

Sustainability | Individual communication

IC - (21114) - MAPPING DISABILITY EXPERIENCES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Background and objectives

The COVID-19 pandemic brought change to the world, as we cycled in and out of lockdowns. These changes created new ways of relating to others, to the world, and to disability, especially for people with disabilities. This project explored how the pandemic has impacted (or not) disabled people's use and understanding of space.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

For this project, we invited map submissions, envisioned in the broadest possible sense, capturing how people used space. The invitations were sent through the diverse local, national and international networks of people with disabilities. The submissions were collected between Spring and Fall of 2020.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

The array of maps received included hand-drawn maps, poems, pictures, and digital renderings. The majority of the maps were from USA, with some from Nepal and UK. These submissions were grouped under four themes. *Home/Circles* reflected the circular dynamic of routines both disrupted and created by stay-at-home orders. *Out-ward/Community* grouped maps that reflect on new relationships with neighbors, community spaces, and cities. Maps in the *Inward/Reflection* theme showed how the pandemic caused many people to turn inward, sometimes expressing negative emotions such as anxiety, while others focused on art and creativity. The last theme *Isolation/Stagnation* captured the feelings of loss and the lack of movement that stay-at-home orders initiated. These maps were shared in a gallery format through a website for community sharing.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

Collectively, these maps captured the many ways that the interactions with the environments tell the story of the pandemic and its unfolding impact on disabled people's lives. It highlighted that these experiences were varied and impacted different levels of spatial relations. This project also revealed how map-making is a creative tool that provides a way to reflect on person-environment interaction and can be used to capture significant changes in lives of people and reveal everyday patterns.

Palavras-chave : Covid-19 pandemic, disability, person-environment interaction