

Changing the world with Parents' Power

Parent Movement in South Korea

Jongsul Yoon

President, Korean Parents' Network for
People with Disabilities



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1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

Prior to 1990s'

Unlike western world where parent movement began in late 1940s' and early 1950s', Korean parents remained as devoted carers struggling with difficulties, in isolation.

➤ **Setting ground for disability movement in Korea in 1980s'**

- 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons
- UN Decade of Disabled Persons (1983~1992)
- In Korea in 1981, the Welfare Act for Persons with Physical and Mental Disabilities was adopted.
- In 1987, Korean disability movement set a scene for reforming the Welfare Act and establishing the Employment Promotion Act



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

➤ Establishment of parent organizations

- Org. led by experts
 - 1968, Korean Welfare Association for the Mentally Defected
- Org. run by parents
 - 1985, Korean Parents Society for the Disabled
 - 1988, Parents Association for People with Down Syndrome

➤ General tendency of parents organizations prior to 90s'

- Self-support group
- Special service provider
- Limited in advocacy as group issues



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

In 1990s'

Individual parents and parents' organizations started to work together in recognition of needs for ensuring the education rights

➤ Awakened by education rights

- Frequent refusals of school admission and absence of special teachers
- Many children had to go informal/non-registered private schools
- 1991, a plan for building a special school was stopped by neighbors
- Parents set coalition on approval of special school by campaigning the government and National Assembly



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

➤ Establishment of Education Rights

- Coalition on welfare of persons with disabilities: 1992~1994
 - Reform of 'the Basic Education for Children with Disabilities Act' into 'Special Education Promotion Act' in 1993
 - Ensured compulsory education for children with disabilities
 - Parents recognized the need for collective action to implement the Act to realize their children's education rights : special class in mainstream schools and allocating special teachers in middle schools

➤ Limitation of the Act

- Legal duty to provide school placement to children with disabilities, but no adequate teaching environment in place



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

In 2000s'

Parents' movement to bring about changes into lives of children with disabilities in all aspects of life incl. education, employment and social participation

➤ **Formation of Coalition on Special Education Rights**

- July 15th 2003, local parents org, teachers union and disability org. established the coalition on education rights
- Recognition that education is vital for children to prepare for their adult life
- Need for appropriate learning environment is needed to be put in place
- The coalition requested essential education infra with sufficient number of teaching assistants, expansion of facilities, increase of after-school support, etc.



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

➤ 4 year's struggle from 2003 to 2007

- Started with campaigns to local education authorities and strengthened movement for making a new law for inclusive education
- Drafting the law and undertook campaigns, incl. hunger strikes, overnight protest camp, occupying National Assembly
- Adopted in April 2007

➤ Major achievement

- Every 4 students has a teacher
- Attendance in inclusive schools increased up to 50%
- Enrollment rate increased from 62.5% to 94% (87,000 out of 93,000)



1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

- **Movement for the Welfare for Children with Disabilities Act 2009~2011**
 - Since parents work together collectively for education right, families become aware of burden of families to care for children on their own.
 - Those burden led some families to ending the whole family life
 - From the experience of drafting and adopting the special education law by parents' initiative, parents became confident in taking a leading role in legislation of the Welfare for Children with Disabilities Act, adopted in 2011.
- **Major achievement**
 - Legal framework for children's welfare
 - Est. of developmental disability rehabilitation service, family support, respite care
 - Improvement of staff in kindergarten from 9 to 6 children per special teacher; 3 children in nursery
 - Partnership with other disability movement groups





1. Development of parent movement in South Korea

➤ Coalition on Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act

- KPNPD again took an initiative on making Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, to ensure full participation of persons with developmental disabilities which require on-going support for self-advocacy and living in the community
- The Act was adopted in April 2014.

➤ Major achievements

- Specialized welfare services for persons with developmental disabilities
 - Support with early intervention, rehabilitation service, behaviour intervention, designated hospital
 - Vocational training centers for persons with severe disabilities
 - Life-long education, day activities, leisure and cultural activities, respite care
- Ensuring prevention of violation of human rights and support with remedies
 - Ensuring self-decision making and support with self-support groups
- Est. of designated service delivery system on Individual planning
 - One-stop service center



2. KPMPD's Contribution to parent movement

➤ Parents as agents of changes, KPMPD est. in 2008

- From the experience of structuring collective advocacy and of putting into place during the campaign on Education Rights Act, a number of parents' organizations were established across the country.
- Parents also recognized that difficulties faced by their children should not be family matters, but the country's duty to solve.
- Need for a progressive parents organization, not only soothing suffering of parents, but also voicing out for changes of the society
- On International Day of Persons with Disabilities in 2008 (Dec 3rd), Korean Parents' Network for People with Disabilities was formally established with an aim of ensuring human rights for persons with disabilities.



2. KPNPD's Contribution to parent movement

➤ Development of disability policies and nation-wide services for persons with disabilities and their families by KPNPD

- Leading roles in adopting 3 major Acts, with partnership with other organizations and disability rights movement
- KPNPD did not stop in legislation, but continued to implement fully all relevant legislations, by suggesting pilot projects which has developed into nation-wide services provided by the government.
- Rehabilitation voucher service for children
- Family support services, KPNPD runs 50 family support centers
- Respite care for families
- Pilot project on community-based day activities, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Welfare
- Pilot project on internship program in mainstream work places, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Welfare
- Research on a supported living scheme, which is currently in development of service by City of Seoul



3. Ways forwards for parent movement

- Capacity building of parents' organizations
- Overcome of disinterest of other parents
- Strengthening political and social cultural influence
- Maintaining the identity of social movement
- Solidarity on other social issues for changes of the society
- Building a firm foundation for movement
- Service consumer vs service provider
- Relationship with the government (strained and cooperative)
- Parent movement vs disability rights movement
- International cooperation





Korean Parents' Network for People with Disabilities



For the world where people with disabilities and their families live in the community happily



Korean Parents' Network for People with Disabilities