



Call for Papers

Alternative Explanations for Disability: Implications for Advocacy and Activism

Organised by the Disability and Inclusion Africa Network

This workshop is organised by the Disability and Inclusion Africa Network as part of the 'Alternative Explanations: Disability and Inclusion in Africa' project, to explore African explanations for, understandings and representations of disability and their impact.

Alternative explanations for disability in African contexts may stem from assumptions and misconceptions, traditional beliefs, religious beliefs, medical determinist, supernatural or witchcraft-related beliefs. These explanations and understandings are not only long-standing in local cultures, passed from generation to generation, but they are also deeply rooted in the fabric of community life. They permeate daily existence and have real consequences for persons with disabilities.

The primary objective of this workshop is to examine how culturally and socially constructed conceptions of disability and disabilities shape, influence and impact both positively and negatively advocacy and activism for the lives, wellbeing, dignity and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

What body of knowledge or epistemic framework about disability in specific African contexts should guide advocacy and activism? Should stakeholders in activism and advocacy pay attention to alternative explanations of disability, or favour one model (e.g. the scientific) over others? What are the best methods of operation in disability advocacy and activism in Africa? Do ethical points of view within specific African cultural contexts impact advocacy and activism for disability? How important is the epistemic privilege of persons with disabilities for the success of advocacy and activism? Is the inclusion of persons with disabilities in advocacy and activism for disability a prerequisite for producing results? How do explanations and understandings emerging from advocacy and activism shape the lived experiences of persons disabilities in African contexts?

We invite proposals from advocates, activists, academics and postgraduate students addressing, but not limited to, the following themes and areas:

- Conceptualizing disability advocacy and activism
- Methods and models for disability advocacy and activism in Africa: History, limits and prospects
- Epistemic framework, epistemic privilege and disability advocacy and activism in Africa
- Persons with disabilities in disability advocacy and activism in Africa
- Ethical questions and challenges in disability advocacy and activism
- Impact of alternative explanations on disability activism and advocacy
- Advocacy and activism for specific disabilities (e.g. albinism, autism, epilepsy, blindness, cerebral palsy, etc.) in Africa: History, challenges and prospects

Proposals in these and related areas should not be more than 250 words and should be sent to Dr Charlotte Baker c.baker@lancaster.ac.uk **by Friday 21 May 2021**.

The submitted document in MS Word or PDF should contain the title of the proposed presentation, name(s) of author(s), affiliation and summary of proposed presentation.

Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by 28 May 2021 with details of the workshop, which will be held online on Monday 21 June 2021.