

**A Comparative Study of
Administrative Practices in American and British Unions**

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Introduction

Trade unions around the world have faced numerous challenges and an increasingly hostile environment over the last few decades. In response, unions have expended significant effort to develop new and innovative organizing, bargaining, and political strategies in order to address the increasingly difficult circumstances they face. Scholars have acknowledged the importance of these efforts and have focused a considerable amount of attention on them (Bronfenbrenner and Hickey 2004; USDOL 2012; Mann 2012). Less attention has been paid to the issue of how unions are adapting their own internal administrative policies and practices to become more efficient and effective organizations.

This paper presents the results of a longitudinal study of the administrative policies and practices of American and British unions over a period of two decades. The authors conducted surveys in 1990 and 1993, and again in 2010 and 2011, that focused on individual union policies and practices involving human resources, hiring, budgeting, and strategic planning. The longitudinal nature of the study makes it possible to examine how policies and practices in these areas changed over time in U.S. and U.K. unions. The comparative aspect of the survey makes it possible to examine how unions in two countries utilized these administrative policies and practices over a particularly eventful twenty year period.

Background

In contrast with the voluminous literature on administrative practices in business and government (and emerging studies of non-profits), little attention has been given to the internal management of labor unions. This disregard dates back to their early history in the

nineteenth century. Both in the U. S. and the U. K., unions formed as loose knit associations of working people (somewhat analogous to the current Occupy Wall Street model), staffed by volunteers and eschewing formal policies, procedures, and organizational structures.

Academic observers focused on their missions and evolving forms (for U.S. see Commons 1918; for U.K., Webb & Webb, 1918, 1919) and emphasized their external impact and internal governance (Edelstein and Warner 1975; Warner, 1973).

As unions matured, becoming national organizations, servicing the economic and political needs of thousands of geographically dispersed members, negotiating and administering long term contracts with employers, collecting and dispersing millions of dollars in dues money, and employing hundreds of full time staff, observers began to note their characteristics in comparison with other organizations of similar size, scope, and impact (Lester 1958). The political imperative governed decision-making, according to Jack Barbash, U.S. union official and scholar (1959), and U.K. authors Hugh Clegg (1961) and Ben Roberts (1956). Harvard Professors Derek Bok and John Dunlop wrote that “judged by contemporary standards of administration, labor unions leave much to be desired” (1970). Another U.S. academic observer, Harold Wilensky, characterized the state of national unions as “administrative chaos” (1956).

Generally accepted standards of administration, as summarized by Dunlop in *Management of Unions* (1990) include:

- 1) the management of human resources, including recruiting qualified personnel to carry out the work of the organization; matching skills of personnel to tasks to be performed; rewarding employees to achieve maximum effectiveness, etc.;

- 2) the budgeting of income against projected expenditures, allocating resources among the various programs and activities of the organization in relation to priority goals;
- 3) strategic planning to assess the environment in relation to priority goals; and
- 4) the evaluation of program results in order to correct course in the present and improve results in the future.

Studies of the internal operations of unions in the 1980's and 90's reported that unions rarely followed these generally accepted principles of organizational administration. With respect to human resources management, observers noted that political considerations dominated the selection of leaders and staff, limiting the pool for selections and constraining the search for the best qualified candidates (regarding the U.S., see Dunlop 1990; regarding the U.K., see Watson 1988). Unions had no formal qualification requirements for appointment to staff or election to office and, unlike other professions, no generally accepted course of staff and officer training (U.S., see Gray 1995; Dunlop 1990; U.K., see Kelly and Heery 1994). Compensation practices were haphazard and arbitrary, resulting in serious inequities (U.S., see Stamm 1969; U.K., see Kelly and Heery 1994). The resulting dissatisfaction spurred unionization of staff members (Stamm 1969; Clark 1989). Budgeting was an ad hoc, rather than a planned and targeted, process for most U.S. unions and strategic planning and evaluation were virtually non-existent (Gray, 1982-1995 interviews with national union presidents; Dunlop, 1990).

The 1980s was, however, a time of awakening to the need for innovation within the union movement (Delaney, Fiorito, and Jarley 1991). As reported by Weil (1994) and Stratton and Brown (1988), Dunlop and his former students helped several national unions

develop and implement strategic plans for achieving innovative goals with enhanced effectiveness. These signs of change inspired a search for best practices through a survey of administrative practices in unions in the U.S., the U. K., and Canada in 1990 (Clark, Gray, Gilbert and Solomon, 1998) and again in the U.S. and U.K. as reported in this article.

Data Collection and Analysis

In 1990, Clark, Gilbert, Gray, and Solomon asked 110 U.S.-based national and international unions to complete a questionnaire about their internal administrative policies and practices. Forty-eight (48) unions returned completed questionnaires for a response rate of 44 percent. In 1993 questionnaires adapted from this instrument were sent to the 86 national unions in the U.K. Sixty-one (61) of the 86 unions completed the questionnaire for a 71 percent response rate.

In 2010, Clark, Gilbert, Gray, and Whitehead again asked sixty U.S.-based national and international unions to provide information on their internal administrative policies and practices by filling out a questionnaire. Thirty-five of the sixty national unions completed and returned surveys for a response rate of 58.3 percent. In 2011 the authors also sent questionnaires to 56 Trade Union Congress (TUC)-affiliated and 40 non-TUC affiliated national unions in the U.K for the purpose of this study. Forty-six unions returned questionnaires for a 48 percent response rate.

Each version of the survey instrument included questions on human resource, hiring, budget, strategic planning, and evaluation processes and practices. Additional questions in each version of the instrument asked about membership levels, membership trends, and the sectors in which members were employed. In some areas, questions were added or changed

based on the findings of the 1990/1993 surveys. In all four instances--the 1990 and 2010 U.S. surveys and the 1993 and 2011 U.K. surveys--the union respondents were asked to answer the above questions in reference to different classifications of staff. This paper focuses largely on policies and practices involving headquarters professional staff, although in some areas results for field/regional professional staff are included.¹ In these cases, comparisons are made between the two types of staff.

This paper will present and compare the 2010/2011 results for both U.S. and U.K. unions in each of the administrative practices areas. Where possible, it will also compare the 1990/1993 results with the 2010/2011 findings

Results from the 1990/1993 version of this study, as well as preliminary analysis of the data gathered for the 2010/2011 version, indicate that, generally, unions with fewer than 50,000 members are much less likely to employ systematic administrative practices than are their larger counterparts. Interviews with unions in the U.S. and the U.K. have confirmed our assumption that in many cases these smaller unions simply do not have the financial resources to widely adopt such practices. In other words, the absence of systematic administrative practices in small unions is not necessarily a matter of choice, but of financial circumstances. For this reason, the analysis that follows focuses on unions with memberships of 50,000 or more.

¹ Headquarters professional staff are usually specialists with advanced training and/or experience in such areas as law, politics and legislation, education, economics, communications, and advanced technology or generalists with significant experience in collective bargaining, contract administration, and organizing. Field professional staff are generally involved in direct representation capacities, including organizing, bargaining, or settling grievances and disputes with employers on behalf of the members the union represents.

Findings

The findings from this study suggest that over the last twenty years unions with the capacity to do so have increasingly adopted more formal, systematic human resource policies and practices and they have continued to turn to consultants to supplement their workforce. They are also engaging in more formal budgeting practices. And they have made much greater use of the fundamental administrative tools of strategic planning and assessment.

Human Resource and Hiring Practices and Policies--Table 1 provides survey results regarding the percentage of respondent unions with more than 50,000 members that had formal, written human resources policies for headquarters professional staff in seven areas in 1990/1993 and in ten areas in 2010/2011. The findings show that in 2010 a majority of U.S. unions had written policies in four of ten human resources areas, whereas twenty years earlier a majority of unions had written policies in only one area (discipline and discharge). They also show an increase in the last twenty years in the percentage of unions with formal policies in six of the seven areas included in the 1990 survey.

For U.K. unions, Table 1 shows that between 1993 and 2011 the percentage of unions with formal written policies for headquarters professional staff increased in four of the seven human resources areas. It also indicates that a majority of U.K. unions responding to the survey in 1993 had written policies in three of seven areas. By 2011, that number increased to seven of ten issues.

It is interesting to note that a comparison of the results in Table 1 for U.S. and U.K. unions indicates that in 1990/1993 a greater percentage of U.K. union respondents had written policies in six of the seven areas included in the survey. In 2010/2011 British unions were

still more likely to have written human resource policies than American unions. This was, in fact, the case for nine of the ten policies included in the 2010/2011 survey.

In sum, the data clearly indicate that unions in both countries have moved toward more formal, systematic human resources policies for headquarters professional employees, but that British unions employ these policies to a greater degree than do American unions.

Table 1
Written Personnel Policies for Headquarters Staff,
U.S. & U.K. Unions w/50,000+ Members, 1990/1993, 2010/2011
(percent)

	U.S. Headquarters Professional Staff		U.K. Headquarters Professional Staff	
	1990	2010	1993	2011
Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action	52	60	86	67
Discipline and Discharge	44	72	86	78
Hiring	48	56	64	67
Performance Appraisal	26	40	14	44
Promotion	26	40	50	44
Salary Review	37	36	40	67
Training	30	44	50	67
Ethics	n.a.	18	n.a.	33
Sexual Harassment	n.a.	80	n.a.	67
Workplace Privacy	n.a.	48	n.a.	67
	n=27	n=25	n=14	n=9

The 2010 U.S. and the 2011 U.K. surveys both included questions about union staff hiring practices. As indicated in Table 2 below, the analysis found that only a small percentage of respondent unions in both the U.S. and the U.K. required current membership or prior election or appointment to union office as a qualification for employment as a member of the union's headquarters professional staff.

The survey results also indicated that while a very high percentage of U.S. unions (88 percent) hire individuals without previous experience working for a union for their headquarters professional staff, fewer than half (48 percent) do so for their field/regional staff. U.K. unions, on the other hand, do not appear to make this distinction. Most U.K. unions hire people from outside the labor movement for headquarters professional staff just as readily as U.S. unions. However, they are much more likely than American unions to hire individuals without prior union experience for their field/regional staff.

British and American unions have quite similar practices when it comes to hiring staff who have previously worked for other unions. A very high percentage of unions in both countries hire such people for their headquarters professional staff (92 percent for U.S. unions; 89 percent for unions in the U.K.). Most British unions hire field/regional staff who have worked at other unions, although the percentage (67 percent) that do is somewhat lower than that for headquarters staff. A majority of American unions engage in the same practice, and the percentage of unions doing so (80) is higher than that of U.K. unions.

It makes sense that unions in the U.S. and the U.K. are open to hiring headquarters professional staff who have worked at other unions. Such professional staff members work in a range of areas, including research, law, education, communications, and legislation and politics. And while staff need to be knowledgeable about the issues in these areas that are specific to the sector or sectors of a given union and the occupation or occupations in which the members of that union work, that knowledge can be readily acquired if the staff person has the skills and background required of professionals in those lines of work. It is, therefore, not surprising that a national union might hire a legal or political professional that has worked at one or more other unions.

Table 2
Union Hiring Practices,
U.S. & U.K. Unions w/50,000+ Members, 2010/2011

Percent of unions that:	<u>U.S.</u> <u>2010</u>	<u>U.K.</u> <u>2011</u>
--require current membership as a qualification for appointment to the headquarters professional staff	29	11
--require prior election or appointment to union office at some level as a qualification for appointment to the headquarters professional staff	8	11
--have hired headquarters professional staff who have no previous experience working for a union	88	89
--have hired field professional staff who have no previous experience working for a union	48	78
--have hired headquarters professional staff who have previously worked for other unions	92	89
--have hired field/regional professional staff who have previously worked for other unions	80	67
--require specific degrees or training as a qualification for appointment to the headquarters professional staff	58	56
--say a college degree is a very important or somewhat important consideration in hiring:		
--headquarters professional staff	84	75
--field/regional professional staff	54	38
	n=25	n=9

The fact that unions tend to hire professionals who have worked for another union to a greater degree for headquarters staff than for field/regional staff also appears to make sense for at least two reasons. First, it is likely that a far higher percentage of staff at the field/regional level

work in direct representation capacities, i.e. organizing, bargaining, or settling grievances and disputes with employers on behalf of their members. This type of work is much more dependent on local knowledge of employers, employees, and specific workplaces and employment relationships, knowledge that individuals within the union are more likely to have than outsiders. The second reason is that most large unions in both the U.S. and the U.K. have their headquarters in the Washington D.C. and London areas respectively. This creates a regional labor market for union professionals that facilitates the movement of staff across unions. Since union field and regional offices are spread more widely geographically and these offices usually do not have ready access to a pool of union professionals, they have fewer opportunities to hire staff working for other unions.

The survey results also suggest that about half of the respondent unions from both the U.S. and the U.K. require specific degrees or training as a qualification for appointment to the headquarters professional staff. However, U.S. unions appear to place a significantly greater value on college degrees when making staff hiring decisions. Eighty-four (84) percent of U.S. respondents indicated that a college degree is a very important or somewhat important consideration in hiring headquarters professional staff and 54 percent reported that a degree was similarly important in hiring field/regional staff. A slightly lower percentage of U.K. unions (75 percent) placed similar value on degrees in the headquarters staff-hiring process, while only 38 percent indicated this was a very important or somewhat important consideration in hiring field/regional professional staff.

The increasing importance of specific training and degrees for union staff is most likely a reflection of the increasingly complex challenges that face labor organizations in

both countries and the increasing sophistication of the strategies unions employ to address these challenges. Certainly, in today's increasingly litigious society, unions are required to devote more time and attention to the legal dimensions of everything they do. In addition, unions require staff with greater economic and financial expertise than was necessary just a few decades ago. And like any organization, unions need to employ staff with knowledge of, and background in, the range of computer, communications, and media technologies they use on a daily basis.

The 2010/2011 surveys asked unions whether they had a human resources director and/or department to handle internal personnel matters. In 2010, 72 percent of U.S. unions with more than 50,000 members indicated they had such a position or department. And in 2011, British unions reported that 78 percent of unions with more than 50,000 members employed a human resources director or a human resource department. At the same point in time, the percentage of unions with less than 50,000 members who reported having a human resources director or human resource department was only eleven percent for both U.S. and U.K. unions.

This finding clearly indicates that larger unions in both countries are much more likely to employ human resource professionals than are smaller unions. Two possible reasons are that smaller unions simply cannot afford to hire such professionals and so make these duties part of the responsibility of administrators with duties in other areas and that larger unions, which have the resources, feel a need to do so because of the increasing complexity involved in hiring and employing staff. In the case of the U.S., the increase in the employment of a human resource director or department is consistent with the increase in written human resource policies suggested by Table 1.

Table 3
Human Resource Directors or Departments
In U.S. & U.K. Unions w/50,000+ Members, 2010/2011

	U.S.		U.K.	
	<50,000	>50,000	<50,000	>50,000
Percent of unions that:				
--have a human resources director or department	11	72	11	78
	n=9	n=25	n=36	n=9

For both countries, an additional area the union administrative practices surveys asked unions about was their use of outside consultants to supplement the expertise of in-house staff. Table 4 indicates the percentage of unions with more than 50,000 members that indicated they employed consultants to provide various services in 2010/2011. The results suggest that while unions in both the U.S. and the U.K. used consultants in many areas, U.S. unions employed outside experts to a much greater degree than U.K. unions. In fact, a higher percentage of American unions used consultants in twelve of the sixteen areas included in the 2010/2011 survey. And in several areas—economic analysis, public relations/communications, lobbying, travel, and corporate campaigns—U.S. unions used consultants to a much greater degree than their U.K. counterparts. It is also worth noting that the two areas in which unions most often used consultants were identical for both U.S. and U.K unions (legal work and computer services and technology).

Table 4
Use of Outside Consultants
in U.S. & U.K. Unions w/50,000+ Members, 2010/2011

<u>Percent of unions that</u> <u>use outside consultants</u> <u>to assist with:</u>	<u>U.S.</u> <u>2010</u>	<u>U.K.</u> <u>2011</u>
--computer services & technology	79	89
--economic analysis	38	0
--financial planning	25	11
--containment of union's benefit costs	46	44
--organizational analysis	21	0
--personnel recruitment	21	22
--public relations/communications	50	22
--training	29	67
--political work	33	11
--lobbying	38	0
--travel	46	11
--legal	88	68
--corporate campaigns	29	0
--organizing techniques & strategies	17	0
--leadership development	58	44
--occupational safety and health	8	33
	n=25	n=9

The 2010/2011 union administrative practices questionnaire also included items focusing on the budgeting, strategic planning, and assessment practices of unions. Both surveys asked the responding unions if they developed an annual budget with planned expenditures by function or department. In 2010, 75 percent of the U.S. union respondents with more than 50,000 members indicated they engaged in this practice, while, surprisingly, an even larger percentage of unions with memberships of less than 50,000 (89 percent) said they did (see Table 5). One hundred (100) percent of British unions in the survey (both large and small) reported that they had a formal budget each year.

The survey results regarding the employment of a formal strategic planning process are also presented in Table 5. The results indicate that in 2010/2011 U.S. unions employed this process less often than British unions. They also indicate that smaller unions in both the U.S. and U.K. used this process more than larger unions. Sixty-four (64) percent of American unions with more than 50,000 reported using strategic planning, while 75 percent with less than 50,000 members engaged in this practice. The results in this area for U.K. unions were 94 and 89 percent respectively.

The 2010/2011 surveys also asked unions that engage in strategic planning whether they have a systematic evaluation process for planned activities. As Table 5 suggests, in this area larger unions appear to be more active than smaller unions. Sixty-nine (69) percent of American unions with memberships of more than 50,000 reported using an evaluation

Table 5
Financial and Strategic Planning Practices
in U.S. & U.K. Unions w/50,000+, 2010/2011

Percent of unions that:	U.S.		U.K.	
	<50,000	>50,000	<50,000	>50,000
--develop an annual budget with planned expenditures by function or department	89 n=9	72 n=24	100 n=36	100 n=9
--employ a formal strategic planning process	75 n=8	64 n=24	94 n=36	89 n=9
--have a systematic evaluation process for planned activities	50 n=6	69 n=16	41 n=34	56 n=8

process; 56 percent of large British unions also indicated they used such processes. However, only fifty percent of U.S. unions with less than 50,000 members and 41 percent of similarly sized unions in the U.K. reported that they engaged in the evaluation of planned activities.

Discussion

The findings outlined above clearly suggest that both in the U.S. and U.K. a majority of unions with 50,000 or more members are moving toward more formal and systematic administrative practices. While there is no definitive statistical proof of cause and effect, interviews with union officials and observations by other researchers suggest both external and internal pressures have induced American and British unions to seek ways to become more effective and efficient. The primary impetus comes from declines in resources in a period when unions are experiencing increasing demands to meet the challenges of a hostile political and economic environment. The need to get “more bang for the buck” from a shrinking dues base has focused the attention of labor organizations on budgets, strategic planning, assessment, and new ways to recruit, employ, and multiply the impact of human and financial resources.

Other external pressures include legislative mandates affecting human resource practices (e.g. equal opportunity employment laws), prevention of sexual harassment, and family and medical leave requirements. In addition, in the U.S. changes to the reporting requirements mandated by the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) have expanded the time and effort labor organizations must devote to recordkeeping in order to meet their responsibilities under the law. In the U.K., unions have also seen their financial reporting obligations increase under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Consolidation Act

1992 (TULRCA). This law requires British trade unions to make their financial and accounting records available to their members and annually submit a set of audited records to the government (Lund 2009).

In the U.K., financial pressure led to a meeting at which four TUC and non-TUC affiliated unions discussed the setting up of a services company to achieve administrative efficiency in “non-bargaining and non-representative activities” while remaining distinctive entities to their members, and three trade unions were involved in a joint approach to computer suppliers and developing joint policies to private contractors before merging (Willman, et al 1994:409).

In the U.S., innovations in administration are further encouraged by national federations and the example of other unions. For many years, the meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Board and its standing committees have provided a useful, if informal, forum for union leaders to exchange new programmatic and administrative ideas. Likewise, the AFL-CIO has regularly called together its affiliates’ department heads in organizing, political action, and law to share information on productive internal practices.

Perhaps most significantly, the AFL-CIO, under the influence of former Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, began the practice in the late 1990s of bringing national secretary-treasurers together to discuss more effective methods of administration. Today this practice continues under the leadership of current AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler. More recently, the human resource directors of AFL-CIO unions have also begun to hold periodic meetings to share information and best practices (Gray 1981; Clark 1992). In contrast this does not appear to be the case in the U.K. where unions contacted were unaware of such activities by their federation. Some British unions, however, have had their staff and officers

participate in training in management practices conducted by one of the U.K.'s business schools

Historically, unions have caused employers to adopt better, more systematic, employment practices. Employers do so because unions increase the employers' costs by negotiating higher wages and benefits and placing restrictions on work rules and process. This provides an incentive for employers to, in turn, search for efficiencies to offset those increased costs. Staff unions (unions formed to represent the clerical and professional employees of unions) appear to have had this same effect on the labor organizations that employ their members. The unionization of staff places pressure on labor organizations to standardize union human resource practices (Clark 1989). This is one explanation why some unions have adopted written human resource policies and others have not.

An additional factor responsible for unions adopting more sophisticated and effective administrative practices is that, over time, the proportion of national union leaders and staff who have attended college, and even graduate school or law school, has grown. As a result, more and more union leaders and administrators have been exposed, via higher and/or continuing education, to theories and principles of organizational management. This exposure makes it more likely that they will look outside their organizations for ideas about management and administration and that they will be open to change.

Exposure may also come from less formal means in terms of negotiating management practices with other employer organizations. In the U.K., for example, several of the larger unions have been involved in equal pay campaigns promoting job evaluation and are now introducing job evaluation schemes into their own organizations. Certainly employees and officers of the union would be likely to see the irony of their own union/employers promoting

better administrative practices for their members' employers, while not doing so for their own employees.

Surveys, like the one focused on union administrative practices discussed in this paper, yield generalizations about trends. However, it is important to note, as Alice Cook (1962) pointed out long ago, that "no two unions are alike." According to Robert Hoxie (1926), an early historian of the American labor movement, the individuality of each union springs from "pluralistic causal factors," but, he noted, union practices show an "evolutionary quality." Each union has its own unique set of administrative policies and practices reflecting the history and traditions of the organization, as well as the industry and occupations of its members, its union structure and government, and its leadership characteristics and philosophy.

Behind the general trends in practice are wide variations among unions. For example, from their inception, unions representing actors, directors, athletes, and pilots emulated many of the administrative practices of business and government. They employed full time managers and hired staff, based on defined qualifications, from outside the ranks of the membership, and they procured professional expertise to meet their financial and organizational needs. In contrast, unions representing skilled crafts and industrial unions in the manufacturing sector generally elected officials and recruited staff from within their own memberships, while public sector and service employee unions looked both inside and outside for qualified staff and innovative ideas about administrative policies. Given this range of practice, there is a need for data collection which examines individual union practices in depth with an attention to impact on efficiency and effectiveness.

The interviews conducted for this study illustrate this variation. For example, a U.S.-based craft union reported that it continues to recruit from its membership ranks but chooses to hire members having college degrees. Whatever the educational background of its new hires, this union develops all staff through training programs at the AFL-CIO's National Labor College or other local universities. This craft union reported having no formal human resource policies or budgeting process, but even as a self-described "traditional" union, it has in recent years conducted a three day retreat for officers and department heads, probably "a first step toward strategic planning."

By contrast, a large American public sector union conducts a strategic planning process that enlists its department heads in a rigorous process. As a result, the human resources director reported an increasingly close "strategic partnership" between the human resources department and top union leaders. One product of this has been an awareness by the union of an impending wave of retirements by senior staff. Given this knowledge, the union has developed a succession plan and talent development initiative that is unusually systematic for an American union

Still another example comes from a professional union that follows administrative practices comparable to those of a medium-sized business. This professional union evaluates its employees' performance either annually or semi-annually, links pay to the results of those assessments, and conducts rigorous budgeting and strategic planning processes. The latter, according to the union's human resources director, "helps drive partnerships and dialogue" in the union. "It links our goals and what employees do...[it's] a carrier of innovation."

Unions benefit in a number of ways from investing in efficient administrative practices. These practices can save unions money, provide better support for individuals and

departments carrying out the programs of the union, and encourage greater professionalism in all aspects of the organization. However, the last example points out what may be the most important benefit--the possible relationship between the implementation of more systematic, sophisticated administrative policies and practices and strategic innovation. In their survey of national unions, Delaney et al. (1991) found that innovation in administration leads to innovation in strategy and function. The findings of this study appear to support that conclusion.

Future Research

While the surveys conducted in 1990 and 1993 and again in 2010 and 2011 identify trends and shed light regarding the evolution of union administrative practices in the American and British labor movements, many questions remain about this facet of labor organizations that can only be answered through further research and analysis. Among these are: What are the implications of more sophisticated administration for the quality of worker representation provided by unions in these two countries? Do these practices give members increased voice in how their organizations are run or do they contribute to a greater bureaucratization of union functions? Better budgeting practices and strategic planning might be expected to produce more effective and targeted results from shrinking union dollars, but is there a downside in terms of the decision making process and its impact on member involvement in supporting organizational goals? Human resource management, as practiced in other organizations, should result in the selection of better qualified personnel and more equitable treatment, positively impacting performance, but how does recruitment outside the ranks of the membership affect membership commitment and morale? Consultants supply

expertise to increase union effectiveness in political and legislative action, internal communications, public relations, and financial management, however, does outsourcing of decisions and activities threaten democratic leadership and rank and file involvement? Future research will be required to answer these questions.

Conclusion

In sum, this paper reports the latest results of a series of longitudinal studies of union administrative practices based on surveys of U.S. and U.K. unions conducted between 1990 and 2011. Specifically, the results indicate that over the last twenty years unions have increasingly adopted more formal, systematic human resource policies and practices, continued to turn to consultants to supplement their workforce, engaged in more formal budgeting practices, and have made much greater use of strategic planning and assessment. The evidence suggests that labor organizations benefit in significant ways from the implementation of these practices.

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