

Exploring characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations in South Korea

Sun-Young Yoo · Kristina Jaskyte

Received: 9 August 2012 / Revised: 18 April 2013 / Accepted: 29 April 2013
© Korean Social Science Research Council 2013

Abstract The purpose of this study was to explore how employees of Korean nonprofit organizations perceived characteristics of innovative organizations. The social-validation method (first, an open-ended question is given; and later, ideas collected from participants are used to make an instrument) was used to collect the data. Thirteen employees representing a variety of nonprofit organizations in South Korea participated in this study. At the first stage of the study, participants were asked to generate a list of characteristics of innovative organizations. A total of 125 characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations were summarized into the 25 most often mentioned characteristics. At the second stage of the study, all participants were asked to rate each of the characteristics on how important they were for an innovative organization. Among the highest-ranked characteristics of innovative organizations were: having a clear organizational vision and mission statement, having transparent financial and accounting processes, having a leader who is open-minded and flexible, being responsive to clients' needs, and having employees who share the vision and mission of the organization. The pattern of agreement among participants indicated a low degree of consensus. Implications were suggested based on the findings.

Keywords Innovation · Nonprofit organization · South Korea

Introduction

Traditional Confucian culture, deep-rooted state-centered traditions, major historical events such as Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, and the rule of successive authoritarian regimes have delayed the development of the nonprofit sector in South Korea (Kim and

S.-Y. Yoo (✉)
Department of Social Welfare, Seoul Jangsin University, 219-1 Gyeongang-dong,
Gwangju-si, Gyeonggi-do 464-742, Korea
e-mail: sunyoung.yoo@gmail.com

K. Jaskyte
University of Georgia School of Social Work, Tucker Hall, 310 East Campus Road,
Athens, GA 30602-7016, USA

Hwang 2002). Since the 1990s, however, nonprofit organizations have gradually expanded their influence to every domain of life (Kim 2002). The increase in academic interest; changes in the legal environment in which nonprofit organizations function; expansion of volunteer activities; development of information technology; and growing partnerships among government, business, and nonprofit organizations have contributed to the growth of the nonprofit sector (Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium 2001).

After an economic crisis hit the nation in 1998, many Korean nonprofit organizations were faced with financial difficulties that were caused by decreasing public funding and intensive competition among nonprofit organizations for various resources and service markets. Since then, Korean nonprofit organizations have recognized the necessity to adapt to environmental changes and have begun efforts to become more innovative, as innovation has been considered to be a critical component of the long-term survival of nonprofit organizations. Drucker (1994) argued that innovation is as important for nonprofit organizations as it is for business or government organizations, because fast-changing environments present threats as well as opportunities for all organizations. Other scholars have also emphasized the importance of nonprofit organizations' ability to innovate, arguing that innovation plays an important role in nonprofit organizations' successful adaptation to change (Boehm 1996; Cohen 1999; Martin 2000; Ritchie and Alperin 2002; Rogers 2003).

Although some evidence exists showing Korean nonprofit organizations' efforts to become more innovative (Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium 2001), a lack of a theoretical basis and empirical evidence to guide those efforts has impeded the nonprofit sector's attempts to become more innovative. In addition, while a number of theoretical and empirical works on innovation of nonprofit organizations can be found in the literature, they were all written by Western scholars. Attempts to apply Western models of innovation in other cultures can be problematic because of the uniqueness of societal and cultural contexts. Our ability to understand what constitutes an innovative organization would be significantly enriched by cross-cultural studies that tested whether what works in some countries would apply in others.

The purpose of this study is to explore how employees of Korean nonprofit organizations perceive an innovative organization. Because there are no studies that attempt to describe characteristics of innovative nonprofit organization in a South Korean context, understanding this notion is an end in itself. Therefore, we strived to explore how employees of Korean nonprofit organizations make sense of characteristics of innovative organizations within Korean social and cultural contexts. Researchers gathered data to build an idea rather than deductively deriving postulates or hypotheses to be tested, as in quantitative research. More specifically, the study was guided by two research questions: (1) What characteristics do employees of Korean nonprofit organizations perceive as important for innovative organizations? And (2) To what extent do employees of Korean nonprofit organizations share an agreement about the characteristics of innovative organizations? The authors were also interested in exploring the similarities and differences between the characteristics of innovative organizations identified by employees of Korean nonprofit organizations and those identified in the Western literature on innovation. The following section provides a brief overview of the literature (primarily Western) on characteristics of innovative organizations.

Characteristics of innovative organizations derived from previous studies

After reviewing the relevant literature on innovation (most of it western), the characteristics of innovative organizations were grouped into three categories: structural, organizational culture, and leadership characteristics (Table 1).

Table 1 Characteristics of innovative organizations derived from previous studies

Category	Characteristics
Structure	Integrative structure (Kanter 1983)
	Low degree of formalization (Henry and Walker 1992)
	Low degree of centralization (Damanpour 1991; Zammuto and O'Connor 1992)
	High levels of complexity (Zammuto and O'Connor 1992)
	Learning organization (Sinkula et al. 1997)
Culture	Interconnectedness of an organization (Ahuja 2000; Nohria and Eccles 1992; Sagawa and Segal 2000)
	Emphasis on diversity (Kanter 1983)
	Emphasis on collaboration and teamwork (Kanter 1983)
	Emphasis on goals, means, reward, task support, and socioemotional support (Tesluk et al. 1997)
	Encouragement of risk-taking and idea-generation (Amabile et al. 1996)
Leadership	An environment where open interactions are supported (Angle 1989; Kanter 1983)
	Participative management and decision-making (Amabile et al. 1996)
	Pro-change values or high-risk strategies (Zammuto and O'Connor 1992)
	Sufficient psychological safety to express ideas and opinions on innovation (Adair 1996; Baer and Frese 2003; Edmondson 1999)
	Supervisory support of the team's work and ideas (Amabile et al. 1996)
Leadership	Noncontrolling supervision (Oldham and Cummings 1996)
	Supervisor's roles to communicate goals, to set expectations, to reward and recognize accomplishments, to provide task support, and to create an environment where risk-taking is allowed (Tesluk et al. 1997)
	Vision-setter leadership style (Shin and McClomb 1998; Jung et al. 2003)
	Transformational leadership style (Jung et al. 2003)

Table 1 provides a summary of characteristics of innovative organizations suggested by Western theorists and researchers. This brief overview was meant to place our study in the context of the current innovation literature and will later serve as a reference point for comparing the characteristics identified by employees of Korean nonprofit organizations with those identified from the existing literature on innovation.

Method

Data collection and procedure

The social-validation method (first, an open-ended question is given; later, ideas collected from participants are used to make an instrument) was used to collect the data (Runco 2007). This method has been successfully used in cross-cultural studies to capture participants' ideas about different constructs (Runco and Johnson 2002). It differs from prevailing data collection methods in that the data are collected using an instrument that is constructed from the ideas gathered from the participants rather than from already existing instruments (Runco and Johnson 2002). This method was seen as suited for this study because the authors believed that meaning is socially constructed by individuals within their social and cultural contexts and this may contribute to the employees' perceptions of

innovative organizations. That is, this method allowed us to capture the uniqueness of those perceptions.

Data collection was a two-stage process. At the first stage of the study, a free-listing technique that is commonly used in cognitive anthropology research was used to generate a list of innovative organizations' characteristics. This technique enables a researcher to explore participants' common understanding of a specific cultural domain by allowing them to express their ideas in their own words (Weller and Romney 1988).

Approval from the researchers' university institutional review board was given, and thirteen participants were recruited from Korean nonprofit organizations, using a non-probability sampling method. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were asked to list their thoughts on innovative nonprofit organization by answering the question, "What characteristics do you perceive as important for innovative organizations?"

All the emailed contents were reviewed, analyzed, and categorized. That is, the characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations were inductively derived from the emailed contents, as in any qualitative research.

At the second stage of the study, the researchers made a five-point Likert-type instrument on the basis of the findings of the first study. The researcher emailed the final instrument of characteristics to all participants, asking them to rate each of the characteristics on a scale from 1 to 5 on whether it was descriptive of an innovative organization (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire also included demographic information on participants' professional and personal backgrounds.

Data analysis

For the first stage's analysis, qualitative content analysis was used. Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, p. 1277). The researchers read through every word or phrase several times, eliminated conceptually redundant contents, counted keywords, compared the text on the basis of differences and similarities, and sorted into subcategories that considered the underlying meaning and context.

For the second stage's analysis, consensus analysis was conducted, using the Anthropic program (Borgatti 1992). Consensus analysis is used "to describe patterns of agreement among individuals about a domain or category of cultural knowledge" (Caulkins 1998, p. 187). This analysis is useful to assess the extent of agreement, whether the domain (characteristics of an innovative organization) is a high-consensus domain, divides into two or more groups, or is idiosyncratic (every employee having a different view).

Findings

Characteristics of the participants

Participants were employed in nine different nonprofit organizations in South Korea with different types of goals (most of them located in the Seoul area): Korea World Vision, Korea Food for the Hungry International, Eland Welfare Foundation, Child Protection Agency, Good Neighbors Korea, Seodaemun Senior Welfare Center, Wolgok Community Welfare Center, International Vaccine Institute, and Jubilee Mission Fellowship.

Two of the participants were executive directors, seven were managers, and four were frontline workers. The participants consisted of four males and nine females whose ages ranged from 26 to 57 years, the mean age being 38.8 years ($SD = 8.3$). Their length of work experience in nonprofit organizations ranged from 1.2 to 28 years, the mean length of working for an organization being 9.8 years ($SD = 93.1$). Four of the participants had bachelor's degrees, and the remaining nine had master's degrees.

Stage 1: exploring characteristics of innovative organizations

The first research question was concerned with exploring characteristics of innovative organizations. The free-listing task produced a total of 125 characteristics of innovative organizations (Table 2). The researchers read through every word or phrase several times, and eliminated conceptually redundant contents. Then, the text about the participants' perceptions of innovative nonprofit organizations was compared, based on differences and similarities, and sorted into 17 subcategories.

Stage 2: identifying agreement among participants on characteristics of innovative organizations

The second research question was concerned with the degree of agreement among participants on characteristics of innovative organizations. The researchers made a five-point Likert-type instrument based on the findings of the first stage's study, and asked participants to rate each of the characteristics on a scale from 1 to 5 on whether it was descriptive of an innovative organization (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The instrument included 25 characteristics, and the ratings of these characteristics are provided in Table 3.

Having a clear vision and mission statement was the most important characteristic of an innovative organization, followed by having transparent financial and accounting processes. Having a leader who is open-minded and flexible, being responsive to clients' needs, having employees who share the vision and mission of the organization, and encouraging teamwork were also ranked very highly. The least important characteristic of an innovative organization was having a leader who was not authoritative.

The Anthropic program used participant ratings of 25 characteristics of innovative organizations as units of analysis and the participants as variables in a factor analysis. This program produced the following estimates: (1) cultural consensus, or the degree of agreement among participants about a set of characteristics, and (2) individual cultural knowledge coefficients, which indicated how knowledgeable each participant was about the characteristics of innovative organizations.

The study's eigenvalues (the latent root of the correlation matrix of participants) were an estimate of cultural consensus or the degree of agreement among participants on the characteristics of innovative organizations. If the analysis produced a single eigenvalue or if the first eigenvalue were large relative to others, it would be indicative of substantial sharing of responses. Romney et al. (1986) suggest a ratio of 3:1 as a useful rule of thumb for determining if the first eigenvalue is large relative to others. Our factor analysis results showed that there was no single pattern of agreement among the participants on what constitutes characteristics of innovative organizations, suggesting a more diversified understanding of the domain (Table 4).

The results reported in Table 4 show that the ratio between the first factor and the second factor and the second and the third factor were similar, suggesting that two or more models of innovative organizations were represented in the data. A scatter-plot where

Table 2 Characteristics of innovative nonprofit organization derived from qualitative content analysis—subcategories

Subcategories

Vision and mission

- Form a clear vision and statement on a realizable mission
- Contrive a way for every employee to share the vision of the organization
- Present the vision of the organization through short- and long-term strategies by the R&D team
- Share the vision and objectives of the organization with employees
- Employ a leader of the organization who can present the organization's vision
- Employ leaders who guide employees to have the organization's vision
- Share the vision and mission
- Communicate about the vision of the organization
- Let every employee share the mission of the organization
- Employ an organization leader who suggests the direction to which the organization should go

Specialization

- Affirm a clear identity (specialization)
- Provide a solid identity of the organization

Goals and strategies

- Set up middle- and long-term management goals and strategies
- Create a bold goal
- Have clear organization goals and strategies to realize these goals
- Plan rationally the organization's management
- Develop a strategic plan and leadership

Task guidelines

- Establish task guidelines and examine organization members' work at all stages
- Integrate the system, focusing on practice, in order that every employee can adapt to any task
- Possess a clear work manual and description of employees' duties
- Outline the clear roles of employees and authorization
- Have a systematic management

Reward system

- Construct a reward system for facilitating the growth of organization members
- Encourage employees to suggest ideas through the reward system
- Utilize the reward system through the scientific evaluation
- Utilize the reward system

Transparency

- Have a transparent financial and accounting process
- Open their financial condition and procedures clearly to the public
- Earn the trust of sponsors and clients through transparent and reasonable financial and accounting processes
- Keep financial, accounting, and management processes upright
- Have a transparent financial and accounting process

Leadership

- Have a chief executive officer with a strong will to change
- Have a leader with a receptive capacity and recognition of challenges facing organization members
- Employ a manager with strong leadership
- Have a leader with a strong will and decisiveness to pursue changes

Table 2 continued

Subcategories

- The leader of organization is not authoritative
 - Encourage the CEO and organization leaders to have an open mind
 - Employ a leader of the organization who pursues common values
 - Employ a leader of the organization who takes responsibility and delegates power
 - Employ a leader of the organization who has clear and consistent leadership
 - Employ an organization leader who has professionalism and flexibility
 - Have bosses who interact with subordinates in a personal way
 - Organizational structure
 - Be flexible
 - Be a horizontal organization
 - Provide a well-organized, inside- and outside-feedback mechanism for the results of team projects and individual work
 - Have a simple organizational structure
 - Decision-making process
 - Have a speedy decision-making process with decision-makers, including board members, readily available
 - Have an organizational culture where organization members participate in policy-making process
 - Collect the opinions of employees rather than allowing the CEO to decide everything without input
 - Devise a simple decision-making structure
 - Have a simple decision-making process and respect the opinions of frontline workers
 - Employ an organization leader who makes decisions promptly and precisely
 - Simplify policy and decision-making processes, so they will be less complex
 - Have a speedy decision-making process
 - Communication and relationships
 - Maintain open communication channels with clients and collaborative organizations, as well as among organization members
 - Communicate smoothly among organization members
 - Have appropriate relationship-management
 - Have a space and channel for open communications
 - Communicate smoothly with organization members and sympathize easily with them
 - Communicate smoothly between the CEO, manager, and frontline workers
 - Encourage leaders and employees to communicate actively
 - Use effective communication to keep horizontal and vertical relationships cooperative and positive
 - Employ a leader of the organization who will communicate with employees harmoniously
 - Communicate creative ideas freely
 - Develop a two-way-discussion culture, not settling for communication that is only from top to bottom
 - Cultivate an atmosphere of active suggestions and discussions
 - Have a leader who doesn't have a bias against their employees' opinions or about the employees themselves
 - Empowerment and taking care of employees
 - Stress the importance of the empowerment of each employee
 - Take care of the happiness of employees themselves, as well as the families of employees
 - Give opportunities for every employee to be a leader
 - Motivate employees continuously
 - Gives employees opportunities for new challenges
-

Table 2 continued

Subcategories

Encourage employees to participate in problem-solving processes
Require every employee to actively participate in the change-process of the organization
Empower employees to practice the vision
Employ an organization leader who supports and encourages employees continuously
Employ an organization leader who has the ability to analyze the characteristics of employees and adjust leadership style accordingly
Have a reasonable and fair personnel management of employees
Manage employees' workload to maintain a balance between family and job duties
Learning
Provide an environment for life-long learning and personal/professional growth in the organization
Support a positive attitude on research and development (R&D)
Support the pursuit of self-development by organization members
Invest time and money on the reeducation of employees
Employ a diversity of types of knowledge
Carry out continuing-education programs for the professionalism of teams and individuals
Provide employees with continuing education and opportunities to grow
Develop a system of knowledge management
Emphasize and develop the growth of individual employees
Give opportunities for employees' self-development
Members' attitudes and challenges (coping methods for change)
Not to be anxious about change (consider changes as opportunities and use them as such)
To have a positive and open attitude on reforms and new things
To cope with environmental changes sensitively, holding meetings for middle-and long-term plans
To not be afraid of failure
To respond positively to the criticism of the organization
To lead the change, not be afraid changes
To urge employees of the organization to not fear failure
To sustain an environment in which the leader and employees are not afraid of changes
To have employees who have the mindset to accept change
To employ a leader of the organization who is sensitive to the changes of the environment around the organization
To respond to environmental changes sensitively and make change happen rapidly
Client-centered
Focus on clients
Grasp clients' needs quickly and provide clients with good quality service
Communicate openly and interchange ideas freely with clients
Team-centered
Have a system of team responsibility
Cultivate team leaders and create opportunities to play a management role
Offer opportunities to sustain teamwork
Resource utilization
Utilize a governing board effectively
Utilize an assortment of personal resources
Have many volunteers who participate in the organization's work

Table 2 continued

Subcategories

Support many human resources to create new ideas
Cooperate well with other related organizations
Cultivate a cooperative organization culture
Others (culture)
Maintain a speedy organization
Enjoy work
Develop and practice original projects
Work in a relationship-oriented way to give benefit to the ongoing work of the organization, not a task-oriented way
Admonish employees to work with servants' hearts, with a service-orientation
Try to grasp the causes of conflict and solve them
Maintain a culture of praise
Exhibit the characteristic of the corporation that operates the organization
Create the circumstances in which employees can focus on their work
Support entrepreneurship
Affect the society to which the organization belongs
Have employees of various ranges of age
Have more young employees than old employees

loadings on the first factor were plotted against loadings on the second factor provided some insight into those different models (see Fig. 1). Participants who were the closest in space are shown by ellipses.

A scatter-plot of individual cultural knowledge coefficients suggested that three models of innovative organizations were represented in the data. Participants seven, ten, and eleven were close to one another in location and had very low individual cultural knowledge coefficients (0.06, 0.08, and 0.05 correspondingly) (model 1). After exploring the demographic characteristics of those participants, we noted that all of the employees in this group were older than the members of the other two groups. In addition, all of them were in management roles.

Participants one, three, and eight were close to one another and had fairly low cultural knowledge scores (0.36, 0.27, and 0.20 correspondingly) (model 2). Employees in this group were relatively younger than members of the other two groups and were all frontline workers.

Finally, participants four, six, and nine had high individual cultural knowledge coefficient scores (0.78, 0.65, and 0.60 correspondingly) and clustered closely together (model 3). This group was different from the other two groups in that its members had been with their organizations the longest. Participant four has been with the organization for almost 22 years, participant 6 for 7 years, and participant nine for close to 13 years. Every employee in this group had a master's degree in social work.

The scatter-plot also showed three outliers that did not fit with any of the three models. Exploring the demographic characteristics helped us understand why this was the case. Different from other participants, who were in direct-service provision, participant two was a fundraising manager. Participant five worked for an organization that serves only elderly people, while the rest of the participants worked for organizations that provided services

Table 3 Rank order of characteristics of innovative organizations ($N = 13$) (rank-ordered from the most characteristic to the least characteristic)

Characteristics of an innovative organization	Mean
1. Has a clear vision and mission statement	4.85
2. Has transparent financial and accounting processes	4.77
3. Has a leader who is open-minded and flexible	4.62
4. Is responsive to clients' needs	4.62
5. Has employees who share the vision and mission of the organization	4.62
6. Encourages teamwork	4.62
7. Is not afraid of change	4.54
8. Has open communication channels among organization members (leader, managers, and frontline workers)	4.46
9. Has a leader who makes sure that the vision is followed	4.46
10. Has an efficient (simple and speedy) decision-making mechanism	4.46
11. Provides employees with professional-development opportunities	4.46
12. Respects employees' opinions	4.38
13. Empowers its employees	4.38
14. Has a leader with a strong will to pursue changes	4.38
15. Seeks employees' participation and input in decision-making processes	4.38
16. Has clear job descriptions for employees	4.31
17. Is responsive to environmental changes	4.31
18. Supports and encourages its employees	4.31
19. Is not afraid of failure	4.23
20. Is a flexible organization	4.23
21. Has a leader who sets up clear, organizational goals and develops strategies to reach these goals	4.23
22. Cooperates with other organizations	4.15
23. Utilizes a reward system to motivate employees	4.15
24. Has a leader who takes responsibility and delegates power	4.08
25. Has a leader who is not authoritative	3.92

Table 4 Results from consensus analysis

Factor	Eigenvalue	Percentage of variance explained	Cumulative percentage	Ratio
1	2.208	47.4	47.4	1.708
2	1.293	27.7	75.1	1.112
3	1.162	24.9	100.0	
Total	4.663	100.0		

for comprehensive populations. Finally, participants twelve and thirteen had majored in theology, while the other participants had majored in social work. These results imply that demographic variables—age, hierarchical position, professional background, and tenure (length of time with an organization)—could influence how participants perceive characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations.

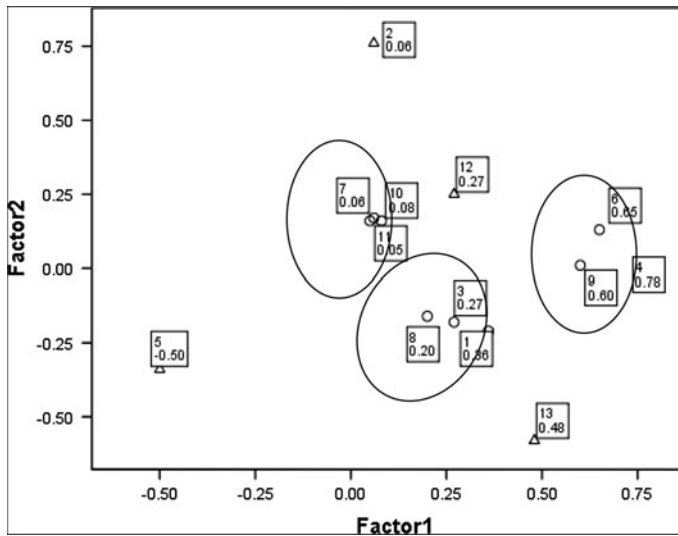


Fig. 1 Scatter-plot of factor 1 and factor 2 loadings of individual competence coefficients

Discussion

This study explored Korean nonprofit organizations' employees' perceptions of characteristics of innovative organizations. The characteristics collected through the qualitative content analysis revealed that employees of Korean nonprofit organizations see the following descriptors: a clear vision and mission, transparent financial and accounting processes, open-minded and flexible leadership, responsiveness to clients' needs, sharing of vision and mission, and encouragement of teamwork as the qualities or conditions most characteristic of innovative organizations. The lowest-ranked characteristics of innovative organizations were cooperation with other organizations, utilization of a reward system to motivate employees, and having a leader who is not authoritative but responsive and delegate's power.

In this study, the most important characteristics of innovative organizations were related to organizational culture and leadership. Different from the western literature, where organizational structural characteristics are seen as central for innovative organizations, in this study, very few organizational structural characteristics were identified as characteristic of an innovative organization. Among the characteristics that were not identified in previous works and that are unique to the Korean context were transparent financial and accounting processes and offering of professional-development opportunities to employees.

These differences could be explained within the Korean social and cultural context. Two factors—political and social corruption caused by rapid economic development and a strong Confucian tradition, which stresses education, may have affected these participants' perceptions of characteristics of innovative organizations. In addition, the results from the cultural consensus analysis indicated a low degree of consensus, suggesting the existence of diversified perspectives on the characteristics of innovative organizations. Those differences seemed to be based on participants' personal and professional backgrounds.

Overall, the 25 characteristics included in the final set of innovative characteristics were similar to the characteristics of innovative organizations identified in the Western literature (see Table 1). In addition, these results were similar to the results of a study that used a

similar methodology to assess Argentinean nonprofit organizations employees' perceptions of innovative organizations (Jaskyte and Riobo 2004).

In summary, while it appears that certain characteristics of innovative organizations may be universal across different cultures, there are characteristics that are unique to a particular culture. In the Korean social and cultural context, transparent financial and accounting processes and offering of professional-development opportunities to employees were seen as very characteristic of innovative nonprofit organizations. This suggests that when applying Western concepts related to innovation to other cultures and societies, the unique aspects of a society and culture should be considered. Additional studies exploring diverse nonprofit organizations in different cultures would provide more insights into the characteristics of innovative organizations that are unique to certain cultures. Larger samples would improve the credibility of findings from such studies.

Implications of findings

This exploratory study provided original insights into how employees of nonprofit organizations in Korea perceive innovative organizations. The list of characteristics could be used as basic materials for future research related to innovative nonprofit organizations in South Korea and for developing a scale to measure the level of innovation of nonprofit organizations. It could also serve as a starting point in the process of trying to reach an agreement among employees on what factors an organization should focus on changing when trying to become more innovative.

The results of this study suggest that the executive directors of nonprofit organizations will have to consider the employees' professional and personal backgrounds when seeking their input on how to achieve higher levels of innovation, as the employees with different professional backgrounds and ages might have very different ideas for achieving that goal. When an organization's practices for innovation are based on a variety of employee perspectives, innovation in nonprofit organization could become a goal that can be reached rather than just an aspiration.

Limitations

This study integrated both qualitative and quantitative research methods, because there is a lack of research about innovation of nonprofit organizations in South Korea. The data were gathered in the form of quotes from participants to inductively explore participants' perceptions on characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations. This study generated richly descriptive and detailed findings on innovation of Korean nonprofit organizations by qualitative methods. However, like other research, this study has limitations. First of all, the participants of this study are not representative of employees of Korean nonprofit organizations, nor of the population as a whole. This limits the extent to which the findings of this study can be generalized to whole population. It is likely that different subgroups of the population could have different views on innovative nonprofit organization. For this reason, there is a need for further studies employing larger and more diverse samples.

References

- Adair, J. (1996). *Effective innovation*. London: Pan Books.
- Ahuja, G. (2000). Collaboration networks, structural holes, and innovation: A longitudinal study. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 45(3), 425–455.

- Amabile, T. M., Conti, R., Coon, H., Lazenby, J., & Herron, M. (1996). Assessing the work environment for creativity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39(5), 1154–1185.
- Angle, H. L. (1989). Psychology and organizational innovation. In A. H. Van de Ven, H. L. Angle, & M. S. Poole (Eds.), *Research on the management of innovation: The Minnesota studies* (pp. 135–170). New York: Harper & Row.
- Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium. (2001). Strengthening philanthropy in the Asia Pacific: An agenda for action. In *APPC Conference Background Paper, Korea*. Retrieved March 24, 2013 from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan005483.pdf>.
- Baer, M., & Frese, M. (2003). Innovation is not enough: Climates for initiative and psychological safety, process innovations, and firm performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24, 45–68.
- Boehm, A. (1996). Forces driving competition in human service organizations and positional competitive responses. *Administration in Social Work*, 20(4), 61–77.
- Borgatti, S. P. (1992). *Anthropac 4.0 methods guide*. Columbia, SC: Analytic Technologies.
- Caulkins, D. (1998). Consensus analysis: Do Scottish business advisers agree on models of success? In V. DeMunck & L. Sobo (Eds.), *Using methods in the field: A practical introduction and casebook* (pp. 179–195). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.
- Cohen, B. (1999). Fostering innovation in a large human service bureaucracy. *Administration in Social Work*, 23(2), 47–59.
- Damanpour, F. (1991). Organizational innovation: a meta-analysis of effects of determinants and moderators. *Academy of Management Journal*, 34(3), 555–590.
- Drucker, P. F. (1994). *Managing the non-profit organization*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Edmondson, A. C. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44, 350–383.
- Henry, J., & Walker, D. (1992). *Managing innovation*. London: Sage.
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288.
- Jaskyte, K. & Riobo, M. S. R. M. (2004). Characteristics of innovative nonprofit organizations in Argentina. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 15(1), 71–79.
- Jung, D. I., Chow, C., & Wu, A. (2003). The role of transformational leadership in enhancing organizational innovation: Hypotheses and some preliminary findings. *Leadership Quarterly*, 14(4/5), 525–544.
- Kanter, R. M. (1983). *The change masters: Innovation for productivity in the American corporation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Kim, P. S. (2002). The development of Korean NGOs and governmental assistance to NGOs. *Korean Journal*, 42, 279–303.
- Kim, I., & Changsoon, H. (2002). Defining the nonprofit sector: South Korea. In *Working paper of the Johns Hopkins comparative nonprofit sector project*, 41. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Study.
- Martin, L. (2000). The environmental context of social welfare administration. In R. Patti (Ed.), *The handbook of social welfare management* (pp. 55–68). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nohria, N., & Eccles, R. G. (1992). *Networks and organizations*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Oldham, G. R., & Cummings, A. (1996). Employee creativity: Personal and contextual factors at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39(3), 607–655.
- Ritchie, N. D., & Alperin, D. E. (2002). *Innovation and change in the human services*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). New York: The Free Press.
- Romney, A. K., Weller, S. C., & Batchelder, W. H. (1986). Cultures as consensus: A theory of cultural and informant accuracy. *American Anthropologist*, 88, 313–338.
- Runco, M. A. (2007). *Creativity—theories and themes: research, development, and practice*. Burlington: Elsevier Academic Press.
- Runco, M. A., & Johnson, D. J. (2002). Parents' and teachers' implicit theories of children's creativity: A cross-cultural perspective. *Creativity Research Journal*, 14(3/4), 427–438.
- Sagawa, S., & Segal, E. (2000). Common interest, common good: Creating value through business and social sector interorganizational relationships. *California Management Review*, 42(2), 105–122.
- Shin, J., & McClomb, G. E. (1998). Top executive leadership and organizational innovation: An empirical investigation of nonprofit human service organization (HSOs). *Administration in Social Work*, 22(3), 1–21.
- Sinkula, J. M., Baker, W. E., & Noordewier, T. (1997). A framework for market-based organizational learning: linking values, knowledge, and behavior. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(4), 305–318.
- Tesluk, P. E., Farr, J. L., & Klein, S. A. (1997). Influences of organizational culture and climate on individual creativity. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 31(1), 27–41.

- Weller, S. C., & Romney, A. K. (1988). *Systematic data collection*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Zammuto, R. F., & O'Connor, E. J. (1992). Gaining advanced manufacturing technologies' benefits: The roles of organization design and culture. *Academy of Management Review*, *17*(4), 701–728.