

Emerging Discourses of Disabled Women's Movement: Critical thoughts of disabled women activists on their politics

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《요 약》

Korean disabled women's movement, which began with starting disabled women's self-organisation, 'Bijjangeul-yonun-saramdeol', in 1990, has grown rapidly, criticising disablism and men-centrism in Korean society. This movement has been acknowledged as the only civil rights movement which can possibly tackle the oppressive forces in Korean society and consequently has constructed maturity internally and externally. The movement is now in a new phase of creating counter social values and seeking ways to achieve its ultimate goal of disabled women's emancipation. The discourses In this moment forming by disabled women activists on their political activism would greatly affect the future politics of the movement. This study aims to consider the movement's decadal achievement as well as its limitation from the critical viewpoint through the discourses emerging from inside the movement.

Key Words : disabled women's movement, patriarchal disablism, critical discourse, counter civil rights movement

I. Introduction

Since its beginning the disabled women's movement has contributed to bringing about a noticeable change in Korean society. It has indeed much affected changes of Korean people's perception and of the public policy of the Korean government. Most importantly it has brought enormous change to the lives of individual disabled women and at the same time contributed to their group empowerment. Through the movement disabled women could reform their disabled identity and also challenge a range of disempowering ideas concerning disability per se as well as the images imposed on them, showing that they are able enough to perform many of social

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roles, which had been regarded impossible to be practiced by disabled women.

Within the last decade the movement has rapidly grown and been developed to the extent that it can be recognised as an important civil rights movement, which resist the rigidly systemised oppression of disablism and sexism in Korean society. It would be reasonable to say that the disabled women's movement is now on a new phase of its development. With the changes inside and outside the movement such as widened network of its own and more complicating structure inside movement organisations, the movement has faced a new task to seek the ways of managing the changes. At this stage disabled women who have been involved in the movement begin to critically rethink their emancipation politics including the method of group empowerment and the ways of embodying emancipatory ethics that they have developed in the past ten years.

This paper aims to reconsider the politics that has been practiced by disabled women in their movement and search for new ways for future development of the movement through examining the new discourses emerging from the inside the movement. The paper will firstly estimate disabled women's movement in the view that it has played a key role in forming resistant force in disabling and men-centred Korean society. Secondly it will investigate disabled women's considerations on their movement practice. In doing so it will rethink the potential danger which would threaten the essential values of the movement. Finally it will suggest the ways that the movement can develop its future politics in order to achieve its ultimate goal of disabled women's emancipation through the movement.

II. Theoretical framework

Since the disabled women involved in their movement became able to define disability in a different way, it has been possible for them as an equal human or citizen to claim their rights. To understand new discourses which are now emerging from the movement it seems necessary to introduce philosophical bases of this politics of disabled women. Among many, this chapter examines two themes of emancipation politics, which effectively influenced and would help understand the politicisation of disabled women; empowerment politics and claims for redistribution and recognition.

1. The politics of empowerment

The politics of difference has been actively adopted by the groups such as women, black people, gay and lesbian, and disabled people, who have been portrayed as the subjects of a new social movement (Crossley, 2002; Melucci, 1985; Porta and Dianni, 1999). For Korean disabled women, this politics has been an important tool to actualise their collective empowerment in their movement. Emphasising their difference from other minority groups, disabled women could reform their group identity and at the same time construct their own culture as an alternative value in disabling and men-centred Korean culture. This section draws on the identity politics and disability culture construction, which are helpful to understand the Korean disabled women's group politics of difference. Following this, it also introduces the debates of redistribution and recognition that would also help to map out the theoretical frames of social justice which disability movement has pursued.

1) Identity politics and disability culture

Disability researchers have stressed the importance of restructuring disabled identity to revalue disabled people themselves and overcome the negative self-images that have been forged by society (Barnes, 2000; Hevey, 1992). They have also insisted that it is 'Disability culture' that identity politics should consequently strive towards. Producing disability culture is valuable for the reason that disability culture is the field where disabled people can share their experiences and build a collective power, therefore they can develop a new politics of disability.

Identity is a key element of the 'dialectical relationship' between the disabled individual and the wider society. Disability researchers have argued that 'identity' is a social construction, therefore it can shift according to place, time and context, and consequently be modified by individuals (Peters, 2000). The disability movement, like the movements of other marginalised groups in society, started with identity politics in which positive identities as an alternative model have been created. Barnes (2000) considers that identity politics is to translate suppressive discourse, which confines disability to the 'private', into 'public' celebration.

The notion of reforming identity draws attention to the necessity of considering the idea that disability identity is not unified or monolithic. In the academic field, the requirement of recognising multi-layers of 'difference' emerged on the grounds that different experiences cannot be expressed through simple identity. Drawing on

Gabel's argument that one develops his/her 'embodied self' through the life experiences, Peters (2000) emphasised that disability identity can be restructured and that to re-identify 'disability' is to acknowledge the multi-dimensional experiences of disability. It is a disability culture that constitutes the performative self which can be formed on the basis of the values of self-pride (Peters, 2000).

Scholars and activists involved in Disability Studies have argued that it is necessary for disabled people to reform their identities to make their dignity and rights acknowledged. Through disability culture, in which impairment can be redefined in positive ways, disabled people advocate their rights to live and express their oppressed experiences with 'pride' of being different. Identity politics, in this view, plays a key role in developing a new culture with which to empower disabled people.

2) Disability and gender

The relationship between disability and gender is another axis in developing identity politics. Feminist disability researchers have argued that disabled women experience disability in different ways, and that the formation of disabled women's identity is to be understood as a complex process in which disability and other oppressive forces interact with one another (Begum, 1992; Lloyd, 1992; Morris, 1991; Sheldon, 1999; Thomas, 1999; Vernon, 1999). The concept of multipleness and simultaneousness helps the understanding of this complexity of disabled women's experience. For disabled women, race, ethnicity, age and other oppressive forces are equally important to disability. Their everyday experiences of disability can be properly explained when these other oppressions are considered together.

The concept of 'simultaneous oppression' is adequate in explaining the daily experiences of disabled women, which indicate becoming a 'multiple other' (Vernon, 1999: 391). It explains the complex and variable interaction between different forms of social oppression. As Morris (1992) stressed, the various oppressions are not simply 'added on' to disability, rather they are experienced in different forms in which some are felt as the main oppression and at the same time it could exacerbate other oppressions. However, as feminist disability academics have claimed, it is important to understand that the experiences of disabled women are dynamics of various oppressions (Crenshaw, 1994).

2. Claims for redistribution and recognition

In the debates of disability emancipation, the discourse of redistribution and recognition takes the central part. It specifically has been considered as important when discussed with the issues of the essential goal or direction of disability deliberation because the debates of redistribution and recognition directly concern to the origin of disability oppression. This sub-section introduces this theoretical debates of the politics of redistribution and recognition, which are closely related to the embodiment of disability emancipation therefore useful to understand the Korean disabled women's politics.

The debates of redistribution and recognition have mainly continued in the area of social justice theory in which how unequal relations of disabled people with the rest of society can be dealt with has been central dispute. Among many of justice theorists Nancy Fraser is distinguishing in elaborating the theoretical framework of resource redistribution as a way to actualise social justice. Fraser has tried to capture the ways of analysing social harms in our times and suggested a guiding principle of intervention into the social injustice in terms of material inequity (Danermark and Gellerstedt, 2004). She considered that claims for redistribution is rooted in a materialist analysis for the egalite of the oppressed, and that claims for recognition is rooted in a culturalist perspective. Noticing that the claims for redistribution are in decline and those of recognition are becoming more central currently, she argued that this phenomenon is paradoxical because material inequalities are actually increasing in contemporary societies. To her, the paradigm of redistribution of material resources and that of recognition of cultural practices do not communicate hence the tension between the two paradigms is to be overarched (Danermark and Gellerstedt, 2004: 342).

Young(1997) criticised that Fraser's claims base on a binary distinction between society and culture. Therefore, according to Young, Fraser's claims undermine the role of cultural recognition as a necessary part of the struggle for economic, social and political justice. Young argued that this dichotomy between the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition is unhelpful because political economy and culture are mutually implicated. In this sense, she maintained, Fraser's dichotomous distinction is problematic in reason that it does not consider those who may experience economic marginalisation on the basis of their socio-cultural identity (Ryan-Flood, 2004: 3-4).

On the other hand, Honneth, a theorist of recognition, developed a 'Hegelian-informed model of recognition' (Danermark and Gellerstedt, 2004: 348). He captured human interaction as the mechanism of recognition, maintaining that if one wants to be recognised, he/she has to recognise the other, and misrecognition or lack of recognition by others, which consequently leads to social disrespect towards a certain group of people in society, distorts the development of individuals' sense of self (Honneth, 1995). On the basis of this concept of intersubjectivity, he also explained moral grammar of social conflicts that accounts for the motives of social struggles:

... the discussion of conflicts refers to a 'struggle for recognition' with regard to the particular case of confrontations between nationalities or ethnic groups... The motives for rebellion, protest, and resistance have generally been transformed into categories of 'interest', and these interests are supposed to emerge from the objective inequalities in the distribution of material opportunities without ever being linked, in any way, to the everyday web of moral feelings (Honneth, 1995: 161).

However, the two paradigms have an implication to rethinking disability and injustice. Economic marginalisation of disabled people is rooted in the socio-economic structures which affect disabled people regardless the type of impairment, and social ignorance and disrespect towards disabled people are rooted in social patterns of representation and interpretation (Danermark and Gellerstedt, 2004: 345). The remedies to the inequalities in both economic and cultural dimension should be reallocation of socio-economic resources and reconstruction of the negative images concerning marginalised groups as well as formation of the groups' power; the social redistribution and cultural recognition. The disability movement can be understood as a way to seek for social redistribution, which resists disabled people's economic marginalisation, as well as a way to seek cultural recognition, which struggles for transformation of social disrespect towards disabled people.

III. methodology

This paper has been completed on the basis of the research which was conducted between 2004 and 2005 for investigating the impact of participation in movement activities on disabled women's consciousness.

For the research, thirty-one disabled women, who were former or present members of KDAWU(Korean Differently Abled Women United) branch organisations or were involved in the initial stage of organising their local disabled women's group, participated in individual and group interviews. The in-depth semi-structured interview was employed as the main research instrument: twenty-eight of the interviews were tape-recorded with the agreement of the interviews, one was conducted only with note-taking and another by means of Korean sign language.

Participant observation was also employed in this research. This method was utilised for the purposes of gaining a better understanding of the members' personal interpretation of the organisation's activities. In addition, numbers of documents including essays, which had been produced by disabled women themselves involved in their movement, were used for analysing development of each branch organisation's activities as well as the opinions about their organisation and its activities.

IV. Situating the Korean disabled women's movement: a resistant discourse to disabling men-centred society

Considering the heightened interest in disabled women's issues in the Korean society, it is reasonable to say that disabled women's movement has constructed meaningful discourse which is powerful enough to affect the rigid system of Korean disabling patriarchy.

In the academic field, it has been contended that the growth of the disabled women's movement was driven by two factors: the need to resist disablism reinforced by cultural practices, and the need to challenge male and able-bodied centrism in the civil rights movement (Kim, E., 1999).

As maintained in volumes of studies, Korean disabled women experience disability in a more oppressive way. Because disabled women's difficulties are

multiplied by gender differentiation and disability discrimination, the forms of exclusion or marginalisation that disabled women experience in family and society are different from those experienced by disabled men. Disabled women activists argue that seeking ways to solve the problems caused by this gender difference in disability experience is the most important reason for organising women's independent groups.

Although many disabled women experience various forms of oppression in both family and society they have not even recognised as multiple victims by the society. For the disabled women, disclosing their hidden experiences of being victimised in the disabling and patriarchal system is itself a way to resist the oppressive forces. For this reason Park (2001) asserts in her essay that disabled women's politicisation must begin with revealing the painful memories and letting others in society know the reality of disabled women's oppressed lives. In this sense the disabled women's movement can be understood as the space in which disabled women tell their personal stories of being oppressed to those who have had similar experiences and foster their sense of collectivity by sharing their experiences.

On the other hand, there is another force that pushes disabled women's groups to developing their own independent organisations. Considerable number of disabled women activists share the viewpoint that emphasises the inherent problems of disability movement. Kim, H., indicated the women's marginalisation as the direct cause of divergence of disabled women's groups from the original disability movement organisations.

Since the 1980s disabled women have taken part in the disability movement... but they have not been able to present their issues, such as the difficulties of childbearing or domestic work, for inclusion in the organisations' political agenda because the members regarded those issues as simply a part of women's difficulties or of individual disabled women's suffering, which cannot be considered as important as the bigger issues such employment... (Kim, H., 2005: 2).

Although it is indisputable that the disability movement in Korea has enormously contributed to enhancing disabled people's status both in the legal domain and in terms of public perception, it is true, as Kim testifies above, that the androcentrism prevalent within the movement had prevented disabled women's issues

being considered as a part of the central agenda of the movement. Disabled women understood that the difficulties they face within the disability movement and in society at large are reinforced by patriarchal values and norms. Their politicisation therefore has the meaning of challenging the multi-oppression forged in Korea's disabling Confucian patriarchy.

V. Focusing on new discourses: a new way of development or the dissolution of the movement?

Disabled women's movement, as described previously, has made a decadal history. During this historical time disabled women have achieved perceivable recognition in Korean society and also developed an insight to introspect their past movement from a critical perspective. It is true that this becomes possible because they have come to be able to identify themselves as political subjects and to empower themselves enough to estimate their political activities on their own. But it is also true that the development of civil rights movement in Korean society, which has played a significant role in placing the social minority groups in the centre of the society and has provided them with a great deal of resource to be political subjects, has enormously influenced the politicisation of disabled women.

This sub-chapter begins with drawing the changed environment around disabled women's movement and considers the effects of the changes to emergence of disabled women's critical thoughts on their emancipatory movement.

1. Changed environments surrounding Korean disabled women's movement

As many social movement theorists have acknowledged, the environment influences the operational conditions of social movement organisations and indisputably the changes of environment surrounding the movement organisations have considerable impact on their members (Porta and Dianni, 1999; McCarthy and Zald, 1987; Scott, 1981).

In the case of Korean disabled women's movement, the changing environments surrounding their movement organisations are having significant effects on their

structures and the changes that the organisations make to adapt to these changing environments inevitably influence individual disabled women members as well as the relationships among them. Facing the changes coming up to their movement, disabled women involved in the movement begin to consider the ways to manage changing circumstances. Because the changes have been generally figured out as forms of external and internal problems of the movement organisations, considerations of the disabled women mainly concern the issues of organisational management. Before discussing the discourses emerging from the disabled women's movement the outer and inner changes of the movement organisations are explored in this subsection.

1) External changes

(1) Expansion of national and local support

One of the most noticeable changes in the disabled women's movement in recent years is the expansion of the scale of local organisations. Since 1997, when a number of small-scale disabled women's groups associated and formed their national network of KDAWU(Korean Differently Abled Women United), the local groups have actively recruiting new members and developed their activities. By arousing public interest in issues reflecting a new perspective on disabled women's difficulties, KDAWU's member organisations become recognised as the representative of disabled women in Korea. As result of this public recognition, the organisations were perceived as constituting a social movement rather than as small-scale local self-help groups. And they have also become acknowledged as part of a broad critical social movement embracing other social movement organisations and various governmental authorities.

Receiving public acknowledgement has helped KDAWU's member organisations gain public support including legal authorisation as corporate organisations and various forms of financial assistance. This expansion in social recognition and substantial support played a key role in the growth of disabled women's organisations. Moreover the public resources, which enabled the rapid growth of disabled women's organisations, expanded further as the government was reorganised with a new administration. The increase of financial resources helped disabled women's organisations employ more staff and expand the variety of their programmes to meet members' needs. This rapid growth in organisational scale has

resulted in changes in organisational structure. The members' central task is now to manage their enlarged organisations within the context of these changes.

(2) Unintended competition among disability organisations

The increased opportunity to obtain public resources also helped other disability groups and organisations develop their group activities. It becomes easier for existing large-scale disability organisations to obtain this support and for small-scale disability groups to have more chances to grow their groups' strength and to act as effective opposition to the existing conservative.

This newly emerged disability organisations developed new agendas for their political activities: they sought to play a role as pressure groups, and create subject to have funds from the various sources. The activities and group politics of the new disability groups, including disabled women's organisations, stimulated the existing disability organisations to strive to gain still higher social recognition and yet more public funds. As a result, invisible competition occurred among disability organisations and affected each organisation in various respects. Both the existing and newly emerged organisations, on the one hand, needed to attract disabled people's interest in order to recruit them as new members. On the other hand, they had to actively develop subjects to obtain more funding, both public and private. To gain greater social recognition and more financial support, disabled women's organisations also had to specialise their programmes and submit appropriate project around distinctive issues.

Although disabled women's organisations neither expected nor intended to compete with other disability organisations, it is true that the organisations more and more focus their interest to managing their enlarged organisational structures and surviving in an environment of competing social movements.

2) Internal effects

Besides these externally produced effects, disabled women's organisations were influenced by internal changes. Firstly, within a remarkably short time, the membership of each organisation greatly increased. Before the small-scale groups of disabled women emerged, disabled women in general had nowhere to turn, but when it became possible to join a group which identified disabled women's difficulties as its central concern, many of them joined disabled women's organisations. Also many of disabled women came to believe that collective action might bring about

significant change, witnessing the empowerment of the marginalised groups as a consequential result of democratisation of Korean society. As a result, large numbers of disabled women came to participate in the activities of disabled women's movement.

As the number of members in the movement organisations increased, the diversity of the membership has also increased in terms of age, class, and the type of impairment. Accordingly members' expectations also become diverse. Various needs and requests exist in a single organisation. Some members expect the organisation to help them find paid work, while others want to a particular skill or obtain information. One group may want to participate in street demonstrations, while another simply wants to enjoy leisure activities with other disabled women. Thus organisation must meet a variety of expectations and requirement. Moreover, members' expectations have become higher, as the organisations have gained control of larger financial resources.

These internal changes, like the external environmental changes, also gives significant influence on disabled women's organisations. This changing situation forces disabled women involved in the organisations to reconsider what should be the organisations' goals and how those goals are to be achieved.

2. Competing discourses around disabled women's politics

Within the context of external and internal changes, disabled women's movement organisations come to face complicate problems. For the enlarged organisations to be maintained, on the one hand, the organisations have to be more systemically structured. And for the management of increased finance, on the other hand, the organisations need to redevelop their programmes in order to appropriately utilise the available resource. Disabled women's movement is now on a new phase of developing their movement. Disabled women, who have been deeply engaged in the movement in their own way, strive to seek better ways to transform these complicating and undecided conditions to the form of maturer resource for the progressive development of their movement. In this process of seeking new ways of developing the movement, disabled women become more critical in assessing their past group politics and submit various opinions for the future politics. New perspectives on the disabled women' empowerment and emancipation are now burgeoning within the movement circle.

1) Issues on democracy within movement organisations

Although disabled women's groups have focused their activities from the beginning on revealing disabled women's difficulties to the wider society, they now need to move beyond social recognition of disabled women's oppression and develop an appropriate politics for the enlargement of their organisations. For those who regard political development as essential for the future political influence of disabled women's organisations, supporting disabled professional groups at both local organisation and national network level is an important task.

Creating an elite group in disabled women's organisation is crucial for the development of alternative policies which can appropriately meet disabled women's needs and heighten the public credibility of disabled women's politics. At the organisational level, this role is essentially that of the leading group, and is to develop those issues which can stimulate members' participation in political activities to attract the interest of funding bodies, and, most importantly, to lead the organisation in the critical disability politics. Some disabled women therefore support a reorganisation of the staff, giving authority to those who have the ability to perform those tasks. Su-jeong's and Seong-shin's narratives represent this perspective:

... I think it's time that this movement become more realistic. We need people who can fight against, and sometimes collaborate with, the government elites or other professional. Like other movement (organisations) we also need the professional to compete with such high levels(professionals)...

[Su-jeong]

... as representatives of disabled women, we have to meet civil servants to suggest how municipal policy might be revised and we need common cause with other movements... sometimes it's necessary to have more professional knowledge if we are to deal with effectively with the organisational work...

[Seong-shin]

Both of them are staff members in their organisations. As implied in the narratives above, they identify the staff group with leading group, and contend that

the leading group needs to be consisted of those who have professional knowledge to manage the administrative work of their organisations.

But some other disabled women worry about that creating a central group to deal with laws and policies would cause considerable problems for their organisations. Since by supporting professionalism and empowering group, a division might develop between professionals and non-professionals, there is a danger that in practice the central group would be composed of well-educated, and middle-class women. If such a division were to occur and a separation developed between the central elite and the periphery, unequal power relations between the two could also develop. Therefore some disabled women who concerned about the possibility of the centralisation of power and about in-group stratification have argued that the operation of their organisations should be controlled by the members. Yeon-seon's narrative reflects this viewpoint:

... When we(staff group) decided and managed the organisation's programmes the ideas were limited. And we didn't know what members wanted to do here. But after the committee was formed, many ideas came up. For example, we usually decide together how we'll get funding... we agreed ask for funding to make a short movie about disabled women's daily lives. At first many of us thought it would be impossible to get public funding for it because we weren't professional film makers and also we thought it wouldn't be considered important by funding bodies dedicated to supporting disabled women's well-being... but the committee decided to apply anyway and we got funding for it... Creative ideas always come from the members and their needs and desires... and they are the ones who will develop our movement...

[Yeon-seon]

Like Yeon-seon, the advocates of member control consider that internal democracy, which can be achieved through voluntary member activism, is of the greatest importance in fostering disabled women's group power. Instead of supporting the ideal of professional central group, the advocates of member control argue that internal solidarity should be enhanced through the active participation of the membership and that the internal solidarity creates a strong motivation for

member's more active participation, which Porta and Dianni(1999) have termed 'symbolic resource' to continue the movement.

Surrounding the issue of managing enlarged organisations, two different perspectives are being developed. One group of disabled women support the formation of central power group composed of elite leaders and another group claims for the development of stronger member control. Like other social movements, disabled women's movement is now confronted with the problem of the power dominance in their movement organisations.

2) The goal of movement politics: changing the socio-economic system or developing cultural values

The question of primary aim of disabled women's organisational politics is another issue around which different perspectives have emerged in disabled women's organisations. For many disabled women, the disabling environment and economic system are the fundamental cause of the oppression that they have experienced.

A group of disabled women explained they could not go shopping or enjoy leisure activities or even attend school because of inaccessible physical environment. Other group of them stressed that because of direct discrimination in the labour market they were facing extreme economic difficulty. Those disabled women underlined that the prime source of their oppression was the disabling socio-economic system. For them, changing such disabling system was believed to be most essential for achieving their emancipation. Chae-rim was one of those who regarded the disabling environment as the fundamental barrier that confines disabled women within the boundary of the family home and prevents them from participating in mainstream social life. She insists that removing such social environmental barrier is the most important task of disabled women's politics:

When I began to go out, I understood that once people went out they could find the solution... society now is much more open than when I was growing. People listen to us and many of them want to help us. My experience is that I could do many more things once I got out with my wheelchair... We have programmes when we go to public places lacking proper facilities make a legal claim to change them. Actually we've changed a lot of things since we began to do that. Many other disabled people can now use the facilities that we made

available... though I'm not so young, I want to be an activist in the disability movement until I can't go on any more... I believe the world will be changed by that kind of activism. And once the surroundings change, many things will become possible...

[Chae-rim]

Chae-rim was in her fifties and uses a wheelchair. As she said, she firmly believed that disabled people can continue to remove the barriers existing in society, and that organisational activities are important in changing the social environment. Therefore the most important goal of disability organisations is to change the environment and contribute to provision of opportunities for disabled people to enjoy their lives and participate in a greater range of social activities.

Some other disabled women emphasise the importance of equal opportunity in the employment field, claiming that it is an essential human right to be paid for one's labour and to build self-confidence and self-satisfaction through financial reward. Many of those emphasise the significance of employment identify the source of their oppression with the exclusive economic system, which deprives disabled women of the opportunity to achieve financial independence in their adulthood. Su-ha, who was a founding member of the first disabled women's group in Korea,

...I know that this law[prohibiting discrimination against disabled people in the employment field] won't solve everything for disabled people. But I believe this law will be the basis of disabled people's empowerment... we face the highest barrier of all when we enter the employment market. Whatever we have done, it's no use. School is the last chance to develop our lives in this society, but there is nothing after that. A strong law assuring our right to live as equal human beings will force society to give us the opportunity to compete on equal terms with non-disabled people in the employment area...

[Su-ha]

In contrast to those who emphasise systemic barriers such as the built environment and the employment market, some disabled women focus their attention on another aspect of oppression. They argue that the fundamental source of disabled women's oppression is disabling ideologies and their representation. These ideologies

lead people in society to perceive disabled women as lacking in physical and sexual productivities and consequently to construct disability-discriminating social system such as hostile environment and discriminating employment market. They consider that the disabling ideologies become interlised in disabled women's sense of self, leading them to perceive themselves in negative ways. For these women, the ideological disempowerment of disabled women's self is most dangerous because self-devaluation induces the justification to oneself of all other forms of social oppression. As Morris(1991) has argued, the absence and distortion of disabled women in cultural representation is a vital theme of disabled women's emancipation. This is because disabling stereotypes form the bedrock on which the attitudes towards, assumptions about and expectations of disabled women are based (Barnes, 1992).

Changing the distorting assumption that regards disabled women as less productive and as asexual or less attractive is the most important purpose of those who firmly believe the oppressive ideologies as the basis of disabled women's oppression. One member of the Disabled Women's Community for Art Culture in Seoul and a member of KDAWU-S(Korean Differently Abled Women United in Seoul) explained why disabled women must act to change their culturally misrepresented images:

To analyse the culture from the disabled women's viewpoint is another significant task we can do to make our space in the culture. cultural infuence... we have to make a valuable cultural content in which disabled women's power can be valorised as alternative, as a mainstream cultural element... Internet cyber space, the digital camera, photos, the novel and poetry... all these are our cultural weapons in the fight against the disabling society. When we make our space in the cultural field, then we make a change... continuous change in the culture can make a difference in all area of society...

[Keung-ju, 2002]

Keung-ju believes that change has to occur throughout society if disabled women are to achieve emancipation. She emphasises the importance of cultural power, which affects all aspect of human life, and argue their misrepresented images. Her argument implies that cultural ideologies can induce negative reponses towards

disabled women that can result in systemic exclusion and discrimination. Therefore, in her view, changing social perceptions through cultural intervention is the most important task that disabled women's politics needs to undertake for their empowerment and emancipation.

Two different foci for achieving the goal of changing disabling society contest in disabled women's movement camp: one is to remove disabling barrier in socio-economic sector and the other is to change or reform the cultural norms and images concerning disabled women. As implied above, the emphasis on one different source of disability oppression now forms the ideology that makes one less important than the other in the practical context of social movement.

3) Method of facilitating empowerment: satisfaction of practical needs or campaigning for political rights

As disabled women's organisations become more capable of mobilising available social resources and recruiting new members, organisational activities become the arena where members's different interests converge. As with the issue of what kind of change is to be prioritised with the object of achieving disabled women's emancipation, different perspectives also contest on the issue of how to realise disabled women's empowerment. The issue of disabled women's empowerment is closely related to the question of the choice of organisational activities. The different emphases on disabled women's empowerment tend to be divided into two positions: meeting members' practical needs and campaigning for political rights.

As Doyal and Gough do, many disabled women believe that their empowerment can be realised through meeting their basic human needs, because the satisfaction of those needs is necessary for people to effectively participate in their form of life and to achieve any other value goals (Doyal and Gough, 1991: 54). From the perspective of the right to citizenship, individual needs satisfaction can be understood as an aspect of protecting the individual's right to citizenship (Taylor, 1999; Taylor and Whittier, 1995, 1999). This conceptual extension of human needs to the right to citizenship is important for the empowerment of marginalised groups because it provides them with the conceptual tool to justify their demand for the redistribution of social resources (Fraiser, 1995, 1997). In interpreting the needs occurring in their day-to-day lives as deprivation of the basic right to citizenship, some disabled women insist that their organisations should provide this basic right through the satisfaction of their practical needs. Hyo-jeong's and Yun-hee' narrations reflect this

view:

I want the organisation to provide us with we actually need... what we really need is to get help to get a job... I don't know how the organisation is going to do it but I think it has to, because we generally are very poor and need help to solve this serious problem...

[Hyo-jeong]

It is important for this organisation to provide a variety of programmes that enable the members to do what they can't do at home and in society because only we can properly understand what they need...

[Yun-hee]

Politically, these activities are to be understood as the politicisation of individual needs, and the disabled women's organisations as the political space in which to actualise an alternative politics that extends the social sector, broadening individual choice and enriching these women's lives (Gould, 1988; Lister, 1997).

However other groups of disabled women are concerned about the negative impact of these welfare services activities. Although the organisations provide many disabled women with the opportunities to perform what they have been deprived of throughout their lives, these activities can be categorised as solutions to individual problems and therefore there is a strong possibility that disabled women's difficulties can be merely regarded as personal problems. These disabled women emphasise that the role of satisfying disabled women's needs can be left in the hands of self-organisations and that this would lead to the failure of claiming social responsibilities. Da-won, the former leader of TDAWU explained this:

... what the organisations have to do is to fight for legislation guaranteeing disabled women's rights, not to provide services... it's like the family burden, taking care of disabled people... the responsibility to meet our needs should be moved to the government... it is not what we should have to do here... If we take on the role of dealing with disabled women's difficulties, the government will never take it (*the responsibility*)... we shouldn't accept funding from the government just

for providing those services because once we depend on ti we can't fight against the government. If we want to make progress in this movement we have to fight, not to collude with it..

[Da-won]

She maintains that accepting government support would create dependency and weaken the organisations' bargaining power. To her it is certain that in order to drive government to accept its responsibility, the movement organisations have to act concertedly as a pressure group.

As showed above, it seems clear that in the disabled women's movement needs satisfaction is considered as passive and individualised reaction rather than practical politics by a group of disabled women. Likewise political action seems to be regarded as over-idealized or partialised politics by other group of disabled women. In this context support for individual needs and action for political empowerment is now being polarised in the movement field, holding high possibility of dividing the activists into two groups alongside the characteristics of actualisation of movement activities.

VI. Conclusion: Rethinking the new discourses

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, starting point of this study is to premise that a decadal history of disabled women's movement has contributed to disabled women's construction of critical consciousness and that the movement has reached a critical point that needs important decisions regarding the methods of organisation management and of goal achievement. Since its beginning, disabled women's movement has played a key role in unveiling disabled women's suffer to the wider society. This would be considered as the first wave of Korean disabled women's movement. It is now on the point of entering the second period of the movement that would require the movement to reform itself as an alternative social movement to the disabling and men-centred ones and to develop new social values for replacing the oppressive ones existing in Korean society. It is undeniable that the discourses emerging from inside the disabled women's movement are crucial to new decisions for their future politics. At this point this study tries to estimate the value

of the movement in a positive view as well as to rethink the movement regarding its ultimate goal of disabled women's emancipation in a critical viewpoint and to make some points which hopefully would provide helpful suggestion for its future politics.

First, the issue on how to manage the enlarged organisation leads us to reconsider the value of disabled women's movement. If professionalism is unconditionally accepted for the growth of its outer scale without restraint of unnecessary power domination of certain group therefore it becomes a prior goal of the movement, it is highly possible that a group of disabled women, who have high education and middle class background or those who have mild impairment with which to maximize communication ability in non-disabled centred society, dominates leading status of the movement. Indisputably power domination of this group will become inevitable and obviously disabled women who have lower education or whose impairment is severer are to be excluded from the central roles and status of the movement. It seems necessary that we need to remember that disabled women's movement began to place the excluded to the centre of the society and to empower them for their human rights to be kept by their group power. Therefore it is most important to deeply consider the possibility that disabled women's movement would make another excluded group within the movement circle, uncritically accepting society's norms and values.

Second, concerning the issue of the goal of disabled women's movement, it would be essential to remind that the movement aims to remove the roots of disability oppression. As many scholars have constantly insisted, the oppression on disabled people have rooted from both the unequal economic system, which is able-bodied-centred, and discriminating ideologies, which make the disabled discriminated in every sector of the society. It is clear that disabled women's oppression is the result of the interplay of those two systemic forces and that disabled women's movement should be concrete and strategic in aiming at the two targets: unequal system which are social and economic and exclusive discourses whose basis are on discriminating ideologies. In this sense, it is not wise for disabled women's movement to allow making an internal discourse in which one of them would be splitted away by overemphasis of the other.

Third, regarding the issue of the method of emancipation, it seems necessary for disabled women's movement to seek a new way of facilitating its empowerment. As discussed in previous section, the movement is now at a new stage where its

internal and external conditions has enormously changed. In order to effectively achieve the purpose of the movement, it is necessary for the movement organisations to consider the ways to reallocate the roles from the perspective of collaboration. Some organisations would concentrate on making political agenda and others on developing alternative service programmes. Some groups would act as political agencies whose task would be to play as pressure group and others would develop effective programmes for disabled women's welfare services. It would be more important to hold balance between meeting individualised needs and becoming political subjective to obtain the ultimate goal of collective empowerment and of individual disabled woman's emancipation.

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장애여성운동에 대한 새로운 담론: 장애여성운동의 정치학에 대한 비판적 사색

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<국문초록>

1990년 ‘빛장을 여는 사람들’이라는 장애여성 자조모임을 만들며 본격적으로 시작된 장애여성운동은 지난 10년간 한국사회의 장애차별주의와 남성중심주의를 비판하며 빠른 성장을 이루었다. 한국사회의 가장 견고한 억압인 남성중심적 장애차별주의를 견재할 수 있는 유일한 시민운동이라는 의의를 기반으로 외적, 내적 성장을 이루어낸 이 운동은 이제 대안적 사회가치의 창출이라는 새로운 과제를 안고 그 궁극적 목적과 목적달성의 올바른 방법을 탐색하는 단계에 이르렀다.

장애여성운동은 한국의 시민사회운동을 둘러싼 환경의 변화와 함께 내적, 외적 성장을 이루어왔다. 10년간의 빠른 성장을 통해 장애여성운동은 대외적으로 가부장적 장애차별주의를 견재하는 중요한 시민운동이라 사회적으로 인정받게 되었을 뿐 아니라 회원의 급증과 공.사적 지원의 증가, 프로그램의 다양화 등 내부적으로도 큰 발전을 이루어내었다. 이제 사회가 인지할 만한 대규모 시민사회운동단체로 변화한 장애여성운동은 각 단체의 운영방법이나 목적달성의 방법론을 새로이 고민하지 않을 수 없는 상황에 놓이게 되었다. 10년간 이루어내었던 성과만큼 앞으로의 운동정책이 발전할 수 있을지는 바로 지금과 같은 중요한 변화를 겪는 시기에 결정될 가능성이 크다 할 수 있을 것이다. 장애여성운동에 적극적으로 참여해 온 장애여성 운동가들은 그들의 미래를 결정할 다양한 운동정책에 대해 고민하고 있으며 이들이 고민하는 많은 부분들은 억압으로부터의 해방이라는 목적을 달성하기 위한 방법론에 관한 것이다. 운영방식이 가져올 수 있는 단체내 권력의 분산과 집중의 문제로부터 장애억압적인 시스템의 변화와 장애억압문화의 새로운 문화창출이라는 가치체계의 정비문제까지 이들은 장애여성운동 내부에서 운동의 정치학에 관한 다양한 담론들을 만들어내고 있다. 이 연구는 한국장애여성운동의 방법론과 관련하여 형성되고 있는 다양한 주제의 정치적 담론들을 연구함으로써 10년간의 장애여성운동을 평가하고 또한 운동주체들이 형성해온 한계점들을 비판적 관점에서 새로이 고찰하고자 한다.

주제어: 장애여성운동, 남성중심적 장애차별주의, 비판적 담론, 대안적 시민사회운동

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