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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Managerial Tasks and Coping Strategies of Community Social Service Provider: The Case of Jeju National University Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center

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ABSTRACT

What are the tasks for improving the effects of community social service provision, and how should we solve these? This study approaches the question with the case analysis of Jeju National University Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center. Considered as the top community social service provider, Sorieoulim started the music mentoring service for adolescents since 2009. They are currently facing managerial tasks caused by the open service registration system and the emergence of similar services, including recruitment of new service users and competent music teachers, service provision in remote communities, and profitability improvement. In effort to address these management issues, Sorieoulim is implementing various coping strategies, such as rural area service expansion, public relations improvement, alliance expansion, pay raise, motivation increase, cost reduction, and revenue diversification.

This paper shows the following conclusion, implication and suggestion:

●The dynamic capability for transforming resources and managerial abilities has a positive effect in coping with rapidly changing environments.

●The resource-based view can be applied to small social service providers and the managerial ability is a more important determinant in performance improvement.

●A new policy that ensures quality service through a service expense increase, stricter registration requirements, and a proper evaluation system for all community social service providers is required.

<Key-words>

Community social service, music mentoring service, resource-based view, dynamic capability, managerial ability

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I. Introduction

In 2007, the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Korea introduced a social service electronic voucher system providing welfare services to elders and disabled. The next year, it expanded to a total of six social services including a home medical care service and a community social service. According to the 2012 statistics, about 56,000 people have been hired from 4,580 service providers and 879.6 billion Korean won (KRW) worth of welfare services are being offered to around 655,000 people (www.socialservice.or.kr).

With its 900 billion KRW budget, the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Korea aims to create jobs for the socially vulnerable group, strengthen consumer choice, build a suitable environment for service quality enhancement, and improve the efficiency and transparency of social service providers. In order to achieve these, the Ministry of Health and Welfare conducts social service quality evaluations at least once in three years, for which they study quality management system, evaluation standards and index of community social service providers (Choi et al., 2013). Most of their studies examine social service as a whole. These macroscopic researches are significant in that they propose relevant government policies for increasing social service provision effects, however, they are limited in demonstrating ways to improve the effectiveness of the service offered by social service providers (www.khwis.or.kr). Although the service provision effect is largely influenced by the actual social service providers, there is little research on what kinds of environmental changes the service providers face or how they should react to such changes to improve their business effect.

In this paper, we examine the problems and solutions the social service provider encounters from the example of a specific community social service program that reflects the characteristics of Jeju Province named Jeju National University Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center (hereinafter referred to as 'Sorieoulim'), using resource-based view. The reason behind choosing Sorieoulim as the case model is because they are currently seeking effective and efficient approaches to social service provision as they struggle with changes surrounding their business environments. Sorieoulim is the first-ever organization to create and run a music mentoring service business model. Established in 2009, they are known to provide the best and largest music mentoring services in Jeju Province. In 2011, they ranked first nationwide in the social service area and won the best enterprise award in 2012 out of 800 organizations. However, the changed policy to an open registration system and a dramatic increase of competitors significantly decreased the number of service users and the profitability of Sorieoulim. There is a fair chance that similar phenomena will appear in other community social service providers which would lead to a decrease in the expected effects of social service businesses. Therefore, we aim to examine current managerial tasks and coping strategies of community social service providers in detail through the case analysis.

II. Theoretical Background and Case Analysis Model

In order to investigate the management problems and the appropriate solutions in providing community social service, a case analysis model based on the resource-based view can be drawn. We briefly introduce the theoretical background and derive a case analysis model (environmental changes → adjustments in resources and managerial ability → performance improvement).

1. Theoretical Background

Resource-based view sees firms as portfolio of distinctive resources and capabilities, and suggests that performance improvement is determined by the nature of strategic resources possessed and utilized by firms (Penrose, 1959; Barney, 1991; Newbert, 2007). A resource is an “asset or input to production (tangible or intangible) that an organization owns, controls or has access to on a semi-permanent basis” (Helfat & Peteraf, 2003). There are four categories of resources; financial (cash, retained earnings), physical (plant & equipment, geographic location), human (skills & individual abilities) and organizational (reporting structures, relationship, patent, brand value, reputation). Resources that are heterogeneous and immobile have a bigger impact on performance. If resources are valuable, rare, costly to imitate and organized to capture value, there is a greater possibility for a sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). However, the resources alone are not enough to achieve good performance. Through managerial activities that secure and utilize these resources in an efficient and effective way, firms can increase their competitive advantage and performance (Sirmon et al., 2007; Holcomb et al., 2009). In particular, firms’ performance depends on dynamic capability (a kind of managerial ability) that adjusts and utilizes internal resources according to changes in environment (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997; Zollo & Winter, 2002; Teece, 2007).

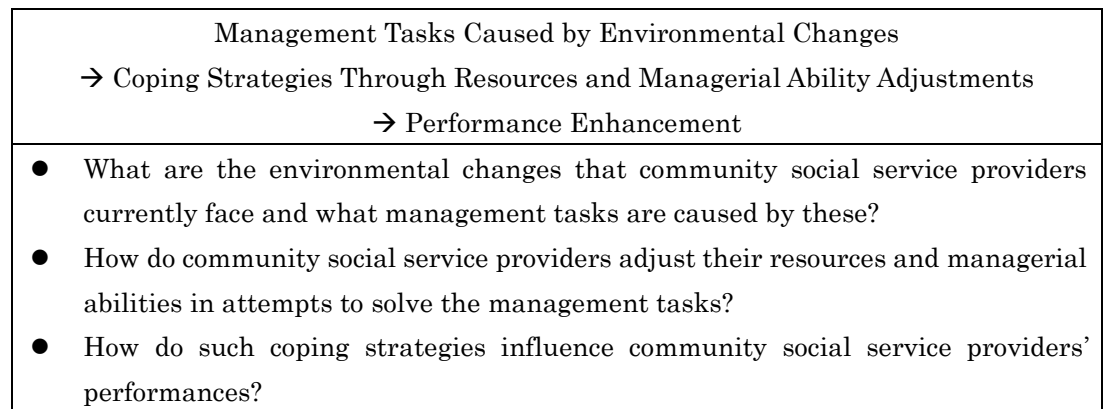
Managing resources is as important as having those resources (Penrose, 1959), in other words, it is critical to have a managerial ability as well as firms’ own resources (Holcomb et al., 2009). This is because performance is influenced not only by firms’ own resources, but also by managerial activities that improve resource productivity (Sirmon, Hitt, Ireland & Gilbert, 2011). Therefore, performance relies on managerial tasks resolving and resource management. The managerial activity of acquiring and utilizing resources for performance improvement is itself the process of solving main managerial tasks efficiently and effectively (Yoon, 2010).

2. Case Analysis Model

As demonstrated above, resource-based view can effectively analyze the process of solving main managerial tasks for performance. Recent studies also examine how performance is affected by managerial tasks and coping strategies in personnel, operation, financial, and marketing managements based on resource-based view

(Barbero et al., 2011; Runyan, Huddleston & Swinny, 2007; Yoon, 2010). Community social service providers also encounter various managerial tasks during service provision, and coping strategies are what determine their performances. Consequently, the determinants of community social service providers' performances can be analyzed using the resource-based view.

In order to enhance the service provision effect, community social service providers adjust their resource and management corresponding to the opportunities or threats that come from firms' environmental changes. In overcoming challenges resulted from environmental changes, they aim to maintain high quality services while acquiring and utilizing resources efficiently and effectively. In other words, community social service providers are responding to problems generated from changes in management environments through coping strategies that adjust resources and managerial abilities according to environmental changes. Figure 1 demonstrates a case analysis model derived from the above argument.



Source: The authors

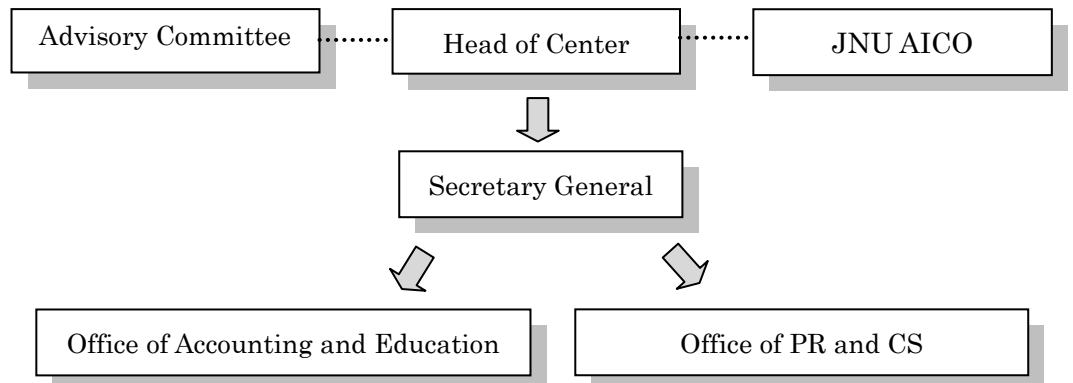
<Figure 1> Case Analysis Model

III. The Case of Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center

1. Overview of Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center

1) The Development

As the official affiliated organization of the Jeju Nat'l University Academic-Industrial Cooperation Office(AICO), Sorieoulim has been providing youth music mentoring services for 6 years since 2009. Youth music mentoring business provides music lessons (vocal, piano, violin, cello, flute, etc.) to adolescents of low-income families and remote communities. The music teachers visit each household in hopes to improve the creativity and emotional intelligence of their students through music mentoring. Currently, around 40 music-major graduates are hired as music mentors serving about 200 adolescents within Jeju Province, also contributing to an increase in college graduate employment rate.



Note: JNU AICO stands for Jeju Nat'l University Academic-Industrial Cooperation Office; PR stands for Public Relations; CS stands for Customer Satisfaction

Source: Sorieoulim Internal Data

<Figure 2> Organization chart of Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center

Sorieoulim is the first organization to develop and implement the music mentoring service business model. This led to a significant accomplishment in the community social service field. The music mentoring service business model, in which the music teachers visit students' houses and give one-on-one lessons, resulted in high student satisfaction. Also, this business model came into widespread use in Korea through benchmarking. As a result, Sorieoulim ranked first nationwide in 2011, and won the best enterprise award in 2012 out of 800 organizations funded by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. In 2014, they started providing music therapy for children with disabilities that helps improve their social competence, also for the first time in Korea.

<Table 1> History of Jeju Nat'l University Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center

Date	Significant Event
June 2009	Selected as the Youth Development & Job Creation Center by the Ministry of Health and Welfare
Feb 2010	Changed to Community Social Service Provision Business
April 2010	Cooperation agreement with Jeju Residents Committee Council
Feb 2011	First place at national community social service providers evaluation
June 2011	Science music camp 'Everyday Science Class Brought to School'
Mar 2012	Cooperation agreement with Jeju Office of Education Support 'Wee Center' and School Maladjusted Students Education Center
April 2012	Cooperation agreement with JNU WISSET Regional Agency of Jeju
May 2012	Best Enterprise Award at national community social service providers evaluation
Oct 2012	Cooperation agreement with Seoul Nat'l University Western Music Research Center
	Cooperation agreement with Jeju Regional Office Community Child Center
Feb 2014	Created and started music therapy program for children with disabilities
July 2014	Cooperation agreement with Mulmae Elementary School

Source: Sorieoulim Internal Data

2) The Business

The major business of Sorieoulim consists of private music lessons, music camps, visiting concerts, and free musical instrument lending services.

Private music lesson is a music mentoring service that focuses on developing creativity and emotional intelligence of the students. Music teachers visit each student's house and give a one-on-one lesson twice a week. About 610,000 people live in Jeju Province and half of the population are distributed across farming and fishing villages and mountainous regions. This makes it hard for the residents living in such rural areas to receive any cultural benefit. For these reasons, the service business model was designed for teachers to visit each household, instead of the typical lesson model where students must come to a designated place. An average number of students receiving this music mentoring service per month is 254 in 2009, 285 in 2010, 318 in 2011, 345 in 2012, 196 in 2013, and 184 in 2014 (Table 2). Among service users, about 30-35% are rural area residents.

The most popular music instruments that students learn are piano, violin, and flute, among 12 different instruments they can choose from. They can also learn singing and composing.

Music camps are held twice a year, where the music teachers (mentor), the students (mentee) and their families all gather to perform music concerts and learn the spirits of cooperation and communication. Major programs include special lectures, master classes, recreation, performances by professional musicians, and students' concerts. Since 2009, music camps have been held two to three times a year, with about 300 to 500 participants. Each camp costs about 7 to 8 million KRW.

Visiting concerts are held each month in remote and isolated communities, such as nursing homes, hospices, orphanages, and rural villages for which classical and popular music are performed by professional musicians. Each visiting concert costs 5 to 6 million KRW and about 30 to 40 audiences come to enjoy the music they normally don't have access to. There have been a total of 55 concerts and more than 2,100 people have successfully been served quality music for free by August 2014.

Free instrument lending service is directed towards people who are unable to afford a musical equipment. They can borrow desired instruments including violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, etc. for a year without charge. Currently, a total of 24 people are using this service.

In return for providing the above services, Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center requires 200 thousand KRW worth of service charge per individual each month. 90% of the charge (180 thousand KRW) is funded by the government, and the rest 10% (20 thousand KRW) is paid by the service users. With a small charge, adolescents of low-income families can enjoy the various Sorieoulim music mentoring services including private lessons and music camps for one year.

<Table 2> The Number of Sorieoulim Staffs, Music Teachers and Service Users

Year	# of Staffs	# of Music Teachers	# of Service Users (monthly average)
2009	4	32	254
2010	4	66	285
2011	4	62	318
2012	5	59	345
2013	4	38	196
2014	4	35	184

Source: Sorieoulim Internal Data

<Table 3> Sorieoulim Revenue and Profitability

Year	Annual Revenue(million KRW)	Profitability (%)
2009	304.0	6.0
2010	683.5	10.0
2011	763.1	7.4
2012	879.3	6.5
2013	608.9	1.7
2014	132.8	N/A

Note: 2009 and 2014 each refer to 6 months (July–December) and 4 months (January–April) of service.

Source: Sorieoulim Internal Data

3) The Expected Effects

Sorieoulim aims for a cultural welfare realization, creativity and emotional intelligence development, youth job creation, and local economy activation.

Sorieoulim provides cultural services to remote and isolated communities who have a limited access to a cultural life through music lessons and concerts, in hopes to encourage their creativity and emotional intelligence. On an average of 250 to 350 service users a month receive the above cultural benefits. Most show high levels of satisfaction, especially in friendliness, service provision capability, service content, with an outstanding average evaluation score of 4.5 out of 5 points.

<Table 4> Satisfaction Survey

Year	Friendliness	Service Provision Capability	Service Content	Service Effect
2012	4.66	4.56	4.68	4.27
2013	4.48	4.42	4.40	4.35

Note: The scale is on a 5-point Likert scale.

Source: Sorieoulim Internal Data

By hiring music college graduates as music teachers, an average of 40 to 60 jobs are created and an income of 600 to 800 million KRW are contributed to Jeju Province local economy activation each year.

2. Environmental Changes and Managerial Tasks

1) Environmental Changes

The major environmental changes Sorieoulim encounters include changing from a service provider designation system to a service provider registration system, and an emergence of similar programs such as Dream Orchestra (Korean El Systema).

- Switching to a registration system: Since August 2012, the Ministry of Health and Welfare switched the service provider entry mode to a registration system from a designation system. A designation system is a closed system where the government selects a few service providers based on their capabilities. On the contrary, a registration system is an open system where anyone can start a service provider business if they meet certain standards. The main reason for this policy change was to encourage competition between service providers and improve service quality. As a result, the number of registered music mentoring service providers in Jeju Province have increased to eight in total. In case of Sorieoulim, the overheated competition between these service providers and a limited government budget led to a sharp decline in number of service users, from 345 in 2012 to 184 in 2014 (Table 2), as well as a 746.5 million KRW worth of drop in annual revenue (Table 3).

- Emergence of similar services: 'Dream Orchestra' by the Ministry of Culture & Tourism and 'Afterschool Activities' by the Ministry of Education have newly appeared in the service provision market. Consequently, a significant number of music mentoring service users and music teachers have moved to these service providers. These services have a competitive advantage to music mentoring services, in that group teaching, compared to private teaching, increases profitability. Because service users are taught in groups of seven rather than one-on-one, Dream Orchestra doesn't need to hire as many teachers and is able to keep a higher wage than the music mentoring service.

2) Managerial Tasks

Shifting from a designation system to a registration system and emerging of similar services resulted in a big environmental change, which led to new managerial tasks for Sorieoulim such as recruiting new service users and competent music teachers, and profit improvement.

- Recruiting new service users: As a consequence of the implementation of registration system and emergence of similar services in 2012, there has been a significant decrease in the number of new service users; from 215 in 2011 to 103 in 2014. A total number of service users also decreased from 318 in 2011 to 184 in 2014 (Table 2). As a result, Sorieoulim encounters a managerial task of maintaining the number of new services users above 200 each year.

- Maintaining competent music teachers: Due to a limited budget, it is difficult for Sorieoulim to recruit music teachers. Many teachers have moved to new similar service providers, because they offer a higher pay raise based on their large budget. The

number of music teachers has decreased from 62 in 2011 to 35 in 2014 (Table 2). In particular, music teachers are reluctant to mentoring students in remote areas because of a long drive and expenses that are not reimbursed. This resulted in a new managerial task of keeping competent music teachers needed to provide high-quality services to users.

- **Improving profit:** A huge decline in a number of new service users resulted in a deteriorating profitability of Sorieoulim. The profitability has dropped from 7.4% in 2011 to 1.7% in 2013 (Table 3). Sorieoulim faces another managerial task of improving profitability while maintaining current service quality.

3. Change in Resources and Managerial Ability and Coping Strategies

As demonstrated in theoretical background, the performance of community social service providers depends on resources and managerial abilities. The resources of Sorieoulim are easily imitable, making it very difficult to maintain its competitive advantage, especially with an environmental change. For example, music teachers, one of the core resources of Sorieoulim, are on a one-year contract, which allows them to easily move to other service providers. It is also difficult to sustain competitive advantage with the managerial ability of Sorieoulim. Although Sorieoulim ranked first nationwide in 2011, its managerial ability isn't as effective as when they first started the business, due to environmental changes caused by the open registration system and the appearance of similar services. Sorieoulim's business model now became easily imitable and its cost-effectiveness is lower compared to the group teaching business model.

Sorieoulim is making great efforts to adjust their resources and managerial abilities according to current environmental changes. Through acquiring and utilizing financial, physical, human, and organizational resources, Sorieoulim is implementing the following coping strategies.

1) Solution for recruiting new service users.

- **Expansion of services for potential service users in remote communities:** While other providers only focus on service users in urban areas such as Jeju city and Seogwipo city, Sorieoulim is recruiting new and potential service users from the remote and isolated communities that they have neglected. In order to encourage music teachers to approach students in remote areas, Sorieoulim is reimbursing transportation expenses and giving incentives with its internal financial resources.

- **Strengthening publicity and PR:** Through publishing their success stories and service differentiation, Sorieoulim is recruiting more new service users. For example, they publicize their difference in intangible resources such as visiting concerts and music camps that other service providers are unable to offer.

- **Alliances with service-related organizations:** Sorieoulim recruits more new service users with its managerial ability of building alliances with the communities in

need of music mentoring services, such as local community centers, orphanages, schools in rural areas, etc.

2) Solution for maintaining competent music teachers.

- Pay raise: Despite the fact that Sorieoulim is under a limited budget, recently there has been a wage raise to maintain and recruit competent music teachers as well as to enhance the service quality, based on their accumulated financial resources.

- Motivation Increase: In order to improve the capabilities of music teachers, Sorieoulim is training new teachers based on their 6-year teaching experiences and giving incentives to outstanding teachers based on their evaluations.

<Table 5> Sorieoulim Managerial Tasks and Coping Strategies

Environmental Changes	Switching to a registration system
	Emergence of similar services
Managerial Tasks	Recruiting new service users
	Maintaining competent music teachers
	Improving profit
Coping Strategies	Recruiting new service users: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I . Expansion of services for potential service users in remote communitites II . Strengthening publicity and public relations III . Alliances with service-related organizations
	Maintaining competent music teachers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I . Pay raise II . Motivation increase
	Improving profit <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I . Cost reduction II . Revenue diversification

Source: The authors

3) Solution for improving profit.

- Cost reduction: Among programs within music camps and visiting concerts, Sorieoulim is transforming expensive programs to cost-effective programs. With this managerial ability, a 10% decrease of the total operating expense is expected.

- Revenue diversification: Based on their business experiences and know-hows, Sorieoulim is diversifying their business revenue through inventing new service programs, such as music therapy for children with disabilities and local school musical lessons.

4. Coping Strategies and Expected Performance Improvement

Sorieoulim has implemented various coping strategies based on resources and managerial ability adjustments in response for environmental changes caused by registration system and emergence of similar services. If these coping strategies work efficiently and effectively, Sorieoulim will be able to overcome current management crisis and maintain their service quality in the future.

Resource-based view considers resource and managerial ability as the determining factors of service providers' performance enhancement. Also, the extent to which these factors affect performance differs according to environmental changes. In other words, a larger dynamic capability –ability to adjust resources and managerial ability according to environmental changes– enhances performances (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2007; Winter, 2003). As shown in the case of Sorieoulim, major determinants of service provider's performance are also resources and managerial abilities, which must be flexible to environmental changes. The managerial tasks caused by environmental changes can be overcome with coping strategies based on dynamic capability, and result in a sustained growth of service providers.

IV. Considerations and Conclusions

1. Summary

What are the tasks for improving the effects of community social service provision, and how should we cope with these? This study approaches the question with the case of Jeju National University Sorieoulim Music Mentoring Center. Sorieoulim started the music mentoring service for adolescents since 2009 and ranked first nationwide in 2011, leading to a cultural welfare realization, creativity and emotional intelligence developments, youth job creation, and local economy activation. In 2013, Sorieoulim hired 42 music teachers, providing music mentoring services to 196 service users and making about 608.9 million KRW worth of revenues (Table 2 & Table 3). Due to a policy change to the open service registration system and the emergence of similar services, Sorieoulim currently faces managerial tasks of recruiting new service users and competent music teachers, providing services in remote communities, and improving profitability. In effort to address these management issues, Sorieoulim is implementing various coping strategies through adjustments in their resources and management, including rural area service expansion, public relations improvement, alliance expansion, pay raise, motivation increase, cost reduction, and revenue diversification. If successfully applied, Sorieoulim will continue to grow and maintain stable and high-quality service provision to Jeju Province. The management issues and solutions for community social service providers were examined based on resource-based view. The dynamic capability for transforming resources and management ability has a positive effect in coping with rapidly changing environments.

2. Theoretical Implications

The major determinant to the business growth of Sorieoulim seems to be the managerial ability rather than the resources. Management resources such as the office, staffs, and music teachers are easily available and imitable, which makes it difficult to sustain competitive advantage. In contrary, the managerial ability to first develop the music mentoring service business model and provide music mentoring services cannot be imitated in a short period of time. As a result, Sorieoulim could grow as the country's number one community social service provider. The managerial ability to utilize resources can be considered as the key factor to the growth of an organization.

The resource-based view that was used mainly to demonstrate big firms and corporations with abundant resources can now also be applied to small and medium-sized firms with limited resources (Barbero et al., 2011; Runyan, Huddleston & Swinny, 2007; Yoon, 2010). Based on the case analysis, this paper suggests that resource-based view can also explain the growth determining factors of small-sized community social service providers.

3. Policy Proposal

The Ministry of Health and Welfare aimed to enhance service quality and encourage competition among community social service providers through lowering the entry barrier. However, according to a research by Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade (KIET), the registration system failed to stimulate effective competition or make a profit (Cho et al., 2014). This is because of strict instructions on budget management, such as the fixed percentage of wages and a limited target market composed of low-income households. The shift to registration system from designation system increased the number of community social service providers, but resulted in a decrease of profitability and service quality. In particular, similar service providers funded by Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture & Tourism overpopulated the music mentoring service market, leading to a profitability and service quality deterioration.

In order to mitigate the problems demonstrated above, we propose a policy that ensures quality services through an increase in service charges, and that imposes stricter requirements for registration. If we don't upgrade the current standards of only requiring 3 staffs and an office for a community social service provider registration, the service providers cannot achieve the economy of scale nor can it obtain the minimum profitability needed for a quality service.

We also propose another policy that allows the potential service users to easily compare and contrast service qualities from a proper evaluation method. For example, through adopting a rating system similar to hotel classifications, each service provider should be evaluated and rated accordingly so that it may help potential service users to gather information about service qualities.

4. Limitations and Avenues of Future Research

Since this paper is an exploratory study based on a one-case analysis, we need to conduct research on various other cases in order to obtain a higher external validity.

For further research, the ways to compensate for the limited amount of resources and managerial abilities of community social service providers should be studied. For example, acquiring appropriate management resources through environmental networking in a cost-effective way should be examined.

As a government funded business, community social service providers are largely affected by the government policies. This calls for a research on a long-term survival and growth of community social service providers, such as a study on becoming a social enterprise without relying on a government budget.

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