exists between the two answers. The traditional hierarchy of healthcare professions has led to these groups wielding considerable influence over who can do what, where and when. Two additional (linked) complexities are that many dentists and GPs work as small business owners, and gender and ethnicity play a part (often intersectionally) in who is likely to be owner or employee.
The implications of the above differences providing a contrast with the experience of the ‘assistant’ workforce as currently examined (Kessler et al, 2013) is illustrated through the analysis of policy seeking to change the regulation of, and working practices within, dentistry in England. First, examination of changes in the make-up of the General Dental Council and the consequent response of the British Dental Association enables us to extend the debates of Campbell and Haiven (2011) and Cao (2011) regarding the relationship between professional associations and trade unions. Second, examining the workforce policy itself provides further evidence of the ambiguous status of dentists as workers/employers and the extensive nature of managerial decisions made by dentists acting as professional workers (as opposed to being an employer). This latter issue enables an extension of Heery et al’s (2008) taxonomy/typology of processes from ‘management decision; joint decision; state regulation’ to include ‘relations with others’. Once we ask questions about how dentists relate to others, we can start identifying their impact on the social and justice outcomes of others.

The paper will be presented as follows. First, we draw on Heery et al (2008) to identify pertinent IR questions, reflecting how they differ from those raised in the sociology of professions and organisational studies. Second, we review IR texts on workforce modernisation and indicate those characteristics that distinguish medics and dentists from the rest of the workforce. Third, we describe and examine recent regulatory changes within dentistry, using them to highlight the potential for different outcomes amongst this occupational group. We conclude by identifying the importance of using an IR lens to study medics and dentists (with the recent industrial action of doctors bringing even more pertinence).

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**Socially Responsible Restructuring: an exploration of the roles of HRM and Unions.**

Industrial restructuring continues apace. Between July 2003 and July 2013 1,836,118 job reductions across the EU 27 plus Norway were planned (ERM, 2013). Within the considerable body of research on the industrial relations and the social impact of restructuring, understanding of how restructuring might be socially responsible, is limited. This paper, hence, through a study of an instance of industrial restructuring that both unions and HR management, considered, albeit retrospectively, to be socially responsible, contributes to understanding of what HR and unions *conceive* of as constituting socially responsible restructuring and the nature of bargaining arrangements associated with this.

The ongoing research is a qualitative case study of a large steel works (SteelCo) in the north of England. Data collection was though semi structured interviews, observation and secondary data. Data was collected over two bouts of restructuring and included 34 semi-structured interviews. Interviews were from senior management, HR managers, local trade unions formed from a wider data set of 59 interviews. Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 2 hours, were recorded and transcribed.

Although restructuring need not lead to redundancy, in the in the UK steel industry, it often does. The impact of redundancy following restructuring includes poor health, financial hardship, emotional and psychological distress and feelings of helplessness towards future employment. Addressing the ways in which individuals are able to move on from redundancy, is especially important when framing restructuring claimed to be socially responsible.

Forde et al (2009:7) suggest that socially responsible restructuring involves ‘an anticipatory or forward-looking approach to restructuring and ongoing social dialogue and negotiation over the effects of restructuring.’ The International Labour Office (ILO) suggests socially responsible practices might include: promoting employability; skills investment; careers counselling; attractive severance and retirement packages; voluntary redundancy; redeployment; enterprise start-up workshops.

Little is known about how employers understand and enact restructuring in a socially responsible way. HR often has responsibility for the implementation of restructuring but concerns HR managers might have for social and ethical obligations can be stripped away to implement corporate strategy. This research hence, identified HRM as a key actor through whose actions socially responsible restructuring could be understood.
Unions play an important role supporting those affected by restructuring. This is particularly relevant in the UK steel industry, characterised as it is by its high union density. Examination of the bargaining process during restructuring, that is typically distributive, provides important insights into how any socially responsible features are devised and implemented. Within this process, the role of unions in this process is often expropriated by management becoming hidden, or unrecognised. Bargaining over restructuring does, nevertheless, provide the potential for integrative engagement; particularly over issues reflecting socially responsible outcomes.

At SteelCo, negotiations between HR and unions were historically a feature of restructuring, in the period studied, what was new, was that management, committed to bargain over the effects of restructuring (not its logic) before the start of the minimum period legally required. This allowed management to promote the involvement of unions from the moment that restructuring was announced. This laid the ground for the development of a more integrative bargaining process. HR not only engaged the unions in formal bargaining but in order to better understand the impact of restructuring and redundancy on those affected, with union agreement, utilised the knowledge unions had of employees. Notwithstanding the commitment to joint working, HR and unions had differing agendas. HR’s concerns for cost reduction, skills retention and timeframe were countered by union insistence on voluntary redundancy and redeployment. Moreover, to convince people of the parlous state of company finances, communications from the company to employees and unions was shaped by an overt economistic message. Both HR and unions raised concerns about the negative climate this might engender. The early agreement to joint working, nevertheless, allowed ongoing dialogue that led to the development of a number of specific support measures for those affected. Included here were aspiration interviews, alternative redeployment schemes and communication (internal newspaper and joint management-union e-mails).

Although management made the strategic decision for early engagement with unions, attempted to avoid compulsory redundancies, introduced a range practical measures to help those made redundant; the claim by management that this formed part of a strategy for socially responsible restructuring, was made retrospectively. Whilst unions accepted the opportunity of early engagement, and considered the support measures positive, they were sceptical of the assessment by management that its restructuring strategy reflected social responsibility toward its employees. Early engagement did though engender a climate that moved bargaining in an integrative direction. This engagement, allowed the unions to a limited degree, to co-own the restructuring process.

The research suggests that agreement that restructuring be socially responsible, might provide unions with the opportunity to foster a popular, co-owned response to restructuring based on non-economistic reasoning that organisations might find difficult to sidestep. Furthermore, through the demand for restructuring that is socially responsible, the possibility is raised of union involvement in the rationale and need for restructuring strategy itself.
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Paying for free delivery: self-employment in parcel delivery

The championing of self-employment by the Conservative Government (Hatfield 2015) has accompanied an increase in the self-employed to 4.6m or 15 per cent of the employed workforce (ONS 2014). The TUC suggest that self-employment accounts for 44% of the net rise in employment since mid–2010, with evidence that earnings from self-employment are less than half that of employees (2014). Although the category is diverse, solo self-employment predominates; relatively few self-employed workers have employees (Hatfield 2015).

Studies of the construction sector have demonstrated the prevalence of false or bogus self-employment, which reduce employer responsibilities and removes employment rights despite sharing many of the characteristics of direct employment (Behring and Harvey, 2015). In line with this proposition the focus of this paper is how supply chain pressures in parcel delivery are reflected in the contractual status of workers. The context is the liberalisation and privatisation of postal services in the UK and expansion of the parcel delivery market in response to ‘a revolution of e-commerce’ (Ed Richards, the Chief Executive of Ofcom - Ofcom, Royal Mail Access Pricing Review, 2014), with Britain the biggest online shopping market in Europe (Financial Times 23.11.14). The growth in e-trading or on-line shopping increased by 3.7 per cent per year between 2008 and 2013 (Ofcom, 2014) and volumes were projected to increase at three per cent per annum between 2013-18 and two per cent per annum in 2018-23 (PWC, 2013).

The desire for the instant gratification of consumer demands, in particular ‘free’ or ‘same/next day’ delivery, coupled with the capacity of retailers to respond to these demands, has involved the transformation of distribution and parcel delivery. This transformation has effectively facilitated a shift in the role of large retailers from passive recipients of goods, to actively (re)shaping relations with distribution and logistics companies and creating an increasingly competitive market. As Jaffe (2010) highlights ‘goods moving’ as opposed to the production of goods per se must increasingly be regarded as an arena for securing cost savings and competitive advantage within supply chains. The restructuring of the logistic function is predicated upon pressures to secure more exacting, demanding and time critical levels of service provision and delivery. The evidence of a European study exploring employment change in the sector highlights that liberalisation and de-regulation have resulted in far-reaching deterioration in employment conditions. The study reveals that increases in atypical employment, growing precarisation and increasing numbers of self-employment paid by piece-rate are evident within the sector (Herman 2013).
The paper draws upon Behring and Harvey’s neo-Polanyian ‘instituted economic process’ approach to explain the proliferation of self-employment. They assert legal, fiscal and economic organizational processes as co-constitutive of the economic organization of the labour market within which workers or clients determine employment status (2015). Burchell et al.’s typologies of direct and self-employment in terms of control, integration, economic reality and mutuality of obligation are used to distinguish between contractual forms in parcel delivery, but crucially the dynamic between them (1999). Again, Behring and Harvey’s notion of degenerative and instituted competition between ‘different qualities and types of labor’ is resonant, although the paper focusses more upon the labour process and labour time than institutional processes.

The paper is based upon a research project supported by a British Academy/Leverhulme small grant and concerned with exploring changes in working conditions at the end of the parcel delivery supply chain - the point of delivery. It is based upon case studies of two logistics companies, one with a history of joint employment regulation and the other where terms and conditions have not historically been subject to negotiation. Methods include documentary analysis, key stakeholder interviews, a survey of direct and self-employed drivers and semi-structured interviews with both. Access to self-employed drivers is necessarily difficult because of the time critical nature of their work – to address this a number of very short (10-15 minute) interviews were undertaken with them whilst they were delivering. This captured the range of contracting and sub-contracting relationships as well as basic information on pay and working hours. Data also reflects posts from two on-line forums where there have been threads discussing self-employment at Yodel.

The findings point to the emergence of a three tier system driven by the transformation of the supply chain in logistics. The first covers the Royal Mail and Parcelforce and other large parcel delivery companies, and is framed by extant collective agreements and residual bargaining over terms and conditions. These are subject to renegotiation in the context of the pressures brought by service level agreements, but provide guarantees for a long-standing organised workforce. The second involves the introduction of a tier of technically ‘self-employed’ owner-drivers on a franchise model, paid by delivery, but not covered by collective agreements, although they have an organisational relationship and identity and a workplace in companies who have collective agreements with extant workers. A third model is of home-based couriers (so called ‘life-style couriers’), also technically self-employed, but using their own cars, who have very limited organisational ties, no fixed workplace and where the prospect of collective organisation is remote. One issue in the transition between these models is shifting divisions of labour by gender, race, ethnicity and age. Evidence suggests three corresponding typologies of parcel delivery company characterised by the balance between directly employed, owner-driver and home-based couriers. While directly employed workers predominate in Royal Mail and Parcelforce, low cost entrants to the market such as Yodel are more dependent upon neighbourhood delivery, whereas companies such as DPD focus on service delivery as competitive advantage and do not use home couriers, but utilise
owner drivers incentivised by better rates per delivery, but an intensive labour process.

Self-employment is the emergent model of work and removes employer obligation to workers and employment rights. Risk (including health and safety) is transferred to the worker; self-employed drivers are liable to provide cover if they are sick or take holiday and if they do not will be charged by employers for the cost of hiring an agency worker. There is no legal requirement to pay a National Minimum (or Living) Wage and as has been suggested for zero hours contracts, self-employment means workers may earn below NMW rates once hours are taken into account. The home courier system, in particular, is based upon episodic working with the demarcation between work and home unclear and the necessity to respond to customer telephone calls implies constant availability. For them and owner-drivers, payment by *actual* delivery, excluding any time spent organising delivery, failed deliveries or taking breaks, also blurs the boundaries between paid and unpaid labour time with ‘unproductive’ work time removed from payment. Retailers drive customer expectations for free and same/next day delivery, which are based upon the unpaid labour of workers.

At the same time, as in construction, false self-employment is marked by many of the characteristics of direct-employment in terms of continuity of engagement with a single employer, the absence of control over working time and the labour process. The notion that ‘self-employed’ workers are part of a distinct precariat is questioned by the dynamic relationship and tension between direct and owner-drivers who work from the same depots and often share managers. The intensification of delivery targets (which increase year on year) for the self-employed places pressure on direct workers, albeit they are not paid per delivery and ultimately constrains collective bargaining.

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Institutional varieties, outsourcing of public services and challenges to employment relations in comparative perspective

The article examines the change of employment relations and working conditions following outsourcing of public services across different countries. The comparative perspective between diverse institutional and legislative frameworks enables to investigate whether the implications of contracting out by public administrations display market-driven convergent trajectories across national boundaries (as according to the ‘common neoliberal trajectory’ identified by Baccaro and Howell) or, conversely, institutions- or actor-dependent divergences. England, Italy and Denmark are chosen as countries characterized by sector agreements, but within different employment relations structures and legislative systems. Conclusions drawn from a qualitative case studies analysis identifies diverging trajectories following national institutional distinctiveness despite similarities in cross-country triggers towards the marketization of public services.

The common pressure is identified in growing competition, cost containment and public sector modernization over the last three decades. The common response by public administrations has been the branching out of services through public procurement, opening up the traditional in-house production arena to market competition and private sector instruments of labour regulation.

Such process of external restructuring may lead to major changes in working conditions by triggering competition on the basis of cost and shifting work from highly unionized and better sheltered organizations to more vulnerable companies that are subject to market fluctuations, where trade union power is low or inexistent. The dependency relations between companies along the production chain can be expected to translate into increased disparities in terms of collective representation and collective bargaining.

Whether such trajectories display converging pattern, rather than divergent developments still constitutes a vividly debated issue. Baccaro and Howell identified a ‘common neoliberal trajectory’ in the transformation of employment relations institutions across advanced political economies, as opposed to the theoretical approach developed within the field of comparative political economy emphasizing the mediating role of the institutional setting, boosting path dependent patterns and within-country incrementalism.

The article is based on six in-depth case-studies of outsourcing processes in local government and healthcare sector across England, Italy and Denmark, including 75 semi-structured interviews carried out in 2013-14 with key-informants and documentary analysis of secondary sources.
The analysis, at first glance, overall reveals similar developments across the three countries. Restructuring fragmented collective bargaining, shifting the negotiation of terms and conditions of employment from an encompassing arena demarcated by public sector collective agreements - which guarantees uniform conditions at workplace level - to a multifaceted pool of public and private sector collective agreements setting differentiated wages and benefits, generally less favourable in the latter case. The role of trade unions in collectively representing workers has been undermined, while their capacity to prevent restructuring events and to buffer detrimental repercussions over personnel has been gradually marginalized. Nevertheless, despite such a common general trend along a trajectory of liberalization, the cross-national comparison pointed to remarkable differences between countries, ascribable to the specific institutional framework, the model of industrial relations to which they answer, differences in national employment legislation across public and private sector and the role played by the state.

Indeed, case-studies in England witnessed a massive transfer of public staff to private subcontractors, matched with mass redundancy procedures and a remarkable deterioration of working conditions, including a decline in wage rate and erosion of sick pay scheme, holidays and maternity leaves. The belated application of the European Directive on Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) in 1993 within a flexible and poorly protected labour market in both public and private sector boosted the expansion of employers’ discretion in the definition of employment conditions, dismantling unions’ coordinating capacity.

In Italy, public administrations have deliberately exploited private sector regulations in order to escape expensive public-sector collective agreements under the pretext of raising competition: outsourcing was to a large extent driven by the search for lower wages paid by external providers. Public personnel were redeployed within the administrations while the pressure of cost reduction was dumped on private sector employees. The result, in the absence of a coordinated union response, was the institutionalization of a multi-tier workforce divided between highly protected public jobs - where strong unions narrowly focused their strategies on members - and sharply deterioration of working conditions in the private contractors, which are often small, barely unionised cooperatives without social dialogue traditions.

Finally in Denmark, despite the transfer of whole public personnel to private companies, and consequent variation in the application of collective agreements, terms and conditions of employment remained almost unaltered and homogeneous by virtue of intertwined protections set by TUPE legislation and the longstanding tradition of collective bargaining, with high level of coverage also in the private sector. In addition, the pay adjustment scheme, linking wage developments in the public sector to those in the private sector as a means to ensure over the long term the same wage dynamics in the whole economy, guarantees broadly similar conditions in the two sectors. Such institutional infrastructure guaranteed overall stability in employment relations, backed by a sound strategy from unions jointly representing employees in both sectors.
References


Liberalisation, privatisation and the re-regulation of industrial relations: the three-decade project of marketisation in Royal Mail

Following 500 years in public ownership, and attempts at privatisation in 1994 and 2009, Royal Mail, the UK postal service, was privatised at the third attempt by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in 2013. (Parker, 2014) Royal Mail constitutes one of the largest privatisations in the UK since the 1990s, and has taken place during a period of fiscal austerity within an increasingly financialised political economy. Since the 1990s, industrial relations in Royal Mail became increasingly conflictual (Darlington, 1993; Gall, 2003); wide ranging HRM interventions were introduced (Beale, 2003; Martinez Lucio et al 1997); followed by liberalisation and active state promotion of marketization since 2005 (Beale and Mustchin, 2014; Beirne, 2013); and ultimately privatisation within a newly financialised employer regime. These new forms of ownership and regulation have impacted markedly on work and employment, but union influence, particularly at the level of the workplace, has remained strong in Royal Mail, highlighting the capacity of labour to influence how ‘external, economic imperatives for change are politically mediated and represented.’ (Martinez Lucio et al, 1997: 268) Royal Mail was privatised during a period of government austerity, with its sale framed partly as a means of reducing government debt, and involved a number of financial actors including investment banks, hedge funds and the establishment of employee-owned shares. This supports empirical analysis of the disconnected capitalism thesis (Thompson, 2013), exploring: the process of market liberalisation and privatisation within a particular regime of accumulation, the role of the state and the impact on employment relations and the labour process.

The empirical research discussed in this paper has its origins in work commenced by a colleague within a particular region of Royal Mail in 1997-99; this research is discussed elsewhere (Beale, 2003), and was followed up with twenty interviews with 23 participants from the same region in 2009-10 (Beale and Mustchin, 2014). This work largely focused on management practices and union responses, but considerable data were collected in 2009-10 related to the impact of liberalisation after 2006, the 2009 privatisation attempt, conflict in the period and the changing nature of postal work that has not been published elsewhere. The region was revisited and ten interviews were conducted in 2014-15 to explore changes over the eighteen months since privatisation. These interviews were analysed and the 2009-10 data re-analysed to address the impact of liberalisation and the threat of privatisation on the employment relationship and work. These qualitative data are supported by secondary sources collected over an eighteen-year period.

Union organisation was significant in mediating the impact of privatisation and liberalisation on work and employment. Union strength derived in part from the organisation’s public sector monopoly status, but was also derived from mobilisation
over previous privatisation threats, managerial interventions and widespread workplace bullying. These resources allowed the union to negotiate an unusually strong collective agreement with a contractual legal underpinning, including significant pay increases in the first few years after privatisation. Government and employers in the UK have generally been opposed to the introduction of such regulated forms of collective bargaining, favouring more voluntaristic agreements. The preparedness of Royal Mail, under the influence of government, to support such an agreement demonstrates the high priority given to the privatisation project and the lengths gone to in ensuring that industrial conflict did not damage the political project of privatisation while protecting the interests of shareholders and financial institutions. The mediation processes introduced go beyond what typically exists in terms of conflict resolution in UK employers, highlighting the determination of the government to ensure the project ‘succeeded’. Management initiatives that constituted forms of employee involvement (Beale, 2003: Beale and Mustchin, 2014) and were opposed in some earlier cases (Darlington, 1993; Gall, 2003; Martinez Lucio et al, 1997) had developed a harder emphasis on efficiency and competition, resonating with analyses of financialised organisations and the pressures that mitigate against ostensibly more ‘progressive’ HR strategies such as resource-based approaches or high performance work systems. (Clark, 2009; Thompson, 2013).

The increasing emphasis on efficiency and performance had a direct effect on the labour process and the nature of work. The management culture historically described as ‘institutionalised authoritarianism’ (Gall, 2003:28) was exacerbated by liberalisation and privatisation, as managers strove to create the kind of lean organisation presumed desirable to a majority shareholder. The multiple sources of pressure driving authoritarian managerial relations and work intensification led to further weakening of (already low) trust relations between workforce and management. However, the union could not be marginalised to the extent that labour often is within such financialised takeovers due to the CWU’s capacity to disrupt the politically sensitive project of privatisation. The divestiture of Royal Mail did not weaken the union as hoped for by some managers; the union constructively engaged with Royal Mail over efficiency, restructuring and new products but retained the capacity to resist some aspects of work reorganisation and managerial authoritarianism. Major challenges were expected in the coming years when the 2014 agreement comes up for renegotiation; if disputes, driven by the employer at local or national level, the increasingly powerful regulator Ofcom, competitors agitating for a takeover or shareholders were to arise then the agreement would be at risk, and attempts may follow to undermine employment conditions including pay, hours, job security, pensions and representation.

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Zero Hours Work in Ireland: Prevalence, Outcomes and Possible Public Policy Responses

Summary
The paper presents findings from the first study on zero hours work in Ireland. The paper aims to assess the prevalence of zero hours work in Ireland, examine the outcomes of such work on employers and workers and assess possible public responses to such work with a view to protecting workers. Particular attention is paid to developments in four sectors – retail, hospitality, health and education.

Literature
The paper draws from two literatures. The first is the precarious work literature which highlights the characteristics of precarious jobs and the impact of such jobs on workers and the State (Acemoglu, 2001; Cranford et al., 2003; Kalleberg, 2012; McKay et al., 2011). This paper contributes to this literature by examining zero hours work, a form of precarious work for which there is a limited but growing research body. In examining potential public policy responses to zero hours work, we also draw from legal regulation literature on how legal systems can reflect the reality of modern labour markets and protect workers. The European Commission has noted that the tests to distinguish an employee in many legal systems are no longer an adequate depiction of the economic and social reality of work. This comment is particularly relevant for people on zero hours work, who occupy a grey area in law (Adams et al., 2015; Barnard, 2014; Deakin, 2014).

Methodology
The paper uses a mixed methods design with quantitative and qualitative data. The primary method used was qualitative interviews with 36 interviews with informed stakeholders (13 employer/business representative organisations, 8 trade unions, 5 government departments/agencies, 4 NGOs and 4 legal experts). The qualitative data was supplemented by an analysis of two surveys. The first is the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) from the Central Statistics Office. The total quarterly sample is designed to be 26,000 households. Overall the QNHS provides a comprehensive and detailed view of the structure of working hours and working patterns by gender, age, occupation and industrial sector in the labour market. We report the number and characteristics of employees who regularly work constantly variable hours. The second survey used is the 2010 European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), a European-wide survey undertaken by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The sample size for Ireland was 1,003 respondents of whom 815 were employees. We examine data in the EWCS on employees’ control of their working hours.
Conclusion

We find that policy discourse on zero hours work in Ireland has been hampered by legislative definitions. Irish employment law recognises a zero hours contract as one in which the employee is not guaranteed hours of work but is required to make themselves available for work with an employer. Under this contract, there is a legislative entitlement to some guaranteed pay. We find that zero hours contracts are not prevalent. However, there is evidence of zero hours work through so-called ‘If and When’ contracts which involve no guaranteed hours of work but also no contractual requirement for an individual to be available for work. These contracts are not recognised in legislation and individuals with such contracts have no entitlement to any compensation for hours not worked. Zero hours work through ‘If and When contracts’ is prevalent across hospitality, in certain occupations in education (primary and second level teaching, third level lecturing and further education, school support staff), and in health (homecare workers). A number of factors contribute to zero hours work including the presence of demand-led services, the lack of legal regulation of ‘If and When’ contracts, state funding models in education and health and poor childcare services for employees.

In terms of the impact on employees, employer bodies argue that zero hours work provides flexibility for employees particularly mothers and students, enhances skills and is an alternative to unemployment. Trade unions and NGOs are highly critical of such work, referring to a number of negative consequences for workers including unpredictable hours and income, difficulties with family life, difficulties accessing social welfare entitlements and the scheduling of work hours as a method of controlling employees. In addition, a pressing legal issue is that individuals on ‘If and When’ contracts are unlikely to satisfy the tests for being ‘an employee’ and therefore are not protected by most employment legislation. We note the options for regulating zero hours work include limiting contractual freedoms legislatively, collective bargaining and a reorientation of state funding models for public services.

References


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Caring about women’s careers.

Summary

Almost half of the UK’s workforce is female; including women who hold multiple areas of responsibility with one in five women being a carer and 38 per cent of employed women having dependent children (Business in the Community, 2012). Yet, invariably literature utilises outdated models of work and careers to evaluate women’s working lives and career development and success. This conceptual paper builds on existing literature to demonstrate that theories of career development need to adapt to take account of both women’s formal and informal work.

Sociological research has previously divided work into paid employment within a public domain and unpaid domestic work in the private sphere. Such a dualistic approach to the world of work has led to areas of the work of some individuals becoming invisible from study, severely limiting our understanding of what constitutes work (Glucksmann, 1995; Taylor, 2004). By redefining work as that which “involves the provision of a service to others or the production of goods for the consumption of others”, other elements of individuals’ lives are open to examination (Taylor, 2004: 38). Thus, work can be both paid and unpaid, formal and informal, both of which lead to different understandings and social evaluations (Parry et al, 2005).

Traditionally, careers have been seen to progress vertically, but this has allowed little room for development for those whose careers do not follow such patterns or provide them with as many opportunities for development (Richardson, 2012). As an individual’s life is multidimensional the different components of a woman’s life and work areas can be considered to be career making and need to be understood within context. It is this alternative social constructionist approach which identifies the need to understand the whole life career and challenges the notion that paid work is the only source of identity and career development (Cohen et al, 2004; Kirton, 2006). Resultingly, alternative concepts of protean (Hall, 2004), boundaryless (Arthur, 1994) and portfolio (Platman, 2004) careers have been developed. Furthermore, concepts of careers specifically relating to women have also emerged, including the life-career model (Pringle and Dixon, 2003), phases of a woman’s career (O’Neil and Bilimoria, 2005) and kaleidoscope careers (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005, 2006).

Taking this into account, this paper presents a case for forthcoming doctoral research which seeks to study the careers of mid-life women (aged 45-65) who provide informal care to family members or friends. This is important as it has been identified that when examining women’s careers, attention must be paid to their personal care work. An individual’s care work becomes part of their identity and revaluing personal care work as work, helps to strengthen its position in career making (Richardson, 2012). While there is a body of work that has looked at women as carers and the effect of caring on their careers, this has tended to focus heavily on
the impact of childcare and neglected those women in their mid-late careers who undertake adult responsibilities. In this way the research is able to tap into effects of caring on women’s careers at a later life stage.

Methods

A methodology is proposed for doctoral research. Calendar interviews within the realm of the life-course method are proposed. This will allow rapport to be developed between the researcher and participants and give them space to have their voice heard alongside, recognition of their career experiences and any key events (Smith et al, 2009). In comparison to standard interviewing, calendar interviewing has produced interviews of a better quality, and a reflective and retrospective nature, providing valuable insight into life events as a whole because they explore the events when they occurred but also the behaviours and states (Martyn and Bell, 2002). Prior to commencing interviewing, focus groups will be held with women who are currently both caring and working in order to develop the interview framework and appropriate timeline.

Conclusion

Extending the conceptual boundaries of work means that the ways in which individuals construct their working lives can be examined. The reality is that work is best understood as a fluid concept incorporating many parts and factors of an individual’s working life, not just that which comprised of formal market work but also personal care work. For each area of work helps to comprise a woman’s career and thus must be taken into consideration when examining her career development. This paper illustrates the importance of recognising women’s informal care responsibilities when examining their career development.

References


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A new political economy of insecurity? AKP and socio-economic actors in re-institutionalisation of Turkish industrial relations

Summary
This paper aims to provide insight into the role of the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi -The Justice and Development Party) government and that of the capital and labour in (re)construction of Turkey’s contemporary industrial relations. Underlying this argument is the AKP government’s re-institutionalisation of Turkey’s three-decade old collective labour legislation in the year 2012 on the justification of country’s need for a change in the rules regulating the industrial relations. Indeed, Turkey’s collective labour law which was put into practice by the military government in the year 1983, placed heavy restrictions on workers right to strike, right to collective bargaining and right to establish and join trade unions. AKP government’s decision to abolish these laws, therefore presented Turkey with an opportunity to meet the international and European labour standards and improve the state of institutional security for labour. Nevertheless, according to the proponents of labour rights operating at national and international levels, provisions of the new bill that is slotted to replace the old law; neither improves Turkish Laws’ compliance with international labour standards nor does it meet the security demands of Turkish labour (DISK, 2012, EC, 2012, ITUC, 2012).

Against this background, this study scrutinises the re-institutionalisation of political economy of insecurity in industrial relations under the decade long rule of the AKP and its neoliberal authoritarian policies. It places capital, labour and state in a wider politico-economic and social context and analyses their circumstances, interests and interactions in the process of most recent re-structuring of industrial relations system in Turkey. It also critically investigates the provisions of Turkey’s new collective labour legislation with regards to institutionalisation of what I call political economy of security/insecurity in industrial relations. In doing so, the study while on the one hand draws a clear picture regarding how AKP policy and practices represent historical continuity in domain of Turkish industrial relations on the other, provides a convincing argument as to how neoliberal globalisation and Turkey’s changing politico-economic landscape affected this transformation.

Literature
The paper mainly engages with two different types of literature. Its theoretical-conceptual framework is informed by historical institutionalism and in lines with the main themes of this literature, it attempts to shed light on the ways historically constructed institutions constrain and shape political behaviours and strategies of actors during the policy making process (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992, Beland, 2005, Hall, 2010). In this regard, the paper conceptually and theoretically analyses and explains state’s superior position vis-à-vis the labour and capital in an historical
context in the domain of industrial relations in Turkey. Drawing on this body of literature, the study also aims at explaining how the institutional structures of industrial relations historically constrain and shape political behaviours and strategies of the Turkish state, capital and labour during the (re)institutionalisation of industrial relations.

The empirical analysis of the study on the other hand builds on and contributes to the body of literature to which one may call critical labour studies of Turkish employment relations. This literature was initially spearheaded by journalist and labour activist Kemal Sülker (2004a, 2004b) and developed further by Aziz Çelik (2010) and Ahmet Makal (1999, 2002). Having been deviated significantly from many other scholarly studies in the area, this collection of research places labour, capital and the state in wider historical, socioeconomic and political environment and provides critical accounts of (1) provisions of collective labour law and/or (2) the interests and interactions established between these actors during and after (re)institutionalisation of industrial relations. This critical exploration of Turkish industrial relations which provides new understandings and insights of the world of work has been adopted by a number of prominent scholars in the area (Dinler, 2012, Uckan, 2013, Yorgun, 2013). This paper contribute to this body of literature with its power-sensitive approach to industrial relations as well as its historical institutionalist methodology informed by critically re-conceptualised security.

Methods

This paper uses qualitative methods and utilises both secondary and primary data sources in order to embrace the most recent developments, changes and continuities in Turkey’s political economy of security in industrial relations. Its main secondary data sources are academic studies media sources and parliamentary proceedings. This study also utilises semi-structured in-depth interviews with the experts of industrial relations in academia, trade union activists, representatives of employees and high-level public sector officials in order to gather primary data.

Conclusion

Turkey’s new collective labour law which was prepared and promulgated under the AKP rule represents not a critical juncture, as the proponents of the AKP policies would like to put it, but a path dependency in making of Turkish industrial relations in historical-institutionalist context. This law maintains the continuity in so-called national interests that have historically driven the (re)structuring process of Turkish industrial relations and follows a historical path which finds its roots in the 1980 coup d’état as well as in the Kemalist state tradition.

References


Parker, Jane: Massey University

Arrowsmith, J., Eastgate, L., Yao, C., Carr, S. and Jones, H.

Exploring corporate and employee rationales for ‘going Living Wage’

A Living Wage narrative has gained traction in a range of countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand. Most of the orthodox economic and popular literature concerned emphasises the potential economic costs of increasing rates of pay (e.g. Maloney, 2013; Bourne, 2013; The New Zealand Treasury, 2013). By contrast, analysis of the Living Wage in other domains has widened to emphasise social and justice/ethical considerations. For example, the Living Wage movement has also advanced not only the aim of addressing poverty but also providing employees and their family with dignity and social justice (Fairris and Reich, 2005). One of its goals is the definition of a remuneration level for those in full-time employment to adequately support themselves and their family’s basic needs and modest aspirations - a ‘decent’ standard of living - in accordance with the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) commitment to ‘Decent Work’ which is central to sustainable poverty reduction and achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development (ILO, 2012; 2014). An established sociological and human relations literature also stresses the offsetting benefits of labour retention, motivation and productivity due to above-clearing ‘efficiency wages’ (e.g. Pfeifer, 2010; Wolfers and Zilinsky, 2015). Most recently, academics have accented and combined the harder-to-quantify aspects of the Living Wage (e.g. employee dignity, empowerment and (familial) well-being) (Carr, Parker, Arrowsmith and Watters, 2016).

Whilst there is relatively little national empirical research, particularly on employer and employee perspectives on the Living Wage, there are circa 45 formally-accredited Living Wage employers in New Zealand5 according to the Living Wage Movement of Aotearoa New Zealand (LWMANZ) (2015), a faith-based religious, union, employer and community/secular coalition and the country’s main advocate of the Living Wage. Moreover, their accreditation has occurred in a broad context of increasing income inequality and the emergence of working poor (Tomei, in Anker, 2011); relatively muted local dialogue on the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda (ILO, 2007) to which New Zealand is formally committed; the lowest recorded level of collective bargaining coverage and significant amendments to cornerstone employment law (Blumenfeld, 2015); steady growth in the numbers seeking food parcels and clothing; rising unemployment (to 5.6 per cent in 2014); and an ‘explosion in the rich-poor divide’ over the last 30 years (Rashbrooke, 2013).

Drawing on organisational case evidence and employee survey responses collected in 2014, we examine the organisational and individual logics of ‘going living wage’,

5 New Zealand’s Living Wage hourly rate has been NZ$19.25 since July 2015 (Waldegrave, 2015). A rate of NZ$19.80 will kick in on 1 July 2016.
and how these rationales inform the decision to implement a workplace LW initiative. Organisational-level factors encouraging a Living Wage initiative were interrogated via semi-structured interviews with senior management of three New Zealand companies from the food manufacturing, retail and contract security industries. Individual narratives were acquired from the personal comments of 606 employees who responded to an online, nation-wide survey. The interview material and survey comments were subject to thematic analysis via manual and computer (NVivo)-assisted techniques respectively, and subsequently manually triangulated. Our findings suggest, in a wider context of building LW campaigning, that firm-level rationales include employer agency linked to varying economic, operational, HRD and ethical considerations, and that these are especially relevant in small firms. For individual employees, unsurprisingly, it emerges that ‘survival’ wages are demotivating and constrain employee development, with implications for engagement and performance levels. Notwithstanding this, their job satisfaction relates to a ‘package’ of factors, including pay but also workload and the nature of one’s work, with a significant proportion experiencing a disjuncture between their current job and long-term expectations around pay and career development. Integrating the findings from both sources, we develop a model of context-sensitive employer rationales for implementing a Living Wage programme.

References


Worker of the world, connect? The case of the connective ‘Fight for 15’ campaign

The Arab spring. Los indignados. Occupy Wall Street. The shock. Within only a few months, some major social movements of a new kind spread out and amazed the world because of their strength and their original nature. In the wake of these events, the labor movement started investigating the success factors of these new and connected movements. Indeed, they appeared to “miraculously” overcome to the main weaknesses of contemporary unionism: low capacity to mobilize, growing gap between the unions and the youth, representativeness crisis, hostile public opinion, poor communication strategies, etc. (Goldfield, 1989).

This new wave of social movements clearly rejuvenated debates around the potential of information and communication technologies (ICT from now) to enhance union activism. But so far, positions within the industrial relations field remained crystalized around two radically opposed views. On the one hand highly enthusiastic - and most of the time speculative - contributions underline the great potential of ICT-based activism to foster union collective actions (Shostack, 1999; Lee, 1996; Diamond and Freeman, 2002; Bryson, 2010; Wood, 2015). For these techno-enthusiasts, there exists no ontological incompatibility between the traditional union logic of action and the use of ICT. The massive adoption of new technologies is on the contrary expected to offer extended possibilities to update unions’ practices and to enhance their efficiency (Fiorito & Royle, 2002). On the other hand, disillusioned – and somewhat despaired – authors conclude to an irreconcilable mismatch between unions and new technologies (Lucio et al., 2005; Saunders et al, 2007; Kerr and Waddington, 2013). For these techno-skeptics, the transplant cannot take between the strong and often bureaucratic organizational structure of unions and the flexible spirit of the new online-based social movements. In between these two fundamentally opposed visions, there has been very little space to investigate more in-depth the interplay between online activism and the more traditional union logic. The work of Muir (2010) and Tapia (2011) constitute a few notable exceptions. Nonetheless, they do not offer a comprehensive framework to evaluate the implications of digitalized contention on union activism.

In order to go beyond this prominent divide between techno-enthusiast and techno-pessimistic and to contribute to the very nascent “third way” of research, I propose in this paper to build upon recent theoretical developments in the social movement field. More precisely, I introduce Bennet and Segerberg (2012) categorization of social movements in the Internet Age. Derived from their long run observations, they distinguish two ideal typical logics of contemporary social movements, namely the classical “union-like” logic of collective action and the new “Occupy-like” logic of connective action. The first “union-like” ideal type of social movement relies on the
classical logic of collective action (Olson, 1965). While also using ICT, this ideal typical form of contention is largely structured and bounded by the logic of pre-existing organizations in order to minimize the free-rider dilemma. To that end, this type of “traditional” collective movement remains relatively hierarchical. The second ideal type is said to follow a connective logic of action and is best associated with movements such as Occupy, the Arab Spring or Los indignados. The first striking characteristics of these “Twitter” or “Facebook” connective movements (Lotan, 2011) is the massive use of ICT and new social media (NSM from now). Primarily structured online, these flat and flexible networks of contention are not bounded by pre-existing organizational patterns and are expected to expend virally through inter-individual social networks. In these connective movements, the distinction between communicative leaders and highly participatory followers become increasingly blurred (Gerbaudo, 2012).

While Bennet and Segerberg (2012) provide a clear frame to contrast two social movement logics, they also acknowledge that contemporary social movements’ reality is much more complex. As a consequence, the organizational logic of social movements in the Internet age is expected to follow a hybridized model that would fall somewhere in between the “union-like” collective and “Occupy-like” connective ideal-types. In order to go beyond the prominent divide between techno-enthusiast and techno-pessimistic, I propose to study in the hybridization process between the new connective logic and the existing union’s collective logic of action.

To do so, I investigate the ‘Fight for 15’ campaign which is taking place in the American fast-food industry since November 2012. This movement piloted by unions indeed features characteristics of both the collective and connective logics. First, this campaign shows a strong online presence, as illustrates the size of its Twitter and Facebook networks - which respectively federate about 39 000 and 150 000 accounts. Next, the organization of the campaign appears to have a strongly networked nature but remain piloted by unions. In order to capture both the collective and connective logic of action at play, our empirical investigation combines interviews of a dozen of organizers with a content and network analysis of the campaign Twitter accounts.

Our study evidences four processes of hybridization between the connective and the collective logics. First, I suggest that the collective logic of action takes over the connective one regarding the organizational structure. Indeed, despite an intensive use of ICT, existing top-down organizational routines are not disrupted. Next, the collective logic merges with the connective logic regarding the campaign framing process. As an illustration, the ‘Fight for 15’ communication heavily borrows from existing “occupy-like” connective frames such as those developed by the “Black lives matter” movement. Thirdly, I evidence the co-existence of the two the logics regarding the campaign expansion strategy. While a traditional coalition-building strategy is led to aggregate partners’ members, the campaign also expends virally online through connective networks such as the Occupy one. Finally, I argue that regarding the division of labor between leaders and participants, the logic transplant does not take and leads to decoupling. This decoupling is best evidenced by the
clearly hierarchical nature of the campaign organization while the online communication largely tries to make up a “leaderlessness” façade.

References


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Migrant workers' responses to the reconfiguration of work. Grassroots organising among low-paid Latin American in London.

The paper sets out to examine through an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach the innovative practices that labour and community organisations have jointly started to deploy in promoting the rights and conditions of low-paid precarious workers in the UK service economy as well as in society more generally. In particular, this paper focuses on issues of representation and self-representation of low-paid new migrant workers at the grassroots and examines innovative organizing practices that a range of civil society organisations have recently articulated across the workplace/community divide to promote their interests and combat their exclusion and exploitation. The paper will address the following questions. What do the organising practices led by new migrant workers look like? What do they provide that traditional trade unions approaches do not? What is the effectiveness of organizing across the community and the workplace for advancing migrant workers’ interest? What is the role of identity, emotions and non-material rewards (alongside material ones) in such practices?

At a time of profound economic, socio-demographic and cultural transformations (e.g. the raise of subcontracting, work degradation, ‘super-diversification’ of the workforce with growing numbers of low-paid migrant workers; the demise of multiculturalism and the increasing stigmatization of migrants in public discourse; see Grimshaw et al 2014; Standing 2011; Anderson and Ruhs 2010; Però 2013) it is crucial to examine what goes on in terms of representation and self-representation of migrant workers’ interests in the workplace and in the community. This paper will help shed light on important aspects of this emerging socio-political phenomenon that so far has failed to receive adequate scholarly attention due to disciplinary fragmentation and rigid division of roles. For example, Industrial Relations has been slow in recognizing the ‘super-diversification’ (Vertovec 2007) of the workforce featuring growing numbers of low-paid and precarious migrant workers whose perspectives and practices have been obscured by an institutionalist focus centred on unions and by a reductionist class analysis that conceptualizes migrants as merely economic subjects (Tapia and Turner 2014; Martinez Lucio and Connolly 2010; Alberti et al. 2013). Conversely, Migration Studies has been characterized by the tendency to reductively conceive migrants as merely ethnic subject (Glick-Schiller 2008; Van Hear 2014). On their part, Social Movement Studies, while analytically sophisticated in terms of their attention to agency, identity and culture, have been overlooking mobilizations around the workplace as part and parcel of their wider historical dismissal of labour mobilizations as a thing of the past (Però 2014).
The paper will present accounts of migrants’ own initiatives and interactions with other labour and community organisations (ranging from mainstream trade unions to new broad-base community organisations) in the promotion of better working conditions and wider social inclusion. It will offer insights into the perspectives of low-paid migrant workers and their allies with regard to their working and social conditions and role that their organizing practices and organizations play in improving such conditions. Foregrounding migrant workers’ perspectives is particularly important at a time when this sector of the population is strongly stigmatised in public discourse and systematically excluded from the current public debate (Blinder and Allen 2015; Però 2013), while on the academic front they tend to be considered as civic and politically quiescent if not dysfunctional to the political process (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad 2008; Però and Solomos 2010).

The paper draws on semi-structured interviews supplemented by informal conversations, participant observation and virtual ethnography conducted in 2015-16 with organisers from Latin American migrant workers and community organisations (e.g. UVW, CLAUK) as well as from British civic and labour organizations in London (e.g. Migrants Rights Network, Unite, Citizens UK). This work builds on previous research with Latin American migrant workers in London conducted by the author.

The paper will contribute original insights into contemporary industrial struggles in the service sector that feature centrally new migrant workers. It will reveal how existing ‘opportunity structures’ of representation can be inadequate in the eyes of these workers who then often have to develop bottom-up alternatives to be better represented. Indeed the paper will outline how migrants’ labour initiatives can have crucial representational functions that mainstream British unions are not always able or willing to provide. The paper will also illustrates how migrant workers’ industrial agency and organizing practices can be rewarding both in material and non-material terms, showing how the (class) practices described are never just an issue of pay and conditions (as new social movements theory has contended). In addition, the paper will provide a sense of how issues of identity, subjectivity, culture (conceived not just in terms of ethnicity but of political vision) and emotions all play a key role in labour organizing practices. At a more general level, the paper will also illustrate some of the benefits of using an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach (McBride et al 2015) in studying (migrant) workers’ organizing practices.

References


Prowse, Peter: Sheffield Hallam University

Prowse, J. and Snook, J.

Austerity and the Living Wage: the Case of Care Homes in Britain

Between 2015 and 2020, over a period when the general population is expected to grow by 3%, the number of people aged over 65 will increase by 12% (1.1 million) those aged over 85 by 18% (300,000) and centenarians by 40% (7,000) (House of Commons Library, 2015). Consequently the growth in care homes has been due to this rising elderly population (ONS, 2015). At the same time, the Care Act (2014) changed the delivery of social care and local government now commission rather than provide care, the bulk of which is delivered by a range of private companies (Grant Thornton, 2014). The workforce that delivers the care are mainly support/care workers paid on the national minimum wage and their numbers are set to increase in this sector (Resolution Foundation, 2015).

Grant Thornton (2014: 12) highlight that ‘wages are the major cost for care homes, accounting for typically around 57% of revenue in nursing homes and 49% in residential homes. Non-staff costs including food costs run at an average of 18%-23% of fee income’. A key trend in elderly care has been the development of care homes funded by hedge funds with larger corporations investing in large purpose built homes compared to the smaller companies that have converted residential properties (Grant Thornton, 2014: 14). Evidence in social care found that company size does not have a significant effect on the share of minimum wage jobs and found that micro and small firms were 26.8 per cent of minimum wage payers, compared to 27.8 per cent of medium sized companies. However, the large care corporations’ wages (45.3 per cent) were the dominant payers of the national minimum wage (Low Pay Commission, 2015: 40).

Although pay bargaining strategies of trade unions and employers shape pay, equity affects the minimum wage policy there are still clear policies that also influence the setting of where pay rates levels (Grimshaw et al, 2014). The Low Pay Commission (LPC) recommended pay increases for the national minimum wage, however care home employers paid just above the minima rates set by the LPC (Low Pay Commission, 2015; Resolution Foundation, 2014). Analysis of national rates found the majority of private sector domiciliary care workers were more likely to be paid at or below the national minimum wage with an increasing trend towards zero-hours contracts (Bessa et al, 2013). A campaign by Unison for 60 care workers who were transferred from National Health Service employment into private contractors highlighted the reduction in their wages (Guardian, 2014). This highlights the challenges for low paid workers in the rapidly expanding sub contracted care sector. Unionisation density rates in care homes is low with an estimate that only one in four workers are in unions and yet they still remain one the lowest paid occupations in the UK (Resolution Foundation, 2014). Unions continue to press for increased pay
for care workers through the LPC and the LPC expressed concern on the reduction in local government funding to pay the national minimum wage rates (Low Pay Commission, 2015: 216; Pennycook, 2013; Unison, 2015). Union recruitment in private sector homes is still low despite the lower rates of pay. It is estimated the increases in the national minimum wage would affect 275,000 workers in care homes increasing pay to the national minimum wage estimates of £7-65 (Resolution Foundation, 2013).

The concern on the funding of social care will focus on the joint perspective of employer and employee experience of the consequences of low pay. The United Kingdom Health Care Association (UKHCA) estimate the rise in the national minimum wage will require an increase in £753 million to £1 billion from councils to fund the increases and have requested increases in state funding for 2,200 private providers of homecare. Estimates for paying the Living wage are calculated at a cost of £2 billion and publicly-funded services procured by local authorities would have increased by £1.4 billion (UKHCA, 2015). The estimates however have benefits as just under half (47 per cent) of public costs would be returned to the Exchequer through higher personal tax receipts and lower benefit payments. Therefore the estimate a net public cost of £726 million in 2013-14 after recovery of taxes (Gardiner and Hussein, 2015).

This paper will consider the three research objectives. First, it will explore employer, union and local government officials’ perspectives of the challenges faced under austerity to fund the national minimum wage and the longer-term living wage calculated by the Living Wage Foundation. Secondly, the research will examine small, regional and national/global social care providers’ perspectives and their concerns for funding both the increases in the national minimum wage set by the LPC for 2015-2020. Thirdly, it will investigate whether there is collaborative working between unions and employers to deliver increased pay. The methods include in-depth interviews with respective employers and unions.

To date what researchers have not explored is a joint perspective of employers, trade unions and local government campaigning collaboratively for an increase in public funding to fund the national minimum wage and Living Wage set by the Living wage Foundation and the implications for care workers.

References


United Kingdom Health Care Association (UKHCA) National living wage in the Homecare sector Open letter to Rt Hon. George Osborne MP available on http://www.ukhca.co.uk/mediastatement_information.aspx?releaseID=232675
Community and Union led Living Wage Campaigns - A Comparative Analysis

The announcement of the Government in July 2015 to increase the national minimum wage presents a contrast to the development of community and collective bargaining campaigns to increase pay and introduce a living wage in the UK (HM Treasury, 2015; Prowse and Fells, forthcoming). In the US, living wage campaigns are state based and community led (Luce, 2004). In the UK, the living wage campaign was initiated by Citizens UK and its East London branch (the East London Communities Organisation, TELCO). These groups have developed new campaigners for higher pay outside of the trade union movement (Wills and Lineker, 2014). The effectiveness and legacy of TELCO based living wage campaigns is evaluated in Lopes and Hall (2015a and 2015b). However, living wage campaigns throughout the UK have been led not only by community organisations, but also by trade unions, student unions and political parties.

There is a growing body of literature exploring campaigning based upon community and faith groups and the emergence of community unionism led campaigning to achieve wage increases (Herod et al., 2003). Holgate’s (2015) international study compares trade union engagement in coalition-building activity with community groups in London, Sydney and Seattle. The literature has also explored the emergence of new actors in industrial relations such as the Living Wage Foundation (LWF), the Resolution Foundation and John Rowntree Foundation that provide a forum outside the Low Pay Commission (Hirsch, 2013). Furthermore, wider evidence on low pay to justify increases in lower pay to a living wage calculation has emerged through the Resolution Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

This paper intends to contribute to the discussion and comparison of community led and union led living wage campaigns. It is based on eleven union and community based campaign cases in England and Wales. The campaign cases comprise individual union and joint union campaigning both in and outside London.

The paper has two primary aims. Firstly it aims to compare the development of the community based campaigns and trade union based campaigns for the living wage, evaluating their impact and effectiveness in raising pay and reducing poverty. Secondly, it aims to evaluate the potential of both campaign models to develop coalition building in a sustainable manner.

The findings outline tangible achievements of community based campaigns, as well as the use of lobbying and methods that extend to the use performance, the media, faith groups and trade unions. This is compared to regional based development of the community and living wage campaigning outside London. The union/community based campaigns outside London also develop a wider extension of new actors in
industrial relations beyond political groups and include the range of local workplace negotiators from unions and the TUC. The findings do however identify a tension between coalitions in building campaigns and the support in some cases of HR Managers in local Government across all political divisions.

Abstract References
Royle, Tony: University of York

The Unequal Struggle 20 Years On: International Union Organizing, McDonald’s and the ‘Fight for 15’

The paper examines the international union organising campaign that has developed out of the US ‘Fight for 15’ campaign which began in 2012. The paper explores the context for the campaign by examining the variations in union representation and the changes or lack of change in pay and conditions of work in McDonald’s stores over the last 20 years in the USA and a number of European countries. Finally, the paper examines the strategies and alliances that have emerged and the varying approaches of national unions supporting the campaign in the broader context of international union organizing (Munck, 2002; Burgoon and Jacoby, 2004; McCallum, 2014).

Since the 2008 economic and financial crisis the previous trends towards greater income inequality within many industrialised nations has not slowed but actually accelerated (OECD, 2015a) this is also very evident in that fact that globally wages as a share of GDP have been falling since the 1990s (ILO, 2013). Although the IMF said it was worried about this increasing income inequality (IMF, 2014), it never mentioned the decline in trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, which is arguably one of the main reasons for this trend (Lawrence et al., 2012). In the USA, the UK and Germany for example union membership has declined considerably since the 1980s and in the USA for example union density is worse than it was in the 1930s, with just six per cent in the private sector (Milkman, 2013; OECD, 2015b). Although UK union density decline has stabilised somewhat since the end of the 1990s, UK unions are once more under attack from the current Conservative administration with its proposed trade union bill (O’Hagan, 2015). Although the German unions have also experienced membership decline (density is now lower than in the UK) in comparison they appear to be in a stronger position due to their system of sector-level collective bargaining and a stronger legal basis for union and employee representation (Behrens, 2013). However, the introduction of a minimum wage in Germany has also raised concerns that this could become a potential threat to the German collective bargaining system (Ochel, 2008).

Nevertheless, in view of the weaker institutional context in the USA and the UK most unions see no realistic alternative other than to improve the minimum wage and demand union recognition as a means to reduce income inequality. The ‘fight for $15’ campaign or ‘fast-food forward’ campaign which began in 2012 in the USA and which is said to have gone ‘global’ (Chen, 2014) is central to these trends. This campaign has been galvanised by fast-food workers who have seen their wages fall even further in real terms since the economic crisis and who are struggling to survive on such low wages (Shierholz, 2014; NELP, 2015). As the market leader in most countries in which it operates and a long history of union avoidance (Royle, 2010),
the McDonald’s Corporation has been one of the key targets of the campaign and despite having difficulties in the US market in recent years, it still has excellent cash flows and has done fairly well since the crisis despite increasing competition and slower global growth, in 2013 for example it made $5.5bn in profits and gave $4.9bn to its shareholders (Brandau, 2014). Indeed in 2014 McDonald’s announced that it was going to give away $20bn to its shareholders between 2014 and 2016, largely in order to prop up its share price (Jargon, 2014). In response fast-food workers have organised strikes and demonstrations on a regular basis since 2012 and have since been joined by other low paid workers. Their main demands are a minimum $15 per hour minimum wage and the right to trade union representation.

This paper provides the preliminary findings of an ongoing comparative qualitative study of the international fast-food industry and the ‘Fight for 15’ campaign. It also builds on several years of previous qualitative research on employment relations in that industry. The paper compares and contrasts the current situation with regard to pay, conditions and union representation at McDonald’s in the USA and a number of European countries. We examine the significance of the international union organising campaign which has been led by the SEIU; the way in which different national institutional settings help provide different outcomes in terms of pay and conditions; and how the ‘Fight for 15’ is perceived in different countries. The current project is based so far on almost 40 interviews with workers and union officials conducted in 2015 and 2016. For example this includes McDonald’s store-level employees from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, the USA, the UK and Germany and union officials from the NGG (Germany); the SEIU (USA), the BFAWU (UK); 3F (Denmark); PAM (Finland); HRF (Sweden) and officials from the IUF and EFFAT. A small number of some respondents were interviewed more than once. The interviews were also supplemented by note taking and observation at a number of meetings involving workers and union officials from these and other countries in Copenhagen, Brussels and London in connection with the ‘Fight for 15’ campaign in 2015 and 2016. The data is also supplemented by an analysis of documentary materials. Further interviews with workers, union officials and union representatives will be undertaken in the USA and Europe next few months.

The preliminary findings suggest that over the last 20 years little has changed in terms of the conditions of work or relative value of wages for the majority of McDonald’s employees and many of the same problems of off the clock work, wage theft, health and safety violations and a sometimes abusive work climate are, according McDonald’s workers, still evident in many of its stores around the world. McDonald’s and other US-owned fast-food chains largely pioneered the use of zero-hour contracts in the 1970s in Europe and has arguably made a substantial contribution to the growth of the ‘working poor’ that is a large number of employees who work, but don’t earn enough to live on. Atypical work of this kind is now a common feature across many service sector jobs and the wage bill of many firms in the service sector (particularly in retail and large fast-food firms) are increasingly being subsidized by government spending on in work benefits. ‘Turbo-capitalism’ and the banking crisis have only served to accelerate the process. If anything wage differentials in the liberal market economies between those at the top and those at
the bottom have increased even further. In the 1990s top McDonald’s executives in the US for example earned around 300 times that of the ordinary fast-food worker, by 2013 this ratio had doubled for American workers (Royle, 2000; Lewis, 2013; Davis et al., 2014). In Northern Europe (Scandinavia in particular) wages differentials remain lower and many workers in these countries have better conditions of work, better wages and genuine benefits such as payments for unsociable hours, paid holiday and so on. In every case this is down to the existence of relatively strong trade unions and sector-level collective agreements. However, even in these countries there are continuing problems with off the clock work, wage theft and some instances of health and safety violations. As in the 1990s these problems are largely associated with the difficulties of getting adequate worker-union representation in every store.

Of course the Northern mainland European countries only represent a relatively small proportion of McDonald’s workforce, the cost to McDonald’s of having a collective agreement which covered all of its 750,000 US employees (both in franchises and directly owned stores) could be substantial. In this context ‘the fight for 15’ could be seen as a US affair, but one that the US unions cannot afford to lose. The SEIU in particular are putting huge resources into the struggle as a last chance to change the discourse around insecure and low paid in the US but also elsewhere. As a union official from the SEIU pointed out to a meeting of European union officials and workers in 2016, …the USA represents an extreme case of what can go wrong in a rich developed country… if we don’t win this battle against McDonald’s and the broader trends towards more insecure low paid work, then the future will be bleak …and your country may be next.

The weak system of union rights in the USA makes it virtually impossible to gain recognition from MNEs like McDonald’s so much of the focus has been on adversarial grass roots activism. However, the SEIU which has been driving the campaign, argues that although local activism is essential, alone will not be enough. In the US has had already had some success in raising minimum wages in some US states (Hutton, 2014; Prah, 2014). Indeed under the continuing pressure of the campaign following Wal-Mart and TJ Maxx, in 2015 McDonald’s announced that it would raise the wages of about 90,000 of its directly-employed workers by about $1 per hour. However, the 80% or more workers employed in franchise stores will get no increase (Hicken, 2015). The SEIU is therefore trying to push the US courts to rule that McDonald’s franchisees and its own stores should be treated as the same joint-employer and there is a court hearing on this issue which began in March 2016. The SEIU with the support and the global union federation the IUF have also built a ‘global fast-food alliance’ with unions in other countries, NGOs and other interest groups in an attempt to ‘hurt’ McDonald’s on a number of levels. This has involved lobbying the European Union Parliament and Commission.

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The Global Unions and global governance: influencing the policies of the World Bank and the IMF through dialogue

In 2002 a formal mechanism for dialogue was established between the international trade union movement and the Washington based international financial organisations (IFIs). The latter include the World Bank (WB), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Since the 1980s the IFIs have had an increasing influence over the system of global governance and particularly so since the 2008 crisis. Already in 2007, in a meeting in the US House of Representatives, the Director of the Global Unions Office in Washington noted that the policy of the World Bank and the IMF has had a direct influence on two thirds of all ITUC members living in developing and growing countries (Bakvis, 2007).

The dialogue takes place at three levels, these include the headquarters, the sector and the country level and all three levels can be considered as important for the Global Unions. The main focus of this paper is the highest organizational level (the headquarters level). It includes exchange and cooperation at the top administrative level between the IFIs and the Global Unions. Every two years there is a high-level meeting and at least once a year a thematic meeting. There are also other interim meetings whose objective is to ensure the follow-up on commitments made during these other meetings (World Bank, 2002a).

The objective of the paper is to examine some of the factors that are decisive in promoting or hindering achievements within the dialogue process. In this context the focus of the paper is on the role of individual actors, particularly their attitudes and perceptions within the dialogue, and the possibilities of organizational learning through the dialogue. Attitudes and perceptions of individual actors are, amongst others, shaped by organizational characteristics such as structural particularities, the organizational identity, and organizational power resources. In order to analyse these characteristics I refer to sociological Neo-Institutionalism which helps to explain structural changes within the IFIs (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), the behavioural theory in order to explain human decision-making processes (March and Simon, 1976), and management studies in order to explain differences in organizational culture (Schein, 1993) and power resources (Morgan, 1997). These organizational theories also contribute to the analytical perspective of global governance. The connection between the global governance concept and organizational theories relating to the dialogue aims to provide a better understanding of how the participating actors react to and deal with global problems and the different use of organizational power.
The data for this paper derives from 34 expert interviews which were conducted with representatives from the Global Unions and their affiliates as well as the World Bank, the IFC, the IMF and the ILO between 2008 and 2013 as well as recent meetings with ITUC members who are involved in the coordination of the dialogue. Furthermore, the author also undertook a period of indirect participant observation as an observer at one technical meeting on gender related issues and one high-level meeting between the Global Unions and the IFIs in 2009 in Washington. This data was also complemented by an analysis of documentary materials which included various reports and the minutes of a number of meetings.

The findings suggest that the dialogue with the IFIs can be seen as an instrument of transnational trade union policy which serves to integrate the social dimension within the globalization of financial and labour markets (Platzer and Müller, 2009). It can be seen as a strategic instrument for the Global Unions to exercise influence over the policy of the IFIs and to shape the rules and institutions of global governance towards a more worker-friendly regime. Due to its specific characteristics (structure, actors, frequency of meetings) the dialogue between the Global Unions and the IFIs differs substantially from social dialogue (as defined by the European Union and the ILO) or lobbying. Firstly, it does not have a very long history and it exists in a much more narrow setting than social dialogue. Secondly, the relationship between the Global Unions and the IFIs and their interaction is very different from the relationship the social partners have in social dialogue. In contrast to lobbying, which reflects the attempt of an organization to exercise influence on national or regional legislation and the decisions of public authorities regarding the allocation of resources at a specific point of time (Keffer and Hill, 1997), the dialogue between the Global Unions and the IFIs follows a more general, long-term approach, it is based on a formal structure and both the IFIs and the global Unions take a continuing interest in the dialogue.

The interviews suggest that there is a wide agreement between the different actors involved that the dialogue on all its levels is essential and important. However, this does not necessarily become reflected in a positive individual behaviour towards the dialogue. Individual perceptions are largely shaped by the paradigms and approaches of the organizations within individual actors work. Due to the persistence of these paradigms and approaches it can be argued that individual perceptions are quite static. Particularly at the IFIs, the less precise approach towards the dialogue and the lack of clear organizational objectives promotes decoupling between individual rhetoric and the actions of individuals. There are also critical opinions and negative attitudes from individual actors on the side of the Global Unions. However, due to the strong objective focused approach of the Global Unions individual actors attitudes do not have a negative impact on communication processes within the dialogue. With regard to organizational learning it can be stipulated that learning related to the dialogue process itself occurs to a greater extent than learning related to specific issues within this process.

So far the Global Unions have achieved some positive outcomes within the dialogue, particularly with regard to the promotion of the core labour standards within the
World Bank and the IFC. The analysis also suggests that there has been to some extent a cultural shift in the IFIs with regard to their understanding of engagement with civil society organizations since the dialogue was formally established in 2002.

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Do You Approve or Disapprove? Public Opinion on U.S. Unions, 1936-2015

Public opinions regarding labor unions have been tracked in terms of confidence, trust, approval, and more sporadically, other dimensions for more than 80 years. Such variables as union approval are regularly reported in news media and have been the subject of considerable scholarly attention. Scholars have offered numerous qualitative and impressionistic analyses, comparing differences among nations, demographic groups, and over time. Since the 1980s, more quantitative modeling efforts have examined public opinion as both cause and effect. As a causal factor, public opinion’s influence on unionization has been analyzed. As an outcome, analyses have focused primarily on economic conditions and prominent employment relations events. Empirical studies in both Britain and the U.S. have identified several significant influences on public opinion.

We offer an extension of previously developed models of public approval and disapproval of U.S. labor unions, and investigate our model’s ability to track union approval, with particular attention to the twenty-plus years since the last such analysis was reported. This latter period includes a steady downward trend in approval and a nearly mirror image uptrend in disapproval, but perhaps more interestingly, it also includes a relatively sharp approval downturn and corresponding disapproval upturn in 2009. As Cappelli (2011) asked “[W]hy, when unions are at their weakest, does the public think they have too much power ... why has support for them eroded so sharply?”

Public opinion toward unions has long been recognized as an important variable in employment relations. Dunlop’s Industrial Relations Systems (1958) declared that environmental influences including the construct of “the locus and distribution of power in the larger society” often exert a decisive influence on industrial relations (1958: 9). The “locus” concept is often referenced more succinctly as societal or community influences, and encompasses diverse phenomena ranging from influential elites to public sentiments and includes the media, business and civic leaders, and several other distinct facets. Bok and Dunlop (1970: 11-12) began their classic Labor and the American Community by listing three spheres of influence for public opinion of unions, being:

- Employer actions toward unions: Image- and goodwill-conscious firms consider public perceptions in their compensation policies and in labor relations strategies such as operating during strikes or hiring striker replacements
• Union members and other workers: Will they support a strike, cross the picket line, provide maximum effort during a dispute or simply “soldier” their way through the workday?

• The general public and certain influential groups: Will picketing laws be enforced strictly or in a perfunctory manner? Will consumers honor a boycott? Will voters pressure elected leaders to take action?

British scholars also long ago recognized the importance of public opinion. Writing in 1961, Flanders (1970:13) opened a famous essay by noting that:

The public reputation of British trade unionism is under fire. Increasingly the unions are accused of being out of date, of clinging to restrictive practices that have outlived their usefulness, of failing to adapt their organisations to present needs, of being unimaginative in their policy and unresponsive to the challenges that contemporary society presents.

Flanders went on to discuss some public misperceptions of unions, but nonetheless stressed that public opinion is a critical concern for them: “… none of this makes it wise for trade unions to discount their loss of public sympathy” (p. 14). He stressed that unions present “two faces” to society, that of a “vested interest” and that of a “sword of justice,” and that it is the latter that earns public support. Flanders credited increasing acceptance of the image of the union as a vested interest, even by union members, as the basis for deteriorating public support at the time of his writing: “It is this, more than anything else, which has been ultimately responsible for their loss of sympathy” (p. 15).

One can cite numerous historical and contemporary examples that illustrate the influences described by Bok and Dunlop and by Flanders, but the truth of Edwards and Bain’s (1988: 311) assertion that “public opinion is an important influence affecting the activities of trade unions” seems self-evident, as does its extension to employment relations actors more generally. Although public opinion’s role as a possible causal influence has rarely been studied, the limited evidence available supports such assertions. Specifically, Stepina and Fiorito (1986) found a significant positive effect for Gallup public approval ratings on U.S. union growth and decline.

Investigations of antecedents of public opinions regarding unions are more common. We review past modeling efforts that identify antecedents of public opinion toward unions. Those attempts, although attaining some success, appear to have stalled in the late Twentieth Century. We then build on those efforts and offer a model of public approval and disapproval of U.S. unions for 1936-2015 using regression analysis with attention to autoregressive disturbances and multicollinearity, issues that plague our own and many studies using time-series analysis but not fully addressed in previous studies. Next, we present empirical estimates, with particular attention to the aforementioned estimation issues. Initial results provide some support for findings from studies of earlier periods. In particular, union approval tends to decline with rises in unemployment and inflation. Thus despite union...
decline, unions are still held responsible for elements of the “misery index.” An additional finding is an important role for union membership composition. Specifically, public approval seems to relate strongly and negatively to the increasing dominance of public sector workers among union members. Finally we discuss results, implications, and possible future directions to further illuminate the antecedents, role, and meaning of public opinion toward unions.

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British Pakistani Taxi Drivers: in a taxi, stuck or moving places!

Summary
It is noticeable to anyone taking taxis in a number of northern cities in the UK like Leeds, Bradford, or Manchester, that many of the drivers are of Pakistani origin. According to a UK Cabinet Office report in 2003, ‘one in eight male Pakistanis worked as taxi drivers compared to a national (UK) average of one in hundred’ (Noon and Blyton, 2007: 286). This figure has doubled to one in four in 2010 for the Pakistani men in working age population in UK (EHRC, 2010). Considering that the white British population is not into this occupation in large numbers as taxi driving is not seen as a socially desirable job, nor an aspirational vocation, then why do a quarter of Pakistani men in the UK drive taxis for a living, is this choice or constraint? The literature on occupational choices (or constraints) of migrants is dominated by various ‘paradigms’ across disciplines, like the human capital theory by economists; structure and agency considerations by sociologists; and individual attributes by occupational psychologists. However, taxi drivers in UK have rarely been considered within the academia and the literature available on migrants choosing to drive taxis is scant and absolutely negligible on the Pakistani men driving taxis, and this is where this study fills a gap.

Literature
There is consensus among scholars that ethnic minorities pay high economic ‘penalties’ in terms of higher unemployment, lower job levels, higher pay differentials and face a ‘glass ceiling’ in growth and promotion at work in comparison to the white British population (Smith, 1977: 1981; Wrench, 1996; Modood et al, 1997; Berthoud, 2000; Clark and Drinkwater, 2002; Dustmann and Fabbri, 2005; Tackey et al, 2006; Holgate and Mckay, 2009; Hills et al, 2010; EHRC, 2010; Brynin and Guveli, 2012). While most ethnic groups suffer from these ‘penalties’, statistics suggest that Pakistanis in Britain are more severely disadvantaged amongst most ethnic groups (Modood et al, 1997; Berthoud, 2000; Tackey et al, 2006; Hills et al, 2010; EHRC, 2010). In terms of employment, Pakistanis in the UK are severely disadvantaged in comparison to other ethnic groups like Indians for employment outcomes (Modood et al, 1997; EHRC, 2010; Brynin and Guveli, 2012; Zuccotti, 2014). Pakistanis have the poorest employment rates at 52 per cent in comparison to British white (74%) and Indians (72%). At the same time, Pakistanis also have the highest economic inactivity rate (46%) among people of working age in the UK. While this may be mainly driven by high economic inactivity rates for Pakistani women at 66 per cent, and for men at 28 per cent (EHRC, 2010), it still cannot explain the high unemployment rates for Pakistani men which is highest amongst all ethnic minority groups at 14.7 per cent, much higher than Indians at 6 per cent and the 6.8 per cent for the UK white population (Labour Force Survey, 2015). Not only Pakistanis tend to be concentrated in low skilled manual jobs (EHRC, 2010), the proportion of those self-employed is also relatively high among Pakistani men.
(18.6%) compared to white British men (13.6%). Some of these ethnic differences are likely to be associated with racism and unfair practices by employers on the grounds of discrimination. However, as Modood and Khatab (2015) argue, some of these differences are also likely to be associated with different ethnic practices and strategies. Self-employment among Pakistani men has been associated with barriers to employment whereby adopting self-employment is undertaken as an alternative strategy to unemployment (Clark and Drinkwater 2000): this will be considered in this study. However, most studies on self-employment among Pakistanis are about corner grocery shops and takeaways and, apart from Kalra, (2000) none in the UK has focused on taxi driving in the past decades and this is where this study fills a gap.

During preliminary exploratory research with taxi drivers, there emerged a pattern in their stories. While many cited ‘choice’, with flexibility (to choose the number of hours; take holidays as own convenience), autonomy (be your own boss; not having to work under anybody else’s supervision), and easy money (cash in hand; the more hours you work the more money you make) acting as ‘pull’ factors. Others mentioned ‘constraints’ like, not having enough qualifications, racial and religious discrimination, as well as restrictive labour market practices, as reasons for not being able to access jobs that they would prefer resulting in them being ‘pushed’ into taxi driving. It appeared in these initial conversations, that while taxi driving was perceived to be ‘easier’ than doing a mechanical, labour-intensive job, or was deemed to be more ‘flexible’ than a regular nine-to-five job, it was one of the few options available to first generation Pakistani migrants considering many had fewer or no qualifications, poor English language ability, and faced institutionalised racism and religious discrimination, and poor support from ‘the system’ around them. One critical mention by almost all taxi drivers in the preliminary research was that none of the taxi drivers wished their next generation to take this up as a means of earning their livelihood. However, both first and second generation Pakistanis seem to have equal likelihood to be in taxi driving (Hills et al, 2010). This raised a set of questions as such how are the social inequalities faced by the first generation Pakistani men being reproduced in the subsequent generations who are born and raised in the UK?

Are these structural constraints external to the people or are these internal and embodied, what French sociologist Bourdieu calls a habitus: ‘a system of durable, transposable dispositions which functions as the generative basis of structured, objectively unified practices’ (Bourdieu,1979: vii as cited in Jenkins, 1982: 272). This formed the basic motivation for this study to find the ‘durable dispositions’ affecting the employment choices (or lack of it) of migrants in general and Pakistani taxi drivers in UK in particular. This study will take a Bourdeusian approach exploring the classical structure-agency debate in sociology using biographical narrative interview methods (BNIM) to explore how culture, class and parental occupations intersect affecting intergenerational mobility of second and third generation Pakistani men driving taxis for a living in the cities of Leeds and Bradford.
Research Methodology: Ethnography using Biographical Narrative Interpretive Methods (BNIM)

Life stories have been the source of rich information throughout academic disciplines. One can learn so much from biographies - both autobiographies and those written by others. Life stories through the biographical narrative method lets us into the world of the protagonist as they experienced it and recollect it (Rosenthal, 1993). The BNIM as advocated by Chamberlayne and Wengraf (2000), is gaining wider recognition in British sociology as an alternative to semi structured interviews, which have been criticised by some academics for the power and control the interviewer accords over the interviewee by structuring and leading the interview with questions directed towards an answer the interviewer wants to hear (Wengraf, 2001; Kvale, 2006). Cederberg (2014) proposes that migrant biographical narratives studied in their social and political context can be used to understand inequalities not only by gaining knowledge of lived experiences of inequalities, but also by considering how dominant discourses help to normalise some of those experiences, and as such may contribute to the reproduction of inequalities. The BNIM as a research method is considered in this study to understand how parents influence the habitus of their children, or how the various fields and their doxa create illusio effecting the self-efficacy of Pakistani men in this study.

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Justice delayed is justice denied: preliminary findings from a study of staff attitudes to reforms at the UK Ministry of Justice

This research is based on reform proposals for 2016-2020 at the UK Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The reforms are being driven from the top, and fit the general model of a neo-liberal approach (Chomsky 1999) to running of public services through public choice theory (Niskanen 1971) and new public management (Hood 1995, Ferlie et al 1996). In practice this means fewer jobs, more intensive work, a reduced role for the trade unions, more unaccountable management, and a smaller core of public ownership and control over key areas of work. This, therefore, is a further study of what has been seen elsewhere (Carter et al 2011, Carter and Stevenson 2012, Gale 2012, Mather and Seifert 2014), but includes the added feature of the central role of the administration of justice itself in a democracy (Sen 2009). Thus the political economy of a neo-conservative agenda becomes a really existing experience for both workers and citizens.

This 2016 study examines sensitive documents obtained from within the MoJ, interviews with union activists in key centres, and other sources of debate (Hansard, ministerial statements, union websites). This is partly action research as developments are unfolding during the research period.

The general proposition that work is organised to achieve the most efficient outcomes gives rise to workplace conflicts as between managers acting on behalf of the employer and workers (individually and collectively through their trade unions) seeking to defend and improve their pay and conditions of service (Kelly 1999). The argument is summed up, ‘as the division of labour increases, labour is simplified’ (Marx 1849: 225), and this is the basis for two subsequent debates: an increasingly instrumental view taken by workers of their work, and the advent of ‘generalised labour’. As Cohen summarises ‘capitalism increases the number of distinct jobs involved in the production of a given product, but at the same time it decreases the specialization of the worker’ (1988:194). This lays the basis for both Braverman’s general deskilling thesis (1974), and Polanyi’s (1944) interpretation of Gramsci’s works (1929-35) about the socialised nature of the division of labour and its attendant consequences for the creation of a working class as a class (Burawoy 2003).

The MoJ gives as its mission: “We work to protect the public and reduce reoffending, and to provide a more effective, transparent and responsive criminal justice system for victims and the public.” It is responsible for courts, prisons, probation services, and attendance centres. It employs around 76,000 people with a budget of approximately £9 billion.
The relevant senior political figure, Michael Gove, has instigated a wide-ranging reform programme to include privatisation, outsourcing, and changes to the management of the services. These changes are aimed at the now familiar targets of civil service trade unions, worker rights, and users in so far as they are deemed to be undeserving.

For example, the government recently announced that it would allocate over £700 million to transform the courts and tribunals. As the senior director in charge of change (Julie Nerney) noted: “We have a strong culture of continuous improvement here, and ... many of you have already been involved with [these developments], but we know that on its own, it isn’t going to be enough”.

Other management initiatives over the next 4 years include a new British Bill of Rights; total transformation of the way the courts work; and driving forward radical penal reform. But NOMS must achieve 15% savings which are required to reallocate resources in the NPS to meet the increased workload as NOMS CEO, Michael Spurr, said that we have “a public duty to maximise value for money for the taxpayer and to continuously improve our efficiency and effectiveness ... In addition to the efficiencies we will achieve through estate modernisation we are committed to reduce our HQ Administrative costs”.

MoJ senior management have already indicated their commitment to a NPM approach to the reforms proposed by government. In so doing there will be a serious impact on staff, unions, and users. This project will trace these as the management details of actual reforms unfold. Thus such a study can add to the body of knowledge about public sector reforms, and in addition link up the debates and data sets about the impact on democracy and the operation (in this case) of criminal justice as a direct result of government changes to the management of labour.

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Are Temporary Agency Jobs Bad Employment Contracts or Bad Employment Relationships? Evidence from Japan

This research explores why temporary agency jobs are regarded as bad jobs, by distinguishing between the impact of temporary agency workers’ employment contract and the impact of their employment relationships on their job qualities. In Japan, temporary agency workers have triangular employment relationships with the client firm and staffing agency in common, but there are some temporary agency workers who have a permanent employment contract as well as others who have a fixed-term employment contract with a staffing agency (Houseman and Osawa, 2003). Though previous research has ignored the difference between the employment contract and employment relationship that temporary agency workers have, we compare the impact of the fixed-term employment contract with the impact of triangular employment relationships, (i.e., the non-direct employment relationship with the firm which temporary agency workers serve).

The temporary agency job is one of the newer trends of employment in Japan, where regular jobs are traditionally popular. The number of temporary agency workers has been increasing in the Japanese labor market since the removal of restrictions in the mid-1980s. Though the percentage of temporary agency workers is still smaller (3%) than the percentage of part-time workers (25%) in Japanese labor markets, temporary agency jobs are recognized as one of the diversified employment categories for Japanese society.

However, temporary agency jobs are often viewed as bad jobs in Japan as well as in the U.S. and European countries (Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson, 2000; Kalleberg, 2011; Mitlacher, 2008; Warhurst, Carré, Findlay, and Tilly, 2012). Temporary agency jobs such as clerical jobs provide workers with lower pay, lower fringe benefits, lower training opportunities and lower employment security than regular jobs, that is, those providing both permanent employment contract and direct employment relationship in the Japanese context, though they may provide them with flexible work time and a feeling that work and life are in balance.

However, a similar tendency of many lower qualities of temporary agency jobs is seen among other non-regular jobs, which provide both a fixed-term employment contract and a direct employment relationship in the Japanese context, such as part-time jobs. Much previous research on part-time jobs similarly demonstrate lower pay, lower fringe benefits, lower training opportunities, lower employment security and higher working time flexibility than regular jobs in Japan, as well as in the U.S. and European countries.

We point out that most previous research ignores the difference in terms of employment contract and employment relationships between temporary agency
jobs and other forms of non-regular jobs (e.g., part-time jobs), so that results of previous research show similarities of job qualities between them. Therefore, in order to explore the reasons why temporary agency jobs are regarded as bad jobs, this research distinguishes between the impact of the employment contract and the impact of employment relationships on workers’ job qualities.

We designed their survey by translating questionnaires of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS, 2010), which is one of the most well-known employee surveys on job quality in Europe, and adding some original questions in the context of Japanese employment. Using this survey, we collected rich quantitative data on five dimensions of job qualities, namely the pay, fringe benefits, work autonomy, working time flexibility and employment security of three employment categories of Japanese workers — regular workers, non-regular workers, and temporary agency workers in two metropolitan areas (Tokyo and Osaka) in 2014. We took our sample carefully by controlling the percentage of basic individual attributes such as gender, age, etc., for each employment category, ensuring that our sample has a certain degree of representativeness in the labor markets of Japan’s metropolitan areas.

In order to control the impacts of as many attributes as possible on job qualities as possible, we chose a sample of workers engaging in administrative support jobs, such as clerical jobs, accounting clerk jobs, sales clerk jobs, etc. for five days per week, comprising the majority of temporary agency workers as well as regular and non-regular workers. Then, we compared the degree of job qualities in five dimensions among temporary agency, regular and non-regular jobs, and analyzed statistically the impact of temporary agency jobs on each job quality by controlling the individual’s and the firm’s attributes. Furthermore, we analyzed statistically the impact of the fixed-term employment contract and the impact of the non-direct employment relationship on the job qualities of Japanese workers.

The results of our analysis reveal several interesting findings. Certainly, as previous research has discussed, there are hardly any differences between the impact of temporary agency jobs and the impact of non-regular jobs on job qualities. For example, both temporary agency jobs and non-regular jobs provide workers with lower pay (monthly income), lower fringe benefits (bonus, retirement allowance, and company pension), and lower employment security (risk of termination, lower skill development, and less career advancement) than regular jobs.

Second and more importantly, there are several differences between the impact of an employment contract and the impact of an employment relationship on job qualities. For example, on the one hand, a fixed-term employment contract has negative impacts on pay, fringe benefits, employment security and positive impacts on working time flexibility. On the other hand, a non-direct employment relationship has negative impacts on fringe benefits, work autonomy, and employment security. Relatively, fixed-term employment contracts have greater impacts (both negative and positive) on workers’ job qualities than triangular employment relationships have.
These findings imply that we need to distinguish the influence of the characteristics of the employment contract from the influence of the characteristics of the employment relationship on job quality. Triangular employment relationships of temporary agency jobs are common in the real world (Kalleberg, 2000; Purcell, Purcell, and Tailby, 2004; Cappelli and Keller, 2013), but the preconditions of an employment contract are very different in each country because they reflect their country’s labor laws, labor markets, and employment practices (Gallie, 2007; Mitlacher, 2007). Future research will need to examine the impact of the peculiar characteristics of temporary agency jobs on their quality.

References


Simms, Melanie: University of Leicester

Hopkins, B.

Negotiating Wage (In)Equality: A UK Study of Two Sectors

This paper presents findings from the UK project of a European Commission funded study examining social partners’ attitudes towards wage inequality. Increasing attention has been paid to inequality in general (Picketty 2014) and wage inequality specifically (Machin and Van Reenen 2007). These debates have generally highlighted that growing inequality is an increasingly important feature of many countries, but is particularly acute in the liberal market economies (Eurofound 2015). At the same time, debates have emerged around the function of collective wage setting mechanisms (collective bargaining, minimum wages etc.) in reducing wage inequalities within and between sectors (Hayter and Weinberg 2011). Questions therefore emerge about how social partners (unions and employers) regard issues of inequality in general, and wage inequality specifically.

The broader comparative study explores these questions in five national settings (UK, Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Slovakia) and across four sectors (automotive, education, retail and banking). This paper reports findings from two of the sectors (education and retail) in the UK. Even this far more limited comparison raising important issues that challenge some of the assumptions made in existing literature.

The research questions we address are:

• What are the most important issues of wage inequality in the two sectors?
• How do social partners in these two sectors think about issues of wage inequality?
• Do they (and, if so, how do they) present issues of wage inequality during bargaining processes?
• What are their general views about the effectiveness (or otherwise) of bargaining in addressing issues of wage inequality?

The research
Desk research for these sectors is complete. This comprised of examining wage data in the two sectors, analysing policy documents of social partners and outcomes of wage setting processes. Primary research has been started and interviews with trade unions and employer associations have been conducted. We anticipate that more interviews will have been completed by the time of the conference and organisation level data will also be available.

Preliminary findings
Dominant concerns about pay trends in the two sectors are very different, but in both cases emerge from government policies. In teaching, this relates to the
government’s support for schools to ‘break away’ from national wage setting, and in supermarkets it relates to the future rapid up-rating of the National Minimum Wage in 2016/7. Perhaps surprisingly then, government policy exerts significant influence on wage (in)equalities even in the liberal UK labour market.

Social partners do generally believe that collective wage regulation (including pay review bodies in the education sector) broadly has the effect of reducing wage inequalities, but outside the public sector the aggregate effects are limited because of the decentralisation of bargaining to company level. Sector level data does indicate a narrower wage dispersal for groups where collective wage setting (collective bargaining, pay review bodies, National Minimum Wage etc.) is strongest and a greater wage dispersal where there is managerial unilateralism. The qualitative evidence strongly supports the view that the constrained effects of company level bargaining largely account for the observed outcomes within and between the sectors.

Overall, unions the two sectors show a notable confidence in being able to regulate wage inequality where they have representation rights. Nonetheless, unions in both sectors are being presented with considerable challenges emerging from government policy. This analysis presents a useful and interesting counterpoint to the generalised picture of the largely unregulated UK labour market and highlight important sectoral dynamics that help explain national patterns of inequality.

References


Cutter, J., Cook, H., Garcia, R. and Valizade, D.

Employers’ perspectives and experiences of the union learning agenda: survey evidence

This paper reports findings from two large-scale surveys of employers’ experiences of and attitudes towards the union learning agenda. The development of the union learning agenda and its impact has been widely studied in recent years (Hoque and Bacon, 2011; McIlroy, 2008; Stuart and Rainbird, 2011; Wallis et al, 2005), but few contributions have systematically explored how employers have engaged with union learning (see Hoque and Bacon, 2011 for a notable exception). The paper looks to fill this knowledge gap by considering the extent of employer engagement, how employers have engaged with union learning and whether they perceive there to be a benefit in working with unions around the learning agenda.

The union learning agenda developed due to a series of policy supports introduced by the Labour government from the late 1990s, though union interest in vocational education and training was more longstanding (Rainbird, 1990; Stuart, 1996). This included the Union Learning Fund (ULF: introduced in 1998), statutory rights for workplace Union Learning Representatives (ULRs: from 2002) and financial support for unionlearn (2006), a department located in the Trades Union Congress, which took over the administration of the ULF from 2006. Analysis to-date has tended to focus on the roles and activities of ULRs and their impact on workplace training and members’ experiences of learning. Critics such as McIlroy (2008) regard union learning as a displacement activity that takes resources and attention away from the key union priority of organising and that also subordinates unions, through the receipt of government funding, to state agendas around workplace training and performance. An alternative position, advanced by Rainbird and Stuart (2011), recognises the structural constraints within which unions operate but argues that union learning allows space for unions to develop new strategies of critical engagement with employers. Empirical evidence shows that the activities of union learning representatives are more likely to be beneficial – in terms of higher workplace or personal learning for workers – where unions have established institutional supports at the workplace, such as learning centres, committees and agreements, to support learning activity.

To establish workplace supports for union learning activity union representatives must engage with employers. It is thus important to understand just how employers view such activity. The only study of employers to-date (Hoque and Bacon, 2011), found that employers were generally positive about union learning, but such positivity was contingent on the set-up of workplace learning centres. Key questions remain. First, there is the nature of employer engagement with union learning activities. Is this restrictive, limited to a narrow range of activities, such as skills
needs analysis or job-related training, or is it expansive, covering different types of learning activities, with multiple roles for unions that embrace the full agenda of workplace vocational education and training opportunities and personal development (Fuller and Unwin, 2004)? Second, what arrangements evolve to govern union learn activities? Where employers actively engage with unions on learning, is this on the basis of labour parity or employer dominance (Kelly, 2004)? Finally, how does the nature and arrangements of engagement impact the likely outcomes of union learning?

The paper draws from a longitudinal study of union learning involving extensive data collection, including secondary analysis of ULF datasets, surveys of union project workers, case studies and surveys of employers and learners. For this paper, we draw from two specific sources of data.

First, we examine the findings of two large surveys of employers conducted during 2010 (n=415) and 2016 (n=385). In both cases samples were drawn from ULF projects, union websites and publications and TUC unionlearn contacts. Both surveys were conducted by telephone and generated response rates of over 40 per cent. While the surveys allow for comparative longitudinal analysis, panel data (i.e. the same respondents to both surveys) was limited to c150 employers. The surveys did not aim to compare a representative sample of employers that engaged or did not engage with union learning or union and no union firms, rather the key aim was to look at employers that had some experience with union learning, in order to understand specifically how they sought to engage and to what level.

Secondly, interview data with key stakeholders in the learning and skills arena, including representatives of the TUC, individual unions, UKCES, CBI, Sector Skills Councils, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the CIPD supplement the analysis. Across the two waves of data in 2010 and 2016 some 40 qualitative interviews with senior policy makers were conducted.

Empirically, employers that had engaged with union learning generally viewed it in a positive light. They saw it as a valuable activity for unions, were willing to continue working with unions around learning and saw benefits of union learning across a wide range of workplace indicators such as organisational performance, investment in training and apprenticeship take-up. Perceived benefits were positively associated with learning committees, agreements and centres. However, such supports were seen to have declined between 2010 and 2016. While hypothetically this could be seen as an outcome of increased employer antagonism or a shift from labour parity to employer dominance the story was more complex. First, there was evidence that union learning activity had declined, largely in line with diminishing state funding. Second, employers were in the main ambivalent to union learning rather than looking to constrain it. Nor were employers looking to substitute their own provision with union learning; deadweight had actually decreased, though so too had employer provision. Where unions had largely been left to get on with learning without any form of employer intrusion, learning activities were nonetheless more restrictive. Expansive learning activity and outcomes were more likely to be
associated with active employer engagement, and this was highest where relations of labour parity had been established.

References


Taylor, Phil: University of Strathclyde

Main, J.

‘A War on Sickies’ or a war on sick workers? Absence management and union representation in local government’

This paper derives from a study of Unison representatives in local government. The activities, orientations and representational effectiveness of a cohort of stewards are examined through the prism of an, in part, longitudinal case study on sickness absence which, it is argued, is one of the central (and most highly contested) issues in current UK employment relations (Taylor et al, 2010).

An historical analysis emphasises the peak of shop steward influence as located in the workplace-based union organisation of the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Charlwood and Terry, 2007). If shop stewards had become ‘the non-commissioned officers’ of a militant trade union movement ‘on the front line of industrial conflict’ (Charlwood and Forth, 2009: 74), even during this period ‘opposition and resistance to capital’ coexisted with pressures to accommodate and even to ‘contain, control and manipulate members’ reactions’. Accordingly, Batstone et al (1977) distinguished ‘populist’ from ‘leader’ stewards. In the ‘structured antagonism’ between capital and labour that shapes the ‘frontier of control’, shop stewards (or reps) in unionised workplaces were and remain at the forefront of contestation.

The really-existing ‘frontier of control’ has shifted considerably in management’s favour since the high-water mark of shop stewards’ power. Within the narrative of union membership decline and shrinking collective bargaining, the number of shop stewards fell from an estimated 335,000 in 1984 to 128,000 in 2004 (Terry, 2010: 278). While shop stewards have long been on the defensive, contemporary conditions betoken a mixed opportunity, for while reps might now champion a more diverse range of worker concerns (Moore, 2011), they also spend more time on individual representation - welfare, grievance and disciplinary matters - than collective activities. Of the issues which union members might reasonably expect - or require representation - the exercise of managerial prerogatives on sickness absence might be as significant as the questions of workload, performance management and discipline in general.

Accordingly, the paper, engages with diverse literatures on sickness absence and its management (e.g. Steers and Rhodes, 1987), including an influential sociological corpus that locates workplace absence and absenteeism within the contexts of the effort bargain, and managements’ compulsion to overcome the indeterminacy of labour power, management control systems and workplace norms (Edwards and Scullion, 1984; Edwards and Whitson, 1993). Yet, the paper critiques the still prevalent view that managers tend ‘to tolerate a degree of voluntary absence
without making concerted efforts to control it’ (Noon et al, 2014: 86) and briefly reviews trends based on recent statistical data (e.g. CBI, 2015; CIPD, 2015).

The empirical subject of the study are the shop stewards of a large city council in Scotland, who report their experiences and their members’ experiences of sickness absence management as the council pursued its ‘War on Sickies’ in the contexts of budgetary restraint and growing austerity. Almost 60 in-depth semi-structured interviews, 12 focus groups and extensive union and council documentation deliver a wealth of qualitative data. Questionnaires implemented in 2010 and 2015 provide an invaluable longitudinal dimension.

The evidence confirms the harshness of new sickness absence management policy and practice. Additionally, it demonstrates the significant extent to which members’ grievances have imposed enormous demands of shop stewards’ representative capacity. Nevertheless, albeit in adverse circumstances stewards, as the personal embodiment of trade unionism for their members, have demonstrated a certain effectiveness in contesting management’s redefined ‘frontier of control’. Amongst the paper’s more general conclusions, then, is a counter to a blanket pessimism that perceives workplace employee representatives as facing ‘seemingly insurmountable challenges’ (Simms and Charlwood, 2010; 243). Finally, the paper reflects on the nature of individual and collective representation, arguing that it is mistaken to erect a Chinese wall between the two.

References
Trappmann, Vera: University of Leeds

Transnational organizing in the European electronic sector

The paper analyses the difficulty of opening up spaces for labour representation within multinational companies in the electronics sector. The study of the European subsidiaries of a US brand-name MNC, one of the biggest players in the electronics sector, shows how the MNC more or less systematically tries to destabilize and destroy labour’s voice both at the national level via union substitution measures and at the transnational level by suppression of the European Work Council (EWC).

Concretely, the MNC denied the EWC’s rights to information and consultation, prevented other forms of labour organization at the national and transnational level and used restructuring to cut labour standards and to get rid of its cost-intensive and unionized workforce. The paper testifies to the difficulty unions face in attempting to alter leading brand-name companies’ employment practices. It demonstrates also however forms of struggle developed by the workers to form transnational solidarity even in such a tightly-controlled and highly-competitive supply chain.

The paper is based on on-going research since 2011, in particular desk research and interviews with works councils at different European sites of one multinational company in the electronic sector. It is important to note that the author has also been an adviser to IG Metall, a German trade union, in its process of setting up with new ways of transnational organising in the electronics. This article integrates both research and the perspective of a participant in a trade unions’ change’s process/movement.

The paper engages with literature on multinationals, European Works Councils, unionization in multinational companies, and labour revitalisation.

This contribution shows the impact of an US-American MNC on labour organisation in Europe, undermining fundamental labour rights and standards guaranteed by law, European directives, collective bargaining or co-determination. The example under study goes beyond what we know from the literature in terms of denying the rights for information and consultation of the EWC, trying to boycott other forms of labour organisation at the national and transnational level, and cutting back labour standards. In the case under study, the MNC has transferred its business model and its ideas about business and profit across EU, and the negative effect on employment has been across the EU, regardless of the different host country institutions. The analysis shows the only actor trying to resist are trade unions and unionised works councils. Here, however, we have seen that a traditional representation body as a EWC easily reaches its limits. Despite being very active and conflictual the EWC has not been able to change any of the corporate strategies. This is not only frustrating for the members, but puts a serious question on the table: how to protect European labour standards and ideas about good business practices?
New forms of labour representation like an union based Alliance evolved as an experiment that show the size of international solidarity and an increasing network capability among unions across Europe. These are new forms to counterbalance some of the negative employment practices stemming from US based MNCs. They are however far from showing a deep impact. The immediate reactions of the corporation under study towards negative press might thus indicate where the Achilles heel is to be found in the future, especially for a corporation that puts a lot of emphasis on corporate social responsibility accounts. While it would be better to find institutional solutions that have more than just an attack of corporate reputation at its disposal, the combination of different types and instruments to protect labour’s interest might be a promising prospect for the future.

References


Wang, Wen: University of Wolverhampton

Flexible contract and workforce absenteeism in Germany, France, Britain and Spain

Abstract
Using European Company Survey (ECS) 2004, 2009 and 2013, this study intends to explain the impact of using contractual flexibility and the uprising workplace sick leave in Germany, from 17% to 28%; while dramatic decline in Britain and France; a fluctuation was observed in Spain. We found that workplaces where with the high presence of non-standard contracts is positively and significantly associated with high workforce absenteeism in Germany, but this is not the case in other countries. However, workplace climate is significantly and negatively correlated with absenteeism across countries and over time. Using non-standard contracted workers may reflect poor employment relations at workplace, since the job insecurity faced by non-standard contracted workers; it was difficult to integrate this group of workers with long-term HR strategy, which may form a vicious circle of absenteeism at workplace.

Introduction
Labour market rigidities are considered to be the key causes of the persistent high unemployment and workplace absenteeism in many European Countries. To combat both high unemployment and compete in the global market, since the mid-1980s, a number of European countries have seen significant increase in labour market flexibility. As a consequence, there is an increasing using of Fixed Term Contracts (FTCs) at workplaces. In 1983, 8.1% of the labour force was employed on a fixed-term contract whereas the figure almost doubled in 2005, 14.5% on average in the EU (Eurostat, 2006). It created a two-tier labor market in a number of European countries (Bentolila and Dolado, 1994; Blanchard and Landier, 2002; Cahuc and Postel-Vinay, 2002). One aspect of the enhanced labor market flexibility is to allow employers to renew FTCs limited or unlimited times which lead to a cycle of FTCs and unemployment (Scherer, 2004; Guell and Petrongolo 2007). The practice of renew FTCs has been reported in a number of countries such as Germany, Portugal and Spain (McGinnity, 2004; Scherer, 2004; Guell and Petrongolo 2007). The impact of repeating FTCs on individual career progress has been touched on (McGinnity, 2004; De Lange et al., 2013; De Vries and Wolbers, 2005), but there is no research so far which has paid attention to effects of high renewal rate of FTCs on workforce effort.

The present study made attempt to investigate the impact of FTCs and workplace absenteeism by using interview data of HR senior managers across more than 1500 companies each among Britain, Germany, France and Spain via the European Company Survey data (2009 and 2013). Beyond providing a cross-country comparison and updating dynamism of contractual flexibility in the EU member states, this study contributes to the debate by assessing both direct and indirect impact of non-standard contract on workplace absenteeism.
Theoretical development

The concerns of high renewal rate of FTCs might have an impact on labor productivity is where stable and skilled workforce is an important source of productivity. Güell (2000) provides an application of the shirking efficiency wage model to a labor market where firms can offer permanent and FTCs contracts, which are allowed to be converted into permanent contracts at their termination. Workers under both types of contract decide each period whether to shirk or not to shirk. As is standard in the literature, firms have a monitoring technology allowing them to identify whether a worker is shirking with a given probability. If found shirking, a permanent worker is dismissed and becomes unemployed whereas a temporary worker does not have his (or her) contract renewed. Güell (2000) predicted that high conversion rate can act as an incentive for FTCs workers. A few existing literature has pointed out the difference of FTCs from temporary contracts by nature, seasonal or holiday (Booth et al., 2000; Portugal and Varejao, 2009), renewing FTCs at the same firm indicate desirability of workers for employers. The conventional findings of temporary contracted workers taking less absence due to fear of job loss might not apply for FTCs (Riphahn, 2004; Ichino and Riphahn, 2005; Engellandt and Riphahn, 2005; Frick and Malo, 2008). The screening device role assumed by FTCs to generate a better job match is empirically inconclusive (Boockmann and Hagen, 2008).

Recently, Bradley, et al. (2012) provide evidence to suggest that temporary workers’ absence is influenced by incentives to attain jobs with protection that is unrelated to threat of dismissal in Australia. Using Italian firm level data, Battisti and Vallanti (2013) reported there is decreased absenteeism among temporary contracted workforces when conversion rate into a permanent position is above 35%.

The practices of renewing most FTCs will not only demotivate FTCs workers but also increase shirking of its permanent contracted colleagues. Rossetti and Tanda (2007) reported wage discrimination suffered by FTC holders even after controlling for observable and unobservable workers characteristics in Italy. FTCs workers, therefore, have a great incentive to search at external labor market by taking sick leave if the system permits. Goux et al. (2001) theoretically proposed that workers with a permanent position in the firm with a higher proportion of temporary contract have a higher incentive to shirk due to reduced risk. Battisti and Vallanti (2013) provided empirical evidence on some evidence that large share of temporary contracts appears to reduce workers’ motivation and effort in Italy. If FTCs are offered to peripheral jobs, where the core workforce’s job is still relatively stable, the labor productivity might not be affected. However, the evidence of temporary contracts crowd out permanent employment (Khan, 2009) and the nature of FTCs make this assumption uncertain. In this study, we are interested in an empirical assessment of the effects of labor market flexibility on workforce effort; one of its dimensions is absenteeism, and subsequently labor productivity.

Since workplace absenteeism is a complex issue which can attribute to at least three levels of causes, personal, organizational and national nature. Individual has better information on its health status and effort committed. Flexible HRM practices, such as flexitime, variable pay and flexible work organization, at firms and workplace settings have been theoretically proposed and empirically found to influence firm
absenteeism (Barmby and Stephen, 2000; Batt and Monique, 2003; Battisti and Vallanti, 2013; Beatson, 1995; Drago and Wooden, 1992). The large difference in the generosity of statutory sick pay benefits and strictness of employment protection legislation across European countries have been found also contributed to cross country difference in terms of level of absenteeism (Frick and Malo, 2008, Barmby et al., 2002; Livanos and Zangelidis, 2013); in addition, high unemployment rate indicates the tight opportunity at the external labor market, which was found to exerting a negative effect on the probability of being absent (Scoppa, 2010; Livanos and Zangelidis, 2013). These factors will also be taken into consideration in this study.

**Data and methods**

The European Company Survey (ECS) is a large-scale, European-wide survey of firms carried out across the EU members and accede member States at the time in 2004, 2009 and 2013, in which include more than 1,500 countries each studied country. The aim of European Company Survey (ECS) is to collect information on the flexibility strategies and social dialogue in firms and is a unique source of comparative information at the firm level. The harmony of the data collection enables cross-country comparison.

**Descriptive analysis**

In figure 1, it shows that workplaces where reported to experience high absenteeism has shown very different paths among the above four countries, a striking two times reduction in the UK and 13 percentage points decrease in France, a fluctuation in Spain. An consecutive increase, reach 28% in Germany, which put Germany with the highest proportion of workplace experience high absenteeism among these four countries in 2013.

![Figure 1. Workplaces Experience High Absenteeism](image)


In Figure 2, it shows that unemployment rate has gone up in the UK, reach a historical ceiling of 8.3% in 2012 since 1997, while Germany has experienced a successive reduction in unemployment over the same period, with the lowest unemployment rate among these four countries in 2013. France was also affected by...
the recession, but the extent is less distractive than the UK, the situation in Spain is volatile, almost one quarter working age people were out of work in 2013. External labour market opportunities may contribute to the observed absenteeism at the organizational level.

**Figure 2: Unemployment Rate**

As shown in Figure 3, UK has the lowest level of employment protection on standard contract and the most stringent measure to take sick leave among these four countries; while Germany has the highest level of labour protection and lenient measures. This partly leads to increased absenteeism rate since 2009.

**Figure 3: Indexes of Employment Protection for standard contract and Lenience of Taking Sick Leave**

**Empirical results**

The result of the logit regressions of high absenteeism of organisations with more than 50 presented in Table 3 &4. It shows that high proportion of non-standard contract is positively and significant correlated with workplace where reporting
experience high absenteeism in Germany and France in 2009. In 2013 data, we don’t have the information on proportion of non-standard contract, we used the percentage of permanent contracted instead, and did not find any significant correlation. However, we found that good workplace climate is negatively and significantly correlated with workplace where report to face the challenge of having high absenteeism.

Table 1 Marginal Effect of Logistic Regression on Organizations in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Absenteeism</th>
<th>Britain</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Spain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of skilled worker</td>
<td>-0.05(0.07)</td>
<td>-0.57***(0.11)</td>
<td>0.31***(0.09)</td>
<td>0.26***(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>-0.08(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.03(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.07(0.07)</td>
<td>0.03(0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Autonomy</td>
<td>0.07(0.05)</td>
<td>-0.03(0.05)</td>
<td>-0.08(0.08)</td>
<td>0.08(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive pay</td>
<td>0.26(0.25)</td>
<td>0.08**(0.03)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>0.00(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% employee use flexible time</td>
<td>-0.21(0.38)</td>
<td>-0.11(0.31)</td>
<td>-0.04(0.07)</td>
<td>0.03(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift work</td>
<td>0.10**(0.03)</td>
<td>0.03(0.04)</td>
<td>0.09*(0.04)</td>
<td>0.08*(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace climate</td>
<td>0.04***(0.04)</td>
<td>0.14***(0.04)</td>
<td>0.07****(0.06)</td>
<td>-0.01(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective wage</td>
<td>-0.12(0.04)</td>
<td>0.002(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.03)</td>
<td>-0.01(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee reps is constructive</td>
<td>-0.04(0.25)</td>
<td>-0.07(0.27)</td>
<td>-0.01(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.06(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of fixed term</td>
<td>-0.11(0.07)</td>
<td>0.38***(0.13)</td>
<td>0.21*(0.12)</td>
<td>-0.07(0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of organizations</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table 2 Marginal Effect of Logistic Regression on Organizations in 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Absenteeism</th>
<th>Britain</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Spain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% skilled worker</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.60***(0.14)</td>
<td>0.21***(0.09)</td>
<td>-0.12(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of employee take paid time off Training</td>
<td>-0.04(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.07)</td>
<td>-0.05(0.07)</td>
<td>-0.10(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Autonomy</td>
<td>-0.02(0.02)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.03(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.04(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive pay</td>
<td>0.06*(0.02)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>0.11****(0.04)</td>
<td>0.01(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% employee use flexible time</td>
<td>0.04*(0.02)</td>
<td>-0.05(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.01(0.07)</td>
<td>-0.03(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift work</td>
<td>0.08*(0.03)</td>
<td>0.10**(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.04(0.04)</td>
<td>0.08*(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 50+ workers</td>
<td>-0.02(0.08)</td>
<td>0.28(0.74)</td>
<td>0.07(0.11)</td>
<td>0.22****(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% permanent</td>
<td>0.08(0.05)</td>
<td>-0.00(0.08)</td>
<td>0.16*(0.08)</td>
<td>0.00(0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace climate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.03(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective wage</td>
<td>0.02(0.02)</td>
<td>0.04(0.03)</td>
<td>-0.01(0.03)</td>
<td>-0.06(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee reps is constructive</td>
<td>0.03(0.03)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.04)</td>
<td>-0.06(0.04)</td>
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</tbody>
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constructive Employment involvement culture

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.02(0.06)</th>
<th>-0.06(0.05)</th>
<th>-0.01(0.03)</th>
<th>0.08(0.04)</th>
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<td>487</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>694</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pseudo</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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*Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

**Heading**

This study made attempt to investigate the wide use of non-standard contract and its impact on workplace absenteeism, and produced econometric evidence on the relationships between high presences of temporary contracts is positively correlated with high absenteeism in Germany, but not in other countries. However, we found workplace climate is negatively and significantly correlated with workplace where report high absenteeism. The using of non-standard contract may reflect poor employment relations, therefore, using non-standard contract to cope with high absenteeism. Since the challenge to integrate non-standard contract workers with permeant contracted works, partly due to job insecurity faced by this group of workers (De Lange et al., 2013; McGinnity, 2004; Gehel, 2010), the high presence of non-standard contract may even deteriorate workplace climate, form a vicious circle of absenteeism.

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The role of trade unions in supporting victims of domestic violence in the workplace

In the UK trade unions have had a long-standing interest in highlighting the impact of domestic violence in the workplace, raising awareness of its effects on employees and encouraging employers to put domestic violence policies in place (Elgar & Parker 2006). At a local level union representatives have also been actively involved in supporting their members who are experiencing domestic violence. However, this is rarely examined in the literature. This presentation will draw on a small-scale study of representatives to explore the role that trade unions have in supporting victims of domestic violence in the workplace.

The scale and scope of domestic violence has long been recognised, with at least 30% of women and 16% of men suffering from domestic abuse during their lifetime in the UK (Bardens and Gay 2014:2). What is less well documented is the extent and impact of domestic violence on employees and workplaces. However, it is suggested 13% of staff are experiencing domestic violence in the workplace (TUC 2014:4). Research has shown that this can directly impact on an employee’s productivity, absenteeism, and employment prospects (Swanberg et al. 2007; O’Leary Kelly et al. 2008).

Workplaces can provide valuable support for employees who are experiencing domestic violence (Reeves and O’Leary-Kelly 2009). However, fear of disclosing their situation to an employer can make accessing this problematic (Swanberg et al. 2007). Thus, for many victims disciplinary sanctions can be a more common first response from their employer (Faichnie, 2010), as problems with absenteeism are misinterpreted by managers and HR professionals (EHRC/CIPD, 2013).

It is within this context that the role of unions becomes significant. Unions can collectively negotiate for better support and polices (Baird et al.2014). Provide resources for employers and representatives to support victims, and raise awareness (Elger and Parker 2006). Representatives can also assist staff directly, such as, signposting them to resources (Foreman 2006). Although, it is recognised that representatives need more training and support for these good practices to become commonplace (ILO 2013).

Method

The aim of this research was to explore the experiences of union representatives in responding to cases of domestic violence at work. With support from a regional TUC Women’s Committee, a cross section of unions and sectors agreed to participate. 18 semi-structured interviews were completed with full-time and lay officers.
Interviewees were asked about: organisational and union responses; their role in supporting victims of domestic violence; their preparedness for this role; any challenges; and the roles played by other organisational actors, such as line managers and HR.

Findings
Respondents detailed the wide range of resources many unions provided on domestic abuse, but also noted that it can be challenging to get domestic violence high on the agenda.

Representatives’ role is to support, advise and direct members to appropriate external agencies. Respondents highlighted that they could face challenges when: victims were reluctant to reveal their abuse, for fear of the consequences; and / or employers did not perceive that domestic violence was a workplace issue. In negotiating with line managers and HR professionals a good working relationship enabled representatives to agree a good solution for the employee. However, negative outcomes, such as dismissal, were not uncommon.

The impact on representatives in handling such cases is particularly under-examined, yet it can have a considerable effect on them. The representatives had not all had specific domestic violence training, rather they drew upon other life experiences and skills. Although representatives are clear that they are not counsellors, many acknowledged that remaining detached was not always easy. Supporting employees in these cases was noted to be very emotionally demanding and stressful. Several respondents explained that they needed additional support themselves at times, something unions may need to address.

In summary, this study builds upon previous research (Elger and Parker 2006, Foreman 2006, ILO 2013) demonstrating union representatives can have a crucial role to play in an employee being able to keep their job and access organisational support if experiencing domestic abuse.

However, representatives face challenges in providing that support due to issues of non-disclosure; and the lack of understanding and awareness within workplaces. Representatives’ capacity is also shaped by the support (or lack of) from other organisational actors and policies.

Furthermore, the study reveals there can be high expectations upon representatives to be able to manage domestic abuse cases. This is a role they may not have been trained for, nor have sufficient support for managing the personal impacts of the cases.

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The Trade Disputes Act 1927 revisited

Summary
This paper considers the current Trade Union Bill in the light of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act 1927, which it resembles in many ways. The 1927 Act declared certain strikes and lock-outs illegal; sought to prevent ‘intimidation’ by pickets; required that union members contributing to a political fund should ‘contract in’ rather than ‘contract out’; and prohibited civil servants from joining TUC-affiliated unions.

The paper addresses the legal settlement which predated the 1927 Act and the pressure for change within the Conservative Party, to which the General Strike gave added impetus. It then traces through the debates – both within the government and outside it – which preceded the 1927 Act. Finally, the effects of the Act are considered, and its aftermath, until it was finally repealed in 1946. The paper concludes by setting the 1927 Act, and the current Bill, within a framework of longstanding Conservative antipathy to the unions.

Literature
The paper engages closely with the historiography of the 1927 Act. The dominant scholarly view echoes that put forward by the government at the time: it represented a modest compromise, ‘a vacant threat rather than the crippling blow depicted by (Labour)’. The 1927 Act was remarkable for what it omitted rather than for what it included: it was the very minimum that Baldwin could have offered an irate Conservative Party and vengeful employers in the wake of the Strike. Some writers, mainly but not exclusively on the left, have, to the contrary, argued that the Conservatives were bent on political vengeance, and sought to ensnare the unions in restrictive legislation.

Methods
The paper is based on extensive archival research in the government papers of the time, together with the personal papers of leading participants such as Baldwin, Churchill and Hogg. Reference has been made to TUC and other union documents, and to the associated parliamentary debates. There is also substantial engagement with contemporary commentary on the Bill/Act, both favourable and hostile.

Conclusion
A number of important principles, hard won over the previous century, died in 1927. Unlike the legislation which had emerged since 1859, the 1927 Act was introduced without wide consultation. There was no Royal Commission, and no attempt to discover the views of the unions. The preceding legislation had largely removed industrial disputes from the purview of the courts. The Act reversed that process and
placed the unions, and their members, once more at the mercy of the law, including the criminal law. Importantly, the 1927 Act represented a sharp political departure. A feature of previous labour law debates had been the concerted drive, from the very top, to keep the unions and the courts apart. On this occasion, Baldwin’s leadership was feeble, either going along with Conservative partisanship or, at least, doing nothing to contain it.

The real-world impact of the 1927 Act is harder to assess. Was it, to quote Bevin, ‘more of an insult than an injury’? Insults matter; but there was, at least, potential injury as well. The Act redrew the legal landscape in relation to picketing and strikes. It was, in all probability, the weakness of the union movement in the inter-war years which ensured a trickle rather than a flood of litigation. Certainly, the healing process which had been promised at the end of the General Strike did not come to fruition.

The leading scholar on the legislation was surely right to say that the 1927 Act was ‘a typical product of Conservatism’, but perhaps not in the way that he intended this assessment in 1971. The Act largely emerged from pre-existing pressures within the Tory party, as over the levy, which had little to do with the effects of the Strike. Taking the longer view, it is now apparent that this was a very Conservative product indeed. With the exception of a brief interlude in the 1950s, when some Conservatives accepted that ‘the trade unions are ... an estate of the realm’, their preference has been to impose legislation upon an unwilling union movement. The 1927 Act sits comfortably within a longstanding pattern of Conservative distrust of the unions. Indeed, it could be argued that Conservatism as a political tradition readily defaults to antagonism towards trade unionism. This position embraces hostility to picketing and secondary action, mistrust of union ‘political’ activities, and support for ballots prior to strikes.

The new Trade Union Bill owes something to the debates of 1926/7. The proposals include stricter ballot thresholds for industrial action (especially in ‘important public services’), further restraints on picketing and a requirement for opting in by union members to contribute to political funds.

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Temporal flexibility: scheduling gifts and the obscuring of employment relations

Numerous accounts of work have emphasised the ways in which the labour process and employment relations can be obscured. Burawoy (1979) goes as far as to argue that the obscuring of the labour process is a central feature of capitalist employment. Burawoy (1979); Durand and Stewart (1998); Heyes (1997); Pollert (1981) and Peng (2011) all demonstrate the ways in which a variety of ‘work games’ act to mystify the nature of the workplace and experiences of employment. Findings from the above studies of manufacturing highlight that work games can take a variety of forms. Work games can be based upon the speed of producing goods, reshaping working time and even flirting with managers. Additionally, Leidner (1993) and Sallaz (2009; 2015) find similar games obscuring the service sector workplaces which they study. Other researchers, such as Batstone et al. (1977); Gallie (1978) and Kelly (1998) stress the importance of trade union leaders and activists in framing workers’ understanding of their situation. More recently it has been argued that contemporary firms make use of direct ‘normative controls’ which cause workers to accept and internalise managerial obligations and definitions of the work situation (Kunda, 1992; Vallas, 2003). These normative controls are usually argued to operate via the ‘high performance team systems’ associated with the post-Fordist paradigm.

Bourdieu (1998: 84-85 [emphasis in original]) provides an alternative means by which employment relations may be concealed from workers. He argues that contemporary flexible work is marked by ‘a mode of domination of a new kind, based on the creation of a generalised and permanent state of insecurity.’ In order to elaborate upon this suggestion, it is necessary to connect it to Bourdieu’s primary mechanism of domination – symbolic violence (Thompson, 1984). Bourdieu (1977) illustrates his concept of symbolic violence through the giving of gifts amongst Kabyle peasants in northern Algeria. He shows how the exchange of gifts, which cannot be reciprocated, binds debtor to giver through moral obligations, while shrouding it as a gesture of generosity. According to Bourdieu, such acts of symbolic violence are especially prevalent when developed institutions which maintain domination in other forms are absent.

The current paper elucidates upon Bourdieu’s insights in order to argue that in the contemporary workplace ‘schedule gifts’ can act as a powerful means by which employment relations are obscured. It is argued that the use of manager-controlled flexible scheduling affords managers significant discretionary power over workers’ work-life balance and job quality (Wood, Forthcoming). This practice, therefore, creates a workplace environment which requires workers to beg managers to alter schedules so as to limit this harm. Managers respond by bestowing ‘schedule gifts’ upon workers. Workers are shown to be unable to reciprocate these schedule gifts and thus experience them as acts of kindness which generate feelings of gratitude and a moral obligation to work hard. Under such conditions, employment is not
experienced as simply the impersonal exchange of X money for Y labour, but rather as the need to repay what appears to be managers’ acts of compassion, caring and friendship.

The above account is developed through the use of two ‘extended cases’ (Burawoy, 2009). The cases represent two of the largest private sector employers in North America and Europe. Both employers are retailers with similar positions within their domestic markets and are named ShopPLC and RetailCorp. Through combining participant observation of work and union organising with 81 semi-structured interviews of workers and union officials, an in-depth account is developed of the operation of schedule gifts and the manner in which they obscure the workplace. These cases also highlight the limits of other mystifying mechanisms.

Although the findings are drawn from just two cases analysis of the 2010 European Working Conditions Survey shows that the number of UK employees experiencing manager-controlled flexible scheduling has grown to 24 percent. This suggests that the obscuring effects of schedule gifts may be a widespread and growing workplace experience. As we consider what 2020 and beyond holds for workers, the findings of this study highlight that the victims of increasingly exploitative employment may not recognise it as such. This will have profound implications for the attempts to improve working life.

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Parker, J., Carr, S., Arrowsmith, J. and Jones, H.

Exploring the living wage and the idea of an income 'tipping point': Qualitative evidence from New Zealand

Much discussion of “decent” incomes has focused on “minimum wages” which are usually legal minima applied to particular sectors or across economies, providing a basic safety net for the working poor in conjunction with transferable benefits (International Labour Organization (ILO), 2013). In recent times, attention has gradually shifted to the levels of incomes that are more concerned with quality of life than basic subsistence (Stevenson and Wolfers, 2013). This broader notion of quality-of-living also encompasses work-life matters such as employment relations and representation, including a sense of workplace empowerment (Luce, 2011). A living wage has therefore emerged and is often defined in terms of enabling meaningful participation in society beyond mere survival through, for example, recreation, supporting a family and saving for the future (Fairris and Reich, 2005). A living wage is predicated on the notion that there is a discrete income below which people risk further deprivation, but above which there should be a qualitative upward shift in human capability. A sense of workplace justice, job satisfaction and life satisfaction can be regarded as prominent indicators of thriving that living wages theoretically enable (Carr, Parker, Arrowsmith and Watters, 2016).

Problematically, however, there is an absence of empirical evidence and agreement on what actual economic value constitutes a living wage in these terms in diverse contexts. One of the challenges is the difficulty of calculating an actual living wage as a result of different perceptions of what forms basic needs. Cost-based calculations exist (e.g. Anker, 2011), providing a departure point for economics-based living wage decisions by employers. Yet, key issues with the calculation of a living wage include that it is inflexible, with many of the workers whom the living wage aims to assist coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds and/or having bigger families to support.

In the context of New Zealand, this paper aims to establish our understanding of the economic value of a living wage, and to explore employees’ narratives on the mechanism and effects of a living wage. It investigates the notion of a living wage via a qualitative exploration of individual narratives derived from the responses of 606 employees to a nation-wide survey conducted in 2014. Utilising NVivo 11, a qualitative computer analytical tool, content analysis was used to classify and triangulate information and to examine relationships in the sample data. Whilst most respondents were from larger organisations and in full-time employment, their personal and familial characteristics (e.g. gender, age, household size, occupation, income level) reflect the considerable diversity of New Zealand workers (Sayers and Ang, 2013).
Both unique points and shared themes were surfaced via this form of investigation. The findings demonstrate that the respondents’ perceived wage satisfaction increased significantly between an annual income of NZD$30,000 (GBP£14,000) and NZD$40,000 (GBP£19,000), suggesting a pivot income range in which people move from “survival” to perceived “decent” income. Further analysis of the narratives reveals increasing costs of living, job security, and fairness as the major concerns in relation to wages. The results highlight a discernible point whereby employees perceive a step-change in terms of how they and their family are empowered by their work income. In addition, the study reveals personal and contextualised connections between the perceived impact of wages on personal, family and organisational well-being. Furthermore, it provides a significant qualitative empirical input into a literature which is dominated by quantitative findings. In terms of policy, too, the study suggests that interventions based on a living rather than subsistence minimum wage have the potential to release wider in-work and social benefits through enhanced capabilities and satisfaction.

References


Can What Counts Be Counted? The Employment Relations Impacts of Marketization and NPM in Voluntary Sector Social Care

This paper discusses the growing marketization of care which has resulted from increasing financial austerity and the shift towards customer-orientated norms caused by personalisation and Self-Directed Support (SDS), and corresponding the impact on employee relations. While at policy level personalisation is premised on choice, discretion and empowerment for service users, much of the dialogue at organisational level centres around cost cutting and budgetary realignment. The aim of this research is to examine the workforce impacts of neo-liberal operating practices, ‘outcome measure’ styled target setting, and the principles associated with New Public Management (NPM) in the context of voluntary sector social care.

The use of funding contracts premised on performance criteria has been a longstanding feature of the voluntary sector landscape, but has been significantly intensified by recent developments in SDS. The shifting balance of power which results from service users directly controlling their own budgets has, and in a sense, effectively made them “customers.” This relationship exerts a new form of pressure on employee relations which is as yet relatively unstudied and unchallenged.

Contextual elements of this research are informed by literatures surrounding public sector reform as characterised by personalisation and SDS (Manthorpe et al., 2011; Duffy, Waters and Glasby, 2010; Ellis, 2007), and NPM (Diefenbach, 2009; Page, 2005). Employee relation aspects chiefly concern VSE and commitment-based literature (Cunningham, 2001, 2008; Baines, 2006; Alatrista and Arrowsmith, 2004, Ridder and McCandless, 2011). In addition, developments in personalisation which lead towards an increase in customer-focus are examined in relation to Customer Oriented Bureaucracy (Korcsynski, 2002; Korczynski, Shire, Frenkel and Tam, 2000). This dynamic adds an additional layer of pressure onto the provision of support and care, and is already visible in other related sectors such as healthcare (Bolton, 2002, 2004).

The research is comprised of two case studies, which were conducted in Scottish voluntary sector organisations between March-July 2015, consisting of 30 semi-structured interviews overall. Participants were sourced from a variety of geographical locations and levels of responsibility. The resulting analysis would strongly suggest that this market-based approach to the provision of care does not create an accurate portrayal of care work due to an inability to enumerate care competencies, which cannot be categorised as “observable behaviours” (Bunning, 2004). The increased burden of paperwork and faux-accountability, each specific to the multitude of individual funders which organisations must cater to, imposes new and unsustainable pressures on the voluntary sector workforce. Additionally, it has
the potential to foster disengagement amongst front-line and managerial staff alike, by demonstrating a clear misunderstanding and undervaluing of the work they do.

Where artificial ‘outcome measure’ style targets do not accurately account for care, employees are compelled to fulfil these monitoring requirements for the sake of demonstrating productivity in order to apply for funding, while simultaneously maintaining acceptable standards of care for service users. The analysis which results highlights the reality that, where shortfalls in service provision do occur, front-line staff are faced with the unenviable decision of working beyond their explicitly stated terms and conditions, or allowing service users to go without adequate care.

Notions of ‘self-sacrificing’ behaviour (Baines and Cunningham, 2011) which are intrinsic to voluntary sector motivation, demonstrated via factors such as high volumes of unpaid overtime (Almond and Kendall, 2000), mean that employees may be unable to object to the degradation which results, often pushing themselves towards breaking point, burnout, and unacceptable levels of workplace stress (Lait and Wallace, 2002, Kirkpatrick et al., 2005). To put their own needs ahead of those of service users could be regarded as being at odds with the ethical nature of their role, and this tension places untenable pressure on the nature of their employment relationship. This research concludes that employees are constrained by the ethical nature of their commitment and motivations, and are unable to object, or in some instances even detect, the degradation which inevitably takes place in relation to their own terms and conditions of employment. Additionally, a perverse incentive exits whereby the meeting of these targets leads to their becoming successively more challenging (Baines, 2006), therefore the predicament becomes progressively more severe. Ultimately, the NPM-style operating practices which have become prevalent in voluntary sector social care have significantly intensified the process of work to potentially unsustainable levels, and pose a critical challenge to effective employee relations.

References