

The Development Path and Empowerment of Work Integration Social Enterprises: A comparative analysis of three cases in Taipei

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Abstract

The Paper applies multi-governance theory to analyze three paths explored by WISEs in Taipei to empower disabled persons. Three levels of empowerment have been achieved—individual empowerment, social empowerment, and political empowerment—with varied consequences for realizing the social mission of the relevant enterprises. All three enterprises adopted supported employment as a tool for empowering the disabled. One outcome of the study is the conclusion that when the enterprise has low dependence on government resources, and high integration within the supporting foundation, the level of political empowerment is high. The finding implies that high levels of financial commitment by the government are unnecessary to this process. Rather, it is the formulation of effective government policies that have supported the mission of WISEs by creating a favorable social and market environment.

Keywords

disabled persons; empowerment; WISEs; social policy; Taiwan

Unemployment resulting from financial or other crises is an ongoing social problem in most countries. In particular, people with disabilities face greater challenges when entering the labor market. According to the 2016 Survey Report on the Living Conditions and Needs of People with Disabilities, the labor force participation rate of disabled people over the age of 15 in Taiwan is 20.41%, and the unemployment rate is 9.17%. The primary reason for such persons engaging in

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atypical labor is “Cannot find a suitable full-time job”.^① According to the statistics of the Social Affairs Bureau of the capital city of Taipei in May 2020, there are 119,329 people with a certificate of disability in the city, accounting for 4.56% of its total population. In order to relieve financial pressure and promote employment for the disabled, traditional NPOs have been operating workshops known as “sheltered workshops.” However, the sheltered workshops have faced difficulties of various kinds, including the challenge of how to position cognition, limitations in career guidance evaluation, lack of appropriate standards for production capacity verification, insufficient number of professionals with both service and management capabilities, and surplus determination.^②

In 2007, the “Law on the Protection of the Disabled” was revised to the “Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Disabled”. These sheltered workshops were defined as a legally sanctioned opportunity for leading to “sheltered employment” of disabled people. The goal of developing social enterprises is to provide training for the disabled and integrate them into the labor market. The “Work Integration Social Enterprise” (WISE) is a type of social enterprise that provides supportive employment for marginalized groups, including the disabled. Its core value is to alleviate the social alienation of marginalized groups through social integration, and it is the most prevalent social enterprise organization in Taiwan.^③

The paper analyzes three cases of WISE in Taipei city, the first metropolitan area in Taiwan to develop sheltered workshops. The three cases are also diverse in terms of financial support, service target, and service models. The three WISEs in Taipei were

^① 台湾卫生福利部/Taiwan Ministry of Health and Welfare (2016), 《2016年身心障碍者生活状况及需求调查报告》/“Report of Disabled People's Living Condition and Demand Survey 2016”.

^② 吴明珠/Wu, Mingchu. and 郑胜分/Cheng Shengfen (2012:10(2)), “庇护工场转型社会企业研究”/“A Study on the Transformation of Sheltered Workshop into Social Enterprise,” *Journal of Disability Research*, pp.148–162.

^③ 官有垣/Kuan Youyuan, 王仕图/Wang Shitu. and 杜承嵘/Duh Chengrong (2018:22), “工作整合型社会企业的社会影响：台湾家扶基金会的个案分析”/“The Social Impact of Work Integration Social Enterprise: A case study of CAREUS Foundation”, *Journal for Social Development Study*, pp. 61-100.

initiated by foundations, as is typical for most WISEs in Taiwan. But they provide employment support and services for different groups: the intellectually disabled, physically disabled, and visually impaired. As a result, their service models are different than that of more conventional NPOs. The goal of this paper is to compare the similarities and differences among these three WISEs' social governance mechanisms for addressing the unemployment problems of the disabled.

1. Literature review and applied theory

In the 1970s, many marginalized groups in Scotland (women, non-European workers, the elderly, and low-skilled workers) were excluded from the labor market or faced high risks of unemployment, resulting in a variety of social deviances. In order to enable marginal groups to enhance their employability and return to the labor market, the social enterprise model was adopted to provide them with supportive employment. According to the definition of the Swedish Ministry of Economics and Regional Development, a WISE is “to engage in the production process and re-integrate the labor market through the learning of workers’ personal experience, development, and new things”.^① WISEs can also play an important role in promoting the formulation of social policies for assisting the vulnerable. For example, the Wappa association in Japan, established in 1971, has always used social campaigns, policy advocacy, and political participation to strive for equal opportunities for the disabled.^② In 2005, through the active promotion of the Kyodoren^③ led by Wappa, the Shiga prefectural government first established its social business office system. This system advocates for the handicapped to work together with healthy persons as

^① Kuosmanen, J. (2014:25), “Care Provision, Empowerment, and Market Forces: The art of establishing legitimacy for work integration social enterprises”, *International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*.

^② 郑南/Zheng Nan. and 庄家怡/Chuang Chiayi (2018:8), “日本劳动整合型社会企业的发展与创新——以Wappa之会为例”/ “The Development and Innovation of WISEs in Japan: Taking the Wappa as an example”, *Learn and Explore*, pp.59–66.

^③ NPOs union organization supporting the disabled, founded in 1981, <https://kyodoren.org>.

equals, recognizes the employment contractual relationship of employees with disabilities, and provides wage subsidies to the handicapped. From the perspective of origin, the emergence of WISEs is deeply influenced by the European cooperative economy that advocates mutual assistance and democratic participation, and it is a criticism of social exclusion caused by capitalism and its efficiency priority.^①As one of the important types of social enterprises, WISE has an important goal to empower the weak in society and support their self-reliance through various methods such as job creation, policy proposals, and the creation of mutual aid systems, has made great progress in the world today. In East Asia, the WISEs in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have their own characteristics and fully demonstrate their development potential.

Most of the WISEs in Taiwan are operated by NPOs that serve the handicapped in order to help them enter the market. Some scholars equate sheltered workshops in Taiwan with social enterprises, but Wu and Cheng view the provision of sheltered employment by sheltered workshops as nothing more than a placement orientation. On the other hand, WISEs provide supportive employment for people with higher employability, with salaries guaranteed by the “Labor Base Law”.^② From organizational goals to business management and legal policies, Liu and Cheng have discussed the transition from commercialization to social enterpriseization of NPOs in Taiwan.^③ Unlike the bottom-up promotion seen in Japan, the Taiwan government has played an important role in promoting the social enterpriseization of NPOs. In 2007, when the “Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of People with Disabilities” was amended, the sheltered workshop was clearly positioned as a place

^① Defoumy, J., Hulgard, L. and Pestoff, V. (2014), *Social Enterprise and the Third Sector*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 17-41.

^② 吴明珠/Wu, Mingchu. and 郑胜分/Cheng Shengfen (2012:10(2)), “庇护工场转型社会企业研究”/“A Study on the Transformation of Sheltered Workshop into Social Enterprise”, *Journal of Disability Research*, pp.148-162.

^③ 刘育欣/Liu Yuxin. and 郑胜分/Cheng Shengfen (2014: 12(1)), “非营利组织商业化到社会企业化: 身心障碍者就业模式的转化”/“NPO Commercialization into Social Enterprise: The transformation of the disabled employment patterns”, *Journal of Disability Research*, pp. 54-66.

to provide sheltered employment services, and the labor-employment relationship between relevant organizations and the disadvantaged was clarified. The Taipei City Labor Bureau also issued an announcement in 2014 on a halt to accepting applications for asylum workshops, and instead launched a program described as “The assistance measures that Taipei City endorses for social enterprises to develop employment for the handicapped.” The above policy goals all serve to promote NPOs to strengthen their own market capabilities and no longer rely on government resource input. They are also the main driving force for NPOs to transform themselves into social enterprises.

The concept of “Empowerment” first appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1849: “The act of empowerment; the state of being empowered,” reflecting that empowerment is both a behavioral process and a result. In 1976, Solomon argued that empowerment is the process of reducing the “powerlessness” of disadvantaged groups, an action by social workers to discover and assist in removing power barriers to the disadvantaged.^① Most scholars believe that empowerment is a combination of subjective and objective.^② Rissel uses the terms “psychological empowerment” and “community empowerment” to summarize the individual’s subjective perception of power, objective resource control, and community political discourse power.^③ Earlier, Conger and Kanungo used “empowerment,” in the context of corporate management research, to delineate how employees improved their abilities through self-organization and changed their powerless status.^④ Holland and other scholars applied empowerment to the protection of women’s power.^⑤ Gutiérrez believes that

^① Solomon, B.B. (1976), *Black Empowerment: Social work in oppressed communities*, New York: Columbia University Press.

^② Riger, S. (1993), “What’s Wrong with Empowerment”, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, pp. 21.

^③ Rissel, C. (1994), “Empowerment: The holy grail of health promotion? ”, *Health Promotion International*, pp. 9.

^④ Conger, J.A. and Kanungo, R.N (1988), “The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice”, *Academy of Management Review*, pp. 13.

^⑤ Holland, J., Ramazannoglu, C., Scott, S., Sharpe, S., and Thomson, R. (1991), *Pressure, Resistance, Empowerment: Young women and the negotiation of safer sex*, London: The Tufnell Press.

enlightenment-minded groups need to increase the enthusiasm of ethnic minority members for political participation on racial issues.^① From the perspective of the theoretical basis and practice of empowerment, empowered persons mainly focus on those who are clearly disadvantaged in social life, and empowering the socially weak has gradually become an important policy goal.

Shu refined our understanding of power by distinguishing among individual power, social power, and political power. Moreover, Shu posits that this ability is not only an objective state, but also a subjective feeling held by people, which can be called a sense of power.^② Based on the above research, this paper organizes **personal empowerment, social empowerment, and political empowerment** as follows. Personal empowerment is based on the individual itself, emphasizing the promotion of personal development, power, and self-efficacy. Social empowerment is higher than individual empowerment, and is based on individual empowerment. It is achieved through interaction with other individuals or groups of individuals, and is a process of obtaining social power through social relationships. Political empowerment is the highest level of empowerment. It refers to individuals possessing sufficient knowledge and skills, possessing cognition and practical participation abilities equal to or higher than that of ordinary people, to achieve social goals through social actions. Providing opportunities for the weak to participate in society is the most important goal of WISEs, which ultimately is another way to describe empowerment. Compared with traditional government welfare departments and NPOs, WISEs have higher self-discipline and stronger empowerment capabilities because of their ability to obtain resources. And this paper will use the empowerment theory framework to

^① Gutiérrez, L.M., Delois, K.A. and Glenmayer, L. (1995), "Understanding Empowerment Practice: Building on practitioner-based knowledge", *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, pp. 76(9).

^② 舒仁凯/Shu Renkai (2018), 《从个体能力到集体行动——国外赋权理论发展研究》/ "Range from Individual Ability to Collective Action—Research on the Development of Empowerment Theory in the English Literature", Nanchang University master thesis.

explore how the three WISEs in Taipei City empower disadvantaged employees, explore how the organization locates and handles relationships with disadvantaged employees, and support their participation in social governance.

2. Multiple case presentations: the development paths and characteristics of the three WISEs

This paper uses the “Multi-case Study” qualitative method to collect empirical data, obtain multiple sources of evidence, and conduct cross-case analysis. Multiple case studies not only allow conclusions to be more persuasive, they obtain deeper and more insightful theoretical discoveries. According to the category of persons with disabilities, this paper selects representative institutions for physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and the visually impaired. Through analysis of the three organizations, we can summarize the various strategic models for the development of WISEs in Taiwan, and thus carry out a more comprehensive comparison and discussion. Of the more than 140 sheltered factories in Taiwan, 43 are located in Taipei. Based on preliminary data collection and consideration of disability categories, three representative large-scale social welfare institutions for the disabled in Taipei were selected as the research objects. The three cases in this paper have a longer development history and produced greater social influence through innovation, and thus are quite representative. At the end of 2019 and in early 2021, two in-depth interviews were conducted with the heads of each organization. Through communicating with key leaders, we learned about the respective positioning, actions, and strategies of the three WISEs.

Table 1 : List of Interviewed Persons

Date	Location	Institution name	Service target	Respondents

11/21/2019	CAREUS Enjoy Taipei Restaurant	CAREUS Social Welfare Foundation	Intellectually handicapped group	Yang Xiuyan, Vice CEO
12/06/2019	Victory Social Welfare Foundation	Taipei Victory Social Welfare Foundation	Physically handicapped group	Zhang Yingshu, CEO
12/14/2019	Eyelope Social Welfare Foundation	Eyelope Social Welfare Foundation	Visually handicapped group	Xie Bangjun, President
Date	Location	Institution name	Service target	Respondents
2/25/2021	online	CAREUS Social Welfare Foundation	Intellectually handicapped group	Yang Xiuyan, Vice CEO
2/21/2021	online	Taipei Victory Social Welfare Foundation	Physically handicapped group	Zhang Yingshu, CEO
2/22/2021	online	Eyelope Social Welfare Foundation	Visually handicapped group	Xie Bangjun, President

2.1 Development history of the three WISEs

CAREUS Social Welfare Foundation, which espouses “lifelong care and life-long education” for the intellectually handicapped as its core value, and “creating the dignity of life and the joy of survival for the mentally handicapped” as its mission, was founded by a group of parents of mentally handicapped children. On 29 June 1995, the founding organizers raised NT\$5 million to establish the CAREUS Cultural

and Educational Foundation, which was filed with the Ministry of the Interior in May 2001, and later registered in October of the same year, thereby becoming CAREUS Social Welfare Foundation. The foundation has service agencies in Taipei, New Taipei, Hsinchu and Kaohsiung. After visiting Swan Bakery in Japan, the founders Shu Guozhen and his wife saw that the model of working in a bakery can provide an environment of social integration for people with mental disabilities, and that this business model can easily be adopted by communities. The first “CAREUS Baking House” was established in Taiwan in 1997. The CAREUS Foundation Taipei Office is divided into the social welfare and social business departments. There are 12 bakery restaurants and 2 bakery workshops. CAREUS Enjoy Taipei Restaurant, located in Xinyi District of Taipei, is a typical example that fully reflects the operating mode of social enterprises. It was opened on 5 October 2015. Currently it serves 15 mentally handicapped people, with a store manager, two supportive employment attendants, a full-time salesperson, and a part-time salesperson.

In 1963, Norwegian physician Olav Bjørngaas and his wife established the first home for children with polio in Taiwan. After that, the Children’s Home adhered to “affirming the value of life and developing the potential of life” and developed into the Pingtung Christian Victory Home. In 2000, “Taipei Private Victory Center for the Development of the Potential of the Disabled” was established. The founder Zhang Yingshu is himself a physically disabled person with poliomyelitis. In 2016, the organizational structure was changed to the “Taipei Victory Social Welfare Foundation” to expand its service targets and provide related welfare work and activities for the disabled to enjoy a more independent, more dignified life quality and future. The vision of the foundation is to “inspire the disabled to develop their life potential and create value.” The Victory Foundation currently operates the Victory Data Archive Center, Victory Digital Design and Printing Center, Victory Handmade

Glass, Victory Gas Station, Victory X Family, Victory Kitchen, Victory X Submarine Fort, and Hackberry Coffee.

Eyeloove Foundation was formally established at the end of 1991 by Mr. Xie Bangjun and many socially prominent figures. At the end of 1997, it was restructured into a social welfare organization. In 2006, it was merged into the Ministry of the Interior as the first foundation in Taiwan that provides comprehensive services and forward-looking planning for visually disabled persons. In 1988, the Dialogue in the Dark Social Enterprise had been established in West Germany, employing visually disabled people as trainers and leading participants to experience learning in a dark environment, thereby changing social attitudes toward “disability” and “diversity.” The result was an increased tolerance in West Germany toward disability and a reduction in self-other boundaries. In order to increase the variety of job types, self-confidence, and social value of the visually impaired, Mr. Xie obtained Dark Social Enterprise (DSE) authorization and founded a “Dark Dialogue Social Enterprise” in Taipei in 2011, personally serving as the chairman of Taipei DiD (short for Dialogue in the Dark).

2.2 A comparative analysis of social enterpriseization strategies of the three foundations

CAREUS, Victory, and Eyeloove Foundation all began to provide employment services for disabled groups around the millennium. In the early stages, when the three foundations adopted the sheltered employment model in providing employment, the initiative of disabled target users was ignored. With gradually deeper cognition of the sustainable development of the organization and its impact on social policy, the three foundations have gradually transitioned from sheltered employment to supported employment, advocating the concept of “Teaching People to Fish” and at the same

time reducing target user dependence on government resources through the social enterprise model.

CAREUS Foundation Taipei Office is co-managed by the social welfare and social affairs departments. The social welfare department is responsible for the “placement” of employment service targets, while the social affairs department is actually a social enterprise department responsible for hiring and training them. For example, Enjoy Taipei restaurant belongs to the social affairs department, and the Enjoy sheltered workshop belongs to the social welfare department. It should be noted, first, that WISEs are included in the foundation, and rely on the resources and influence of the foundation to achieve development. Second, as a traditional NPO-type social enterprise, CAREUS Foundation regards WISEs not only as an important means to achieve its mission but a way to help the foundation to achieve large-scale services to support more people with mental disabilities. Because it is more difficult for people with mental disabilities than those without to enter the competitive labor market, CAREUS Foundation currently positions itself as a “placement” service.

Victory Foundation has developed a diversified corporate social enterprise model for its disabled target group: 1. Cooperate with enterprises to help them understand and fulfill their social responsibilities. In March 2011, for example, FamilyMart and the Victory Disability Development Center cooperated with the Taipei City Government Labor Bureau to create a tripartite cross-border convenience store employment model. This was the first convenience store in Taiwan that provided services performed by disabled employees. 2. Enterprise joining. In 2017, Victory Foundation successfully obtained approval from Subway to open the first Subway submarine castle operated by a disabled team in Taiwan. 3. Commercialization of foundations. In 1987, the Victory Data Archives Center was established, while the

Victory Digital Design and Printing Center was established in 2002 and the Victory Handmade Glass “Passer” in 2008. 4. The social enterprise of the foundation. The Victory Foundation began operating the Victory Gas Station on 1 January 2010; in 2014 it focused on the issue of “food safety” and opened an internationally certified central kitchen in the Taipei Social Enterprise Building, named “Victory Kitchen”; and in 2019 established Pushu Coffee, committed to the hand-made business of coffee roasting. In 2020, the Victory Foundation began to explore the practice of impact investment, and funded a church in its efforts to set up a FamilyMart convenience store in the Ankang community of Wenshan District. Arguably the most important feature of the Victory Foundation is that it does not conduct social fundraising and instead maintains the operation of its projects entirely through its commercial revenues.

Taipei DiD was founded because of the experience of Eyelove Foundation’s chairman, Xie Bangjun, with DSE in Germany. He has been running the foundation for over 20 years. Taipei DiD currently has 3 board members, 6 teachers, and 25 visually impaired trainers. The Eyelove Foundation and the Taipei DiD social enterprise operate independently on a dual track. The Eyelove Foundation still operates as a traditional foundation, and its organizational funds come from social donations, government purchase services, and government funding support. In addition to the foundation obtaining sufficient capital in its founding stage, its social enterprise Taipei DiD has become completely independent of the foundation, meaning the social enterprise is fully operational on its own. The foundation only acts as a shareholder and does not participate in the operation and corporate decision-making. Eyelove Foundation’s Chairman Xie explains it as follows:

The foundation only serves as a shareholder of the DiD, not as a manager. I am not involved in the decision-making and operation of DiD.

DiD has another person in charge. Our completely independent operational model is to take precautions and protect the foundation, so that the financial losses of these undertakings should not affect the foundation. (Interview, 14 December 2019)

Table 2 : Comparison of operating modes of social enterprises by foundation

Foundation name	Social enterprise positioning	Sources of revenue	Development model	Function
CAREUS	Traditional NPO social enterprise	Much depend on the foundation	Develop the social enterprise sector based on the foundation	Placement (means)
Victory	Company type social enterprise (Social enterpriseization of foundation completely)	Close to 100% from the market	Cooperate with the enterprises to realize corporate social responsibility	Support (purpose)
			Franchise market operation	
			Commercialization of foundation	
			Social entrepreneurship (Internally established & social impact investment)	
Eyelove	Company type social enterprise	Dependent on the market	Social impact	Support (purpose)

	(Dual-track independent operation of foundation and social enterprise)	completely, independent of the foundation	investment	
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3. WISEs and empowerment

Empowerment for disadvantaged groups is the main function of WISEs. In this section, through an elucidation of the different strategies of the three WISEs in Taipei, We will discuss the social impact on vulnerable groups of social governance from the three perspectives of personal, social, and political empowerment.

The personal empowerment offered by WISEs is embodied in the protection of the basic labor and employment rights of the disabled. Through acquiring the abilities and skills needed for their sheltered jobs, disabled individuals gain a sense of accomplishment and a perception of their power in social participation. The CAREUS ENJOY restaurant has been transformed from its original status as a sheltered workshop and relies on the foundation's parent operating support. In terms of employment standards and processes, CAREUS Foundation emphasizes the positioning of "placement." ENJOY restaurants have lower requirements for production capacity, and instead emphasizes training and improvement. With respect to workplace hierarchies and relationships, the relationship between general employees and employees with disabilities is the relationship between caring and being cared for, and assisting and being assisted. ENJOY restaurant holds labor-management meetings every quarter in order to discuss simple topics, such as uniform styles, and provide corresponding aids in the meeting to help the disabled employees understand and participate. According to the Vice CEO of CAREUS, Yang Xiuyan:

In the work environment, we will let them understand the job requirements, then coach and assist them to complete the work……We will let them know why the jobs are suitable or not. Of course, they have the right to choose independently. In the end, we hope to cultivate in them the independence in carrying out their work, and we will also redesign the jobs for them. (Interview, 25 February 2021)

The foundation protects the right of their disabled workers to choose their jobs, and it also supports corresponding incentive and assessment mechanisms. For example, the position of “Little Han’er foreman” is accompanied by a post upgrade of NT\$1,000. The foundation emphasizes personal empowerment in its transformation of sheltered workshops into social enterprises, and in doing so guarantees the basic labor rights of the mentally handicapped. However, because the disabled employees are still in the role of being cared for and placed, they are not substantially involved in company management. In effect, then, the WISE developed by the CAREUS Foundation does not touch on social or political empowerment.

Social empowerment allows individuals to have the knowhow to affect others, which constitutes knowledge acquisition and ability improvement on an interpersonal level. In WISEs, social empowerment is embodied in those disabled people who have the space to fully express their needs, and not only can have a certain influence on the thinking and actions of others, but have the ability to gain the trust of others and to demonstrate and enhance their subjectivity. Taipei DiD is the first experience center in Taiwan with “darkness” and “silence.” Approximately 15 to 30 people participate in each workshop. Participants enter a dark environment and are temporarily rendered “disabled” to fully experience the life of the visually impaired, for example by requiring a visually impaired trainer to complete various tasks. In this specific environment, the roles of able-bodied people and vulnerable, visually impaired

persons are completely interchanged. In the course of exchanging dialogue in the dark, the visually impaired persons' weaknesses become an advantage. They are able to demonstrate keen awareness, flexible mobility, and professional work ability. The visually impaired people use the professional role of a trainer to influence the actions of the participants, dominate the experience of the participants, and turn their "weakness" in the light into the most trustworthy "professionalism" in the dark. Having realized the value of personal empowerment for marginalized groups, DiD allows social empowerment to be fully demonstrated to able-bodied groups through the concept of "role swapping." Healthy people gain more empathy for the visually impaired in the experience. At the same time, visually impaired employees fully demonstrate the influence they are able to exert in interpersonal interactions in the workplace, and as a result they gain the respect and recognition of the able-bodied public.

At the level of political empowerment, WISEs allow the disabled to have decision-making power and a voice in organizational governance and management, which can affect the development strategy of the organization by promoting the realization of the organization's social and economic goals. The Victory Foundation tries to solve the employment and social adaptation problems of the disabled in their entire life cycle. Having established interpersonal relationships from his work experience and acquired professional skills, the founder Zhang deeply understands the importance for the disabled of the basic right of employment and being able to fulfill their desire for self-realization. The Victory Foundation fully adapts to market needs in its operations. In addition to training and placing disabled employees internally, it must compete on equal footing with other traditional companies in the market. According to Zhang:

Some traditional NPOs have been selling products by promoting children's vulnerabilities and gaining social sympathy. This is not a sustainable approach. There are also organizations that don't want to be in line with the market and don't want to look at the needs of the market. They always decide what children can do for themselves. If an ability framework is set up [in advance], this will limit the children's ability, and also make society think that the products or services of the disabled are not good! (Interview, 21 February 2021)

The personal experience and commitment of CEO Zhang has resulted in a perspective that prioritizes the marketability of WISEs. As a result, Zhang supports the overall operation of the foundation and positions the foundation as one that does not accept donations, raise funds from society, or require government subsidies. Zhang fully demonstrates the leadership and decision-making power in the organization, and has even greatly corrected the stereotypes that affected the distribution of resources for the disabled.

However, the WISE developed by the Victory Foundation still has enormous limitations in terms of political empowerment. As a social entrepreneur CEO Zhang undeniably plays a leading role in the governance and management of the organization. Individuals determine the development of an organization, and the development of the organization continues to promote the realization of individual political empowerment. Compared with the practice of Wappa in Japan, which has adopted a mutual aid-type “distribution fund” system, explores the equal relationship between the healthy and the disabled, and holds regular general membership meetings to build an anti-capacity and non-discriminatory society,^① the degree of political

^① 郑南/Zheng Nan. and 庄家怡/Chuang Chiayi (2018:8), “日本劳动整合型社会企业的发展与创新——以Wappa 之会为例”/ “The Development and Innovation of WISEs in Japan: Taking the Wappa as an example”, *Learn and Explore*, pp. 59–66.

empowerment is still low. The empowerment of employees with disabilities is mainly reflected in the realization of personal empowerment and social empowerment. In terms of personal empowerment, the foundation integrates the disabled into social market competition through the development of supportive employment, and through providing them with strategies to improve their skills, become socially adaptable, and gain awareness of their rights. In terms of social empowerment, market demand orientation allows the disabled in the service industry to continuously improve their knowledge and abilities, exert influence in the workplace and society. Although the disabled have the space to express their needs in the workplace, their decision-making power and voice have not been fully reflected in organizational development. Therefore, the full realization of the three levels of empowerment is only reflected in the leader himself.

The attainment of personal, social, and political empowerment progresses in layers. If the same subject has achieved political empowerment, both personal empowerment and social empowerment have been realized. Empowerment is both a process and a goal. The closer to the level of political empowerment, the closer to the realization of the ultimate social mission. CAREUS Foundation realizes the personal empowerment of employees with mental disabilities, but has not achieved social and political empowerment. The Eyelove Foundation realizes personal empowerment and social empowerment through workshops in the form of marketization and “role conversion.” The political empowerment of the Victory Foundation is embodied solely in an individual leader, and thus the organization is still limited to the realization of personal empowerment and social empowerment for its disabled employees. The three WISEs, then, have different degrees of exploration at the empowerment level, and they each have their own limitations.

Table 3: Comparison of empowerment features of three WISEs

	Empowerment Features
Personal (CAREUS)	Protect the basic labor and employment rights of the disabled for personal development.
Social (Eyelove)	Based on individual empowerment, the disabled obtain social power through interaction with other individuals.
Political (Victory, partly)	The highest level of empowerment, the disabled have decision-making power in organizational governance and management.

4. Factors affecting the degree of empowerment of WISEs

4.1 The relationship with the foundation

The ENJOY restaurant is still a sheltered workshop within the CAREUS foundation. It receives 2 to 3 million Taiwan dollars in subsidies and venue support from the government each year. The subsidies include salaries for employment service personnel and marketing technicians. The Eyelove Foundation founded Taipei DiD, but it does not participate in the governance and decision-making of the company. Based on the dual considerations of the independence of social enterprises and the protection of the foundation, the two are completely independent of each other in their operations. The Victory Foundation is total social enterpriseization, practicing financial transparency and openness, and operating in a completely market-oriented form. In 2020, the sum of government funding subsidies and social donations only accounted for 3.3% of Victory Foundation's funding sources. The ENJOY restaurant and the CAREUS foundation are semi-independent, with the social enterprise highly dependent on the foundation, and therefore CAREUS is still actively supporting the

realization of personal empowerment for ENJOY's disabled employees. The Eyelove Foundation and Taipei DiD operate completely independently, with the corporate social enterprise able single-handedly to help its employees achieve social empowerment. In contrast, Victory Foundation is the social enterprise itself of the foundation, and thus its employees have realized limited political empowerment.

4.2 Obstacles and capacity requirements

The clients of CAREUS Foundation include persons with Down's syndrome and other mental impairments, as well as those with mental disorders such as autism and hyperactivity. The foundation is positioned as a placement service with low productivity requirements for its mentally handicapped employees. The Vice CEO of CAREUS, Yang, has stated:

[We] still make relevant plans or upgrade training according to the physical state of the disabled employee... Then if he is an aging, mentally disabled employee, we will find ways to maintain his health and make him happy, enable him to work happily, and find ways for him to willingly go out of the house. (Interview, 21 November 2019)

Taipei DiD is committed to making visual impairment both an advantage and a means to a profession. The company regularly recruits students (DiD trainers), and the selection criteria include "certification for disabilities; high school or higher graduation (or) equivalent education, with rich social experience preferred; good orientation ability; fluent oral expression, etc." The company conducts a three-stage selection process that includes a written review, interview, and course experience. Once selected for the program, a disabled person will need to pay NT\$3,000 for the training. The company contracts with those trainees who have passed the internship.

The recruitment form of Taipei DiD is no different than that of traditional companies, and the contracted trainers are required to meet high production standards.

Disabled employees in Victory Foundation start work after completing education and training, where they are required to adhere to standard operating procedures and act in a relatively complete promotion mechanism. In contrast to CAREUS Foundation target users, Taipei DiD's and Victory's service users have the same intelligence as the general population, so it is easier for them to achieve social and political empowerment. The CAREUS service targets are moderate to mildly disabled people whose social capacity is akin to that of naive children, their limited mental capacity means that the duration of employment training is long and the labor costs high.

4.3 Degree of marketization and policy support

The CAREUS ENJOY restaurant, located in Taipei's city hall, is training-oriented. The customers are mostly city hall staff. In accordance with relevant policies, the foundation receives government subsidies every year and receives assistance from the government such as venue provision. Taipei DiD cooperates with government institutions and business enterprises to provide them with courses on leadership, teamwork, and innovation. The company's operating model is to discover career options for the visually impaired, other than more traditional, subservient roles such as providing blind massages or customer service, that allow the visually impaired to turn their weakness into an advantage in the dark and work in a capacity that enables them to refine their unique abilities. The Victory Foundation operates in a fully market-oriented model. The establishment of social enterprises is based on market demand and relies on their leaders' market acumen and business operation capabilities. Mass consumer products allow employees with disabilities to access more diverse customer groups and an open social market. About Victory Foundation's

market-oriented model., CEO Zhang said clearly:

We are sure. The employment of the handicapped depends on the team, on SOP, on lowering the threshold, and on reorganization. We felt that there was nothing we couldn't do. From our point of view, it is very important to rethink the market demand, look at where the market is, rather than look at what children will do. (Interview, 6 December 2019)

In the social enterprise spectrum, the closer an enterprise is to a general enterprise and competitive markets, the more it is necessary to break through the traditional positioning of the disadvantaged, and the closer it is to the realization of political empowerment for its target users.

Table 4: Factors influencing the degree of empowerment

	CAREUS restaurant (personal empowerment)	ENJOY	Taipei DiD (social empowerment)	Victory (political empowerment)
Obstacles	Intellectually handicapped group		Visually handicapped group	Physically handicapped group
Capacity requirements	low		high	middle
The relationship with the foundation	Semi independent		independent	integration
Degree of marketization	low		middle	high

	(training-oriented)	(ability-oriented)	(market-oriented)
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In summary, the relationship between WISEs and their supporting foundations, production capacity requirements, degree of marketization, and policy support affect the degree of empowerment achieved by target service users. When a WISE is more dependent on the foundation, more dependent on internal resources, and operates with less independence, it faces greater difficulty achieving social and political empowerment. Compared with other groups of target users, the degree of empowerment attained by the mentally handicapped group is more limited, making it difficult for the WISE to help its users realize their potential for independent, autonomous decision-making. According to the degree of marketization, WISEs can generally be divided into three categories: those that are training-oriented, ability-oriented, or market-oriented. The more market-driven a WISE is, the more vital it is for its employees with disabilities to be stimulated to actively adapt to the norms and rules of the general labor market. Although the political empowerment of its employees is still limited, the market-oriented tendency of the Victory Foundation is the most prominent among the foundations compared in this analysis.

5. Conclusion

We started this paper with an introduction to empowerment theory as a basis for the case studies under discussion, then divided empowerment into three levels of impact: personal, social, and political. We also summed up the progressive relationship of the three levels of empowerment: the closer to political empowerment, the closer to the realization of a socially-oriented mission. In the three cases in Taiwan examined in this paper, no true political empowerment has been achieved for persons with disabilities. Victory Foundation's operating model, which seems to be completely market demand-oriented, has given employees with disabilities great

initiative, but its political empowerment remains only with the foundation's leader. Through the case studies, we have also concluded that the degree of empowerment generated is affected by the relationship between a WISE and its foundation, production capacity requirements, the degree of marketization, and social policies. The empowerment of the socially weak is both a process and a goal. The core of empowerment is to stimulate the potential of the handicapped so as to enable them to realize their own personal, social, and political empowerment.

Facing the governance crisis of modern society, Rosenau advocates "governance without government".^① Stephen and Andrew advocate a "state-centered" governance paradigm.^② Beyond the state-society dichotomy, Salamon proposes a "new governance" theory of mobilizing the participation of various state and non-state actors through collaboration, to overcome the triple dilemma of market failure, government failure, and voluntary failure in modern society.^③ As a new agent of social governance, WISEs exert influence over the creation and maintenance of the unique advantages they generate as hybrid organizations. WISEs supplement government actions in a bottom-up manner to provide supportive employment for those disabled target users who have been marginalized by the traditional labor competition market. They also promote the redesign of the government and offer practical experience as a basis for molding social policies; modify the traditional labor market to enhance market inclusiveness and awareness of corporate social responsibility; and provide NPOs with the possibility of evolving from sheltered employment to supportive employment, from government dependence to autonomous operation. Each WISE analyzed has, in essence, integrated its particular advantages in

^① Rosenau, J.N. (2009), *Governance without Government*, London: Cambridge University Press.

^② Stephen, B. and Andrew, H. (2009), *Rethinking Governance: The centrality of the state in modern society*, London: Cambridge University Press.

^③ Salamon, L. and Elliot, O.V. (2002), *Tools of Government: A guide to the new governance*, London: Oxford University Press.

ways that enhance its competitiveness in the market, become the medium of communication and action for itself as a subject, and promoted the co-governance of multiple subjects in supporting the employment of handicapped persons. From the results, as one social governance mechanism, WISEs can solve the structural unemployment problems of the disadvantaged through the market. It can be said that WISEs are the results of multi-governance that solves complex problems in modern society, and it is also an important promoter.

As a participant in multi-governance, the government can play an important role in formulating laws and policies. In the development of WISEs in Taiwan, the revision and promulgation of relevant laws and policies have promoted the transition from sheltered to supportive employment for the disabled. In 2007, the “Law on the Protection of the Disabled” was revised to the “Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Disabled” as a turning point in the development of sheltered workshops. In turn, the sheltered workshops were transformed into events that manage labor administration, clarify the labor-employment relationship between the organization and the disadvantaged, and change their role from one of positioning their target users as recipients of life care to recipients of employment support. Just like the Vice CEO of CAREUS, Yang, said:

Therefore, after the law is amended, many NPOs that set up sheltered workshops will close the sheltered workshops, and then return to the original day care or re-establish a model that meets the prescribed positioning. (Interview, 21 February 2021)

This new model just is WISE. In 2011, Taipei City launched the “Implementation Measures for Subsidy for Handicapped Employment Promotion Services” and thereby encouraged NPOs to transform sheltered workshops into self-financing social enterprises. **All in all, in the development of WISEs in Taiwan, the influence of**

relevant laws and policies has been of utmost importance. Unfortunately, this survey did not find any WISE cases in Taiwan like Japan's wappa, which can promote the introduction of new social policies.

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