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An Institutionalist Explanation of the Evolution of Taiwan's Disability Movement: From the Charity Model to the Social Model

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Abstract: In this article, we analyze the process of institutional change in Taiwan's disability field by focusing on the role of social movements. An institutional perspective emphasizes how a particular logic in an organizational field generates formal and informal institutions that define how persons with disabilities are treated in a society. Before the 1990s, the charity model was dominant, and later it came to be challenged by the disability movement, which advocated for the social model. We argue that the transition to a social model was a major achievement by disability organizations, which successfully combined the dual roles of advocate and service provider. By making strategic use of welfare privatization in the 1990s, they were able to mobilize a series of lobbying campaigns. Their efforts culminated in the passing of the Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act in 1997, which marked the beginning of the social model in Taiwan.

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Introduction

Like other Taiwan's social movements that came into being since the 1980s (Ho and Hsiao 2010), the disability movement had persons with disabilities, as well as their family members, as its core constituents, and the momentum of the movement was propelled by their struggle for rights. However, there was an uncommon trend, namely the disability movement tended to work closely with the state, rather than to adopt a predominantly confrontational posture. The dramatic increase in welfare budget was one of the main reasons for this. Disability organizations became more formally structured and professionally-oriented when the government began to outsource its welfare services to non-state agents and agencies (Liu 2000).

While the possibility for cooperation is certainly conducive to the institutionalization of social movement organizations, the actual trajectory of Taiwan's disability movement over time still remains to be investigated. Furthermore, since a social movement is a collective challenge that seeks to change the status quo, the impact made by such a movement likewise needs to also be taken into consideration. Institutionalization in organizational theory refers to the process by which a particular practice and form becomes legitimate and prevalent in a field populated by similar agents (Strang and Soule 1998). Once a social movement evolves into a stable sector with a sufficient population, it is more likely to diffuse and impose its framework on to the environment around it (Lounsbury 2005). Since the changes in institution and organizations often take place simultaneously, the evolution of Taiwan's disability movement should be explained in both dimensions.

Applying institutional analysis to social movements and social change has become a recent research agenda (McAdam and Scott 2005; Schneiberg and Lounsbury 2008). Both institutional study and social movement theory focus on collective action and the process of change. The former has gradually shifted its intellectual concern from stability-inducing mechanisms of isomorphism to change-promoting agents and processes (Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca 2009: 3), while the latter pays more attention to organizational models that shape the practice and perception of social movements and the relationships between organizations (Clemens 2005: 357). There is a noticeable convergence in that the two camps are, more than ever, integrating social movements, organizations and institutions into a common framework that explains collective action and its impact.

In contrast to other rule-following agents, social movements disturb and challenge the existing institutions in order to facilitate social change (Scott 2008: 103). To make their voices heard, movements usually disrupt the social routines and force the incumbents to grant concessions. As Piven and Cloward argue (1977: 24), protests are successful insofar as they come in various forms of "mass defiance" that create acute social disruption. Nevertheless, while social movements succeed in popularizing their demands, they not only instigate new game rules but also become legitimate insiders.

Taiwan's disability movement emerged in the mid-1980s, when those persons with disabilities, and their families, mobilized to advocate their rights with regard to education, employment, medical treatment and so on. Although the Disabled Persons Welfare Law was enacted in 1980, the protection it provided to this disadvantaged community remained minimal, largely due to traditional cultural perceptions of physical and mental impairment. In Chinese culture, disabilities – particularly the hereditary ones – were viewed as a result of retribution (報應, *baoying*). Taking care of persons in need was seen as a family responsibility, and one which the government should not meddle in. In other words, what was taken for granted was the so-called charity model, which treated physical and mental disabilities as purely one's own personal misfortune. Hence, sufferers were expected to overcome their disadvantage with the help of others' mercy and kindness. The disability movements represented a challenge to this assumption. While the welfare budget underwent a tremendous hike in the 1990s, the disability movement organizations established partnerships with the government. In tandem with the campaign to streamline the government, officials invited the disability movement organizations and welfare organizations to provide services to those people in need. This policy shift brought about a change in the organizational ecology. Organizations led by persons with disabilities, as well as their families, came to replace the traditional staff who had organized the agencies along religious and philanthropic lines, and thus these individuals became the significant actors. As disability organizations were increasingly integrated into the welfare governance, a social model was finally established in the late 1990s.

Social movements cannot win substantial benefits for their constituencies without changing the constitutive rules of society. To secure their achievements on a permanent basis, social movements also need to reshape the external environment. This paper thus analyzes the simultaneous changes in disability movement organizations as well as the broader institutional beliefs existing in the organizational field (Scott et al. 2000). It explains the evolution of the disability movement in Taiwan in light of institutional theory, which we understand as an analytical approach that focuses on the process by which the organizational field and its logics, belief system and material practices – as well as routines – are produced and reproduced by institutional agents (Scott 2008: 97-105, 181-190). The disability organizational field is constituted by a community of organizations that share a common system of meaning. Actors in the field tend to interact with one another more frequently than with those that are outside of the field (Wooten and Hoffman 2008: 130-131). The existence of challengers and disruptive events can bring instability to an existing field. Interaction among actors at a critical juncture has the effect of upsetting a previous settlement in the field (McAdam and Scott 2005: 17-19).

We use a research strategy that relies on historical narrative, a common approach in the study of institutional processes (for example, Haveman and Rao 1997; Wright 2009). We collected research data from interviews and from a variety of documentary sources – which includes newspapers, government publications and periodicals published by disability movement organizations. This paper is structured by the three successive eras of Taiwan's disability movement. In this way, the following section describes the pre-1980 traditional view of disability as well as the main actors and the then-situation facing persons with disabilities. We then move on to explain the rise of disability movements in the mid-1980s, as well as the subsequent state response. The next section analyzes the welfare privatization of the 1990s, and how initial fuzziness in the governing framework enabled the disability organizations, with state resources, to mount a challenge to the charity model. We periodize the evolution of disability movements by the occurrence of disruptive events. Disruptive events often elicit responses from the relevant actors, and hence facilitate change in the organizational field (McAdam and Scott 2005: 18-19). In this paper, we identify the 1980 Disabled Persons Welfare Law (殘障福利法, *Can zhang fulifa*), the protests in the late 1980s and the 1997 Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizen Protection Act (身心障礙者保護法, *Shenxin zhangaizhe baohufa)* as three major disruptive events, which generated new behaviours from existing actors and also led to the incorporation of new ones.

Disability Models

The charity model, the medical model and social-contextual approaches are the three main practices in the treating of disabilities (Oliver 1996; Shakespeare 2006; Swain, French, and Cameron 2003). Because the government tends to ignore their special needs, charitable and religious organizations often assume the function and the role of service provision and hence reinforce the popular stereotype of disability as being a form of dependency – a situation that is called the charity model (Swain, French, and Cameron 2003: 90). In Chinese culture, disabilities – whether inherited or acquired – are considered as misfortune and/ or retribution. The medical model also adopts an individualistic perspective that views disabilities primarily as a personal problem arising from certain functional limitations. The medical model defines disabilities as impediments that come as the negative consequences of disorder, indiscipline and unreliability. Impairment is considered something undesirable and that should be cured, overcome or simply hidden (Swain, French, and Cameron 2003: 22-23).

The emergence, in the late 1960s, of social-contextual approaches to disability around the world represented a conscious challenge to these hitherto individualistic assumptions (Shakespeare 2006: 19-22). The social model in the British disability movement and various studies rejected the reduction of disability to impairment. Impairment should be strictly defined as "the functional limitation(s)", whereas disability was created by social conditions that prevented the persons from "taking part in the normal life of the community due to physical and social barriers". In other words, impairment might or might not result in disability. The social model basically maintained that disabilities were socially constructed; hence, its supporters concentrated on how to remove social barriers, and as a result paid relatively little attention to the issue of impairment. Its critics argued for the need to acknowledge the experiences of people with impairments, as well as the impacts of these on personal lives (Thomas 2002; Shakespeare 2006: 31-32).

Not all the social-contextual approaches maintained a strict impairment-disability dichotomy. Shakespeare (2006: 19-26) shows that, even though social environment played a predominant role, most social-contextual approaches, nevertheless, did not ignore impairment or abandon medical intervention. Such pragmatism is also visible among the social model adherents in Taiwan. Taiwan's disability movement has been guided in their advocacy by the social-contextual approaches since the late 1980s. Nonetheless, those self-help groups that sought to reform the relationship between the disability and medical/ special education professions continued to focus on the treatment of impairment.

In terms of the actual welfare that the persons with disabilities are entitled to, Taiwan's case has not yet reached the full expectations of the social model. Still, we argue that the new institutional logic after 1997 falls into the category of a social model, for two reasons. First, we want to call attention to the fact that the emergence of the disability movement in the late 1980s brought about a new cultural framework that put paramount emphasis on the notion of rights – a distinctive feature of the social model. Second, since institutional logic is "a set of material practices and symbolic constructions which constitutes its organizing principles and which is available to organizations and individuals to elaborate" (Friedland and Alford 1991: 248), it has the power to shape how actors interpret and act in a particular field. Due to the mobilizing efforts on the part of the disability movement, the social model replaced the charity model in the 1997 legislation. This legal change also had reverberations in the cultural dimensions. Since then, the main actors – including disability organizations, officials and professionals – internalized the new norms and regulations in the field by acting according to the social model. In short, there has been an isomorphic change following the legislative achievement, as the social model gradually began to remould the existing practices.

The Domination of the Charity Model in the Disability Field (1945-1980)

Institutional Logic: The Charity Model

Symbols, words, signs and gestures shape the meaning that we attribute to objects and activities (Scott 2008: 57). The name of a community thus represents the way that a society thinks of them. In this vein, disability was called *canfei* (殘廢) or *canzhang* (殘障) before the late 1990s. These terms implied that a person was useless because of his/her impairment. While *canfei* (殘廢) underscored the functional consequences of bodily defects, the notion of retribution (報應, *baoying*), popular in Chinese societies, offered a ready-to-use explanation for its cause, "We must have done something wrong in the previous life; therefore, God punished us by giving us a handicapped child" (Pan 1986: 10). Such statements were made by parents who struggled to raise a child with a disability, and it characteristically revealed the dominant cultural assumption that physical deformation was a deserved punishment for a previously committed sin.

The theory of retribution burdened the parents with guilt, and consequently they were also forced to hide their children at home. The social stigma was so powerful that some hapless parents even abandoned their ill-fated children simply to get out of trouble. Under the *baoying* idea, it was taken for granted that victims had to endure their sufferings alone and that their family members should undertake the responsibility of caring. The Chinese culture of familialism only allowed an extremely limited place for social assistance. The help of others was legitimate insofar as it came from the voluntary act of personal goodwill or mercy. Overall, persons with disabilities were encouraged to stand on their own, rather than to become a social burden, as the ideal role of the "handicapped-but-not-useless" persons (殘而不廢, *canerbufei*) implied.

Specifically, what was dominant was the so-called charity model, which signified the paramount role of charities in the provision of services (Swain, French, and Cameron 2003: 90). While the charity idea used the emotional power of fear, pity and guilt to raise resources for affected persons, it also perpetuated the image of the latter as being dependent, if not outright inferior (Swain, French, and Cameron 2003: 91). Retribution and charity were, in this way, complementary. The theory of retribution offered an excuse for the evasion of the obligation to remove social barriers, while the charity model reinforced the social image of the dependency of those with disabilities.

Deficiency in Disability Institutions

Before 1980, the legal framework for the support and treatment of disability was rudimentary at best. The only welfare service provided by the government was free surgery as well as assistive devices for poor people with physical disabilities, from 1975. Since there were very few government-run institutions, the private shelters that were funded by philanthropic organizations and religious groups were the only ones responsible for catering to the needs of persons with disabilities. As late as the 1960s, abandoned persons with disabilities were indiscriminately housed together with the elderly, the poor, orphans and the sick. The shelters used were usually called *jiujiyuan* (救濟院), which literally meant "relief house". Some shelters were called "skill-learning institutions" (習藝所, *xiyisuo*), which admitted only those with a minimal working capacity and which trained them to become productive. However, these training programmes only offered limited help, so that, ultimately, only very few persons were able to live self-reliantly (Kao 1992).

It was only in the 1970s, when Catholic and Protestant churches first introduced western scientific medical treatment and social work practices to Taiwan, that institutions designed specifically for addressing disability finally came into being. Previously, shelters were built to house a host of marginal persons without regard for their special needs – an expediency that did not in any way take the various forms of disability into consideration. The churches were instrumental in differentiating institutions according to the various categories of disability so that specialized help, rather than mere relief, could be offered. In the absence of state-led welfare, philanthropic and religious groups took the lead in the provision of services. Some religious groups even started to organize self-help societies. These private efforts succeeded in creating a network among and between persons with disabilities, through which they were able to find practical and emotional support. Later on, this valuable network became what (McCarthy 1987: 55) called the "social infrastructure" that underpinned mobilization in the mid-1980s.

A Disruptive Event and Its Settlement

In the postwar era, the Kuomintang (KMT) (Guomindang) government was initially devoted to the military project of retaking Communist-controlled China, and then to industrialization through exports. Despite this move from militarism to developmentalism, the regime still persistently placed social welfare at the bottom of its agenda so that those people with "low levels" of productivity were regarded as useless at best and as a financial burden at worst. This explains why the Department of Social Affairs, a subordinate agency under the Ministry of the Interior (內政部, *neizhengbu*), drafted a disability law in the 1960s, but its legislation was postponed for more than a decade. Towards the end of the 1970s, a series of diplomatic setbacks shook Taiwan violently. The United States established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in December 1978, and at the same time terminated its pre-existing ties with Taiwan. In this troubled context, the belated social welfare that was provided for the treatment of disability came as a part of the KMT's effort to mend its undermined political legitimacy. As a result, in a short period between 1980 and 1981, the KMT government enacted three welfare laws. They were the Public Assistance Act (社會救

助法, *Shehui jiuzhufa*) (January 1980), the Disabled Persons Welfare Law (June 1980) and the Senior Citizens Welfare Act (老人福利法, *Laoren fulifa*) (January 1981).

Table 1: The Statistics of Disability in Taiwan

Disability Categories	**Year**				
	1981	**1991**	**1996**	**2001**	**2006**
Blindness	21,383	19,408	28,224	754,084	51,759
Deaf	7,524	5,458	43,055	41,190	104,422
Speech Disorder	7,873	5,299	7,516	82,558	12,251
Physical Disability	90,183	102,370	205,713	323,542	400,254
Mental Disability	25,149	38,316	59,570	73,609	87,160
Losing Functions of Primary Organs	-	489	29,114	64,979	96,623
Disfigurement	-	31	1,530	2,640	3,749
Unconscious Chronically	-	29	2,558	4,159	4,733
Senile Dementia	-	5	2,832	11,583	20,896
Autism	-	28	854	2,550	6,185
Psychiatric Disability	-	-	24,324	60,453	91,160
Multi-Disability	25,149	32,710	49,791	74,467	93,816
Stubborn (Difficult-to-Cure) Epilepsy	-	-	-	-	2,583
Caused by Infrequent Disease	-	-	-	-	704
Others	-	15	1,596	2,627	3,720
Total	177,917	204,158	456,683	2,627	981,015

Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan 2008: 131.

In spite of these legislative efforts, conventional ideology and stigmas about disability persisted. The Disabled Persons Welfare Law adopted a medical definition of disability, which was divided according to hearing, visual, verbal, physical, mental and multiple disability categories, as well as by levels of impairment (Table 1). However, this law failed to challenge the prevalent perception of disability as an individual problem; as a result, the government's commitment was restricted to the setting up of public institutions for persons with disabilities and the provision of subsidies for medical expenses. Although significant impact was negligible, its symbolic meaning was far-reaching. By breaking the long tradition of state non-interference, the law itself engendered the organizational field and also invited new actors to construct supportive institutions for those with disabilities.

The Emergence of the Disability Movement (1981-1990)

Institutional Logic: The Professionalized Charity Model

A new organizational field for disability care emerged with the Disabled Persons Welfare Law. Although private organizations and institutions existed prior to the passing of this legislation, the law was, nonetheless, critical in helping them to gain more legitimacy, by enhancing their continuity and credibility (Suchman 1995). New actors – such as state bureaucrats and professionals – came on stage and joined in the process of constructing the field. The professionals were the key institutional agents who produced rational responses to the law (Edelman, Uggen, and Erlanger 1999). They played a significant role by defining reality, devising ontological frameworks, proposing distinctions, creating typifications and fabricating principle or guidelines for subsequent action (Scott and Backman 1990: 290). The medical and special educational professions were simultaneously authorized to identify the categories and levels of disability. Their involvement highlighted the fact that "rehabilitation" was the main policy goal then, even though the assumption that disability was a personal, rather than social, problem remained unchallenged.

The involvement of experts professionalized the charity model by prescribing the standardized processes of examination, treatment and rehabilitation. With the legitimacy of modern knowledge, medical science further solidified the individual attribute of disability – one of the core assumptions of the charity model. A rational process of evaluating disability categories and levels was formalized, and, as a result, proper treatment and rehabilitation programmes were designed and later implemented. "Handicapped-but-not-useless" was the professed goal of rehabilitation. The only public subsidy stipulated in the Disabled Persons Welfare Law (Article 15) was for medical and rehabilitation expenses.

While rehabilitation could mean rebuilding capacities in many different spheres, it was noticeable that persons with physical disabilities were the only recipients of vocational rehabilitation in this period (Zhang

1981: 19-20). Helping them to find jobs was largely an extension of their rehabilitation, and thus it was not a surprise that many training programmes were conducted by medical agencies (Zhu 1985: 16). Medical involvement was premised on the goal of alleviating their functional impairment (Jiang and Wang 1981: 12). Vocational training programmes – such as massaging, shoe-repairing, seal-making and watch-repairing – were designed to facilitate reintegration into the workforce (Zhao 1985: 8). These skills were relatively easy to learn and could be practiced on a self-employment basis. Hence, even though employment became a new concern, the state's commitment was still extremely limited. There was no attempt to develop new trades for those persons with disabilities nor did the state encourage the private and public sectors to hire them.

In terms of education, state involvement was restricted to the most "teachable" of the persons with disabilities, while regular schooling remained closed off to them. Despite the passing of the Special Education Act in 1984, there was still no stipulated budgetary support or implementation schedule (Cao 1987). A mother who raised a daughter with severe disability in her intellectual faculties recounted the difficulties in obtaining school admission. There were only a few schools that would accept students with disabilities. Even when she did manage to find one willing school, there still existed many obstacles.

> The school I found only admitted 12 students in a class, and there were more than 40 students who were ahead of my daughter in the waiting list. Furthermore, there was only one class every two years. My daughter was in the severe level of disability; she was weaker in capacity. But the students in that class were not as severe as my daughter (Interviewee 1, 30 April 2009, Taibei).

In higher education, there were roughly 20 per cent of university departments that refused to admit students with disabilities in late-1980s (Legislative Yuan 1990). Hence, it was clear that the Disabled Persons Welfare Law and the Special Education Act did not represent a departure from the charity model. While the involvement of the state and of professionals might be a novel feature, they nevertheless failed to challenge the underlying individualistic assumption and prejudice.

In the 1980s there was a surge in the number of public and private institutions providing for persons with disabilities, particularly large-scale asylums. What were their common features? A contemporary journalistic report characterized them as "the caged kids". "In a large asylum, two care workers fed 40 children. There was a stool hole in every cage. All the basic human needs – eating, sleeping and excrement – were met in a one-meter-squared space" (Yu 1986: 24). An organizational archetype embodied the dominant cultural perspective (Greenwood and Hinings 1993). Consequently, the large-scale asylums, as the organizational archetype in this period, revealed the perception and practice of how dominant actors treated persons with disabilities. Regardless of whether the asylums were founded with public or private support, maintaining their bare existence in the most cost-saving way was the taken-for-granted endgame.

While the Disabled Persons Welfare Law gave impetus to the rise of a new field, the law itself did not function as a "regulative pillar" because of its emptiness and non-compulsoriness, which, as a result, failed to exercise "constraint" upon action (North 1990: 4; Scott 2008: 50-54). This weakness in enforcement was revealed in the following three aspects:

First, most articles in the Disabled Persons Welfare Law were exhortative in nature, without clearly spelling out the implementation procedure. For example, Article 17 stated that those institutions that hired persons with disabilities in excess of 3 per cent of their workforce would be rewarded. But what constituted a reward remained unspecified. Second, the government did not strengthen its administrative staff. After the promulgation of the law, the Social Bureaus of local governments assigned bare minimum of staff to handle the disability-related affairs. Even the Department of Social Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior (內政部社會處, *Neizhengbu shehuichu*) allocated less than two persons in this regard (Legislative Yuan 1990). This insufficiency in manpower meant an undersupply of welfare service. Finally, the law only encouraged the private initiatives to establish disability institutions and refrained from committing public resources. Hence, there were roughly 128,000 persons with disabilities in the first census, held in 1981, but merely 9,000 persons who had ever obtained government services in 1989 (Legislative Yuan 1990). This huge gap revealed that the Disabled Persons Welfare Law did not bring about significant change, as might have been expected.

Emerging Disability Organizations

Aside from the pre-existing philanthropic and religious organizations, the field also witnessed a surge of new organizations in this period. These organizations were often established by professionals. For example, the first Social Welfare Foundation (第一社會福利基金會, *Di yi shehui fuli jijinhui*) was founded in 1980 by three special education experts who had received their training overseas. Special education workers also established the Chung-hua Foundation for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (中華啟能基金會附設春暉啟能中心, *Zhonghua qi hua jijinhui fushe chun hui qi hua zhongxin*) in 1981 and the Association for Mentally Handicapped Persons (啟智協會) in 1983 (Ma 1994). A group of ophthalmologists helped to found Mu-kuang Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (慕光盲人重建中心, *Muguang mangren chongjian zhongxin*) in 1981, while psychiatrists were instrumental in setting up the Mental Rehabilitation Association (康復之友協會, *Kangfu zhi youxiehui*) in 1984 (Yu 2001). Clearly, professionals were active advocates and organizers in this period.

Even with the gradual establishment of these large-scale asylums, the traditional negative perception of disability lingered in the mind of the general public. Characteristically, these institutions were located in remote and thinly-populated areas. Any attempt to establish them in the city would have very liked incurred popular protests. In 1983, the first Children's Development Center (第一兒童發展中心, *Di-yi ertong fazhan zhongxin*) planned to purchase land in Fengqiao New Village (楓橋新村, *Fengqiao xin cun*) in Taibei metropolitan area, in order to build a training site for persons with mental retardation. This move triggered a wave of community resistance. The residents insisted that the influx of these children would be detrimental to the health of their own kids (*Lianhe Bao* 1983). They angrily argued, "Take your love back to your home" (*Jingji Ribao* 1983). The so-called Fengqiao Incident demonstrated that the public still adhered to the logic of the charity model and expected those with disabilities to be hidden away in invisible corners.

In addition to these initiatives by professionals, activism on the part of persons with disabilities also rose in prominence. The Sunshine Social Welfare Foundation (陽光社會福利基金會, *Yangguang shehui fuli jijinhui*) (1982) and the Eden Social Welfare Foundation (伊甸社會福利基金會, *Edian shehui fuli jijinhui*) (1983) grew out of the self-help societies for burn survivors with facial disfigurement and for persons with physical impairment respectively. These organizations were engaged with vocational training and outreach programmes regarding medical treatment. These service-providing activities helped to build a national network that connected their previously isolated clients. In the late 1980s, the Sunshine and the Eden Foundations evolved into national organizations that played a leading role in the burgeoning disability movement.

In 1987, the founding of the Syin-lu Foundation (心路基金會, *Xinlu jijinhui*) signified the growing differentiation between self-help activities by persons with disabilities and the involvement of professionals. Due to a controversy concerning the Enforcement Rule of the Special Education Act, the parents of the Association for Mentally Handicapped Persons staged a demonstration in defiance, aimed against the professionals' opposition (Hsiao and Sun 2000). Syin-lu was the splinter organization that prioritized the right of persons with disabilities over the opinions of the professional authorities.

A Disruptive Event: The Disability Movement and the Termination of the "Patriotic Lottery"

The parents of persons with disabilities were the first group of activists that resorted to street protests in order to claim their rights (Chang 2007, 2009). In 1985, as the Enforcement Rule of the Special Education Act was being formulated, they aimed a petition at the Ministry of Education in the attempt to obtain more resources for those children with medium-to-severe intellectual disabilities. However, the Enforcement Rule, announced in 1987, disappointed them because there was no regulation regarding budgetary allocation nor did it compel the mandatory establishment of special education classes and schools. The "homeschooling" clause, which allowed children with severe impairments to study at home, was viewed as a convenient way for the state to dodge responsibility (*Lianhe Bao* 1987a). Disillusioned, parents took their kids to the streets and demanded the abolishment of the Enforcement Rule.

More and more issues emerged after this dispute over education for persons with intellectual disabilities, and they were all related to the socially-constructed disfranchisement. The self-help societies began to voice their demands in the mid-1980s. To put the spotlight on the unfriendly design of artificial environments, they marched, petitioned the authorities and held press conferences. According to our count, from one major newspaper in Taiwan (the *Lianhe Bao* database), there were 46 incidences of disability-related protest between 1987 and 1990. The disability movement was motivated by a broader conception of citizenship, directly related to every sphere of the daily life of persons with disabilities – such as education, transportation, employment and so on. Among the education-related issues, the highly restrictive eligibility of the University Entrance Examination, which excluded many students with disabilities, was questioned. Disability organizations also extended their attention to the transportation issue. At that time, as the Taipei (Taibei) Mass Rapid Transit system was being planned, they staged a campaign to highlight their special need for obstacle-free spaces. Amid these diverse issues, movement activists adhered to the argument that disability was a result of social exclusion, rather than it being an individual problem. Their activism deviated from the charity model that merely sought to "rehabilitate" these marginal persons through voluntary and private initiatives. They advocated the idea that schools, workplaces and public transportation should be redesigned to include consideration of the needs of persons with disabilities, instead of demanding the latter to overcome their impairment in the first place.

The lifting of martial law in 1987 awoke the slumbering civil society in Taiwan. With the gradual establishment of civil liberties, social movements rose as a conspicuous phenomenon (Ho 2005: 401-402). At that time, there was a zeitgeist that encouraged aggrieved victims to express their plight in protest activities. It was in this context that persons with disabilities began to take part in street demonstrations. The sudden termination of the "Patriotic Lottery" in 1987 triggered a sustained protest. The Patriotic Lottery (愛國獎券, *aiguo jiangquan*) was a government-run gambling system that relied on persons with disabilities for distribution. Over the years, it became a vital source of livelihood for them. At that time, there was an underground gambling activity (the so-called "Everyone's Happy" (大家樂, *dajiale*) that betted on the number of the official Patriotic Lottery. Government officials took a dim view of this widespread gambling craze, and in order to curb this "illness", they abruptly announced the end of the Patriotic Lottery, which had been in place for more than 30 years. A group of persons with disabilities were victimized because they suddenly lost their means of subsistence (*Lianhe Bao* 1987b).

The Patriotic Lottery incident accentuated the fact that persons with disabilities suffered not so much from their inherent impairment but rather from the variety of different social obstacles that were artificially imposed upon them. If their livelihood could be deprived by a government decree, the same political intervention might be used to improve their situation. The personal story of Ms. Liu Xia (劉俠) further enhanced the persuasiveness of the social-contextual approach. Liu, whose childhood illness consigned her to life in a wheelchair, was famous for her literary works, which won national acclaim. Her perceptive mind guided her to discover that existing social rules contributed to the marginalization of disability. In her autobiography, she documented an unpleasant episode where she had not been allowed to enter an exhibition when accompanied by her family because it was "ungainly" (Liu 2007: 204-204). Such discriminatory experiences motivated her to establish the Eden Social Welfare Foundation in 1982. After several years of participation, she became aware of the necessity for "change in the larger environment, otherwise more services could not change the fundamental problems that persons with disability faced" (Liu 2007: 291). In 1989, she decided to run for office to bring her activism into the political arena. However, her formal education had stopped at primary school, which disqualified her from joining the election for the Legislative Yuan. Being a nationally renowned figure, Liu Xia's disfranchisement further highlighted the unfair treatment that persons with disability had to face. Thus, when the government responded to the angry Patriotic Lottery peddlers by offering programmes in skill-training and job referral – a taken-for-granted solution according to the charity model – they were adamant in their refusal. The social model required that society should make efforts to incorporate persons with disabilities, rather than the other way around. Thus, disability organizations launched a campaign to revise the Disabled Persons Welfare Law. In 1989, more than 70 related organizations and 500 persons joined in a collective petition to the Legislative Yuan, and the law was finally modified in 1990.

The Smoothing Down of Disruptive Events

The intensive mobilization, as well as the support by politicians in the late 1980s, pressured the state to respond to the demands of persons with disabilities. The 1990 revision was largely a consequence of their protests. The Disabled Persons Welfare Law was amended in the following dimensions:

1. An enlarged eligibility that incorporated people with facial disfigurement, people with brain injuries, people with autism and Alzheimer's disease patients (Article 3).
2. Special education supplied on the basis of the disability census (Article 9).
3. The mandatory hiring requirement that set 2 per cent for public institutions with more than 50 employees and 1 per cent for private institutions with more than 100 employees.

Failure to meet the obligatory minimum came with a fine that was collected in a special account allocated to disability welfare. The last regulation was obviously a concession to the furore over the Patriotic Lottery, which had brought the employment issue fully into the spotlight.

Beside the legal offensive, persons with disabilities and their family members underwent a metamorphosis in this period, as revealed in the change that took place in their self-help societies. In the past, the popular notion of retribution prevented them from appearing in the public. However, their activism in the late 1980s clearly demonstrated that they had overcome this psychological hurdle and begun to embrace the social model as a way to explain their own misfortune. In addition, the Private Organizations Law (人民團體法, *Renmin tuantifa*) of 1988 removed the martial law era restriction on civil association, so that these self-help societies evolved into disability organizations with full legal status.

The growth in organizations was a perceptible fact in this period. People from the different categories of disability formed their own local organizations, which then joined together in a national federation. Finally, in 1990, the national federations from diverse disability categories set up the League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled (殘障聯盟, *Can zhang lianmeng*). The League came from an ad hoc action for revising the Disabled Persons Welfare Law, and then became an important movement organization in itself. Initially composed of 73 member organizations, the League was important in bringing together religious groups, self-help groups and professional social workers. Despite its heterogeneity, its early period witnessed leadership by persons with disabilities – such as the first two Presidents (1990-1995), Liu Xia of the Eden Foundation and Li Yihong (李宜宏) of the Parents' Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, as well as the second General Secretary Chen Mingli (陳明里) of the Sunshine Welfare Foundation. Towards the end of this period, the League and the national federations from different disability categories became the dominant actors in the field. They formed a densely-interconnected organizational population in which different issues could be discussed across many arenas. In the years to come, their advocacy for the disability rights would become increasingly potent and salient.

Competition between the Charity Model and the Social Model (1991-1998)

Institutional Logic: The Eclipse of the Charity Model

Although a decline, from the early 1990s, was witnessed in street protests by persons with disabilities, the number of disability organizations kept growing, and they continued to challenge the existing charity model. In spite of the fact that the Disabled Persons Welfare Law had been partially revised, the charity model still continued to shape existing state policy.

Disability organizations raised their claims on behalf of "welfare consumers", and they argued that they were equally entitled to the government's welfare service since they also paid tax (Cao 1995). Facing these claims, the state adopted what Gamson (1975: 29) called a preemptive strategy to neutralize their protests. The welfare budget has been constantly increased – from 200 million TWD in 1990, and 1,280 million TWD in 1991, to 3,750 million TWD in 1999 (Ministry of the Interior 2009a). Nevertheless, while the incumbents were willing to allocate more resources, the social model was still not taken as being legitimate. The revision in 1990 of the Disabled Persons Welfare Law failed to challenge the underlying assumptions of the charity model. Furthermore, the enlarged budget did not come with reinforcements in the numbers of administrative staff and social workers. In 1996, the Department of Social Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior only assigned four officials to disability policy. And, nationally, there were less than 500 persons who had to deal with a budget of 3.7 billion TWD (Legislative Yuan 1998).

In this period, a new pattern of partnership between state and disability organizations emerged. Neo-liberalism, which celebrated the virtue of the free market and criticized the ineffectiveness of government regulation, came to affect Taiwan during the 1990s (Kwon 2005). Under this new paradigm, more and more issues that concerned public affairs were delegated to private initiatives. Privatization became a catchword when it came to the reform of underperforming state-owned enterprises, educational reform and social welfare. In Taiwan's context, welfare privatization meant the outsourcing of services to private organizations, rather than using the state agencies to administer and provide services. Table 2 shows the number of disability institutions in Taiwan. The government only built six public disability institutions in this period, while the so called "publicly-owned and privately-managed" (公辦民營, *gongban minying*) institutions, which were usually outsourced to disability organizations, increased in number by 24. The Social Affairs Bureau of Taibei City Government started to contract private organizations to manage its institutions. In 1997, as many as 32 public institutions were privatized in this fashion, and, among them, 11 were related to disability welfare (Chen 1997). Under this arrangement, a tripartite relationship emerged in that the state became the purchaser of welfare services, the disability organizations the providers and persons with disabilities and their family members the consumers.

Table 2: The Founding of Disability Institutions in Taiwan

	1950-1979	1980-1990	1991-1998
Public	0	6	6
Privatization	0	0	24
Private	11	29	50
Total	11	35	80

Source: Ministry of the Interior 2009b.

The provision of welfare through outsourcing helped to professionalize disability organizations. At the same time, due to the lack of legal regulation regarding government purchase, disability organizations obtained latitude in experimenting with their ideal social model. New professional workers were hired to manage relations with officials. In addition, the state also demanded that a certain percentage of social workers or special education staffs should be employed in the contracted organizations (Hwang 1999). Since the principle of social work emphasized empathy and the priority of clients, they soon won the support of persons with disabilities and their family members. More and more disability organizations began to hire professional social workers as their Chief Executive Officers.

The lack of specification regarding both welfare privatization and its evaluation turned out to be an advantage for disability organizations, who, as a result, could obtain resources and provide services without cumbersome bureaucratic interference. An organization that specialized in services for adults with mental disabilities explained how they adopted the logic of the social model:

> Our first institution aimed to accommodate them. We do not want the old-fashioned asylum; so we call it a Community Home (社區家園, *shequ jiayuan*). Although we do not possess the financial capacity, we still want to change the prevailing ideas. Why should we put persons with disabilities into a large-scale asylum that takes hundreds of inmates? We wanted the disability to enjoy a community life. A Community Home means that they can take part in many activities and use the services and resources in the neighbourhood (Interviewee 1, 30 April 2009, Taibei)

In the past, the idea of small institutions was not accepted by the state. Thus, the disability organizations undertook efforts to have their "Community Home" registered in the government. In the attempt to build a community for adults with mental disabilities, they made an important breakthrough by setting up a disability institution with less than 50 persons and not using the term "asylum". In addition, they departed from the previous emphasis on relief and initiated the experiment of integrating persons with disabilities into the regular community (Interviewee 1, 30 April 2009, Taibei). In sum, they managed to realize the social model, at least in terms of welfare provision.

The disability movement began to challenge the professionals' authority. In the past,

> parents who took care of children with developmental disabilities had to visit hospital very frequently. They often found themselves caught in the process of transferring from department to department. If they failed to find the right department, they could not find out the root cause of the illness (Interviewee 2, 11 February 2009, Gaoxiong).

In her autobiography, Liu Xia also mentioned similar frustrations during her childhood, which had led to delays in her medical treatment. Furthermore, some physicians were arrogant because of their fame so that she and her family were occasionally treated with disrespect (Liu 2007: 85-92). Many parents shared similar excruciatingly painful experiences, and therefore they advocated for a unified examination centre for children with developmental problems. They lobbied the Ministry of the Interior, the Department of Health and the medical institutes to change their existing practices. Consequently many hospitals began to provide unified services for the easier evaluation of children with disabilities.

Furthermore, disability organizations continued to challenge the charity model on the issue of how disability was perceived and treated. From the perspective of the social model, it was not adequate to define disability merely as the lack of physical function. It was argued that "handicapped" was not synonymous with disabled.

> The so-called 'handicapped' (傷殘, *shancan*) meant the imperfection of bodily structure. However, the term 'disabilty' (*canzhang*) connoted 'impairment' (殘 *can*) as well as 'obstacle' (障 *zhang*). The obstacles originated from the external environment. Hence we should not equal impairment with disability. Whether a person has disability or not depends on how she/he interacts with the environment (Yu 1990).

Disability organizations insisted that obstacles were socially made so that the charity model had erred in viewing disability as a strictly individual problem. Only when the artificial obstacles were eliminated could the persons with disabilities enjoy their social life freely.

Disability organizations mounted a series of campaigns to further promote the social model. In terms of employment, the 1990 revision of the Disabled Persons Welfare Law stipulated a minimum percentage in hiring. However, most of the employers did not abide by this regulation. Even government agencies and state-owned enterprises argued that that they had difficulties in "finding suitable persons" (*Jingji Ribao* 1994). In 1993, the number of employed persons with disabilities was less than 50 per cent of the targeted ratio. As a matter of fact, many government agencies and state-owned enterprises listed their penalty fines that had been paid to the welfare fund in their budget (Legislative Yuan 1998). Obviously, public sector administrators found it easier to pay the money than making bona fide efforts to hire persons with disabilities. In order to enforce the quota hiring system, disability organizations held meetings with officials and employers. They also promoted the projects of "job accommodation" and "supportive employment" in the attempt to make workplaces free from any artificial obstacles (*Mengxun* 1996).

In addition to employment issues, disability organizations also made progress in political rights. In the wake of the Liu Xia incident, they staged more than 20 protests and finally succeeded in removing the education requirement for elected officials, in 1994. Equal rights for examination were also in the agenda of the disability organizations. Due to their incessant lobbying, the restriction in the University Entrance Examination was abolished. In the 1996 revision of the Act of Civil Servants Examination (公務人員考試法, *Gongwu renyuan kaoshifa*), persons with disabilities obtained eligibility to participate, and a special examination for them was held for the first time in July. In terms of transportation, disability organizations invited specialists to set up a Commission for Obstacle-free Environments to popularize their demand (*Mengxun* 1996). Finally, the idea of the social model was continuously championed in their lobbying with legislators in the hope that the existing legal regulations could be revised. In 1994, disability organizations obtained support from the opposition party (the Democratic Progressive Party) and initiated the legal process for revision of the Disabled Persons Welfare Law.

Changes in Organizational Population

Self-help societies were reorganized into legally registered associations in the wake of the lifting of martial law; in this period, more and more self-help societies and associations further adopted the outward form of foundations. Why was there a wave of reorganization? As the state released more opportunities for outsourcing, which required one to have the status of foundation in order to be a contractor (Su 1993), it became necessary for disability organizations to adapt to the new form before they were able to provide services with government resources. Among these newly-founded foundations, the boards of directors were mainly composed of persons with disabilities and their family members. The Syin-lu Foundation, for example, was led by a board of parents of mentally challenged persons. As a result, many disability foundations still had the characteristics of self-help societies in their placing of a premium on the needs of their members.

The number of national disability organizations grew fast during this period. There were only six national organizations in 1979 and twelve in 1990, but the number rose to 39 in 1997, with more differentiation in terms of disability categories. In the main, the dynamics for growth came from the initiatives of persons with disabilities and their family members (Luo 1993; Yu 2001). In the previous era, professionals used to lead the disability organizations; now it was mutual aid among persons with disabilities that became the defining concern of the organizations. For instance, the Kaohsiung Mental Rehabilitation Association (高雄康復之友協會, *Gaoxiong kangfu zhi you xiehui*) was founded by professional therapists in 1983 and aimed to "rehabilitate the patients medically for earlier home returning". But another organization that was set up by family members in 1994 proclaimed their goal to be to "strengthen the cooperation between patients' family members and to struggle for legal rights and welfare" (Yu 2001: 16). Visibly, a new consciousness of rights came to guide the activism of persons with disabilities.

In the 1990s the organizational initiatives from persons with disabilities came to replace those instigated by professionals and philanthropists. Newer foundations were set up because of the successful fundraising activities of self-help societies. As disability foundations grew, they also branched out organizationally. In order to become the appointed contractors in many cities and counties simultaneously, these foundations also worked to develop their local chapters. The fact that the participation of disability organizations was largely viewed as the exemplary case of welfare privatization meant that local officials would even actively encourage the establishment of local branches of the more famous foundations in order to be able to outsource the welfare budget to reliable partners (Interviewee 2, 11 February 2009, Gaoxiong). Needless to say, the franchising trend also rose from the intention to provide services for those persons who were hitherto neglected by the disability activists.

Franchising also helped disability organizations to build their local support. The past experience that the former had in the national arena could be rapidly duplicated in many locales. The annual meetings of foundations gathered staff from many places and were instrumental in consolidating their consensus on how to best provide welfare service. The League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled, for example, held regular meetings with professional social workers (*Mengxun* 1996). Franchising – as well as inter-organizational networking – facilitated the gradual acceptance of the social model in to the organizational field.

Hence, even though only a minority of disability organizations were directly involved with legislative lobbying and social advocacy, welfare provision was critical in shifting attention towards state policy. As more disability organizations became involved with outsourcing, they also became increasingly aware of the fact that a change in the political process would have an impact upon the situation of those persons with disabilities. In this way, the social model, which emphasized the external living conditions over individual efforts, gained greater credibility in the disability field.

The Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act and Its Impact

Throughout the 1990s, it was a noticeable phenomenon that Taiwan's disability organizations simultaneously played the dual roles of welfare contractors and challengers to the state. There was no organization that rejected government resources on the principle of independence; neither did co-optation, in the sense of forfeiting movement demands, arise as a result. In contrast, the British case showed that privatization policy reduced the influence of disability organizations because they were either co-opted or marginalized (Oliver and Barnes 2009). To understand the unusual coexistence of service and advocacy in Taiwan, we should take the following three factors into consideration.

First, Taiwan's government was under two opposing pressures at the same time. The acceptance of the neo-liberal paradigm meant that "small government" had been proclaimed as a policy goal, while democratization forced the incumbents to pay attention to the hitherto neglected issue of social welfare (Liu 1998). In 1991, the government listed social welfare as one of the national development aims, which thus ushered in what has been called the "golden decade of the welfare budget". Since the government streamlining resulted in fewer officials for more budgetary resources, privatization by outsourcing became the only possible choice.

Second, once established, the partnerships between public sectors and disability organizations gained a momentum of their own and became self-perpetuating. Liu (2008) discovered the "advantage of early comers" in that there was almost no change in disability organizations that undertook the welfare outsourcing on behalf of Taibei City Government from 1985 onwards. For them, government contracts were the vital resource needed to maintain their staff. For fear of losing experienced workers, disability organizations tended to continuously maintain their cooperation with officials.

Finally, the sheer diversity of welfare services for persons with disabilities was a constraining factor for the officials concerned. Different categories of disability obviously needed specialized forms of service. Consequently, finding a suitable policy collaborator was not easy for many officials at local Social Bureaus. According to one interviewed official,

> This kind of outsourcing does not come with a profit. Disability organizations just want to provide service for their members. For example, what the Taiwan Foundation for the Blind (愛盲基金會, *Ai meng jijinhui*) do is simply to accompany blind persons in shopping, going to school and getting medical treatment. Who would like to be a contractor for this kind of service? That is the reason why we always let the Taiwan Foundation for the Blind know about our project be-

> fore the formal announcement (Interviewee 3, 22 January 2009, Gaoxiong).

The highly customized nature of disability welfare services turned out to be an advantage for disability organizations, who, consequently, enjoyed a better bargaining position vis-à-vis officials. Before the Government Procurement Act became effective in 1998, the rule of outsourcing was not formalized. There was no legal requirement for competitive bidding and compulsory evaluation. Hence, the privatization of social welfare in the 1990s created what Hajer (2003) called "institutional voids", which empowered disability organizations. They continued to oppose the existing legal framework and their protest campaigns in no way compromised their contractual relations with the state.

Starting from 1994, the League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled launched a campaign to revise the Disabled Persons Welfare Law. The mission statement of the campaign highlighted the guiding principle of the social model:

> [The revision] […] aims to transform the pessimistic and passive myth of retribution into a positive contribution through caring. It is emphasized that persons with disabilities do not need sympathy or charity, but rather opportunity, fairness and rights (Legislative Yuan 1998).

Starting in 1993, all the legislators were popularly elected for the first time. With a parliament that became more responsive to citizens, social movement organizations were increasingly adopting the strategy of legislative lobbying to further their goals. The disability movement was no exception in this regard. In the 1990s it was often the case that disability organizations initiated the legal revisions with the help of some friendly legislators. For example, in 1995, the Disabled Persons Welfare Law incorporated chronic mental patients, due to the lobbying efforts by their representative organization.

Aside from lobbying, disability organizations sometimes used more aggressive tactics to pressure officials into action. The 1990 revision required that disability-friendly facilities should be provided in public spaces within five years. Failure to comply with this rule would result in revocation of the user license. In 1995, the League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled staged a campaign to survey public spaces and demanded the impeachment of the Minister of the Interior (*Lianhe Bao* 1996).

Cooperation in the form of outsourcing narrowed the distance between officials and disability organizations, who were even invited to act as policy consultants. The League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled took part in the formulation of the Proposal for Disabled Welfare Policy by the Ministry of the Interior (*Lianhe Bao* 1995). For the first time, disability organizations gained a foothold in the decision-making process by becoming able to exert influence within the bureaucratic structure. This, further, opened the way for the institutionalized participation in the local disability governance, following the 1997 revision.

After three years of concerted effort, the legislative offensives bore fruit. In 1997 the original law was re-christened as the Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act. In its first article, the law pronounced the goal to be to "protect the legal rights and interests of people with disabilities, secure their equal opportunity to participate in social, political, economical and cultural activities fairly". Clearly, the social model had obtained legal recognition and the law itself helped to institutionalize the disability field.

The 1997 revision brought about three major reforms that facilitated the further reception and acceptance of the social model. First, alongside the Ministry of the Interior, other authorities concerned with public health, education, labour, construction, public works, housing, transportation and finance were obliged to set up special units to handle disability matters (Article 2). This change underscored the fact that persons with disabilities were no longer passive clients of social welfare, but had become active participants with special needs.

Second, national and local governments were required to establish the Committee for the Protection of Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens (身心障礙者保護委員會, *Shenxin zhangaizhe baohu weiyuanhui*) to coordinate the relevant affairs. Beside officials and scholars, those representatives who were persons with disabilities should make up no less than one-third of the committee members (Article 7). A governance unit is usually the most important decision-making site in an organizational field (McAdam and Scott 2005: 17). In the past, the Disabled Persons Welfare Law designated the Ministry of the Interior as its enforcing agency, which failed, however, to function as a working governance unit due to the lack of manpower. Thus, the Committees for the Protection of Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens were designed to remedy this problem. The prescribed participation on the part of persons with disabilities aimed to make sure that the field would not be monopolized by bureaucrats and professionals. With the promulgation of the new law, disability organizations won the permanent right to take part in the decision-making process, and, hence, national and local governments could no longer sidestep disability issues (*Mengxun* 1999).

Finally, the new law laid emphasis on the provision of individualized, professional service to persons with disabilities (Article 15). This change signified a departure from the past limitation of only providing for their basic needs. It was now acknowledged that persons with disabilities had diversified needs and should be treated on an individual basis with the goal of eventual integration into the wider society. In addition, the obstacle-free principle (Articles 4, 21, 26, 30, 31, 47, 48 and 49), as well as the small-scale community-based institutions (Article 60), were also the products of the social model that the disability movement had been advocating for.

The 1997 passage of the Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act came with a renewed attempt to strengthen the overall legal framework. Prior to 1997, there were only twelve disability-related bylaws and regulations, but the 1997-2000 period alone gave rise to 33 new ones. Most of their contents dealt with a particular form of social exclusion. Clearly, the social model came to dominate the organizational field, which, as a result, provided better protection for those persons with disabilities. It became institutionalized in the sense that its assumptions were constantly socially reproduced.

Developments after 1997

After the legislative change, disability organizations used the social model to influence the cultural understandings and perceptions of other actors in the same field. On International Disability Day 1998, 90-plus organizations launched a demonstration for basic economic security. The event was also used as a protest against the reduction of subsidies. The Ministry of the Interior responded by adjusting the subsidy to be allocated to be given according to the family's economic situation. In 2002 the subsidy for home care service was first introduced. The national pension scheme that started in 2008 also included provision for the non-lower income persons with disabilities. Although there was a substantial expansion of welfare, disability organizations still argued that families had to shoulder a heavy burden given the limited amount of subsidies that were available.

With the social model now established as the dominant logic, the disability movement also harvested some gains in other areas. A government report listed the following progresses (Ministry of the Interior 2009c): the Ministry of Education launched the project of twelve-year educational placements for disabled students in 2001; the Council of Labour provided unified services for vocational rehabilitation for the disabled; centres for assistive technology have been universally established in every county and city; and, starting from 1997, local examination centres for children with developmental delays were set up, thus helping to promote early treatment for children with disabilities (Tseng 2010: 48-70).

With the Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act, the disability field no longer followed the previous logics of charity or professionalism. Instead, the social model enabled disability organizations to become more established and authoritative. After 1997, disability organizations played a more important role in the official process of drafting revisions. In 2007, thanks to their participation, a major revision was passed to improve the state protection of persons with disabilities. Compared with the herculean efforts to promote legal change in the 1990s, the social model, thus, helped to amplify the political influence and output of disability organizations.

Conclusion

This article aimed to understand the trajectory of Taiwan's disability field, from an institutional perspective. We analyzed the process of how particular set of logics of treating persons with disabilities was challenged and eventually replaced by a new one, as well as its concomitant changes in institutions. The charity model – based on the traditional conception of disability as retribution – resulted in personal stigma for the victims, whose plight was further aggravated by the government's neglect as well as the indiscriminate way of confining them to relief houses. The various crises of political legitimacy triggered the state into enacting laws for these unprivileged groups in 1980. A disability field emerged accordingly and new institutions, directed by medical and special education professions, also came into being. However, these institutions still emphasized personal impairment rather than social involvement, and thus, the discontent felt by those persons with disabilities and their families gave rise to a strong current of organized movement during the late 1980s.

With the simultaneous welfare budget growth and privatization of the 1990s, the disability movement evolved into being service providers and also took advantage of the unclear rules of outsourcing to further advocate for the social model. They challenged the institutions of the charity model by exposing the unequal treatment of persons with disabilities. Their efforts culminated in the legal amendment of 1997, which marked the formal beginning of the social model in Taiwan. Since then, the assumption that disability was a social construction rather than an individual misfortune began to take root. Later on, with the passage of the Persons with Disabilities Right Protection Law (身心障礙者權益保障法, *Shenxin zhangaizhe quanyi baozhangfa*) in 2007, the social model was further consolidated as the government vowed to build an individualized support system for the social participation of disabled people. The government also announced the adoption of the ICF's (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) guideline in official assessments by 2017 (*Mengxun* 2007). After 1997, the improvements in terms of medical treatment, education, employment and civil rights for the disabled have been made to conform with the social model generally.

Social movements struggle for interests and create new identities on the behalf of disfranchised people (Cohen 1985). Globally, the disability movement has been instrumental in effecting the transition from a charity model to a social model. The disability movement in the United States fought for civil rights and independent living, which resulted in the landmark legislation of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. In Britain, the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation, the pioneers of the social model theory, also engendered a paradigm shift. The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 represented the success of British efforts in this regard. In Taiwan's disability movement, both interests and identities were the goals that motivated persons with disabilities into a series of campaigns. Over the years, they not only gained better treatment in terms of the resources that the government allocated for their welfare, education, employment and so on, but they also succeeded in obtaining a new recognition that did not carry with it cultural and social stigmatization. In this article, we characterize this change as the transition in Taiwan to the social model. The institutional approach is instrumental in highlighting the fact that a given organizational field plays a critical role in constituting and representing interests and identities. Institutions, simply put, are the rule of the game that impose a legitimate definition on a situation. Only by radically altering how a social problem is collectively perceived is a social movement likely to win new interests and identities for its constituencies.

Appendix

Background of Interviewees

	Background	Experiences in Disability Field (Years)
Interviewee 1	Founder of a disability organization, mother of mental disability child	29
Interviewee 2	Social worker in a disability organization	14
Interviewee 3	Official of the department of social welfare	15

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Contents

Introduction

Research Articles

Discussion

Research Articles

Research Articles