

Abstract

The thesis studied the movement of women organizations which have been trying to make changes leading to the amendment of the Criminal Code section 276. The writer studied the understanding of the target groups adopted by the women organizations as their strategy for the movement on violence against women, particularly on gender-based violence and spouse rape issues.

The writer analyzed the campaign for law amendment through public forum in every region organized by women organization network and by judicial officials using the concept of Gender Violence Discourse and Women's Body Right. The social movement process of women organizations was analyzed with the concept of New Social Movement.

The social movement process of the women organizations aimed to amend section 276 of the criminal code with the clause "any person who rapes a woman other than his wife" to drop the words "other than his wife" and replace it with "other person". The study indicated that through this process, women organizations had established a mechanism of social movement for their networks and allies. The strategy applied for the movements was to appoint "Focal Points" who conducted activities with the same objective at the same time, i.e. the public forum. The public forum opened up space for women to jointly raised awareness on domestic violence, especially gender-based violence developed within the society through social and legal construct. The society at large and even the women themselves did not realize that this was violence against women. The civil society jointly learned and shared experience of violence. The space was opened up for "women's voices" where the argument occurred within their own conscious and with others thus awareness on domestic violence against wives was raised.

The women organizations created the discourse on women's body right emphasizing that, "Domestic violence is no longer personal". This discourse was developed from the learning process and the sharing of experience among women in group discussion which was then extended to the bigger forum. The women

organizations also invented the set of knowledge emphasizing that “Women have rights to say no to sexual intercourse with their husbands”. The discourse was developed in the manner of feminist practical reasoning. Wives were able to free themselves from mainstream discourse passed down to them through culture, beliefs, teachings, norms and legal system. They changed their old belief that “wife must response to husband’s sexual needs as he requires”.

The social movement process linked to the state mechanism with whom the women organizations has created a “state alliance”. They joined hand in the movement and jointly developed knowledge in those public forum. However, the proposed bill with the amendment had not been proceeded for the state’s consideration. The campaign for the amendment of criminal code section 276 had been facilitated only through the mechanism of social movement.

The study also discovered that not only the government’s policy was the important key to the desired change but also the political situation. These were the keys to the success of the criminal code’s amendment when the women organizations acted swiftly during the government reform in 2006. The Government of the reform period cannot deny the fact that “Women’s Rights are Human’s Rights”.