
Universal and special conditions for advocating disability rights: from the experiences of Japan and Korea

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Abstract

In the process of formulating policies for the disabled, more emphasis is being placed on participation by the disabled themselves both domestically and internationally. Active disability rights movements are emerging in many countries.

I previously researched on the conditions for successful advocacy that promotes the participation of disabled people in the field of welfare policymaking, reviewing and comparing the advocacy of organizations consisting of disabled people in Nordic countries, United States and Japan. This discussion covers the organizations' history, fundraising strategies, ways of participating in the policymaking process, relationship to the government, as well as their role and influence. Universal conditions for participation by the disabled in every country are as follows; the role of disabled people's organizations to be a community for them to have an identity as a member of society is very important especially when we are dealing with a familistic welfare system. Definite strategies and international networks are required to respond to the domestic welfare system and gain power to negotiate with and protest against the government.

Now the aim of this report is to confirm these conditions and add several factors to develop active and effective disability rights advocacy in East Asia. For this purpose I will review and compare the advocacy work of disabled people's organizations in Japan and Korea. There are similar welfare system and familistic cultural value, and recently strong disabled citizen's movements in both countries. I also focus on the National Human Rights Commission of Korea established in 2001 as a national advocacy institution for human rights protection and examine its function in welfare policies. Lastly I will mention the significance of legislation of Non-Discrimination Act for the disabled people in Japan and Korea.

Keywords: disabled people's organizations, conditions for successful advocacy, Japan, Korea, welfare system

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