Promoting “Difabel”, Promoting Social Model of Disability in Indonesia, Study of Disability Movement in Yogyakarta

Slamet Thohari

For many decades, disability in Indonesia has been seen in medical perspective, segregated into special schools and their presences regarded as a social pathology. However, social model concept of disability defining disability as a product of social oppression, gave tremendous effect to deconstruct the term for “disabled persons” which is in Indonesian means “penyandang cacat”. Inspired by social model, the Indonesian disability movement tried to change it into DIFABEL which means “differently-abled-people. The research was done in Yogyakarta before Indonesia ratifying the Convention on The Rights of Person with Disabilities, 2011. The findings are the disability movement got their momentous moment in changing the new paradigm in Indonesian presidential election, 2004. DPOs which have been engaged to this issue underwent fragmentation into many aspects, they also bequeathed into next generation concerning disability issues.

**Keys Concept:** Disability, Difabel, Social Movement, Social Model

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There are about 29 million people with disabilities in Indonesia (BPPK, 2013). Yet, their presence does not take a significant role within Indonesian society nor within government policies. People with disabilities (PwD) have complex problems, they have to deal with stigma and discrimination in their day to day interactions in daily life, mostly inaccessible environments, and the politics of segregation which remains in many aspects of cultural life. (Thohari, 2011)

Despite the significant presence of people with disabilities, discussion of social movements barely touches on the disabled rights movement, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia. It is absolutely one of the most important movements in our modern society where many new social changes are emerging. I will attempt to explore the journey of the disability movement in Yogyakarta as portrait of the disability movement in Indonesia, and it has been a pilot project for accessible place in the 1990s and it is province with the strongest disability movement in Indonesia.

I will focus on how the disabled rights movement processed the deconstruction of discriminating against people with disabilities and made a new label. This new moniker is regarded as more humanistic and democratic i.e. “Differently-abled people”—difabled— than the term “penyandang cacat” (“disabled people” or “disabled)

The movement derived at the same line with social model which ruined the medical model’s definition of disability defining disability as “personal tragedy”. social model beleived disability is a product of “social oppression”. The emerging of industrial capitalism brought the hegemony of ‘abled-body’ and “normality” became the yardstick for judging people with impairments as ‘less than human’ (Bernes and Marcer, 2003: 26; Oliver, 1990) It is a label which is used as a symbol of struggle for equal rights for people with disabilities within Indonesian society.

Accordingly, a questions which could be the foundation of this writing, How does the disability movement promote social model of disability in Yogyakarta?
Indonesia was under an authoritarian regime for 32 years. In 1998, Indonesia made a remarkable transition to a democratic political system. It was a moment when many social groups and civil organizations took advantage of the transition to voice their concern. People within the disabled rights’ movement had more opportunities to express their opinions, to argue their case, and to promote their causes. One of these was to put forward their new paradigms expressed in the label “difabel”. Changing the term is a new concept, which demands new policies and attitudes. These attitudes are more democratic and include people with disabilities as citizens.

Due to the more democratic conditions, NGOs (Non Government Organisations) that were concerned with the rights of the disabled took the opportunity to promote the concept of the new term “difabel.” They also organized people with disabilities then convinced them that people with disabilities are actually the same as other people. They are not “disabled,” which implies that they could not do anything. Rather the “difabled” had abilities just as others did. Those who supported the rights of the “difabled” also made many connections with the media and people in political parties. Meanwhile, there was also a political moment which helped to promote the new concept of the “difabled,” and this was becoming accepted by the people. Despite some internal conflicts among members of the movement, they were able to disseminate the information which they had to offer.

There are 27,439 people with disabilities in Yogyakarta (BPJS 2007), most of them do not have equal access to facilities as other people do. Most of the public services, schools, means of transportation, markets, universities, museums and other public buildings are not accessible to them. Almost all of them also have very low income and little education. It is difficult for them to workforces access due to their disabilities. They face many discriminatory rules and laws that are implemented by companies and the official government. These regulations restrict the number and type of jobs available to them based on their disabilities.

In Yogyakarta, stereotypes also determine how people with disabilities handle their lives. In addition, people with disabilities are regarded as an embarrassment and as burdens for the family. In general, the disabled are isolated from others and most of them are placed in special
schools to be educated. In many cases, a disability is also believed to be predetermined, which means it should be accepted without complaint while other believe that people with disabilities possess special powers. They are therefore considered to be extraordinary people who maintain a special balance in the world. According to certain religious beliefs, God gave the disabled special characteristics that made them stand out in society (Byrne, 2003)

These negative perceptions and concepts of disability are very persistent in Yogyakarta. Traditional beliefs state that possessing a disability is a magical and supernatural occurrence. Therefore, people with disabilities are regarded as people who have supernatural powers that should be respected. As stated by Anderson (1960), people with disabilities and dwarves could be found in Javanese castles. In addition, these extraordinary people strengthened the position of the Javanese kingdom and the power of the king (Anderson, 1960).

A disability is really determined by the socio-cultural and physical environment. The Indonesian government is unable to set up the environment of inclusion and integration for people with disabilities to participate in an “able-bodied society”. In most places, especially in the rural areas, people with disabilities are regarded as mystical beings or they are somehow believed to relate to sorcery or witchcraft. Some of them have been hidden in the home and isolated from society due to the negative perceptions and stereotypes that people.

The government provides very minimal special services programs or facilities to meet the various daily needs of a person with a disability. Due to the lack of accessibility, a simple impairment may become a significant handicap. For example, public transportation, public places, and educational facilities are not accessible. Therefore, a disability is a huge burden which can oppress people.

The New Order Regime, the authoritarian regime within which Suharto became president, created many organizations for the disabled. On other hand, the regime also supported the segregation of people with disabilities. For the Suharto regime, a disability was deemed a burden which belonged to the person alone. A disability was a kind of personal tragedy.
Moreover, the regime viewed people with disabilities as “abnormal people”, and they should be rehabilitated. For the sake of efficiency, the regime decreed that the disabled should be institutionalized. At the same time, that the regime created many organizations to help the disabled, it also supported government programs to control them.

Under the Suharto regime, there were also organizations which were characterized by what was called by Purwanta (2006), or activists who worked for the rights of the disabled. The movement aimed to get charitable funds and alms from the government or philanthropic organizations. The organizations for the disabled were “umbrella agencies,” which were connected to international organizations initiated and created by the government. It was a sort of union for the disabled, in which most of their programs were in line with the government’s programs for the disabled. In other words, they were similar to the government’s right hand. The other types of organizations for the disabled were groups that were based on an individual kind of disability, such as the visually impaired. Some of them gained funds from the government and international organizations.

Figure 1 Government’s classification of Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Physically</th>
<th>Blind</th>
<th>Intellectually</th>
<th>Psychologically</th>
<th>Deaf</th>
<th>Double</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kota</td>
<td>1,212</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogyakarta</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulon Progo</td>
<td>2,164</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>4,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bantul</td>
<td>1,420</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunung Kidul</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1,945</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Figur 2: The Classification of Children with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Regencies</th>
<th>Physically</th>
<th>Blind</th>
<th>Mental Retarded</th>
<th>Mental Psychotic</th>
<th>Deaf</th>
<th>Double</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kulon Progo</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bantul</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gunung Kidul</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sleman</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yogyda</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,144</strong></td>
<td><strong>720</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,077</strong></td>
<td><strong>752</strong></td>
<td><strong>622</strong></td>
<td><strong>190</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,505</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: The Characteristics of the Organizations for the Disabled under Suharto’s Regime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERS, ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLE GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TYPE OF ORGANIZATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charitable Organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Umbrella Agency</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The other thing to know about how the government control and regulate the power could be seen from the why government classify people with disabilities based on the kind of disabilities. As shown in the table above, we can see how the people are classified based on their disabilities. More than that, they also become recipients of charity without any policies or conditions that govern them. The policies are derived from colonial’s legacies, Dutch brought modern medical practice to Indonesia. Currently, many institutions such as educational institutions and employment require admission related to the health condition which is either “mentally and physically health” (sehat jasmani rohani). This condition is really segregating people with disabilities; they cannot get their educations, and work as the other people.

These policies are really segregating people with disabilities. Based on “normal discourse” and the regime of truth about normalcy produced by government, people with disabilities are consequently being isolated from society. They are not included in public spaces such as: schools, corporation or any other institutions since they are regarded as “abnormal” people.

Instead of including people with disabilities in public schools, government built thousands special schools or people with disabilities. Based on the types their disabilities, they are separated from “normal society”. In those schools they get any hand skill such as: sewing, carving, panting and so forth. These are the categories of special schools (SLB—Sekolah Luar Biasa) in Yogyakarta:

1. SLB/A for children with visual impairment;
2. SLB/B for children with hearing impairment;
3. SLB/C for children with developmental disability;
4. SLB/D for children with physical/motor disability;
5. SLB/E for children with social and emotional disorder; and
6. SLB/G for children with multiple disabilities.

**Disability Movement, Difabel as a new perspective**

Mansour Fakih is an Indonesian pursuing his master’s and PhD. at the University of Massachusetts with field in critical education. He is a pioneer in analyzing people with disabilities, most of whom have been segregated and previously regarded as “abnormal”. In 1997, he was a head of Oxfam Indonesia, and as such, he had many connections with people who were involved in NGOs. This situation smoothed him to solicit information on social issues from other people in the field.

Fakih teamed up with Setyadi Purwanta, a blind person who was involved in NGOs and concerned with disability issues. They traveled together and went to many areas and communities to see what the conditions of people with disabilities were truly like. They concluded that the most significant things were that people with disabilities had become segregated and discriminated against, and there existed a belief within all of society that people with disability are “abnormal” people. (Purwanta 2004 in Suharto and Munandar 2004: 23).

Fakih’s and Purwanta’s reflections are accurate. These conceptions of the disabled, as well as their institutionalization and segregation, have become the dominant policies. These policies were implemented for people with disabilities, particularly in education settings. The Indonesian government constructed many special schools which were designated for a specific kind of disability. During the Suharto era, says that There are 800, 000 Children with disabilities under 7-15 years of age. Unfortunately here are only 41,015 of them have capability to get special education which we had only 10.050 teachers (Kompas 11, 05, 1996). This situation leads us to conclude that Suharto’s government encouraged them to be educated in special schools. Therefore, this means that the regime implemented segregation policies, not inclusive ones, when it came to people with disabilities. Visually impaired people, for example, have been sent to specific schools.
Due to this condition, the post-Suharto government decided to change the prevailing perception in society regarding the disabled and it offered the new paradigm. For the new government, a disability was “a social oppression” based on social norms. These beliefs were dominated by the “ideology of normalism.” In addition, Mansour stated that a disability is a term or condition produced by a capitalist system, which leads members of society to compete with one another. To deal with this problem, the concept of disability should be deconstructed, and term “disability” here has been regarded according to a new mindset. The underpinnings of these new attitudes and policies questioned the term for people with disabilities, since “dis” means that a person “does not have capability” to do something. The new government leaders changed the term “disabled” to DIFABEL (Differently abled people), since the new view was that everyone is capable and every person has his or her own differences. Changing the term that was used in people's daily life implied a change in the policies and attitudes. The prevailing view was more democratic and equitable. Promoting the new term for people with disabilities is, actually promoting new paradigms and attitudes and policies. (Purwanta 2004 in Suharto and Munandar 1994: 41-73).

**Promoting the Term “Difabel,” as well as Equal Rights**

After deciding to use the new more democratic term, activists worked hard to promote it everywhere. University campuses were important places that activists focused on to further the rights of the “difabled.” In 1998, Dra Manunggal (NGO led by Setya adi Purwanta) declared that “difabled” was the new term to call people with disabilities. Other NGOs, PPCI, PERTUNI (Union of Indonesian Blind People), GERKATIN (Indonesian Deaf Movement), BPOC (Indonesian Disabled Atlets), FKCPTI (Front Phisically Disabled People, YAKKUM (Christian Center for Public Health), LBH (Legal Aid Institute) and Yogyakarta used the new term as well. They declared that the equal rights of people with disabilities should be implemented as part of the surge of democracy which occurred during the post-Suharto regime (*Kompas*, 6/23,1998)

on September, 27th 1999 in Yogyakarya, Mansour Fakih, with the head of PPCI (Indonesian Disabled People Association) approached Gadjah Mada University, one of the biggest university in Indonesia to hold the big seminar on the paradigms of disability
perspectives and elaborate the effect of the term “dis” in the disabled life and at the same moment, they also introduced the new term “difabel” to many scholars (Kompas 9, 29, 1999).

In December 1998, some of disabled rights’ activists who were associated in KAPCI (Committee for Indonesian People with disabilities) met and created a dialogue with a title “Reformatting the Indonesian disabled rights’ Movement.” These groups recommended using the new term for people with disabilities, which was DIFABEL. According to them, everyone in the world has his or her own differences and capabilities.

Since 1998, many disabled rights’ activists have been committed to applying and promoting the new term. This new moniker would help the disabled gain greater acceptance within society. Due to the groups’ commitment, they used the term “difable” in their daily lives, official correspondence, and other activities. In addition, they promoted the new term throughout the whole Indonesian society.

SIGAB, a disabled rights’ organization based on Yogyakarta, is one of organizations that actively promoted the new term. Moreover, they used the term “difabel” in their name SIGB, or Sasana Integrasi dan Advocacy Difabel (Center for Integration and Advocacy of the Difabel). They published a magazine quarterly, which also could be accessed online. Furthermore, they published a book, which was a tribute to disabled rights’ activist Fakih, and they published a weekly bulletin, which was distributed to NGOs, official government organizations, cultural centers, etc.

Meanwhile, to promote the rights of people with disabilities, SIGAB, CIQAL, ITMI, PERTUNI, Dria Manunggal, and other organizations held what they referred to as: Sunday morning Gathering. This was a gathering held every Sunday morning in downtown Yogyakarta. During this proceeding, the organizations promoted discussions on the rights of the disabled and how to include the disabled in society. In this gathering, they used and promoted the new term for all of the people attending the meeting. They invited artists, government officials, academics from campuses and so forth, to gather in 2000. The other programs coordinated by SIGAB which
promoted the new term “difabel” included movie screenings on campuses. These films persuaded the students to become involved in the disabled rights’ movement.

There have been activities created by many within the disabled rights’ movement to promote the term “difabel” throughout Indonesia. These activities could be characterized in the following ways: First. Persuasion This is a process in which a group or individual works to persuade others to believe that people with disabilities are people just like any other people. People who use persuasion maintain that the disabled are not sick, they should not be institutionalized. Therefore, the appropriate word to call them is “difabel”, not “penyandang cacat” “or “disabled.”

Second, among the Members the persuasion process is usually used by the senior members with the new members in formal or informal settings. Informally, they are encouraged to use the term in their daily life. The senior activists are taking the opportunity to do some activities, while simultaneously expanding the minds of the younger members. This is done through workshops, journals created by SIGAB in every few years, counseling done by SAPDA (NGO concerning on children and disabled woman issues) and workshops on inclusive Education by Dria Manunggal (NGO concerning on inclusive education for people with disabilities)

Third There are also some activities done to inform people—(average people or disabled rights’ activists). These activities include workshops on disability awareness for government officials done by SIGAB (NGO concerning on disability issues based in Yogyakarta), disability awareness workshops for functionaries of political parties, workshops, and disability awareness programs for the heads of villages in Bantul done by SAPDA.

Fourth Parades and performances, A large parade held celebrate International Disability Day in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, SIGAB, for instance, held a carnival with a small train that traveled around Yogyakarta. SAPDA and CIQAL (NGO concerning on economic empowerment of disabled people) in 2008 held a carnival with 1,000 people in wheelchairs. Since 2007, DMC (Difabeled Motorcyclist Community) always tours around large cities to promote the rights of the disabled.
Fifth Advocacy: Some organizations advocate during their activities. Yogyakarta is the strongest province of disability advocacy. Those done by many NGO and coalition among NGO concerning disability issues such as: SIGAB, SIQAL, SAPDA, Dria Manunggal and so forth. SIGAB for example, it is an NGO concerned with advocacy. Many advocacies were performed, such as opposing a presidential election which banned disabled people from participating as candidates in 2004. In addition, advocacy was used in 2006 to oppose a university’s admission policy, which was very discriminatory. These organizations also advocate for accessibility in public transportation. The Media has a significant role to play in this process. When these organizations hold activities they always invite the mass media to cover their events.

Sixth Publishing, using the publishing media is a very significant tactic that organizations use to promote their ideas. By doing this, their ideas and views on equal rights will be distributed. There are many ways to do this, such as using personal web sites. These include sigab.orh which is the most visited web site that promotes the term “difabel.”

Seventh: Internship program, some of the disabled rights’ activists have been involved in other disability organizations. Some of SIGAB’s functionaries have been members of Dria Manunggal. Purwanta and Fakih were the masterminds who have influenced many disabled rights’ activists. The head of PUSDAKOTA, the head of INTERAKSI, and the head of the TALENTA Foundation, were mentored by Purwanta and they received internships with Dria Manunggal.

As previously mentioned, Purwanta, a visually impaired person, and Fakih, a human rights activist, are the important people who promoted the change of the term from “penyandang cacat” into “difabel.” Setiaadi is associated with an NGO that is concerned with disability issues. It offers a new critical perspective, which sees disability as a social issue. Being disabled is caused by social oppression or the “ideology of normalcy.”

Based on Yogyakarta, a large university city in Java, Dria Manunggal was becoming a center of the growing movement to use the term “difabel”. Many people were involved in this NGO and Setiaadi and Mansour both were the people who influenced others. Some of them have
had internships, or they were just involved with helping programs without charge. They did this in order to gain experience and knowledge on disabled and human rights, and to create an inclusive society.

Some of them were involved only for the internship, and some of them become full members of these organizations. However, some of them were involved with internal conflicts, so they went on to create new organizations, such as SIGAB. After the internships, some of them went back to their home cities and formed new organizations, such SAPDA.

SIGAB is an organization created by former associates of Dria Manunggal. Through this process, some of SIGAB’s members also created new organizations, or were involved in other groups. Those organizations are concerned with the same issues, yet they do not share the same focus. For example, MATAHARIKU is an organization for the hearing impaired. It focuses on deaf rights, sign language and its culture, and multiculturalism. This organization was influenced by SIGAB’s notion, and the founder was a member of SIGAB. Some of SIGAB’s functionaries became members of MATAHARIKU. This paralleled what happened within the DMC (Difabel Motorcyclist Community.) DIFA Karya also is an organization which is concerned in economic empowerment for people with disabilities. Most of the important people within DIFA Karya are also becoming SIGAB’s members.

Many organizations are created with a specific focus, since they know what should be done to fill the gaps for the disabled. SIGAB is an organization concerned with advocacy. SAPDA is concerned with the empowerment of people with disabilities. MATAHARIKU’s focus is on the culture of the hearing impaired. Karya is concerned with economic empowerment. The DMC is concerned with the disabled culture and transportation rights. It also supports making ceremonies, such as parades and carnivals, accessible for disabled people.
Figure 4: “Difabel” Organizations and Their Focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Focuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIGAB</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPDA</td>
<td>Empowerment and Health rights for disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRIA MANUNGGAL</td>
<td>Inclusive education and assistive technology for Blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATAHARIKU</td>
<td>Deaf culture, Deaf rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIQAL</td>
<td>Economic empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIFAKARYA</td>
<td>Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMC</td>
<td>Disabled culture, promoting accessibility in performances, parade, touring, and etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based the table above, we know that there are many social organizations, such as DRIA MANUNGGAL, which have their own foci. They are promoting and deconstructing the medical “concept of disability,” which was first worked on by DRIA MANUNGGAL. Additionally, these groups practiced activities based on the new paradigm, such as: advocacy, accessibility, promoting the culture of the hearing impaired, and economic empowerment.

When individuals are immersed in a social movement, they internalize a new self-image as being part of a collective. The social movement after DRIA MANUNGGAL continued the paradigm of inclusivity. They not only deconstructed the paradigm of segregation and exclusivity, but they continued to struggle to promote the rights of people with disabilities. As one can see, “difabel” has a long long way to go to be accepted within society. In some ways, some disability movement still struggle against the old paradigm and try to change the term.
### Figure 5: The Cohort of Disability Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before 1990s</strong></td>
<td>Disability defined as “abnormal”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action: Segregation and Institutionalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisations → supporting government’s programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990-2004</strong></td>
<td>Deconstructing the old paradigms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRIA MANUNGGA</strong></td>
<td>Promoting new paradigms: disability as a product of society, introducing social model of disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SIGAB, DIFAKARYA, SAPDA, MATAHARIKU</strong> etc</td>
<td>Practicing new paradigm: advocacy, inclusive education, accessibility, hearing impaired cultures, economic empowerment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal conflicts exist within these organizations in terms of getting resources, achieving transparency and selecting leaders. For these reasons, they have been divisive, fragmented and are not always in line with the same goals. However, these conflicts tend to have beneficial effects in terms of the development of the new paradigms for which these groups struggle.

Although many disabled rights’ organizations have been fragmented, this disunity does not make them incapable of changing the people’s mindset and implementing a new paradigm which is more democratic. Therefore, disunity and dissension within the disabled rights’ movement actually expanded the new paradigm, which was their original goal. These internal conflicts and disunity do not always weaken the social movement. In fact, dissension can breed and cause change.

Following the thesis of new social movement, Krieasai stated that most social movements adapt and change, as has been seen in the United Kingdom. UPIAS, the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation, is a disabled rights’ movement in UK which introduced the “social
model” of disability studies. Many activities were derived from the UPIAS’s experiences, particularly in the implementation of inclusive education. Some social organization also adapted the concept of “civil rights” for people with disabilities. This was the approach of the Independent living (IL) movement in the USA¹.

On the other hand, there are many organizations for the disabled which still use the conventional paradigms, such as the medical diagnosis paradigms or the belief that a disability is a personal tragedy. Those organizations absorbed some aspects of what was promoted by other organizations which struggled to promote the term “DIFABEL.” Currently, some of them are also working together with NGOs concerned with the term “difabel,” but they still do not want to use that moniker. There is a paradigm shift that is still needed in the ways that people perceive others with disabilities.

On the other hand, the presence of these organizations strengthens their identities and makes them feel part of the same struggle. So, the forming identity processes here works with disunity and just like a “binary fusion” in bacteria or amoeba. Internal conflicts contributed to the process of identity expansion. In fact, government organizations which used the medical terminology model for the disabled became the “enemy” or were seen as the “antagonist” within society.

**Political Moment**

The identities of difabel were also determined by the specific moment when disability issues became a topic of public discussion. It also increased public knowledge of the disabled, which had long been forgotten as citizens. That was the discrimination practiced during the general election in 2004. Abdurrahman Wahid, the former president and a visually impaired person, tried to run for president. However, the KPU (a committee for the general elections), did not permit him to run due to his blindness. The policy was actually based on the rule created by

¹ “Social model”, a concept of disability promoted by UPIAS (Union of the Phisically Impaired Agaights Sagregation) in United Kingdom and Independent Living a concept of disability promoted by disability movement in USA are the influential concept inspiring many disability movements around the world. See Mike Oliver, (1997) “Disability Movement is a New Social Movement” in Community Development Journals VOL 32 NO. 3,p 244-251
the KPU, which stated that the candidate should be in good health mentally and physically. According to them, visual impairment is not an indication of poor health. The Indonesian Physicians Association was involved and had to give an official medical statement regarding the “sickness” (Kompas, 4, 30, 004)

It was a momentous occasion and had tremendous effects on the disability movement in Indonesia. Disability issues became a topic of serious public discourse. Many seminars and public discussions were held on campuses talking about what disability is, as well as the rights of the disabled. In addition, on May 7, 2004, there was an advertisement in the second biggest newspaper in Indonesia, the Java Post. It said: “how wonderful their contribution in the world “Franklin D Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, David Blunkett, Stephen Hawking, Ludwig van Beethoven, Taha Husein, Marla Runyan” and the last is Abdurrahman Wahid” (Jawa Pos, 5, 7 2007) These were all disabled people.

Moreover, there were also large demonstrations by people with disabilities against KPU. There were even huge riots due to this discrimination. In Yogyakarta, particularly specific place such as in notified as muslim traditional area, both in rural and urban area. Thousands of people took to the streets and yelled “Long live Abdurrahman Wahid!”. This also happened in Bangil, East Java and other places in East Java (Kompas, 5, 27, 2004).

During that time, disability was a word debated by many people, and the term difabel spread across the country. Many dialogues and public discussions were held, on campuses, and on television, regarding the rights of people with disabilities. In sum, disability became a topic of public discourse and the term difabel was a popular buzzword. For people with disabilities, particularly for those who were not activists, it was at that time that they called themselves “difabel”. It also happened that most NGO concerned with equal rights began using the term as well. The disabled had previously been forgotten by many human rights organizations. Clearly, the general election of 2004 was a huge moment for people with disabilities. It was the time when many people were introduced to the concept of disability as a “social oppression.” in other words, disability rights are human rights, It was also the time that the definition of disability was contested by the medical approach and social model. In addition, it was at that time that the term “difabel’ spread across the country.
The following figure is a table which shows the emergence of the term difabel in *Kompas*, the largest newspaper in Indonesia. Based on this figure, we can see how the term suddenly became popular in 2004. Following 2004, difabel became more popular, and even more recently, almost everyone in Indonesia knows what difabel is. At least most people know to whom the term refers even if they do not know what the meaning behind it is.

**Figure 6. The Dynamic of the Emergence of Difabel in the Largest Indonesian Newspaper, KOMPAS**

![Chart showing the emergence of difabel in Kompas](chart.png)

**Conclusion**

The history of the disability Movement in Yogyakarta and even in Indonesia is mostly the history of the battle for a definition between disability as a medical issue and disability as product of social oppression. This contest was expressed in the terms that they used to define people with disabilities or “penyandang cacat” (disabled person) and *Difabel* (*differently abled-person*). “Penyandang cacat” is a term created as an adaptation from “people with disabilities”. “Cacat” is a term for “disabled” from those who believe that a disability is a medical affair and a personal tragedy. “*Difabel*” an acronym of “differently-abled-people” refers to disability as a social construction, being disabled is due to social oppression and domination.

To deal with the problem of people with disabilities, one should not institutionalize them in specific places, as was done by the government or NGOs which see a disability as a personal tragedy. Accessibility should be offered in an inclusive society. This means inclusive schools and equal rights are the answer to the problem.
In the 1990s, after they returned from abroad, some scholars introduced new perspectives on social issues. This theoretical framework then affected their perspective on disability, since people with disabilities at that time were really oppressed and discriminated against. Accordingly, these scholars offered the new term “difabel” instead of “pendyandang cacat” (disabled people). For them, changing the term is the same as changing the paradigm.

Since 1998, Indonesia’s political climate began to change and it is becoming a more democratic country. At this moment, NGOs concerned with disabilities use the moment to promote the new paradigms by using the new term. The methods used are: persuasion of their members, parades and performances, advocacy, publishing and mentoring, or doing internship programs. Those methods have been done steadily. They actually strengthen the identity of people with disabilities.

Furthermore, in the process of their struggles, they fragmented themselves. This was caused by internal conflicts, or by others who created new organizations in other locations. However, the process of disunity aided the promotion of the term difabel and the new paradigm that it offered. The process of these struggles also was helped by a political event in 2004, which made disability issues a topic of public discourse. It also made the term difabel popular and strengthened it as a new identity for people with disabilities. Since that moment, difabel is a well known term to call people with disabilities n Yogyakarta or Indonesia, although some people are not aware of what it means.

There are different patterns of cohorts within the disability movement in Indonesia. The first cohort is the “cohort-1990s.” They worked hard to promote the new paradigm and the second cohort, 2004-2010, is practicing the paradigm. Many activities to promote an inclusive society came as a result of the paradigm that they promoted. There has been transference of identity here, from the first cohort to the second cohort. Their diversity and disunity did not reduce their movement’s identity and perspectives on disability.
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