IMAGE DESCRIPTION CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2
Recommended graphic size: 55.8cm x 43.18cm

Understanding Disability Models

Created By: Shir Grunebaum

The different models of disability do different things in different contexts, but all the models "rarely existent in extreme forms" and are both embedded within ontological and epistemological practices.[10]

- "As ontological models, they define what disability is – a condition materialized by society and the environment, or a diagnosable category characterized by lack of access"
- "As epistemological models, they defined how disability is best known – through accounts of personal experience, audits of the built environment, literature and art, or through scientific and medical data"

(Hamraie, 2012, pp. 14-15)

Moral/Charity Model

- Disability is viewed as "an inferior or pitiful state...[as a] result of sin, or in need of charity" [1]
- Argues that disability should be seen as inferior based on religious doctrine [1]

Often criticized as it incorrectly "declares disability to be a tragedy, a misfortune, that must be tempered or erased by generous giving" [9]

Political/ Relational Model

- Disability is viewed as a site of questions rather than firm a definition [3]
- Argues that it "...builds on social and minority model frameworks but reads them through feminist and queer critiques"[3]

Medical Model

- Disability is viewed as "a medical problem", this "defined groups and individuals solely based on their impairments"[1]
- Argues that individuals can be characterized "by [focusing] on fixing an impairment" [2]
- Argues that "...atypical bodies and minds [are] deviant, pathological, and defective"[3]

Often criticized as it "[solves] the problem of disability...by normalizing, or eliminating, the pathological individual" [3]

Some scholars, however, have cautioned that they are "equally wary of a complete rejection of medical intervention" [3]

Often criticized as it results in the application of a 'clinical design' to assistive technologies [4]

Often criticized as it "...if disability is truly defined only by society, the experience of impairment is to some extent invalidated" [2]

Often criticized as it "may inadvertently delegitimize experiences of bodily impairment and individual desire for medical intervention" [5]

Social Model

- Disability is viewed as a neutral characteristic or attribute [1]
- Argues that this can act to "...guide people with disabilities and their allies toward dealing with external barriers" [1]
- Argues that "disabilities are interactional" [6]

Often criticized as it results in AT which emphasizes aesthetics and individual design [4]

Biopsychosocial Model

- Disability is viewed as a complex, evolving, and defining experience [1]
- Argues that the model should include contextual factors such as environmental and personal factors [1]

Often criticized as it "confuses treatment versus identifying the cause of disease/ disability" [8]

Often criticized as it "inaccurately depicts the mind-body relationship" [8]

Often criticized as it is "...based on a false conception of boundaries between these fields of study" [8]

Some scholars, however, have cautioned that this is in line with the **Rehabilitation Model** which "postulates that while disability is a problem, the individual can effectively learn to cope and function" [1]

Minority Model

- Disability is viewed as neutral, or even positive, as well as natural characteristic or human attribute [1]
- Argues that " ...disability is a distinct diverse cultural and socio-political experience and identity" [1]

Often criticized as it does not account for "for how a disabled person's response to impairment shifts over time or by context" [3]

Image Description

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Infographic Introduction: The different models of disability do different things in different contexts, but all the models "rarely existent in extreme forms" and are both embedded within ontological and epistemological practices. “As ontological models, they define what disability is – a condition materialized by society and the environment, or a diagnosable category characterized by lack of access”. “As epistemological models, they defined how disability is best known – through accounts of personal experience, audits of the built environment, literature and art, or through scientific and medical data”. (Hamraie, 2012, pp. 14-15).

Infographic is presented as 6 hexagons, each a different colour and containing a different model. Each model is depicted within the hexagon. Important criticism or contextual information is presented using linking arrows.

Moral/Charity Model (icon: hand holding heart, green): Disability is viewed as "an inferior or pitiful state...[as a] result of sin, or in need of charity” 1. Argues that disability should be seen as inferior based on religious doctrine 1. Linking arrow states that this model of disability is often criticized as it incorrectly "declares disability to be a tragedy, a misfortune, that must be tempered or erased by generous giving" 1.

Medical Model (icon: stethoscope, dark blue): Disability is viewed as "a medical problem", this "defined groups and individuals solely based on their impairments" 1. Argues that individuals can be characterized "by [focusing] on fixing an impairment" 2. Also argues that "...atypical bodies and minds [are] deviant, pathological, and defective" 3. First linking arrow states that the medical model is often criticized as it "[solves] the problem of disability...by normalizing, or eliminating, the pathological individual" 3. Second linking arrow states that the medical model is often criticized as it results in the application of a 'clinical design' to assistive technologies 4. Third linking arrow states that some scholars, however, have cautioned that they are “equally wary of a complete rejection of medical intervention” 3. Fourth linking arrow states that some scholars, however, have cautioned that this is in line with the Rehabilitation Model which "postulates that while disability is a problem, the individual can effectively learn to cope and function" 1.

Social Model (icon: social connections, purple): Disability is viewed as a neutral characteristic or attribute 1. Argues that this can act to "...guide people with disabilities and their allies toward dealing with external barriers" 1. Also argues that "disabilities are interactional" 6. First linking arrow states that the social model is often criticized as it “may inadvertently delegitimize experiences of bodily impairment and individual desire for medical intervention” 5. Second linking arrow states that the social model is often criticized as it "...if disability is truly defined only by society, the experience of impairment is to some extent invalidated" 2. Third linking arrow also states that the social model is often criticized as it results in AT which emphasizes aesthetics and individual design 4.

Minority Model (icon: small slice of pie chart, red): Disability is viewed as neutral, or even positive, as well as natural characteristic or human attribute 1. Argues that " ...disability is a distinct diverse cultural and socio-political experience and identity" 1. Linking arrow states that the minority model is often criticized as it does not account for "for how a disabled person’s response to impairment shifts over time or by context" 3.

Biopsychosocial Model (icon: head with brain replaced by gears and human connections): Disability is viewed as a complex, evolving, and defining experience 1. The biopsychosocial model argues that the model should include contextual factors such as environmental and personal factors 1. First linking arrow states that this model is often criticized as it "confuses treatment versus identifying the cause of disease/ disability" 8. Second linking arrow states that this model is often criticized as it "inaccurately depicts the mind body relationship" 8. The third linking arrow states that this model is often criticized as it is "based on a false conception of boundaries between these fields of study" 8.

Political/Relational Model (icon: voting, light blue): Disability is viewed as a site of questions rather than firm a definition 3. Argues that it "...builds on social and minority model frameworks but reads them through feminist and queer critiques" 3.

Adendum

Ontology "is the philosophical field revolving around (the study of) the nature of reality (all that is or exists), and the different entities and categories within reality" 11. Ontology is a "description of the way the universe is, as opposed to the way it is not, at any time" 12.

Epistemology is the "philosophical field revolving around (the study of) knowledge and how to reach it" 11. Alternatively epistemology can be defined as "creative and subjective, given its human-centered frame of reference". Nevertheless, both epistemological and ontological models provide valuable means of understanding phenomena 12.

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