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Abstract

This paper uses linked data on over 1,500 workplaces and 20,000 individuals from the 1998 British Workplace Employee Relations Survey to analyze the relationship between labor unions and the availability of six employer-provided family-friendly policies. Although unions were negatively associated with the availability of work-at-home arrangements and flexible working hours options, they appear to have increased the availability of three other policies designed to help workers balance the demands of work and family: parental leave, special paid leave, and job-sharing options. They did so both by negotiating for additional benefits (monopoly and collective voice effects) and by providing workers with information about existing policies and assisting them in using those policies (facilitation effects).

*The authors acknowledge the Department of Trade and Industry, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service, and the Policy Studies Institute as the originators of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey data, and the Data Archive at the University of Essex as the distributor of the data. Karen Mumford also acknowledges with gratitude the hospitality she enjoyed at the Economics Program, RISS, Australian National University, where she was a visitor for part of the period of this paper's preparation.

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JOHN W. BUDD and KAREN MUMFORD*

This paper uses linked data on over 1,500 workplaces and 20,000 individuals from the 1998 British Workplace Employee Relations Survey to analyze the relationship between labor unions and the availability of six employer-provided family-friendly policies. Although unions were negatively associated with the availability of work-at-home arrangements and flexible working hours options, they appear to have increased the availability of three other policies designed to help workers balance the demands of work and family: parental leave, special paid leave, and job-sharing options. They did so both by negotiating for additional benefits (monopoly and collective voice effects) and by providing workers with information about existing policies and assisting them in using those policies (facilitation effects).

In the United States, Great Britain, and many other countries, work-family concerns are an important public policy issue, and trade unions have been suggested as a potential vehicle for improving the workplace provision of family-friendly policies. While unions can lobby for legislative changes and help employees exercise existing legal rights, the focal role of U.S. and British unions is to negotiate specific workplace terms and conditions of employment.

This paper uses the British Workplace Employee Relations Survey 1998 (WERS98) to examine how unions affect the availability of workplace family-friendly policies.

The research concentrating on unions and work-family concerns is not extensive. Cowell (1993) traced the development of organized labor's work-family agenda. Gerstel and Clawson (2001) documented diverse union leader views on a range of work-family issues and explored why some unions have been more successful than others in negotiating family-responsive benefits. Budd and Brey (2003) analyzed the impact of unions on the effectiveness of the U.S. Family and Medical Leave Act. Much of the remaining work on unions and work-life balance consists of advocacy and educa-

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Copies of the programs used to generate the results reported are available upon request from the first author at Industrial Relations Center, 3-300 Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0438. The 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey data set is available from the Data Archive at the University of Essex.

tional pieces such as Grundy, Bell, and Firestein (1999) and Schwartz (1996).

Several studies have analyzed the relationship between organizational characteristics and employer-provided family-friendly benefits. The results for unionization are mixed. In studies of U.S. organizations, Guthrie and Roth (1999) and Kelly and Dobbin (1999) found no statistically significant effects of labor unions on maternity leave programs; Deitch and Huffman (2001) and Osterman (1995) similarly found no relationship between unionization and a broader array of family-friendly benefits. In contrast, in a sample of pregnant women, Glass and Fujimoto (1995) concluded that union status is one of the strongest predictors of family-friendly benefits—though not always in a positive direction. Bardoel et al. (1999) found that unions are positively associated with leave options in Australia, but not other family-friendly policies such as flexible work options or child care. In none of this research, however, was unionism the focus of the analysis.

The present research uses the WERS98 to estimate the relationship between trade unions in Great Britain and the presence of six employer-provided family-friendly policies: parental leave, paid family leave, subsidized child care, flexible working time, working at home, and job sharing. Unlike the authors of previous empirical research, we are able to analyze both establishment and individual measures of family-friendly policies, and we are able to exploit information on the characteristics of more than 20,000 individual employees matched to information about their workplaces.

In addition to extending the important work-family balance literature, this research contributes to our understanding of what unions do. Freeman (1981), Freeman and Medoff (1984), and others documented two decades ago that individuals represented by a trade union were more likely than non-union workers to receive traditional fringe benefits such as health insurance and retirement plans. As employer-provided benefits become more diverse, it is imperative to empirically re-check the validity of that conclusion.

Family-Friendly Practices

An important influence on the design of work policies and benefits has traditionally been the norm of the “ideal” worker who works full-time and leaves unpaid household work to someone else (Williams 2000). Family-friendly corporate policies can be divided into two categories based on what weight, if any, they assign to that traditional norm (Bailyn 1993; Bailyn, Drago, and Kochan 2001).¹ One category provides services such as subsidized or on-site day care, sick-child care services, employee assistance programs, and on-site meal preparation to help employees fulfill the standards of the ideal worker. The other category is comprised of benefits that allow employees flexibility to deviate from the model of the ideal worker to better balance work and family concerns.

One major subcategory within this second group of family-friendly benefits is leave policies. In Great Britain, there is an explicit distinction between maternity leave (a woman taking leave to give birth and care for a newborn child), paternity leave (a father taking leave around the birth of a new child), and parental leave (leave for the purpose of taking care of a child). Starting in April 2003, all pregnant employees are entitled to 26 weeks of maternity leave paid at a statutory rate, and women who have completed six months of service with their employer are able to take an additional 26 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. Similar provisions apply to adoptive leave. Fathers with at least one year of service with their employer are entitled to two weeks of paternity leave, paid at a statutory rate. Moreover, male and female employees are entitled to 13 weeks of unpaid parental leave to be used over the first five years of the child’s life. In the United States, there is less of a distinction between the types of leaves, and under the Family

¹Case study examples of employer-sponsored family-friendly policies are described in Bureau of National Affairs (1986), Bravo (1995), and Bevan et al. (1999).

and Medical Leave Act, employers with more than 50 employees must provide employees with 12 weeks of unpaid family and medical leave, which includes the British concepts of maternity, paternity, and parental leaves, each year. Employers in both countries are able to offer more generous benefits, in both compensation and time allowed off, and these additional leave policies are an important category of employer-sponsored family-friendly policies.

Comprising a second subcategory of family-friendly policies that allow deviations from the ideal worker norm are policies that change the regular work schedule. One major example is job sharing initiatives in which (typically) two employees work part-time to share the responsibilities and total hours of one full-time position. Allowing workers to choose to work part-time in the absence of a formal job-sharing arrangement is another example. Other policies in this category are flexible working schedules in which workers have greater control over when they put in their hours each week at work.

Finally, in a third class of “norm-defying” family-friendly policies are those providing work site flexibility. Most prominent among these are policies that allow workers to telecommute and work at home.

A variety of important research issues emerge from these family-friendly policies. To what extent do employees use these policies, and do the policies accomplish what they are supposed to (Forth et al. 1997; Haley, Perry-Jenkins, and Armenia 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, and Lyness 1999; Waldfogel 1998)? Are employees willing to pay for them (Drago et al. 2001)? Should the policies be mandated as a matter of public interest (Heymann 2000)? Are they sufficient by themselves to reconcile the conflicts of increased demands at both work and home (Bailyn 1993)? Finally, under what circumstances are these policies commonly adopted (Bardoel et al. 1999; Deitch and Huffman 2001; Osterman 1995)? It is this last question, and in particular the role of labor unions, that is the focus of the remainder of this paper.

Monopoly, Voice, and Facilitation

The model of unionism developed in the seminal works by Freeman and Medoff (1979, 1984) is a very useful framework for analyzing the effects of labor unions on the employment relationship. In this model, unions have two “faces.” Viewed from one angle, they act as monopolies, wielding monopolistic power to negotiate compensation packages for union members above the level of competitive markets. From a second angle, they act as agents of collective voice and institutional response, conveying to employers the collective preferences of employees—including preferences with respect to compensation. This framework yields two predictions for the effect of unions on the provision of employee benefits (Freeman 1981; Freeman and Medoff 1979, 1984; Miller and Mulvey 1992).

First, unions can use their monopoly power, via collective bargaining, to increase the incidence and value of employer-provided benefits such as health insurance and retirement benefits. For example, a recent empirical investigation found that unionized employees were at least 15 percentage points more likely to be covered by employer-provided health insurance benefits than were comparable nonunion employees (Buchmueller, DiNardo, and Valletta 2002). This consideration leads us to expect a higher incidence of family-friendly benefits in unionized workplaces than in nonunion workplaces.

Second, through the collective voice mechanism, unions may re-arrange the total compensation package toward greater employee benefits and lower wages. In a nonunion workplace, textbook economic models imply that wages and benefits will reflect the preferences of the marginal worker, not the average worker. The presence of collective voice through a union in which outcomes are determined by majority voting changes the focus from the marginal to the average worker. Because average workers are generally older and less mobile than workers on the margin of joining or quitting the firm, they are more likely to prefer benefits. As such, we expect

unionized workplaces to have higher levels of benefits than nonunion workplaces, holding total compensation constant. With specific respect to family-friendly benefits, we expect that where the work force favors such benefits, unionized workplaces will have them at greater levels than do non-unionized workplaces. In particular, to the extent that family-friendly benefits are more highly valued by women than by men, unions are predicted to push for and achieve family-friendly benefits through their collective voice mechanism when the fraction of women in the workplace is high.

These two effects of unions have received the greatest attention in analyses of employee benefits. Both dimensions predict differences between nonunion workplaces (or workers) and unionized workplaces (or workers) in the level of employee benefits. But in addition to winning benefits for workers by exercising monopoly-based bargaining power or promoting, through collective voice, the preferences of the average worker rather than the marginal worker, labor unions can facilitate workers' knowledge and use of existing benefits. For example, unions can provide information to employees about benefit plans through union newsletters and other communication channels. Workshops, training sessions, and representation by shop stewards can help workers use existing benefit programs.

The strongest evidence to date on facilitation is in the context of publicly provided benefits (Weil 1996). Budd and Brey (2003) found that among hourly employees, those who are unionized are statistically significantly more likely than others to have heard about the Family and Medical Leave Act. Hirsch, Macpherson, and DuMond (1997) attributed greater levels of workers' compensation receipt among unionized workers, compared to similar nonunion individuals, at least partially to union-provided information on workers' compensation systems and to union-provided help in pursuing workers' compensation claims. Similarly, hourly unionized workers are more likely to receive unemployment insurance benefits than are comparable nonunion

individuals. Budd and McCall (1997) concluded that this difference stems from the "rights-facilitating effects" of labor unions—providing information about unemployment insurance programs and providing representation if there are disputes.

Thus, an analysis of how labor unions affect workers' benefits can focus on (1) a monopoly effect, (2) a collective voice effect, and (3) a facilitation effect. Through the monopoly effect, unionized employees should have greater levels of employee benefits, including family-friendly benefits, than nonunion employees, because of greater bargaining power; through the collective voice effect, they should have more family-friendly benefits, if these benefits are desired more by the average worker than the marginal worker (in other words, the incidence of these benefits should reflect the demographic characteristics of the union members in each workplace); and through the facilitation effect, when benefits are equally available to unionized and nonunion workers, unionized individuals should be found more likely to report having a specific benefit, because of a greater awareness of the benefit plans. These three hypothesized effects guide the empirical analyses below, but note that the monopoly and collective voice effects pertain to the availability of benefits while the facilitation effect pertains to individual awareness. Future research should similarly distinguish between availability and awareness of employee benefits.

WERS98: Data and Empirical Specification

The data used in this study are drawn from the British Workplace Employee Relations Survey 1998 (WERS98) (Department of Trade and Industry 1999).² WERS98 is a

²WERS98 is the fourth in an ongoing series of surveys and follows the 1980, 1984, and 1990 Workplace Industrial Relations Surveys. WERS98 is the first to include questions pertaining to family-friendly practices. For additional details on WERS98, see Cully et al. (1999) and Forth and Kirby (2000).

nationally representative survey of workplaces with 10 or more employees containing a vast amount of information on diverse aspects of human resources and industrial relations. Face-to-face interviews for WERS98 were conducted with a manager (with day-to-day responsibility for employee relations) at 2,191 workplaces between October 1997 and June 1998. Furthermore, at each of 1,880 of these workplaces, a questionnaire was presented to 25 randomly selected employees (in workplaces with more than 25 employees) or to all the employees (in workplaces with fewer than 26 employees), resulting in over 28,000 completed employee questionnaires. Lastly, interviews were conducted with a worker representative—either the senior lay representative of the recognized union with the most members or the senior employee representative of a joint consultative committee—in 947 workplaces. The response rates were 80% for the face-to-face management and worker representative interviews and nearly 65% for the employee questionnaire. WERS98 is a stratified random sample, and larger workplaces and some industries are over-represented. Thus, all of the empirical results that follow use workplace and employee sampling weights. Brief variable definitions and sample statistics are presented in Table 1.

WERS98 and its predecessors have been used to analyze diverse research questions (Millward et al. 2001), but we are not aware of any research using these data to examine unions and family-friendly work practices. The management questionnaire asked whether any non-managerial employees are entitled to parental leave, are allowed to work at or from home in normal working hours, can participate in job sharing schemes, or have access to a workplace nursery or help with the cost of child care.³ For each of these four categories, we created a variable indicating whether or not the manager said the benefit was available

in that workplace. Additionally, the questionnaire asked, “If an employee needed to take a day off at short notice, for example if they had a problem with child care or if their child is sick, how would they generally take this time off?” From the responses, we constructed a variable indicating whether employees could generally use special paid leave in these situations.⁴ These five indicator variables—parental leave, special paid leave, child care subsidy, working at home, and job sharing—are the workplace-level dependent variables of interest.

The employee questionnaire asked questions similar to those in the management questionnaire. One item asked for an indication of which, if any, of five arrangements—flexible working hours, job sharing, parental leave, working at or from home in normal working hours, and workplace nursery or help with the cost of child care—would be available in the respondent’s workplace if the respondent “personally needed” them. Also asked was, “If you needed to take a day off work at short notice, for example to look after a sick family member, how would you usually do it?” From the responses to these two questions we constructed dichotomous variables indicating whether the employee believed he or she had access to, or would be allowed to use, parental leave, paid leave, a child care subsidy, flexible hours, working at home, and job sharing. These six variables are the employee-level dependent variables of interest.⁵

Retaining only those individuals who have complete information for the variables used in the analyses below leaves 22,674 individuals from 1,924 workplaces. Managers’ interview responses indicate that of these 1,924 workplaces, 34.4% have parental leave available, 24.3% have special paid leave,

³While unpaid parental leave is now required in Great Britain, it was a voluntary employer option at the time of the WERS98 survey.

⁴Fewer than 1% of the managers and fewer than 3% of the employees responded that time could not be taken off, so we focus on whether or not paid leave is available.

⁵There are six employee-level and five workplace-level dependent variables because the management interview did not ask about flexible working hours.

Table 1. British Workplace Employee Relations Survey Samples, 1998: Weighted Descriptive Statistics.

| Variable | <i>Workplace-Level Data</i> | | <i>Individual-Level Data</i> | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | <i>Sample Mean</i> (1) | <i>Standard Deviation</i> (2) | <i>Sample Mean</i> (3) | <i>Standard Deviation</i> (4) |
| <i>Management Responses (Workplace-Level)</i> | | | | |
| Parental Leave Available | 0.344 | 0.495 | 0.423 | 0.496 |
| Special Paid Family Leave Available | 0.243 | 0.438 | 0.243 | 0.446 |
| Workplace Nursery or Child Care Subsidy Available | 0.061 | 0.324 | 0.117 | 0.330 |
| Working at Home Available | 0.128 | 0.377 | 0.176 | 0.388 |
| Job Sharing Available | 0.280 | 0.485 | 0.378 | 0.492 |
| <i>Individual Responses</i> | | | | |
| Parental Leave Available | n/a | n/a | 0.267 | 0.449 |
| Paid Family Leave on Short Notice | n/a | n/a | 0.451 | 0.500 |
| Workplace Nursery or Child Care Subsidy Available | n/a | n/a | 0.036 | 0.186 |
| Flexible Working Hours Available | n/a | n/a | 0.314 | 0.471 |
| Working at Home Available | n/a | n/a | 0.091 | 0.315 |
| Job Sharing Available | n/a | n/a | 0.149 | 0.379 |
| <i>Workplace Variables (Management Interview)</i> | | | | |
| Recognized Unions Present | 0.390 | 0.495 | 0.602 | 0.485 |
| At Least 500 Employees | 0.010 | 0.318 | 0.207 | 0.325 |
| Establishment Age (years) | 32.196 | 46.219 | 38.284 | 42.927 |
| Firm Has Multiple U.K. Work Sites | 0.676 | 0.416 | 0.751 | 0.408 |
| Public Sector Organization | 0.250 | 0.460 | 0.290 | 0.473 |
| Proportion Female Employees | 0.543 | 0.286 | 0.483 | 0.285 |
| Proportion Part-time Employees | 0.321 | 0.282 | 0.258 | 0.261 |
| Proportion Youth Employees | 0.081 | 0.117 | 0.060 | 0.100 |
| Proportion Older Employees | 0.150 | 0.114 | 0.161 | 0.113 |
| Proportion Non-White Employees | 0.042 | 0.105 | 0.041 | 0.089 |
| Human Resources Employee at the Work Site | 0.177 | 0.492 | 0.461 | 0.495 |
| Proportion in Formal Teams | 0.604 | 0.374 | 0.699 | 0.357 |
| Proportion in Quality Circles | 0.179 | 0.319 | 0.217 | 0.321 |
| At Least Two Occupations with Difficulty Filling Vacancies | 0.116 | 0.368 | 0.181 | 0.359 |
| Fraction of Employees—Operative and Assembly | 0.080 | 0.234 | 0.139 | 0.231 |
| Fraction of Employees—Unskilled Occupations | 0.120 | 0.222 | 0.120 | 0.197 |
| <i>Individual-Level Variables (Employee Questionnaire)</i> | | | | |
| Union Member in a Recognized Workplace | n/a | n/a | 0.362 | 0.485 |
| Age Midpoints of 7 Categories | n/a | n/a | 39.408 | 11.328 |
| Female | n/a | n/a | 0.482 | 0.500 |
| Living with a Spouse or Partner | n/a | n/a | 0.697 | 0.459 |
| Any Children Ages 0–4 | n/a | n/a | 0.142 | 0.347 |
| Any Children Ages 5–11 | n/a | n/a | 0.197 | 0.395 |
| Any Children Ages 12–18 | n/a | n/a | 0.201 | 0.400 |
| Non-White | n/a | n/a | 0.037 | 0.190 |
| <i>Education (O Level is omitted category)</i> | | | | |
| CSE or Equivalent | n/a | n/a | 0.124 | 0.313 |
| A Level or Equivalent | n/a | n/a | 0.147 | 0.366 |
| Degree or Equivalent | n/a | n/a | 0.156 | 0.392 |
| Postgraduate Degree or Equivalent | n/a | n/a | 0.052 | 0.247 |
| Education Other Level | n/a | n/a | 0.257 | 0.411 |
| Recognized Vocational Qualifications | n/a | n/a | 0.379 | 0.485 |
| Part-Time | n/a | n/a | 0.247 | 0.391 |
| Fixed Term Contract | n/a | n/a | 0.030 | 0.174 |
| Temporary Position | n/a | n/a | 0.042 | 0.189 |
| Days of Training in Last Year | n/a | n/a | 2.462 | 3.236 |
| Sample Size | 1,924 | | 22,674 | |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey 1998.

Note: The sample mean is weighted using workplace or individual sampling weights.

6.1% have subsidized child care, 12.8% have working at home options, and 28% have job sharing. With the exception of special paid leave (specification of which is complicated by important wording differences between the two questionnaires), the employees' responses uniformly indicate a lower level of availability of these benefits. Assuming that the managers are not intentionally or unintentionally overstating benefits availability, this discrepancy may reflect uneven coverage of family-friendly policies within workplaces or a distinction between availability and awareness. We return to this issue later in the paper.

Both the management and employee questionnaires also include information on unionization. At the workplace level, the management interview asked about the number of union members and recognized unions in the workplace. From responses to these questions, we construct a workplace union recognition variable indicating whether there is a recognized union in the workplace. Of the workplaces in our sample, 39% (associated with 60.2% of the employees) have at least one recognized union. In the employee questionnaire, individuals were asked whether they belong to a trade union (or staff association). In our (weighted) sample, 36.2% are identified as union members in workplaces with at least one recognized union. Unfortunately, the questions do not allow us to determine whether there is a recognized union that bargains for each specific individual employee in the survey.

To explore the relationship between the six family-friendly practices and unionization, we estimate a probit model for each dependent variable at either the workplace or employee level. Probit models are used because each dependent variable is a dichotomous indicator variable, so an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is inappropriate.⁶ To control for other observable

differences across individuals and workplaces that may be related to the presence of family-friendly policies, we also include a variety of control variables. These variables were selected to capture factors identified as potentially important by previously published leading theories on the subject.

The leading theories are of three types. First, economic theory suggests that firms will introduce family-friendly policies if they increase profits, whether by increasing productivity or lowering the costs of turnover and absenteeism (Glass and Fujimoto 1995). Empirically, this implies that demographic controls are important because different groups of workers will have varying levels of demand for such policies. This theory also suggests that labor market tightness will be important: when labor markets are tight, employers might need to offer additional benefits to attract and retain employees.

Second, internal labor market explanations of employer-provided benefits emphasize employers' need to develop employee commitment (Osterman 1995). Empirically, this type of explanation implies that measures of internal labor markets and high commitment work systems, such as the presence of training, work teams, and quality circles, will be important.

Third, institutional theories emphasize that organizations respond not only to economic factors, but also to the institutional environment, including pressures for conformity or mimicry (Guthrie and Roth 1999; Kelly and Dobbin 1999). Firm size and public sector status are important control variables in this theory (Wood, de Menezes, and Lasiosa 2003). Complete sets of dummy variables to control for differences across industries, regions, and—in the employee-level models—occupations are also included.

Lastly, the probit models are weighted using workplace or individual sampling weights. The standard errors account for the stratified sampling procedure of workplaces and the clustered sampling procedure of individuals within workplaces.

⁶The well-known problems with OLS estimation with dichotomous dependent variables include heteroskedasticity and the failure to constrain predicted probabilities between 0 and 1.

Table 2. Probit Analyses of Family-Friendly Policies
in Great Britain, 1998 (Selected Coefficients): Workplace Provision.

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Parental Leave (1)</i> | <i>Paid Family Leave (2)</i> | <i>Child Care (3)</i> | <i>Work at Home (4)</i> | <i>Job Sharing (5)</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Recognized Union(s) in Workplace | 0.530** (0.154) [0.191] | 0.445** (0.162) [0.127] | 0.357* (0.213) [0.023] | -0.085 (0.165) [-0.012] | 0.385** (0.161) [0.110] |
| At Least 500 Employees | -0.214 (0.160) [-0.072] | -0.168 (0.178) [-0.043] | 0.747** (0.176) [0.088] | 0.113 (0.166) [0.018] | 0.356** (0.170) [0.112] |
| Public Sector | 0.400** (0.205) [0.147] | 0.344 (0.205) [0.101] | 0.046 (0.283) [0.003] | 0.402* (0.213) [0.067] | 0.942** (0.247) [0.303] |
| Workplace Proportion Female | 0.183 (0.297) [0.065] | -0.357 (0.317) [-0.098] | 1.369** (0.404) [0.081] | 0.821 ** (0.320) [0.119] | 0.989** (0.309) [0.274] |
| Workplace Proportion Part-Time | 0.381 (0.286) [0.135] | -0.591* (0.331) [-0.162] | -1.123** (0.397) [-0.067] | -1.430** (0.341) [-0.207] | -0.316 (0.296) [-0.087] |
| Workplace Proportion Older Workers | -1.222** (0.507) [-0.433] | -0.326 (0.509) [-0.089] | -1.472* (0.778) [-0.088] | -0.624 (0.674) [-0.090] | -1.036** (0.533) [-0.287] |
| Workplace Proportion Non-White | -0.004 (0.568) [-0.001] | -1.667** (0.642) [-0.457] | 0.644 (0.546) [0.038] | 0.078 (0.892) [0.011] | 1.032 (0.867) [0.286] |
| Workplace Has a Human Resources Employee | 0.500** (0.131) [0.187] | 0.214 (0.139) [0.062] | 0.582** (0.169) [0.051] | 0.523** (0.135) [0.096] | 0.689** (0.134) [0.222] |
| Other Workplace-Level Controls from Table 1 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Industry (11) | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes | Yes** |
| Region (10) | Yes | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey, 1998.

Notes: The sample size is 1,924. Each entry contains the probit coefficient, standard error (in parentheses), and marginal effect [in brackets] from a probit model weighted by sampling weights. The standard errors account for the stratification in the sampling procedure.

**Statistically significant at the 0.05 level; *at the 0.10 level (industry and region tests are joint tests).

Workplace Availability Results

To first investigate the overall effects of labor unions on the availability of family-friendly policies in Great Britain, we estimate workplace-level probit models for each of the five family-friendly policies, using managers' interview responses to indicate the workplace availability of these policies. Reported in Table 2 are the probit coefficients, which reflect sampling weights; standard errors (in parentheses), which account

for stratification in the sampling procedure; and estimated marginal effects (in brackets). Note that these models control for establishment characteristics such as size, age, public/private sector, and industry; workplace demographics such as fraction female, fraction part-time, and fraction older workers; human resources dimensions such as the presence of a human resources representative and the proportion of workers in teams; and labor market tightness, as indicated by region effects

(which will control for regional labor market conditions such as the unemployment rate) and the degree of difficulty filling vacancies.⁷

Controlling for these characteristics, workplaces with at least one recognized union are statistically significantly more likely than other workplaces to have parental leave policies, special paid family leave, child care facilities or subsidies, and job sharing arrangements. The union effect in the child care model is statistically significant only at the 10% level (p -value = 0.095), but the other three estimates are very precisely estimated—the p -value is 0.001 for the parental leave model, 0.006 for the special paid leave model, and 0.017 for the job sharing model. Moreover, relative to the sample mean incidence of these family-friendly policies, the estimated difference between workplaces with and without recognized unions is large. For parental leave policies, the sample mean is 34.4% and the presence of recognized unions is predicted to increase the probability of having this policy by 19.1 percentage points, which translates into a 55% increase. The corresponding percentage increase for special paid leave is 52%; for child care, 38%; and for job sharing, 39%.

The reported marginal effects are calculated using the standard algorithm: all of the variables are set to their sample mean values, and the marginal effects for continuous independent variables are calculated as the change in probability for a small change in the variable while the marginal effects for dummy variables are calculated as the change in probability associated with changing the dummy variable from zero to one. However, the union results are robust with respect to an alternative specification in which the marginal effect is calculated for each observation and then averaged. The marginal effect at the average and the average effect at the margin, respectively, are as follows for the

union recognition variable for each model: parental leave (0.191, 0.170), special paid leave (0.127, 0.117), child care (0.023, 0.035), work at home (−0.012, −0.014), and job sharing (0.110, 0.091).

The results in Table 2 reveal that in Britain, workplaces with at least one recognized labor union are statistically significantly more likely than non-union workplaces to have four family-friendly policies: parental leave, special paid leave, child care (at the 10% significance level), and job sharing.⁸ These estimates control for a wide range of establishment and work force characteristics. To try to decompose these results into monopoly and collective voice effects of unions, for the same five workplace-level dependent variables we ran probit models in which the samples were restricted to workplaces with at least one recognized union. Table 3 presents the results of that estimation.⁹

Because Table 3 is restricted to workplaces with at least one recognized union, the sample size is reduced to 770. Moreover, we supplement the models with four additional independent variables from the management and worker representative questionnaires: workplace union density, and indicator variables for whether the employer deducts dues from employee pay, whether the largest union in the workplace has meetings at least every three months, and whether the largest union in the workplace uses newsletters or e-mail to communicate with members. The first two variables are intended to proxy union bargaining power and therefore capture the mo-

⁸The statistically insignificant union estimate in the work at home model could stem from any of several causes. Two possibilities are a lack of union success in bargaining for this policy or a lack of demand for this option among union members.

⁹The traditional strategy for distinguishing between the monopoly and voice effects on employee benefits is to estimate models holding total compensation constant (Freeman and Medoff 1984). The WERS98 data, however, lack measures of total compensation.

⁷Due to space constraints, the complete results are not presented. They are available upon request.

Table 3. Probit Analyses of Family-Friendly Policies in Unionized Workplaces.

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Parental Leave (1)</i> | <i>Paid Family Leave (2)</i> | <i>Child Care (3)</i> | <i>Work at Home (4)</i> | <i>Job Sharing (5)</i> |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Union Coverage Density | 0.668** (0.268) [0.254] | 0.542** (0.252) [0.203] | 0.315 (0.336) [0.026] | -0.296 (0.287) [-0.047] | 0.118 (0.289) [0.048] |
| Employer Deducts Dues | 0.001 (0.254) [-0.000] | 0.102 (0.265) [0.038] | -0.210 (0.301) [-0.019] | 0.085 (0.274) [0.013] | -0.119 (0.271) [-0.045] |
| Union Meetings at Least Every 3 Months | -0.078 (0.170) [-0.030] | -0.110 (0.184) [-0.041] | -0.056 (0.213) [-0.004] | 0.096 (0.216) [0.016] | 0.355* (0.189) [0.132] |
| Union Uses Newsletters or E-Mail to Communicate with Members | 0.250 (0.171) [0.095] | 0.104 (0.171) [0.039] | 0.415** (0.202) [0.033] | 0.355* (0.192) [0.055] | 0.365* (0.203) [0.140] |
| At Least 500 Employees | -0.119 (0.193) [-0.046] | -0.313 (0.217) [-0.110] | 0.609** (0.207) [0.080] | 0.345 (0.226) [0.067] | 0.185 (0.228) [0.069] |
| Establishment Age (years) | 1.126 (1.792) [0.428] | -3.483** (1.762) [-1.306] | -1.709 (1.504) [-0.139] | -1.637 (1.598) [-0.258] | -0.037 (1.793) [-0.014] |
| Firm Has Multiple Work Sites | 0.0003 (0.243) [0.0001] | 0.046 (0.231) [0.017] | -0.814** (0.281) [-0.119] | -0.617** (0.290) [-0.135] | 0.158 (0.287) [0.062] |
| Public Sector | 0.888** (0.280) [0.340] | 0.659** (0.278) [0.232] | 0.027 (0.276) [0.002] | 0.223 (0.329) [0.033] | 1.468** (0.308) [0.537] |
| Workplace Proportion Female | 0.349 (0.481) [0.133] | -0.818* (0.478) [-0.307] | 1.477** (0.521) [0.120] | 1.423** (0.442) [0.224] | 2.124** (0.535) [0.817] |
| Workplace Proportion Part-Time | -0.213 (0.504) [-0.081] | -0.389 (0.519) [-0.146] | -0.414 (0.492) [-0.034] | -1.420** (0.566) [-0.224] | -0.831 (0.519) [-0.320] |
| Workplace Proportion Youth | 1.156 (1.312) [0.439] | 2.637** (1.282) [0.989] | -8.428** (2.973) [-0.684] | -0.088 (1.211) [-0.014] | -2.639 (1.731) [-1.015] |

Continued

nopoly effect. The second two are intended to proxy union responsiveness to membership concerns and therefore capture the collective voice effect. Recall further that the collective voice effect predicts a responsiveness to the demographic characteristics of union members.

The pattern of results in Table 3 supports a monopoly effect of unions on family-friendly policies for parental leave and paid family leave and a collective voice effect for the other three policies: child care, work at home, and job sharing. Workplaces with a higher fraction of union-rep-

resented workers—and therefore presumably greater bargaining leverage—are statistically significantly more likely to have parental leave and paid family leave available to at least some employees. Workplace union density, however, is not related to the incidence of the other three family-friendly policies. In contrast, workplaces in which the union communicates with its members via newsletters or e-mail are more likely to have child care, work at home, and job sharing policies, at least at the 10% significance level. Moreover, workplaces with a higher proportion of female employ-

Table 3. Continued.

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Parental Leave (1)</i> | <i>Paid Family Leave (2)</i> | <i>Child Care (3)</i> | <i>Work at Home (4)</i> | <i>Job Sharing (5)</i> |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Workplace Proportion Older Workers | -1.183 (0.804) [-0.449] | 1.845** (0.881) [0.692] | -0.953 (0.785) [-0.077] | -3.495** (0.988) [-0.551] | -0.732 (0.935) [-0.282] |
| Workplace Proportion Non-White | 1.737* (1.001) [0.660] | -0.684 (0.848) [-0.257] | -0.467 (0.930) [-0.038] | 1.689 (1.212) [0.266] | 2.255** (0.646) [0.868] |
| Workplace Has a Human Resources Employee | 0.269 (0.168) [0.100] | 0.068 (0.184) [0.026] | 0.338 (0.216) [0.031] | 0.149 (0.216) [0.024] | 1.001** (0.210) [0.345] |
| Workplace Proportion in Teams | -0.107 (0.230) [-0.041] | 0.352 (0.245) [0.132] | 0.715** (0.295) [0.058] | -0.118 (0.295) [-0.019] | -0.111 (0.282) [-0.043] |
| Workplace Proportion in Quality Circles | 0.606** (0.231) [0.230] | 0.596** (0.251) [0.223] | 0.170 (0.243) [0.014] | 0.154 (0.278) [0.024] | 0.620** (0.275) [0.239] |
| Difficulty Filling Vacancies in at Least Two Occupations | -0.623** (0.203) [-0.244] | 0.150 (0.236) [0.057] | 0.142 (0.227) [0.013] | -0.270 (0.274) [-0.036] | -0.279 (0.252) [-0.110] |
| Operative and Assembly Employees (fraction) | 0.296 (0.440) [0.113] | -1.025** (0.396) [-0.384] | 0.032 (0.518) [0.003] | -0.446 (0.466) [-0.070] | -0.794 (0.495) [-0.306] |
| Unskilled Employees (fraction) | -0.327 (0.409) [-0.124] | -0.725 (0.446) [-0.272] | -0.041 (0.615) [-0.003] | -1.467** (0.735) [-0.231] | -0.427 (0.440) [-0.164] |
| Industry (10) | Yes | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** |
| Region (9) | Yes | Yes* | Yes** | Yes** | Yes |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey, 1998.

Notes: The sample size is 770. Each entry contains the probit coefficient, standard error (in parentheses), and marginal effect [in brackets] from a probit model weighted by sampling weights. The standard errors account for the stratification in the sampling procedure.

**Statistically significant at the 0.05 level; *at the 0.10 level (industry and region tests are joint tests).

ees are also more likely to have these three family-friendly policies.¹⁰

The split between parental leave and paid leave, on the one hand, and child care, work at home, and job sharing arrangements, on the other, is consistent with the nature of these benefits. Parental leave and paid leave involve time away from work.

Employers likely perceive these benefits as costly, similar to traditional benefits such as vacations or sick leave, and the provision of these benefits is therefore a distributive bargaining item. Unions with higher bargaining leverage are able to win these benefits more readily than other unions. In contrast, the other three family-friendly policies—child care, work at home, and job sharing arrangements—do not involve lost working time and might be seen as more of an integrative, win-win situation. As such, unions use their collective voice to articulate the case for such benefits, rather than their bargaining power to extract them.

¹⁰The proportion female coefficient in the paid leave model is negative and statistically significant at the 10% level. This is also consistent with a monopoly effect for paid leave if higher concentrations of women reduce bargaining leverage.

Individual Awareness Results

The workplace-level estimates from Tables 2 and 3 reveal that unionized workplaces are more likely than nonunion workplaces to have family-friendly policies and that this increased availability is consistent with a combination of monopoly and collective voice effects. The third way unions can affect the provision of family-friendly policies is by facilitating employee awareness of existing policies. To analyze this dimension, we turn to the individual-level data in which the dependent variables of interest are the individual responses to the questions regarding the availability of family-friendly policies. While we treat the workplace-level responses as indicating the availability/existence of the policies, the individual responses reflect individual awareness.

The probit results for individual awareness of six family-friendly policies are reported in Table 4.¹¹ The probit models are weighted using individual sampling weights, and the standard errors account for both the stratified sampling of workplaces and the clustered sampling of individuals within workplaces. Though only selected results are reported in Table 4, the independent variables include the workplace-level control variables from Table 2 and the individual-level control variables listed in Table 1, such as age and education, plus occupation effects.¹² Consistent with the common belief that family-friendly policies are of particular concern to women (Williams 2000), the only variable that is statistically significant in all six models is the individual respondent's gender.¹³

Union members in workplaces with recognized unions are estimated to be six percentage points (the marginal effect reported in Table 4) more likely than other employees to report that parental leave is available, *ceteris paribus*. This estimate is statistically significant at conventional levels (p-value < 0.01), and relative to the sample mean of the dependent variable of 26.7%, it implies an increase of 22% in the awareness of parental leave. Turning to the other policies, there is also a statistically significant positive association between union membership in a recognized workplace and the reported awareness of paid family leave and job sharing arrangements. In fact, union membership increases the likelihood of reporting perceived availability of paid family leave by 8% (p-value = 0.028) and of job sharing arrangements by 20% (p-value < 0.01). In contrast, union members in recognized workplaces are significantly less likely to indicate the availability of flexible working hours (p-value = 0.058) and work at home options (p-value < 0.01).

Overall, these individual-level results suggest that trade unions do have a significant positive relationship with individual awareness of the availability of some family-friendly policies, especially parental leave, paid leave, and job sharing, but they are negatively associated with perceptions about the ability to work at home and to have a flexible work schedule. These relationships may reflect a union effect on the availability and awareness of family-friendly policies. Alternatively, they may stem from reverse causality, whereby individuals with specific preferences for family-friendly benefits choose to be union members or work in a unionized workplace. If these preferences are based on unobservable characteristics not controlled for in Table 4, then union status is endogenous. This would further imply that the estimates in Table 4

¹¹Recall that unlike the management interview, the individual questionnaire includes flexible work hours as a possible response to the question on the availability of family-friendly policies. Table 4 therefore includes one more dependent variable than Tables 2 and 3.

¹²Due to space constraints, the complete results are not presented. They are available upon request.

¹³The coefficient for the female indicator variable is negative in two cases, but because the dependent variables in Table 4 measure individual perceptions,

it is not clear that a negative estimate is anomalous or puzzling. Rather, these results underscore the marked differences between men's and women's views of family-friendly policies.

Table 4. Probit Analyses of Family-Friendly Policies
in Great Britain, 1998 (Selected Coefficients): Individual Perceptions.

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Parental Leave (1)</i> | <i>Paid Family Leave (2)</i> | <i>Child Care (3)</i> | <i>Flexible Hours (4)</i> | <i>Work at Home (5)</i> | <i>Job Sharing (6)</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Union Member in a Recognized Workplace | 0.186** (0.033) [0.060] | 0.090** (0.041) [0.035] | 0.088 (0.058) [0.004] | -0.070* (0.037) [-0.024] | -0.236** (0.051) [-0.019] | 0.154** (0.039) [0.030] |
| Female | 0.251** (0.033) [0.080] | -0.090** (0.031) [-0.035] | 0.186** (0.056) [0.008] | 0.081** (0.035) [0.028] | -0.153** (0.044) [-0.013] | 0.237** (0.044) [0.045] |
| Any Children Ages 0-4 | 0.241** (0.051) [0.080] | -0.030 (0.049) [-0.012] | 0.373** (0.070) [0.020] | 0.006 (0.036) [0.002] | 0.103* (0.053) [0.009] | 0.119** (0.045) [0.023] |
| Non-White | -0.232** (0.074) [-0.068] | -0.044 (0.070) [-0.017] | -0.319** (0.136) [-0.010] | 0.119 (0.083) [0.043] | -0.109 (0.109) [-0.008] | 0.024 (0.103) [0.005] |
| Part-Time | -0.118** (0.037) [-0.036] | -0.324** (0.041) [-0.125] | 0.005 (0.067) [0.0002] | 0.200** (0.037) [0.071] | 0.003 (0.070) [0.0002] | 0.157** (0.045) [0.031] |
| Fixed Term | -0.145** (0.067) [-0.044] | -0.303** (0.082) [-0.115] | -0.060 (0.114) [-0.002] | -0.058 (0.072) [-0.020] | 0.040 (0.092) [0.003] | -0.159** (0.071) [-0.027] |
| Temporary | -0.175** (0.071) [-0.052] | -0.532** (0.079) [-0.193] | -0.085 (0.119) [-0.003] | 0.208** (0.062) [0.076] | -0.045 (0.157) [-0.004] | 0.107 (0.074) [0.021] |
| Workplace Has a Human Resources Employee | 0.116** (0.038) [0.037] | 0.174** (0.041) [0.068] | 0.307** (0.098) [0.013] | 0.040 (0.044) [0.014] | 0.052 (0.055) [0.004] | 0.068 (0.045) [0.013] |
| Other Controls from Table 1 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Industry (11) | Yes | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** |
| Occupation (8) | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** |
| Region (10) | Yes | Yes | Yes** | Yes** | Yes** | Yes* |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey, 1998.

Notes: The sample size is 22,674. Each entry contains the probit coefficient, standard error (in parentheses), and marginal effect [in brackets] from a probit model weighted by individual sampling weights. The standard errors account for the stratification and clustering in the sampling procedure.

**Statistically significant at the 0.05 level; *at the 0.10 level (industry, occupation, and region tests are joint tests).

are biased upward (in absolute value) and that the results are over-stating the effects of unions on family-friendly policies.

To address this issue, we need an instrument for union status that is correlated with union status but uncorrelated with family-friendly benefits. The WERS98 survey asks individuals who they think would best represent them "in dealing with managers" (1) for "getting increases in my pay" and (2) for aid "if a manager wanted to discipline me." We construct two indicator

variables for individuals who responded that a trade union would best represent them in these two situations. We think these variables fulfill the condition needed to qualify them as valid instruments: they are correlated with union status (because of a preference for union representation) but not with family-friendly policies.¹⁴

¹⁴The correlations between the instruments and the family-friendly policies range between -0.08 and 0.10; the correlations between the instruments and union status are 0.55 and 0.58.

Table 5. Instrumental Variables Estimates: Union Members in a Recognized Workplace.

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Parental Leave (1)</i> | <i>Paid Family Leave (2)</i> | <i>Child Care (3)</i> | <i>Flexible Hours (4)</i> | <i>Work at Home (5)</i> | <i>Job Sharing (6)</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Probit: Marginal Effect | 0.061** (0.011) | 0.032** (0.016) | 0.003 (0.003) | -0.028** (0.013) | -0.019** (0.004) | 0.028** (0.008) |
| 2. OLS | 0.059** (0.010) | 0.031** (0.015) | 0.005 (0.005) | -0.023* (0.012) | -0.036** (0.007) | 0.036** (0.009) |
| 3. Instrumental Variables | 0.074** (0.021) | 0.049** (0.025) | 0.018 (0.013) | -0.082** (0.024) | -0.089** (0.011) | 0.043** (0.016) |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey, 1998.

Notes: The sample size is 22,215. Each entry reports the coefficient (rows 2 and 3) or marginal effect (row 1) and standard error (in parentheses) for the variable indicating union members in recognized workplaces. Each model contains the control variables from Table 4. In row 3, union status is instrumented by two indicator variables for whether the individual feels a union is his or her best representative for pay and discipline matters. The models use individual weights and the standard errors account for the clustering in the sampling procedure.

**Statistically significant at the 0.05 level; *at the 0.10 level.

Table 5 therefore presents the results of instrumental variables models for the six family-friendly policies. Note that the control variables from Table 4 are included in the models, but only the union results of interest are reported because of space constraints. Because instrumental variables estimation is regression-based, rows 1 and 2 of Table 5 first show that ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation—which, because of the dichotomous dependent variables, equates to estimating linear probability models—yields results very similar to probit models on the same sample.¹⁵ We therefore feel it is appropriate to use instrumental variables even though the dependent variables are dichotomous. The instrumental variables estimates when we instrument for union membership are reported in row 3.

Recall the concern that if some unobservable characteristics are driving the family-friendly results and these unobservables are correlated with union status, then the union estimates in a probit or linear prob-

ability model will be biased upward (in absolute value). The results in row 3 do not indicate that the results in Table 4 overstate the union effects on family-friendly policies. Rather, even when we account for the possibility that union membership is an endogenous choice variable, union membership has statistically significant positive effects on the reported availability and awareness of parental leave, paid family leave, and job sharing arrangements, and statistically significant negative effects on flexible hours and work at home options.

This leaves the question of actual availability versus perceived availability and awareness. Unions may successfully bargain for these policies (or avoid them, as in the case of flexible working hours and working at home) for their members so that union-nonunion differences reflect actual differences in the availability of these policies. These are the monopoly and collective voice effects of unions on benefits. On the other hand, an important alternative possibility is that these policies do not differ between unionized and nonunion workplaces but that unionized individuals are better-informed (or worse-informed, in the case of flexible working hours and working at home) about the availability of these policies or more confident in their ability

¹⁵The very slight differences in the probit results between Tables 4 and 5 reflect a reduction in the sample size as a result of dropping observations with missing values for the instruments.

to use them. This is the facilitation effect of unions on benefits.

Recall that in Table 1, individual employees' responses to whether parental leave, child care, working at home, and job sharing are personally available to them indicate a considerably lower incidence of these benefits across workplaces than do the managerial responses about whether these family-friendly policies are available to *any* non-managerial employees. For example, 42.3% of the employees are in workplaces in which the manager indicated parental leave was available (row 1, column 3 of Table 1), but only 26.7% of the employees said that parental leave would be available to them if they needed it (row 6, column 3 of Table 1). For job sharing, the corresponding percentages are 37.8% and 14.9%. Assuming that the managers' responses are accurate, these differences could stem from any of three factors: a lack of individual awareness of the availability of family-friendly policies (ignorance); a lack of perceived availability, such that individual employees do not think they would be allowed to use a policy even though they are formally covered by it (perceived manager discrimination); or differential availability, such that some employees in the workplace are covered by the policy but the specific respondent is not.

Unfortunately, we do not have direct measures to distinguish these three possibilities, but by restricting the sample we try to minimize the likelihood of the last possibility—formal differential availability. Moreover, the first two possibilities are different, but they are both forms of a facilitation effect of labor unions, so support for this general effect does not require an explicit distinction between ignorance and perceived availability. To address these issues, we first restrict the sample to individuals from workplaces in which the manager indicated that the relevant family-friendly policy was available. To lessen the importance of differential formal availability among employees, we exclude workplaces in which three other employee benefits (pension plan, extra sick leave, and four or more weeks of paid leave) are not

provided to both managers and the largest occupational group. Since part-time employees and those on temporary or fixed-term contracts might also be the most likely to be excluded from regular benefits, these individuals are also excluded from the restricted sample. These exclusions are intended to leave in the sample only those workplaces and individuals for which employee benefits are the most likely to be equally available on a formal basis.

Table 6 presents the probit results for four of the family-friendly policies using the restricted samples.¹⁶ First note the sample means for each dependent variable. The (weighted) sample mean for parental leave is 0.382. This implies that 61.8% of employees are not aware that they are entitled to parental leave, or are formally covered but do not perceive that they would be allowed to take parental leave, or are in workplaces in which some but not all employees are formally entitled to parental leave. Given the restrictions we have imposed on the sample, we believe (although we cannot be sure) it is unlikely that this entire group can be explained by differential formal availability. The numbers for the remaining three family-friendly policies indicate an even greater role played by ignorance, perceived availability, differential availability, or some combination thereof.

With respect to the probit results in Table 6, the union coefficient is positive and statistically significant for both parental leave (at the 10% level) and job sharing. The union coefficient is negative and statistically significant for working at home arrangements. This negative coefficient implies that union members either are less aware of working at home arrangements than are non-union workers, are less likely to perceive that they would be allowed to

¹⁶Table 6 includes no model for paid family leave because the management and employee questionnaires differ appreciably in the wording of the relevant question, and it is without a model for flexible working hours because the management questionnaire included no question pertaining to that policy.

Table 6. Unions and Family-Friendly Policies: Effects on Policies or Information?
(Individual-Level Analyses: Workplaces with the
Family-Friendly Policy and Equal Other Benefits)

| <i>Description</i> | <i>Parental Leave</i> (1) | <i>Child Care</i> (2) | <i>Work at Home</i> (3) | <i>Job Sharing</i> (4) |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Union Member in a Recognized Workplace | 0.091* (0.051) [0.034] | 0.107 (0.119) [0.025] | -0.156* (0.092) [-0.038] | 0.136** (0.056) [0.043] |
| Controls from Table 4 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Dependent Variable Mean | 0.382 | 0.220 | 0.264 | 0.286 |
| Sample Size | 6,219 | 1,859 | 2,771 | 5,838 |

Source: Workplace Employee Relations Survey, 1998.

Notes: Each entry contains the probit coefficient, standard error (in parentheses), and marginal effect [in brackets] from a probit model weighted by individual sampling weights conditional upon the workplace reporting the availability of the relevant family-friendly policy and upon three other employee benefits (pension plan, extra sick leave, and four weeks paid leave) being available to both managers and the largest occupation group. The standard errors account for the clustering in the sampling procedure.

**Statistically significant at the 0.05 level; *at the 0.10 level.

work at home, or are more likely to work in workplaces with differential availability of such arrangements. The probit model contains eight occupational dummy variables, but perhaps there are finer occupational constraints on working at home that are associated with highly unionized employees (such as mining).

With respect to parental leave and job sharing, the positive union effect implies that union members are more aware of the availability of these family-friendly policies, or less likely to work in workplaces with differential perceived or formal availability, than are their non-union counterparts. We would like to estimate a model in which all individuals have, for example, a parental leave policy formally available. To the extent that the sample restrictions achieve this, the estimated coefficient reflects differences in information about the policy or in perceived availability, not in actual availability. This finding is consistent with a union facilitation effect in which union members have better information about family-friendly policies and are more confident in their ability to use them. To the extent that some workplaces might still have differential formal availability, the estimated coefficient partially reflects differential availability, not just ignorance or

perceived availability. Yet all three interpretations imply that labor unions benefit workers by widening the effective coverage of family-friendly policies. More definitive results on increased awareness—real and perceived—of family-friendly policies through the union facilitation effect, however, require additional survey questions not now available, and they are left to future research.

Conclusion

Workers' difficulties in balancing the demands of work and family are a major policy concern and the focus of considerable research. Trade unions may be in a position in the workplace to alleviate such conflicts in two ways: by bargaining for additional employer-provided family-friendly policies; and by facilitating workers' use of existing family-friendly policies by providing information and representation, thereby increasing effective coverage. In this study we have used linked data on over 1,500 workplaces and 20,000 individuals from the British Workplace Employee Relations Survey 1998 (WERS98) to analyze the relationship between unions and the availability of six major family-friendly policies: parental leave, paid family leave,

child care subsidies, flexible working hours, working at home options, and job sharing options.

The overall results, based on weighted probit models, imply that workplaces with one or more recognized unions are statistically significantly more likely to have parental leave, paid family leave, child care (weakly significant), and job sharing policies than are similar workplaces with no recognized unions. The increased availability of the first two policies—which are similar to other benefits such as paid vacations and sick leave—appears to stem from the monopoly effect of unions on employee benefits. That is, unions use their monopolistic bargaining power to win these benefits from employers. The availability of the other family-friendly policies—which do not involve lost work time and therefore might contain more integrative or win-win opportunities—appears to stem more from the collective voice effect of unions on employee benefits. That is, the presence of these family-friendly policies is correlated with unions' communication with their membership and with greater proportions of female employees, a pattern that is consistent with the articulation of union member preferences at the bargaining table to achieve specific benefits.

Our analysis of employees' questionnaire responses indicates that union members in workplaces with recognized unions were more likely than non-union workers elsewhere to report that they had personal access to parental leave, paid family leave, and job sharing options but were less likely to report the availability of flexible working hours and work at home options. Instrumental variables estimates do not indicate that endogeneity is a problem when inter-

preting these results, which further supports the causal nature of the relationship between union status and family-friendly policies. Discrepancies between managerial answers and individual employee answers to questions about the availability of family-friendly policies highlight the potential problems of employee ignorance, perceived lack of availability (the respondent is formally covered but is not sure the manager will let him or her use the policy), and differential formal availability (the policies' coverage across the workplace is incomplete). By narrowly focusing on specific workplaces and individuals, we try to minimize the frequency of this last problem. The results are suggestive of important union facilitation effects for increasing the effective coverage of parental leave and especially job sharing options. As described in the previous section, the data are not perfect for addressing this issue, but this is an important issue for future research on family-friendly policies, and employee benefits more generally.

In sum, in British workplaces, unions appear to positively affect the provision of some family-friendly policies—in particular, parental leave, special paid leave, and job sharing options—in two ways: by negotiating for additional benefits; and by informing workers about existing policies and representing them when they wish to avail themselves of those policies. At the same time, unions appear to be negatively associated with the provision of other family-friendly policies, such as working at home and flexible working hours options. Whether this negative association reflects the preferences of union members or union leaders is an important question for future research.

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