

6S 2022 Sketch Groups Template  
Staccato Project Design

AREA: CLIMATE CHANGE, LABOR PRODUCTIVITY AND POLITICS

TITLE

Re-thinking the Measurement of Labor Productivity: Disability, Vulnerability and Climate Change

RESEARCHER

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ABSTRACT, INTELLECTUAL MERIT, BROAD IMPACT

This project aims to revisit the measurement of labor productivity through a disability justice lens. By asking how understandings of disability - and normalcy - are tied to labor, the project will make the case for carefully measuring the impact of the vulnerability created by climate change on bodies that labor. Methods for this project will include in-depth semi-structured and structured interviews, and where possible, ethnographic observations. The project will contribute to emerging work on the relationship between climate change and disability by interrogating the effects of heat on labor through a critical, mixed methods lens. The broader impact of the project will be an ongoing conversation (in a range of different formats, including a podcast and a series of short blog pieces) that examine the disabling effects of climate change.

OVERVIEW / RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How is the measurement of labor and productivity understood with/in/out a disability justice lens? How does climate policy make room for the experiences of disabled people and communities?

To answer these questions, this project will focus on two coastal sites in India, examining the impact that climate change has had on the lives of disabled people at these sites. In particular, the project will ask: what disabling effects of climate change have emerged? Does global and local policy find itself able to attend to - and account for - these effects? In using a disability justice lens, the project also pushes back against the notion that access can be/is one specific or singular thing; rather, it attends to how access is a relational practice in disabled communities, and to what it means for access to continue to be re-negotiated through the impacts of climate change.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Recent work on climate change has discussed some of the ways in which climate change policy is often likely to leave disabled people behind, starting with the knowledge that many major climate change documents are not accessible. Attending to the effects of climate change on peoples' bodies through a disability justice lens is a significant departure from a health and well-being lens, which often tends to locate the responsibility within the individual. Instead, a disability justice lens both allows for an attention both to systemic factors that are closely related to disability, as well as to sources of disability expertise that are essential to climate change responses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background: The IPCC's Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability (<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>)

Analysis: So far, mostly newspaper articles, such as Olivia Shiva

(<https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/127919351/scant-mention-of-disabled-community-despite-higher-risk-of-climate-change-impact>)

Contributions to topical literatures on disability justice, as well as possibly the environmental humanities

#### METHODS AND DATA RESOURCES

Although the proposal emphasizes ethnographic methods for this project, it is often the case that ethnographic work (at least as envisioned at North American universities) is thought of as a process of traveling to other spaces. This process is in turn carbon heavy as a method, and the aim of this project will be to attend to possibilities for lower carbon research, drawing in large part on existing research connections and potentially conducting further research remotely, including interviews. This project will also include archive ethnography, focusing particularly on existing climate policy documents, with an attention to how vulnerability is constructed and defined for disabled people and communities (if/when included).

#### THEORETICAL FRAMES & DATA ANALYSIS

- Disability studies scholarship on the limits of vulnerability as a construct
  - Disability expertise (Dokumaci)
  - Disability anthropology (Hartblay)

Data analysis will be conducted alongside data collection, and will involve two rounds of coding the data to review emerging themes.

#### PLAN OF WORK

This project will be contingent upon funding.

#### CHALLENGES AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

One significant challenge will be making room for remote research amidst the many changes brought about by COVID-19 and the other impacts of climate change in the Global South. Therefore, in addition to IRB consent, ongoing consent for inclusion in the study (and any future publications) will be sought from participants.

#### VALIDITY AND EVALUATION

In addition to funder-related evaluation, the project will aim to make data from interviews and ethnographic observations (anonymized) available online, open source, so that others who wish to engage with this data for their own purposes may do so.

#### PREPARATION AND WORK THUS FAR

A pilot study for this survey will be conducted 3 - 6 months prior to the start of the full project. The researcher is working on an existing piece on low carbon methods.

#### DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

All data will be stored on a secure server, and will be backed up on the researcher's computer. No one other than the researcher will have access to interview data.

