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Analysis of Current Status and Characteristics of Multiple Union Establishment

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I. Background and Purpose

- The legalization of multiple labor unions has been viewed as a major change in institutional environment that could serve as a turning point for labor-management and labor-labor relationships at the establishment level; and that could produce both positive/negative outcomes, e.g. rising unionization rate, intensifying competition between FKTU (Federation of Korean Trade Unions) and KCTU (Korean Confederation of Trade Unions), and increasing domination and interference by employers.
 - However, although quite some time has passed since forming multiple unions at the establishment level was allowed in 2011, little research has been conducted—apart from Yongjin Nho (2015)—to analyze the characteristics of establishments where multiple unions are formed based on quantitative data.
- Workplace Panel Survey (WPS) is considered to be the only data suitable for analyzing the characteristics of establishments where multiple unions have been established because it provides basic information on their characteristics such as industry and size; the changes in the number of union members; the makeup of workforce including employment types as well as employee representation; and useful information on industrial relations such as the overall atmosphere and the position change of the representative union.
 - Therefore, using WPS, we will try to examine establishments where multiple unions have been formed and explore whether there is a difference in the probability of establishing multiple unions depending on

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the characteristics of industry and size, as well as industrial relations.

II. Changes in the Number of Unions and their Members Since Legalizing Multiple Unions

- Whether or not the number of unions and their members has increased since the legalization of multiple unions has an important meaning in relation to the promotion of the right to organize.
 - The establishment of a new union representing those who were not represented previously by the existing union, or that is part of the existing union but critical of its policy, may result in the increase of the number of union members, leading to the rise of the unionization rate.
 - If, however, certain members of the existing union simply decide to form a new union, it is not expected to raise the number of union members significantly.
 - Tae-Gi Kim (2009) predicted that allowing multiple unions is not likely to increase the unionization rate significantly because the existing unions have already organized most of the potential members and the costs of joining the union will exceed the benefits if a newly-established union cannot provide new services.
 - The extent to which the number of union members will actually increase (i.e. growth of unionization rate) depends on how much the existing non-unionized employees join a new union.
- According to Table 1 and Figure 1 showing the number of trade unions, the number of union members, and the unionization rate using the WPS data from 2005 to 2015, the overall number of unions increased steadily and the number of union members also followed the same trend.
 - In particular, the number of unions has clearly been increasing since the legalization of multiple unions in

2011. The number of union members has been fluctuating, with a relatively big decrease in 2013 from the previous survey year, followed by recovery in 2015 to the level slightly higher than 2011.

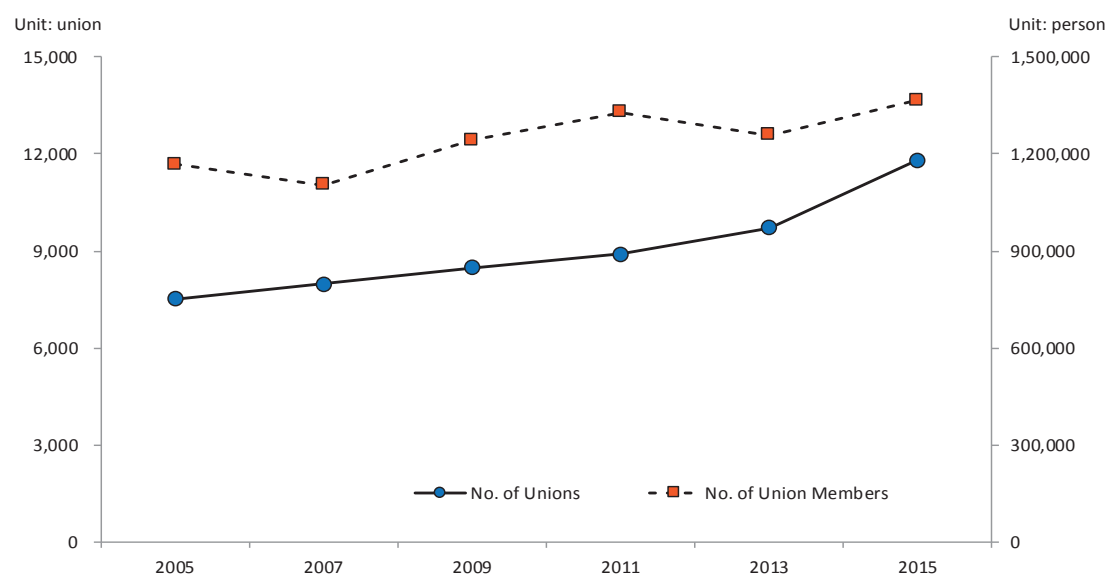
- Meanwhile, although the number of trade unions and the number of union members have increased steadily, the unionization rate of establishments with 30 or more employees based on WPS declined from 26.0% in 2005 to 21.8% in 2015 (Jungwoo Kim, 2017).
 - Such a drop in the unionization rate despite the increase in the number of union members during the same period is due to the fact that the increase in the number of members failed to catch up with the increase in the number of wage workers, which is the denominator in the calculation of the unionization rate (Also, this relatively rapid drop in the unionization rate seems to reflect the sample characteristics of WPS for establishments with 30 or more employees. For example, when the data on “The Status of the National Labor Union Organization” for all wage workers is used, such a sharp drop in the unionization rate is not observed).
- All unionized establishments were divided into those with multiple unions and those with a single union. Looking at the changes since 2011, the increase in the number of unions was largely due to the division of the existing unions (See Table 2).
 - Out of all unionized establishments, the percentage of those with multiple unions is relatively stable at 15%. In the case of those with a single union, the number of unions was not restored to the 2009 level until 2013.
 - According to Jong-Kyu Kim (2012), among the 676 new unions that reported set up until the end of January 2012 after the legalization of multiple unions at the establishment level on July 1, 2011, only 152 unions (22.5%) were formed from the non-unionized sector, while 77.5% were formed as a result of the division of

Table 1. Changes in the Number of Unions, Union Members, and Unionization Rate by Year

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Number of trade unions (place)	7,517	7,989	8,494	8,903	9,725	11,819
Number of union members (person)	1,167,815	1,105,106	1,242,900	1,328,516	1,258,200	1,365,225
Unionization rate (%)	26.0	23.7	24.3	22.9	21.3	21.8

Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

Figure 1. Changes in the Number of Unions, Union Members by Year



Source : WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

Table 2. Changes in the Number of Unions by Year According to Union Status

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Single union sector (single union establishments)	7,517 (100.0)	7,989 (100.0)	8,494 (100.0)	7,727 (86.8)	8,405 (86.4)	10,266 (86.9)
Multiple union sector (multiple union establishments)				1,175 (15.2)	1,320 (15.7)	1,553 (15.1)
Total	7,517	7,989	8,494	8,903	9,725	11,819

Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

the existing unions.

- This trend is more evident in the number of union members. In Table 3, the number of union members of the multiple union sector has steadily increased, and the proportion in terms of union members of the multiple union sector among the entire union sector continuously increased from 19.4% in 2009 to 24.6% in 2013 and

27.0% in 2015. On the other hand, the number of union members of the single union sector was not restored to the 2009 level (before the legalization of multiple unions) even in 2015.

- Figure 2 shows that, while the number of union members in establishments with 30 or more employees had moderate growth after allowing multiple unions in 2011,

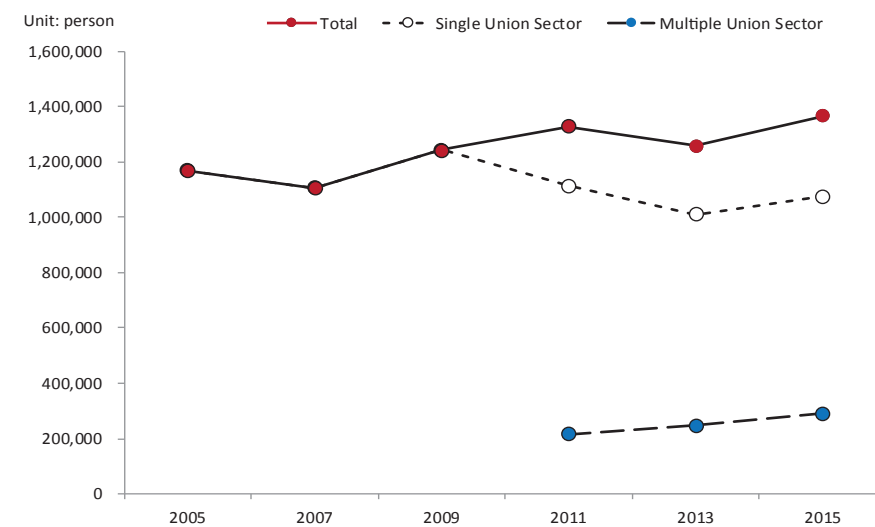
Table 3. Changes in the Number of Union Members by Year According to Union Status

(Unit : person, %)

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Single union sector	1,167,815 (100.0)	1,105,106 (100.0)	1,242,900 (100.0)	1,112,487 (83.7)	1,010,110 (80.3)	1,075,112 (78.7)
Multiple union sector				216,030 (19.4)	248,090 (24.6)	290,113 (27.0)
Total	1,167,815	1,105,106	1,242,900	1,328,516	1,258,200	1,365,225

Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

Figure 2. Changes in the Number of Union Members According to Union Status (2005~2015)



Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

the increase is not large and the majority of the increase is attributed to the division of the existing unions.

- This trend is consistent with the prediction (Sung Hee Lee, 2011) that the increase in the unionization rate will not be as large as the increase in the number of unions after the legalization of multiple unions.

III. General Characteristics of Establishments Where Multiple Unions Have Been Formed

- Comparing the basic characteristics of the single union sector and the multiple union sector by integrating the 2011, 2013, and 2015 WPS data—after the legalization of multiple unions—and Table 4 shows the difference in the ratio of multiple union emergence according to in-

dustry and size of establishment in terms of the number of trade unions.

- By industry, the ratio of multiple union establishments in the entire non-manufacturing was 15.03%, significantly higher than the ratio in the entire manufacturing (8.01%).
- In the non-manufacturing sector, the ratio of multiple union establishments in the Social Services and the Distribution Services exceeded the average at 31.25% and 20.02%, respectively. Among the manufacturing industries, the Metal, Automobile, Transportation (12.02%) and the Chemical Industry (10.55%) reported a higher-than-average ratio of multiple union establishments.
- The ratio of multiple unions by size of establishment ranged from 11.14% (300~499 employees) to 16.31% (over 500 Employees), indicating a relatively small gap

Table 4. Characteristics of establishments where multiple unions have been established (vs. single union establishments) - Comparison of the Number of Unions

			single union sector		multiple unions sector	
			No.(place)	Ratio(%)	No.(place)	Ratio(%)
All			26,399	86.71	4,048	13.29
Industry	Manufacturing	Light Industry	1,756	97.43	46	2.57
		Chemical Industry	1,453	89.45	171	10.55
		Metal, Automobile, Transportation	2,303	87.98	315	12.02
		Electric, Electronic, Precise	1,407	95.28	70	4.72
		All Manufacturing	6,918	91.99	602	8.01
	Non-manufacturing	Construction	580	90.64	60	9.36
		Electricity, Gas, Water Services	271	93.23	20	6.77
		Personal Services	4,221	93.92	273	6.08
		Distribution Services	7,317	79.98	1,831	20.02
		Business Services, Others	5,010	94.07	316	5.93
		Social Services	2,081	68.75	946	31.25
		All Non-manufacturing	19,480	84.97	3,446	15.03
Size	30~99 Employees		14,515	86.90	2,188	13.10
	100~299 Employees		5,339	85.63	896	14.37
	300~499 Employees		4,482	88.86	562	11.14
	Over 500 Employees		2,063	83.69	402	16.31

Source : Weights were applied to the integrated WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees of 2011, 2013, 2015 (periods after the legalization of multiple unions).

compared with the overall average of 13.29%.

- This is somewhat different from the prediction of Tae-Gi Kim (2009) that additional unions are more likely to be established in large enterprises with better solvency.

- The results of examining the ratio of multiple union establishments according to industry and size of establishment in terms of the number of union members showed a wider sectoral gap compared to the results produced in terms of the number of unions (See Table 5).

- First, by industry, the percentage of the multiple union sector in terms of the number of union members stood only at 5.75% on average in manufacturing but at 25.16% in non-manufacturing. In particular, the proportions were high in Electricity, Gas, Water Services (35.49%), and the Distribution Services (23.91%).

- By size, the percentage of the multiple union sector in establishments with 500 or more employees was 24.98%, which was above the total average of 19.09%, and the percentage was less than the average in establishments of smaller sizes.

IV. Characteristics of Industrial Relations at Establishments Where Multiple Unions Have Been Formed

- Among the characteristics of industrial relations, the impact on the formation of multiple unions of how industrial relations are perceived by labor and management was first examined. The multiple union sector tends to view that industrial relations are more adversarial com-

Table 5. Characteristics of establishments where multiple unions have been established (vs. single union establishments) - Comparison of the Number of Union Members

			single union sector		multiple unions sector	
			No.(place)	Ratio(%)	No.(place)	Ratio(%)
All			3,197,709	80.91	754,232	19.09
Industry	Manufacturing	Light Industry	193,014	96.75	6,477	3.25
		Chemical Industry	185,431	89.48	21,809	10.52
		Metal, Automobile, Transportation	497,599	95.52	23,364	4.48
		Electric, Electronic, Precise	290,178	98.39	4,757	1.61
		All Manufacturing	1,166,222	94.25	71,110	5.75
	Non-manufacturing	Construction	74,067	90.31	7,946	9.69
		Electricity, Gas, Water Services	33,734	64.51	18,561	35.49
		Personal Services	260,719	88.55	33,715	11.45
		Distribution Services	734,730	76.09	230,834	23.91
		Business Services, Others	615,530	79.21	161,583	20.79
		Social Services	312,707	83.11	63,547	16.89
		All Non-manufacturing	2,031,487	74.84	683,123	25.16
Size	30~99 Employees		517,978	84.65	93,962	15.35
	100~299 Employees		485,734	86.26	77,343	13.74
	300~499 Employees		782,528	87.40	112,842	12.60
	Over 500 Employees		1,411,469	75.02	470,085	24.98

Source : Weights were applied to the integrated WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees of 2011, 2013, 2015 (periods after the legalization of multiple unions).

Table 6. Perception Gap between Labor and Management toward Industrial Relations in Multiple Union Establishments and Single Union Establishments (as of 2011)

(Unit : person)

“Labor and management are in an adversarial relationship” (1:adversarial, 5:friendly)	Status	Management	Primary Union	Secondary Union	Gap (Management ↔ Primary Union)	Gap (Management ↔ Secondary Union)
	Single union	3.881	3.775		0.106	
	Multiple unions	3.660	3.490	3.497	0.171	0.163

Note : 1) weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees

2) Among multiple unions, the primary union refers to the union that has the largest number of union members, and the secondary union has the second largest number of union members.

pared to the single union sector, and it reports a wider perception gap between labor and management. In other words, the more industrial relations are perceived to be adversarial and the wider the perception gap between labor and management, the higher the percentage of forming multiple unions in establishments (See Table 6).

- The questionnaire called for indicating how much the respondents agree or disagree with the statement

“Labor and management are in an adversarial relationship” using the scale “Strongly agree” (1), “Moderately agree” (2), “Neither disagree nor agree” (3), “Moderately Disagree” (4), “Strongly disagree” (5). The scores closer to 1 means the respondents perceive that labor and management are in an adversarial relationship, while the scores closer to 5 means that the respondents feel that labor and management are in a cooperative,

friendly relationship.

- In the single union sector, the perception score of management was 3.88, relatively higher than that of the multiple union sector (3.66). In the case of labor, the perception scores of the single union sector and the multiple union sector were 3.78 and 3.49, respectively, meaning that the single union sector has a stronger perception that labor and management are in

a non-adversarial relationship.

- The perception gap between labor and management in the single union sector was small at 0.11 (labor: 3.78, management: 3.88) while that in the multiple union sector was relatively big at 0.17 (labor: 3.49, management: 3.66).
- When management clearly pursues the anti-unionism

Table 7. Relationship between Anti-unionism Strategies of Management during the Previous Survey Period (2yrs ago) and the Percentage of Multiple Unions Being Formed

(Unit : place, %)

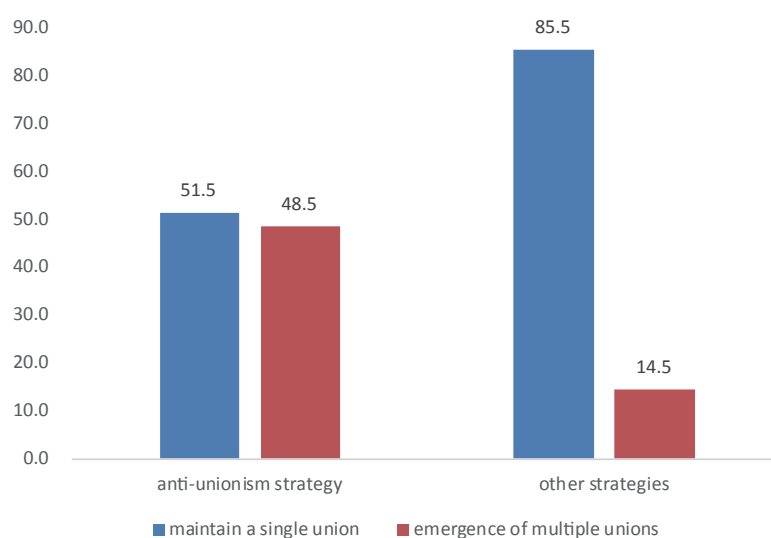
	All (2011~2015)	
	Single union	Multiple unions
All	16,813 (84.9)	2,989 (15.1)
Trying to weaken or dissolve unions	178 (51.5)	168 (48.5)
Other strategies	16,635 (85.5)	2,821 (14.5)

Note : 1) Using the WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees, weights were applied to calculate the percentage of multiple unions being formed resulting from employer strategies toward unions in the previous survey period (2 years ago).

2) Other strategies include: ① acknowledging the existence of union but trying to minimize its participation in business management; ② respecting union as a partner and encouraging its participation in business management.

Figure 3. Comparison of Percentages of Forming Multiple Unions Resulting from Employer Strategies toward Unions (2011, 2013, 2015)

(Unit : %)



Note : 1) Using the WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees, weights were applied to calculate the percentage of multiple unions being formed resulting from employer strategies toward unions in the previous survey period (2 years ago).

2) Other strategies include: ① acknowledging the existence of union but trying to minimize its participation in business management; ② respecting union as a partner and encouraging its participation in business management.

path in its industrial relations, the percentage of multiple unions being formed in the establishments increases significantly (See Table 7 and Figure 3).

- While multiple unions are allowed, employers may seek to increase its domination and interference as part of its strategy to weaken labor unions or may

cause division among workers, thus raising concerns that another union may be established (In Jun, 2009; Jong-Kyu Kim, 2013). Such tendencies have been confirmed in certain cases of metal workers unions (Seok-Beom Hong, 2014; Jae-Won Ahn, 2017).

- According to the WPS data, if the employer had a

Table 8. Relationship between Militancy of Primary Union during the Previous Survey Period (2yrs ago) and the Percentage of Multiple Unions Being Formed

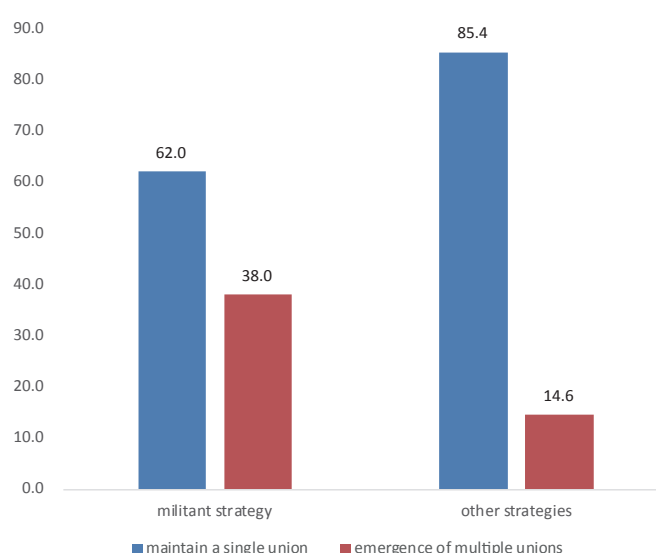
(Unit : place, %)

	All (2011~2015)	
	Single union	Multiple unions
All	16,813 (84.9)	2,989 (15.1)
Militant, seeking to weaken the management's authority	271 (62.0)	166 (38.0)
Other strategies	16,542 (85.4)	2,824 (14.6)

Note : 1) Using the WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees, weights were applied to calculate the percentage of multiple unions being formed resulting from labor union strategies during the previous survey period (2 years ago).

2) Other strategies include: ① acknowledging the management rights but not at all cooperative about matters that may be against even the slightest interests of the union and the workers; ② actively cooperating with management, thus trying to protect the interests of workers in the long term; ③ cooperating with management without considering much the interests of workers.

Figure 4. Comparison of Percentages of Forming Multiple Unions Resulting from Strategies of Primary Union (2011, 2013, 2015)
(Unit : %)



Note : 1) Using the WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees, weights were applied to calculate the percentage of multiple unions being formed resulting from labor union strategies during the previous survey period (2 years ago).

2) Other strategies include: ① acknowledging the management rights but not at all cooperative about matters that may be against even the slightest interests of the union and the workers; ② actively cooperating with management, thus trying to protect the interests of workers in the long term; ③ cooperating with management without considering much the interests of workers.

strategy other than clear anti-unionism during the previous survey period (i.e. two years ago), the probability of multiple unions emerging after two years was 14.5%. On the other hand, if the employer was clearly pursuing the anti-unionism path two years ago, the probability of multiple unions emerging after two years was 48.5%, more than three times higher.

- These statistical results imply that, if the employer stands firm in anti-unionism, the possibility of their supporting or encouraging the formation of a more cooperative union through direct/indirect intervention or pressure cannot be ruled out.

• If the union takes a very militant and uncooperative stance, the proportion of the emergence of multiple unions is higher than if the union were cooperative (See Table 8 and Figure 4).

- If the union pursues political or militant strategies, there is a possibility that a new union will be created against the existing policy (In Hur, 2009) or a new union will pursue non-political strategies (Tae-Gi Kim, 2009).

- According to the WPS data, if the primary union had the toughest stance (i.e. militant, seeking to weaken the management's authority) during the previous survey period (i.e. two years ago), the probability of the emergence of multiple unions after two years was

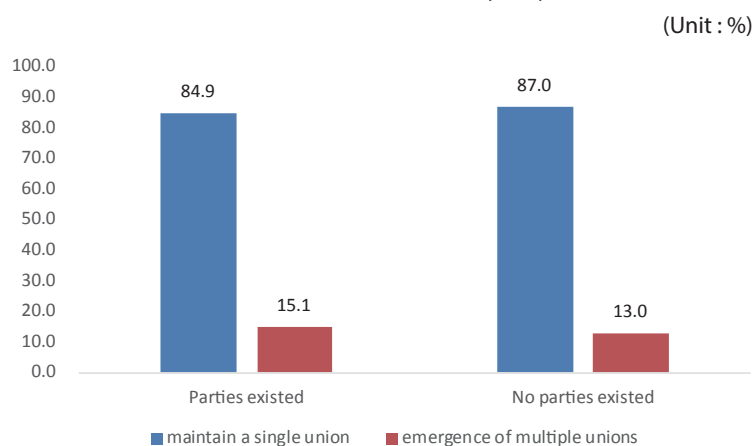
Table 9. Relationship between Presence of Labor Movement Parties during the Previous Survey Period (2yrs ago) and the Percentage of Multiple Unions Being Formed

(Unit : place, %)

	All (2011)	
	Single union	Multiple unions
All	6,003 (86.8)	910 (13.2)
Parties existed	508 (84.9)	91 (15.1)
No parties existed	5,495 (87.0)	819 (13.0)

Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees. Limited to the business establishments surveyed both in 2009 and 2011 who reported that they had unions both in 2009 and 2011 (n=558).

Figure 5. Comparison of Percentages of Forming Multiple Unions Resulting from Presence of Labor Movement Parties (2011)



Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees. Limited to the business establishments surveyed both in 2009 and 2011 who reported that they had unions both in 2009 and 2011 (n=558).

38.0%. This was more than twice the average probability (14.6%) if the union had a more moderate strategy.

- There are no significant differences in the probability of the emergence of multiple unions depending on the presence or the absence of parties (factions or groups) in the union that pursue different paths of activism (See Table 9 and Figure 5).
 - Often in large-scale establishments, there exist formal/informal field organizations called parties (factions or groups) in Korea's labor movement. They are grouped according to particular ideological tendencies or paths of activism, and based on other secondary factors such as occupation, department, school, or hometown. As they compete to gain higher authority within unions, i.e. executive power, they continuously reorganize themselves and form and break alliances within themselves.
 - In the past, these parties competed in the election for the acquisition of single union power, but now that multiple unions are legalized, there is a possibility that they will try to establish a separate union.
 - According to the WPS data, if there was a labor movement party during the previous survey period (i.e. two years ago), the probability of the emergence of multiple unions after two years was 15.1%, slightly higher than the probability if there were no party (13.0%). However, the difference is not that significant.
 - This implies that a labor movement party does not

always proceed with establishing a separate union just because multiple unions are allowed.

- Establishments where a strike has taken place reported a much higher percentage of multiple unions being formed than establishments where a strike has not or never taken place (See Table 10 and Figure 6).
 - According to a case study of Korea University Research and Business Foundation (2014), there have been a number of cases where, after a strike ended at an establishment, the union which took strike action decided to split or those who were not members of the existing union decided to form a new union, resulting in the existence of multiple unions.
 - According to the WPS data, among the establishments that experienced a strike during the previous survey period (i.e. two years ago), the percentage of those with multiple unions was 77.9% in 2011, much higher than the percentage calculated among the establishments that did not experience a strike (9.2%).
 - In 2013, the percentages of the establishments with multiple unions among those that experienced a strike during the previous survey period and those that did not have a strike during the previous survey period were 33.0% and 13.3%, respectively, still showing a quite considerable difference. However, it was much smaller than the gap in 2011, and the gap between the two sectors disappeared in 2015.

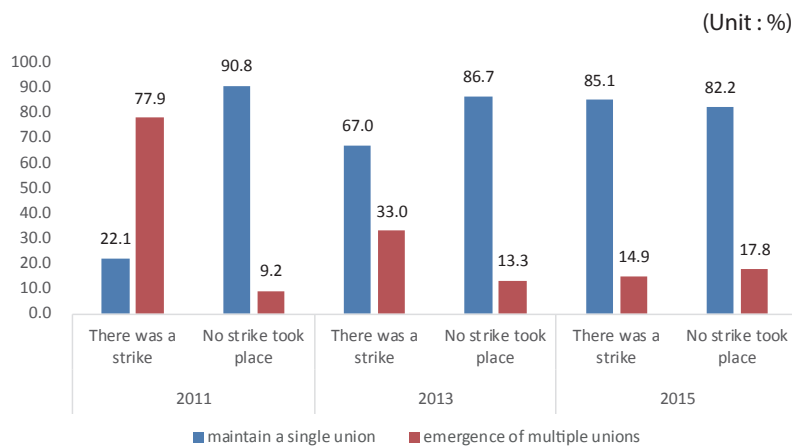
Table 10. Relationship between whether a Strike Took Place during the Previous Survey Period (2yrs ago) and the Percentage of Multiple Unions Being Formed (2011~2015)

(Unit : place, %)

	2011		2013		2015		All	
	single union	multiple union	single union	multiple union	single union	multiple union	single union	multiple union
All	5,353 (89.5)	629 (10.5)	6,005 (86.4)	948 (13.6)	3,292 (82.3)	708 (17.7)	14,650 (86.5)	2,286 (13.5)
There was a strike	26 (22.1)	92 (77.9)	83 (67.0)	41 (33.0)	107 (85.1)	19 (14.9)	217 (58.9)	151 (41.1)
No strike took place	5,327 (90.8)	538 (9.2)	5,921 (86.7)	907 (13.3)	3,185 (82.2)	690 (17.8)	14,433 (87.1)	2,134 (12.9)

Source : weighted WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees.

Figure 6. Comparison of Percentages of Forming Multiple Unions Resulting from Having Experienced a Strike (2011~2015)



Source : Using the WPS data on establishments with 30 or more employees, weights were applied to calculate the percentage of multiple unions being formed resulting from having experienced a strike during the previous survey period (2 years ago).

- These results indicate that after experiencing a strike which is an extreme form of labor-management confrontation, it is frequently observed that the existing union decides to split or a new union is formed to compete with the existing union that took strike action. That relationship was especially evident in 2011—the first year of legalizing the establishment of multiple unions at the establishment level, and the trend has gradually weakened since then.

V. Summary and Implications

- Although the number of unions and the number of union members calculated using the WPS data have been increasing since the legalization of multiple unions in 2011, when establishments are divided into those with multiple unions and those with a single union, it is concluded that the increase is largely due to the division of the existing unions. Therefore, the effect on the increase in the number of union members is not significant.
- The proportion of union members who belong to multiple union establishments among all union members steadily increased from 19.4% in 2011 to 24.6% in

2013 and 27.0% in 2015.

- According to the distribution of multiple union establishments by industry, non-manufacturing accounts for a higher proportion than manufacturing, and there is no clear tendency in size distribution.
- Characteristics related to industrial relations of a particular establishment have a clear statistical relationship with the ratio of multiple unions being formed. The more adversarial and militant the industrial relations are, the more likely multiple unions will be formed.
- The more the industrial relations are perceived to be adversarial by labor and management, the higher the percentage of forming multiple unions. Also, the establishments where multiple unions have been formed are likely to have a wider perception gap between labor and management compared to the establishments with a single union.
- If the employer clearly pursued the anti-unionism path, the probability of the emergence of multiple unions was 48.5%, more than three times higher than when the employer had strategies other than anti-unionism (14.5%).

- If the primary union takes a very militant and unco-operative stance, the probability of multiple unions emerging is 38.0%. This is more than twice the probability if the union had a more moderate strategy (14.6%).
- There are no significant differences in the probability of the emergence of multiple unions depending on the presence of a labor movement party (the probability is 15.1% if there was a labor movement party and 13.0% if there was no party).
- In 2011, among the establishments that experienced a strike during the previous survey period (two years ago), the percentage of those with multiple unions was 77.9%, much higher than the percentage calculated among the establishments that did not experience a strike (9.2%). However, the gap between the two sectors significantly narrowed and disappeared in 2015.
- According to the above descriptive statistics, the emergence of multiple unions is influenced greatly by the experiences and practices in adversarial industrial relations, e.g. the anti-unionism strategy of the employer, militancy of the union, and whether or not the establishment has experienced a strike. There is no clear evidence that allowing multiple unions has resulted in positive outcomes such as an increase in the number of union members
- However, the above descriptive statistics do not prove causality. And in the future, it is planned to perform econometric analysis to examine various characteristics of the establishment, in particular further investigate the statistical relationship between the characteristics related to industrial relations and the possibility of forming multiple unions.

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