

The recognition process in white-collar trade unionism.

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to analyse the process of union recognition within manufacturing firms. In particular the research focuses upon those factors which contribute to the unionisation of white-collar workers and which create the circumstances in which union recognition itself takes place.

The aim of this approach is to produce an analytical model of the union recognition process. It is hoped that such a model can be used by industrial relations practitioners as a guide to understanding what happens within their own companies.

Basically the model examines the recognition process at three levels or stages; primary, development, and negotiation. Each stage is characterised by certain changes in the existing pattern of employer/staff relationships which either hinder or promote the development of unionisation within firms.

The major components of the model include the influence of staff associations, managerial control systems, and the impact of union recruitment strategies.

Much of the research data is derived from factual sources. These include case-studies from manufacturing firms, interviews with trade union officers, postal data, and interviews with white-collar workers.

The study helps to fill a gap in existing industrial relations literature, where research has tended to focus upon overall patterns of white-collar unionism rather than on the organisational problems faced by individual firms.

THE RECOGNITION PROCESS IN
WHITE-COLLAR TRADE UNIONISM.

BY

R.S. MARSH.

Thesis submitted to the Council for
National Academic Awards, Sheffield
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of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Philosophy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.A.S	Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service
A.C.T.S	Association of Clerical, Technical and Supervisory Staff
A.P.E.C.C.S	Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff (known as APEX)
A.P.S.T	Association of Professional Scientists and Technologists
A.Sc.W	Association of Scientific Workers (now part of ASTMS)
A.S.E.E	Association of Executive Engineers
A.S.E.E.T	Association of Supervisory Staffs, Executives and Technicians (now part of ASTMS)
A.S.T.M.S	Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs
A.U.E.W	Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
C.A.W.U	Clerical and Administrative Workers Union (now part of APEX)
C.I.A	Chemical Industries Association
C.I.R	Commission on Industrial Relations
C.P.E.A	Clerical, Professional and Executives Association
D.A.T.A	Draughtsmen's and Allied Technician's Association (now part of TASS)
E.E.T.U/ P.T.U	Electrical, Electronic and Telecommunication Union/ Plumbing Trades Union
G.E.N.U	General and Municipal Workers Union
I.R.C	Industrial Relations Court
L.S.E	London School of Economics
M.A.T.C.A	Management, Administrative, Technical and Supervisory Association (Part of CMAU)
N.U.D.B.T.W	National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers.
N.U.E.E	National Union of Bank Employees
S.O.G.A.T	Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (now included in - National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel)
T.A.S.S	Technical and Supervisory Section (part of A.U.E.W)
T.G.W.U	Transport and General Workers Union
T.U.L.R.A	Trade Union and Labour Relations Act
U.K.A.P.E	United Kingdom Association of Professional Engineers

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1.1 The Development of White-Collar Unionism

The growing importance of white-collar unionism in Great Britain can be attributed to two factors; the increase in the level of white-collar employment; and to the rising levels of union membership amongst these workers. (See Appendix D)

During the period 1911-1966, the total white-collar workforce increased almost threefold. It rose from 3.4 to 9.6 million workers. This change is significant when compared to the change in manual employment which rose from 13.7 to 14.4 million workers during the same period. If viewed in purely political terms, white-collar workers may well equal manual workers in terms of numbers by the latter part of this century. In the U.S.A. white-collar workers already outnumber manual workers. (Bain, G.S. 1970)

Whilst the total size of the white-collar workforce has increased, the level of union membership has also grown. However, the real increase in union membership has taken place within manufacturing industry. The most recent research on union growth, although now twelve years out of date, indicates that the years 1948-1964 total white-collar membership density increased only marginally from 28.8% - 29.0% (Bain, G.S. 1970) This means that although the number of union members increased, this increase was compensated for by the growth in total white-collar union employment. Therefore, the proportion of total white-collar union membership i.e. density, has remained virtually static, although this did grow by 12% in manufacturing industry. (Bain, G.S. 1970)

The reason for this variation can best be understood by referring to the public sector union membership. In 1960 union

membership density within national and local government was around 84%. Thus, recruitment within these sectors had almost reached saturation point. Therefore, any future real union membership growth is likely to occur in manufacturing industries where in 1964 union density was only 12.1%. (See Appendix D)

The most recent research concerning white-collar unionism in Great Britain indicates that trends in union membership are continuing. (Lusley, R 1973). This research shows that between 1964-1970 T.U.C affiliated white-collar unions recorded an average growth in membership of 75%. In this same period T.U.C affiliated white-collar sections of manual unions recorded an average membership growth of 34.5%. These figures, however, relate only to total white-collar membership. No distinction has been made between those unions who recruit members from both the public and private sectors.

Taking the above trends into consideration, and given Bain's findings which show manual unionism to be almost twice that of white-collar workers, then the bulk of future union membership increase is likely to be white-collar, particularly from the much lower unionised manufacturing industries.

In general, white-collar workers have shown a resistance towards trade unionism. Whilst this is not a problem in the public sector where high employment concentration and bureaucratisation have tended to encourage union membership, private industry has had considerably less white-collar union growth. A factor which has stimulated this research.

One partial explanation for this resistance has been given by Lockwood who suggests that amongst clerical workers this may be partly due to 'class-consciousness', which is reflected in the degree to which white-collar unions have or

have not affiliated themselves to the Labour Movement.

(Lockwood, D, 1953) whilst this may be more historically significant, economic and organisational pressures cannot be excluded from such an analysis.

A measure of this resistance can be highlighted by reference to research amongst bank clerks. Two measures of a union's 'character' were used by Blackburn to assess the 'unionateness' and 'completeness' of organisations competing for bank staff. (Blackburn, R.M. 1967)

'Unionateness' is determined by the commitment of a recruiting organisation to the general principles and ideology of trade unionism. Thus, 'unionateness' is the willingness of an organisation to apply the following:

- (a) collective bargaining as its major function
- (b) independence from an employer
- (c) the extent to which militant tactics are employed
- (d) whether it declares itself to be a 'trade union'
- (e) if it registers as a trade union
- (f) whether it affiliates itself to the T.U.C./Labour Party

(Blackburn, R.M. 1967)

'Completeness' has a more objective basis of measurement. The term is used to define the proportion of potential members who are actual members of a trade union or other such organisation. It is a measure of union membership density.

If these two measures were used to assess the 'character' of say a staff association, then, since staff associations are usually low in 'unionateness', the 'completeness' of such

organisations would give some indication of staff attitudes towards unionism. Where support for staff associations is high i.e. high 'completeness', then it is likely that the unionisation of such workers will take place at a much slower rate.

However, where the 'completeness' of a staff association is low, then unionisation is more likely to develop, especially if staff have grievances against the firm which have been left unresolved by any form of internal consultative machinery.

It is characteristic of the development of white-collar unionism that it has often been compared against the manual 'model'. The implication has been that white-collar workers have different needs than those of manual workers. It is true that the propensity of staff to become unionised has been lower than that of manual workers. Yet, manual workers have not enjoyed the same degree of employment security, working conditions, or social status as white-collar workers. However, the density of white-collar unionism appears to vary considerably between different occupational white-collar groups. (Appendix D) The union density for all clerks, in 1964, was only 10.5%. For technicians the figure was much higher at 29.6%. These differences indicate that between occupational groups there may be organisational or occupational factors which determine union membership propensities.

One factor highlighted by Bain, the concentration of employment, partly explains these variations. Bain notes that although the average number of clerks per establishment is three times greater than that for technicians, the dispersion within firms of clerical staff is probably much greater. Thus, the

degree of group organisation within firms is a factor, together with the bureaucratisation of such large groups, which determines union density between occupational groups. (Bain, G.S. 1970)

There are then certain features of the organisation of white-collar work which influence unionisation. A second major problem affecting white-collar union membership has been the reluctance of employers to grant recognition. Bain includes this variable within his model of overall union growth. What he does not explain is how this process evolves and what effect this has upon the success of recognition attempts within the firm. It is the purpose of this research to explain some of the organisational pressures which control the rate at which recognition agreements can be negotiated.

1.2 Definition of the Problem

George Bain's research in the field of white-collar unionism identified three major variables which influence union growth. These are:- union recognition, employment concentration, and government intervention. (Bain, G.S. 1970)

Union recognition is the variable which has been selected for examination in this research. The research focuses upon an organisational perspective as distinct from industrial or national perspectives, favoured by previous researchers. Bain's other variables relate to these two latter perspectives. Employment concentration, for example, highlights the pattern of white-collar union growth within industries and occupations, it does not directly assist in our understanding of union growth in a given firm. Government intervention, which has influenced

growth of recognition in particular industries in the past, may influence company recognition policies, but cannot alone explain the variations in union recognition which occur between firms.

Union recognition is therefore postulated as the key variable in the development of company unionism.

In an organisational context, the recognition process can be characterised as one which creates a change in relationship between white-collar staff and their employer. This is a change from what may be described as an 'individualistic' to a more 'collective' relationship. Ideally the recognition process starts with little or no union membership within an organisation, and ends with a negotiated agreement.

Thus, this study concerns itself with those influences which relate to this sequence of events.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study is concerned with the identification and analysis of the process of union recognition as it affects white-collar workers within private or manufacturing industry.

Private industry has been chosen for this focus because of its diverse characteristics in terms of organisation structure, technology, and management attitudes. Manufacturing is also characterised by a greater dispersion of white-collar workers, and where unionism is often bound up with ideological, economic, and status differences. Compared with the public sector, the degree of centralisation is less. The relative independence of employers from government control has allowed them to act

freely in matters concerning labour policies. However, recent legislation in the form of the Employment Protection Act and various other measures is reducing this relative independence of private employers.

The objectives of this research can be briefly summarised as follows:-

- (a) To examine those principal elements which directly or indirectly influence the nature of staff union recognition within the firm.
- (b) To develop an explanatory or analytical framework of the recognition process.
- (c) To evaluate in greater depth some of the important variables developed in (b) above.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter Two examines the current literature and research evidence related to white-collar unionism. It includes an analysis of such factors as occupational attitudes towards trade union membership; managerial attitudes and reactions; the role of staff associations; professional and employer's associations; the role of trade unions; and government intervention. Its purpose is to identify the major influences upon union recognition.

Whilst Chapter Two has an explanatory function, Chapter Three is concerned with research strategy. An examination is made of the various methodological approaches towards research in the social sciences. From the resulting analysis an attempt is made to maximise the advantages inherent within these different approaches by developing a research strategy which

is appropriate to the study of union recognition. The chosen strategy attempts to minimise the defects inherent within any single approach and instead uses a multiple approach to the problem area.

The purpose and function of Chapter Four is the development of an analytical framework of the recognition process. Case-studies form the basis of this explanatory model. It is expected that the results will prove useful in assisting the evaluation of white-collar unionisation at organisation level. Although the case-studies are used as a starting point for this analysis, they only partially explain all cause-and-effect relationships. A more detailed analysis of aspects of the recognition process is made using data from thirty-six published C.I.R reports, postal survey evidence, and interviews with trade union officers.

Chapter Five includes a survey of white-collar workers carried out within a company in which union recognition had recently occurred. The study examines the reasons behind worker's decision to join a union and tests some of those findings already developed in previous chapters.

The final chapter includes a summary of the main research findings. An evaluation has also been made of the use of research techniques in studying union recognition, together with suggestions for future research.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the literature which relates to the problems of white-collar union recognition.

Although a number of comprehensive studies of white-collar unionism exist, these have often focused only part of their attention upon the question of recognition. (Bain, G.1971, Blackburn, R. 1967). There are, however, many shorter pieces of research which have some bearing upon this study, and these have been brought together within this chapter.

Perhaps the most significant recent findings are those which have been published by the CIB. The CIB studies have been primarily concerned with disputes that have arisen within individual firms. Many useful guidelines concerning union recognition have been summarized in CIB Study No. 5. Where appropriate these findings have been used in this, and later chapters.

Since this study is concerned with union recognition within the firm, attention is given to relationships between staff and management. This is particularly relevant to white-collar work, since relations with the employer have often governed the attitudes of staff towards unionism. The differences between white-collar workers are also significant, since the development of unionisation may be affected by the different attitudes held by these groups towards trade unionism.

Management attitudes are discussed in some detail because management is probably one of the most fundamental determinants of white-collar unionism.

Other factors considered important include staff associations, trade union organisation, employer's associations, professional associations, and the effects of government intervention.

Each of the chosen areas influences some aspect of union recognition at one of two levels:-

- (a) the development of company policies because it may be accountable in any decisions that are taken

or

- (b) it is relevant to the process of recognition inside a firm because it is one of the determinants of such a process.

Thus, the sections of this chapter reflect an attempt to identify the relative importance and relationship of each variable as a basis for eventually analysing the process of recognition. It is anticipated that by undertaking this evaluation the conceptual parameters of the recognition process may be objectively 'sifted out'

2.2 Organisational structure and Occupational differences

In order for the process of unionisation to begin amongst a group of employees, it is necessary for them to be interested in joining a trade union. This is an obvious point to make, but interest in trade union membership does not happen by chance. Certain aspects of a person's job situation and/or personal attitudes must be orientated in a way which encourages him or her to consider trade unionism.

Two factors which appear important in affecting this situation are the structure of the organisation, and hence the occupational structure which produces differentiation amongst employees.

Firstly, the effect of the organisational structure.

2.2.1 Organisational Factors.

It has been suggested that a highly formal organisation structure produces 'group cohesiveness', and therefore tends to promote collective organisation. This is a particularly relevant argument where group members share a common background and interests. (Blau, P and Scott, A. 1963)

This assumption is based upon the view that the centralisation of labour controls by managements often becomes necessary as an organisation grows and/or becomes more complex in its operation. However, formal organisation does not always produce the optimum conditions under which collective action can be cultivated. One study, for example, suggests that far from increasing the 'proletarianisation' of staff towards the reference framework of manual workers, bureaucratic control can introduce a 'calculative' acceptance of the organisation through a greater identification with the job. (Mercer, D and Weir, D 1972)

An alternative contention is that formal organisation has a less direct influence upon white-collar workers decision to join unions. Instead, this is explained by reference to the 'individualistic' character of a lower 'middle-class' ideology. Associated with this belief is a dislike of collective institutions and a feeling that individual interests are not best represented by unions. (Mercer, D and Leir, D 1972).

Given such arguments, Bain's assumption that the formal treatment of staff through "administrative particularism" encourages unionism, does not allow for the possibility of a change in an individuals orientation towards his work. (Bain, G.1970)

The size of a firm is an insufficient indicator by itself, that staff attitudes towards unionism will change. However, size not only relates to numbers of staff employed. Other measures, such as the 'breadth' of an organisation structure, or the technological complexities of manufacturing could also affect the formal treatment of workers. For example, an organisation which has a 'horizontal structure', consisting of many small separate units may be compelled to use bureaucratic systems to administer its staff. The test would be whether the level of controls was high, or, whether there was a high degree of centralization of staff policies between the different sub-units of the organisation. As Bain remarks:-

"Regardless of how few employees there may be at a single establishment, they will probably be subject to company-wide grading schemes and salary structures, and in general, their terms

and conditions of employment will be determined by formal rules which apply impersonally throughout the company" (Bain, G.1970)

Thus, it would appear likely that if an organisation structure affects staff attitudes towards unionism, then this might be reflected in the degree to which labour policies are applied and/or centralised. Alternatively, the manner in which staff themselves adapt to this formalisation could offset any disruption caused by the change.

Differences in staff attitudes are discussed in the following section to assess how these may affect unionisation tendencies between different occupational groups.

2.2.2 Occupational Factors

Work Orientation and Ideologies

The personal attitude of staff towards their work may influence their views regarding trade unionism. In one study, data gathered from clerical staff has indicated that existing promotional opportunities within a firm dictated a preference for individual, but not collective, representation. (Sykes, A.1966) Findings from a study of technicians also suggest that the uncertainty regarding career patterns and job status strongly influences their feelings towards union representation. (Roberts, B et al 1972).

Unlike clerical staff, technicians were more concerned over the intrinsic aspects of their work and the measure of status this incurred. Whereas clerical staff appeared to be more concerned with their loss of potential status, technicians appeared to want to maintain their status in relation to lower status groups such as manual workers.

In contrast to these two groups supervisory staff have generally been concerned about infringements upon their attained status over recent years as the nature of their work has changed. (Yanouzas, J 1964)

These occupational differences can, therefore, result in some variation in the nature of attitudes towards trade unionism. Clerks may resist union recruitment if the employer is seen to be upholding their 'perceived status' within the firm. Technicians may join unions if they see other workers achieving benefits which threaten their relative status position. Supervision may be affected by changes which result from the increased power of shop-stewards, or the impact of new technology, especially if these undermine their job authority.

The manner, therefore, in which white-collar staff view their work establishes their interests in the context of the organisation in which they work. Attitudes derived from daily work activity may assist in the formation of values which unionism may appear to threaten. On the other hand, the instrumental use of unionism in the case of technicians, provides a means of maintaining accepted status differences.

Whatever their effect, occupational 'norms' can be an important determinant of a groups willingness to unionise under different circumstances.

Reference Groups and Organisation Roles

It has already been shown that clerical staff can hold a strong attachment to their position within the organization, and would thus be closely affected by management actions. This link is related to individual career expectations within a firm.

where these links no longer exist, it has been shown that this can lead to quite rapid unionisation amongst clerks. (Sykes, A 1966). However, data from a study within the steel industry has indicated that clerks can hold promotional prospects in low priority. It was suggested that this 'inversion effect' was governed by the strength of clerical ties with the local working-class community. (Bosch, J et al 1974)

Technical staff, however, have shown a strong orientation towards group and occupational norms. Whilst this may influence their attitudes towards unions, one piece of research has indicated that in the case of Drawing Office staff, their awareness of 'organisational integration' is just as important a factor in governing their attitudes towards work. (Macdonald, K and Nichols, A 1969)

The influences upon supervisory unionisation are somewhat more ambiguous. This may be due to the 'man in the middle' position of the supervisor which has become even more accentuated over recent years by dramatic changes in the nature of supervisory work. (Fletcher, C 1969). These changes have resulted from increasing technological and managerial problems within industry which have tended to affect the authority and status inherent in supervisory work. The impact of technological change upon production, coupled with the increasing complexity of management practices have placed many previous shop-floor decisions in the hands of more senior management. The supervisors' ability to manage subordinates has also been curtailed with the increase in shop-floor bargaining and the growing importance of the shop-steward. Supervision

has thus tended to become separated from either upper or lower reference groups, which once determined both its formal and informal status. (Yancuzes, J 1964).

From the different studies of white-collar occupations certain trends are discernible. The effects of organisation policies can directly or indirectly threaten status and job security. Unless changes are made by a firm to compensate for any perceived loss by its staff then potentially there may exist certain fundamental uncertainties which union recruitment could exploit.

Occupational Composition

One important determinant of a group's willingness to join collective organisations is the degree of unity of interest which such groups possess.

The characteristics of clerical work for example, do tend not to lend themselves to the development of unity. There are wide variations in tasks performed, levels of status, and in the qualifications possessed by such workers. Here, the areas of common interest could be the conditions of employment within the firm itself. Common salary structures, working conditions, etc., provide one such basis for harmonising clerical groups.

Similar differences, although not quite as obvious, exist within technical groups. The results of an L.S.E. study showed wide variations in union membership levels between planning and production engineers, and laboratory and drawing office staff. (McCarty, et al 1972) In this instance the nature of the work environment created high or low identification with

the company in terms of their career expectations. Another variation resulted from the internal organisation of technical groups. Laboratory and Drawing Office staff tended to be organised in large groups, whilst production staff had a much greater measure of job autonomy.

Supervisory staff tend to be distributed much more widely within an organisation than most other staff. Also they have always possessed a fair measure of autonomy. The effect of this relative isolation may have reduced their interest in unionism. However, where large organisations exist, there are also more likely to be opportunities for collective organisation. Such interest could be stimulated by membership of such bodies as staff associations or interest groups i.e. supervisors' forums. (CIB Report No. 1 December 1969) Where common feelings of alienation exist amongst supervisors and others, collective organisation and representation would be engendered. In particular, supervisors could combine with other groups such as technicians when common salary grading and conditions prevail. In recent years (1964-1970), there have been shown indications that the major unions recruiting supervisors are recording growth rates of between 33% - 90% (Lumley, W 1973) It would appear, therefore, that supervisors are beginning to respond to the effects of organisational changes.

2.2.3 Summary

The size and structure of an organization appears to be partly responsible for the development of collective organisation amongst staff. In particular the controls imposed upon staff by

management actions may be important in governing union membership trends.

An important constraint upon union growth could be the occupational composition of the workforce. Clerical staff appear to have interests which coincide with those of the employer thus reducing their interest in unionism. Reduced career opportunities may, however, reduce this attachment and make them more 'union-conscious'. This could also be enhanced if group formations occur through staff being subjected to common conditions and treatment.

Technical staff, whilst being more tightly organised, show some awareness of organisational influences, such as career patterns. However, technicians have shown that they are conscious of their group status in relation to manual workers. This latter influence could be important in deciding whether they unionise or not.

Supervisory staff tend to be affected by changes in the authority levels of their work role within the firm. This factor is accentuated by a loss of control over their subordinates, particularly concerning labour relations, and by the encroachment of technological and managerial specialists into line-management tasks. Larger organisations give supervisors an opportunity to organise themselves collectively, although this might necessitate combination with other staff if they are also subject to the same conditions and treatment.

2.3 Managerial Reactions to White-Collar Union Recognition

The manner in which management reacts to the growth of trade unionism amongst its staff is often of fundamental importance to the development of union recognition.

If management opposes trade unionism forcefully, this attitude may create fears amongst those staff who align their interests with those of the firm. On the other hand, if management accepts staff unionism in principle such fears are avoided and potential members may feel more confident about becoming members if management is favourably disposed towards such actions.

To clarify some of the issues involved, it is useful to examine management reactions to white-collar unionism. Basically there are three postures which management may adopt when staff interest in unions is shown:

- (a) Outright Rejection - employer totally rejects staff unions and makes his opposition clear and explicit
- (b) Subversive Rejection - employer rejects unions but not openly. His intention is to 'put off' potential members
- (c) Acceptance - this may not always be absolute, since the terms of acceptance may be severe.

2.3.1 Outright Rejection

One research study has indicated that some managers within large firms still believe that the recognition of staff unions is a moral and economic mistake. (Roberts, B et al 1972)

These managers believed the organisation to be an 'organic entity', in which all employees shared common interests and owed it a common loyalty.

This view is consistent with the 'unitary' philosophy. (Fox, 1966). The organisation is conceived as a 'team' by managers holding this belief, and under such circumstances trade unionism is perceived as a threat to the unity of the 'team'.

The 'unitary' attitude is therefore a form of opposition which acts against the development of unionism. It is possible that opposition towards staff unionism may be much more strongly voiced by managers because staff may be considered the 'strategic arm' of all decision-making. The actual function of decision implementation could thus be seen to be under threat if staff unionisation took place.

Under such conditions managers may view unionism as a direct attack upon their own personal authority. A counter-reaction could result in management attempting to reinforce its legitimate authority by resisting demands for collective representation on pay and other matters. (CIR Report No. 1 December 1969).

This type of defensive reaction from management may influence union recruitment. If a natural empathy exists between management and staff, then commitment to unionism by 'management-orientated' staff may be low. Under these circumstances staff may follow any lead set by management to avoid a fragmentation of existing relations. The view put forward by Bain argues that conflict is not an inevitable result of organised

opposition toward management. Instead he argues that in pluralistic societies all workers require a multiplicity of loyalties i.e. family, church, political party, and that these can be separated from one another in the appropriate setting. (Bain, © 1957).

However, Bain's view assumes that an employer holding his 'unitary' philosophy will purposefully rationalise the situation that confronts him within his own firm. Managers may have their own vested interests at stake which conflict with 'pluralistic' thinking.

A reluctance to accept unionism may also result from an inexperience of unions. Growing firms, for example, may not recognise that relationships with staff are changing. This could result in a 'remote' contact with staff which may make the latter more aware of the effectiveness of collective bargaining as a means of improving pay and conditions. (Bain, © 1957).

When an employer fails to recognise the need for change in his existing labour relations he may try to reinforce his own authority by introducing controls. The effect may be to formalise relationships gradually. In this context, the transition from 'individual' to 'collective' relationships can sometimes be prolonged. It has been suggested that:

"In these cases there is usually found to be some provision for discussion, whether it be in the form of a staff association recognised as a negotiating body, or a system of joint consultation". (Halc, J 1952)

Such transitional processes may have the effect of breaking down 'unitary' beliefs. The 'team' analogy may be gradually eroded as management begins to accept, even tacitly, that a division of interests exists.

This point is important in the context of the recognition process, since both parties may be 'conditioned' into an acceptance of the need for collective representation.

2.3.2 Subversive Rejection

This form of management behaviour may result from a reluctance to admit anti-union attitudes publicly. Management may thus attempt to undermine union recruitment by threatening staff status or career expectations.

Subversive tactics might include the setting up of staff associations at an early stage in union recruitment. This sort of move could be seen as an attempt at providing an alternative notion of collective organisation, whilst at the same time retaining control. (CIR Report No. 52 October 1973)

It could be argued that the above tactic is a 'last ditch' measure used by management when other 'subversive' measures fail.

Other competitive measures used by management have included such tactics as:

"paying salaries equal to or better than those in unionised firms; granting salary increases during a union recruitment campaign; establishing welfare, profit-sharing and other benefit schemes; offering various types of rewards to 'loyal' employees; giving speeches and interviews designed to convince employees

that their interests can be better cared for by management than by a union; granting monthly staff status; and establishing 'company unions'." (Bain, © 1970)

These measures have been described by Bain as "peaceful competition".

Any such measures may influence the rate at which unionisation takes place. The process of union recognition could, therefore, be stalled or slowed down, if management used such tactics.

2.3.3 Acceptance

The acceptance of staff unionism by management may be subject to certain organisational or policy constraints.

Before examining these constraints, it is necessary to distinguish between two levels of recognition agreement, partial and full recognition.

Partial recognition gives representational rights only to a union. It allows a union the right to represent workers on grievance issues, but excludes the negotiation of salaries. Full recognition is only achieved when the union can act on the behalf of staff or groups of staff in a salary bargaining situation. However, there is an area of 'gray' between these two conditions where some unofficial negotiation or influence may be exerted by union representatives, even though official recognition is not conceded.

The two prime constraints used by management have been the criteria of 'appropriateness' and 'representativeness'.
(CIR Report No. 9 July 1970)

The measure of 'appropriateness' was originally used to determine the suitability of manual works unions to represent white-collar workers interests. Such a method could be used in other ways. An employer might, for example, prefer to deal with a specific category of union e.g. craft, industrial, or general union. Should this criteria be used, then in the case of a craft-based union, the degree of coverage might be limited to those staff with technical interests.

An employer may use 'appropriateness' as a guide to the selection of a union with the potential to recruit a large majority of his staff. He may thus exclude unions without this potential. Therefore, in trying to avoid a potential multi-union situation, an employer might create opposition amongst staff who are not satisfied with the employer's choice of union. This may then have the effect of limiting membership to those workers who have close interests with the favoured union.

Representativeness is a manoeuvre used by the employer to determine the level of support for a particular union or unions. The employer could be trying to assess the numerical support of a union on the basis of existing union membership.

This basis for determining support for unions has been criticised by the C.I.A as being arbitrary, and not reflecting any potential support which might exist and which may not be exhibited in actual membership figures. (C.I. Report No. 37 April 1973) The C.I.A suggest that in assessing support for a union, two measures need to be obtained:-

- (a) The actual membership of each contending union or unions.

- (b) Potential support amongst non-union members who would be prepared to join if a union was given recognition status.

The C.I.R have used this approach on numerous occasions. Support is determined using a secret ballot to assess the extent of support, 'actual' and 'potential' amongst the staff concerned

Representativeness can also be used to assess whether support amongst common interest groups, company or industrial, is acceptable. Employers have justified this as a means of preserving company-wide policies and salary structures, but unions believe that it is simply a method of 'putting off' the recognition issue. (CIR Report No. 37 April, 1973)

Where management wishes to direct the growth of staff unionism along companywide policy lines, this does not accommodate occupational preferences. As Dale found in his study of clerks.

"Associations like the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied workers, who cater for other than office employees, find that many clerks object to being classed with, for instance, shop assistants, and that their clerical membership tends to remain comparatively low". (Dale, J. 1962)

This situation was also highlighted by the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employer's Associations, who note that:

"Many workers, such as craftsmen, clerks, and technicians, have an obvious interest in combining on an occupational rather than an industrial basis, so that they are free to take their transferrable skills from job to job while remaining within the same union". (Donovan Commission 1963)

Thus, in some circumstances 'representativengas' does not allow for occupational and status preferences. An employer, therefore, may have to accept some degree of multi-unionism if he is to meet the demands of particular common interest groups.

2.4 The Role of the Staff Association

The development of staff associations is closely associated with white-collar unionism.

Arguments against staff associations usually condemn them as being too 'paternalistic', or because they are not independently controlled they cannot act as true workers opposition groups towards management.

Staff associations may also reflect the ideological feelings of white-collar workers. In banking, for example, the character of the respective staff associations is designed to appeal to the majority of 'middle-class' clerks. (Blackburn, 1967) Also, the bank employer's policies are designed to prevent the union N.U.B.A from obtaining recognition rights at the expense of the longer established associations.

Undoubtedly, without an employer's support, there is no evidence to suggest that staff associations have the resources or expertise to participate effectively in collective bargaining.

However, the existence of a staff association within a firm can create problems when some members of staff wish to join a union and seek recognition. In such potentially dynamic situations, the role of management can be decisive. The C.I.B. records that:

"In one company a management statement to employees stressing the importance it placed on independent representation led to the members of a staff association favouring an amalgamation with a claimant union; while in another company a similar statement led the staff association to press for negotiating rights."

(C.I.L. Report No. 27 April 1973)

Thus, it can be seen that the formation of staff associations, often through the insistence of management reflect managerial attitudes.

If an employer has two contending groups, i.e. staff association and trade union, seeking representative status, he may be faced with a situation of "who to recognise". In this situation managerial action can be the deciding factor. If an employer recognises the union, then this may quickly establish the union and increase its majority, since as Wright-Hills states:

"personal exposure to unions not only reveals their benefits but sometimes creates a social situation in which those who do not belong feel socially ostracised".

(Wright-Hills, C 1951)

However, some staff associations may develop before the attention of the union is drawn towards the company. It has been suggested that this is because there is an initial inertia to be overcome and that 'potential unionism' may actually exist within some groups. (Blackburn, E. & Grundy, R 1968). Staff associations might, therefore, be positively helpful in breaking

down this inertia by conditioning staff towards collective rather than individual action.

When the staff association is viewed in this context it could be an important link in the process of unionisation.

To summarise, the staff association can be viewed in the following terms:

- (a) used by management as a structural barrier and as a reason for not recognising external unions
- (b) providing a focal point for "class" interests
- (c) being instrumental in harnessing collective support and breaking down any initial inertia
- (d) providing management and/or workers with a 'staging post' towards unionisation which appears to meet the existing requirements of all parties.

2.6 Employer's Organisations.

Employer's associations have a number of important functions. They exist to protect the interests of employers from the demands of organised labour, government policies, public authorities, professional bodies, suppliers of materials, and customers. (Hunns, V.C. 1967)

The industrial relations activities of the associations may vary, but typically they include the development of a collective bargaining framework within which minimum, and to some extent maximum, pay and conditions can be negotiated.

The Associations did not always allow individual members to negotiate their own maximum rates. However, because of recent

shifts in bargaining to plant levels, and the resignation of some large firms who wished to introduce productivity agreements, modifications have had to be made in this policy. (C.I.A. Study 1 1972)

The control of minimum terms of employment has been important to the development of union recognition, since one of the most decisive attributes of the associations:

"has been to act as relay-stations for transmitting minimum terms and conditions of employment, including union recognition throughout an entire industry"

(Dain, G. 1970)

However, this important role has begun to decline with greater emphasis laid upon plant bargaining.

Companies who are members of employer's associations may thus be influenced by recognition policy guidelines, but unless they can be easily adapted to individual company needs, firms may create policies which suit them even though they are out of step with similar firms in their own industry.

Any such assumption must ultimately depend upon the degree of influence the association exerts over its membership. However, where an employer seeks association advice, then the latter can provide information which may eventually guide the employer's future decisions.

Historically, the employers associations have been largely responsible for the vast majority of white-collar union recognition. (Dain, G 1970) This is important to a few industries such as engineering, where unions such as the A.U.W. white-collar

section (T.A.S.S.), are able to invoke the engineering employer's agreement to claim recognition when membership levels are appropriately high enough.

The importance of the employers association with regard to recognition issues would, given trends towards company bargaining, appear to be diminishing. Any influence is often the result of adherence to any guidelines that it may advocate.

The change in such trends reflects the basic fact that the policies of employers associations have, in the past, been governed by the demands of manual workers. Whilst manual workers may have had interests in industrial coverage, white-collar workers may have occupational interests which conflict with industrial precedents.

In such new circumstances, firms may, in some instances, have to recognise unions who hold democratic majorities in contradiction to any agreement made between another union at industry-level.

2.6 Trade Union Organisation

Manual trade unions have been generally somewhat slow in their efforts to accommodate white-collar interests within their organisations. Trade union recruitment has often neglected to recognise that white-collar staff may require organisational changes to be made before they will consider representation by a manual trade union. As one author puts it, they:

"must attract white-collar workers generally, they must also appeal to identifiable groupings within the white-collar category, each having its unique characteristics". (Kleingartner, 1960)

This argument indicates that different white-collar groups may require particular persuasive approaches. However, to appeal to more white-collar workers, unions must make provision for these workers to be incorporated into their organisation.

Many white-collar workers may feel anxious at being 'lumped' together with manual workers. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to affiliate white-collar groups to the parent union. Without some form of identity the white-collar worker might feel that his own needs are subordinate to those of the manual or majority membership.

The 'appropriateness' of a union might be reflected in its membership figures when it is seeking recognition. Since, where union recognition attempts repeatedly fail, white-collar workers may question the union's claim by withdrawing their support. More specifically, Roberts et al found that:

"some technicians, particularly those in more specialised work, would not join unions because there was none available which was sufficiently appropriate for them." (Roberts, 2 et al 1972)

The particular requirements of some white-collar staff may therefore not be easily satisfied where the contending union has a fairly 'open' structure. Thus, large general unions would not appear to have the necessary internal organisation with which to deal with workers who have closely identifiable occupational interests.

However, there are instances where broad occupationally based unions such as the G.A.S.U (now AmU), have 'opened'

their recruitment to achieve considerable improvements in growth during the past two decades. (Hughes, J 1967)

Unions such as N.S.T.U.S have also maintained high growth patterns, due partly to the adoption of a formula which is sufficiently 'open' not to restrict growth, whilst being comparatively 'occupational' to appeal to identifiable groups. (Hughes, J. 1967) Although, in the case of N.S.T.U.S, amalgamation, coupled with the "tiger in a white-collar" image of its General Secretary, Olive Jenkins, may well have generated high growth.

To achieve early success in recognition negotiations with often reluctant white-collar workers as members, a union must often take the lead and demonstrate to staff that it is both appropriate and effective. Thus, there are two prime objectives that unions should try to achieve.

- (a) The development of appropriateness in the minds of both employer and occupational worker. This could be achieved by diversifying union structures, and/or by operating on an industrial basis where this is appropriate.
- (b) The production of bargaining strategies which will appeal to white-collar workers through a better understanding of the needs of such workers. It is obviously helpful if unions can achieve early recognition successes and thus demonstrate their bargaining capabilities.

2.7 Professional occupations

Professional workers of all kinds are now employed within industry in larger numbers than ever before. Their collective

interests are based largely around their professional institutions.

Professional associations have many similar characteristics to those exhibited by craft unions. Whereas the latter are organised to safeguard physical skills, the professions are organised around bodies of knowledge. (Hall, R 1969) Through the regulation and training of incumbents, the professional bodies have been able to upgrade and maintain both the status and remuneration of professional workers.

The associations have not been too willing to use trade union tactics to maintain professional standards. One researcher has suggested that this is because they have either been too big or too dignified to behave as 'irresponsible' pressure groups, or that they are too small or too insignificant to succeed. (Fillardson, R 1964). Yet, a few professional bodies have now registered as trade unions e.g. U.E.N.E.E.N (professional engineers) and the R.I.C (chemists). This is some evidence of a changing trend.

The professional associations still often view themselves in the character of the 'independent practitioner' of the past. (Guvillier, R 1974) What is apparent is that nowadays the problems facing professional employees are very often organisation-based, reflecting possible abuses of managerial authority. Organisation pressures may threaten professional status and work expectations therefore, the need to exercise control over misuse of managerial authority can only be effectively achieved through some form of collective bargaining.

The unionisation of professional workers has been notably more successful in the public services e.g. teachers, doctors,

civil servants and nurses. However, government organisations do reflect higher degrees of bureaucracy and centralisation of professional groups. Trade unionism under these circumstances has been shown to be much more acceptable to both sides in view of its instrumental value in a bureaucratic structure.

(Grady, R 1965)

Within private industry there are signs that professional unionism has a following, notably through the development of such bodies as U.K.A.P.A. However, professional unions still have to achieve recognition, and this has generally proved difficult since the relative numbers of professional to non-professional employees in a given organisation is usually low. This fact alone may prohibit employers from allowing these workers union recognition at the expense of the vast majority of lower-status white-collar staff. Also employers may wish to avoid a fragmented bargaining structure. (Lickens, L 1972)

The presence of professional unions in competitive recruitment with other white-collar unions may cause some problems for the employers and unions involved. U.K.A.P.A., for example, with the A.S.E.L and A.T.S.T., has decided to set up a joint body to be known as the Confederation of Professional and Executive Associations (C.P.E.A.). Such a move could conflict with the forward recruiting activities of A.S.T.M.S and A.P.E.A. into management and professional groups, from which they derive much of their existing membership status. Employers might, therefore, feel reluctant to grant recognition to unions such as U.K.A.P.A. because of the inevitable friction this might create amongst the longer established

white-collar unions. This attitude is clear from those expressed to the C.I.B. by engineering and chemical firms who had been approached by U.M.W.A.M. These attitudes are summarized as follows:

- (a) they do not want to have to deal with another white-collar union
- (b) they wish to avoid the extension of unionism into managerial grades where many professional staff are employed
- (c) U.M.W.A.M. is interested in persons qualified, not in those holding senior positions, and this may disrupt long-standing bargaining agreements
- (d) they feel that ability is important and that qualified and non-qualified staff have to work together
- (e) they do not feel that professional engineers have sufficiently special interests which cannot be adequately represented by existing unions. (C.I.B. Study 3, 1973)

Given such strong views against professional unionism, the best compromise would appear to be some form of dual membership of a union and professional body. As the C.I.B. also note, dual-membership need not produce problems, however it does require an understanding of professional staff on one side, and trade union activities and objectives on the other.

2.8 Government Intervention

Governments seek to influence union recognition in a number of ways, the two most important being:

Indirectly:- by introducing legislation which gives an emphasis towards union membership. Examples of such legislation now include the Industrial Relations Act (1971); the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act (1974); the Employment Protection Bill (1975); and the Trade Union and Labour Relations Amendment Act (1976).

Directly:- through forms of intervention using bodies such as the C.I.R and A.C.A.S

Industrial legislation can be useful, but in itself it is incapable of changing attitudes over the short term. Action of a more direct nature is required if government is to influence any direction within company industrial relations.

The Industrial Relations Act did, however, contain some provision for the development of union recognition. The proposals did not 'take-off', because too much emphasis was placed upon the question of union registration. Since the unions avoided registration, the Act itself became somewhat sterile. (Descooby, J and Hansen, C 1976)

However, associated with the Act was the Commission on Industrial Relations. The C.I.R was initially instituted by the Labour government of 1969. It had certain non-statutory powers which allowed it to investigate disputes and publish the findings.

Whether these were acted upon, depended upon the goodwill of the parties involved. Under the Industrial Relations Act, the Industrial Relations Court (I.R.C) was empowered to ask the C.I.R (an independent body), to investigate and publish its findings. The I.R.C could, and did, use some of these findings in its final judgement of the dispute.

Between 1969-74, the C.I.R investigated eighty-eight disputes and also published a number of special studies based upon these experiences. Thirty-six of these references involved recognition issues, nearly all of which concerned white-collar workers.

This type of 'piecemeal intervention', using the C.I.R as its agent, was a direct attempt by government at industrial relations reform.

Whilst it would be difficult to measure the effects and influence of the C.I.R investigations, the C.I.R did produce some practical guidelines which may well have had some effect upon the processing of company recognition issues.

Many of the firms and trade unions who responded to enquiries during this research felt that the C.I.R had left its 'impression' upon British industrial relations.

Some of the major C.I.R findings include:

- (a) the systematic use of balloting to determine 'potential' as well as 'actual' support for trade unions.
- (b) refinement of the concepts of 'bargaining units' and 'bargaining agents'
- (c) consideration of collective bargaining in relation to the structure of industrial relations existing within the firm. (C.I.R Study 5 1974)

The C.I.R. was wound up in late 1974. However, the new Advisor,³ Conciliation, and Arbitration Service (A.C.A.S), which carries out the work previously done by the Department of Employment, now undertakes investigations similar to those carried out by the C.I.R.

This is evidence that the existing Labour government regards 'interventionism', through independently controlled agencies, as an integral part of the rationalisation of British industrial relations. The effects of such 'interventionism' can have a direct impact upon union recognition. Union officers who have been interviewed during this research indicated their frequent use of A.C.A.S where they met strong resistance from an employer over their claim for recognition.

2.9 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has considered union recognition amongst white-collar workers from an organisational perspective. The important influences upon union recognition within firms have been summarised in Figure 1.

Probably the most fundamental determinant of unionisation is the attitudes prevalent amongst staff. These attitudes may reflect organisational or occupational needs of staff groups. This must, therefore, be the base-point for any analysis of union recognition within an individual firm. It is evident from the literature research that some groups are more susceptible to unionisation than others, thus unionisation of a firm's staff could take place at different rates.

Managerial attitudes towards staff unionism are again of fundamental importance, and are clearly related to those of the

staff themselves. Just how well management and staff 'get on', will be reflected by their mutual response to each others needs within a given work setting. How management reacts to staff joining unions is of equal importance. Firms may react by offering better pay and conditions and thus compete against trade unions for worker's loyalties. They may also attempt to subvert union membership by reducing the status potential or security of those staff who join unions. Even if management reacts favourably towards staff unionism, it is still able to influence the outcome of union growth by imposing its own 'conditions for acceptance' upon the negotiations. However, if management accepts white-collar unionism this could accelerate its growth within the firm, by influencing the attitudes of the staff themselves.

Within the context of the firm, the staff associations may develop partly as a result of managerial attitudes towards unions, and partly because some staff hold anti-union feelings. The employer may use them to discourage trade union membership, or to provide staff with an acceptable alternative. From the staff viewpoint they can provide an ideological alternative where staff and employee interests coincide. Another suggestion is that staff associations may act as 'staging posts' to unionisation by developing and articulating collective interests.

Employer's associations have historically been one of the earlier determinants of union recognition. However, their power and influence is limited by their degree of industrial coverage and membership control. One recent feature of industrial relations

i.e. plant-level bargaining, has placed greater emphasis upon company industrial relations policies. Thus, firms may be more likely to encourage unionism which meets their particular needs rather than industrial guidelines. Therefore, the employers association can only offer overall guidelines for policy formation, the final decision rests with the firm itself.

The influence of trade unions upon union recognition is determined by how effectively they respond to the recruitment and development of union membership. Staff themselves still have to choose to join unions, but they may be subject to influence from union recruitment or from observation of the unions' success in other areas. One basic problem for trade unions has been their own organisation. Unions with an 'open' structure may have a wide appeal to some staff, but not necessarily to those with strong occupational interests. Manual unions with white-collar sections have certainly found it necessary to devolve their white-collar interests and give their white-collar organisations some clear identity. In terms of bargaining strategies, unions such as A.S.T.M.S have adopted aggressive tactics. Although this may alienate some groups of staff, it gives a positive lead to others. Other unions i.e. A.P.E.K, prefer to give professional support and advice and allow members to determine their own bargaining behaviour.

The importance of trade union initiatives in stimulating recognition within Great Britain has often been under-emphasised. In his criticism of Bain's analysis, Adams argues that most white-collar union recognition in Great Britain did not result

primarily as a result of independent government action. Instead Adams suggests that it occurred from the joint effects of economic conditions, government policy and union initiative. (Adams, R.J. 1975). Thus, from an organisational standpoint, it would be important to know in what manner union interaction with the firm and its workers effects the development of union recognition. This appears to be a neglected area in the literature so far covered.

The importance of professional associations is much more limited within private industry because of the lower concentration of professional employees. Some signs of union activity are emerging with the formation of professional unions such as U.K.A.P.E. However, the problem still remains that management is usually reluctant to grant union recognition to professional staff at the expense of the larger majority of non-professional white-collar workers.

Government intervention within industrial relations has, as noted above, contributed to the development of union recognition in the past. However, in recent years the importance of government-created agencies such as the C.I.R have influenced some employers ideas concerning recognition. (See Chapter 4). Recent government legislation has made union membership even more legitimate in law, and this also includes an element of intervention through A.C.A.S. Governments must therefore still feel that government intervention in company-level industrial relations using agencies such as A.C.A.S is still an important method in industrial relations reform. The importance of government initiative lies in its ability to improve the

climate within the firm, thus making it easier for staff to seek recognition and more difficult for employers to refuse it.

The review of current literature undertaken in this chapter shows only what is known about union recognition. There are a number of gaps in these findings which are not explained using available evidence. These are as follows:-

- (1) The extent to which the labour policies pursued by a firm affect the growth of union membership.
- (2) The extent to which staff associations assist in encouraging collective interests which eventually lead to union membership.
- (3) To what extent the strategies of union recruitment influence the growth of union membership within the firm under different conditions.

It is the purpose of this research to try to answer some of the questions posed.

The following chapter explores some possible research strategies which may be used to examine union recognition within firms.

FACTORS CREATING FAVOURABLE/UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION

FIGURE 1

FACTOR	FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS	UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS
Company Organisation Structure	Defines common collective groupings. Narrows treatment differences between manual and non-manual workers.	Separates groups with ideological or occupational interests. Used by employers to restrict entry of certain unions.
Occupational Composition Workforce	Some groups have a higher propensity to unionise. These could act as a 'vanguard' for union growth.	Can create multi-union problems. Some groups may be ideologically opposed to unions, and some may opt for 'staff unions'.
Negerial Reactions to White-collar unionism	Develops policies to allow a balanced growth of unionism. Positive attitudes in favour of unions helps to create interest in them.	Can undermine union growth by 'competing' for workers loyalty. May deter staff from joining by threats to status or security.
Self Associations	Act as 'steering posts' to full unionism. Develop collective interests amongst staff. Highlight their own deficiencies when compared against unions.	May compete for members, thus undermining bargaining power of unionised employees. May also be used by the employer as an excuse for not 'recognising' external union
Employers Association	Act as 'transmitting stations' to employers seeking advice on this problem. Assist in policy development.	Broad policy-making results in agreements made with 'selected' unions. Such unions may be unacceptable to many occupational groups.
Trade Union Organisation	Recruiting strategies can expand union growth. They can demonstrate their abilities in negotiation and representation by catering for the needs of white-collar workers	Narrow 'appeal' to certain groups of worker reduces the potential growth of such unions Lack of suitable org. structure to administer to special requirements of some white-colla workers.

FACTORS CREATING FAVOURABLE/UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION

FIGURE 1 (contd.)

FACTOR	FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS	UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS
Professional Associations	Act as 'high status' transmitters of unionism. This is most apparent when the associations become 'trade unions' and use collective bargaining.	Can reduce professional unionism by insisting upon professional values. Opposes the idea of collective bargaining.
Government Intervention	Introduction of legislation which increases the legitimacy of trade unionism. Use of 'interventionist' policies.	Rejection of legislation framework by the trade union movement.

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have attempted to draw out from a wide selection of literature those factors which influence the recognition process. One limitation of much of this literature is that it does not always relate directly to the study of white-collar unionism within the context of the firm.

This deficiency may indeed be due to the difficulties encountered in developing industrial relations research. That is, the researcher's access to data. Many of these difficulties are derived from the interplay of numerous organisational influences which create the complexities for the data analyst.

The problem is basically one of methodology. It is in the research approach to the problem that distortions begin to occur. Thus, a research method which does not give adequate weight to the multi-dimensional character of industrial relations may give a limited insight of the problem.

It is the questioning of research methods that has created much debate within the social sciences. The arguments question the manner in which social phenomena are recorded for analysis by fieldwork investigation.

Within the context of these arguments, two principal schools of thought have so far emerged which are concerned either with qualitative or quantitative approaches. These two approaches have generated two different yet complementary styles of research.

In order to assess the merits contained within these philosophies, this chapter ^{examines} both sets of ideas to see whether it is possible to select a workable approach and apply it to

the study of union recognition.

To summarise, the objectives of this section are:-

- (a) To examine the philosophy of research methodology in an attempt to focus upon the defects and attributes within these ideas.
- (b) To suggest an appropriate research strategy for the study of the union recognition process within firms.

3.2 Approaches Towards Research in the Social Sciences

There are two basic approaches which suggest how research should be carried out in the social sciences. These are usually described as being either 'quantitative' (measurable), or 'qualitative' (diagnostic) in nature. Each approach is surrounded by its own philosophy and its own endemic code of logic. Yet, both are equally concerned with the viability of their end product - theory.

The differences which separate these two approaches result from an argument between 'means' and 'ends'. Each adopts a particular view of how best social reality can be evaluated, tested, and incorporated into the existing body of knowledge. However, in some respects both theoretical stances are divergent, and in this respect retrogressive, since scholars are often arbitrarily attracted to one or the other 'schools'. The purpose of each approach is, however, the same. As Glaser and Strauss point out:-

"What clash there is concerns the primacy of emphasis on verification or generation of theory"

(Glaser, B & Strauss, A. 1967)

Whilst these divisions have historical significance, it is important to note that for modern day theorists, the complementary aspects of each approach have a more valuable contribution to make in the bridging of these divisions.

Following this view, I have focused my attention upon examining the relative usefulness of each group of ideas rather than in coming down upon one set approach.

3.2.1 Quantitative Theory

The concern to measure one's research findings is an attribute which has its derivation in the natural sciences.

The natural sciences have had, as their focus, physical matter. Since matter has its own innate characteristics and properties which behave differently under different conditions, it has been more amenable to observation and measurement. Scientists have thus been able to devise categories of measurement which allow other scientists to share in the understanding of these changes.

The inherent logic behind scientific deduction has given natural science an indisputable integrity over all other areas of knowledge.

The development of the social sciences is, however, of much more recent origin. Its early development was due to the 'positivistic' approaches of Comte and others whose philosophy related to the thinking of the natural sciences. (Avon, R.1969)

In attempting to legitimise social science greater stress was laid upon empirical validation using statistical analysis. This search for improved methods of measuring social

phenomena is impressive in its generation of ideas. Whilst examining the 'tools of social science', John Hodge, whilst accrediting quantitative theorists for the sheer amount of work undertaken, hints rather guardedly about the 'shadowy nature of favourite formulations'. Even under some degree of uncertainty, Hodge goes on to reaffirm that the social scientist should put his hypotheses at the mercy of his experiment. (Hodge, J. 1959)

Such a view emphasises the appropriateness of the techniques used to observe social facts rather than on the facts themselves. The problem becomes one of testing the validity of methods used rather than in trying to understand the subjective meanings that individuals place upon their actions. Here the conflict between pure and social science becomes marked. The whole procedure places the 'chicken before the egg'.

The essence of the problem can be explained by the self-diluting nature of the problem-solving process. Galtung describes this defect very succinctly by suggesting that:-

"one problem of this methodology is its way of atomising entities - 'the ocean-ness of an ocean' and the 'mountain-ness of a mountain' may disappear in the process." (Galtung, J. 1967)

Thus, in an attempt to conceptualise problems into a common idiom of terms and ideas the quantitative research method may be guilty of sacrificing accuracy for the sake of tidiness. Data has in fact to be rationalised in order to be managed.

One such technique known as the 'systems approach' is concerned with building models of reality. Riddock has argued that when such models or systems are constructed they only conform to an approximation of the truth. (Riddock, R. 1972) Within such models areas of information are either ignored for the purposes of clarity or missed because the system is insufficiently sensitive to pick up minute phenomena.

A justification for model-building is that it aids thinking. This is, of course, essential as a method of consolidating theoretical findings. A defect is that this process tends to understate the complexities behind social problems.

Quantitative research methods are particularly valuable in mass studies. Here human data cannot be identified except by the use of objective terminology, (class, occupation, age), to separate mass characteristics in a population sample. There are, however, limits at which the statistical tool becomes 'blunted', or out of focus.

One suggestion could be that quantitative measurement should come into effect when data has already emerged from a problem-situation. That is, at the post data collection stage when raw data could be sifted using a variety of objective techniques. This approach would be largely unstructured to prevent data becoming distorted by the over-use of objective method in the initial stages.

3.2.2 Qualitative Theory

"The qualitative method is an act of faith.

The believer begins with a perspective,
states his assumptions and arrives close

"to proving the latter with his researchers."

(Fletcher, C. 1974)

Such statements emphasise that in qualitative theory the essence is upon human events which, once understood, are the source of useful theory.

The quantitative approach, in contrast, begins with theory and works downward towards the individual or human events. The qualitative theory is the 'grounded theory' suggested by Glaser and Strauss. Theory, they suggest, evolves from the data itself since concepts and hypotheses are worked out in relation to the data during the process of research. (Glaser, B and Strauss, A. 1967).

Implicit in the quantitative method is an assumption that 'theory' only requires confirmation through research. In the qualitative approach, the 'methodology' is very near being the 'theory'. As Fletcher remarks:-

"it is a way of studying and producing theory since both theory and methodology are worked out in an integrated fashion."

(Fletcher, C. 1974)

Qualitative theory is based upon three recent developments - phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology. These have been defined respectively by Fletcher as:- the intelligence corps, the signal's regiment, and the light infantry/paratroop regiments. (Fletcher, C 1974) These approaches can be further defined as:-

- (a) **PHENOMENOLOGY** - the sociology of common-sense, it relates to the stock of knowledge that individuals possess and how they typify new phenomena against what they already know.
- (b) **SYMBOLIC INTERACTIVISM** - concerns communicative behaviour between individuals, or the unspoken meanings which individuals attach to particular functions of social life
- (c) **ETHNOMETHODOLOGY** - the laws surrounding natural events and circumstances. Peoples acceptance of what is happening, and how they relate daily phenomena to the practical situation. Has similar qualities to (a) above.

Each of these themes has practical application because they do not define too precisely the guidelines of research itself. They are basically research orientations within the qualitative 'school of ideas'.

The qualitative method is multi-dimensional like most social problems. It examines individuals, their relations with the environment, and their patterns of social interaction. It does not, therefore, rely upon a single set of meanings or theoretical dogmatism.

The technique is difficult to apply in practice since it places more responsibility upon the researcher. Primary analyses are made upon the individual problem allowing the data to 'throw up' ideas which have to be explained.

In line with the philosophy of the qualitative theorists there has developed the 'action approach'. Action, it is suggested, arises out of the meanings which 'actors' in a given situation attribute to that social world. (Silverman, D. 1970). In other words, meanings are derived from the intrinsic properties of the situation being studied, and not from any predetermined set of assumptions that the researcher might possess.

The 'action approach' often requires the researcher to get involved in the situation he is studying. This, is, of course, very difficult, because a person cannot really 'experience' the social world of another unless he becomes truly part of it. (Lupton, T. 1966). The major problem with this approach is that it requires high interpersonal skills on the part of the researcher. Not only must he be able to interpret the actions and meanings of others, he must also be aware of his own effect upon these phenomena. If objectivity becomes entwined with subjectivity it thus becomes difficult for a researcher to separate the truth.

Qualitative methods are not the complete recipe for social science research. They should, where possible, be used in conjunction with established quantitative approaches.

3.3 Research Approaches - White-Collar Union Recognition

A number of studies into white-collar unionism have directed their attentions towards developing 'grand theory'. Bain, for example, has used quantitative methods to develop his theory of white-collar union growth. (Bain, G. 1970)

Whilst these ideas are of value in explaining growth patterns within the context of the economy, they do not give enough insight into the problems associated with growth at organisation level. Bain's model identifies three variables, concentration, government involvement and union recognition which have influenced union growth. I have chosen union recognition for study because I believe this to be the most significant aspect of white-collar union growth.

Union recognition provides the basic momentum for generating growth in terms of increased membership, and is therefore fundamental to Bain's model. Yet, the process of recognition is a 'one-off' occurrence. Each organisation that is involved in the recognition issue will tend to be unique, since many factors will interplay with one another to produce a change in the position of the white-collar worker. The process of recognition varies in the time it takes to evolve, weeks, months, often years. Yet the study of this phenomena may have to be undertaken in a lesser time span.

The research problem itself is abounded by complexities. Whether to examine historical events, whether to follow on-going events, or whether to synthesise events from all sides concerned. These questions have to be answered before any research design can begin.

In attempting to answer the questions posed, I have considered three outline research approaches, which for convenience I have termed RETROSPECTIVE, ON-GOING, and SYNTHESIS.

3.3.1 Retrospective

This method of tackling the problem is historical, since it evolves post events which have 'died'.

Two approaches to this method come to mind:-

- (a) Develop theory from case-histories and other background facts, and test this against any new situations.
- (b) Collect facts from those with knowledge of post events (documents included) and build-up theory from this basis.

The approach lends itself to either quantitative or qualitative analysis, or a combination of both. Much will depend upon the number of case-histories collected and the 'depth' of information which evolves. Action research in its purest form is out, since actions have arisen in the past, and retrospectively, new meanings may be attached to events based upon new experiences. The time-lapse-effect upon informant's attitudes and/or perceptions about the problem will require re-interpretation by the researcher in relation to these actions or events. One might have to interpret one's own understanding of the problem by using comparative analysis with related theory before evaluating any data.

The second major problem is connected with the recording of events. Respondents could include shop-stewards, managers, or union officials. Whatever information is collected will be influenced by methods of recording. Individual perceptions of events will often vary according to the level of knowledge possessed and the role or position each respondent

played during negotiations.

Recording may be facilitated if two levels of record are considered separately (facts and feelings), and then superimposed together.

FACTS - The methodology of events and the sequence in which they took place. Facts can be also interpreted by the 'meanings' placed upon them by the 'actors'. Therefore, it is useful to distinguish here between possible 'perceptions' respondents may have of events. Such variations would have to be confirmed by secondary accounts or data.

FEELINGS - This type of data is subjective. It is likely to improve the 'reality' of purely factual data. Fundamentally it is concerned with meanings or attitudinal attachments that are made to various actions or events.

The distinction between 'facts' and feelings' can sometimes become blurred. However, facts can be verified by reference to reports, documents, or independent accounts such as government inquiries.

Feelings, however, are much more difficult to translate into record, since questioning may determine the mode of response. Questions should be considered beforehand in order to give adequate coverage. Yet, they should be designed to be sufficiently 'open-ended' so as not to over-structure replies. Asking a

respondent to 'describe in his own words' what happened gives feedback which is less influenced by the researcher.

When recording is completed, both forms of data require verification by the respondents, since translation from the spoken to the written word can produce its own distortions.

The case-study of each recognition situation can thus yield to the researcher a pictorial view of the problem. The result is a historical development which attempts also to incorporate, as far as is possible, respective attitudes and feelings of the parties involved.

Analysis could take the form of identifying those characteristics which appear as 'constants', or those which are instrumental in developing the recognition process through its various stages. There is a need to be aware that any data can be structured or categorised by the researcher which may give the resultant data new meaning.

This stage is important in the development of theory. New theory should therefore be tested against known theory to see where disparities exist.

Qualitative evidence can also be subjected to systematic analysis. Content analysis can be used to assist in the separation of common characteristics between cases. Or, where variations are apparent, these may be evaluated using techniques such as the points rating system, or differential scaling methods. Although any of the above techniques could still be criticised on the basis of their subjectivity, they are, however, attempts to 'objectify' qualitative material.

Whatever form the analysis takes, it should always be appropriate to the 'needs' of the data. Classifying data into accepted categories may produce distortions. To avoid this danger it is sometimes better to consider techniques after the data has been collected and briefly analysed. In this way attempts to order data collection will be less likely, and data which would otherwise be excluded can now be considered.

3.3.2 On-Going

This is the 'real' thing, or is it? The recognition dispute is in being, and the researcher is invited to watch. Such a situation would approach the ideal, since the problem of gaining entry remains the most difficult of objectives to realise.

There are two ways in which an on-going dispute might be observed, from inside and from outside.

Getting all parties concerned to accept the presence of an 'outsider' will often depend upon the goodwill of those concerned. The researcher would have to negotiate his role within the context of the on-going dispute. Politically, his loyalties might be suspect by either side, which could hinder the quality of any feedback. If such a situation is suspected, then a lesser degree of involvement might have to be considered.

If the researcher decides that he can get involved in the situation under study, then he would have to observe what was happening and question the 'combatants' on the ground. Such a position is fraught with difficulties. The 'actors'

involved may be influenced by the researcher's presence and might therefore pay up to this, giving a 'Hawthorne-effect'. The only alternative would be to use 'keyhole' methods which are, to say the least, unethical. (Hamblin, A. 1974)

Secondly, the objectivity of personal records can be questioned on the basis that the observer is subjected to conflicting perceptions of events. That is, his frame of reference as an impartial observer and the results of his own personal interpretation of the feelings that are aroused in him by the actions of the 'actors'.

To involve oneself 'externally' with events would still require union or management co-operation. In this instance an observer would be reporting upon happenings after they had occurred. Contact with all parties would have to be made with the full confidence of all sides. I have made this point because unless the observer's integrity is fully substantiated at the outset, then any 'reporting back' could be seriously inhibited by a reluctance to disclose confidential information.

The major drawback in the 'report-back' method is that information becomes 'second-hand' and is subject to some re-processing by the respondents. Skill is required by a researcher in the questioning technique to test out the respondents' views in relation to the situation being discussed. The 'action research' technique uses this facility for re-processing information to achieve change within the organisation by firstly giving the participants a feedback from the research findings.

However, the function of this research is not intended as a means of initiating change within any particular organisation.

3.3.3 Synthesis

This approach is concerned with the building up of a composite theory derived from recorded events, case-studies, interviews and other source material concerning the problem of recognition. This approach is similar to, and could well supplement, the case-method described earlier.

The technique involves a fundamental analysis of attitudes and expectations of the parties involved. Some hypotheses-building is inevitable but is subject to testing and re-testing until found workable. Greater stress is laid upon validating theory using the comparative method. An analogy can be drawn between this method and that of a detective building-up a social facsimile of a murder victim from a vast array of fact, opinion, and related evidence. (Lebb, E.J. et al. 1966)

The technique of synthesis can be used where no 'live' data collection is possible or even feasible. Data may include empirical findings from similar or related research problem areas.

The theoretical explanation of events is carried out using inference and deduction as analytical methods. This is, of course, a conventional approach. One of its drawbacks is that it lacks a certain credibility with practitioners since it is not 'grounded' with direct empirical evidence.

3.4 Suggested Research Methodology

The previous section has enumerated three possible approaches for tackling the research problem defined in Chapter One.

From this pool of ideas I have chosen what I consider to be the best approach taking into account the problems and limitations that I have already met in the 'field'.

3.4.1 Preliminary Data Collection

The initial work carried out can be briefly summarised as follows:-

- (1) An attempt to gather background information from firms in the Sheffield and Yorkshire region using a postal questionnaire. This resulted in 314 firms being included in a random sample of firms employing at least 250 people. All firms in this category were included from the Sheffield area, and a random sample of one in three firms from the remaining Yorkshire region. The 1972 'Kompass Directory' of firms was used as a frame of reference. From this exercise 50 firms responded (16% response rate), the results of which are shown in Appendices A, B and C.
- (2) The collection of six case-studies from firms in which recognition had been, or was, a problem. (Appendix I). Many of these cases were the result of postal survey follow-ups. Four of these cases originated from management sources, and two from both union and management sources.

3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection

Subsequent to completing the initial data collection it was found that the cases reflected a management-bias.

To combat this problem eight interviews were arranged with full-time union officers of six major white-collar unions to obtain union views and experiences of union recognition problems. The interviews were unstructured, and an analysis of the responses is given in Chapter Four.

Whilst the interviews with union officials provided much useful data, these in themselves were not enough to clarify certain points emerging from the case-studies. In order to find out whether management policies acted upon white-collar unionisation a detailed analysis of thirty-six C.I.R. reports concerning union recognition was undertaken. This analysis provided some insights into certain structural aspects of organisation policies e.g. grievance handling. The detailed breakdown of this analysis is given in Appendices E and F.

A follow-up to the initial postal sample was also carried out into thirteen companies which had staff associations. This involved a short questionnaire which tried to establish reasons for, and nature of, staff association membership. (See Appendices G and H) Only six companies responded.

3.4.3 Final Data Collection

The final stage of field research involved the use of structured interviews with groups of white-collar workers. The firm chosen for this research had recently granted union recognition on behalf of a bargaining unit for supervisors.

The objective of the interviews was to determine the factors which affected individual decisions to become union members. On this basis it was possible to test out some of the theoretical ideas which were derived from earlier data analysis.

3.5 Summary

The major problem which has been encountered in data collection has been the availability of first-hand data. With this problem in mind I have had to collect evidence from many sources.

In this context I have been influenced by the arguments put forward by one group of researchers who suggest that:-

"Once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more independent measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced." (Webb, D.J. et al. 1966)

They believe that if all independently used research techniques are inherently weak in some respect, then multiple research methods can minimise the effects of individual weaknesses.

From my own research experiences I have encountered such weaknesses in my approaches to data collection. I have consistently found the need to collect more data. Whilst doing this I have had to refine my own ideas about union recognition. My initial perception was of a somewhat static process which could be illustrated through the use of case-studies. Having to consider other factors more closely i.e. union attitudes, union recruitment strategies, has led to more

enlightened perceptions of how complex industrial relations actually is in practice.

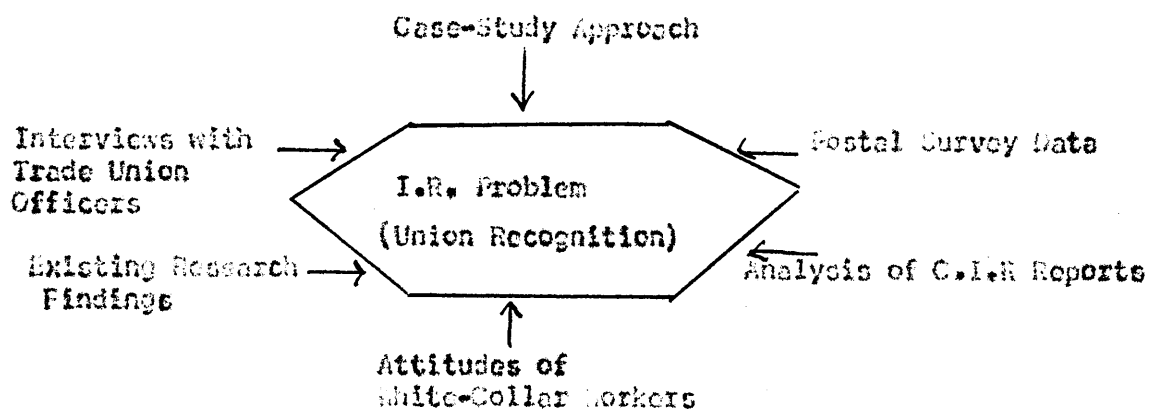
The multiple approach that I have adopted can best be illustrated by the simple conceptual model outlined in Figure 2.

The problem is a common factor whichever independent approach is being used. Each research perspective gives only a partial insight into the problem. A theoretical understanding of the problem is given by the combination of separate insights derived from the different sources and levels of data obtained by each research method.

The overall research perspective reflects the researcher's own learning experience which he gains from each new layer of evidence that is uncovered. Compounded, such results amount to a totality of learning.

This research strategy combines, in effect, the most appropriate methods from either qualitative or quantitative sources. It would appear to be a useful means by which the multi-faceted or multi-dimensional nature of industrial relations can be understood.

The following chapter examines the findings that have resulted from the use of this research methodology.



4.1 Introduction

I have devoted the first section of this chapter to outlining the process of recognition using the case-study summaries. The chapter then proceeds to evaluate the recognition in three stages which I have termed primary, development, and negotiation. These boundaries are not necessarily distinct in practice, since in 'real life' they may sometimes overlap.

Whilst the case-study findings provide a conceptual outline of the problems parameters, an in-depth analysis of specific variables is pursued within this framework.

Much of the research data, particularly the case-studies, is extremely bulky. For this reason it has been placed in the appendices.

4.2 An Outline of the Recognition Process

The selection of case-studies, shown in Appendix J, illustrate the events and/or negotiations undertaken by the six firms involved.

The resulting data from each case was subjected to content-analysis to isolate common factors that occurred between the different firms involved. The resulting analysis was then summarised and depicted in Figure 3.

4.2.1 Case-Study Abstracts.

The following abstracts give an outline of the more detailed case-study summaries which are given in Appendix I.

Case 'A' - This concerns a large chemical firm which has a number of manufacturing divisions. The company has a formal recognition policy which is designed to allow recognition to a union which can show that a majority of staff are members. However, a union must gain a majority membership within all the firm's operating divisions before it can be allowed to succeed. This policy has caused problems since, although one union (A.S.T.M.S) has gained majorities within individual manufacturing divisions, it does not satisfy the company-wide requirement and therefore does not qualify for recognition. The union is contesting this policy on the basis that it hinders adequate staff representation by the over-centralisation of staff policies, through fear of multi-unionism. The union believes that company-wide and divisional staff matters can be separated as a basis for allowing union recognition on a divisional level.

Case 'B' - Is concerned with the development of union recognition in a company which is involved in printing and distribution. The company has objected to staff unionism quite strongly and fought off union claims for recognition.

The initial impetus in union membership occurred in the company's warehouse where hostility towards company overtime agreements resulted in a degree of conflict. The intervention and efforts of S.O.G.A.T increased union membership quite rapidly. Together with changing management attitudes, the efforts of the union resulted in a recognition agreement eventually being negotiated.

Case 'C' - Involves a medium-sized engineering firm which had a staff association to represent and negotiate on behalf of its members. The relative ineffectiveness of the staff association as a pay negotiator coupled with improvements in manual workers pay relative to staff pay encouraged increasing membership of B.M.T.S.A. Management were favourably disposed to the parent-body of this union (G.M.W.U) and allowed a union recognition agreement to be concluded.

Case 'D' - Describes the activities of A.S.T.M.S. in attempting to recruit staff at I.C.I. I.C.I. appeared to obstruct union recognition by setting up a staff association for all its existing staff. A reference to the

Industrial Relations Court was investigated by the C.I.R who recommended A.S.T.M.S. as a bargaining agent in a majority of the I.C.I bargaining units. With a change in government, the recommendations were not implemented, although gradually A.S.T.M.S. has managed to gain some success in its recognition attempts.

Case 'E' - This case concerned a small engineering firm which quickly expanded over a short time. Many of the changes which took place reduced the career expectations of existing supervisory and technical staff. Whilst manual unionism also began to emerge during this period, the perceived differences between these two groups helped to encourage union recruitment. The union A.S.T.M.S. approached the company regarding recognition and succeeded in negotiating an agreement with the company.

Case 'F' - The company concerned is a medium-sized carpet manufacturer. Union membership within the firm has developed in a number of ways. Clerical staff have been recruited by the existing manual union N.U.D.B.T.W, who has been trying to gain recognition for all categories of staff. Technical staff have

attempted to maintain their status in relation to supervisors, and this has resulted in their acceptance of A.S.T.M.S. representation through deficiencies in their status as 'senior staff'. The company has encouraged separate staff associations for occupational groups, although accepting the principle of union recognition. A number of causes are responsible for the events in this firm, some of which result from an inferior system of industrial relations which is only gradually being remedied since the firm was taken-over.

4.2.2 Elements of the Recognition Process

A summary analysis of the case-studies is given in Figure 3 which identifies those factors which enable or restrain the development of the recognition process.

The recognition process has been analysed as three separate stages. The characteristics of each of these stages is illustrated briefly in Figure 4. This shows how the transitional nature of the process may be followed through the stages involved.

This particular type of framework gives a somewhat 'static' picture of the process, showing only linear relationships. Since the union recognition process is concerned with dynamic events, more detailed analytical treatment is required.

The following sections of this chapter deal more specifically with the theoretical dynamics of recognition problems as they occur in firms. I have used the case-study findings to assist in this task.

Statistical data and interview findings are used to explain specific points within the theoretical framework. I have dealt with each stage of the recognition process in a separate section to focus the research findings upon those factors which I believe to be important.

4.3 Recognition - The Primary Stages

4.3.1 Bureaucratic Controls and Changes in Staff Attitudes

The initial development of unionisation amongst white-collar workers results from changing attitudes towards management. These changes may occur because of the difficulties encountered by firms in administering large numbers of staff using bureaucratic methods.

Large firms, and those with multi-plant operations may, therefore, have to continually adjust their labour policies to ensure some form of standardisation of treatment. One company which had to introduce job evaluation noted that:-

"The problem of pay relativities was a major concern in view of the fact that a large number of organisational units were concentrated in close geographical proximity."

(Case A, para.7, Appendix I)

In this situation management may face a dual problem. If no action is taken to correct anomalies, then discontented staff may join unions to correct the situation. However, if action is taken and systems are introduced by a firm, then this may increase the formal treatment of staff. One researcher has suggested that in this latter case the threat of bureaucratic controls may influence staff to join unions as a counter-measure. (Lusley, R. 1973)

Thus, if bureaucratisation affects union membership levels, this could be reflected by the size of the firm itself. Evidence gathered from the initial postal survey indicated size as an influencing factor, but the pattern of the data was not regular which may have been due to the small sample taken. (Table 5, Appendix B) The data did show a doubling of union membership in firms employing over two thousand workers. In contrast, an analysis of C.I.R. reports showed union membership levels to be the same for both large and small firms. (Appendix E) The results are, therefore, somewhat arbitrary but this could be due to the sample sizes taken.

Another indicator of the level of bureaucratic control i.e. the incidence of salary grading schemes, may also be used to test the above. From the C.I.R. analysis salary grading schemes existed in 19 out of the 36 firms studied. (Appendix F)

The data in Table 1, Appendix E, shows a possible association between size of firm and the existence of salary grading. Union membership levels, however, vary between large and small firms. The density of union membership was 30.5%

in firms with grading schemes, and 45.1% in firms without such schemes.

One conclusion that might be drawn from these findings is although the existence of salary grading appears to be related to a firms' size, the existence of such schemes appears to depress union membership. Another view could be that as a firm grows it finds it necessary to introduce formal systems of administration. Whilst such systems reduce some discontent they do not satisfy all parties, and therefore some unionisation still takes place.

It would appear that any formal system for administering staff reduces the trend towards unionisation, but it may not stop it taking place over the long-term.

This view was confirmed by some of the trade union officials interviewed in the course of this research. A T.A.S.S official noted that:-

"Grading systems slow down union growth as do other labour policies, but only for two or three years. Eventually anomalies occur in management systems which can only be 'ironed out' by negotiation."

This view was also put forward by a representative of A.C.T.S who suggested that, "systems need to be reviewed every five years".

Whilst labour policies may slow down staff unionisation, a T.A.S.S. official pointed out that in such companies that use them extensively, management attitudes towards unionism were much more realistic anyway.

Arising out of the previous discussion are a number of points. These are summarised as follows:-

- (a) The bureaucratic control of staff through labour policies i.e. salary grading, may reduce their expectations of individual treatment.
- (b) whilst labour policies may take the place of an individual reward-system, they do not always function impartially. The breakdown of these policies may also engender further hostility from dissatisfied staff.
- (c) Labour policies appear to impose a 'time lag' into the process of unionisation. Thus, union membership may still occur, but at a slower rate than where no policies exist.

4.3.2 Consultative Arrangements within the Firm

A point discussed in Chapter Two, suggested that if management failed to keep pace with a rapidly expanding organisation, this might be reflected in a lack of provision for dealing with staff problems.

In case-study 'B', for example, this was shown through the lack of available grievance procedures, which was an important factor affecting the growth of unionism. (Para. 18, Appendix I). The firm in question had irregular work patterns which necessitated overtime working in periods of high demand. The dispute which arose from this situation was not reconciled because no arrangements for consultation existed, and therefore,

strong opposition towards management developed.

In Case 'F' an incident over the entitlement of sickness benefits which was not remedied, was instrumental in creating rapid growth in union membership amongst technicians. (Paras. 18/19 - Appendix I)

In each of these cases the firms concerned did not have any formal policies for dealing with grievance issues.

Whilst dealing with this question, an A.P.E.X official viewed the situation from a slightly different viewpoint. He suggested that:-

"Some staff workers want to feel important.

They may be well paid, etc., but feel ignored.

They see the growing importance of manual

shop-stewards and the level of consultation

given to manual workers."

A lack of consultation might, therefore, be a significant factor in creating a demand for collective representation.

To evaluate this possibility, an examination was made of the conditions prevailing inside thirty-six firms which were investigated by the C.I.R. (Appendices E and F) Included in this analysis was the existence of salary grading schemes, staff associations, works councils, bonus and merit rating schemes, and the 'quality' of grievance handling procedures.

The effectiveness of grievance handling procedures was assessed by the C.I.R., and it was possible to determine whether this was 'good', 'poor', or 'non-existent'.

A measure of the quality of grievance handling was included in the analysis because it appeared to be a useful indicator of a firm's ability to manage conflict. If grievance handling is ineffective then this could alienate members of staff resulting in higher union recruitment.

To test this argument, data from Appendix E has been analysed in Appendix F - Tables 2 and 3. In view of the small sample size, the data was grouped showing 'poor' and 'non-existent' grievance procedures together. Also union membership levels have been classified as 'high' (above 50%) or 'low' (below 50%).

From the results of statistical analysis using both the chi-square and rank correlation tests, a strong association was found to exist between the quality of grievance handling and the level of union membership. Although the chi-square test showed this association to be highly significant, the rank correlation test, which gave a positive value, did not show this to be very high. This latter result may have been due to the limited size of the actual sample of firms.

However, from the overall results of the C.I.R. analysis, certain observable tendencies were evident within the firms studied. (Appendix F - Table 6) These are summarised below.

- (a) That firms with low union membership levels are much more likely to have systems of salary grading, merit-rating, or bonus payment systems. These firms are also more likely to have either staff associations or works councils, and their

ability to handle worker's grievances
is usually good.

- (b) That firms, with high union membership levels are less likely to have systems of salary grading, merit-rating, or bonus payment systems. These firms will tend to have poor or non-existent procedures for handling grievances. The existence of any form of staff association or works council was also less evident.

These results indicate that a low level of consultation within firms may be a significant factor in "triggering-off" union membership recruitment. On the other hand, early unionisation amongst staff could dispel the need for firms to develop internal consultative mechanisms of their own.

4.3.3 Summary

This section has attempted to highlight those factors which give the unionisation of white-collar workers its initial impetus.

Firstly, the use by management of bureaucratic labour controls may create uncertainties amongst staff, which they respond to by joining collective organisations (unions and staff associations). The administration of staff through labour policies which may include salary grading schemes, is not always impartial. Eventually these systems may malfunction creating anomalies which can only be rectified by negotiation.

Secondly, if management fails to provide or update facilities for consultation, this could create demands for union representation. One particular measure, that of grievance handling, has been shown to relate directly to the level of unionisation existing within firms.

Whilst these two initial causes of union membership growth may have separate origins, they are also related. The formalisation of labour policies also contributes to the level of bureaucratic control. Thus, the process is basically similar. The difference lies in the rate at which unionisation takes place. No action by management may accelerate union recruitment, whereas if management constantly adapts to the needs of the situation, then the pattern of unionisation may be subject to a 'time-lag'. The key to events is likely to be determined by the approach adopted by management.

The following section shows how the development of union growth may occur, given that some initial support has already been created within the firm.

4.4 Recognition - The Development Stages

The development of unionisation towards the negotiation of a recognition agreement involves the 'building-up' of existing membership support.

A number of factors can affect this development. (See Figure 3) However, two such factors have been selected to illustrate this stage:-

- (a) the role of the staff association
- (b) the effectiveness of union recruitment strategies

The staff association has been chosen because it is a characteristic of white-collar work which has often influenced the degree of union membership in firms. (Bain, G. 1970)

The strategies used by trade union recruitment are often the most important external influence over the growth of unionism within private firms. For this reason alone they have been included in the following analysis.

4.4.1 Changes in the Nature of Staff Association

It is notable that in the relationships that govern management and staff there has been a tendency towards internal forms of collective representation. These have included, Works Councils, Consultative Committees, Staff Forums, Company Unions, and Staff Associations. All are included under the general umbrella of 'staff associations', although works councils/consultative committees have other functions. One view of the staff association is, that it is a device of management designed to 'stall' or 'put off' trade unionism. Bain, for example, suggests that most staff associations "are more indicative of the behaviour of employers than employees". (Bain, G. 1970) He also suggests that they are either used to keep out unions on one hand, or, in paternalistic firms, by a sincere desire to treat staff as part of management. On no account, however, does he offer any substantial evidence for this claim.

In stressing this, the main point is to show that beliefs about staff associations always assume that they are a company tactic designed to oppose white-collar unionism.

Whilst there is substance in this belief, there are contra-indications from these research findings which suggest other causes as well.

From the C.I.R analysis (Appendix E and F), and the initial postal survey (Appendix A, B, and C), union membership levels are compared in Figure 5.

It can be seen that union membership levels are significantly lower in those firms with staff associations. The results from the two separate samples also show strong similarities.

This feature is interesting because the attitudes of the two categories of firms varies. Within the postal sample, those firms who responded largely held favourable attitudes towards trade union recognition. (Appendix B, Table 6) The firms included in the C.I.R analysis were, however, mostly in dispute with their staff over recognition. It is possible to infer from this latter sample, that management within the firms involved was less favourably disposed towards white-collar unionism.

If the two assumptions concerning management attitudes are correct, then staff associations also exist in firms who are not opposed to unionism. This may be due to a change in company attitudes over a time. However, the existence of staff associations does appear to depress union recruitment.

The manner in which staff associations form may be important in explaining the above anomaly. Out of the six firms who completed the staff association questionnaire, three firms indicated that their associations were set up on the basis of staff demands. (Appendix H, Q.2) whilst one could argue that

the firms may have actually 'cultivated' interest in staff associations, other evidence exists which indicates that staff can be the actual promoters of associations.

In Case 'F' (Appendix I, paras. 15/17), staff associations for both foramen and loom tuners were created in response to staff demands. This is a notable instance, since the company concerned had already agreed to recognise trade union representation in the case of its clerical staff.

From the responses of firms who completed the staff association questionnaire, certain basic causes of staff association formation were given. (Appendix II, Q.4) The responses were classified as to their origin and included the following:-

- | <u>'Company Originated'</u> | <u>'Staff Originated'</u> |
|---|---|
| 1. An attempt to dissuade staff from joining a union. | 1. The level of support for unions was too low. |
| 2. Development of the existing 'staff society'. | 2. Gives representation to non-union members. |
| 3. Formalisation of 'common interests' due to growth of unionism. | |

Those staff associations which were originated by the company all indicate unfavourable attitudes towards unions. However, those originated by staff themselves appear to accept the reality of unionism. In this latter context the staff association is viewed implicitly as either transitional or an alternative to unionism.

It has already been stated (Chapter Two), that staff associations can be viewed as 'staging posts' to the unionisation of white-collar workers. If this argument is sound, it should be possible to demonstrate that staff associations have a limited life-span which results in staff eventually joining trade unions.

Questions put to the trade union officers interviewed were designed to test out this assumption. The questioning covered the following areas:-

- (a) Why staff associations emerge.
- (b) Defective functions of staff associations.
- (c) Union approaches towards staff associations.

Overall, views about staff associations included comments that they were usually 'very conservative', or 'management-orientated', and that very few actually did any negotiating.

Concerning the formation of staff associations, one official of M.A.T.S.A. noted that:-

"Clerical and Administration staff are the main members, they appear to be naive about industrial relations because they have had little or no experience."

The argument suggests that an inexperience of unionism breeds a fear of the likely consequences of union membership. This belief may have resulted from the influence of such factors as the media which often over emphasises the less desirable aspects of trade unionism. Thus, staff associations may represent a rather tentative step towards collective representation.

Another view given by A.P.E.X was that staff associations were:-

"Enthusiastic when they first form. Workers

often use them as a piece of 'moaning machinery'.

One benefit of staff associations may be that they give staff, perhaps for the first time, an opportunity to voice collective issues. In particular the staff association might fulfil the role of defective or non-existent grievance handling procedures.

A view put forward by a T.A.S.U. official regarding the formation of staff associations suggested that management uses staff associations:-

- (a) as a deterrent to unionism
- (b) as a means of improving communication links
- (c) to give representational arrangements

Whilst (a) is an accepted argument anyway, (b) and (c) would appear to emerge as the result of organisation pressures. There are some problems, the introduction of planned change, for example, which cannot be carried out effectively without some form of group consultation.

All of the union officers interviewed commented upon the defects of staff associations. Broadly, these views were that:-

- (a) They (staff associations), demonstrate their lack of ability when a dispute arises. Workers become easily dissatisfied when their representative fails to come back from management with anything concrete.
- (b) Staff often latch on to staff associations when seeking forms of representation, the process eventually ends up in them joining a union.

These views suggest that the life cycle of a staff association is of a limited duration. This can not be altogether true, since there are instances e.g. Banking, where staff association growth has continued even whilst a union has been recruiting members. (Black, R. 1967)

Many union officers did agree, however, that the life-span of a staff association could be prolonged if it had strong management backing. Therefore, if firms do not actively support staff associations there may be a tendency for the members to 'drift' towards trade union membership.

Union officers also suggested the following causes for the decay and eventual demise of staff associations.

- (1) Through the union continually highlighting their deficiencies to staff
- (2) Through the union using major areas of contention, or a dispute, to take up issues with management that have been left unresolved. (similar to (1) above)
- (3) Through direct approaches from staff association officials who wanted a union organiser to come and talk to their members.
- (4) Through ineffective leadership by staff association officials who either do not 'deliver the goods', or who are seen to be using their position to ingratiate themselves with top management. (related to both (1) and (2) above)

The first two causes are linked closely to a unions recruitment strategies. They may also be more applicable to situations where unions have negotiated representational agreements and already have a 'core' of support within the firm.

The other causes relate to staff association leadership. If these officials realise their own limitations in bargaining with management, they may influence their membership into opening up a dialogue with trade unions. Where an official 'visibly' fails to achieve results for staff, then staff may opt out of the association and seek union representation themselves.

Nearly all the union officers believed that staff associations were becoming less important. Some felt that recent industrial legislation (T.U.L.R.A and Employment Protection Bill) reduced this status, because they could not seek adequate protection for their members as an 'independent union'.

One overall conclusion from the preceding discussions is that there is evidence that indicates that staff associations can and do act as 'staging posts' in the development of white-collar unionisation. An important point to remember is that the origin of staff association, whether management or staff inspired, may determine its inherent stability over the long-term. Without management support, however, staff associations may become an 'outpost' for staff who do not wish to have anything to do with unions at all.

4.4.2 The Effectiveness of Union Recruitment Strategies

Effective trade union recruitment is a critical factor in the development of union membership, since it often requires an impetus which is external to the conditions prevalent within the firm.

Some unions believe that the strength of union membership is the shortest route to securing full recognition.

As A.S.T.M.S. notes:-

"Our clearest route is the growth factor, when we have obtained say 30 - 40% of potential membership, then the employer has less option to refuse recognition."

(Case 'D', Appendix I)

Whatever the ultimate objective of a union, it still has to assess the situation in each company before deciding upon an appropriate strategy. Its assessment should take into account social and economic circumstances prevailing, since these may be the 'wedge' that can be used to influence staff into becoming union members.

Some arguments were given by the union officials interviewed regarding factors which influence the white-collar workers views about union membership. These include status and substantive issues which may come under threat.

Status

White-collar workers have often been shown to be status-conscious. One way this may manifest itself is through pay differentials. All the respondents agreed that this was a strong 'influence' of dissatisfaction. M.A.T.S.A noted that this was a particular concern of supervisors, who were readily

aware of what their highest paid sub-ordinates were earning.

Loss of social status was thought by some respondents to be the main drawback to staff joining trade unions. U.A.T.S.A suggested that: "People who are frightened of unions are those who are not well up on the social scale, usually low-paid clerical types." Status factors also affected the recruitment of higher-level white-collar staff. U.S.D.A.W, for example, lost its potential membership from the Commercial Travellers Association to A.S.T.M.S. In this instance the salesman preferred the prestige of a 'managers union', against that existing in a 'warehouse workers' union.

To avoid being identified as low status unions, some have developed an approach to attract managerial membership. T.A.S.S, for example, has devised a two-tier system of representation for both managers and their sub-ordinates within the same firm. Both groups belong to the same union, but each have a separate representative who negotiates only for his allotted group.

In another instance, A.C.T.S has appointed a national officer with special responsibility for management problems.

Separate representation for managers ensures that their authority as negotiators of staff salaries is not undermined. It also preserves the necessary measure of autonomy between management and staff and complements the social structure which actually exists in the firm.

Substantive Issues

Whilst status can be an important influence of staff attitudes towards unions, some issues often bring more immediate results.

This was illustrated by A.P.E.X who noted that dismissals, for example, are a 'cut and dried' undermining of authority. It is an immediate threat to status which could increase union membership and act as a form of insurance policy against any further unilateral action by an employer.

Redundancy creates similar pressures. As a T.A.S.S official put it: "redundancy destroys paternalism". Redundancies visibly demonstrate that an employer is unable to look after white-collar interests if these conflict with economic extrinsicities.

Whilst the issues mentioned are important 'cues' for a union organiser, any background knowledge has to be used as part of an overall recruitment strategy. A number of such strategies emerged from the interviews with trade union officials. Some of these were 'conscious' strategies, that is, approaches which were considered as part of a repertoire of techniques

to be used systematically. Other strategies evolved from 'on-the-spot' situations which may have been influenced by the views of the staff involved.

The following account of these strategies places different emphasis upon different approaches. However, it should be noted that some of these approaches cannot be made unless some degree of union membership has already existed within a firm.

'Strategic Groups'

This approach may be adopted by a union when it is seeking to consolidate its position within a firm. The basic idea is to select a small composite group of workers such as bonus clerks or computer staff. Membership recruitment is then concentrated within that group.

The selection of groups such as wages personnel means that management can be placed under pressure with the minimum use of force if it continually refuses to grant recognition. As a N.A.T.S.A official put it:-

"the threat of a labour withdrawal on a Wednesday, if carried out, would create a build-up of pressure from manual workers who expect to get paid on a Friday."

Or, as a T.A.S.S official noted:-

"take a wages or accounts department and the firm will see the danger of a dispute in a vulnerable area."

Thus, using the 'strategic group' strategy, a union can exert either direct or indirect pressure upon an employer which might result in him conceding recognition. However, another T.A.S.S

official pointed out that this approach should only be used when others had failed. There was a recognised danger in using force, which might result in one early success, but which could taint future relations with the employer.

The highlighting of the inherent strategic position of white-collar workers is also used as an argument to show potential staff membership that they are in a position to mobilise actual bargaining power equal to that exerted by manual workers.

Enveloping

Where staff union membership is already highly concentrated within a large organisation, it is sometimes expedient for a union to press for an agreement in a small bargaining unit. As one N.A.T.O.A official put it:-

"Pick off one group, say technicians, then systematically begin 'mopping up' other groups."

Comparable views put by other union officials included the following comments:-

"Negotiate for one group. However, if support is on a broader front extend negotiations to give them a broader outlook." (A.S.T.M.S)

"When a specific bargaining unit is initially being sought, encourage employer to extend the agreement by arguing that he may find himself negotiating with three or four unions later on." (A.P.E.N)

"Use the pressure of an established recognition agreement from one group to approach other groups." (A.C.T.S)

The first two approaches attempt to persuade an employer that existing recognition, albeit on a narrow front, should be extended to give the union further territorial rights. This partly plays upon the employers fear of multi-unionism. It also endeavours to create prior claims over other unions of potential union members.

The third approach realises the importance of using recognition status to demonstrate the union's expertise to other groups of staff. A union can also highlight the 'preferential' treated being enjoyed by union members.

Power Bargaining

Some unions referred to the use of militant action in connection with 'strategic group' strategies, however, only M.A.T.S.A and T.A.S.S actually recommended the use of a power bargaining approach.

T.A.S.S, for example, stated that:-

"The strength of our engineering section can be important if staff agree to a militant approach.

The time-lag, however, is important, if a dispute lasts too long membership tends to fall off."

The danger of putting off some groups of 'conservatively minded' white-collar workers is all too obvious. It is clearly important to have any decision to use industrial strength ratified by those staff likely to be affected.

If the time-lag of an industrial dispute is important, then sufficient power must be evident within the firm. A T.A.S.S official noted that the first question to be asked in

such circumstances was:- " What is our industrial strength in that company in terms of weight of numbers?"

Some firms are well aware of the implications of having one union for both 'blue' and 'white-collar' workers, and in some circumstances try to avoid this situation. (Case 'F', Appendix 1 para. 13). They often prefer to separate manual and non-manual unionism, since this often conflicts with existing labour policies or pay structures.

Build-up Support

The development of union membership can sometimes be a slow process. Some unions feel that more time in these circumstances should be spent actually 'cultivating' new membership.

A union officer from A.C.T.S has suggested that a union should:-

"Respond to the difficulties of staff, go into the firm and talk to people and develop contacts within the firm."

In other words, build-up some support at 'grass-roots' level before applying for union recognition.

U.B.S.A.W advocated a similarly 'quiet' approach. It suggested that if good relations could be developed with an employer, then it was possible to negotiate a recognition agreement with only 20-30% of potential membership strength.

A.P.E.X contended that where a membership majority could not be obtained within all a firm's bargaining units, it could argue from the basis of having the 'bulk of support'.

The union believed that 50% support within two-thirds of a company's bargaining units was a good basis for succeeding in a company-wide recognition claim.

The strategy of 'building-up support' does not place the emphasis upon 'grand tactics'. Instead, it relies upon a solid base of support developed through intensive groundwork. This is believed to be a better long-term guarantee of staff support and company recognition.

4.4.3 Summary

Within this section the effects of staff associations and union recruitment strategies were examined in relation to the recognition process.

It is evident that from the staff association findings that these bodies may have two functions. The traditional view that management uses them to counteract the development of white-collar unionism is still valid. However, this argument is not true for all situations. Staff associations are also an expression of, collective, as distinct from, individual feelings. Under these conditions it is more likely that workers will eventually seek or transfer their allegiance to trade unions. The cultivation of staff associations by trade unions has resulted in many 'conversions'. There is also evidence from trade union sources to indicate that, in effect, the staff association is a 'staging-post' to unionisation in certain circumstances.

The effectiveness of trade union recruitment strategies is probably the major influence of union growth within firms.

A union is able to exploit management staff differences and reduce the effects of paternalism.

The choice of an effective recruitment strategy will depend upon such factors as, the level of support within a firm, the attitude of employer towards extending recognition agreements, and the amount of influence union power has upon negotiations.

When sufficient support has been created within a firm, then the final critical stage of negotiations can take place.

4.5 Recognition - The Negotiation Stage

The ultimate goal in the recognition process is the final negotiations or rule-making procedures. This is the 'final act' whereby management and staff formalise their relationship.

The recognition agreement is considered to be a central feature in any negotiations. As one A.P.E.X official put it:-

"The recognition agreement is the key, development of membership does not then pose any problem."

Unions are sometimes motivated towards seeking recognition agreements because of their distrust of 'custom and practice' arrangements within certain firms. Should a company be taken-over, then quite often existing industrial relations activities may have to be rationalised to bring them into line with those of the parent organisation. There is always the possibility under such circumstances that all previous membership gains could be lost to another union which has negotiating rights within the parent firm. Another A.P.E.X official put this point quite succinctly when he said that, "Agreement prevents encroachment."

However, agreements cannot always be easily gained from a company without high membership strength. In this context one must consider the differences which result from partial and full recognition. The success rate of unions undertaking claims for 'representation only' agreements does not appear to be very favourable. In only two out of seven of the postal survey cases examined were unions successful in such negotiations, since many did not have sufficient staff support. (Appendix C)

The advantages to a union of partial representation were:-

- (a) It allows entry into a firm on a semi-formal footing. This allows a union to demonstrate to potential members its ability in taking-up and solving grievance issues.
- (b) If a union has set up a 'dialogue' with a company, it is in a position to influence company decisions concerning staff policies.

Some of the union officers interviewed felt that partial recognition agreements were merely a 'sop', something to quieten staff demands. One A.S.T.M.S officer maintained that he would not negotiate at all without a full recognition agreement, and that his approach was to attempt to gain full recognition rights at the earliest opportunity.

However, many unions will accept recognition on a 'representation only' basis when membership cannot be built up very quickly. A T.A.S.S official notes that:-

"The union might have to wait until an issue comes up which can be 'linked' to recognition."

This view coincides with that of an A.S.T.M.S organiser who was interviewed in connection with case-study 'A'. He believed that to try and force the recognition issue, "which is only a piece of paper anyway", could alienate membership if pursued "bloody-mindedly", in isolation. He suggested that what was needed, was some really substantive issue, i.e. pay, redundancy, or dismissal, which could be used to 'lever' the question of recognition home.

One interesting point which emerged from interviews with the union officers, was that all but one stated that they 'negotiated' unofficially from time to time with firms who would not concede official negotiating rights. Such information relationships are obviously of great value in developing a union's acceptance with reluctant employers.

The basic problem underlying most recognition claims results from insufficient membership support. In some circumstances, the level of membership may be somewhat marginal and this can often lead to protracted disputes. Case 'B' typifies this type of problem. In the company concerned a number of approaches were made to the company regarding membership strength. Although the company had held unfavourable attitudes towards unionism, a change in attitude, gave the union an opportunity to enter the firm and recruit more members. This eventually resulted in an agreement being concluded. (Appendix I, Case 'B', paras. 20/22)

Some of the problems resulting from inadequate membership levels can be overcome by using the C.I.R. approach which involves balloting to determine 'actual' and 'potential' membership. (C.I.R. Study No. 5) This approach has been shown to work in a variety of circumstances including the determination of appropriate 'bargaining agents'.

where the attainment of membership majorities is not a major problem, the structure of recognition agreements and resulting policies becomes the 'cornerstone' of negotiations. Here, the distinctions made by the C.I.R. concerning 'bargaining units' and 'bargaining agents' have tended to become the appropriate method of managing recognition.

The boundaries of bargaining units are used to differentiate the white-collar workforce for the purposes of representation. Boundaries may be determined by such factors, as occupational similarities, training and education, systems of payment within the firm, and the nature of the organisation structure. Whatever criteria are accepted these will affect any future recognition policies negotiated with other groups of staff.

In Case 'A' a certain rigidity was imposed by the structure of bargaining units. This was caused by the company's policy which allowed only those unions with majority support inside all manufacturing units to achieve recognition, even though they may have as members a majority of a total company staff. The problem resulted from the company's wish to avoid creating a multi - fragmented bargaining structure. (Appendix I, Case 'A', paras. 14/17).

A problem can arise if the conditions of acceptance for recognition are too liberal, where they tend to encourage differences in representation between similar groups of staff.

A balance may be found between two such extremes and this could form the basis of negotiations. The firm in question not only restricted recognition to company-wide coverage, but also applied a high membership level criteria as well. The result of these combined restraints was to limit one union (A.S.T.M.S) which had great difficulty, even with high membership, of obtaining recognition.

The fear of inter-union problems in a multi-union situation is not always valid. In such problem areas, a bargaining panel made up of member-unions, can be introduced to stabilise any inter-union conflict or rivalry. (Lewis, R and Latta, G. 1972) Any policies which are developed need to give a clear indication of the area of 'jurisdiction' of each union in a multi-union situation.

4.5.1 Summary

A number of points concerning recognition agreements are highlighted within this section.

Firstly, unions appear to be aware of the importance of recognition agreements, since these influence further recruitment. Secondly, agreements prevent encroachment upon recruitment by competitive white-collar unions. The third point concerns the importance of partial recognition agreements which are seen as useful only in circumstances where there is no likelihood of rapid membership recruitment.

One major factor influencing the negotiation stage is the actual level of support for a union. The balloting procedures used by the G.I.R would appear to be the most realistic method of determining potential support. Thus, membership levels alone are somewhat arbitrary determinants of support.

The fragmentation of unionism can lead to a multi-union situation. One way of reconciling this problem is for firms to accept it, and develop multi-union negotiating panels to reconcile inter-union conflict where possible.

4.6 Conclusions

The data which has been so far included in the preceding sections highlights the dynamics of the recognition process.

It would appear that the development of unionisation is associated with growing firms where the imposition of staff controls becomes necessary. Thus, in order to administer to staff firms have to devise systems of control to aid this purpose. Whilst labour controls help to give impartial treatment to staff, they also tend to quantify benefits. Staff become increasingly aware of actual levels of treatment which they compare with that advocated by management through systems of control. Thus, if staff are able to quantify actual and anticipated levels of benefit, they are also able to measure their relative gains or deprivation against other groups. If the relative deficiency of 'systems treatment' as perceived by staff is unacceptable then grievances may increase as anomalies begin to occur. Therefore, whilst

management controls over the white-collar workforce become inevitable as the size and diversity of the workforce increases, they are usually somewhat static in operation needing constant amending.

Most forms of bureaucratic control have objective aims, they cannot legislate for the subjective feelings of the workers they are designed to administer. Thus, in the case of salary grading systems, the method of assessing relative skills and effort is limited to that which are observable at the time such a system is devised. Changes in the work flow and organisation of staff occur over time and thus devalue the legitimacy of the original measures. It is here that areas of conflict occur which require to be negotiated. If sufficient numbers of unresolved complaints result, then unless the company devises further systems to arbitrate these grievances staff may begin to demand representational arrangements.

Whatever form of representation is chosen by staff, the effect of bureaucratic controls is that collective consultation in some form eventually becomes necessary.

The staff association can fulfil such a need, whilst giving management some say in its formation, powers, and organisation. Staff associations meet the expectations of staff whilst maintaining some level of informality in their dealings with management. Internal consultation prevents a 'them and us' situation from arising and reinforces the co-operative spirit that often pervades management/staff relationships. It is a compromise which 'stalemates' the development of unionisation.

Many firms realise that developing staff associations limits the growth of unionism, and use this as a means of gaining time. However, the results of negotiations eventually throw up deficiencies which cast unfavourable light upon these associations. Therefore, whilst they exist and slow down union recruitment, they usually fail to meet the expectations of staff, or compete poorly against unions operating within other parts of a company. An important factor here is the pressure exerted upon the company by union recruitment. When concerted exploitation of the deficient aspects of staff associations is carried out by trade unions they report 'conversions'. Thus, the 'staging-post' concept is given further credence if staff associations act as transitional mediums for voicing staff views. It is likewise possible that white-collar workers lack the experience of acting collectively, and that staff associations provide an opportunity for experiencing group decision-making.

The previous discussion relates to those variables which have been highlighted and/or substantiated with data within the chapter. Whilst these variables are considered important, the context in which they are presented is no less important.

The data is presented within the conceptual framework of the recognition process. In doing this emphasis is given to the time-span over which events take place. The recognition process is considered in three stages and these highlight the relative position of the variables chosen. The primary stage is characterised by low unionisation, where the organisation

is being modified by management to conform to the pressures and demands being made upon it, both by labour and by administrative needs. In these early stages communication links between management and staff appear to be less than desirable. The need to control labour is dictated by organisational requirements and these often infringe upon staff expectations reducing job satisfaction. New methods of consultation result as each party endeavours to bring about a state of equilibrium.

During the middle or development stage of this process, the development of collective organisation is of central importance. The need to negotiate rather than just communicate arises because changes to existing practices, which may develop from the operation of management system, become important to those staff concerned. Whilst negotiation often does take place under these circumstances, the means to do it may not be totally effective. Staff associations may, for example, prove incompetent when faced with professional management negotiators. The union may then appear to be the best agent to represent staff. Whilst these changes are occurring between management and staff, unions themselves become important initiators of union growth, within a firm. A union may, so to speak, tip the balance of staff and company thinking towards the issue of union recognition. This is where the selection of appropriate recruitment strategy becomes crucial if a union is to maximise its gains in terms of union membership growth.

Within the negotiation stage, formalisation of collective representation usually takes place. Whatever rules are agreed between the two parties these will form the basis for recognition in other bargaining units within that company. The recognition agreement can also limit union recruitment possibilities for other unions. It is often the first union 'through the door' that establishes prior territorial rights over recruitment, particularly where the employer wishes to avoid a multi-bargaining situation in the future.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF THE RECOGNITION PROCESS

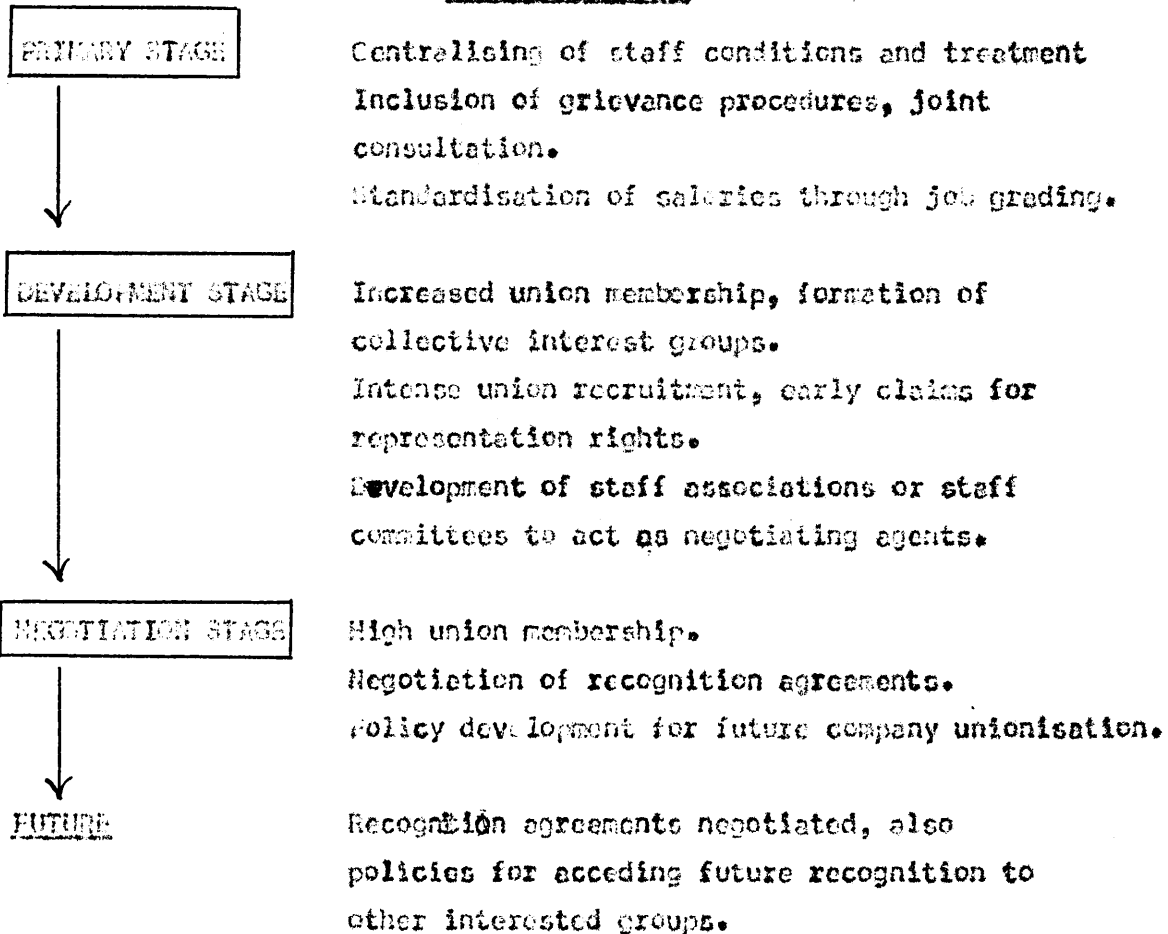
FIGURE 3

Stage	Enabling Forces	Restraining Forces
PRIMARY	<p>Introduction of job grading. Centralization of staff policies. Lack of grievance handling procedure. Income inequalities between manual and non-manual workers. Government legislation concerning the rights of individuals to join trade unions. Managerial acceptance of unionism for all workers. Demands for participation in aspects of decision-making by staff. Elements of union membership beginning to occur. Proximity of staff to shop floor workers.</p>	<p>Outright rejection by management of white-collar unionism. Lack of interest in unions amongst staff. Paternalistic treatment of staff by employer. Workforce widely dispersed in small manufacturing units. High labour turn-over and employment of temporary staff</p>
DEVELOPMENT	<p>Increased levels of union membership (20%) Intensive union recruitment campaigns. The introduction of a policy for recognition of unions. Employer unable to satisfy individual grievances. Uncertainty caused by organizational changes. Inadequacy of staff associations in negotiating.</p>	<p>Management resorting to 'subversive' tactics, or using structural barriers to stop union growth. The development of staff associations. Management creating improved grievance handling procedures or joint consultation. Multi-union recruitment.</p>
MATURATION	<p>Clear definition of bargaining units. Majority (50%) membership within bargaining units. The use of ballots to assess 'potential' union members. Existence of a clearly defined recognition policy.</p>	<p>Union having minority membership strength. Entry of other parties such as staff associations and competing unions. Unclear recognition policies, where bargaining units are not clearly separate</p>

Phase 1

Individual treatment of staff: employees
have little interest in unions.

CHARACTERISTICS



AVERAGE LEVELS OF UNION MEMBERSHIPFIGURE 5

Study	Firms with Staff Associations	Firms Without Staff Associations
GIR Analysis	33.6%	43.2%
Postal Survey	33.4%	40.1%

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters attempt an explanation of the union recognition process. Whilst these findings contain much useful data from a variety of sources, there is no data from white-collar workers themselves.

In order to rectify this omission, and also to enable some of the theoretical findings to be tested, a survey was conducted amongst a group of white-collar staff.

The firm chosen was a large company operating in the North-West, where union recognition had recently been granted to certain staff bargaining units.

In the company concerned there were four major bargaining units below middle management. These included:

- (a) Clerical and Administrative Staff
- (b) Technical Staff
- (c) Supervisory Staff
- (d) Junior Management, Specialist and Professional Staff.

Each of these groups, except technical staff, agreed to co-operate with a limited number of interviews. Eventually, and in agreement with both the company and staff representatives, twenty-four members of staff were selected for interviewing which was carried out over a two-day period. The individuals selected were chosen to give a cross-sectional balance of opinion, i.e. age, location in firm occupation, and sex. Each person selected for interview agreed to be interviewed separately. (For interviews schedule, see Appendix J)

In the course of the survey a number of separate visits were made to the firm to elicit background information concerning the firm's relations history and organisation structure.

After the survey was completed, and the results analysed, the findings were communicated back to respondents at an informal meeting held on the company's premises. This proved a useful method of testing the validity of research findings. However, it also helped to give the exercise some meaning to those people who took part as well as providing further data.

5.2 The Company Background

The firm is a large chemically-based manufacturing organisation employing around 5,500 people. The organisation is split up into two large operating divisions which operate autonomously, each having its own managing director.

Division 'A' employs approximately 3,250 people and the smaller Division 'B' around 2,200 people.

The study was carried out in Division 'A' which consisted of four manufacturing units as well as seventy merchandising branches. The unit being examined contained about 1,300 personnel.

The occupational structure is as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Number</u>
Hourly Paid	Manual Workers	500
2 - 5	Clerical and Admin. Staff	800
6 - 7	Supervisory	
6 - 9	Junior Management + Specialist	
3 - 9	Technical Grades up to Section Leader	
10 - 11	Middle Management	

Included within the above are headquarters personnel, and these bring the staff numbers far above normal staffing levels for a manufacturing unit.

Prior to 1972 the company had a staff association in one of the manufacturing units which was brought under central control. This resulted in the company having to devise its own system of 'In-House' negotiation committees during 1972 to create parity within the new organisation structure.

Supervisors were the first staff group to use 'In-House' arrangements. They were followed by the Clerical and Junior Management groups in 1974. During 1975 clerical staff became unionised, joining A.C.T.S (T.G.M.U), and technical staff joined A.S.T.M.S. The most recent unionisation has occurred amongst supervisors who joined A.S.T.M.S in January 1976.

The groups which are still non-unionised include the Junior Management group which is covered by an 'In-House' arrangement. Middle management personnel are consulted by management on industrial relations matters through a company-wide system of management forums.

The company introduced a salary grading system based upon job evaluation in 1972. This system is now urgently in need of overhaul, and the firm envisage this taking place shortly.

Up to 1971 the company did not have any formal system for dealing with grievances. Formal procedures have since been introduced based upon the Industrial Relations Act - Code of Practice.

The company has used balloting to determine staff preferences for union or internal representation. Most groups appear to have accepted 'In-House' arrangements except technical staff. This latter group joined A.S.T.M.S after the result of ballots was known, and the company subsequently invited union recruitment officers into the firm.

5.3 Results of the Survey

The interviews were conducted amongst three of the firms bargaining units, and these included the following:-

Clerical and Administrative Staff	- 10 respondents
Supervisory Staff	- 5 respondents
Junior Managerial, Specialist and Professional Staff	- 9 respondents

Of the three bargaining units only the first two had become unionised. The junior managers were covered by an 'In-House' negotiating committee for representational purposes.

The results of the survey are best subdivided into two major categories:-

- (1) Reasons for joining trade unions
- (2) Reasons for remaining with or leaving the firm's 'In-House' arrangement.

Using this method of analysis, the performance of the staff associations can be evaluated and assessed in relation to the earlier research findings.

5.3.1 Staff Reasons for Joining Unions

Clerical Staff

Of those clerical and administrative staff interviewed eight were union members and two non-members. The average length of service in the company was 10.9 years.

The most frequently given reason for joining the trade union A.C.T.S (T.G.W.U), was related directly to the ineffective results of the 'In-House' negotiating committee. Comments frequently given were:-

"the negotiating group is being 'conned' by the company"

"the 'In-House' negotiating group is impotent, it does not seem to be doing anything"

"the salary reviews are out of step within the company as well as the local area"

The lack of 'visible' success of the 'In-House' system in negotiating acceptable pay levels was, however, constrained by government pay policies during the period of its operation. However, comments were frequently made concerning the staff negotiating groups lack of communication of the results of negotiations.

"the group does not confer with staff about management offers"

"there is a lack of information from the negotiating group, particularly on the works side"

The second comment resulted from the location of the staff committee, which sprang up amongst staff groups working in the administrative buildings. These staff were physically separated

from staff on the works site.

Some degree of discontent was shown regarding the organisation of work within offices, and in the manner in which gradings were determined.

"promotion was given to a girl in my office with little experience of the job, when there were others with more experience"

"there is an unreasonable distribution of work in my department, which is not taken into account in salary grading"

Amongst clerical staff there appeared to be a lack of awareness of how to articulate these grievances, some staff having had little success with individual managers. In one case the respondent suggested that she had joined the union-

"to correct past injustices from management"

Two other respondents implied that they were influenced directly by the union representative, with whom they were in sympathy, and who promised them better pay and conditions. The influence of group leadership would appear to be an important factor governing levels of union membership.

In the case of two members of staff who did not join the union, one was apprehensive about possible strike action from membership. The other person was influenced by a manager who suggested that it was inappropriate for some-one involved in confidential work.

Supervisory Staff

Amongst the supervisory staff interviewed all were union members. They included four males and one female and had generally worked for the firm longer than most clerical staff with an average length of service of 13.4 years.

As a smaller bargaining unit with roughly thirty members, the supervisors, had been very active in their use of the 'In-House' negotiating committee.

The supervisors had used the facilities offered by the company on forming their negotiating committee. These included a financial fund of \$500, together with training facilities which included courses on negotiating techniques.

Whilst the supervisors were initially enthusiastic about their ability to negotiate through the committee, satisfaction was not always maintained. Comments frequently voiced were:-

- "the negotiating group was ineffective against management as many grievances were left unresolved"
- "the 'In-House' arrangement had reached a stalemate, management had superior negotiating ability"

Behind these arguments the supervisors had many powerful grievances.

- "The results from salary grading were unsatisfactory, no grade moves in five years. The shop-floor is catching up with supervisors".
- "Disillusionment with management particularly over discipline and promotion."
- "low pay of supervisors due to the job and not the supervisor being paid"

"superintendent's job off-handedly given to a person without being advertised within the firm."

The company's salary grading system based upon a points rating job evaluation was probably the most frequently quoted source of discontent. One major problem was that there was only a limited right of appeal. Some supervisors felt that the points rating system tended to favour those with the largest number of personnel under their control. In a few departments processes and materials were the resources controlled and not people. Basically, it was felt that within the grading procedures there were areas which could be negotiated if the expertise were available.

The two other major sources of dissatisfaction amongst supervisors were promotional opportunities, and the operation of disciplinary procedures.

Promotion was a concern of younger supervisors, some of whom held technical degrees, and who saw no career pattern within the firm.

The operation of disciplinary procedures was held to be defective by supervisors in production departments. These supervisors felt that too many cases were not upheld by line management, thus undermining their authority. Whilst a shop-floor worker could appeal to a company tribunal over his discipline case, there was no right of appeal for the supervisor within the existing grievance procedure.

Overall, many of the supervisors exhibited the 'man in the middle' syndrome, first stated by Rothlisberger,

but since re-defined by Fletcher. (Fletcher, C. 1969). Fletcher notes that those supervisors most in conflict were those at the end of the career structure and particularly senior supervisors. Within the firm examined the group of supervisors interviewed contained both senior supervisors, and also graduate supervisors, each of which felt strongly about their lack of integration with management. Unionisation amongst these supervisors may well have been an act of desperation to compensate for their isolated position within the firm's hierarchy. All but two of the firm's supervisors now belong to A.S.T.M.S.

5.3.2 Membership of the Firm's 'In-House' Committees.

The company operated 'In-House' negotiating arrangements for each bargaining unit. Such arrangements existed for both clerical and supervisory staff prior to these groups seeking union recognition. This arrangement, however, still operates amongst the junior managerial bargaining unit which has not yet become unionised.

The following analysis is designed to highlight those circumstances favouring internal representation and those which do not.

Circumstances Favouring Internal Representation

The findings which reflect these attitudes are based upon interviews with members of the junior managerial, specialist, and professional staffs bargaining unit.

The formation of the 'In-House' negotiating agreement was inspired by management overtures in 1973. The company wished

to formalise its staff negotiations, whilst allowing some element of collective bargaining to ensue. In fact the company stated that it felt that staff organisations would help to 'bridge the gap' before unionism was introduced into staff grades.

Management organised a ballot of all staff within each bargaining unit to determine their preference for either a staff association or trade union. The firm's industrial relations manager pointed out that the firm privately preferred the 'In-House' arrangement as a 'first step'.

The junior managers, otherwise known as the 6 - 9 group because of their grading range, did show much more confidence in internal representation than other groups.

Some of the 6 - 9 groups' reasons for accepting the 'In-House' arrangement were typically:-

"A feeling that the company will help you, its more of a trust situation."

"The management package offered was good, no bargaining procedures existed prior to it."

"I felt that individual choice still prevailed under the agreement."

"Wished to be represented by some body which is recognised by management."

There appeared to be a general consensus that the 'In-House' agreement was still the appropriate body to represent the interests of the 6 - 9 groups. Of those staff interviewed, only one was a union member. They were also largely male, with an average length of service in the company of 15.2 years.

Quite a number of those questioned held unfavourable images of trade unionism.

"I feel that unions are more appropriate to manual workers, where the division of profits from produced goods are a subject for forceful bargaining."

Some suggested that the image of trade unions was poor, both politically and socially.

There were also some fears expressed concerning the effect of unionisation upon relationships within the firm.

"direct access to management gives freedom of movement"

"Formal treatment of staff has occurred amongst those groups who have unionised. Management is less willing to discuss individual matters in such circumstances."

Many of the managers questioned were concerned about the possible effect of union membership upon their future promotion prospects. However, within this group as a whole there was thought to be a 'left-wing' faction which favoured unionisation.

Circumstances Favouring Trade Unionism.

The previous comments given by members of the Junior Management group were factors which helped to maintain the system of internal representation.

Although at the time of the interviews most Junior Management staff felt satisfied with their present arrangements, many also felt that because of government pay restrictions the arrangement had not been fully tested under free collective bargaining. Each respondent was asked to indicate those areas

of grievance which he expected the negotiating committee to resolve.

Some of the Junior Management comments referred to the ability of the negotiating committee itself.

"It appears to have become a 'talking shop', they make decisions in committee without reference back to staff."

"As a member of the negotiating committee, I have noticed that management only let you go so far."

"It has had many leadership changes, and each time there is a change in direction."

Another respondent referred to the general lack of professional advice offered by the committee. However, one respondent who had actually joined the union A.S.T.M.S suggested that:-

"When the big rush comes we will be stronger if a union is with us."

He was referring to the end of the present pay restrictions.

Other views concerned individual grievances, particularly the operation of the grading system, where one manager thought that he ^hould have some say in the assessment of his junior staff.

Approximately half of the respondents interviewed said that they would be prepared to consider joining a trade union if the majority of the Junior Management group voted in favour of it.

Clerical Staff

The reasons given by the clerical and administrative

group for leaving the 'In-House' system were generally much more fundamental.

A major factor appeared to be the relative levels of pay award received by different groups within the firm. Many grievances were also directly related to grading levels, and with the lack of redress available in situations where the level of work had changed.

This group did not appear to have much feedback from their negotiating committee, which was thought by many to be almost totally ineffective.

Supervisory Staff

Of those reasons given by the supervisory group, grievance issues appear to be the major cause of discontent with internal representation. Nearly all respondents referred to the lack of professional knowledge possessed by the negotiating committees concerning collective bargaining. The general view was that a union had the resources which a group of individuals within a firm could not possess. Thus, most of their attitudes concerning 'In-House' representation are reflected in their reasons given for joining unions.

5.4 Summary and Conclusions

The findings from this survey reinforce many of those earlier derived from other data sources.

Staff representation, in the form of 'In-House' negotiating committees was instigated by the company to meet the deficiencies of its labour policies. The industrial relations manager felt that at the time of the ballot the company was not ready to deal

with a unionised white-collar workforce. Staff associations thus catered for the transition toward formal relationships.

The 'In-House' negotiating committees, once operational, proved incapable of dealing effectively in negotiations with management. Hence, the frequent comments regarding 'professional expertise' offered by trade unions. Many of the deficiencies in the negotiating committees resulted from their lack of organisation. Often they failed to produce results, but particularly they did not communicate effectively as representatives. Only in the case of the supervisors did the committee have any impact. Eventually the supervisors realised their limitations as a small inexperienced group negotiating with professional managers.

Many of the issues which exacerbated staff grievances remained unchanged. The grading system, which was referred to by all groups, needed overhaul. Pay anomalies, the discipline procedures, these two created many problems on which the 'In-House' arrangements failed to tackle. Thus, the growing level of staff unionisation was greatly enhanced by the company's failure to modify existing procedures as they began to become somewhat defective.

The background to these difficulties was created through the company's endeavours to rationalise its organisation structure over the previous decade. Management was obliged to use an increasing number of bureaucratic controls to achieve this purpose, and with all such systems modification was eventually needed but not always put into effect.

It would appear that in this company the process of union recognition has been concluded amongst two-thirds of the bargaining units. Further development is likely to occur in the junior managerial groups where a nucleus of discontented staff already exist. Much will depend upon the effectiveness of the remaining 'In-House' negotiating group and the gains it can negotiate after pay restraint ends.

There are two factors which could alter the rate at which further recognition agreements are negotiated. Firstly, the influence of the company could be crucial, since many of the career-minded junior management group are apprehensive about how the company will behave if they unionise. Secondly, the unions influence has yet to be felt. Many of this group have had little direct contact with unions, since no attempt has been made by existing unions to cultivate recruitment amongst management staff.

The junior management group was also the only group which indicated any significant attachment to the organisation. One point which did emerge was that junior managers generally had a longer average period of service with the company than other groups. This personal commitment to the firm may have been encouraged by their career expectations. Also, most respondents indicated attitudes towards trade unionism which appeared to be influenced by their upper peer group, the senior managers. This attitude was not shown by supervisors who considered themselves 'between' management and labour, and therefore somewhat alienated. Amongst clerical staff, who were

largely women workers, much more apathy was shown towards collective representation, and this group appeared to be strongly influenced by their own group leaders in their actual decision to join trade unions.

Overall, the company chosen proved to be an interesting example of the dynamics involved within the process of recognition. The case also validates certain aspects of the model depicted in Chapter Four.

6.1 Findings and Conclusions

The research data presented has focused upon the process of union recognition within the organisation. The findings emphasise those areas which form the basis of change in existing relationships between employers and their white-collar staff.

Whenever change occurs within this relationship which results in a polarisation of interests, then the climate is created in which unionisation may develop.

The following findings have so far emerged as important factors influencing the process of union recognition within individual firms.

Labour Policies

The development of labour controls i.e. salary grading, may have the effect of slowing down any trend towards staff unionisation. As a firm grows in size and/or complexity, there is a tendency for management to adopt bureaucratic methods of control as a means of administering its staff. Whilst management may do this in order to rationalise its treatment of separate staff interest groups, not all individual differences can be met in this manner. There is a tendency, therefore, for anomalies to develop in all management systems because they function as controls over rational behaviour, and that which is foreseeable. Eventually such systems develop anomalies which are unforeseen, and which require to be negotiated if all parties are to be satisfied. Hence, the need may arise for some form of consultative machinery to meet these difficulties.

Grievance Handling

The research data indicated that the ability of an employer to manage staff grievances was associated with the level of staff unionisation within his enterprise. Whilst good grievance procedures tended to be associated with low levels of unionisation, poor or non-existent grievance procedures were associated with correspondingly higher levels of unionisation. Poor grievance handling by management may, therefore, increase staff discontent sufficiently to 'trigger-off' unionisation. On the other hand, union membership could develop first and thus reduce the need for more formal grievance handling. However, in the survey described in Chapter Five grievance issues appeared to be one of the major contributory factors in staff reasons given for joining trade unions.

Staff Associations

Staff associations and similar bodies i.e. staff committees, 'In-House' systems, appear to have a useful intermediate role in the process of recognition. Recent research into white-collar unionism (Lunley, R. 1973 and Bain, G. 1970), views staff associations purely in terms of their 'buffer' role, being instigated by employers wishing to avoid the spread of unionism into white-collar areas.

This is a limited view of these organisations. Whilst there is evidence from research into banking (Blackburn, R. 1957), that employers have fostered staff associations to compete against trade unions, this research points to other functions.

The concept of a 'staging-post' role for staff associations can be an alternative argument to the above. All but one of the trade union officers interviewed reported 'conversions' of existing company staff association membership. Such developments might not have occurred quite as rapidly if the white-collar groups concerned had not initially been organised on a collective basis.

Another view is that staff associations and similar groups may provide the mechanism by which white-collar workers become conditioned into operating through collective rather than individual channels. Instances of this were evident from interviews with staff operating under an 'In-House' system. (Chapter Five). Many staff realised the deficiencies in their own understanding of industrial relations matters when they began to negotiate through such internal committees.

In the survey quoted, the company itself privately wanted 'breathing space' in order to modify its existing personnel policies whilst anticipating the future unionisation of its staff. The company also felt that, towards the later period, that if the existing unions were allowed to recruit non-members within the company, the resulting bargaining structure would be improved with fewer 'interfaces' between itself and the negotiating groups.

Whilst staff associations may act as 'staging-posts', management may still use them initially as a stalling device. In suggesting that staff associations may educate staff into becoming more aware of collective negotiations, management may

also undergo a similar transition. Whilst management has now generally accepted manual unionism, it is often less inclined to accept staff unions. Therefore, whilst management may use the staff association initially as a 'buffer', it may eventually find them useful for 'testing out' staff views and reactions to proposed labour policy matters. It could be in the company's interest, therefore, to ensure that such collective negotiations are strengthened and extended if they assist in resolving grievances and other conflicts within the company.

Union Recruitment Strategies

The initiative of exercised by trade unions can put additional pressure upon firms to concede recognition. A union is also able to develop staff membership levels to a stage where negotiations for recognition can begin. Whilst certain pressures build-up inside a firm to promote unionisation, the external 'pull' exerted by union recruitment is essential if momentum is not to be lost.

A number of strategies were discussed with the trade unions officers interviewed. These included:-

- (a) building-up support or confidence of staff through education and persuasion
- (b) concentration of recruitment upon strategically powerful groups of staff within a firm.
- (c) using the political strength of existing manual membership
- (d) extending existing recognition agreements to cover other groups of staff.

Strategy (a) was used where staff required constant coaxing before they would consider becoming union members. This approach required more intensive groundwork by the trade union officer and the benefits from recruitment were long term.

Strategy (b) relied upon intensive recruitment in a small bargaining unit where membership was high already. In gaining recognition in such a unit the union was getting its 'foot in the door'. Also, the group chosen was one which had a critical function within the firm, i.e. wages department, where the threat from a labour withdrawal could have placed management under threat of severe disruption.

Strategy (c) was used by unions who also recruited manual and white-collar members. The union used its power-base of manual membership to strengthen its claim for recognition. One advantage to the union was that it usually had negotiating rights, and was able to bring up the subject of white-collar recruitment during normal negotiations.

Strategy (d) was basically an enlargement strategy. Once a union had begun to negotiate a recognition agreement for one group of staff, it attempted to gain further territorial rights over other groups. Under these circumstances management might have responded favourably to reduce the possibility of multi-union contacts.

Whichever strategy is used by a trade union, its effect is to cultivate interest in collective representation with company staff and also with the management concerned.

The findings which have been discussed above highlight some of the important variables within the recognition process.

A conceptual model of the recognition process is depicted in Figure 6. This model uses the technique of force-field analysis to illustrate the action of the different variables within the life-cycle of the process. (leary, M.1974).

The use of such a model views recognition within the context of accompanying organisation pressures or changes. This type of framework is helpful in highlighting the phenomena which govern union growth within firms. Whilst such a framework cannot explain all aspects of the recognition process, it does give parameters which could provide the basis of a new theoretical approach.

The model identifies the three stages of the recognition process, and these can provide a 'yardstick' against which individual cases can be measured against.

Each stage contains certain observable traits. In the primary stage the first signs of staff grievances may result in some membership of trade unions. Management may also be trying to adapt to change by designing better labour policies to meet organisational requirements.

Within the development stage union membership may be increasing, partly through staff initiative, and partly through increasing activity from union recruitment. There may also be a tendency for staff associations, committees, etc. to be formed within firms. Management may assist these formations, although staff may encourage their growth in order to be represented internally, and thus keep out trade unions.

During the negotiation stage the emphasis will be upon parties developing rules and procedures for recognition to be ratified. Once recognition has been conceded, the policy for future recognition claims will tend to be more formalised.

One of the deficiencies in the model described is that it cannot explain all situations. Some firms may be faced with rapid changes in market conditions which make redundancies inevitable. Under such circumstances staff may so fear insecurity that rapid unionisation could take place. In such circumstances the process stages may well overlap.

The findings so far developed from this research should help to explain white-collar union recognition problems within the firm. Without any systematic means of examining such problems, industrial relations practitioners are less able to effect policy-guidelines for white-collar unionism to manage within their enterprises.

It is felt that the framework developed from this research can result in better understandings which could guide all parties in their handling of such situations, and thus contribute to more effective industrial relations.

662 Suggestions for Future Research Approaches

The approach used to study the problems of union recognition was that of the earlier stated multiple-method. It utilises, in effect, a number of methods which are organised and focused upon a single problem. Use of this perspective has proved useful in gaining a better insight of company industrial relations.

It was found that the initial use of the postal survey questionnaire had a limited value. Although partly due to the level of response, the major drawback was that it gave only an overview of the problem. However, it did provide a starting point for this research and it highlighted the possible influence of staff association membership upon unionisation levels. This proved to be a useful insight. Another positive gain from the postal survey was the number of case-study contacts that resulted from follow-ups.

The use of case-studies was a significant stage in the research. Although limited in the depth of analysis, the cases helped to identify the parameters of the recognition process and isolate some of the principal characteristics common to different firms. An alternative to this type of case-study is an in-depth examination of an actual dispute. However, the drawbacks are those of gaining entry to companies concerned, and of influencing the response or behaviour of the participants.

The analysis of the C.I.A. reports proved to be one useful source of data. The reports largely contained data which is not usually amenable to quantitative analysis. However, by initially analysing the information in a sub-sample of these reports certain common characteristics i.e. quality of grievance handling, were found which were identifiable in the remaining sample. It was also possible to subject this data to statistical analysis and test the incidence of grading schemes, staff associations, etc. and relate these to the existing levels

of white-collar unionisation.

The unstructured interviews with trade union officers provided another important source of data. However, if the sample had been much larger, it may have been possible to quantify some of these responses. The major limitation was the time involved in such exhaustive groundwork. However, the results of the smaller sample gave some useful insights into the problems of membership recruitment.

In retrospect it is always possible to consider methods of data collection which might have been more appropriate than those actually chosen. The number of possible approaches to the study of union recognition all have inherent individual defects as research instruments. One remedy to this problem is to consider a multiple-approach and to assess whether any technique could helpfully fit in to the scheme. The following approaches, in the light of experience, could be considered for this type of study.

- (a) Individual case-studies of workers' experiences or perceptions encountered whilst a recognition dispute was actually occurring.
- (b) Longitudinal studies of a series of disputes or negotiations that are on-going.
- (c) The use of diaries issued to a representative selection of individuals within all parties concerned in a dispute situation.

The use of individual case-studies would be specifically aimed at the white-collar workers being affected.

Whilst this research did analyse staff attitudes towards unionism through the use of structured interviews, the time involved was less than half an hour per person. Therefore, what is required is a more detailed in-depth case-study of about one hour duration with each individual in any selected sample.

The process of union recognition is concerned primarily with change. Therefore, the use of some type of longitudinal study may be appropriate. A longitudinal study is defined as one which is based upon repeated measurements of the same respondents over time. (Hall, M.D. and Williams, H.L. 1970). Studies of union recognition could, therefore, utilise this technique by selecting members from all parties and submitting them to rigorous questioning periodically. Co-operation from all parties is still vital to the success of such an approach. However, it does have advantages over the on-going case-study since respondents are less likely to be aware of observation.

If the use of longitudinal studies is to be effective the problem of identifying firms with a potential for unionisation has to be overcome. Firms within growth industries, or in those industries undergoing economic reconstruction i.e. from labour to capital intensive would be likely candidates for such an exercise.

The use of diaries may be perhaps more suitable for recording events/reactions over a shorter time period. They may be useful in recording or monitoring events whilst the researcher is absent.

Diaries could prove a useful as a recording technique if used in conjunction with longitudinal studies. They could provide a continuous record of events which could be compared with periodic sampling. This would assist any eventual analysis since the diarists would act as a control group.

6.3 Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this study could provide the basis of any future research into union recognition. The theoretical structure which has been developed could be used to assess the importance of different recognition variables within firms of different size and structure and occupational composition. In particular there is no research yet published which has attempted to build a model of unionisation which could assess the interaction of these different variables. Usually each is examined in isolation from the others.

Whilst the examination of unionisation trends amongst, say clerks, is extremely helpful in understanding occupational behaviour, it is somewhat isolated from other factors which go together to make up the reality of the work situation. The reality of industrial relations is that it is multi-faceted. Only an effective multi-dimensional study can simulate, in theoretical terms, the conditions under which changes in behaviour can be understood. Whilst the economist attempts to build models of the economy to assess how it behaves, the industrial relations theorist should be considering developing models of the 'firm', which can be adjusted to suit particular

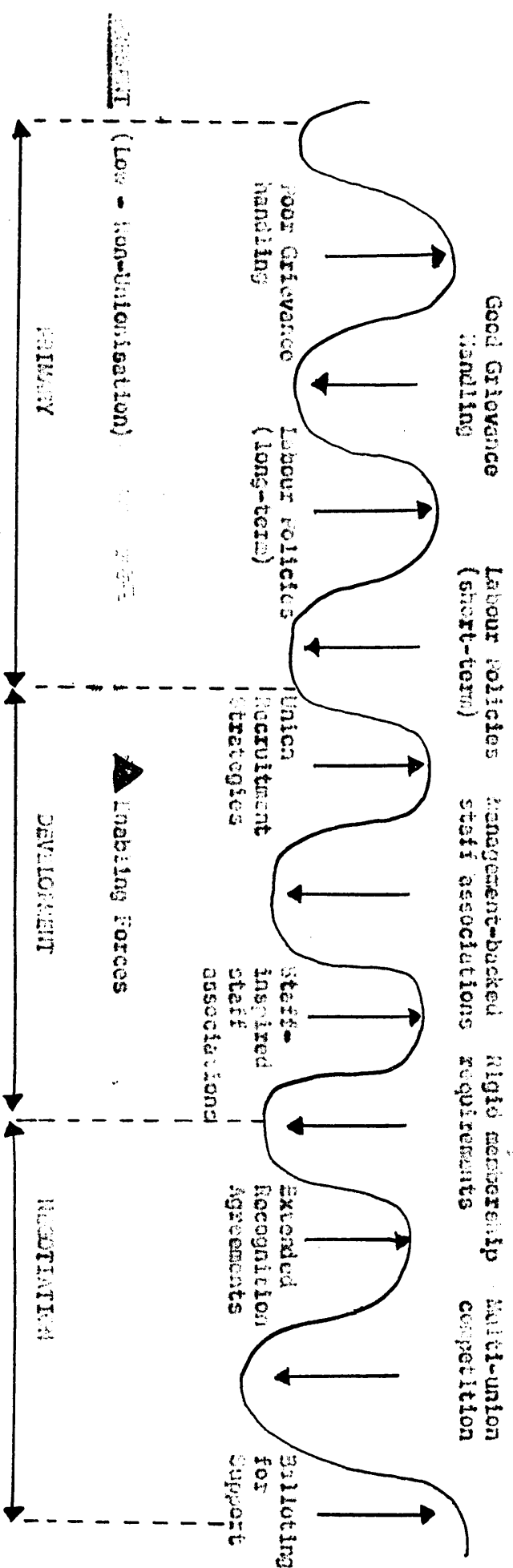
conditions. In this way data can be assessed in terms of its relevance to other variables which together form the basis of company industrial relations systems.

FORCE-FIELD ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGES WITHIN A FIRM AND THE PROCESS OF UNION RECOGNITION

FIGURE 6

FITTING: (Union Recognition)

Restraining Forces.



APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON WHITE-COLLAR TRADE UNIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

(a) Principle Activity of Company _____

(b) Total Employees (tick appropriate box)

0-100 101-250 251-500 501-1000 1001-2000 Over 2000

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

(c) Please indicate number of each type of white-collar employee

General & Clerical Staff

Supervisory & Lower Technical Grades

Professional/Specialist Staff

Middle Managers

Senior Managers

Other: Please state _____

(d) Please estimate the number of unionised staff below. Include only those staff who are represented by a union in salary negotiations.

Gen./Clerical Sup./Tech. Prof./Spec. M/Managers S/Managers Other

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Q.1 (a) Does the company recognise white-collar unions or white-collar sections of manual unions?

YES/NO

(b) If Yes, indicate the unions concerned.

(c) If NO please state why.

Q.2 (a) What grades of staff are considered eligible for union membership?

Gen./Clerical Sup./Tech. Prof./Spec. Middle Managers

☐☐☐☐

Senior Managers

Other

☐☐

(b) Has the company a written or 'unwritten' policy regarding:

(i) Criteria union must fulfil if it is to represent any group of white-collar staff?

YES/NO

(ii) Criteria union must fulfil before it is allowed to negotiate on behalf of staff in salary negotiations

YES/NO

(c) If YES indicate what steps the union must take in each case

Q.3 Have any previous attempts been made by unions to seek recognition rights on behalf of staff for:-

(a) Representation only? YES/NO - No. of attempts

☐

(b) Representation and bargaining rights? YES/NO - No. of attempts

☐

(c) Indicate which attempts failed and which didn't:-

Representation rights FAILED/SUCCESSFUL

Bargaining rights FAILED/SUCCESSFUL.

(d) Please indicate why any of the recognition attempts failed.

Q.4 (a) Has the Industrial Relations Act and Code of Practice affected the company's attitude towards white-collar recognition policies?

YES/NO

(b) If YES, indicate the nature of the changes:

Q.5 (a) Is the company a member of an Employers' Association? YES/NO

(b) If YES please indicate which.

(c) Does the Association have a policy for recognising white-collar Unions? YES/NO

(d) If YES, please indicate what the policy is, and whether it covers bargaining as well as representation rights.

Q.6 (a) Does the company have any form of Staff Association? YES/NO

(b) If YES, please indicate in which activities the Association participates.

Salary Negotiations

Dispute Procedures

Company or Works Councils

Pension/Welfare Benefits

Other: please state

Q.7 Have you any written documents relating to such matters as industrial relations policies and procedures, personnel statistics, Employers Association rules, etc. which you are willing to supply us with?

YES

NO

If YES please attach to the questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and effort; your answers will provide a more detailed framework for the next stage of this research project.

At a later stage in this investigation we hope to undertake more detailed work. Please indicate below whether you will be able to assist by allowing a researcher into your organisation for the purpose of follow-up.

I am willing to be contacted regarding possible follow-up to this
unwilling
research. (Please delete as appropriate).

NAME: -----

POSITION:

--

COMPANY:-----

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF POSTAL SURVEY DATA

Table 1. Sample Breakdown (Firms Employing 250+ employees)

Area	Total firms	No. of Firms sampled	% of Total firms
Sheffield	154	154	100
Yorkshire	480	160	33

Table 2. Sample Response

Area	Firms Sampled	No. of replies	Sample Responses (%)
Sheffield	154	26	16.8
Yorkshire	160	24	15.0
TOTAL	314	50	15.9

Table 3. Reasons for Non-Response

Reason	Sheffield	Yorkshire
Lack of time	8	3
Company policy	3	6
Questionnaire inappropriate	5	6
Change of firms address	-	2

Table 4. Percentage Density of Unionisation by Occupation

Area	Clerical	Sup. & L/Tech	Prof. & Spec.	L/Man.	S/Man.	Ave
Sheff.	38	73.3	15	9	-	41.2
Yorks.	40.1	50.3	32.6	2.1	-	35.8
Std. Ave.	39.1	60.5	27.1	5.5	NIL	38.3

Table 5. Percentage Density of Unionisation by Occupation and firm size.

Size of Firms (No. of employees)	Clerical	Sup. & I/Tech.	Prof. & Spec.	Middle Managers	Total
101 - 250	19.15	64.5	15.8	-	30.2
251 - 500	19.3	31.3	23.4	8.77	22.9
501 - 1000	45.8	52.2	14.7	6.42	39
1001-2000	32.1	53.7	6.19	3.20	22.8
2000 +	56.2	100	63.7	-	62.2

Table 6. Firms Recognising White-Collar Unionism

Area	Yes	No	Total
Sheffield	22	4	26
Yorkshire	17	7	24
Total	39	11	50

Table 7. Incidence of Unions Recognised by Area

Union	Sheffield	Yorkshire	Total
T.A.S.S	13	7	20
A.S.T.M.S	12	7	19
A.P.P.X	11	8	19
G.M.R.U	1	1	2
S.G.G.A.T	-	2	2
N.U.D.B.T.W	-	1	1
N.A.U.T.T	-	1	1

Table 8. Unions Incidence by Size of Firm (All Areas)

Union	Size of Firm					Total
	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2000+	
T.A.S.S	3	5	4	5	3	20
A.S.T.E.S	1	2	5	7	3	18
A.P.E.X	1	5	4	3	3	16
Total	5	12	13	15	9	54

Table 9. Incidence of Staff Eligibility to Join Unions

Area	Clerical	Sup. & L/Tech.	Prof. & Spec.	Middle Mgns.	Senior Managers
Sheffield	25	23	11	9	4
Yorkshire	20	20	13	13	7
Total	45	43	24	22	11

Table 10. Extent of Union Recognition Within Firms

Area	Representation only		Rep. and Negotiating Rights	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sheff.	13	13	13	13
Yorks.	10	13	11	12
Total	23	26	24	25

Table 11. Union Attempts to Obtain Recognition

Area	Representation Only		Rep. & Negotiating Rights	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sheff.	5	22	7	19
Yorks.	5	10	9	11
Total	10	32	16	30

Table 12. Employers Association Membership

Area	Members	Non-Members	Total
Sheff.	20	6	26
Yorks.	16	7	23
Total	36	13	49

Table 13. Recognition Policies and Employers Association

Area	With Policies	Without Policies	Total
Sheff.	19	2	21
Yorks.	10	6	16
Total	29	8	37

Table 14. Employers Association Membership and Size of Firm

Employers Association	Size of Firm				
	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1000-2000	2000+
Member	4	11	10	9	2
Non-member	3	5	1	2	2
Page of Members	57	69	91	82	50

Table 15. Staff Association Incidence

Area	Yes	No	Total
Sheffield	8	18	26
Yorkshire	5	18	23
Total	13	36	49

Table 16. Incidence of Staff Associations Activities

Activity	Sheff.	Yorks.	Total
Salary Negotiations	5	2	7
Disputes	5	3	8
Works Councils	5	2	7
Pensions/ Sick leave	6	2	7

Table 17. Staff Associations by Size of Firm

Staff Associations	Size of Firm				
	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2000+
Member	2	3	4	4	2
Non-Member	7	12	6	7	2
All members	NIL	12	40	36	50

Table 10. Staff Association Presence and Density of Unionisation
by Occupation.

Area	Clerical	Sup. & L.Tech.	Prof. & Spec.	Middle Managers
Sheffield	23.2	39.0	4.46	7.45
Yorkshire	33.0	90.9	69.2	6.96
Atd. Ave. Un. Density	53.0	90.2	46.1	7.23
Total Density ²	39.2	60.5	27.1	5.5

² Taken from Table 4

APPENDIX C

SUB-ANALYSIS OF POSTAL SURVEY DATA

Characteristics of Sub-Sample of Companies in which Recognition Attempts were made.

1. GENERAL FINDINGS

5 Companies came into this category.

(a) Firm Sizes

0-100	Employees	-	1 firm
101-250	"	-	2 firms
1001-200	"	-	1 firm

(b) Occupational Distribution of Unionised Staff

Gen/Clerical	Sup/Tech.	Spec./Prof.	Middle Managers
4	4	2	1

(c) Recognition Policies

Four out of five firms possessed recognition policies of some description, a summary of criteria included:

- (1) Proof of membership
- (2) Agreement of company representation, grievance, and other I.R. procedures
- (3) Attainment of majority membership within the appropriate occupational group.

Only two out of the five companies mentioned the question of representation rights by themselves, in these cases, the firms related to National Agreements made by Employers Associations.

(d) Employers Associations

All five companies were members of an employers organisation, but in only three cases did the association have recognition policies.

(e) Staff Associations

Only two out of the five firms had staff associations, one of which gave negotiating rights.

(f) Industrial Relations Act

Two firms said that the 'Act' had affected their policies towards white-collar unionism. Both stated that this had caused them to formalise their staff policies in this respect.

(g) Representation and Recognition Attempts

In four out of five cases recognition was granted to the union after the first or second attempt. One company was approached on three occasions and eventually gave representation rights to the union concerned because membership levels were extremely low.

2. UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS

9 Companies come into this category.

(a) Firm Size

251-500	employees	=	4 firms
501-1000	"	=	2 firms
1001-2000	"	=	3 firms

(b) Occupational Distribution of Unionised Staff

Gen/Clerical	Sup/Tech.	Prof./Spec.	Middle Managers
2	3	1	-

(c) Recognition Policies

Only five out of nine firms had recognition policies - the criteria being:

- (1) Compliance with National Agreements
- (2) Size of membership within occupational group

(d) Employers' Associations

Seven out of nine firms were members of an employers organisation, however, only four of these associations had recognition policies.

(e) Staff Associations

Three out of nine firms had their own staff associations, but a fourth firm was considering setting one up.

(f) Industrial Relations Act

Only two firms suggested that the 'Act' had affected their staff policies. Each firm said that it had been encouraged to stimulate collective organisation whether staff association or union. One firm gave lectures to staff about the Act's implications for them.

(g) Representation/Recognition Attempts

Representations Rights

Seven out of nine of the firms had been approached on this basis, in two cases two attempts had been made. In only two out of the seven instances had the attempts been successful. The overriding reason was a lack of staff support, and in one instance a ~~free~~ vote had weighed heavily against union representation of any kind. However, in this instance the existing staff

association held full negotiating rights. Two of the unsuccessful attempts were made in companies with existing staff associations.

(h) Remaining Rights

Six out of the nine firms had been approached directly for full negotiating rights. One attempt had been made at two firms, and in the remaining firms, two, three and four attempts were made respectively.

The factor which was most consistent in failures was 'structural', many of the unions failed to meet majority membership requirements, associated in some instances with a failure to gain even representation rights.

Staff associations were either present or being considered in three out of the five firms approached.

POPULATION WITH COLLAR NECK

Size and Distribution of the Occupied Labour Force 1911-1966⁽¹⁾

Occupational Groups ⁽³⁾	Nos. (000's)				
	1911	1931	1951	1961	1966
All White-collar workers	3432	4841	6945	8450	9451
Managers & Administrators	631	770	1243	1262	1514
Higher Professionals	164	240	435	710	829
Lower Prof. & Technicians	560	725	1059	1418	1604
Foremen & Inspectors	237	323	590	682	736
Clerks	632	1404	2341	2994	3163
Salesmen & Shop Assistants	989	1375	1276	1393	1516
Manual workers	13625	14775	14450	14022	14392

Density of Unionization by Occupation 1964⁽²⁾

Occupational Group	Union Density (%)
Foremen	6.8
Scientists & Technologists	5.3
Technicians	29.6
Clerks	10.5
All White-collar workers	12.1

(1) Sources: Bain, G & Price, S. 1972 pp. 266-9

Bain, G.S. 1970 Table 2.1

(2) Source: Bain, G.S. 1970 Table 2.3

(3) Excludes employers and proprietors

APPENDIX E

ANALYSIS OF CONTRIBUTION TO INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS REPORTS

Sheet 1

Air Report No.	Pay Rates Fixed by Firm	Clerkance Procedures			Works Council or Committee	Staff Assoc. or Committee	Bonus or Profit Sharing Schemes	Union Membership	No. of Manufacturing Units	Total No. of Employees
		Good	Poor	None						
60	X			X				89	7	10
72	X	X						11	15	36
73	X			X				23	24	44
83	X			X				81	1	66
71	X			X				61	39	104
3	X	X						17	2	139
57	X	X				X	X	21	24	166
64	X		X			X		28	24	169
28	X			X	X		X	41	1	180
74	X			X			X	51	60	190
81	X			X		X		8	56	233
65			X			X	X	57	1	240
25		X			X		X	19	3	249
21	X	X					X	16	4	250
42	X	X				X		42	33	260
5	X		X		X		X	65	1	390
7	X		X					65	5	400
75	X	X				X		12	47	464

Firms
with

0 - 250

Employees

Firms
with

251 - 500

Employees

Cir Report No.	Pay Rates Fixed by Firm	Grievance Procedures			Works Council or Committee	Staff Assoc. or Committee	Bonus or Merit Rating Scheme	Mgt/Collier Union Membership	No. of Manufacturing Units	Total No. of Employees	
		Good	Fair	None							
61	x	x				x		28	122	535	Firms with 501 - 1000 Employees
62	x	x				x	x	37	3	573	
70	x	x				x	x	15	90	784	
63	x			x		x		13	1	1200	Firms with 1001 - 2000 Employees
65	x		x			x		39	1	1200	
70	x	x				x		46	4	1450	
66	x		x					67	4	2145	
1	x		x		x	x		54	6	2177	
20	x						x	65	4	2499	
63	x							23	5	3300	Firms with over 2000 Employees
12	x	x						19	75	3700	
30		x				x		45	12	4535	
22		x				x	x	21	41	6775	
32		x						29	13	8193	
16				x		x		61	51	8700	
2	x			x				16	62	9460	
24	x					x		5	93	12226	
50		x				x	x	40	11	132000	

Notes

1 These firms were in dispute with manual workers

2 This firm already negotiates with a trade union

APPENDIX F

ANALYSIS AND CALCULATIONS - CIA DATA

Table 1. Existence of Salary Grading and Size of Firm

Size of Firm (No. of Employees)	Age of Firms with G. Schemes	Age of Firms without G. Schemes
0 - 250	21.4	78.6
250 - 500	25	75
501 - 1000	66	34
1001 - 2000	100	NIL
2000+	83	17

Table 2. Union Membership Levels and Quality of Grievance Procedures

Union Membership levels (./Collar)	Grievance Procedures		Total
	None/Poor	Good	
C - 50% (low)	7	18	25
SI - 100% (high)	11	0	11
Total	18	18	36

Chi-square Test

Null hypothesis - that there is no difference in union membership levels and quality of grievance procedures.

Result

Computed value of $\chi^2 = 14.7$

From tables χ^2 with 1 degree of freedom at 95 confidence level = 3.84

Thus the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that the difference between union membership levels and the quality of grievance handling is significant

Table 3. Rank Correlation (Grievance Procedures/Union Membership)

Ranking (Union Membership)	Grievance Procedures		d (x-y)	d^2
	None/Few (x)	Good (y)		
0 - 10% (1)	(1) 5	(1) 7	2	4
11 - 20% (2)	(2) 2	(7) 1	1	1
21 - 30% (3)	(1) 5	(5) 3	2	4
31 - 40% (4)	(2) 2	(2) 6	4	16
41 - 50% (5)	(1) 5	(3) 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
51 - 60% (6)	(0) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	(3) 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	4	16
61 - 70% (7)	(0) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	(6) 2	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	42 $\frac{1}{4}$
71 - 80% (8)	(0) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	(0) 9	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
81 - 90% (9)	(2) 2	(0) 9	7	49
91 - 100% (10)	(0) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	(0) 9	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
				$\Sigma d^2 = 133$

Notes:

- (1) Numbers in brackets (under grievance procedures) represent the actual frequencies.
- (2) Where rankings are uneven e.g. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$, this is because a mean rank has been used when 2 or more frequencies are the same.

Calculation of correlation coefficient 'r'

$$\begin{aligned}
 r &= 1 - \frac{6 \times (d^2)}{n(n^2 - 1)} \\
 &= 1 - \frac{6 \times 133}{10(100-1)} = \frac{798}{990} = 1 - 0.81 \\
 \therefore r &= 1 - 0.81 = 0.19
 \end{aligned}$$

Table 4. Staff Association/Works Council - Union Membership

White-Collar Union Membership level	Firms with Staff Assoc. or Works Council	Firms without	Total
0-50 (low)	17	8	25
51-100 (high)	4	7	11
Total	21	15	36

Chi-square test

Computed value for $\chi^2 = 3.14$

From tables χ^2 with 1 degree of freedom at 95%

$= 3.84$

\therefore null hypothesis accepted of no association

Table 5. Incidence of Bonus/Merit Rating and Availability of Grievance Procedures.

Presence of Bonus or Merit Rating Schemes	Grievance Procedures		Total
	Poor/Bona	Good	
Firms with	5 (42%)	7 (57%)	12
Firms without	13 (54%)	11 (46%)	24
Total	18	18	36

Chi-square test:

Computed value of $\chi^2 = 0.48$

From tables χ^2 with 1 degree of freedom $= 3.84$

\therefore null hypothesis of no association accepted.

Table 6. Combined Frequency Table.

A/Collar Union Membership Levels	Grading/Merit Rating or Bonus Schemes	Grievance Procedures		Staff Assoc. or Works Council	Total
		Poor/None	Good		
0 - 50 (low)	18	7	18	17	60
51 -100 (high)	6	11	0	4	21
Total	24	18	18	21	81
<p>Chi-square test:</p> <p>Computed value of $\chi^2 = 18.4$</p> <p>from χ^2 tables with 3 degrees of freedom $\chi^2 = 7.81$</p> <p>∴ null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that a strong association does exist.</p> <p>2nd. Chi-square test: (excluding data on grievance procedures)</p> <p>Computed χ^2 value = 0.43</p> <p>χ^2 from tables with 1 degree of freedom = 3.84</p> <p>∴ null hypothesis of no association accepted.</p>					

APPENDIX C

STAFF ASSOCIATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long has the company's staff association been in existence?

less than 1 year 1-3 years 3-5 years 5-10 years Over 10 years

☐☐☐☐☐

2. What approximate percentage of the following occupational groups belong to the Staff Association?

Clerical Technical Supervisory Professional Managerial

☐☐☐☐☐

3. On whose suggestion was the Staff Association set up? Was it the company? Yes/No

was it the staff themselves? Yes/No (if Yes which group put forward the idea) _____

4. What set of circumstance/events led to the Staff Association being formed?

5. Does the Staff Association have bargaining rights?

Yes/No

6. If Yes to (5) above, how long have these rights existed?

7. Does the Staff Association:-

- (a) have its own financial resources. Yes/No
or (b) depend upon facilities provided by the firm Yes/No

8. How does the company view the role of the staff association. (Please tick appropriate description)

- (a) as a medium through which information can be channelled to staff
(b) as an alternative form of staff representation to unionism
(c) as a focus for testing out staff opinion towards policy decisions

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

9. If members of the company's staff belong to a recognised white-collar union, why does the company still support a staff association?

10. How does a company view the continued existence of its staff association now that the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act specifically discriminates against 'non-independent unions'?

COMPANY

MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. The information that you have provided will remain confidential and will only be used for general analysis of other research information.

R.S. March
Department of Management Studies
Sheffield Polytechnic

APPENDIX H

STAFF ASSOCIATION QUESTIONNAIRES

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Response Rate

6 out of 13 firms completed a questionnaire.

5 firms said they no longer had a Staff Association.

Q.1 How long had the Staff Association been in existence?

Between 1 - 3 years (2 firms)

Between 3 - 5 years (2 firms)

Over 10 years (2 firms)

Q.2 What range of occupational groups belong to Staff Association?

Clerical Staff - average membership of 80%

Technical Staff - " " " 49%

Supervisory Staff - " " " 49%

Professional Staff - " " " 66%

Managerial Staff - " " " 67%

Q.3 Who set up the Staff Association?

In 3 firms the staff themselves (clerical or supervisory staff),
and in 3 firms the Staff Association was set up by the firm.

Q.4 Circumstances leading up to the Staff Association formation.

Staff Originated

- (1) Observed advantages of joint discussions (manual employees)
- (2) Wish to be represented.
- (3) To counteract union recruitment drive

Company Originated

- (1) An attempt to dissuade staff from joining a union
- (2) Development from the company's 'Staff Society'
- (3) Growth of Unionism - formalisation of common interests

Q.5 Does Staff Association have bargaining rights?

5 firms replied YES and only 1 replied NO.

Q.6 How long have bargaining rights existed?

All 5 firms replied that these had existed since the formation of the Staff Association.

Q.7 Does the Staff Association:-

	YES	NO
(a) Have its own financial resources?	<input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>
(b) Depend upon company facilities?	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>

Q.8 How does the company view the role of the Staff Association?

- (a) As a medium through which information can be channelled to staff (5 firms)
- (b) As an alternative to unionism (4 firms)
- (c) As a focus for testing out staff opinion (2 firms)

Q.9 Why is Staff Association still supported if union existed?

- (a) Level of support for unions too low (3 firms)
- (b) Gives representation to non-union members (3 firms)

Q.10 Affect of Trade Union and Labour Relations Act

No firm had any clear idea as to the actual effect of this clause in the 'Act'. Many suggested that their staff association would remain as long as support existed. One company suggested that it was a suitable alternative for managers who had to negotiate on behalf of the company with white-collar unions.

APPENDIX I

THE CASE-STUDIES

SUMMARY OF CASE-STUDY 'A'

THE COMPANY

1. It is a large organisation operating within the chemical and extractive industries, employing around 3,800 people. The company employs approximately 1550 white-collar staff throughout its seven operating divisions. The distribution of these staff is as follows:

	<u>No. of Locations</u>	<u>Staff Nos.</u>
Head Office Depts.	3	236
CM Division	1 major & 4 minor sites	283
CT Division	1 major & 5 minor sites	192
Ma Division	1	128
C Division	6	179
MP Division	5	84
D Division	50 minor sites	262

2. Around 60% of all staff are concentrated within Head Office Departments, and the CM, CT, Ma and C Divisions where there are large concentrations of staff on single sites.
3. Unionism amongst manual workers has been established for some time within the company. Although a multi-union situation, labour relations are about average for a British industry.
4. Prior to 1971 none of the company's staff employees were represented by a union, although ad hoc forms of joint consultation operated in varying degrees within the different manufacturing divisions.

5. The company had no central policy with regard to internal consultation; however, it did begin to standardise pay scales and conditions for all staff on a company-wide basis. A system for dealing with grievances was also instituted during 1971.
6. During 1968 management consultants introduced a system of job evaluation for all levels of staff above junior management grades.
7. In 1970 the company introduced its own job evaluation system for staff in junior management and lower staff grades. The problem of pay relativities was a major concern, in view of the fact that a large number of different organisational units were concentrated in close geographical proximity.
8. Job evaluation provides the basis for salary determination throughout the company.
9. On the basis that some degree of white-collar unionism was inevitable, the company began to plan ahead its own policies for dealing with the recognition of staff unions.

RECOGNITION POLICIES

10. The issue of white-collar unionisation arose during late 1970, when staff union membership within the company was almost non-existent at around 1%. It was the company's wish that they should avoid a multi-union bargaining situation unlike the development of manual unionism within the company. They felt that they would like to hold more of the initiative regarding the development of staff unionism, whilst still allowing sufficient scope for staff to be represented collectively by the bargaining agent of their choice.

11. The company's problem was to determine outline structural agreements of its own, normally the unions were often the first to propose such recognition agreements. Certain guidelines given by the CIA were used as the basis for policy determination.
12. Further data was then collected on the pattern of manual unionisation in the various divisions. An attempt was made to assess any effect which this was likely to exercise on the development of a staff union structure within the company.
13. Staff conditions, including pay, had been determined on a company-wide basis, and it was felt that any proposed recognition policies should operate on the same lines. Initially the company charted out the potential bargaining units, based on criteria included in the then draft 'Code of Practice'. The unit constituencies were then devised for employees up to and including first and second line supervision. The units consisted of:-
 - (a) first and second line supervisors
 - (b) engineering staff - all grades
 - (c) general staff below junior management
14. Partial recognition was to be granted to a union which could secure a 51% majority membership within the appropriate bargaining unit in a division or major site. In other words, representational rights and limited negotiating rights in-so-far as these related to matters of purely local determination. Full recognition, including full negotiating rights, could be secured if a union achieved majority membership in a bargaining unit encompassing all operating divisions.

15. However, the company suggested that it might have been able to concede full recognition to a union if it was able to secure 100% membership within just a few divisions of the company. Such a situation was foreseeable due to the uneven distribution of certain types of staff, many of whom were concentrated amongst a few divisions.
16. The company's recognition policy was designed to encourage white-collar unionisation to develop within a pre-determined framework. They did not wish to appear to favour any particular union, thus adopted a rigidly neutral attitude towards interested unions.
17. Reasons given for this attitudinal stance suggest that the company wishes to avoid a fragmented bargaining structure through multi-unionism. Further, by encouraging the growth of the first union to gain a foothold in the organisation, the company felt that this might obstruct the entry of a similarly eligible union at a later date. Alternatively, the company felt that even if others did appear and recruited 'pockets' of members, the setting-up of all minor unions, with a single union holding majority power, might still result in inter-union rivalry.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

18. The first union claim for recognition was made by ASTMS at the company's 'C' Division during February 1971. Its claim was based upon a 60% membership within the supervisory bargaining unit and approximately 50% within the general staff grades. Approaches were made by the company to the Department of Employment for an independent check to be made of membership levels.

19. The union accepted the fact that they would only be able to 'represent' members within their defined bargaining units. A partial recognition agreement was concluded in November 1971. ASTMS have also secured representational rights in a number of smaller plants within the company's 'M1' Division.
20. Throughout the company ASTMS has a total membership strength of 20% - 25% of the total potential white-collar membership (1,250 staff are included in the bargaining units).
21. Although ASTMS is the only major challenger for union members within the company, there are a small number of draughtsman in 'M2' Division who have obtained a representation agreement with IASS. Also within this same division, a majority of the laboratory staff also wish to be represented by IASS, but they are apparently not eligible to become part of the same bargaining unit as draughtsman, who are in fact engineering staff.
22. Thus the situation, which became strongly influenced by the Industrial Relations Act, and particularly the 'Code of Practice', has reached a position where no further inroads are being made by any union (other than IASS), into the ASTMS supremacy of numbers. As yet recognition, in its fullest sense, has not fully evolved and remains fairly static, since no union has been actively recruiting new members in recent months. However, there are signs that at those sites where partial recognition was given some time ago, there is a growing desire for fuller negotiating rights.

The union has challenged the company's policy on the basis that it should be handled at divisional level. Their prime concern was 'CM' Division where no significant recruitment had been made.

Although the union holds majority membership in 'C' and 'MF' Divisions, the question of overall company recognition has been delayed because of the low support in 'CM' Division. The union's view is that the situation is unrealistic when compared to industry generally, since very few companies still retain a 'company-wide' approach to union recognition.

During the summer of 1975 the union made an approach to ACAS, and linked the recognition issue to a salary claim. It appeared that a dispute might have arisen over the issue, but for the company coming up with a substantial pay award, which reduced the impetus of the recognition claim. The recognition issue appears to have dropped in significance, possibly due to the restrictions imposed upon bargaining by the government's 46 pay policy.

The company has suggested that the union's existing agreements, which allow 'representation', give the union a lot of influence over salary issues. The company still maintain that full recognition has to be substantiated by majority staff membership across company-wide 'bargaining units'.

Staff attitudes towards the recognition issue have been variable, although during the summer of 1975 there was talk amongst clerical, supervisory and technical staff, of holding a series of one day stoppages in support of this issue.

The union has held a number of discussions with the company concerning the 'substantive issue' of an agreement to allow salary

negotiating by the union in certain divisions, but no formal agreement has yet emerged. The union believes, however, that the company is influenced by the union's views upon salary matters. Although the company's attitude has not formally changed, the union has developed an informal system of negotiation, which the union calls 'bargaining at arms length'. The union is uncertain whether formal recognition could improve the results of its informal influence over salary negotiations.

The unions wish is that the company could develop divisional bargaining units, which they believe are more suitable because of their relative autonomy as trading groups. This proposal would have to allow for certain company-wide matters e.g. pensions, grading, which would be subject to centralised negotiations.

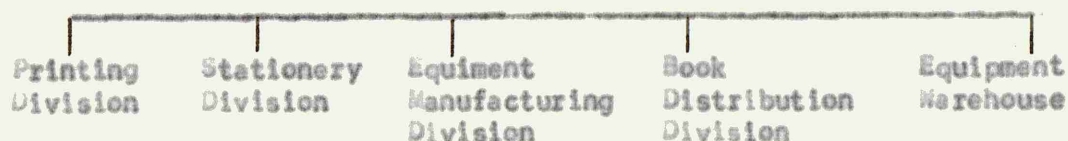
The union estimates that at the present time (January, 1976) it has, overall, a majority of the company's staff as members. However, the membership is uneven, and until this situation improves, the prospect of concluding a recognition agreement with with company is not promising.

SUMMARY OF CASE STUDY 'B'

THE COMPANY

1. The company originated over 100 years ago as a family concern specialising in the printing and distribution of educational materials for schools and colleges.
2. The company now directly employs 1,500 people within its Head Office and five operating divisions.

HEAD OFFICE



3. Staff problems have usually been dealt with by 'open-door' policies; individual line management not having had any experience of trade unions, on the whole, held unfavourable attitudes towards unions. These attitudes may have been reinforced by the wholly antagonistic view of unions held by many of the board of directors at that time.
4. The company employs around 570 white-collar staff, but to these could be included a variety of warehouse and distribution workers (weekly paid staff) whose work resembles that of retail bookshop staff.
5. Salaries have been determined by the company using published salary surveys, comparing local wage rates, and using National Agreement guidelines which have been adopted informally.
6. Staff conditions are described as 'good', a 37½ hour week, with a sickness benefit scheme in operation.
7. The company has had no formal procedures for dealing with grievances, although an ad hoc joint consultative committee was set up in 1970 when the firms Book Division experienced staff difficulties after moving to new premises. In 1973, however, a central J.C.C. was set up at the company's head office to deal with company-wide grievances and disputes. Previously, the company policy had allowed individual managers to handle these problems.
8. At present, unionised employees account for less than half of total staff (350 remain non-union). Of these approximately 40% are clerical staff, and the remaining groups predominantly warehouse (weekly paid) staff.

THE CLAIM FOR RECOGNITION

9. The claim was initiated in October 1969 by employees of the company's Book Division. Employees in this division were traditionally relatively low-paid due to the extremely keen profit margins which are characteristics of the book trade in general. Book Division employees invariably received lower pay than employees in other divisions, although contrary to company policy, it was a fact of life.
10. Recruitment of labour had always been a problem but the company usually got over this by using temporary labour. The movement of the division to new premises in 1968 altered labour attitudes. Staff were apparently tired with being low-paid, and more particularly with the 'old fashioned' supervisory attitudes which pervaded the division.
11. During this period, militants within the division decided to seek the aid of SOGAT to help them establish a union shop. SOGAT then approached the company on the question of recognition. Management responded by suggesting that before any recognition could be conceded, a majority membership had to be achieved. The union then began unofficial recruitment of members. When the level of membership had risen sufficiently, the union then returned to management and asked for discussions to be held. The discussions were to include both warehouse and clerical staff within the division concerned. Of the 160 workers concerned, approximately 55% of these were warehouse staff.
12. A meeting was eventually held on the company's premises after working hours at which the Group Personnel Manager was invited to attend. This initial meeting was followed by a further series of meetings, during which certain allegations were

made by both parties. The union maintained that members were being 'put off' the idea of union membership by the largely anti-union middle-managers and supervisors.

Management countered this argument by saying that they believed one of the leading recruiting figures was using undue pressure tactics by threatening those not wanting to join the union with the possibility of unemployment when recognition had been obtained, and a 'closed shop' arrangement was in force. There was an element of truth in both these allegations, and it was true that line managers were anti-union and had expressed these feelings quite openly.

13. Two new factors entered into the discussions at this stage. Due to the seasonal nature of the work in this division, the firm was running down on its temporary staff. The union claimed that the company was 'getting rid' of union members, a tactic designed to undermine union strength. Also at this critical time, the company held its annual pay reviews, and the pay increases were particularly good. The company suggested that pay increases reflected the fact that trading profits were high that year. They were not in fact, trying to subvert the development of union membership by 'buying them off'. In the absence of union presence, however, there is no way of knowing if the increases would have been similarly high.

14. The culmination of these discussions led to a secret ballot being organised by the Group Personnel Department, and supervised by a SOGAT FCC (Father-of-the-Chapel) and a representative from personnel. The ballot question asked

was, "Do you want trade union representation?".

Approximately 27% of the workers involved replied "yes" to this question. Since this did not constitute anything near a majority view the situation remained unresolved and the union stepped out of the scene.

15. The relatively low response toward union membership may have been influenced by management statements made prior to the ballot. Management suggested that if union recognition was achieved then the company would implement 'union conditions'. The company operated a 37½ hour week, the union minimum was 40 hours. Company benefits under the sick pay scheme would also have to be discontinued. These two factors, particularly the sick pay benefits, were very much appreciated by female workers (approximately 50% of staff) and they obviously did not wish to endanger these benefits.
16. Later in 1959, a Joint Consultative Committee was established for the Book Division employees. Its prime function was to settle outstanding grievances and problems created in the move to new premises. The JCC constitution did not incorporate responsibility for pay negotiations, since the company complied already with national or local pay agreements within the industry.
17. Company salary policies with regard to the Book Division were designed to ensure that differentials between the Division and other staff in the organisation would be gradually reduced. Thus interest in union representation lapsed until two years later.

18. During October 1972 an incident occurred in the Book Division which brought the issue back into the limelight. This happened during the annual peak working period when a high level of overtime work was required. Overtime, however, was not very popular with the married women within this Division. Three of these women refused to work any overtime whatsoever. Local management decided in fairness to other staff who were all working overtime that they would invoke the overtime clause within the company hand-book. They posted up a notice to the effect that overtime was to be made compulsory. Although the notice was put up without prior consultation with the Personnel Department, Personnel agreed with the invoking of this clause, but they felt that the notice given (3 days) was somewhat short.
19. Personnel shortly received a telephone call from a TGU official regarding the case of one woman involved who was known to him. The position was explained to the TGU official who then passed on the information to SGGAT.
20. SGGAT later approached the company on the question of recognition based upon their increased membership strength which they claimed now constituted a majority. They suggested to management that not only warehouse staff were involved, but also clerical workers as well.
21. Discussions took place between SGGAT and the company management during October/November 1972. The question of ballots was discussed but here SGGAT could not agree. They had received instructions from their Head Office not to participate in any activity (secret ballots) which in any way resembled the

procedures within the Industrial Relations Act. Further discussions were undertaken at which management suggested that one way to prove membership strength was to allow an unofficial inspection of membership records. Management further suggested that they would also be prepared to grant recognition of the union on the basis of a 51% simple majority instead of the previous requirement of two-thirds. The company's attitude had obviously changed since 1969, during which time the influence of the Industrial Relations Act and the fact that many firms had granted recognition on much lower proportions caused the company to re-think its policies towards staff.

22. An inspection of SOGAT records took place during January 1973. Management had also issued a statement to its employees stating that they would not regard union membership as a 'disloyal act'. They also stated that the 37½ hour week would still apply, and that existing company sick pay scheme would operate only for existing employees, although new staff would not be eligible for these benefits.
23. The membership check revealed that 56 out of 80 warehouse workers (70%), and 31 out of 69 clerical workers (45%) were union members. Full recognition was therefore granted in respect of warehouse staff, and the company allowed limited representational rights for clerical staff. A month later a second inspection of union records took place which showed that clerical membership had increased to 38 out of 69 employees (55%). Full recognition was then granted to SOGAT on behalf of clerical as well as warehouse staff.

24. During the second recognition attempt, the company asked line managers to 'play down' any prejudices they had concerning unions. This was particularly important because line managers were still regarded as 'father figures' by many of the staff, and were thus in a position to influence opinion. A degree of uncertainty had been felt by these managers, that with the introduction of unions they felt that a measure of their authority had been withdrawn since they now had to 'soft treat' the union members. The company reassured line managers that their authority still stood, and that they were to treat these workers in no different fashion than previously. Indications were also given as to how to handle procedural agreements and what role the FOC's (shop stewards) had within the company.

SUMMARY OF CASE-STUDY 'C'

THE COMPANY

1. The firm, which originated as a family business, operates in the engineering industry producing a selection of engineer's cutting tools. It is a medium-sized organisation which employs around 1,600 people, 450 of whom are staff employees.
2. The company has had good relations with the GMAU which represents the majority of the company's manual workers. Although the engineering industry based AUMA had represented many of the shop floor workers, they had found the GMAU to be much more active as a union, and many had thus transferred to this union as the years passed. At present approximately two thirds of the workforce belong to the GMAU. However, there are some trends away from the general union back to the

engineering union, perhaps because the AUEW has shown greater militancy over recent years and might best represent their needs in the future.

3. Staff workers have had the opportunity to join the company's staff association since 1950. The association is mainly composed of supervisory staff, draughtsmen and technicians.
4. Staff pay was determined prior to 1971 by cost-of-living increments assessed from an agreed datum level. The staff association was allowed to comment on these annual pay proposals put forward by management, but in fact did not appear to influence their determination in any significant manner.

STAFF UNIONISM

Clerical Staff

5. During 1965 the manual workers union (CMAU) became increasingly militant on the wage bargaining front. Its success in negotiations led to the introduction of an incentive scheme for manual workers. Encouraged by the activities of this union, clerical worker representatives approached the union to discuss staff representation. Management had no objection, and between 60 and 80 clerical workers became union members.
6. Although they were in a position to negotiate their own pay structure, they had little success. In 1970, in consultation with the union staff representative, a new wages policy was thrashed out. This led to increased clerical membership in the union.
7. In early 1972 a job evaluation scheme took place, and was coupled with a temporary staff bonus scheme, with a promise to implement a permanent scheme after twelve months. However, the company,

after consultations with the CWAU clerical branch (NATSA) decided that it was not feasible to introduce incentives into the offices. Instead they opted for an efficiency award scheme. Clerical staff reacted strongly to this 'sell out' and membership fell from 250 to 100.

8. One of the major problems that has faced the clerical union has been obtaining suitable internal representatives. The manual workers convenor has, in fact, had to act on behalf of these workers as well as his own, because a suitable representative could not be found.

SUPERVISORY AND TECHNICAL STAFF

9. About the time of the Industrial Relations Act, the company's staff association approached the local representative of ASTIS to discuss union representation. Management approval was sought and granted, after which the proposal was put to the vote and accepted by a majority of the staff. Approximately 80 supervisory staff were involved, and there were later joined by about 20 technicians.
10. Since this occasion the workforce has expanded, but ASTIS membership has not significantly increased. Some of the members have felt dissatisfied with the lack of perceived real benefits from union membership, and have left the union. At its height, the union membership reached 150 members from both supervisory and technical grades. Wroughtsmen and technicians had originally belonged to DITA before it merged to become part of ASTIS. Membership to DITA dated back to 1853/54, but showed little activity, the members being primarily interested in being kept informed about nationally agreed rates of pay.

11. Management has openly encouraged its workers to join unions, and even though staff are considered 'part of the management team', the company has not felt that an extension of unionism into white-collar areas would cause them any particular problems.
12. White-collar workers are divided into three groupings for the purpose of pay-structuring:

	<u>Approx.No.</u>	<u>Approx.% Unionised</u>
Supervisory	83	85
Technical	60	75
Clerical and non-supervisory	260	45/50

13. Whilst the company had a staff association its members did not participate in Works Council activities, except as Management representatives.

SUMMARY OF CASE STUDY 'D'

ASTF NEGOTIATION NEGOTIATIONS WITH I.C.I

1. The union's involvement in I.C.I. extends back over twenty years, when ASSA and ASCW (now merged to form part of ASTF) were both independent white-collar unions. Both unions had members within I.C.I., but no recognition or representation agreement was in force.
2. I.C.I. had its own internal system for dealing with staff through its staff committee system. The system was based upon a three-tier structure:

Departmental Committees	(once per month)
Division Staff Conference	(twice per month)
Central Staff Conference	(once per month)

3. Each department elected representatives by ballot, which, once formed, elected delegates to represent them at the Division and Central Staff Conferences. The task of progressing the work of these conferences was undertaken by small standing committees at Division and Central level. These standing committees met frequently and took on (in the company's view), a considerable managing and quasi-negotiating role.
4. The ASICS view is that the system was nothing less than 'organised paternalism'; involving hundreds of people and costing around £2m. to administer. Staff who were organised in this way had no bargaining rights only consultative rights, and the company still retained overall control.
5. During 1968 ASICS obtained representation rights for monthly staff. Recognition had in fact been granted to a number (seven or eight) traditional manual unions for weekly staff. These unions were known as the 'signatory unions', and originally began discussions with the firm in 1928. The company believes that there is very little evidence (in fact some contra-indications) that monthly staff union membership was such as to justify negotiating rights for any common interest group before the early 1970's.
6. ASICS had put pressure on I.C.I to try and obtain formal recognition, but had a low membership within the company, around 5,000 members out of a total white-collar labour force of 36,000.

7. The groups which were attracted to the ranks of ASTMS were mainly technicians and supervisory staff, and these formed the centre of ASTMS strength within I.C.I.
8. Manual unions within the company had been negotiating good deals in the early 1970's, but staff discontent began to increase as inflation eroded pay relativities. This situation brought up a new development, the I.C.I Staff Association. The Association rapidly gained a membership of 1,400 during its first few months of operation. Its organisation included a full-time official and a system of organisation which covered all levels of staff employees. ASTMS maintain that I.C.I refused to allow the Staff Association negotiating rights, arguing that this was dealt with by their staff committee system. I.C.I, however, argue that the Staff Association was given no more and no less facilities to organise than T.U.C affiliated unions, and that it eventually turned to the Industrial Relations Court because it despaired of organising all I.C.I staff without company assistance.
9. During 1973 ASTMS was involved in a reference to the Industrial Relations Court, which was initiated by the Staff Association. Although T.U.C policy did not allow affiliated unions such as ASTMS to initiate their own claims to the Court under the Industrial Relations Act, the union was allowed to defend itself if cited in such an action. The I.C.I Staff Association cited ASTMS in its evidence to the I.R.C.

10. The Staff Association asked the Court to treat the 36,000 staff within I.C.I. as one bargaining unit with the Staff Association as the sole bargaining agent.
11. The claim was then referred to the Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) for investigation, the results were in fact published. (See CIR Report 82).
12. After a thorough investigation of the situation at I.C.I., the CIR rejected the Staff Association claim and instead suggested six separate bargaining units based upon the company's common salary grading structure. These units were as follows:

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Scientific and Technical Staff |) | |
| 2. Clerical and Administrative Staff |) | 'HAGIAM' grades |
| 3. Supervisory Staff |) | 1 - 10 "Green |
| 4. Engineering Staff |) | Book Staff" |
| 5. Managerial Staff (all grades) | | Grades 10-15 "Blue Book Staff" |
| 6. Top Management (Black Book Staff above Grade 15) | | |

It also recommended the appropriate union to represent each bargaining unit.

13. ACTUS was proposed as the sole bargaining agent for Scientific and Technical Staff, Clerical and Administrative Staff and Engineering Staff. It was also suggested that ultimately ACTUS should have bargaining rights for Managerial Staff. Joint bargaining rights were suggested for the supervisory bargaining unit between ACTUS and the 'signatory unions'.
14. The company's Staff Committee was shown to have only 17. of membership support throughout I.C.I.

15. The company did not implement the CIB Report, although it did propose a recognition policy based upon ballots once an audited 20% membership threshold had been reached within a bargaining unit. Recognition was to be granted to unions whose support exceeded 50% in any bargaining unit.
16. So far ASTMS has claimed bargaining rights for Scientific and Technical Staff, which resulted in full recognition and bargaining rights being conceded by the company in January, 1975.
17. ASTMS believes that I.C.I is opposing further unionisation with ASTMS as the bargaining agent - the company has offered the 'signatory unions', excluding ASTMS, sole bargaining rights in the supervisory bargaining unit.
18. The union believes that the company will sponsor APST, a professional amalgamation, or an in-house Staff Association again, in its managerial bargaining unit, TASS/ASTMS in the Engineering Staff bargaining unit, and the TCU/ASTMS in clerical and administrative areas. The company's policy is one of allowing staff to choose for themselves within the constraints of the law.
19. ASTMS is presently asking for a ballot of Engineering Staff, and remains active in recruitment within all other bargaining units. However, the company is not convinced that ASTMS would be the favoured union, and awaits the results of balloting or auditing to demonstrate staff preferences.

QUESTION - How well does the Bridlington Agreement protect ASTMS in a situation where a number of unions are 'scrabbling' for a small percentage of the total staff workforce?

REPLY - In I.C.I. for example, the size of the workforce is so large that there is no need for unions to fall out.

QUESTION - How well do you think joint-bargaining panels function?

REPLY - They have often benefited ASTMS because of our often superior negotiating ability; unions have in some cases 'handed over' to ASTMS.

QUESTION - What is it that ASTMS possesses that say either AMPS or TASS doesn't possess in the field of white-collar recruitment?

REPLY - ASTMS is more publicly recognised (thanks to Olive Jenkins) and this helps white-collar staff to identify it from other unions. The union also provides proof of its success in terms of its membership (310,000). The breadth and depth of membership throughout numerous areas of white-collar employment adds to this credibility.

QUESTION - Is there any particular strategy which you prefer to adopt when seeking recognition from companies within private industry?

REPLY - Our clearest route is the growth factory, when we have obtained say 30-40% of potential membership, then the employer has less option to refuse recognition. However, where I.C.I. is concerned, ASTMS have not problems - to deal with this situation we have created a special

appointment (full-time officer) to deal with this organisation where we already have 5,000 members, and where development can be stimulated.

QUESTION - What arrangements have you had to make where bargaining units have been already outlined by a company and where there is overlapping membership between AIMS and another white-collar union?

REPLY - Our first priority is to recruit non-union staff to build-up a 'power-base', secondly to contact the other union and define a common approach - a unified approach can then be made to the employer.

QUESTION - Has AIMS used this strategy in I.C.I?

REPLY - No, except in the supervisory bargaining unit where negotiations are already in being.

QUESTION - What strategy do you adopt in multi-plant situations? e.g. you have set up a special organisation to deal with Building Society recruitment.

REPLY - Yes. We also set up National Advisory Committees which provide specialist services. It has been very effective. We produce recruitment leaflets and booklets aimed at particular employees. We also provide our members with a highly professional 'back-up' service; when you are dealing with 'professional' staff they are very often 'wrapped up' with their 'professional' status.

QUESTION - How much importance do you place upon shop stewards?

REPLY - We call them Group Secretaries - IATUC believes that full-time officials should have little power, except in an advisory role. The onus is on staff to control events and if they require advice, etc., they can fall back on full-time officials, services, etc. This 'high cost' back-up service is probably responsible for our high growth.

QUESTION- What areas of expansion do you envisage in the short-term?

REPLY - The main areas of expansion will be in the chemical and petro-chemical industries, particularly in the engineering and management sectors, and within finance and commerce. In the long-term our major growth is going to be in the financial and commercial sectors.

QUESTION- Did you encounter any problems in organising particular groups of staff in I.C.I?

REPLY - The union has more problems in organising managerial rather than technical or engineering staff. Technical and engineering staff are organised largely around industrial activity where they come into contact with manual workers and can readily see the benefits of unionism, and are much more amenable to collective organisation. Managerial staff have not the same contact with unions and are also much more bound up with status. Clerical workers - junior and female clerical workers have a high rate of turnover and they are difficult to organise. Other female staff may be working for 'pin-money', and it is difficult to convince them of union benefits. The remaining group of professionally or career orientated administrative staff require protection and assistance in career development, and they do not provide a major difficulty in organising.

SUMMARY OF CASE-STUDY 'A'

THE COMPANY

1. The company originated in the Sheffield area as a family business specialising in engineering fabrications. Much of the present work evolves around the aircraft and chemical industries, but the company also manufactures domestic ware.
2. The organisation employs approximately 840 people and is structured around a Holding Company and four Product Companies on a single manufacturing site. There is also a small 'off-sheet' company but this employs only a handful of people.

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES

	<u>Staff</u>		<u>Manual</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
CO - 1	84	34	369	27
2	33	10	66	2
3 Holding	14	37	25	10
4	2	4	13	12
5 Offshoot	1	-	1	2
6	12	4	31	9

3. Unionism amongst the manual workers has only been formalised since 1962-69. It was around this time when changes in management occurred. Previously one manager had overall responsibility for controlling the various site operations.
4. In 1969 managerial changes resulted in decentralised control being exercised within each of the product companies, the responsibility being given to plant managers. Other changes

included new managers being brought in from outside the firm, where once these positions would have been filled by people within the firm being promoted.

STAFF UNIONISM

5. In January 1969 the company received a letter from ASTMS claiming recognition and negotiating rights for appropriate staff grades. The letter was passed up to senior management, who turned the request down.
6. During the following period the company undertook a review of staff salary structures, and using job evaluation new grades were introduced (1970).

The grades were:

1. Supervisory Staff
2. Technical and Sub-Supervisory Staff
3. Lower Technical and Senior Clerical Staff
4. Lower Clerical Staff

The majority of staff were placed within the lower three grades.

7. During the next two years staff membership of ASTMS had gradually begun to improve, including a substantial number of supervisory and technical staff. The common factor for unionisation appeared to be the 'shop floor' origins of many of these staff, who had not only been members of a manual union, but who were also in a position to compare the gains being made by manual workers within the company.
8. In early 1973, ASTMS approached the company by letter regarding its request for recognition. This was followed by a meeting between two internal staff representatives of ASTMS and management,

after which was concluded the basis of a recognition agreement. The company then asked for details of membership, and there followed a number of discussions concerning the details to be included in the agreement. One clause 'an agreement between the company and ASTMS' was eventually changed to 'between the Company and employees who are members of ASTMS'. The agreement (which had been drafted by ASTMS) was concluded in September 1973.

SUMMARY OF CASE-STUDY 'F'

THE COMPANY

1. Operating in the carpet industry the firm employs around 1,300 people, of which nearly 400 are staff employees.
2. Staff salaries have, since 1970, been determined by the Institute of Office Management Grading System, which in the company covers six grades of staff. The grades have salary ranges of around £500 p.a. and each grade overlaps.
3. Since 1969, when the company was subject to a takeover, the new management have modified the old payment system, which included cost-of-living supplements, to ensure that parity was achieved with all companies within the group. Cost-of-living increments now no longer operate when an employee breaches the £2,000 p.a. salary barrier. However, in April 1975, the cost of living index was introduced again for all staff because of the present high level of inflation.
4. The grading system is operated with staff representatives, who scrutinise any changes that may take place annually. A Works Council is in operation, and includes staff representation.

UNION REACTION

5. The organization of white-collar workers has occurred during the past six years. However, a Foreman's Association has been in existence for some time, its main interests being occupational; it did not originally have any negotiating status.
6. During 1969 a group of foremen made an approach to AUSTIA regarding representation. The company heard of the approach, was not sympathetic, with the result that no further development took place.
7. Manual unions within the company included the ETU, AUMA, and the IUEMIA.
It was the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers, and Textile Workers which became interested in white-collar recruitment, since it already had some supervisory members who had retained their membership after promotion.
8. A national agreement had been made by manual unions operating within the carpet industry, allowing members to recruit all workers confined in that industry. This was interpreted to cover white-collar staff as well.
9. The IUEMIA then recruited between 30-40 junior clerical workers within the company. A few months afterwards when the annual pay review came up, the clerical workers felt that their pay improvements had not been justified by union representation, and after an argument with IUEMIA convenor, promptly withdrew their membership.

10. In 1972 the company received a visit from an AFK representative, the union had already recruited members in one of the other 'group' companies, which was run on a completely separate basis.
11. A meeting took place between AFK and the company, and the latter was favourably impressed. AFK then went to confer with the NUOSTA, who threatened AFK with the Bridlington Agreement, after which AFK withdrew from the scene.
12. The company was then approached by the NUOSTA to discuss how staff might be organized. A verbal agreement was concluded to the effect that NUOSTA could represent junior clerical staff.
13. The union then began to recruit clerical staff and came back to the company when they had recruited a majority of clerical staff (60 members), the company then gave the union the go-ahead to set up their staff organisation with the proviso that 'blue' and 'white' collar interests were to be kept separate. Clerical membership then began to increase to around the 100 member mark.
14. The company has been approached by the NUOSTA on numerous occasions regarding clerical staff, describing them as 'very friendly' and 'amiable', but their role, as the company views it, has been of a purely consultative nature, even though they have full bargaining rights.
15. The Foremen's Association would not accept any representation by the NUOSTA, whom they thought inappropriate. They were given leave by the company to set up a Staff Association which consisted of the following sections:

Manager's Association

Assistant Managers Association

Lorcan's Association

Loom Tuner's Association

16. The Lorcan's Association was the only really active constituent member, and obtained bargaining rights from the company.
17. The Loom Tuner's Association following this approach also claimed bargaining rights which were again granted.
18. Some time later a dispute arose regarding a Tuner who, after being off work through illness, received an injury at work, and subsequently claimed payment for his time off. However, the company's scheme did not differentiate between accident and sickness benefits, although staff members were entitled to a period of sick leave, the Tuner concerned had already used up all his leave. The Tuner's Association approached the company, but also received no satisfaction.
19. Disgruntled, the Tuners approached AITUS, their motive being to avail themselves of legal representation in case of accidents.
20. An AITUS full-time official then approached the company requesting bargaining rights, on the basis of majority support within the Loom Tuner's Association. Discussions with the company resulted in a recognition agreement being drawn up in respect of the Loom Tuners.

21. The position of staff organisation within the company at present is:

Clerical workers	-		represented by NUJETS
Foremen	-	"	" Foremen's Association
Loom Tuners	-	"	" ASTT
Managers	-	"	" Manager's Association

BACKGROUND POINTS

1. The company began formalising its personnel policies before and after the Industrial Relations Act 1971 was introduced.
2. When the 'Act' was implemented the company invited the 'Industrial Society' to hold seminars within the company to inform staff about the provisions in the Act.
3. Grievance procedures had existed in the company, originating from shop floor labour relations, but no formal procedures (except perhaps the Works Council) had been drawn up for processing grievances.
4. Salaries had previously been negotiated on an individual basis within the salary Grading framework.
5. The carpet industry is relatively small (60,000 workers) and the Employers Federation did not draft up any precise guide-lines for dealing with white-collar unionism.
6. The two most active white-collar groups within the company, Foremen and Loom Tuners, have been involved in status squabbles. Loom Tuners, who maintain and service weaving looms will not accept the foremen's authority over them, since they maintain that only someone who is craft-trained is

capable of directing their work. Foremen on the other hand, are held responsible for shift operations, which includes ensuring that maintenance of breakdowns is quickly carried out to maintain production targets.

The Tumers status preoccupation has involved endeavours to obtain the same staff grading as Foremen even though they might have to relinquish other financial benefits such as bonus payments etc. Tumers recently became graded as 'senior staff', which to them was worth more than an additional £7 per week, which they could have been entitled to outside this 'senior' category.

APPENDIX J

QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING UNION AFFILIATION

DESIGNED TO JOIN TRADE UNIONS

Bargaining Unit:

Position:

Q.1 How long have you worked for the company?

Q.2 Are you a member of:

- (a) A trade union
- (b) A staff association
- (c) Both TU and SA
- (d) Neither

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.3 (a) How long have you been a union member?

(b) How long have you been a Staff Association member?

Q.4 Give briefly your reason for joining the union.

.....

.....

.....

Q.5 Did any person or persons within the firm influence you in your decisions to join. If so, who, and how?

.....

.....

.....

Q.6 Did you take into account gains made by other groups, e.g. manual workers?

Q.7 STAFF ASSOCIATION PRESENTING

(a) What circumstances made you join the SA?

(b) How did your membership of the SA affect your view of the trade unions?

(c) What situation led you to transfer your membership from the SA to a trade union.

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