

An Exploratory Study of Trade Union Pluralism in Ghana

Kenneth E. Parku

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5852-1170>

University of Ghana

kennethparku@gmail.com

Yvonne Ayerki Lamptey

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4490-5683>

University of Ghana

ayerki@yahoo.com

Abstract

The practice of trade union pluralism at an enterprise level is seen as problematic for both the management of enterprises and the trade union movement. The problems arise from inter-union rivalries, competition and disputes over demarcations of privileges and rights. This article explores the practice of trade union pluralism at the enterprise level in Ghana with the aim of creating awareness of the effect of the practice on the general trade union movement. This qualitative study employed a cross-sectional design and used purposive and snowball sampling methods in selecting the participants. The data was analysed thematically. The findings from the study show that union pluralism is stimulating the decline in general union membership, the breakaway of local unions from the federations, and employers' classification of workers based on their qualifications once they are employed by organisations, and their assignment to specific unions (automatic membership at enterprise level). It is suggested that employment laws encourage union breakaways, which weakens the unions especially at the enterprise level. It is recommended that the state, labour officials and policy-makers should enforce labour laws, especially regarding freedom of association, and consider revisiting or amending some labour laws to curb their abuse. The government and labour institutions need to work together to operationalise the implementation of legal provisions on freedom of association or consider amending the provisions to curb the existing abuse.

Keywords: trade unions; union pluralism; enterprise level; collective bargaining certificate



Introduction

For the purpose of this study, the concept of trade union pluralism is seen to connote the existence of more than one trade union in an organisation or at an enterprise level (Sinclair, 2006, p. 39). This description is based on the basic tenets of the concept, a background to which is sketched next.

Trade union pluralism is embedded in the principle of freedom of association, a universal basic human right promoted in the conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO); therefore, by implication, pluralism should remain possible in all cases (Gernigon, Odero, & Guido, 2000, p. 33). Employment laws do not institutionalise a factual monopoly, even in situations where all workers prefer to unify the trade union movement at some point; therefore workers should be able to choose to form unions outside the established structures (ILO, 2010). The presence of several recognised trade unions in an industry or workplace is a phenomenon associated with Ireland and Britain (Wallace, Gunnigle, & McMahon, 2004). Trade union pluralism has been found to exist in an organisation where there are both full-time and casual employees (Harcourt & Lam, 2011). While some of the employees may be more concerned about overtime, others may be more worried about performance contracts. In such situations, union members divide into interest groups, hence bringing about union pluralism (Stevenson & Bascia, 2014). However, Chaison (1996) and Akkerman (2008, p. 445) view the existence of inter-union relationships in a multiple-union setting as a practice that does not necessarily have to be competitive. Union pluralism can be viewed from a positive perspective to be a collaboration of two or more unions in an organisation or industry (Harcourt & Lam, 2011).

The concept of trade union pluralism is a phenomenon that has not been intensively explored in developing countries. Workers and employers in countries that are signatories to the ILO Convention No. 87 have the right to establish organisations or to join them, subject only to the rules of the organisations concerned. This principle is reinforced by the Constitution of Ghana (Ghana, 1992) which emphasises freedom of association. All persons have the freedom of association to form or join trade unions or other associations, national or international, for the protection of their interest. Hence, workers and employers have the right to establish and join organisations of their choice. This right, however, has given rise to several problems, particularly regarding the structure and composition of organisations' collective bargaining agreements and arrangements (Kalamatiev & Ristovski, 2012) aimed at protecting the rights of workers and giving employees a voice. However, even though the pluralist theory deems the existence of trade unions in an organisation as necessary (Edwards, 1999), the question of trade union unity or pluralism emerges, and the trade unions find it difficult to work together, cooperate and sort out their differences under the same roof (ILO, 2006).

The Ghanaian labour movement was officially born in 1941 when the British colonial government passed a law recognising trade unions. This movement consisted of many small individual unions limited to separate enterprises or government departments. Lack of finances, inexperienced leadership, weak organisation, and inadequate administration prevented the labour movement from wielding any power in collective bargaining (Trachtman, 1962). Even today, the labour unions in Ghana are usually too weak to accomplish their objectives by economic force; they must look to alliances with more powerful groups. This makes political unionism inevitable. Although many of the smaller unions were sympathetic to the ideas for a new structure relating to trade unions, the plans met with opposition from the relatively stronger, better organised unions that did not want to surrender their autonomy. The government settled the issue by adopting the Industrial Relations Act of 1958, which was radical legislation compared with colonial labour laws and Western standards. The Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) was recognised as the legal representative of the unions of Ghana. In January 1958, the leaders of the TUC announced a new structure for the many small unions of Ghana. This new structure was written into law, so that only the 24 national unions named in the Industrial Relations Act could legally negotiate for their members (Davison, 1957). According to the new structure, there was to be a powerful central organisation to direct the movement, and 16 (later 24, and now 16 again) national unions as affiliates. In other words, major amalgamations were to be made, and the multitude of individual unions would become part of a centralised structure that would formulate policy and direct operations (Davison, 1957). The historical antecedent of the trade union movement in Ghana has always shown elements of union pluralism; however, the major concern is whether the practice is enhancing unionism in Ghana or whether it has been detrimental to the union movement.

Statutes in some European countries, such as the Netherlands, Ireland and Finland, clearly recommend a single trade union system for first-level organisations or allows the establishment of only one such association for all workers in an enterprise. In other countries, such as France and Britain, only one national trade union may be established for a given category of workers or in each region (Sinclair, 2006, p. 34). It becomes problematic when the legislation provides directly or indirectly that only one trade union may be established for a given category of workers (ILO, 1994). In recent years, there have been positive developments in a relatively large number of countries following the introduction of pluralistic and democratic political systems. The previous trade union monopoly established by law and often by organisations has been abolished and replaced by a system allowing trade union pluralism (ILO, 2010). In areas such as southern Europe and in some Nordic countries, traditional trade union monism has been replaced by pluralism in the form of multiple representative federations that exist as trade union movements in individual countries (Kalamatiev & Ristovski, 2012).

Initially, in the French colonies of Africa, unions were established as branch organisations of the trade unions existing in France to defend the interests of the French

workers employed in the colonies. Legislation to regulate this situation was promulgated in 1884 and 1904. In 1937, a new French government decree set out broader rights and rules concerning the creation of trade unions in the colonies (Obeng-Fosu, 2007). The “one party, one union” system was practised in French-speaking African countries until the 1990s when democratisation emerged and evolved on the continent, and political and trade union pluralism gained prominence, creating new prospects for individual freedom and institutional reforms (ILO, 2010). Trade union pluralism has followed the process of democratisation in Africa to ensure trade union democracy.

The practice of trade union pluralism is gaining prominence in the industrial sector in Ghana. Multiple trade unions have emerged at both the enterprise and industry levels, which has been linked to political influence and differences relating to employment (P. Asafu-Adjaye, personal communication, October 20, 2016). For instance, multiple unions, such as the Ghana National Association of Teachers, National Association of Graduate Teachers, University Teachers’ Association of Ghana, and Polytechnic Teachers’ Association of Ghana, exist in the educational sector. This brings into question the maintenance of solidarity as a fundamental value in trade unionism, an issue that the current article seeks to explore in the light of the labour laws in Ghana.

Weaknesses in the African trade union movement, such as the lack of trade union unity in many cases, have undermined the efficiency of trade unions and their credibility (ILO, 2006) at the enterprise level. To develop insight into and understanding of issues pertaining to union pluralism, the researchers aim to establish the factors that influence trade union pluralism and the related challenges in order to create an awareness of the impact of union pluralism on the trade union movement at the enterprise level in Ghana.

The random creation of unrepresentative and ineffective organisations has become the cause of division, confusion and abuse in trade unionism. Union pluralism and the principles of freedom of association have stimulated these forms of proliferation. One of the few studies to explore such phenomena was conducted among 30 British manufacturing plants, and the conclusion was reached that most managers claimed that union pluralism had no effect on business efficiency or flexibility (Dobson, 1997, p. 66). Another study in Ireland on multi-union workplaces as hubs for conflicts and their contribution to weakening trade union movements indicated that multiple unions in a workplace led to either an industrial relations climate of great conflict or to a significant obstruction of change in the workplace (Sinclair, 2006, p. 34).

A limited number of studies have been conducted by the ILO (2010) on problems of trade union pluralism in the new democratic context in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa and the proliferation of pluralism in French-speaking Africa. A number of studies (Akkerman, 1997; Daly, 1968; McCarthy, 1981; Sinclair, 2006) have explored this phenomenon and made a call (Akkerman, 2008; ILO, 2010) for more studies in the area

of union pluralism to explore the earlier findings in different contexts and in different geographical locations in order to contribute to a better understanding of the concept of trade union pluralism in developing countries. However, discussions on union pluralism have attracted little academic attention (Harcourt & Lam, 2011), and very few studies have been carried out on union pluralism, also at the enterprise level (Baah, 2005), although earlier studies were conducted at the sector or industry level. Hence, this article seeks to explore the practice of trade union pluralism at the enterprise level.

Literature Review and Theoretical Basis

Concepts Underpinning Union Pluralism

The creation and promotion of an industrial relations climate or system is the key to fostering cooperative management and trade union workplace relations (Barrett, 1997). Consequently, it is imperative to highlight the concepts that underpin the practice of union pluralism. One of the most important characteristics of employee participation is the employee voice that can be used to articulate individual dissatisfaction with management or the organisation, to express collective organisation, and to contribute to management decision-making particularly regarding work (Armstrong, 2006). To have a voice in the organisation forms the basis of an employee's affiliation with a trade union. Hence, giving employees a voice aids in the stimulation of the practice of union pluralism.

Pluralism can exist in the form of multiple parallel union structures in a unitarian structure where trade unions with different tendencies operate, cooperate and sort out their differences. All of these activities are carried out at the same workplace of a single national centre (ILO, 2010). Similarly, as stated by Dobson (1997), trade union pluralism can refer to a situation where more than one union represent workers and exercise collective bargaining. Dobson has taken care to make sure that his definition is interpreted correctly by indicating that a different structure of collective bargaining could alter the description of the union structure. This study adopts Akkerman's (2008) definition of trade union pluralism as the presence of more than one trade union in an organisation or a workplace. The focus of the practice is on the enterprise level, that is, where an individual organisation has numerous trade unions operating within it.

With reference to the experiences and empirical indicators of different countries, the pluralist theory emphasises the need for trade unions in organisations (ILO, 2010). The pluralist perspective recognises the fact that there is an imbalance of power within an organisation, an imbalance which is due to divergent views, interests and objectives of the different groups of people in the organisation (Nel, Kirsten, Swanepoel, Erasmus, & Poisat, 2008). The pluralist perspective therefore implies that union recognition should be encouraged and that union representatives should be allowed to carry out their duties. Unlike the unitary theory, the pluralist theory encourages the influx of trade unions in organisations, as the presence of more unions will facilitate negotiating with employers

for better terms and conditions of employment and healthy workplace standards for employees. Consequently the theory inherently and indirectly has elements that stimulate the concept of trade union pluralism. This makes a strong case for supporting multiple unions in an organisation, which is the basis of trade union pluralism.

Institutional Reform, a Remedy for Union Pluralism

The Donovan Commission, which reported in 1968 on trade unions and employees' associations in Britain, made recommendations for the reform of single-union agreements. Policy-makers were of the view that unions should put in efforts to promote unity and solidarity of the trade union movement by merging smaller unions. The British and Irish congresses of trade unions have always insisted without success on structural reform and a reduction in the number of unions. This resulted in disagreements between union leaders, members and stakeholders. Activities of unions came to a standstill because there were splits on reforms, particularly in the 1940s (MacPartlin, 1997). Implementation of the reforms was very challenging especially during the 1920s, 1930s and 1960s, due to the factions opposing the idea. Also, during the times when there was a downturn in the economy, most citizens were unemployed, and the number of people who joined unions also reduced drastically. For example, in the 1980s there were many union mergers because there were not many resources to operate with, considering the nature of the economy at the time (Wallace et al., 2004). This article seeks to consider some of the propositions that have been made, in the hope of understanding both the positive and negative nature of the concept of union pluralism and finding a way forward.

Trade Union Pluralism and Collective Bargaining

The introduction of the concept of trade union pluralism has brought about quite a number of changes to the collective bargaining system. Workplaces with multiple unions tend to unify their bargaining channel.

At an enterprise level, the labour management in organisations where there are more than one trade union has autonomy over the act of collective bargaining. However, this practice might generate misunderstanding between labour and management during bargaining channel unification. It also results in damaging the uniformity of terms of conditions of employment due to overlapping bargaining and in creating excessive competition and division among unions that practise union pluralism (Noh, 2010).

According to Bryson (2003), workplaces that have more than one trade union (that practise union pluralism) and adopt the practice of single bargaining, tend to have outcomes similar to those that practise singular union bargaining. Consequently, the results of union bargaining may not be affected by the competition that exists among unions. Nonetheless, a study conducted by Akkerman (2008) has shown that

organisations that practise the concept of trade union pluralism have no option but to collaborate with each other in order to maximise the mutual benefits of bargaining.

The Legal Frameworks of Union Pluralism

ILO conventions have played a major role when it comes to trade unionism in Ghana. In the period between 1957 and 1966, Ghana ratified 34 of the ILO conventions, which included conventions 87 and 98 that have to do with freedom of association and collective bargaining. These conventions have contributed directly and indirectly to the introduction of the concept and practice of trade union pluralism.

The right to practise trade union pluralism is inherent in the terms and provisions of ILO Convention 87 that stipulates that every individual organisation consisting of workers and employers should be allowed the right to form or join any association of their choice. The ILO conventions on freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, which were accepted in 1948 and 1949 respectively, refer to these rights as inseparable because they tend to complement each other. The ILO conventions have contributed in shaping the industrial relations and trade union laws and regulations in many African countries, and Ghana is no exception. The conventions have paved way for the influx of trade unions in the country and have gone further to welcome the concept and practice of trade union pluralism: it is becoming a common phenomenon to have organisations with multiple unions operating in the country. All of these twists in the trade union movement are made possible by the ILO conventions that have enlightened many countries about the rights and privileges of both employers and workers.

In Ghana, one of the fundamental human rights is freedom of association, which is provided for in the Labour Act 2003 (Act 651). Section 79(1) of this Act points to the fact that any individual (worker) engaged in a legal activity from which the individual receives an income has the right to form or join any trade union they prefer without being forced to do so, to protect and promote the worker's interest, economically and socially. This section states further that for workers to be able to form trade unions, some form of consensus should be reached between the worker or trade union and the employer. Section 80 of the Act deals with the formation of a trade union or an employers' organisation, and it also gives more details about the preceding section. It stipulates that an enterprise or organisation that has two or more individuals as workers is permitted to form a trade union. It is important to note that the law has placed no limitation on the number of unions that can be formed in an organisation, hence multiple unions are welcomed (Amoako-Asiedu, 2013).

According to Obeng-Fosu (2007), the right of individuals to form associations for any lawful purpose is one of the essentials of democratic communities; therefore, considering that Ghana is a democratic state, this principle should be in operation in the country. Hence, under no circumstances should an individual or a group of people be

deprived of their right to form or join a particular association or union (Britwum, 2010). These laws that have been put in place to prevent the infringement of human rights, especially regarding unionism, are rapidly encouraging the practice of trade union pluralism in Ghana. The concern is, however, whether the concept and practice of union pluralism, which has a legal backing, is a blessing or a curse to the trade union front or movement.

A fundamental human right that has been provided for in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, is freedom of association. Article 21(1)(e) provides for “freedom of association, which shall include freedom to form or join trade unions or other associations, national or international, for the protection of their interest.” This section in the Constitution has contributed to the growth and development of trade unionism in Ghana and has led to an increase in the number of trade unions at the enterprise, sector and national levels and, hence, to the firm establishment of the practice of trade union pluralism in the country.

Challenges Associated with Union Pluralism

The introduction of the concept of union pluralism at an enterprise level tends to fuel some degree of rivalry and competition, which affects the cooperative or oppositional atmosphere of a long- or short-term nature (Deery & Iversen, 2005, p. 588; Dobson, 1997; Metcalf, Wadsworth, & Ingram, 2005, p. 4).

Workplaces that have more than one trade union and adopt the practice of single bargaining tend to have outcomes similar to those that practise singular union bargaining (Bryson, 2003). Consequently, the results of union bargaining may not be affected by the competition that exists among unions. Nonetheless, organisations that have plural unions have no option but to collaborate with each other in order to maximise the mutual benefits of bargaining (Noh, 2010, p. 69).

Multiple unions could exist at enterprise, industry or sector and national levels, but still pluralism has been perceived as a destructive tool—a curse rather than a blessing to the trade union movement (ILO, 2010) due to the inability of the unions to manage their differences. Pluralism does not seem to promote the solidarity and unity needed in the trade union movement; it encourages union rivalry, competition, inter- and intra-union conflicts and difficulties in reaching collective bargaining agreements (ILO, 2010). However, very little effort has been made to explore this problem, hence the decision to focus on it in this article.

The fragmentation of labour is one of the major challenges facing the trade union movement in recent times. In general, labour unions fall under the umbrella of the TUC (ILO, 2010) but in Ghana, various unions, such as the Ghana National Association of Teachers, the Graduate Teachers’ Association of Ghana, the University Teachers’ Association of Ghana, the Civil and Local Government Staff Association and many

others, are not affiliated with the TUC. The disunity among these unions poses a major threat to the solidarity of the union front, leading to conflicting situations. Because of the disintegration of labour unions, unions attempt to negotiate separately especially when it comes to issues with government. Various studies have shown that this practice is not helpful to the trade union movement: it creates rivalry between the unions, lack of solidarity among the leaders and members, low bargaining power, inability to generate funds to help its members, and lack of unity among workers (Gupta & Gupta, 2013). The emergence of trade union pluralism has worsened these challenges, particularly at an enterprise level. The unity of purpose and the strength that have been gained from the large membership of unions and also the solidarity that guides the principle of the working class struggles over the years seem to be diminishing. Instead of unions relying on their traditional source of strength (unity and solidarity), they are viciously competing for membership with one another in the ever-shrinking formal sector (Akkerman, 2008).

Research Objectives

This article seeks to explore the concept of trade union pluralism at an enterprise level by exploring the factors that stimulate trade union pluralism, and the benefits and challenges associated with union pluralism. Furthermore, it seeks to create an awareness of the impact of union pluralism on the trade union movement in Ghana. In light of the research objectives, the following research questions are posed: What are the factors that influence the practice of trade union pluralism?; What are the challenges associated with union pluralism?; What is the impact of the practice of union pluralism on the trade union movement in general?

Research Design

Considering the comprehensive and exploratory nature of the research issues, a qualitative approach was used. A cross-sectional design was adopted and a semi-structured interview was conducted using an interview guide designed to collect information about the push-and-pull factors encouraging the union members and the executives of the selected organisations to practise union pluralism. A second interview guide was designed to collect information from the managers and employees of the selected organisations. Lastly, a third interview guide was designed to gather information on the phenomenon from a number of labour officials. The participants were interviewed and their responses were recorded individually. The interview guides helped the researchers to be consistent with the questions the various participants were asked. The study was conducted among unionised organisations in the public sector in Ghana that had more than one trade union. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 35 participants. The purposive sampling technique was used to select organisations with multiple unions. Similarly, the snowball sampling technique was used to identify an appropriate participant who helped to identify other participants in organisations with multiple unions. The sample included 10 Labour

Department executives/officials, 20 union members from the 10 selected organisations and five managers/employers from 10 organisations. The 10 organisations were selected from four sectors, namely, agriculture, manufacturing, real estate and construction, because they engaged in intense trade union activity, making them the best sectors for exploring issues regarding the co-existence of multiple unions (GTUC, 2012, p. 20). In analysing the data collected from the participants, thematic and content analysis was done, and the emerging themes were linked to themes obtained from existing literature to explain the phenomenon through an analytical narrative.

Table 1: Organisations studied

<i>Number of organisations</i>	<i>Organisations (10)</i>
Locations	Greater Accra Region Central Region Eastern Region
Private/Public organisations	Private organisations (3) Public organisations (7)
Forms of union pluralism practised	Same class of workers (7) Different class of workers (3)
Sectors	Agriculture Manufacturing Real estate and business activities Construction

Ethical Considerations

In conducting the study, the researchers made sure to have the full consent of the participants prior to the study and ensured their participation was voluntary. The information gathered from the participants was treated with the utmost confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. The use of offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language was avoided in the formulation of the interview guide. There was a high level of objectivity in the discussions and analyses throughout the research. The researchers were careful to acknowledge all the works of other authors used in any part of the study.

Findings and Discussion

In exploring the concept of union pluralism, it is imperative to identify the factors that stimulate the practice of this phenomenon. The inability of union leaders or executives to address the needs of their members was one of the concerns raised by 85 per cent of the union members. The union executives take their members for granted, not prioritising their needs and concerns. Meanwhile, dues are taken from union members to strengthen the finances of the union in order to be financially stable to serve the union members. Most of the union members pay their dues on a monthly basis, which ranges from GHC 50 (50 Ghanaian Cedis) to a maximum GHC 100. Regardless of the efforts put in by the union members, their needs regarding working conditions are not met by the executives. The union members lamented that the promises and policies that the union executives presented to them at the initial stages in the formation of the union in respect of protecting their interests did not see the light of day. A union member indicated:

From the beginning, they tell us sweet and convincing stories about how they will help to address our issues; they actually go by their words but after some time, they don't mind us anymore. We pay our dues but the leaders do not do anything for us. Last three months our colleague had a confrontation with management regarding some allowances he was entitled to, which I know the union executives could have helped but they just stood there for management to sack the man, they are not trying for us at all.

A union executive responded:

At the initial stages of forming the union, management is very supportive, after a while when they realise that we are taking them on, they begin to make things difficult for us, which in turn affects discharging of our duties to the members.

Union pluralism has been closely linked to the decisions of union members to either form another union or to exit one union and join another one. This situation encourages the practice of trade union pluralism at an enterprise level. The union members disclosed some salient reasons for joining other unions. One union member said:

I choose to join my current union because of the level of influence they have on management and their ability to bargain on the members' behalf.

The status of unions in the country is one major factor raised as the reason why employees join a particular union. The workers look for a union that has a good standing and that is part of the "movers and shakers" of the country. There are some unions that do not have the power to influence management or the government, even when these unions attempt to hold a strike to make their grievances heard it takes a long while for their concerns to be heard. In some cases, they are totally ignored. However, there are some unions that are taken seriously by the government or management; these unions

are able to get the government or management to address their issues regarding remuneration or conditions of services.

A union member said:

I joined the union because they are able to put pressure on management to solve our issues. Management knows that when they go on a strike it will really affect productivity, so their issues are addressed within a short while.

Trade unions exist to accomplish the purpose for which they were formed, that is, to make sure they protect and provide for the needs of their members. However, there are unions that do not go the extra mile to do these things, and due to their ineffective negotiation skills they are unable to negotiate successfully on behalf of their members. Of the union members, 55 per cent indicated that they looked for or joined a union that was able to accomplish a lot of success in bargaining on behalf of its members.

The right to practise trade union pluralism is inherent in the terms and provisions of ILO Convention No. 87, the Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) and the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Of the participants, 65 per cent raised concerns about some of the Labour Act provisions and the disregard some of the laws showed to employee relations in Ghana.

The labour laws permit everybody to form or join a trade union of their choice; however, the majority of the participants indicated that this right was abused, especially at an enterprise level. Some individuals capitalise on this fundamental human right by joining associations, groups or unions for dubious reasons and to the detriment of other people, and they also hide behind this right to get involved in unscrupulous activities.

A union member indicated:

In one of the organisations a union executive from the existing union amassed a section of the members of the union to form another union because the union executive did not want to step down from his position after accusations of misconduct. It brought about disruption in the union activities in the organisation.

The participants placed emphasis on the number of persons required to form a union, referring to the Labour Act that provides for two or more workers employed in the same undertaking to form a trade union. Of the participants, 65 per cent suggested a policy amendment to increase the number of persons required to form a union. This would reduce the proliferation of unions at the enterprise level; hence, less unhealthy competition, rivalry and conflict on the labour front.

A union executive suggested:

I think, if possible, the number required to form a union should be increased [to 30 plus], so that by the time one forms a union at the enterprise level, it will have been with a reasonable support of the employees. This will also avoid persons who just form unions with few friends just for their selfish gains.

The issue of automatic unionisation was one of the findings of the study. The Labour Act specifies that every worker has the right to form or join a trade union of his or her choice for the promotion and protection of the worker's economic and social interests, and that it should occur without coercion. However, responses from the field showed that organisations made the joining of a union obligatory. In most of the organisations, once you are employed, your qualification automatically indicates which union you should be affiliated to. Employees are not given the opportunity to decide which union they prefer to belong to or to exercise their freedom of not belonging to a union.

A union member said:

The moment you are employed, you are not asked if you want to join a particular union or not; they start deducting dues from your salary as a union member, which I think is not fair at all.

This culture is now a norm in most organisations; however, this is contrary to the provisions of the labour law that stipulates that an individual must give consent to join a union or show interest in joining. This indicates that the violation of the laws is also playing a role in the encouragement of the practice of trade union pluralism at the enterprise level. Both employers and employees take advantage of the situation and form unions or force individuals to join unions for dubious reasons.

There has been a paradigm shift from the usual norm where associations, groups and different classes of workers in an organisation were affiliated to the federations or mother unions such as the General Agriculture Worker's Union (GAWU), General Transportation, Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Union (GTPCWU), Union of Industry, Commerce and Finance Workers (UNICOF), Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU), and Local Government Workers' Union (LGWU). Among the 10 organisations sampled for the study, three had broken away from their umbrella unions to form their own enterprise unions (in-house unions). Two of the organisations stated that they had broken away from their mother unions due to these unions' ineffectiveness. Some of the federations lost their members to GAWU, GTPCWU and ICU. This issue is a great driving force for the emergence of enterprise-based unions in the country (GTUC, 2012). Of the participants, especially the local union executives and union members, 55 per cent mentioned that they had decided to disassociate themselves from their mother unions because of ineffectiveness. They preferred to rather form their own local unions in their respective organisations as the federations were characterised by ineffectiveness, lack of internal democracy and power drunkenness.

A union executive indicated:

We have some challenges with our mother union and we are now trying to form our own union. We want to break away from the ICU and GTPCWU. We are in the process of getting our certificates but we are yet to add some few documents to make us a full union. When it comes to May Day, there are some benefits that have to come from our mother union which we don't get. We use our own in-house-generated fund to support the May Day in a way of getting a t-shirt and a get-together after the match organised by the workers. For some years now, these things have not been coming from our mother union, but we pay money to them every month; so the money is just there and they are using it just for their administrative work but we the individuals, we don't benefit.

The inability of the federations to be proactive and efficient in discharging their duties and meeting their members' obligations is leading to the decline in the membership of the mother unions (GTUC, 2012).

Another union executive indicated:

We suspected some of the mother union executives played along partisan politics. Our reasons for this suspicion have to do with how proactive the traditional unions get when a particular political party is in power, and how laid-back they become when that party is no longer in power. This situation, therefore, makes some of the federations reluctant in standing up against some policies that are not favourable to its members such as issues regarding minimum wages and conditions of service.

This phenomenon of the local unions breaking away from mother unions was observed as a disturbing practice persisting in the labour sector because the mother unions are the bedrock of the trade union movement. A collapse of these federations will have dire implications for worker representation in the country. The above problems are giving rise to the development of plural unions at the enterprise level in the country. Interestingly, the local unions are keen to stand on their own, and the edge they have to manage their own affairs has led most of their leaders to educate and train themselves on issues regarding industrial relations.

Data from the field further indicates that the number of employees joining unions has decreased drastically, because workers are of the view that there is a lot of unhealthy competition and hostility among union members because of the desire to acquire the collective bargaining certificate. They do not want to be caught up in such an environment. This situation was part of the detrimental effect associated with union pluralism in organisations. There is evidence that a negative effect of having multiple unions in organisations is that workers are discouraged from joining trade unions. This indicator supports the fact that trade union density is declining rapidly, with the result that the union movement is becoming feeble (Shore & Newton, 1997, p. 189).

A union executive said:

Because of the tension and hostility that exist in the organisation among the union members and executives, some of the employees decide not to join any union at all. The reason they give is that they are not ready for all the drama that the union activities bring.

One of the participants has a contrary view to the assertion that union membership was declining.

A labour official indicated:

I beg to differ, I think regardless of the negative effects of having more unions in an organisation, employees are getting to know the advantages of joining a union and what it will mean if they do not join any union. Therefore more workers are joining unions.

This shows that there are two sides to the issue pertaining to the decline/increase in union membership (Murphy, 2003). However, the majority of the participants indicated that there was a decline in union membership. This response rate supports the findings of the study by Osei-Boateng & Ampratung (2011) according to which about 50 per cent of individuals working in 1999 had trade union representation at their workplaces. However, by 2006, the proportion of the workforce that belonged to trade unions at their workplaces had declined to 37 per cent. Similarly, before the extensive retrenchment in the public sector in the 1980s, the membership of Ghana's TUC was estimated at about 700,000 whereas the membership stood at about 350,000 in 2017.

The practice of trade union pluralism has been associated with having negative effects on organisations and weakening the solidarity of trade unions (Cully, 2000; Sinclair, 2006). Most of the interviewees, who ranged from union members, union executives, and management to labour officials, were of the view that union pluralism could be problematic. They raised several challenges posed by the presence of multiple unions at the enterprise level, such as collective bargaining issues (struggle between two unions of the same class of workers to obtain the collective bargaining certificate), unhealthy competition, union rivalry, and political interference (where some unions are formed along political lines).

A union executive said:

We have two unions here, and even though only one has the bargaining certificate, before we go and negotiate with management we have to consult them and hear their views as well. This process usually delays decision-making both on our part and that of management.

This assertion buttresses the provision in the Labour Act encouraging unions that have the bargaining certificate to consult with the other unions in the same undertaking before making a decision. Therefore, even though the process causes a delay as remarked by one participant, consultation before decision-making is permitted by the labour law. In

the long run, the decision taken is binding on everyone, which brings some level of fairness to the process or to union activities.

It was also noted that in some organisations, unions were formed on the basis of class, in other words, senior staff and junior staff were in different unions. In such a case, according to the Labour Act, both unions are eligible to be issued with its own (different) collective bargaining certificate. A collective bargaining certificate is issued to a union for the same class of workers, and as there are two classes of workers (junior and senior staff) in this case, both have the right to be issued a certificate. Participants in such organisations raised the concern of management having to deal with them separately before decisions were made, hence delaying the bargaining process and decision-making. However, contrary to the concerns raised by the participants, Bryson (2003) posits that when it comes to issues of union pluralism, it does not have any negative effect on collective bargaining because in situations where only one union has the bargaining certificate, the union in question deals with management and the decision is binding on the other unions. This supports the provision made in the Labour Act that once the union with the certificate negotiates, the decision is binding not only on its members but also on the rest of the employees consisting of the same class of workers in the organisation.

The interference of the government or political parties in the activities of trade unions is not acceptable according to the laws of Ghana; the Labour Act stipulates that a trade union shall not be subject to the control or the financial or material help of any political party. Nevertheless, the government and political parties did get involved with union activities at a sector or industry level. They arranged for their key people to hold leadership positions in most of the traditional unions so that they could influence the unions (Adu-Amankwah & Tutu, 1997). This practice was one of the challenges most of the participants indicated as the effect of practising union pluralism in organisations. The participants reported that some of the unions had political affiliations.

A union member said:

Since it is a government company as I said, one of the major things that can really bring change into the business environment is change of government. Therefore, the unions are sometimes linked to partisan politics, that is, if you belong to this union, meaning you belong to party A. It might not be the truth but that is the perception here in this organisation. The people perceive union A to be a member of party A and union B to be a member of party B. These are not really true; however, people benefit from it, you know it's a competition between the two unions, so based on which party is in power, one union will go and lie that this one belongs to the other side so that they will have favours such as getting political appointments and have their way.

The information gathered from the field indicated that union leaders had links with various political parties and that this was evident in their activities.

A group of union members pointed out:

There have been instances that when a particular union executive or union is not on the side of the current government, they tend to agitate and incite their members to go on unnecessary or uncalled-for strikes to discredit the government. In the same vein, when a particular union is on the side of the government, usually when they have issues, their grievances are addressed within a short while.

This situation brings about animosity between the existing unions because there is partiality and/or discrimination in respect of unions who are supposedly not associated with the government in power. The participants were very careful about mentioning which political parties were involved, because it was a sensitive subject to talk about. Rivalry, disunity, animosity and disloyalty have been associated with organisations that have more than one trade union (Gupta & Gupta, 2013).

A union executive said:

There is so much tension that it sometimes gets physical between the union executives of both sides. Around last year, the executives of union A fabricated lies to management about the other union's members that union B's leaders were using members' dues for personal gains. This resulted in some members leaving to join the other union. All of these things are not good for us.

The participants, especially the union executives and leaders, admitted to the fact that even though they encouraged the concept and practice of having multiple unions at the enterprise level, it brought about animosity and unhealthy competition between the unions and the organisation as a whole. Of the participants, 75 per cent emphasised that having multiple unions in organisations caused unions to compete with each other. Members continually held meetings with management to draw attention to employees' grievances. The harshness of the competition, the hostility, and the fabrication of issues just to get more members and achieve other objectives caused union members and executives to eventually become enemies of other union members and executives. Unions discredit other unions to lure their members away, and in doing so they offend each other and hurt each other's feelings. They compete to acquire the collective bargaining certificate issued by the chief labour officer to the union with the most membership.

A union executive shared his experience:

As a union executive, I believe in employees being treated fairly and I have much knowledge when it comes to employee relations. I usually lead the team to negotiate with management; sometimes management wants to play smart with us, but I never agree and I had support of the other members. When management realised I was hindering them in executing their bad and unfavourable plans, they promoted me to another class, even when I wasn't due for that. Meaning I could not be an executive of

the previous union anymore since I wasn't in their class. Management intentionally did this so that I will not be in a position to lead the members for their right. It is a really sad situation we have here.

These issues raised by the participants support the claim of Lambropoulos and Wynn (2013) that organisations that have multiple unions are more likely to have their union leaders victimised by management. Management tends to influence the union executives in order to sway the outcome of negotiations to be in their favour, which is usually easy and possible in organisations with multiple unions. Similarly, these responses from the participants affirm the assertion of Gupta and Gupta (2013) that intra-union rivalry is a major tool affecting the solidarity of trade unionism; rival unions would go as far as sabotaging union activities that are in their own interest. Unions make wild accusations, and in the end the workers' confidence in trade unions is destroyed.

Contrary to the above views of most of the participants, three organisations were of the view that the existence of multiple unions in their organisations helped to keep management on its toes and to do what was expected of them. This is because the unions get together to agree on issues of common interest and then they are able to put pressure on management to have those issues resolved or addressed without having to approach management as individual unions. Hence, the introduction and practice of union pluralism is seen as an instrument to increase the effectiveness of management in ensuring employees' wellbeing.

A union member said:

Because there are other unions, all the union executives are working hard to please us so we will not move to other unions. We share ideas on the best ways to negotiate with management in order to benefit all parties. This creates some kind of collaboration and peaceful atmosphere in this workplace.

This point confirms the view of Metcalf et al. (2005) that unions, like other institutions, need competition to keep them doing their best. In other words, competition among unions should be encouraged (Freeman & Medoff, 1984).

The participants expressed their satisfaction with the right to have multiple unions in their organisations as it helped in distinguishing them in terms of classes of workers and getting their specific needs addressed. It is important to note that these responses were obtained from organisations that were unionised according to classes.

A union executive said:

We fall under different classes of workers, therefore I don't see the need for both classes of workers to belong to one union, and our needs are different from that of the junior staff. With the current situation at hand, we, the senior staff, are affiliated to union A

and they focus solely on our needs without any interference from the junior staff; therefore I think this brings us some form of fairness in addressing working conditions and salary issues.

Union pluralism has been linked to several negative effects when it comes to the trade union movement in Ghana and in the world at large (Akkerman, 2008; Sinclair, 2006). However, there have been some good feedback from organisations that have multiple unions. These organisations emphasised that having multiple unions in their organisations had brought about good competition between the unions in the organisations. Every union puts in the maximum effort to make sure their members' needs are met and their grievances attended to. Each union adopts strategies to make their union lucrative in order to attract more members. Hence the practice of union pluralism has positive impacts on the trade union movement.

The phenomenon of unions breaking away from their respective mother unions has been associated with managements' influence on the local unions in organisations. Most of the participants, specifically the labour officials and some union executives, indicated that the breakaway from the mother unions was the result of management finding the means to have its ways. Management, who is aware of the protection that the mother unions can give to its members and their knowledge about the rights of the employees, encourage their employees to break away from the mother unions. This is done by encouraging in-house negotiations between management and the local unions or workers without the consent of the traditional unions they are affiliated to. Management does this in order to influence its employees who are perceived as not having much knowledge about industrial relation issues. Therefore, the employees cannot get support from the mother unions who are in the best position to fight for the employees' interests and rights. The question asked by local union executives is why the employees or local unions cannot fight for their rights themselves without the help of the traditional unions. The data discloses that some of the local unions do not have much knowledge about employee relations issues, placing the traditional unions in a better position to fight and negotiate for employees' rights since they have more knowledge about and experience in issues relating to industrial relations and employee rights.

A labour official indicated:

We have realised that the employers in most cases are anti-union; they don't want their employees to be part of the larger union centres and mother unions. When the members become part of the larger unions, it becomes very difficult for the managers to manipulate or control them, that is, they are not able to do the things they like. When the union becomes an in-house or enterprise-based one, they have a lot of control over them, so we find management encouraging enterprise-based unions for their selfish interests.

The responses from 40 per cent of the participants showed that they welcomed union pluralism and even felt that having multiple unions in their organisations was the best thing to happen to them. There has been a form of “good” competition between the unions that exist in organisations. Unions put in the maximum effort to make sure their members’ needs are met and their grievances attended to. Each union adopts strategies to make the union lucrative in order to attract more members. Hence, the unions compete with each other in making sure they are responsible for their members, all in a bid to increase their membership. In the end, the employees or union members tend to benefit the most from the situation because their needs are prioritised by the unions, which is as it should be. Management enjoys the peaceful working atmosphere that the healthy competition brings to the organisation; there is no animosity and tension between workers. However, according to the general responses received from the participants in the interviews, intra-union competition in Ghana was not of great help in terms of best industrial relations practices.

It was observed that the forms of pluralism practised in Ghana differ from the forms practised in European countries. For example, the data shows that workers in the same class are affiliated with different unions. The question raised by some participants, especially labour officials, was how healthy such a practice was to the labour sector. According to an ILO report, the attack against a trade union’s unity and solidarity in Ghana by some union leaders and employers intensifies as the establishment of enterprise-based unions gains momentum, and that union pluralism is more detrimental at an enterprise level (ILO, 2010). Moreover, the question asked by the Labour Department of Ghana is why workers of the same class will unionise separately, seeing that only one union will eventually be issued with a bargaining certificate.

Union pluralism at an enterprise level is based on classes of workers. For instance, junior and senior staff members are affiliated with different unions. Although this form of pluralism at the enterprise level is seen as less detrimental to labour unionisation, some of the participants indicated that they preferred both classes of workers to belong to a single union to encourage solidarity and reduce division among the classes of workers. However, 50 per cent of the participants regarded this arrangement as impossible due to the superiority accorded to the higher classes of workers.

Out of the four labour officials interviewed, three advocated a single union and one expressed his endorsement of multiple unions in the workplace. About 40 per cent of the union executives and members preferred multiple unions. However, out of the 10 managers interviewed, seven advocated a single union at the enterprise level and three opted for the practice of union pluralism. The seven managers were of the view that union pluralism was a good concept but that its practice at the enterprise level brought about disunity and conflict among leaders. On the other hand, the other three managers indicated that union pluralism promoted democracy in the organisation and also served as a check for employers to treat workers right.

A labour official said:

A single union is better, because when there are multiple unions, management has its way, they manipulate the unions, and there is always tension and animosity between the members, which make the working environment unhealthy.

Another participant indicated:

The existence of multiple unions defeats the purpose of solidarity and unity, which is the core principle or aim of trade unionism.

Table 2 provides a summary of the findings of the current study.

Table 2: Summary of findings

<i>Selected themes</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Exit motives of union members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective executives • Less bargaining power • Favouritism and discrimination
Entry motives of union members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influential unions • Availability of alternatives • Union achievements
Challenges of union pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective bargaining issues • Victimisation of union leaders • Union rivalry/Unhealthy competition • Political influence
Benefits associated with union pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactiveness of management • Fairness • Effectiveness of executives
Policy issues regarding union pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic unionism • Freedom of association
Decline in union membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees' unwillingness to join unions
Breakaway from federations/mother unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffectiveness of federations • Internal democracy

Limitations and Strengths

The study was limited to trade unions registered with the Labour Department in Ghana. It was also restricted to organisations that had more than one trade union in the formal and public sectors in Ghana. The scope of the study was decided on because the trade union activities in the country are predominantly centred in the formal sector and anything that adversely affects the development of the formal sector also has an adverse effect on trade unionism.

Getting access to the sample was restrictive due to a lack of statistical data on organisations that have plural unions; therefore, using the snowball technique was appropriate. The researchers ensured that the selected organisations represented four main sectors of the economy. Given the typical nature of the sampled unions, the findings of this research can be generalised.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research on the legal effects of union pluralism will be relevant. The issue of local unions breaking away from mother unions was one of the major concerns raised by the representatives of the trade union movement. This is a major problem facing the union movement in Ghana. It will be important for future research to study the effect this phenomenon has and will have on the federations now and in the future. There is evidence of violations of the provisions in the ILO conventions and the Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) regarding the freedom of association—individuals have been directly and indirectly assigned affiliation with particular unions.

Implications—Practical/Managerial/Policy

Concerns raised regarding the number of persons required to be able to form a trade union indicate the need to table the issue for national consideration and exploration of its future impact on union development and in order to manage possible abuse. It will be pertinent for the state, labour officials and policy-makers to enforce the labour laws regarding the freedom of association and to consider revisiting or amending some of the provisions to curb abuse.

Contribution and Value Add of the Study

The study indicated the factors that encouraged the practice of union pluralism at the enterprise level. These included the ineffectiveness of union executives, the desire of unions to obtain a collective bargaining certificate and agreement, and the rampant display of favouritism and discrimination among union members and their leaders. Additionally, the study revealed that the availability of other unions in organisations, the power of unions to bargain at a national level, and the existence of unions that are more proactive than others in organisations either at the sector or industry level were also vital factors leading to union pluralism.

Contrary to the views of the majority of the participants that union pluralism is a destructive tool, the study has revealed that union pluralism in Ghana also has positive effects: it makes management proactive in attending to the concerns of workers, it can be used as a tool to keep management in check to ensure workers are treated fairly, it promotes healthy competition among unions, and it leads to the effectiveness of the union executives in the organisation. The strengthening of the employee voice was indicated as another positive impact of union pluralism on organisations and the trade

union movement; the influx of unions in organisations has provided several avenues for employees to express their grievances and demand management to address them. In some cases the various unions in the organisations collaborate to fight for a common goal. However, based on the general responses received from the participants, it has been established that the practice of trade union pluralism at the enterprise level is detrimental to the solidarity and unity of the industrial relations system in Ghana.

Conclusion

The study has established that trade union pluralism is a destructive development with regard to the trade union movement. The practice has detrimental effects on union activities: it makes it difficult for unions to bargain with management; it results in delays in decision-making and; it makes it possible for political parties to interfere in union activities to achieve their selfish desires. Management also interferes in union activities to manipulate the system and cause disunity among employees to break their front. Union pluralism leads to rivalry, unhealthy competition, animosity and tension among unions and their members and leaders, and employer victimisation of union leaders or executives. Union pluralism is seen as contributing to workers' refusal to join trade unions, consequently leading to the decline in union membership in the country and trade unions' and federations' loss of members. Similarly, the practice of union pluralism at the enterprise level has had negative effects: rivalry between unions; interference of political parties in union affairs; unhealthy relationships among union members and executives; victimisation of union leaders or executives and; complications in reaching collective bargaining agreements in organisations.

The study has revealed that the practice of trade union pluralism impacts negatively on the trade union movement in general. It has led to the new trend of local unions breaking away from federations or mother unions, and the multi-unionisation of the same class of workers, thus affecting the united front of trade unions. In addition, it has led to automatic unionism where employees are coerced to join particular unions in their organisations. It is important to note that this practice is against the labour laws of the country and violates the principle of freedom of association that forms the basis of trade unionism.

References

- Adu-Amankwah, K., & Tutu, K. (1997). Ghana, going beyond politics. In G. Kester & O. O. Sidibé (Eds.), *Trade unions and sustainable democracy in Africa*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Akkerman, A. (1997). A new theory of trade union competition. In Joe Wallace, Tam Dalzell, & Bernard Delany (Eds.), *Continuity and change in the employment relationship* (pp. 231–246). Dublin: Oak Tree Press.

- Akkerman, A. (2008). Union competition and strikes: The need for an analysis at the sector level. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 61(4), 445–450.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/001979390806100401>
- Amoako-Asiedu, E. (2013). *Industrial relations and trade unions* (2nd ed.). Accra: Nab Superior Services.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *Handbook of human resource management practice* (10th ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- Baah A. Y. (2005). An empirical analysis of the labour market and trade union effects in Ghana (PhD thesis). University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.
- Barrett, J. (1997). On the nature of experience in the bare theory. *Synthese*, 113(3), 347–355.
- Britwum, O. A. (2010). Union democracy and the challenges of globalisation to organised labour in Ghana (PhD dissertation). Maastricht University.
- Bryson, A. (2003). Working with dinosaurs? Union effectiveness in delivering for employees. London: UK Policy Studies Institute. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1004983313200>
- Chaison, Gary N. (1996). *Union mergers in hard times: The view from five countries*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Cully, M. (2000). Unions @ a loss: Members and earnings. *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 26(1), 11.
- Daly, G. F. (1968). *Industrial relations: Comparative aspects with particular reference to Ireland*. Cork: Mercier Press.
- Davison R. B. (1957). Labor relations in Ghana. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 310(1), 133–141.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000271625731000114>
- Deery, S., & Iverson, R. (2005). Labor-management cooperation: Antecedents and impact on organizational performance. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 58(4), 588–609.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/001979390505800404>
- Dobson, J. R. (1997). The effects of multi-unionism: A survey of large manufacturing establishments. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 35(4), 547–566.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8543.00068>
- Edwards, P. (Ed.). (1999). *Industrial relations: Theory and practice in Britain*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Forde, M. (1984). Trade union pluralism and labour law in France. *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 33(1), 134–157. <https://doi.org/10.1093/iclqaj/33.1.134>
- Freeman R. B., & Medoff J. L. (1984). *What do unions do?* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Gernigon, B., Odero, A. H. G., & Guido, H. (2000). ILO principles concerning collective bargaining. *International Labour Review*, 139(1), 33–53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1564-913X.2000.tb00401.x>
- Ghana. (1992). Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.
- Ghana Trades Union Congress. (2012). *Organising for empowerment, employment security and increased productivity*. 9th Quadrennial Delegates Congress (pp. 20–28), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, August 11–16.
- Gupta, A., & Gupta, N. (2013). The 21st century trade union challenges in India. *Journal of Accounting and Marketing*, 2(2), 104. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2168-9601.1000104>
- Harcourt, M., & Lam, H. (2011). Non-majority union representation conforms to ILO freedom of association principles and (potentially) promotes inter-union collaboration: New Zealand lessons for Canada. *Dalhousie Law Journal*, 34(1), 115–141.
- International Labour Organization. (1994). *Freedom of association and collective bargaining*. Geneva: ATA Press.
- International Labour Organization. (2006). *Freedom of association and collective bargaining*. Geneva: ATA Press.
- International Labour Organization. (2010). *Trade union pluralism and proliferation in French-speaking Africa*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Kalamatiev, T. & Ristovski, A. (2012). Trade union pluralism – Progression or regression in the protection of workers’ rights in the Republic of Macedonia? *SEER: Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe*, 15(3), 391–399. <https://doi.org/10.5771/1435-2869-2012-3-391>
- Lambropoulos, V., & Wynn, M. T. (2013). Unfair labour practices, trade union victimisation and voice: A comparison of Australia and the United Kingdom [Abstract]. *Adelaide Law Review*, 34(1), 43–64. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2633860>.
- MacPartlin, B. (1997). The development of trade union organisation. In T. V. Murphy & W. K. Roche (Eds.), *Irish Industrial Relations in Practice*. Dublin: Oak Tree Press.
- McCarthy, C. (1981). An evaluation of the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Industrial Relations. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

- Metcalfe, D., Wadsworth, J., & Ingram, P. (2005). Multi-unionism, size of bargaining group and strikes. *Industrial Relations Journal*, 24(1), 4–13.
- Murphy, C. (2003). Union membership slips again. *Australian Financial Review*, 3.
- Nel, P. S., Kirsten, M., Swanepoel, B. J. Erasmus, B. J., & Poisat, P. (2008). *South African employment relations: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Noh, Y. J. (2010). Multi-unions in the United States. *Labour Review*, 69, 32–34.
- Obeng-Fosu, P. (2007). *Industrial relations in Ghana: The law and practice* (3rd ed.). Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Osei-Boateng, C., & Ampratwum, E. (2011). *The informal sector in Ghana*. Accra: FES.
- Shore, L. M. & Newton, L. A. (1997). Union-membership relations: Loyalty, instrumentality and alienation. In M. Sverke (Ed.), *The future of trade unionism: International perspectives on emerging union structures* (pp. 189–208). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Sinclair, J. (2006). An obstacle to management innovation? Some myths uncovered on multi-union workplaces in Ireland. *Irish Journal of Management*, 27(1), 34–39.
- Stevenson, H., & Bascia, N. (2014). *Teacher unions and multi-unionism: Identifying issues of gender and militancy in Ontario and England*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 27–May 1.
- Trachtman, L. N. (1962). The labor movement of Ghana: A study on political unionism. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 10(2), 183–200.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/449952>
- Wallace, J., Gunnigle, P., & McMahon, G. (2004). *Industrial relations in Ireland*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.