

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

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What do we know about how successful businesses use their human resources strategically? Behind this apparently simple question there are serious research problems and numerous traps for the unwary.

Since the popular acclaim achieved by Peters and Waterman's 'In Search of Excellence' the bandwagon effect has produced a plethora of further titles all aiming to describe the golden rules of business success. This is perhaps inevitable, given how easy it is to tempt people with the notion that there is a fundamental truth which, if only they understood it, would bring them success, fame and riches. Such books are in the same genre as earlier attempts, from which the reader was expected to learn how to make friends and influence people or to succeed in business without really trying. As Guest (1992) puts it, 'In Search of Excellence' may have been 'right enough to be dangerously wrong'; that is the book was researched and even if the ideas were over simplified, the appeal of half truths is that managers can find some degree of resonance with their own experience, so tend to believe the entire message. What is equally dangerous is a reaction to such books which dismisses all the messages, and which results in a rejection of any attempt to research this area.

The research problems raised by the desire to find out what managers do to improve performance through HRM begin when we seek to define 'successful businesses'. What is success - profit, high share prices, return on capital, happy customers, happy employees, stable employment, a significant contribution to the economy? The questions could continue, but the point is surely made that we cannot assume simple definitions of success will be accepted by all the stakeholders in a business. What was fatal to the Peters and Waterman (1982) argument was their assumption of some sort of 'permanent' or long term success. Businesses rise and fall with the trade cycle. No virtue attaches to just survival in business for a long period. What works in 1992 may not be suitable for the year 2000.

The most important criterion from the perspective of the shareholder is profitability and the return on assets, but shareholders and analysts are aware that few companies will turn in spectacular profits every year. Ten years ago companies such as Polly Peck were amazing commentators with their performance, but even the existence of such apparent shooting stars has proved ephemeral.

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There are long term good performers, such as Marks and Spencer, Glaxo and ICI which regularly produce highly successful business performance, year on year, within their own industry groupings. What makes them newsworthy is their steady top of the league position. Such long run results may require significant changes to the business, to the types of services, the products or even the portfolio of businesses. The flexibility of the business strategy could therefore be an important aspect of their success. But how compatible is business flexibility with the concerns of Human Resource Management? Human Resource Management is sometimes characterised as being concerned with creating organisation culture, with change from one stable state to another stable state. For many businesses now, perhaps there is no stability: continuous change is the norm.

The Literature on Business and Human Resource Strategy

There is not the space here for a comprehensive review of the literature on this subject, but it is important to recognise that there is a literature on HR strategy which is growing rapidly.

The study of business strategy has been dogged by prescriptions. These 'how to do it' formulae have at least provided researchers with tools for analysis, and have offered frameworks against which practice may be compared. Thus we find the seven 's', the Boston matrix, and various other approaches to competitive posture analysis taken up by consultants and business students.

From the strategic study of businesses, categories of strategic objectives have been developed, such as cost competitiveness, product differentiation and niche marketing. Miles and Snow (1978) have taken this further by putting forward a fourfold strategic typology dependent on the stability of product markets, based on the match between the strategy, the market environment and the organisational goals which influence the control systems, including the human resource management systems. There are, according to this formulation, defensive, prospector, analyser and reactor strategies, each of which has implications for organisation structure.

In the literature on HR strategy, Purcell (1989) has explored how structures in multi-division companies influence strategy, and has shown the complexities of corporate strategies covering a portfolio of businesses. The first and second order strategies followed in divisionalised companies concentrate on markets, and the integration of company policies. He argues that because of the need to meet short-term financial targets, and under the pressure of accountability for divisional profits, human resource strategies are relegated to third order strategies which concentrate on marginal improvements and this makes it harder for unit level managers to bring out long run policies.

By contrast, Schuler (1992) has put forward a vision of strategic human resource management based on three distinct elements: HR philosophy, policies and practices. This suggests that even in large organisations there are distinctive HR approaches, which are sustained by line managers as much as by HR professionals.

Many accounts of HR strategies in support of business strategies concentrate on management of the change process. Pettigrew (1988) has demonstrated how skills development and training processes can be exploited to provide a competitive advantage, and there are classic case studies of companies such as British Airways which reveal the significance of HR policies in bringing about a cultural transformation. What many of these studies tell us is that successful businesses have found ways to gain the maximum utilization from the human resource, by a variety of means.

In this way, as Storey (1992) reminds us, human resource management has been conceptualized in varying ways. For example normative visions emphasize empowerment and commitment, but there are also descriptions which equate the concept with employment policy, for the utilization of people, including sub-contract and franchise arrangements. There are also those who see HRM as another version of Organisation Development, where the key concern is managing change.

Models of HR

The need to discover what constitutes successful performance can result in a move from 'is' to 'ought'. The problems of researching the area are best overcome by case study methodologies but this produces difficulty when we try to generalize the research.

In the early 1980's I researched with Alan Fell the different approaches companies used to manage the personnel function (Tyson and Fell 1986). These different 'models' of human resource management were created by the varying contingencies which influence all organisational decision making. We distinguished three models, which we saw as: a basic administrative model, a systems model with a strong industrial relations emphasis, and a business manager, professional model. Each model was equally legitimate, each had its particular limitations. The benefits from describing these models are that we can evaluate the function in terms of what the managers realistically seek to achieve and we can measure the changes to models within any organisation over a period of time. Above all, this approach suggests we should no longer seek some idealized model of human resource management, which is unrealistic and inappropriate.

The possibility of changing models is itself a liberating maxim. We do not need to conform to any one set of assumptions. From the diversity of approaches we may expect HR specialists to form closer links with the business decision makers.

Research into the Relationship Between HR and Business Strategies

Following on from this research initiative I recently undertook a joint project with PE International, which has researched the business and human resource strategies of 30 large British quoted companies which have performed consistently and relatively well within their industry sectors. The sectors selected were engineering, construction, retail, leisure, pharmaceuticals and large multi-product/service companies. To measure company performance in a reliable way we took three key financial ratios: profit before tax:sales; return on total assets; and added value:pay. These were chosen because they cover all the main business areas of physical, financial and human assets.

Although the companies chosen included many well known corporations, given the contingency view expressed above, and the caution we would wish to extend to any research project of only 30 companies, generalizations of the findings must only be taken at a high level of analysis. There is little that is common across all these different businesses. However, there were a number of areas which stand out from our data. The findings may be summarised under five general points.

Firstly, there were different approaches to strategy formation, but each of these successful businesses did have a distinct, 'thought through' approach to the formation of strategy, which the managers felt was in tune with their current business needs. There are, one might say, different routes to excellence, but there was in each instance, a route. There was little evidence of highly centralized, formal long term planning processes for human resources. The plans may have had some quantifiable elements, but the numbers to be employed were usually in outline only. The complex, long term manpower plans still described as good practice, seem largely a matter of the past. There were scenario planning exercises, but these were in the strategy formation stage. Succession planning, by contrast, was much more commonly undertaken.

Secondly, human resources were seen as a significant creator of success. This was because of the effect on the capacity to sustain operations, to compete, and because of cost pressures. In some organisations, the innovative, creative aspect of high quality people was also stressed. Perhaps there is an echo of Purcell's point here, in the emphasis placed upon managing current operations. This was not just because of short term financial pressures, but also because of the pace of change, which was recognised by these senior managers to warrant a major human resource response. "If we are to stay on top in our business we have to..." being a typical response in relation to important policy areas such as management education and development. Managing current operations was also a role for HR Directors whose role was a mixture of 'firefighting' - handling 'downsizing', creating new management teams, looking at the immediate consequences of acquisition and divestment decisions, and contributing to long term strategic thinking.

Thirdly, Human Resource Directors were contributory to the strategic thinking at Board level. This may not have always been in a formal way, but also included cases where they performed roles such as acting as a Counsellor to the CEO, providing team development skills for the top team and advice, policies on management development and succession planning, for example in subsidiary companies, or within Divisions. In some organisations informal employee relations policies were seen as a very important ingredient in the company's success (for example keeping the unions negotiating at business unit level, rather than with the centre).

Fourthly, there is no doubt that the complexities of structural relationships defy generalisation. Prescription about the place of human resources within the structure is not possible. One reason for this is because structures seem to be constantly changing. Moves from centralization to decentralization, from a simple command structure to a more divisional form, or changes to the existing formal reporting were typically in

process. Pressure from the recession in the UK and overseas, the need to organise on European lines, or to take account of a global strategic initiative were amongst the causes. Joint ventures, and various forms of collaboration brought to these companies a more fluid approach to organisation. Here too we may see a strong HR influence, through such new philosophies as empowerment, the formation of semi-autonomous work groups, franchise operations, sub-contract and outsourcing. The post-modernist organisation form encourages diversity, and this itself provides opportunities for Human Resource input to the strategic process.

And finally, this brings me to perhaps the most significant finding. The process of strategy formation gave to Human Resource Directors their major role in managing change. There was a recognition amongst senior managers of the saliency they should attach to managing the people part of any change. The process of gaining commitment for new ways of working, for total quality management, for new industrial relations, and above all, for being prepared to live in a constant state of change was seen as the biggest contribution human resource management could make. This was because flexibility and responsiveness to market conditions, in order to remain competitive at times of political, economic and social turbulence, were given the highest value.

Summary

Our research so far has indicated the significance of organisation structure and the dynamics of change into which any conceptual notions of human resources must be placed. What is, or is not a realistic role for HR Directors is entirely dependent on the issues as perceived by the dominant coalition. This brings HR Directors into the political arena, if they wish to influence strategy. It is in this way that the process issues become significant. But, success is not all dependent on process. The 'law of the situation' is ultimately a matter of products, services, technology and markets, as the recession has shown.

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TRADE UNION DENSITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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Introduction

Most national surveys of industrial relations, such as the Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (WIRS) have been conducted on a Great Britain basis so that previous large scale survey analysis of regional trade union density (Millward and Stevens, 1988) has been confined to the Great Britain regions and has ignored Northern Ireland. In any case, WIRS includes establishments with fewer than 25 employees, new establishments, and all establishments in agriculture and coal mining. As a result, previous studies of trade union membership in Northern Ireland (Black, 1986) have been based on trade union returns to the Registrar of Friendly Societies in Northern Ireland (there being no Certification Officer in Northern Ireland), together with locally conducted surveys of trade union officials.

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 1989, for the first time, included questions on trade union or staff association membership. The LFS is based on a large sample and covers the whole of the United Kingdom, with no major exclusions in the sample coverage. It is thus representative of all in employment. Detailed analysis of the results for Great Britain have been published in the *Employment Gazette* (Stevens and Wareing, 1990). The LFS provides a uniquely rich data source on trade union membership in Northern Ireland.

The British Social Attitudes Survey (BSAS) has asked questions about trade union membership since 1983, but it was only in 1989 that this survey was partially extended to cover Northern Ireland. The SAS supplements the LFS in that it uniquely provides information on trade union membership by religion.

This paper draws on both surveys to provide a composite picture of union membership among the employed workforce in Northern Ireland. The characteristics of trade union members are examined with regard to employment status, hours worked, sex, industry, occupation and religion.

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The Labour Force Survey

In general, the LFS results (Table 1) confirm the results found by Black (1986) that trade union membership density among employees in Northern Ireland is markedly higher than the Great Britain average. 49% of employees in employment were members of trade unions in Northern Ireland in 1989 compared to 39% in Great Britain. Correction for industrial structure makes no difference to this result.

Table 1: Union Density in the United Kingdom (1989 LFS)

	Great Britain		Northern Ireland	
	Number (thousands)	Density (per cent)	Number (thousands)	Density (per cent)
Male	11,862	44	262	51
Female	10,187	33	226	47
Non-manual	12,357	35	249	51
Manual	9,659	43	235	47
Manufacturing (2-4)	5,434	41	106	55
Non-manufacturing (0, 1, 5-9)	16,584	37	379	47
Full-time†	17,051	43	397	54
Part-time†	4,995	22	91	28
Size of workplace:				
Under 6 employees	2,407	11	170	25
6-24 employees	4,378	23		
25 or more employees	14,465	48	316	62
All employees**	22,049	39	488	49
Self-employed	3,425	9	87	*
All in employment††	25,962	34	595	42

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

† The definition of full-time and part-time is based on the respondent's own assessment, not on the number of hours usually worked.

** Includes those who did not provide information on one or more of the dimensions reported in the table.

†† Includes those on government employment and training programmes (see footnote to Table 2) and those who did not report their employment status.

Source: Stevens and Wareing (1990) Table 1.

Density was higher in Northern Ireland on every dimension: males, females; non-manual, manual; manufacturing, non-manufacturing; full-time, part-time; small workplaces and large workplaces. Also, density was uniformly high in Northern Ireland with males, females, non-manuals and manuals, workers in manufacturing and non-manufacturing all having a level of membership density of around 50%. Density only fell considerably below 50% among part-time workers and among employees in workplaces employing less than 25 employees.

Of all the standard regions of Great Britain, only the North has a higher overall density than Northern Ireland - 52% compared to 49%. Density in Northern Ireland is higher than in Wales (48%), Scotland (46%) and the North West (46%) and is much higher than the southernmost regions of Britain where density is closer to 30% (Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 10).

Higher density in Northern Ireland relative to Great Britain is particularly marked among female employees and among non-manual employees. The latter have a higher density in Northern Ireland than manual workers. Also remarkable, is the much higher level of unionisation in the Northern Ireland manufacturing sector - 55% density in Northern Ireland compared to 41% in Great Britain. This difference may have considerable implications for employment (Metcalf, 1988).

Trade union membership among the self employed in Northern Ireland at 10% was similar to the figure of 9% for Great Britain.

The LFS results suggest a rapid decline in trade union density between 1983 and 1989. Total trade union membership in Northern Ireland fell from 283,400 in 1983 (Black, 1986) to 247,169 in 1989. However the LFS results and results based on returns from trade unions are not strictly comparable because they are compiled in different ways. Thus Black's survey may exaggerate membership because it is compiled from trade union returns. Likewise, the LFS figure may underestimate membership because it excludes some union members who are unemployed or retired.

Table 2 details union density among the employed workforce by employment status, hours worked (full-time or part-time) and sex. While Northern Ireland male employees in full-time employment are more likely to be unionised than their Great Britain counterparts (53% to 45%) the big contrast is in the much higher proportion of Northern Ireland females in employment who are trade union members. 56% of full-time and 30% of part-time female employees are union members in Northern Ireland compared to only 40% and 23% respectively in Great Britain. In addition, a higher proportion of female employees work full-time in Northern Ireland (73% compared to 56% in GB) so that, overall, 46% of female employees are trade union members in Northern Ireland compared to 33% in Great Britain.

Table 2: Union density among the employed workforce in Northern Ireland and Great Britain: employment status, whether working full-time or part-time and by sex.

	Males		Females	
	Number in NI	Density (%)	Number in NI	Density (%)
Employees		NI GB		NI GB
All	132921	50 44	105843	46 33
Full-time†	131998	53 45	81329	56 40
Part-time†	923	9 12	24514	30 23
Self-employed				
All	7192	10 10	844	9 7
Full-time†	7192	10 10	844	7 9
Part-time†	0	0 11	0	0 5
On government employment and training programmes**	138	1 6	118	*
All in employment	140251	41 37	106918	46 30

* sample size too small for a reliable estimate

† The definition of full-time and part-time is based on the respondent's own assessment, not on the number of hours usually worked.

** Includes all those on the YTS, Employment Training, Community industry and the Voluntary Projects programme, together with those on government training schemes who said they did some paid work.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 2.

Density is much higher among part-time female employees than among part-time males in Northern Ireland, which is what one would expect given the different characteristics of the female part-time labour force in terms of age, marital status, labour force attachment and length of service with the same employer (Stevens and Wareing (1990); 406). Also, union density among full-time female employees is higher than among full-time men.

This finding that trade union membership is higher in Northern Ireland than in Great Britain for both males and females holds for virtually all age groups and all periods of service with current employer (Table 3). Although the age distributions of the female employees are similar in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, length of service with current employer tends to be longer, on average, in Northern Ireland, especially for females, perhaps reflecting the fact that more of them are in full-time employment. 52% of females have been with their current employer for 5 or more years in Northern Ireland compared to 38% in Great Britain. Since length of service with the same employer is associated with a greater propensity to union membership, we would expect this to have raised aggregate female density in Northern Ireland.

Table 3: Union density among employees in Northern Ireland and Great Britain by age and length of service by sex

Age	Males		Females			
	Employees in NI	Density(%) NI GB		Employees in NI	Density(%) NI GB	
16-19	3458	18	16	3510	25	15
20-24	13832	33	31	14454	40	28
25-29	20874	52	39	16740	54	36
30-34	19028	60	47	17155	60	35
35-39	15867	57	51	12530	55	33
40-44	16698	62	51	13272	51	36
45-49	15252	63	53	10318	43	38
50-54	12600	61	54	9060	48	40
55-59	7995	53	54	6497	48	38
60-64	6554	64	48	2189	34	28
65-69	496	28	13	118	8	x
70+	267	21	*	0	0	x
<i>Length of service with current employer</i>						
< 3 months	834	12	16	1105	14	10
3-5 months	2024	27	21	2465	25	14
6-11 months	5202	27	24	4875	27	19
1 year	7139	31	28	5933	27	23
1-2 years	23356	41	36	20452	41	32
5-9 years	26469	56	47	26258	53	43
10-19 years	45619	68	61	35031	66	53
20 years+	22145	72	64	7447	68	50
All employees†	132921	51	44	105843	47	33

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

† Includes those who did not state either age or length of service.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 4.

Union density is higher in Northern Ireland for both males and females in all broad occupational categories (Table 4). Among full-time females, density is very much higher in Northern Ireland in professional and related - science and clerical and related (Table 5). Perhaps of greater interest is the very high level of union organisation relative to Great Britain among female manual workers in Occupation Groups XI, XII and XIII, most of whom would be employed in a semi-skilled capacity in private sector manufacturing.

Table 4 : Union Density among employees: occupational status and sex

Broad Occupation	Males Number in NI	Density(%)		Females Number in NI	Density(%)	
		NI	GB		NI	GB
All non-manual	52938	51	37	74074	51	34
of which:						
Managerial and professional	34397	53	37	43147	75	49
Clerical and related	13300	58	45	27622	43	28
Other non-manual	5241	33	29	3305	15	13
All manual	78548	52	50	31624	40	31
of which:						
Craft & similar	36763	53	52	6633	56	38
General labourers	3251	60	56	145	*	*
Other manual	38534	50	48	24846	37	30
All employees†	132921	51	44	105843	47	33

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

† Includes those who did not state their occupation.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 6.

As noted earlier, union density among full-time females is higher than among full-time males in Northern Ireland. This in part reflects the different occupational structure of the full-time female workforce, 25% of whom are engaged in Occupation Group II, Professional and related - education in Northern Ireland. 90% of these full-time female teachers are in union membership as are 87% of their part-time colleagues. But in many other Occupation Groups, union density in Northern Ireland is higher among full-time females than among full-time men. In this respect Northern Ireland differs from Great Britain where female density is only higher among Professional and related in Education. This may, in part, reflect the greater relative importance of the public sector in Northern Ireland, but not entirely as the figures for Occupation Groups XI, XII and XIII demonstrate.

Table 6 shows trade union density by SIC 1980 Industry Division. Density in Northern Ireland follows the GB pattern. It is high in public services (much of Divisions 1, 7 and 9) and low in private services (Divisions 6 and 8), although the figure for Banking, Finance, etc, is considerably higher than the GB equivalent. Table 7 provides a more detailed breakdown of union density in non-manufacturing by broad occupation, size of workplace, whether working full-time or part-time and by sex. Only in the Construction industry and in Posts and Telegraphs is Northern Ireland density below the GB average.

Table 5: Union density among full-time employees in Northern Ireland and Great Britain by occupation and sex

	Occupation group	Employees All	Density (%)		Males Number in NI	Density(%)		Females Number in NI	Density(%)	
			NI	GB		NI	GB		NI	GB
I	Professional and related – management and administration	5404	37	27	3941	38	27	1463	40	27
II	Professional and related – education, etc.	54371	84	69	15003	84	72	32381	90	78
III	Literary artistic and sports	1100	51	35	1100	66	44	0	*	34
IV	Professional and related – science, etc.	9494	60	41	7973	59	42	1521	71	38
V	Management	7175	28	23	5988	29	24	1069	24	20
VI	Clerical and related	43400	47	33	15624	61	54	24220	50	32
VII	Selling	6391	18	14	3086	30	26	1065	10	16
VIII	Security etc.	4359	47	51	3781	49	53	303	70	49
IX	Catering, cleaning, etc	21983	33	28	4885	49	41	6970	40	36
X	Farming, fishing and related	1131	14	24	1131	18	29	234	*	*
XI	Processing etc. (excluding metal and electrical)	21518	51	45	13133	49	49	7113	44	54
XII	Processing etc. (metal and electrical)	27813	62	55	26463	62	56	1232	71	44
XIII	Painting, assembling, etc.	11086	72	46	5802	57	52	4413	73	44
XIV	Construction, mining etc. (not identified elsewhere)	3891	33	42	3891	34	43	0	0	*
XV	Transport	15487	54	50	15123	57	53	255	*	42
XVI	Miscellaneous	3901	64	56	3639	66	61	117	*	*
	All occupations	238764	49	39	131998	53	45	81329	56	40

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 6.

Table 6: Union density among employees by industry, sex and whether working full-time or part-time

Industry	Employees			Full-time males†			Full-time females†			All part-time†		
	All Number in NI	Density (%) NI GB		Number in NI	Density (%) NI GB		Number in NI	Density (%) NI GB		Number in NI	Density (%) NI GB	
0 Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1003	14	13	624	12	15	234	*	*	145	*	*
1 Energy and water supply	7141	87	76	6420	89	78	589	72	63	132	*	*
2 Extraction, minerals, etc. manufacturing metal	3948	36	48	3582	38	54	366	29	34	0	*	*
3 Metal goods engineering	22475	70	42	18514	71	46	3812	68	30	149	*	14
4 Other manufacturing industries	32113	52	38	18962	52	44	11116	53	33	2034	41	22
5 Construction	8646	28	30	8352	30	33	145	*	18	149	*	*
6 Distribution, hotels and repairs	17117	19	14	9054	24	17	4072	17	16	3991	7	11
7 Transport and communication	14289	66	62	12389	77	69	1740	39	46	160	17	28
8 Banking, finance, etc.	14123	40	25	7411	44	28	5910	43	27	802	16	13
9 Other services	116613	63	52	45393	69	61	53345	76	61	17875	37	34
All industries**	238764	49	39	131998	53	45	81329	56	40	25437	28	22

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

† The definition of full and part-time is based on the respondent's own assessment, not on the number of hours usually worked.

** Includes those who did not state the industrial activity of their employer.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 7.

Table 7: Union density in non-manufacturing by broad occupation, size of workplace and whether working full time or part-time

SIC classes	All non manufact- uring		Agriculture		Energy & water		Construction		Wholesale		Retail distribution		Hotels, catering, repairs		Transport	
	v		0		12-17		50		61-63		64-65		66-67		71-77	
	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB
All employees	47	38	14	13	89	71	28	30	37	16	16	15	18	11	58	52
Men	50	42	11	15	90	74	30	33	34	19	17	15	15	9	67	60
Women	46	33	19	*	76	60	*	13	21	9	15	15	21	11	*	26
Full-time†	53	44	11	15	88	72	29	32	31	17	16	18	23	12	60	55
Part-time†	27	23	17	*	*	*	11	*	15	*	16	12	10	9	0	*
Managerial and professional	66	45	*	*	62	61	35	22	8	7	7	14	37	10	30	40
Clerical and related	47	33	*	*	84	66	6	14	14	9	17	21	10	*	27	27
Other non-manual	23	21	*	*	*	*	*	*	20	*	16	12	30	*	23	*
Craft and similar	39	48	*	*	100	82	26	38	47	30	24	19	22	14	86	75
General labourers	63	55	*	*	84	*	32	*	63	*	*	*	0	*	0	*
Other manual	39	35	18	12	100	74	35	31	89	28	21	21	13	11	71	61
>25 employees	61	49	31	49	88	71	36	39	41	22	26	26	21	17	75	62
<25 employees	27	n/a	6	n/a	*	n/a	19	n/a	17	n/a	9	n/a	17	n/a	18	n/a
Base: all employees**	354210		7403		8054		5462		17192		51226		21296		12227	

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Table 7: Continued

SIC classes	Posts and telecom		Banking, finance, insurance		Business services		Public administration		Education		Medical services		Other services	
	79		81, 82		83-85		91		93		95		92, 94, 96-99	
	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB
All employees	78	82	58	45	28	12	69	58	67	61	78	61	39	35
Men	90	87	62	47	33	16	64	58	78	74	82	74	51	47
Women	52	68	55	43	23	9	73	58	61	55	77	59	34	29
Full-time†	79	85	62	47	32	14	70	60	82	77	83	72	51	45
Part-time†	39	52	34	32	*	5	40	44	22	36	68	47	24	22
Managerial and professional	52	72	64	41	30	12	77	59	86	72	90	73	53	44
Clerical and related	74	71	60	46	24	9	70	60	33	42	43	26	65	30
Other non-manual	*	*	*	63	16	*	64	56	*	*	0	*	0	*
Craft and similar	95	92	69	27	37	32	84	54	44	36	*	74	74	53
General labourers	0	*	0	27	*	*	85	*	0	*	0	*		72
Other manual	78	90	35	27	37	21	49	50	30	43	65	52	30	30
>25 employees	89	85	64	43	43	17	70	59	70	63	85	69	56	51
<25 employees	45	n/a	54	n/a	11	n/a	57	n/a	61	n/a	34	n/a	23	n/a
Base: all employees**	9340		13985		21636		59071		48193		38181		38256	

* Sample size too small for a reliable estimate.

† The definition of full and part-time is based on the respondent's own definition, not on the number of hours usually worked.

** Includes those who did not supply information on one or more dimensions of the table.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 8a.

Table 8: Union density in manufacturing by broad occupation, size of workplace, whether working full-time or part-time and sex

SIC classes	All manu- facturing		Metals, mineral products		Chemicals, manufactured fibres		Metal goods, mechanical engineering		Electrical and instru- ment engineering		Vehicles, transport equipment	
			21-24		25, 26		31, 32		33, 34, 37		35, 36	
	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB	NI	GB
All employees	61	41	25	55	56	38	43	39	63	29	84	63
Men	65	46	28	58	74	46	46	42	61	31	85	63
Women	54	29	0	41	*	23	31	26	67	25	80	37
Full-time†	56	43	26	57	67	40	44	41	63	30	86	64
Part-time†	38	19	*	*	0	*	*	*	0	18	*	*
Managerial and professional	46	25	0	29	*	26	24	23	40	16	9	44
Clerical and related	46	21	0	37	*	*	*	17	58	16	86	35
Other non-manual	23	14	0	*	*	*	45	*	*	*	*	*
Craft and similar	61	52	50	69	*	58	*	50	75	41	83	72
General labourers	54	53	*	*	0	*	61	52	*	*	68	*
Other manual	62	51	31	62	90	54	*	49	81	44	88	70
>25 employees	65	47	33	62	90	54	*	49	81	44	88	70
<25 employees	36	n/a	12	n/a	*	n/a	19	*	35	n/a	30	n/a
Base: all employees**	105707		8253		2817		7705		7684		16905	

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Table 8: Continued

SIC classes	Food, drink tobacco		Textiles		Leather, footwear, clothing		Timber, furniture, paper, printing		Rubber, plastics, other manufacturing	
	41, 42 NI	42 GB	43 NI	43 GB	44, 45 NI	45 GB	46, 47 NI	47 GB	48, 49 NI	49 GB
All employees	53	47	65	43	54	33	43	36	36	34
Men	52	51	59	46	56	32	45	42	42	42
Women	55	40	80	40	53	34	37	21	*	16
Full-time†	55	48	65	46	53	37	45	39	38	36
Part-time†	29	41	69	*	61	17	22	*	*	*
Managerial and professional	53	31	12	*	49	*	46	28	*	25
Clerical and related	45	30	56	*	59	*	25	20	*	*
Other non-manual	50	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Craft and similar	45	60	75	46	56	40	43	46	40	44
General labourers	75	*	*	*	0	*	0	*	0	*
Other manual	56	54	77	59	51	38	59	42	56	40
>25 employees	56	54	77	59	58	40	54	44	48	41
<25 employees	6	n/a	*	n/a	*	*	16	*	9	*
Base: all employees**	17700		10570		15126		14319		4628	

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

† The definition of full and part-time is based on the respondent's own definition, not on the number of hours usually worked.

** Includes those who did not provide information on one or more of the dimensions.

Sources: Labour Force Survey (NI) 1989, and Stevens and Wareing (1990), Table 8b.

In manufacturing, it is to be noted that while density is relatively low in Northern Ireland in Division 2, (Table 6) where there is little steel industry, density in Divisions 3 and 4 is well above the Great Britain average for both males and females. In Other Manufacturing (Division 4), density for full-time females is higher than for full-time males in Northern Ireland. Overall, density among employees in Northern Ireland manufacturing is much higher than in Great Britain - 61% compared to 41% (Table 8). Only in the Metals (steel) and mineral products industries is density in Northern Ireland below that in Great Britain.

The Social Attitudes Survey

The British Social Attitudes Survey, extended to Northern Ireland in 1989, gives us some indication of the trade union density by religion in Northern Ireland. While the number of employees in the SAS sample was very small, the results in the first column of Table 9 are sufficiently similar to those from the LFS in the last column of Table 1 for us to be reasonably confident of their reliability.

Table 9: Union density among employees in Northern Ireland: by religion, sex, broad occupational group and industrial sector

	All Employees Density %	Roman Catholic Density %	Protestant Density %	Not Available Density %
All employees	48	51	46	45
Males	46	52	43	43
Females	49	49	51	37
Non-manual	50	59	41	48
Manual	46	40	52	43
Manufacturing	49	48	57	43
Non-manufacturing	47	51	44	55
Number in sample	343	110	155	78

Source: Social Attitudes Survey (Northern Ireland) 1989

The results suggest that, of those employees who have divulged their religion, employees identifying themselves as Roman Catholic are somewhat more likely to be trade union members than those who identify themselves as Protestants. Those not divulging their religion are less likely to be trade union members.

Among female employees, trade union density is slightly higher among Protestants than among Roman Catholics. Density is considerably higher among Roman Catholic males than among Protestant males.

Trade union density among Protestant manual workers and among Protestants working in manufacturing is higher than among their Catholic equivalents. By contrast, density among Roman Catholic non-manual workers and among Catholics working in the non-manufacturing sector is higher than among their Protestant counterparts.

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