

## Life Experiences of the Disabled Adults in Public Education Yahak Program

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### 성인 장애인의 야학교육프로그램 참여 일상경험

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#### Abstract

This study was to explore the living experiences of the disabled adults who were participating in public education Yahak program held at evening class. The study designed in-depth interviews with ten disabled people using a grounded theory approach. Through analyzing process, 34 concepts, 15 subcategories, and eight categories were deduced. In axial coding, casual condition, 'Suffering from unknown cause disabilities' and 'Isolated by social cause', context condition, 'Taking discriminative treat for disabilities' impacted on phenomenon, 'Overcoming their conditions by themselves'. Intervening conditions was 'Taking social supports' and action-interaction condition, 'Enjoying public programs' totally lead to consequence in 'Controlling daily life' and 'Exploring their own social roles'. The periods of process were divided three stages, reflecting disabled situation, formation phase of social relation, and self-developing phase. The core category, 'Trying to be recognized as a member of society' incorporated the relationship between and among all categories and explained the process. The study indicates that social education program for the disabled helped to develop themselves as a member of society. Therefore, we suggest there may be a need for training for professionals who work with disabled people to develop social adaptation.

**Key words : Disabled Persons, Learning, Life Style, Qualitative Research**

#### I . Introduction

2014 Korean National Survey on persons with disabilities reported that the prevalence of disabilities in the country has been rising steadily over the last decade(Kim, Won-Ho · Park, Yoon-Ghil · Shin, Hyung-Ik & Im, Sang-Hee 2014). Regarding the causes, the acquired disability rate has risen by more than 88.9%(Ministry of Health and Welfare 2015). Acquired disabilities consisted

of physical ailments; the majority was related to having had a stroke. The chronic disease prevalence rate was 77.2% among the disable(Kim, Won-Ho · Park, Yoon-Ghil · Shin, Hyung-Ik & Im, Sang-Hee 2014). The rehabilitation and medical needs for this sector of the population have been increasing; the government's plans for national welfare and education programs must be carried out properly.

Korean literature on disabilities has focused on community-based rehabilitation services and

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depression(Kim, Sang-Youp · Kang, Kyung-Sook · Kim, Seung-Hee · Lee, Jeong-Un & Chang, Mi-Young 2015), the meaning of lifelong education(Seo, Bo-Soon · Ahn, Seong-Woo 2014), and living system(Moon, Hye-Sook 2009). The authors found that disabled people's capacity for a social life and living conditions are important to them. Their environment can affect their lifestyle, psycho-social health, and physical movement. Non-Korean literature reported that disabled and obese people face obstacles in daily life, accessing services, and responding to challenges. Obesity results in disabilities, a high level of care and costs(Pain & Rose 2006). Older obese women suffer from physical pain associated with disabilities and physical functions(Fowler-Brown, Wee, Marcantonio, Nog, Long & Leveille 2013). The likelihood of having a disability increases with age, along with more chronic diseases, support received from families and less satisfaction with support(Jang, Haley, Mortimer, & Small 2003). Regarding the disability experience process, personality and social support were huge factors(Gretebeck, Ferraro, Black, Holland, & Gretebeck 2012). The literature revealed the healthcare system and psycho-social health to be important elements of disabled people's well-being. But there were rare the disabled adults what experience had and how thought was in their public education Yahak program.

This study explored the life experiences of physically disabled persons. This paper aims to gain an understanding and describe the experiences of disabled persons in Korea's public education Yahak program, based on their perspectives.

## II. Methods

### 1. Methodology

The author used grounded theory for the analysis(Strauss & Corbin 1998). This approach involves in-depth interviews. And have possibilities to develop an understanding of the learning process from the perspective of the physically disabled adults. For quality of this paper, the author applied theoretical sampling according to grounded theory methodology and identified by a expert in this area.

### 2. Participants

Of the ten interviewees, half were women. Their aged were between 37 to 48. Most participants had a low level of literacy education and had acquired physical disabilities. They willingly joined the public education program to learn elementary knowledge and socialize. They caused by disabilities from a stroke and polio. They agreed to be interviewed about their experiences with having a disability and their lifestyle in regards to the public education program.

### 3. Ethical issues

This study received ethical approval from the university committee(IRB No: 1041386-20140618-HR-004-03). The interviewees received a brief verbal explanation of research. They were given a copy of a consent form to sign, and the interviews were audio-recorded. The researcher maintained their anonymity. The participants received medical band gift as compensation at the final meeting.

### 4. Data collection and analysis

The author collected data June and August 2015 using semi-structure interview, which consisted of

open-ended questions. The interviews were proceed 2-3 times per participants and took 40-50 minutes per interview. The first question was: "Talk about your public education Yahak program. What caused you to join the program?"

After initial questions, the researcher asked follow-up probing questions: What happened next?, How did you feel about?, What kind of benefit/weakness did you expect?, Could you explain more about?

The final question consisted of: Is here anything else you would like to tell me about your experience? Their experiences related to their lifestyle and anything else they wanted to talk about.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The author examined the transcripts using approaches developed by Strauss & Corbin. The author performed analysis with the transcripts using constant comparison. They used coding to interpret the data and form a substantive theory in the field. The final analysis linked all the categories to the central classification of "Trying to be recognized as a member of society."

### III. Results

Since the analyzing process have continued presented method, 34 concepts, 15 subcategories and eight categories were deduced as following ([Table 1]).

All participants had attended more than one year in the program. They had stigma in their disability. They assisted by activity helper as to their disability level. These pre-experiences led to join to the program. They got with it as themselves.

Analysis with coding broke down the data with 34 concepts, 15 subcategories and eight categories.

All categories integrated with 'Trying to be recognized as a member of society'. The participants' experiences can be divided into three stages. The stages are following.

#### 1. Reflecting disabled situation

Initially the participants felt in confusion, as they know their own physically disabilities. They have several causes as like severe pain, facial disfigurement, infantile paralysis, stroke, cerebral palsy, amputation and myasthenia.

In this phase, they experiences in suffering from unknown cause disability, isolated by social case and taking discriminative treats for disabilities.

"Suddenly, my right shoulder had not got upward. I diagnosed with myasthenia. So, I drunk and cried for that days."

"I have difficulties in standing position, but I could work in a sitting posture. Daily life adjusted by my physical defects."

#### 2. Formation phase of social relation

The participants willingly joined at public education Yahak program. They introduced by friends and relatives. They aimed their own study plan and continued social relationship through the program. Their family assisted living condition by foods, house, money and emotional supports. They encouraged by family and friends in daily. They resumed study and promoted social health at the place. They moving out their parents and assisted by a activity helper through public welfare service. They said that the learning was very effective and they engaged in reciprocally each other.

"Stress going out me.. whatever is not control to I want. So that' s my stress. When I moving to there, but I can' t. I found out the way is to being together. So I have drinking with friends after

classroom.”

“I like to together with people. Before coming to the program, I had working alone. Now, I met

various people alike me. So I emotionally supported.”

<Table 1> Categorizing the concepts by the grounded theory

Paradigm Model	Category (8)	Sub-Category (15)	Concept (34)
Casual Condition	Suffering from unknown cause disabilities	Confused by unexpected disorders	Taking diagnosis of a rare disease
		Having daily discomforts	Complaining of severe pain
		Having limits in mobility	Having sudden immobility
	Isolated by social cause	Having difficulties in taking jobs	Having inability in using chopsticks
			Having difficulties in transportation
			Living alone
Context	Taking discriminative treat for disabilities	Unawareness of the disabilities	Refused by facing interview
		Social classifying for the disabilities	Having doubting minds
		Beaten by classmates	
		Becoming fun for their disabilities	
Phenomenon	Overcoming their conditions by themselves.	Resuming studies	Rejected by public restaurants
		Exploring opportunities for social involving	Becoming a nonentity in public facilities
		Participating in welfare programs	
		Studying hard with overtime efforts	
Intervening Condition	Taking social supports	Self-supporting in economic aspects	Valuing on meeting between themselves
		Taking helps by peoples	Beginning the helping activities
		Taking supports by welfare facilities	Self-supporting in daily payments
		Moving out their parents	
		Supporting by members of family	
Action/ Interactions	Enjoying public programs	Balancing study and social life	Taking helps by neighbors
		Taking opportunities for practicing healthy lifestyles	Assisted by caring staffs
		Funding for operation charges	
		Knowing the stock by English studies	
consequences	Controlling daily life	Taking a sense of physical balance	Taking helps by Korean language studies
		Improving a sense of physical control	Exercising by attending programs
		Doing voluntary services in daily life	Practicing healthy diets
	Exploring their own social roles	Improving concentration by studies	Maintaining desirable body weights
		Discovering new goal in their own life	Controlling urination by themselves
			Improving of hand moving
			Giving helps for their fellows
	Initiating effective learning skills each other		
	Satisfying by improved scores		
	Planning for go on to the next stage of their education		

### 3. Self-developing phase

The participants became proud in daily life. They find something new and overcoming bad habits. They tried to be member of society. They have one more than purpose in daily life. Their purpose

to participate in the program were that learning itself, challenge the upper degree, social health and so on. They developed their own control competence in life. They had healthy eating, moving and socialized. So they had dreams that

going university to be helpful person in society.

“I prized for improving grade. I felt worth in my efforts. So I took out the course of middle school”

“I took out secondary counseling certification. It’s my efforts and I so happy to be helper with my friends. I listened positively with them and they recognized me as a counselor.”

#### **IV. Discussion**

This study aimed to understand and reveal the experiences of adults with acquired physical disabilities in public education Yahak program. Data were grouped into eight categories.

The author’s prestudy on socialization and health experiences of physical disabled adults in public welfare program was deduced on 6 themes that was ‘life patterns exclusive health’, ‘powerlessness by physical disabilities’, ‘social supports’, ‘positive motivation’, ‘seeking to be holistic health’, and ‘sens of accomplishment’(Kim, Jeong-Soo 2016). But, in this paper, the participants’ experiences revealed that their disabilities are related to unknown causes, they were socially isolated and discriminated against in regards to receiving treatment, they often have to overcome their condition alone. As they receive social support and enjoy the programs, they have control of their life and explore their own social roles. Data were integrated all these categories into one: “Trying to be recognized as a member of society.”

The first experience the participants described reflected their circumstances living with disabilities. The participants suffered and described feeling isolated. They tried to face the challenges of their disabilities and deal with their living conditions. Related reports revealed that young adults with a

physical disability improved in terms of occupational performance at work, self-care, and leisure when they received rehabilitation(Verhoef, Roebroek, Schaardenburgh, Floothuis, & Miedema 2014). It was similar in that for social adaptation.

Regarding the formation of social relationships, the participants make efforts to overcome their conditions, receive social support, and enjoy the program. They adapted to a public center for learning and enjoy each other’s company. Given this fact, we can conclude that disabled adults need to be in a community. Related papers revealed that increasing recreational physical activity was linked to reduced risk of disability(Gretebeck, Ferraro, Black, Holland, & Gretebeck 2012) and greater social support(Jang, Haley, Mortimer, & Small 2003).

Regarding questions on self-development, the participants made efforts to overcome obstacles by controlling their daily lives and exploring their own social roles. They set a life goal and tried to navigate daily life by themselves. In terms of their experiences in the public education Yahak program, they aim to be recognized as members of society. Other studies showed that higher physical activity might help functionally disabled adults improve or maintain their physical functions(Lee, Hea-Young 2006; Loprinzi 2014). Although there were differences in the program, physical activity in the public education Yahak program was an important role in functioning to make them as a member of society.

#### **V. Conclusion**

This paper has provided an understanding of Korea’s public education Yahak program for

disabled adults through a grounded theory. Based on our results, the contents of an intervention program will be considered and include physical activity and recreation for the disabled adults. And, we would like consider the methods of social supports in enjoyable public programs. Research on learning and intervention programs need to consider psycho-social health and well-being.

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