

[ABSTRACT]

**A Case Study on the Voluntary
Separation of Workers in a
Manufacturing Firm.**

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The purpose of this study is to investigate empirically the antecedents of voluntary separations of workers in Korean manufacturing industries. I argue that the intention of a worker to leave is influenced by the degree of job satisfaction in an organization to which he/she belongs. Therefore the intention to leave can be reduced and the organizational commitment can be improved, if the firm provides proper personnel management incentives.

A firm from the labor intensive manufacturing sector is selected to represent an organization in which the typical Korean personnel management system is practiced, and 774 workers are interviewed to be analyzed quantitatively.

Findings are supportive to the theoretical arguments presented. Factors which are found to be important in determining a worker's decisions to stay are intrinsic job satisfaction, horizontal and vertical human relations, early socialization in the firm, and firm-specific training experience. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the current high quit rates of the manufacturing industries in Korea is caused by improper management practices which is not able to induce the commitment of workers.

However, it has been argued that workers in the manufacturing industries have been very effectively mobilized for the last three decades in spite of low wages and poor working conditions. This can be explained by considering the macro situation of Korean labor market which has been kept to be very competitive because of the unlimited supply of labor force from the rural population.