Life Experiences of the Disabled Adults in Public Education Yahak Program

Jeong-Soo KIM
(Pukyong National University)

성인 장애인의 야학교육프로그램 참여 일상경험
김 정 수
(부경대학교)

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
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.

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 proceeded 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 there 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 paralyis, 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
"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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm Model</th>
<th>Category (8)</th>
<th>Sub-Category (15)</th>
<th>Concept (34)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casual Condition</td>
<td>Suffering from unknown cause disabilities</td>
<td>Confused by unexpected disorders</td>
<td>Taking diagnosis of a rare disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having daily discomforts</td>
<td>Complaining of severe pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolated by social cause</td>
<td>Having limits in mobility</td>
<td>Having sudden immobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having difficulties in taking chopsticks</td>
<td>Having inability in using chopsticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Living alone</td>
<td>Having difficulties in transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refused by facing interview</td>
<td>Living alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having doubting minds</td>
<td>Living alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Taking discriminative treatment for disabilities</td>
<td>Unawareness of the disabilities</td>
<td>Beaten by classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social classifying for the disabilities</td>
<td>Becoming fun for their disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenon</td>
<td>Overcoming their conditions by themselves.</td>
<td>Resuming studies</td>
<td>Participating in welfare programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exploring opportunities for social involving</td>
<td>Studying hard with overtime efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventional Condition</td>
<td>Taking social supports</td>
<td>Self-supporting in economic aspects</td>
<td>Valuing on meeting between themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking helps by peoples</td>
<td>Beginning the helping activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking supports by welfare facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action' Interactions</td>
<td>Enjoying public programs</td>
<td>Balancing study and social life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking opportunities for practicing healthy lifestyles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking a sense of physical balance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improving a sense of physical control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doing voluntary services in daily life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discovering new goal in their own life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Initiating effective learning skills each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfying by improved scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning for go on to the next stage of their education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
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, Roebroeck, 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.

References


Received : 29 February, 2016
Revised : 12 March, 2016
Accepted : 18 March, 2016