



Ethical Dilemmas of Disability Inclusion—Emerging Ethics of Activism and Care: Introduction to the Special Issue

Oana Branzei¹ · Anica Zeyen² · Susanne M. Bruyère³ · Eline Jammaers⁴ · Nidhil Singal⁵ · Gregor Wolbring⁶

Received: 1 February 2025 / Accepted: 2 October 2025 / Published online: 7 November 2025
© The Author(s) 2025

Keywords Disability · Ethics of care · Ethics of activism · Ableism · Disableism

Background and Context

The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that 386 million of the world's working-age people have some kind of disability (ILO, 2024). This is only a fraction of the 1.3 billion people currently identifying as disabled (United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs, 2024). Disabled people live, learn, self-advocate and are entrepreneurs. By interacting with others who often lack first-person experiences of disability, they influence a wide range of social norms.

Employment is a fundamental human right, yet with unemployment among disabled people reaching as high as 80% in some countries or for certain disabilities, disability advocates have long fought against the systemic barriers that deny this right. (Keen & Oulton, 2009; Lovegood & Dorado, 2025; United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs, 2024). For instance, taking stock of progress over the five decades since the passage of the US Rehabilitation

Act in 1973, (Schur et al., 2024) conclude that people with disabilities still face significant employment disparities with an employment rate of 37.1% in 2023 compared to 75.0% for those without disabilities. Furthermore, they show that disabled people earn 15% less on average, are twice as likely to live in poverty, and often encounter workplace discrimination, lack of support, lower job security, and precarious work conditions. The latest United Nations' Flagship Report on Disabilities and Development (2024) concludes that disabled people have been left behind and that progress is insufficient and, in some cases, has stagnated or reversed.

Aspects of life such as identity, self-representation, and voice often demand significant additional personal investment—of effort, energy, and emotion—from disabled individuals (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025a; Zeyen & Branzei, 2023). Aspects of life such as identity, self-representation, and voice often demand significant additional personal investment—of effort, energy, and emotion—from disabled individuals (Watermeyer & Swartz, 2024). uch discrimination is often discussed under the umbrella of *ableism*—bias against disabled people rooted in a preference for normative, non-disabled bodies and minds (Campbell, 2009; Wolbring, 2008); or *disableism*—the systemic exclusion of disabled people through institutional structures and practices (Goodley, 2013; Miller et al., 2004; Wolbring, 2008).

Against this backdrop, two emerging areas of inquiry—the intersectionality of disabled people (Wolbring & Nasir, 2024) and the equity, diversity and inclusion of disabled people (Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2021)—are increasingly being examined through the lenses of ableism and disableism, offering new insights into how discrimination operates and how it might be dismantled within management and organization studies.

The call for papers for this special issue (Zeyen et al., 2022) was motivated by the enduring discrepancy between the state of the world and the state of the field in management

✉ Anica Zeyen
anica.zeyen@rhul.ac.uk

¹ Ivey Business School, Western University, London, Canada

² School of Business and Management, Royal Holloway University of London, London, UK

³ Disability Studies, ILR School, Yang Tan Institute On Employment and Disability, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, USA

⁴ Faculty of Business Economics, Hasselt University, Hasselt, Belgium

⁵ Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

⁶ Department of Community Health Sciences, Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB T2N4N1, Canada

and organization studies. A small handful of early references warned of disability-job fit stereotypes (Colella & Varma, 2001) as well as of negative social constructions of disability (Harlan & Robert, 1998) and their effects on the treatment of disabled individuals in organizations (Stone & Colella, 1996).

More recently, and in response to persistent inequities, research on ableism and disableism flourished in several fields of study,¹ with dedicated areas in human rights (Gordon et al., 2018), history (Hanes et al., 2017; Rembis et al., 2018), education (Aron & Loprest, 2012; Singal & Wijesinghe, 2025), and sociology (Lewis Brown et al., 2023). Numerous edited volumes have contrasted the problems of the past and begun exploring alternative futures of working while disabled (Carey, 2022; Carling-Jenkins, 2016; Rioux et al., 2021). Since our original call for papers for this special issue was published in 2022, there has been an increase in publications on disability within leading management publications (Boehm & Jammaers, 2024). Recently, several edited collections (Beatty et al., 2023; Branzei & Zeyen, 2025b; Breen & Forwell, 2023; Fielden et al., 2020) also focused on the intersection of disability and organizing. Some colleagues even argue in favor of mainstreaming disability (Choudhury Kaul et al., 2022) as a dedicated area of study in fields like entrepreneurship (Yousafzai et al., 2022), or work (Heymann et al., 2014), following precedents in other fields. Despite this increase in academic attention, the implications of ableism and disableism, even on a topics like inclusion, still receive significant less attention by management and organization scholars than other marginalized characteristics.

Disability and Ethics

Several ethics scholars have invited, and offered, up close and personal looks at disability at work (Kulkarni, 2024; Loacker & Weiskopf, 2025), with compelling lived accounts in diverse national and cultural contexts (Halvorsen et al., 2017) that expose the continued dominance of ableism and disableism (Jones et al., 2016; Keen & Oulton, 2009; Piechowski, 2011; Stone & Colella, 1996). As a result, many choose to conceal non-visible disabilities (Le Marois, 2025) as disclosures of disabilities (Lyons et al., 2017, 2018; Preston, 2025) may resolve some issues, it often triggers other challenges such as ongoing negotiations

about reasonable accommodations (Speech et al., 2023). Such inequities (Heymann et al., 2014) lead some disabled workers to grow discouraged (Heslin et al., 2012), while emancipating and emboldening others (Hein & Ansari, 2022).

This special issue aims to carve out a dedicated space for appreciating the nature, mechanisms, and consequences of ableism and disableism at work. The seven contributing author teams accomplish this shared goal by showing that: (1) current ethics, while helpful as starting points of systematic inquiry, remain insufficient for addressing the breadth and depth of disability-related ethical dilemmas in today's workplaces, yet (2) new ethics emerge and evolve because disabled workers choose to engage with a growing variety of ethical dilemmas in ways that can iteratively and cumulatively lead to radically new understandings (Hein & Ansari, 2022) and practices (Zeyen & Branzei, 2023). Here, ethical dilemmas arise from ableism and disableism at all organizational levels, from individual to societal. These dilemmas involve situations where individuals or organizations must make decisions that may benefit some while harming others or contradict their values. For example, a disabled person might value honesty but choose to conceal their disability due to anticipated or past discrimination. Organizations striving to become more disability-inclusive may face resistance from key stakeholders or have to make difficult resource allocation decisions. These are just a few of the many ethical dilemmas encountered by disabled individuals, their allies, and organizations.

Prior research has long established that, when ableism or disableism are dominant in specific organizational contexts, there is significant inertia and resistance to change (Jammaers, 2023). Ableism is dominant when metaphors, policies, laws, regulations, quotas, or fines give explicit preference to how non-disabled minds and bodies approach work (Ellis, 2010; Schalk, 2013; Wolbring, 2012). Jammaers and Zanoni (2021) explained, for example, how varieties of ableism restrict how employees engage with the ethical dilemmas around identity at work. At the same time, disableism is dominant when disabled people are negatively perceived and evaluated through stigmas and stereotypes that include societal and organizational structures (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025b; Watermeyer, 2013).

One way to tackle dominant disableism (Hein & Ansari, 2022) or ableism (Zeyen & Branzei, 2023) is by first constructing, and then resolving, ethical dilemmas. Taken together, this special issue helps us explain: (1) how ableist and/or disablist tensions at work foreground specific ethical dilemmas; and (2) how new ethical nuances may emerge in organizations where ableism or disableism still dominate (Lowney, 2017).

¹ Wolbring also discusses ableism in relation to emerging technologies and governance, anti-environmentalism and climate change, governance, transhumanism, enhancement medicine 2008, peace and religion, among other subjects (please see <https://wolbring.wordpress.com/>).

The Seven Articles in Overview

The published collection of papers, co-authored by teams comprising 18 authors, spans diverse contexts including France, Hungary, India, and China. These studies engage with facets of ableism and disableism across significant temporal, spatial, and historical dimensions; periods during which dominant norms have begun to shift. Collectively the contributions acknowledge the systemic pressures exerted on individuals, while celebrating the transformative agency of individuals in reshaping those very systems. They reflect on the slow pace of change through a range of methodological approaches and offer models of (self-)disclosure both for their participants and for the researchers themselves. Interactions within our guest editorial team—intentionally composed of diverse minds and bodies from Belgium, Canada, the UK, and the US—enabled a shared exploration of the ethical dilemmas that arise in the emergence of new ethical frameworks. This is what we learned together.

We, the guest editors, have chosen the order in which the seven accepted articles are presented to expose varieties of ableism and disableism over time and space.

Our lead article, co-authored by Estephania Santacreu-Vasut and Huali Wu (2025), begins our Special Issue in 2010 China. The 33,600 observations recorded by the China Family Panel Studies (CFPS) survey offer a nationally representative sample of individuals aged 18 to 60 in paid employment. Empirically, the lead article offers a compelling account of discrimination, demonstrating that disabled women face exclusion not solely on the basis of disability or gender, but through the compounded effects of their intersection. This study is among the few that develop a quantitative approach to examining intersectionality, providing a methodological contribution that advances how such complex, layered experiences of discrimination can be empirically assessed. (for another exception see Cech, 2022).

Santacreu-Vasut and Wu (2025) poignantly illustrate the compounding effects of intersectional discrimination through their focus on financial compensation. While the impact of discrimination on earnings is well-established in existing research (Speech et al., 2023), the magnitude of this effect is both novel and potentially unsettling for some readers—both in absolute and relative terms. Crucially, the authors show that the penalty for being a disabled woman is not uniform; those with lower levels of education face significantly harsher economic consequences. This suggests that the negative effects of early exclusion are not only persistent but intensify over the course of one's working life.

The second article, co-authored by Sára Csillag, Carmen Swastics, Anna Laura Hidegh, and Zsuzsanna Györi (2025), invites us into post-socialist Hungary. Using a microhistorical approach, the authors explore the lived

experiences of 29 disabled entrepreneurs, highlighting the constraints on economic participation and the enduring influence of pre-regime change structures—particularly welfare dependency and reliance on disability organizations. Their narratives reveal how internalized ableism shapes self-presentation, with many positioning themselves as “able” entrepreneurs and distancing themselves from other disabled individuals. The microhistorical lens helps explain how ableism becomes internalized over time. Ideologically charged discourses shaped how these entrepreneurs learned to think and speak about themselves. Even decades after the regime change, this “severe social legacy” continues to exert a profound toll.

The third article, co-authored by Andries Baeken, Anneleen Forrier and Nele De Cuype (2025), offers a deep exploration of policy dynamics across four government terms in Belgium, spanning 2004 to 2024. The authors conclude that while the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) “aims to eradicate ableism, its recontextualization and appropriation reinforced neoliberal ableism” (p. 1). Employing a critical discourse methodology—specifically, a discourse-historical approach—the article draws attention to subtle shifts in language that, over time, cumulatively reframe the very meaning of work for disabled people. Interpreting work as a right, as intended by the CRPD, does not impose obligations on how disabled individuals engage with the labor market. However, reframing work as a norm propagates ableism by generating expectations that disabled people should work. The article also traces the emergence of so-called activation policies, which equate inclusion with labor market participation and aim to increase employment rates. Through a careful, topic-by-topic analysis, the authors demonstrate how the meaning of work shifts—from an option and a personal choice to a societal goal, a necessity, and ultimately a perceived waste if the labor of disabled individuals, now framed as having a duty to work, remains untapped.

The fourth article, co-authored by Deepti Sharma and Ganesh Prabhu (2025), takes us to India. Drawing on repeated interviews with disabled professionals conducted between 2019 and 2023, the authors reconstruct participants' full lived histories, highlighting critical junctures and transitions in their experiences of working while disabled. The study offers novel insights into what the authors term “an illusion of inclusivity in colonial environments” (p. 1), particularly for individuals born with disabilities who have distinguished themselves through professional education and practice. Expanding on the concept of competency labor, Sharma and Prabhu show how early experiences of discrimination led participants to interpret their own efforts and achievements through internalized, paternalistic legacies of ableism. Over time, participants came to recognize this internalized ableism, reflecting on emotions of (in)

competence, disentangling impairment from powerlessness, reinterpreting mind–body differences, and redefining their own standards of competence.

The fifth article, co-authored by Neva Bojovic, Amanda Peticca-Harris, Angela Schill and Johannes Kraak (2025b), leveraged interviews collected more than a decade earlier as part of an oral history project, *Unheard Voices*, intended to document how hard of hearing employees were impacted by a significant regulatory change. The Equality Act (2010) required all UK employers to make reasonable adjustments for people with hearing loss. These oral histories had been collected in 2008 and 2009, on the eve of the regulatory change, and featured individuals with acquired profound hearing loss. The primary data source was enriched by follow-up interviews and additional third-party repositories. The 43 participants are fully identified, not only by first and last name, but also by the age when the disability started, the age at the time of the interview, their gender, and their occupation. This paints an intersectionally rich picture of a progressive disability across different domains of work. This study presents not one but two alternatives to internalizing ableism by revealing two parallel processes of orchestrating care through coaching and through resourcing. Counterbalancing the progression of their acquired disability, these 43 intersectionally diverse individuals orchestrated, through repetition, emotional work and elaborate relational arrangements, a sense of routinized responsiveness that helped them feel less excluded in their respective workplaces.

The sixth article, authored by Lisa Buchter (2025), examines how disability rights activists promoted greater inclusion for themselves and others following the enactment of disability legislation in France. As Buchter reminds us, laws themselves can be ableist in their premise, content, and implementation, often requiring legal intermediaries to interpret and apply them meaningfully. This study conceptualizes inside activists as such intermediaries—individuals who not only interpret the law through the lens of their lived experience but also strategically reshape their own practices to influence how the law is implemented within their organizations. The article highlights the multilevel efforts required to shift organizations subject to new legal mandates from apathy to superficial compliance, and ultimately toward substantive commitment. Notably, data collection begins a decade after the law was passed, but prior to the activists' interventions, offering a rare perspective on the slow pace of legislated change and the pivotal role of later actors in shaping how early legal blueprints are interpreted and enacted. Buchter's interpretivist methodology also provides a valuable guide to ethical research practice, including approaches to self-disclosure, self-imposed limits on questioning, and the intentional cultivation of safe holding spaces among diverse

mind–body configurations—both in the workplace and throughout the research process.

The final article, co-authored by Anita Stazyk and Jana Bauer (2025), presents a theoretical contribution that foregrounds the critical importance of ethical dilemmas in the context of disability and work. Building on and extending theories of voice and silence, the authors highlight the persistent absence of disabled workers from mainstream scholarship on these concepts. They identify multiple barriers to voice and diverse motivations for silence. This leads to a nuanced framework that disaggregates the reasons for voice into three dimensions: (1) the power and status of the voicer, (2) the opportunity to voice, and (3) the content of the voice. In addition, the article explores the construction and resolution of three key ethical dilemmas: (1) voicer identity, (2) voice design, and (3) voice purpose. Through this framework, the authors offer a compelling lens for understanding how ethical tensions shape the possibilities and limits of voice for disabled individuals in organizational settings.

This closing article helps readers understand *voice* as a complex and effortful form of “work at work”—one that cannot be taken for granted by disabled employees and often involves intricate processes of ethical sensemaking and navigation. It also lends perspective to why ideologies (Csillag et al., 2025) and interpretations (Bojovic et al., 2025a, 2025b; Buchter, 2025) loom so important (Buchter, 2025) when change is so slow (Baeken et al., 2025) yet so strenuous (Sharma & Prabhu, 2025).

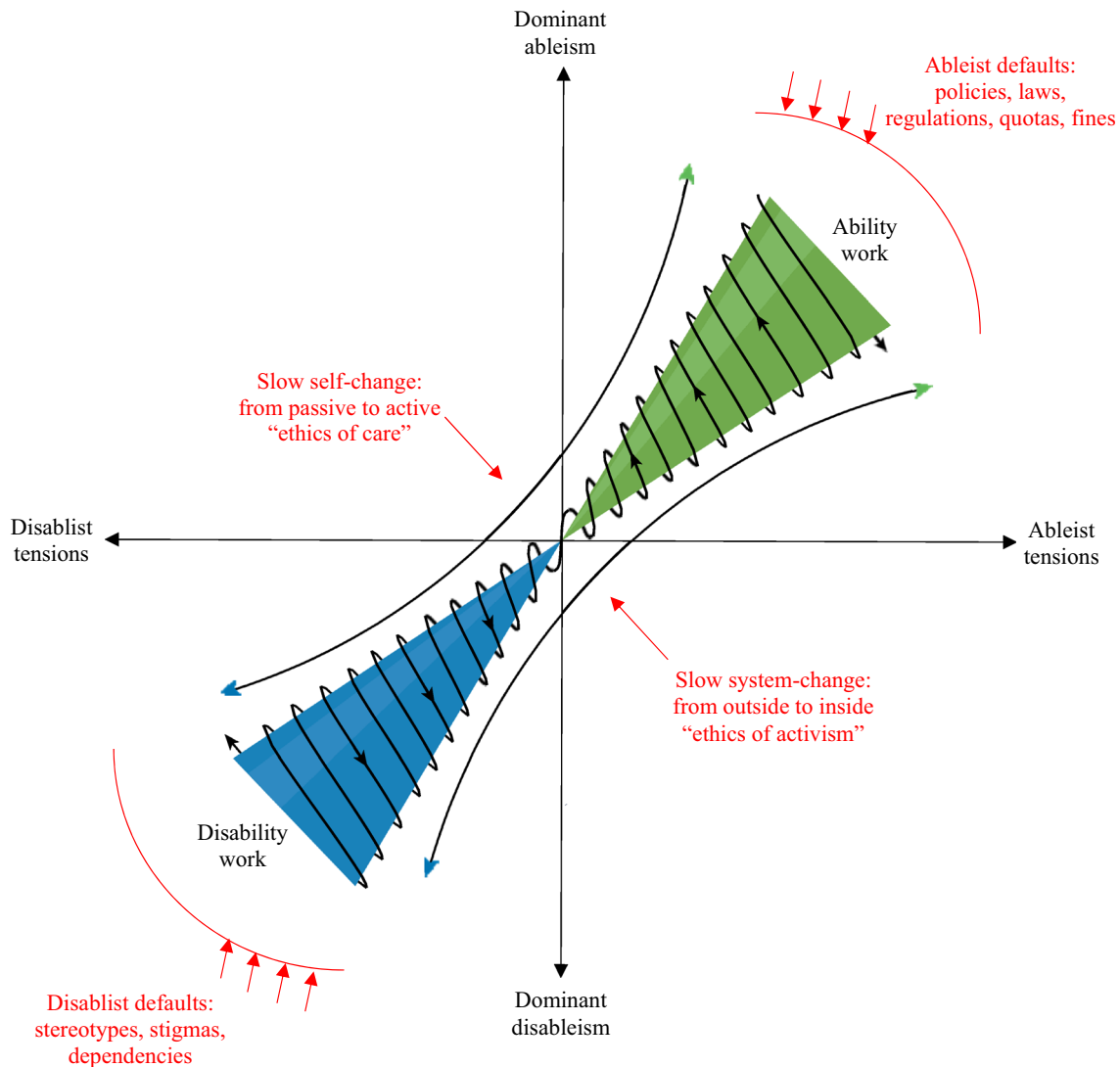
Taken together, the seven articles in this special issue immerse readers in the meanings and manifestations of ableism and disableism across organizational and occupational contexts in six countries: Belgium, China, Hungary, India, France, and the UK. At the time of acceptance, the 18 contributing authors were affiliated with institutions in nine different countries. Notably, four of the contributors were still completing their doctoral studies at the time of initial submission—a commendable achievement, particularly given the stigmas that continue to surround (the study of) disability in some contexts. Through self-disclosure, at least one author with lived experience of disability was part of three of the seven author teams. The remaining four teams undertook deliberate efforts to reflect on and revise their own positionality. For further reflections on how the editorial process supported this discovery of positionality, see Zeyen and Branzei (2025a). The guest co-editorial team included seven diverse minds and bodies.

A Framework for Future Research on Ableism and Disableism

Engaging with disability among 25 scholars with such different intersectionalities presented unique opportunities

for co-discovery. The role of ethical dilemmas in shifting the dominant poles of ableism and disableism in organizations is the result of many rounds of interactions.

Based on the collective insights from the seven articles, we offer a framework (see Fig. 1). We hope that the reader can locate their own lived experiences and/or research in



(Dis)ability work as emergent ethics

Fig. 1 Alt Text: Graph with two axes in the form of a cross. The x-axis shows the range from “disablist tensions” on the left to “ableist tensions” on the right. The y-axis represents the range from “dominant ableism” at the top to “dominant disableism” at the bottom. There are two isosceles triangles with their points meeting at zero where both axes intersect, the hourglass shape they form runs diagonally from the bottom left quadrant to the top right quadrant. The triangle in the bottom left quadrant is blue and the other is green. Each has a spiral running around them with arrows indicating movement away from the center. The end of the green triangle is labeled “ability work” and the end of the blue marked “disability work.” At

the outermost edge of each triangle there is a red line with four red arrows pointing inwards, as if to indicate a barrier. The “ability work” barrier is labeled as “Ableist defaults: policies, laws, regulations, quotas, fines” and the “disability work” barrier is labeled as “disablist defaults: stereotypes, stigmas, dependencies.” In the top left quadrant there is a red arrow pointing toward the center labeled (also in red) “Slow self-change from pass to active ‘ethics of care’”. Diagonally opposite, in the bottom right quadrant there is another red arrow, also pointing toward center marked “slow system change: from outside to inside ‘ethics of activism’”

the four quadrants, and perhaps even use the visualization to retrace critical experiences and choices over time. We also hope that it opens new ground for appreciating the varieties of work done by disabled people (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025b).

For clarity and parsimony, we distinguish between two forms of such work: disability work, which aims to expose and counter disableism, and ability work, which seeks to reveal and reverse ableism. Readers may trace more specific forms—such as voice work or resourcing work—by following the ongoing contributions of the authors featured in this special issue and the broader community of inquiry we continue to build across our respective disciplines. Ultimately, we co-discover how new ethics emerge when disabled individuals engage in the sustained effort of challenging ableism and disableism in the workplace.

The burden of ableism and disableism remains substantial across many settings (Bruyère & Colella, 2022; Jammaers & Zanoni, 2021; Lovegood & Dorado, 2025; Singal & Wijesinghe, 2025; Wolbring, 2012; Zeyen and Branzei 2025a). Yet these forces are not insurmountable. This collection of work sheds light on how dominant defaults take hold—and how their grip can be loosened. Taken together, the papers make a significant contribution to three distinct avenues for reengaging diverse mind–bodies at work: (1) ethical dilemmas, (2) ability work and disability work, and (3) emergent ethics of activism and care. In what follows we briefly reflect on these key collective insights.

Ethical Dilemmas

Starzyk and Bauer (2025) construct the phenomenon of disabled employee voice by centering three ethical dilemmas. Each dilemma is framed through a juxtaposition: the biases and negative evaluations that disabled employees have come to anticipate, and the rights and responsibilities that may be forfeited through silence. Rather than focusing solely on how these dilemmas arise, the authors theorize why they emerge—highlighting the tensions that make them ethically charged. While these dilemmas may not be fully resolvable, they shift attention from what is to what might become. In doing so, they redirect energy from coping with dominant defaults to the deliberate choices individuals make in navigating and reshaping their work environments.

Although not always as explicitly theorized, ethical dilemmas are central across all five qualitative studies in this special issue. Buchter (2025) presents a complex matrix of ethical dilemmas operating at multiple levels, illustrating the diverse strategies inside activists use to challenge and change dominant defaults. Baeken et al., (2025) trace how seemingly subtle utterances can cumulatively shift one ethical dilemma; is work a right? into another; is work a duty to society? Sharma and Prabhu (2025) show how born-disabled

professionals gradually reframe their ethical dilemmas, moving from internalized feelings of incompetence to the deliberate staging of competence. Bojovic et al., (2025a, b) explore how employees with acquired disabilities navigate between two distinct ethical dilemmas, each shaping the steps they take to foster responsiveness in others. While these trajectories may have the same result, the dilemmas are resolved through different mechanisms: dilemmas of self-acceptance are addressed through repetition and emotional labor, whereas dilemmas of position or role are negotiated through the creation of relational arrangements. Csillag et al., (2025) remind us that these intricate ethical dilemmas are deeply embedded in socialist legacies and neoliberal economies—and that navigating them requires sustained and often invisible “work.”

The quantitative study by Santacreu-Vasut and Wu (2025) centers on a fundamental ethical dilemma: how much additional discrimination arises from the intersection of disability and gender, beyond the individual penalties typically associated with each? Unlike the theoretical and qualitative contributions in this special issue, this dilemma is not individually constructed or resolved. Instead, it is collectively held—embedded in structural patterns of inequality and revealed through statistical evidence. This shift in scale underscores the systemic nature of intersectional disadvantage and highlights the ethical imperative to address compounding forms of discrimination not only through individual action but also through institutional and policy-level change.

As we come to better appreciate the variety and complexity of ethical dilemmas in organizational life, a logical next question concerns the time and effort involved in their construction and resolution. Building on established concepts such as labor and social-symbolic work, we draw attention to the intentional and often invisible choices individuals make to confront and disrupt ableism and disableism. This work is not incidental—it is deliberate, sustained, and frequently emotionally and relationally demanding.

Ability Work and Disability Work

Ability work is more prevalent than disability work in the collection of articles in this special issue. By ability work we mean the choices made and the steps taken to establish one’s competence in ableist contexts.

The analytical precision of Santacreu-Vasut and Wu (2025) reveals ability work. They demonstrate a stepwise reduction in the income penalty as disabled women attain higher levels of education, work more hours, or transition into different occupations. While the cross-sectional nature of their data limits insight into individual trajectories, the observed average differences at a given point in time offer

valuable guidance for policy and practice. Interventions that support educational attainment, sustained workforce engagement, or occupational mobility would not only improve individual earnings but also help narrow discriminatory gaps—addressing the structural roots of inequality (Janssens & Steyaert, 2019).

Stazyk and Bauer's (2025) exploration of voice work exemplifies ability work in its most deliberate form. They show that different voice dilemmas activate distinct types of ability work, each requiring conscious effort to navigate entrenched biases and expectations. Similarly, Csillag et al., (2025) illustrate how entrepreneurs define themselves through ability work—positioning their productivity and skill in contrast to societal narratives that frame disabled individuals as dependent on handouts. Buchter's (2025) inside activists also engage in sustained ability work, enrolling in courses, working overtime, and creating new roles to ensure their lived experiences shape how laws are interpreted and implemented. Bojovic et al., (2025b) highlight the cumulative power of two forms of ability work—caring and resourcing—in enabling employees with acquired disabilities to foster responsiveness in others. Sharma and Prabhu (2025) uncover a “superpower” of ability work, showing how professionals learn to liberate themselves from the grip of internalized ableism. Yet, Baeken et al., (2025) reveal an Achilles' heel: when emphasis is placed too heavily on ability, the right to work risks being reframed as a duty to society, reinforcing ableist expectations under the guise of inclusion.

Disability work is not the flipside of ability work. We use the term to refer to deliberate efforts to push against disablist defaults: the stigmas, stereotypes, and dependencies (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025a).

Three of the seven studies offer compelling illustrations of disability work. Sharma and Prabhu (2025) examine the early and intense discrimination faced by individuals born with disabilities, and how these individuals came to recognize the negative societal meanings attached to their body and mind differences. The authors detail how participants worked to accept a socially imposed, stereotyped identity and engaged in deliberate efforts to monitor their behavior, pursue self-directed learning, and seek external support such as remedial education. The labor involved in adapting to these imposed norms—what the authors refer to as “disabled defaults”—was substantial and emotionally taxing. Participants responded by regulating their sense of competence, aligning their self-efficacy with prevailing expectations to navigate and succeed within ableist environments.

The quantitative findings of Santacreu-Vasut and Wu (2025) can also be interpreted through the lens of disability work. Their analysis reveals that disabled women consistently earn less than both non-disabled women and

disabled men across all levels of education and occupational categories. This persistent gap underscores the compounded disadvantage faced by disabled women and reflects the structural labor they must undertake—not only to participate in the workforce but to counteract intersecting biases. Although the study does not trace individual trajectories, the aggregate disparities point to the systemic nature of disability work and the need for targeted interventions to reduce inequality.

The theoretical arguments presented by Starzyk and Bauer (2025) also demonstrate that disability work often precedes voice. Disabled employees must first engage in substantial cognitive and emotional labor to understand the multiple barriers and potential negative consequences associated with speaking up within disablist environments. Importantly, disability work does not automatically follow from the presence of disablist defaults. As shown by Csillag et al., (2025), disabled entrepreneurs are acutely aware of these defaults, yet they neither resist nor deny them. Instead, they redirect their efforts toward performing and differentiating themselves through their abilities—choosing to define their professional identity through ability work rather than contesting the constraints directly.

Although both ability work and disability work resist dominant defaults (Jammaers, 2023), they carry different risks. Although both *ability work* and *disability work* resist dominant defaults (Jammaers, 2023), they carry distinct risks. Several articles in this special issue caution against the dangers of internalizing ableism (Csillag et al., 2025), where individuals may overinvest in proving their worth through productivity and competence, inadvertently reinforcing the very norms they seek to challenge. At the same time, internalizing disableism can be equally, if not more, damaging (Sharma & Prabhu, 2025). Even when individuals achieve meaningful systemic change, the psychological imprint of early exclusion and stigmatization may persist, making it difficult to fully disentangle personal identity from imposed limitations.

Performing *ability work* and *disability work* requires distinct forms of preparation. In cases where individuals engage in both—such as Buchter's (2025) inside activists—the investments are substantial and often highly specialized, as are the returns. Skilled enactments of either form of work tend to generate a positive feedback loop: the more time and training invested, the more individuals are motivated to deepen their engagement. As a result, both *ability work* and *disability work* can be understood as cumulative, building over time through repeated effort, reflection, and adaptation.

Our framework (Fig. 1) suggests that performing either ability work or disability work may anchor attention to a specific set of dominant defaults. The deeper the investment in one form of work, the more entrenched the

focus becomes—making it increasingly difficult to shift between these normative frameworks. Sharma and Prabhu (2025) illustrate this dynamic through reflections from professionals who transitioned from disability work to ability work as their careers advanced. These shifts were not automatic; they required conscious reorientation and often involved emotional and cognitive labor to disengage from previously internalized norms.

Drawing on the collective insights featured in this special issue, we propose that ethical dilemmas serve as orienting mechanisms—directing work toward either disablism or ableism. What remains uncertain is whether ethical dilemmas can actively shift an individual’s focus from disability work to ability work, or vice versa. What is clear, however, is that the cyclical and cumulative nature of both forms of work can foster the emergence of new ethical frameworks. In this issue, we focus on ethics of activism and ethics of care, both of which are well-established in disability scholarship and recur across several contributions. Yet, other ethical orientations may also emerge from the sustained labor required to challenge and reconfigure the dominant defaults of ableism and disableism.

Emergent Ethics of Activism and Care

As disability rights movements (Carling-Jenkins, 2016) continue to unfold, significant attention continues to be given to emerging ethics of activism. New and diverse forms of solidarity and allyship are taking shape as we deepen our understanding of differences among minds and bodies and expand the boundaries of epistemic authority—challenging assumptions about “who knows what” (Carey et al., 2019; Eyal, 2013). These developments have opened new channels for expressing solidarity, including forms of anti-stigma organizing (Wang & Tracey, 2024). Emerging ethics of activism encourage us to view ableism and disableism not as fixed organizational defaults, but as ethical dilemmas to be addressed through collective organizing and intentional action (Winter, 2003).

New *ethics of care* emerge through relational processes (Carmeli et al., 2017; Gabbard & Schaffer, 2025; Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012). These ethics are shaped not only by the needs of care-receivers but also by the evolving identities of caregivers. Rötzeimer-Keuper and Wunderlich (2024) illustrate how interactions between caregivers and care-receivers can transform both parties, reshaping roles and expectations. Suquet and Collard (2024) explore the shifting meaning of what constitutes “good” care, emphasizing its contextual and negotiated nature. Redhead et al. (2024) document how new ethical dilemmas and practices emerged in the healthcare sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the dynamic and responsive nature of care ethics under pressure.

We use the term emergent ethics to describe previously unrecognized or unexplored distinctions between established ethical approaches and alternative possibilities that can be imagined (Carey, 2022). An emergent ethics of activism refers to new orientations or outcomes that arise through the act of engaging in activism. For instance, redefining one’s identity from a disabled employee to an inside activist enables the construction and resolution of different ethical dilemmas through distinct forms of (dis)ability work. Similarly, an emergent ethics of care opens new modalities for giving, receiving, or facilitating care—toward oneself (Bojovic et al., 2025a, b; Csillag et al., 2025), toward others (Baeken et al., 2025; Buchter, 2025), or both (Starzyk & Bauer, 2025). These two ethical orientations may co-emerge from seemingly simple realizations. For example, recognizing the disproportionate discrimination faced by disabled women compared to disabled men can catalyze both new forms of activism and new expressions of care. Across the seven articles in this special issue, we observe how these emergent ethics of care and activism take root—even within workplaces marked by persistent biases and structural barriers (see Table 1).

This special issue offers several new insights into *emergent ethics of activism*. The benefits of such ethics are most clearly illustrated in Buchter’s (2025) study of inside activists, who create organizational possibilities that extend beyond what legislation explicitly prescribes. However, the risks are equally significant. Baeken et al., (2025) reveal how the discourse around the right to work was co-opted to advance neoliberal agendas, ultimately placing undue responsibility on disabled workers to contribute to society through employment. These examples underscore the importance of emergent ethics of activism in driving systemic change—albeit slowly and often contentiously.

It also provides new insights into emergent ethics of care. Most notably, emergent ethics of care can serve the disabled workers by putting in place helpful response routines (Bojovic et al., 2025a, 2025b) or may disserve them by entangling them in unhelpful ones (Sharma and Prabhu 2025). Although emergent ethics may be motivated by efforts to help oneself in the face of (dis)ableist defaults, the alternatives are not always self-beneficial. For example, Csillag et al., (2025) show how changing one’s perspective on what care is or how it can be obtained can entrap disabled entrepreneurs into cycles of ability work that keep them focused on ableist defaults. Or vice versa, attempts to imagine how one could thrive in disablism settings may create an illusion of care (Sharma and Prabhu 2025). We do wish to draw explicit attention to the differential approach to care and its impact on the (slow) transformation of the self.

The field of disability organizing is opened to new possibilities through the recognition that individual trajectories are sensitive to differentials—and that such differentials

Table 1 Articles included in the special issue

Article	Research focus	Temporal frame and empirical context	(Dis)ableist ideology as constraint and/or opportunity	Borrowed concept/s	Disability and/or ability work ^a	Emergent ethics
Baeken, A., Forrier, A., De Cuyper, N. (2025) Is work still a right if it has become a norm? Disability inclusion in labor market policy disclosure	How do policies come to de- and re-contextualize work as a duty or a right?	2004–2024, Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of the federal state of Belgium) Flemish policy and parliamentary debate over 4 government terms 121 documents for 110 parliamentary questions	Discursive utterances create disable it and/or disableist tensions for policies-in-the-making. When these tensions transform how policy initiatives are being framed, their implementation can reinforce dominant (dis)ableism instead of dismantling them	Recontextualization as “a process of discourses’ spatio-temporal diffusion” (Krzyzanowski, 2016, p. 314) discoverable through a Discourse-Historical approach (Reisigl, 2018)	Diminishing returns and downsides to ability work: elements of the UNCRPD introduced as arguments pro market inclusion of PWDs are appropriated over time by neoliberal discourses and subordinated to its hegemony	As activism, thwarted, as one variety of ableism shapeshifts into another, attempts to foster inclusion end up leading to exclusion instead
Bojovic, N., Peticea-Harris, A., Schill, A., and Kraak, J. (2025b) Orchestration of care: Exploring the active role of disabled workers in creation of socio-material care arrangements at work	How disabled workers take an active role to guide care arrangements at work	2001 & 2008–2009 UK 52 first-person accounts 9 written histories (2001) 43 oral histories (2009) of disabled workers before the Equality Act came into effect in 2010 5 follow-ups (2023)	Disableism as dark side of care (Canton & Dominey, 2020, p. 26): when recipients are construed as inferior, acts of care further stigmatize and infantilize them	Tonto’s (1998) conceptualization of care as a practice based on attentiveness, responsibility, competence and responsiveness Herring’s (2020) conceptualization of an ethics of care for disability studies	Some disabled workers actively orchestrate care by engaging in <i>ability work</i> practices of <i>coaching</i> (guiding care by communicating care needs directing others in accommodating these needs) and/or <i>resourcing</i> (actively creating and utilizing both material and human/embodyed resources)	As care, that can be conceived and cultivated through the agency of its recipients through dynamics that deliberately alter the physical, human and relational landscape of work
Buchter, L. (2025) “We are our own best advocates”: When disability rights activists constructed legal compliance to address ableism in France	How disability managers design their own positions and programs from the ground up	2015 France Disability managers implementing a 2005 anti-ableist law that clarified compliance and introduced financial penalties for non-compliance with “employment mandate” Interpretivist analysis of ethnographic interviews	Ableist beliefs that “impairment or disability (irrespective of ‘type’) is inherently negative and should the opportunity present itself, be ameliorated, cured, or indeed eliminated” (Campbell, 2009, p. 5) Disabled people’s experiences are “regulated within the confines of juridical formations” (Campbell, 2009, p. 37)	Value-laden judgment (Jamaers, 2022, p. 4) drives diagnoses of workplace ableism. These diagnoses orient the political and practical interventions of disability managers, who work as insider activists to actively intermediate the implementation of anti-ableist laws	Disability managers construct their own representations of what is ableist in their workplaces and what is good compliance with disability laws. Their value-laden judgments as <i>apathy</i> , <i>superficial</i> or <i>substantive commitments</i> determine which ableistic practices they address through four types of <i>ability work</i> (<i>structural</i> , <i>recoupling</i> , <i>relational</i> , <i>individual</i>)	As activism to slowly change the system by intermediating the implementation of anti-ableist laws and regulations in the workplace

Table 1 (continued)

Article	Research focus	Temporal frame and empirical context	(Dis)ableist ideology as constraint and/or opportunity	Borrowed concept/s	Disability and/or ability work ^a	Emergent ethics
Csillag, S., Svastics, C., Hidegh, A.L., and Györi, Z. (2025) Pushed to the edge? Entrepreneurs with disabilities and the post-socialist experience of ableism	How entrepreneurs with disabilities (EWDs)' experience of (dis)ableism lingers from socialism to neoliberal capitalism	2018 & 2020, Hungary 29 entrepreneurs with disabilities (EWDs), 26–70 years old, multiple intersectionalities Retrospective interviews 'give voice' to shared experiences of post-socialist ableism through the reconstruction of microhistorical accounts	Ableist and disableist defaults marginalize entrepreneurs with disabilities (EWDs) by depicting them as passive, vulnerable and dependent, reducing them to second-call actors in social, economic and political life (Martin & Honig, 2019)	"Cruel optimism" (Kolářová, 2017) and critical disability studies of how disability was constructed during socialism in Eastern Europe (Dinu, 2022) and re-constructed during the transition to neoliberalism (Mladenov, 2017)	The development of a complex rehabilitation system with OECD and EU funds led to a surge in social, economic and political rights. <i>Ability work</i> through the exercise of economic rights was held back by invisibility, passivity, and the second economy—others' 'cheat the system' mentality of evading state rules for self-interest. <i>Ability work</i> as the exercise of political rights was limited by EWDs' marginalization in official policy-making	As activism, illusioned by social, economic and political rights and disillusioned by the socialist legacy
Santacreu-Vasut and Wu (2025) At the intersection of ableism and sexism: Conceptual and empirical applications	How labor markets differentially penalize disabled people based on their genders	2010, China 33,600 nationally representative, cross-sectional observations linking The China Family Panel Studies (CFPS) and The Chinese Household Income Project (CHIP)	The dominance of disableism creates a cascade of penalties, which are unevenly distributed across intersectionalities, however such differences often remain invisible and therefore inactionable through appropriate policies	Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition to attribute observed inequalities in income to two distinct sources (disability and gender) and their interaction (Blau & Khan, 2017)	<i>Disability work</i> as quantification of discrimination by separating penalties to disability from additional penalties for different groups of disabled workers (women)	As activism, at the intersection of ableism and sexism, by equipping policy-makers with analytical tools that separate the direct from the indirect costs of dominant ideologies and isolate key sources
Sharma, D., and Prabhu, G.N. (2025) Navigating competency in an ableist world: The lived experiences of disabled individuals in education and the workplace	How individuals with disabilities 'fit in' an increasingly competitive world	2019–2023 India 3 life phases of 8 individuals with disabilities transitioning from MBA to employment; updates in lived epistemologies followed through repeated interviews	'Non-disability as the normative organizing principle' (Williams & Mavin, 2012) discriminates against 'disability as a diminished state of being human' (Campbell, 2008). Stereotypes based on mind–body differences can threaten one's sense of competence	Competency labor, a form of impression management to present oneself as competent in others' terms (Haber, Pollack & Humphrey, 2014), often through self-promotion, self-presentation and ingratiation/image projection	Disabled individuals defy the gravity of ableist defaults in three stages of <i>disability work</i> : <i>sensing</i> , <i>staging</i> and <i>countering</i> 'incompetence'	As care for one's constantly threatened sense of competence through a process of slow self-change

Table 1 (continued)

Article	Research focus	Temporal frame and empirical context	(Dis)ableist ideology as constraint and/or opportunity	Borrowed concept/s	Disability and/or ability work ^a	Emergent ethics
Starzyk, A. & Bauer, J.F. (2025) Three dilemmas of disabled employee voice	How disabled employees are systematically prevented from speaking out	Theory-building paper that delineates the gaps in the current understanding of employee voice to construct the phenomenon of disabled employee voice	The voice process is more demanding and the consequences for speaking out riskier for workers with (in) visible disabilities. Exercising voice creates and resolves (dis)ableist tensions	Employee voice (Morrison, 2011; 2014; 2023) refers to which employees are more likely to speak out, when, where, how and why as well as the factors that inhibit or limit speaking out at work	Disabled employees need to engage laborious practices to speak out. <i>Disability work</i> tackles three endemic and entwined voice dilemmas of <i>voicer identity</i> , <i>voice design</i> , and <i>voice purpose</i>	As activism, casting voice as a prerequisite for self-representation within workplaces

^aThe guest co-editors grouped the many varieties of work under the broader labels of disability work and ability work

can be intentionally shaped by the ethical dilemmas individuals encounter and engage with. This perspective helps distinguish ableism and disableism from other forms of systemic discrimination that have historically received earlier and more extensive scholarly attention (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025c). By foregrounding ethical dilemmas as generative mechanisms, this special issue contributes to a deeper understanding of how new pathways for organizing, identity formation, and systemic change may emerge.

There are at least two epiphanies that we believe may not have become clear without the body of work featured in this special issue.

First and foremost, the slow pace at which changes in ethics unfold despite the collective realization that the underlying issues are so unjust and so pressing. The slowness of already overdue change was counted in decades and generations. Yet some participants spoke about deliberately slowing down the change to get it right, to help others catch up, to allow for grappling with realities and exploration of alternatives (Buchter, 2025). Slowing down urgent change to consider the diversity of minds and bodies may seem counterintuitive at first, but it makes sense once we realize the elaborate (dis)ability work that needs to happen before existing defaults may get overwritten.

Second, it may take decades to discern the difference between disability work and ability work, and even longer to reorient one's efforts toward ethical dilemmas of one's own choosing. This missing middle ground—and the difficulty of pivoting from one form of work to the other—is perhaps best exemplified by the professionals studied by Sharma and Prabhu (2025). Their narratives reveal how deeply embedded disablist defaults can shape early career trajectories, and how the transition to ability work often requires not only external validation but also significant internal transformation.

Combining these two realizations, our framework underscores that both self-transformation and system change may be slow in part because their beginnings are especially difficult. Across the seven articles in this special issue, we observe that these beginnings can be accelerated through the deliberate construction of ethical dilemmas. Such dilemmas compel new forms of disability and ability work, which in turn create the conditions for emergent ethics to take shape. Whether through activism, care, or other yet-to-be-articulated ethical orientations, these processes reveal how change—though gradual—can be initiated through intentional engagement with the normative tensions that define contemporary organizational life.

Where to go From Here? Some Concluding Thoughts and a Research Agenda for the Future

This special issue explores emergent ethics of activism and care as dynamic responses to ableist and

disablist defaults. Across the seven articles, a theoretical and empirical foundation is laid for understanding how these dominant norms (Jammaers, 2023) begin to shift through the iterative formulation and resolution of ethical dilemmas (Zeyen & Branzei, 2023). Together, the contributions illustrate how ethical dilemmas orient individuals toward different forms of disability and ability work, and how sustained engagement in these forms of work can give rise to new ethical frameworks. Whether through activism that redefines organizational possibilities or care practices that reshape relational identities, the articles collectively show that change—though slow—is possible and often begins with the deliberate labor of those navigating the margins.

The deep roots of disability rights within disability studies (Watson and Vehmas 2019), disability history, and disability sociology have long offered a rich repository of barriers and levers to change. These foundations help explain why both individual and systemic transformation often unfold slowly. Our framework embraces this slowness, using it as a lens to examine the lived processes of navigating organizations structured around normative assumptions of mind and body. By attending to the gradual pace of change, we can better appreciate the intricate, iterative work through which default norms are challenged, ethical dilemmas are surfaced, and new ethical orientations begin to emerge (Halvorsen et al., 2017).

Appreciating the slow emergence of new ethics requires renewed attention to the lived experiences of individuals with diverse minds and bodies. This raises critical questions for research practice: How can our methods meaningfully invite and include the full spectrum of lived experience? What does accessibility truly entail in the process of conducting research with and for disabled people?

Emerging approaches respond to these questions by foregrounding disabled voices through varied modalities of expression (Zeyen & Branzei, 2023), embracing new forms of first-person activism and care (Branzei & Zeyen, 2025a), and fostering conversations that confront taboos, disrupt dominant narratives, and co-create meaning (Zeyen & Branzei, 2023). These approaches also open pathways for new processes of inclusion that challenge conventional research norms (Pierce and Rider 2022).

Understanding ethics as emergent within, rather than externally imposed upon, organizations (Gray, 2010) shifts analytical attention toward the diverse minds and bodies that shape foundational concepts of rights, identity, and justice (Gilliland et al., 2017). We are witnessing a dual turn in scholarship: one toward the body and another toward the mind. Yet, few studies have meaningfully connected these dimensions (for exceptions, see Zeyen & Branzei, 2023). To date, both turns have largely concentrated on what we term disability work—the intentional efforts to reframe and resist disablist defaults embedded in organizational structures and practices.

The turn to the body—particularly bodies that are different and often stigmatized—as a resource has several notable precedents in management and organization studies. One of the earliest contributions, by Jammaers and Ybema (2023), illustrates how bodies are symbolically constructed and mobilized in organizational settings that “other” individuals based on bodily shape and size. (Bojovic, Garud, et al., (2025a) further demonstrate how stigmatized bodies can be reconfigured as cultural resources. Zeyen and Branzei (2023) document distinct types and cycles of body work that actively reverse negative perceptions and evaluations of bodies. Extending this line of inquiry, Zeyen and Branzei (2025) explore how bodies themselves become enrolled in processes of destigmatization and de-othering.

Looking ahead, future research on the places and processes of embodiment (Mintz and Fraser 2024) promises to deepen and extend the turn toward diverse bodies—not as passive recipients of ableist and disablist contexts, but as active agents who shape and remake organizational life.

The turn to the mind—particularly divergent or diagnostically labeled as disordered—as a resource has gained momentum through three recent special issues on neurodiversity at work (Doyle et al., 2023; Hennekam, Volpone, et al. 2023b; Krzeminska et al., 2019), with several more forthcoming. This emerging body of work has begun to address both sides of a critical question: on one hand, how organizational structures and labor markets include or exclude individuals with mental illness (Hennekam et al., 2023a, 2023b); and on the other, how evolving social norms and practices around mental health challenge and reshape these structures (Johnson & Joshi, 2016; Kensbock et al., 2022).

This special issue contributes to making diverse minds and bodies stand out rather than fit in. Prior scholarship has argued for “branding” (DePoy & Gilson, 2014) and “designing” (Doussard et al., 2024) disability as a strategic and structural resource. Building on these foundations, we call for new curations, conversations, and conceptualizations that document ability work: purposeful practices that challenge and transform ableist defaults. This shift is already underway in relation to other forms of marginalization (Janssens & Steyaert, 2020).

The process of foregrounding and valuing neurodivergent and disabled identities raises profound questions about identity (Dirth & Branscombe, 2018) and inclusion (Dobusch, 2021). It opens new avenues for research on ableism and disablism within management and organization studies, inviting scholars to rethink foundational assumptions and practices.

Acknowledgements We would like to express our gratitude to all the reviewers who dedicated their time to evaluating the papers in this special issue, including those that were not selected. We also extend our thanks to our 18 authors for their incredible and insightful contributions. Our appreciation goes to the special issue editorial team at the Journal of Business Ethics for entrusting us with this project, staying with us through some challenging times, and recognizing the

importance of highlighting research on disability, ableism, and ethics. Additionally, we are grateful to all the loved ones who supported us and our authors throughout this journey. On behalf of our authors, we also thank all the research participants for their invaluable time and effort, without which these remarkable papers would not have been published.

Data availability Not applicable.

Declarations

Ethical Approval This editorial is not based on any primary data with human or other living participants. Therefore, ethical clearance was not required.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Aron, L., & Loprest, P. (2012). Disability and the education system. *The Future of Children*. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2012.0007>
- Baeken, A., Forrier, A., & De Cuyper, N. (2025). Is work still a right if it has become a norm? Disability inclusion in labor market policy discourse. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05962-6>
- Beatty, J., Hennekam, S., & Kulkarni, M. (2023). *De Gruyter Handbook of Disability and Management*. De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110743647>
- Blau, F. D., & Kahn, L. M. (2017). The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations. *Journal of economic literature*, 55(3), 789–865.
- Boehm, S. A., & Jammaers, E. (2024). Disability-based discrimination in organizations. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 60, Article 101932. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2024.101932>
- Bojovic, N., Garud, R., & Cheded, M. (2025a). The body as a cultural resource for entrepreneurs in stigmatized settings: The case of sex toys by women for women. *Journal of Business Venturing*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2024.106449>
- Bojovic, N., Peticca-Harris, A., Schill, A., & Kraak, J. (2025b). Orchestration of care: Exploring the active role of disabled workers in creation of socio-material care arrangements at work. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05963-5>
- Branzei, O., & Zeyen, A. (2025a). An emerging theory of (dis)ability at work. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Disability and Work*. Routledge.
- Branzei, O., & Zeyen, A. (2025b). *Routledge companion to disability and work*. Routledge Publishing.
- Branzei, O., & Zeyen, A. (2025c). A mid-range review of (dis)ableism at work. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *Routledge Companion to Disability and Work*. Routledge.
- Breen, J. S., & Forwell, S. J. (2023). *Disability in the workplace: The politics of difference*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220695>
- Bruyère, S. M., & Colella, A. (2022). *Neurodiversity in the workplace: Interests, issues, and opportunities*. Taylor & Francis.
- Buchter, L. (2025). “We are Our Own Best Advocates”: When disability rights activists constructed legal compliance to address ableism in France. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05959-1>
- Campbell, F. K. (2008). Refusing Able(ness): A Preliminary Conversation about Ableism. *M/C Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.46>
- Campbell, F. K. (2009). *Contour of Ableism: The Production of Disability and Aabledness*. Palgrave Macmillan UK. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230245181>
- Canton, R., & Dominey, J. (2020). Punishment and care reappraised. *Spaces of Care*, 15–38.
- Carey, A. C. (2022). *Disability and the sociological imagination*. SAGE Publishing.
- Carey, A. C., Block, P., & Scotch, R. K. (2019). Sometimes allies: parent-led disability organizations and social movements. *Disability Studies Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v39i1.6281>
- Carling-Jenkins, R. (2016). Disability and social movements. *Routledge*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315577364>
- Carmeli, A., Brammer, S., Gomes, E., & Tarba, S. Y. (2017). An organizational ethic of care and employee involvement in sustainability-related behaviors: A social identity perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(9), 1380–1395. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2185>
- Cech, E. A. (2022). The intersectional privilege of white able-bodied heterosexual men in STEM. *Science Advances*. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.abo1558>
- Choudhury Kaul, S., Alam, Q., & Sandhu, M. S. (2022). Why disability mainstreaming is good for business: A new narrative. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 177, 861–873.
- Colella, A., & Varma, A. (2001). The impact of subordinate disability on leader-member exchange relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(2), 304–315. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3069457>
- Csillag, S., Svastics, C., Hidegh, A. L., & Györi, Z. (2025). Pushed to the edge? Entrepreneurs with disabilities and the post-socialist experience of ableism. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05965-3>
- DePoy, E., & Gilson, S. (2014). Branding and designing disability. *Routledge*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203093542>
- Dinu, R. H. (2022). Recent historiographical trends in scholarship on disability and socialism in Eastern Europe. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 24(1).
- Dirth, T. P., & Branscombe, N. R. (2018). The social identity approach to disability: Bridging disability studies and psychological science. *Psychological Bulletin*, 144(12), 1300–1324. <https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000156>
- Dobusch, L. (2021). The inclusivity of inclusion approaches: A relational perspective on inclusion and exclusion in organizations. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(1), 379–396. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12574>
- Doussard, C., Garbe, E., Morales, J., & Billion, J. (2024). Universal design for the workplace: Ethical considerations regarding the inclusion of workers with disabilities. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 194(2), 285–296. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05582-y>
- Doyle, N., Moeller, M., Ott, D. L., & Raskovic, M. (2023). Call for Papers for Special Issue of IJMR: Neurodiversity in Organisations: Taking Stock and Shaping Future Research. *International Journal of Management Research*. <https://www.bam.ac.uk/resources/call-for-papers-for-special-issue-of-ijmr-neurodiversity-in-organisations-taking-stock-and-shaping-future-research.html>. Accessed 27 January 2025
- Ellis, K. (2010). Contours of ableism: The production of disability and abledness. *Continuum (Minneapolis, Minn.)*, 24(4), 638–640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304311003797498>

- Eyal, G. (2013). For a sociology of expertise: The social origins of the autism epidemic. *American Journal of Sociology*, 118(4), 863–907.
- Fielden, S. L., Moore, M. E., & Bend, G. L. (2020). *The palgrave handbook of disability at work*. Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42966-9>
- Gabbard, D. C., & Schaffer, T. (2025). *are and Disability Relational Representations*. Routledge.
- Gilliland, S. W., Steiner, D. D., & Skarlicki, D. P. (2017). *Emerging perspectives on organizational justice and ethics*. Information Age Publishing.
- Goodley, D. (2013). Towards a contextual psychology of disablism. *Disability & Society*, 28(3), 431–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2013.764105>
- Gordon, S. J., Pöder, J.-C., & Burckhart, H. (2018). *Human Rights and Disability Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Gray, M. (2010). Moral sources and emergent ethical theories in social work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(6), 1794–1811. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcp104>
- Haber, J., Pollack, J. M., & Humphrey, R. H. (2014). Competency labor: A conceptual framework for examining individuals' effort and emotions in projecting an image of competence at work. In *Emotions and the Organizational Fabric* (pp. 305–330). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Halvorsen, R., Hvinden, B., Beadle-Brown, J., Biggeri, M., Tøssebro, J., & Waldschmidt, A. (2017). *Understanding the lived experiences of persons with disabilities in nine countries: Active citizenship and disability in Europe*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315623924>
- Hanes, R., Brown, I., & Hansen, N. E. (2017). *The Routledge History of Disability*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315198781>
- Harlan, S. L., & Robert, P. M. (1998). The social construction of disability in organizations: Why employers resist reasonable accommodation. *Work and Occupations*, 25(4), 397–435.
- Hein, P., & Ansari, S. (2022). From sheltered to included: The emancipation of disabled workers from benevolent marginalization. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(3), 749–783.
- Hennekam, S., Volpone, S., & Pullen, A. (2023). Call for Papers for a Special Issue of Human Resource Management Neurodiversity at Work: Challenges and Opportunities for Human Resource Management. *HUMAN Resource Management*. Accessed 27 January 2025
- Hennekam, S., Richard, S., & Özbilgin, M. (2023a). How social structures influence the labour market participation of individuals with mental illness: A bourdieusian perspective. *Journal of Management Studies*, 60(1), 174–203. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12851>
- Herring, J. (2020). Ethics of care and disability rights: complementary or contradictory?. *Spaces of Care*, 165–182.
- Heslin, P. A., Bell, M. P., & Fletcher, P. O. (2012). The devil without and within: A conceptual model of social cognitive processes whereby discrimination leads stigmatized minorities to become discouraged workers. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(6), 840–862. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1795>
- Heymann, J., Stein, M. A., & Moreno, G. (2014). Disability and Equity at Work. *Oxford University Press*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199981212.001.0001>
- ILO. (2024). Factsheet On Persons With Disabilities. <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/resources/factsheets/factsheet-on-persons-with-disabilities>.
- Jammarers, E. (2022). Theorizing discursive resistance to organizational ethics of care through a multi-stakeholder perspective on disability inclusion practices. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-022-05079-0>
- Jammarers, E. (2023). Theorizing discursive resistance to organizational ethics of care through a multi-stakeholder perspective on disability inclusion practices. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(2), 333–345.
- Jammarers, E., & Zanoni, P. (2021). The Identity Regulation of Disabled Employees: Unveiling the ‘varieties of ableism’ in employers’ socio-ideological control’. *Organization Studies*, 42(3), 429–452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840619900292>
- Janssens, M., & Steyaert, C. (2019). A practice-based theory of diversity: Respecifying (in)equality in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 44(3), 518–537. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2017.0062>
- Janssens, M., & Steyaert, C. (2020). The site of diversalizing: The accomplishment of inclusion in intergenerational dance. *Journal of Management Studies*, 57(6), 1143–1173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12524>
- Johnson, T. D., & Joshi, A. (2016). Dark clouds or silver linings? A stigma threat perspective on the implications of an autism diagnosis for workplace well-being. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 101(3), 430–449. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000058>
- Jones, K. P., Peddie, C. I., Gilrane, V. L., King, E. B., & Gray, A. L. (2016). Not so subtle: A meta-analytic investigation of the correlates of subtle and overt discrimination. *Journal of Management*, 42(6), 1588–1613. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206313506466>
- Keen, S., & Oulton, R. (2009). Disability discrimination in employment. *Oxford University Press Oxford*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199232277.001.0001>
- Kensbock, J. M., Alkærsg, L., & Lomberg, C. (2022). The epidemic of mental disorders in business—How depression, anxiety, and stress spread across organizations through employee mobility*. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 67(1), 1–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00018392211014819>
- Kolářová, K. (2017). „Mentální retardace “a afektivní politiky zřeknutí se. *Gender a výzkum*, 18(2), 128–154.
- Krzeminska, A., Austin, R. D., Bruyère, S. M., & Hedley, D. (2019). The advantages and challenges of neurodiversity employment in organizations. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 25(04), 453–463. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2019.58>
- Kulkarni, M. (2024). Narrating a prototypical disabled employee. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 189, 781–796.
- Lawrence, T. B., & Maitlis, S. (2012). Care and possibility: Enacting an ethic of care through narrative practice. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(4), 641–663. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0466>
- Le Marois, R. (2025). Disability and (In)visibility Work. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Disability and Work*. Routledge.
- Lewis Brown, R., Maroto, M., & Pettinichio, D. (2023). *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Disability*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190093167.001.0001>
- Loacker, B., & Weiskopf, R. (2025). Being (Ab)normal – be(com)ing other: Struggles over enacting an ethos of difference in a psychosocial care centre. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 196(2), 255–272. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-024-05702-2>
- Lovegood, R., & Dorado, S. (2025). From charity to human rights. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *The routledge companion to disability and work*. Routledge.
- Lowney, C. W. (2017). On Emergent Ethics, Becoming Authentic, and Finding Common Ground. *Charles Taylor, Michael Polanyi and the Critique of Modernity*. Springer International Publishing.
- Lyons, B. J., Martinez, L. R., Ruggs, E. N., Hebl, M. R., Ryan, A. M., O'Brien, K. R., & Roebuck, A. (2018). To say or not to say: Different strategies of acknowledging a visible disability. *Journal of Management*, 44(5), 1980–2007. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316638160>
- Lyons, B. J., Volpone, S. D., Wessel, J. L., & Alonso, N. M. (2017). Disclosing a disability: Do strategy type and onset controllability make a difference? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(9), 1375–1383. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000230>

- Martin, B. C., & Honig, B. (2019). Inclusive management research: Persons with disabilities and self-employment activity as an exemplar. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *160*(1), 107–122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04122-x>
- Miller, P., Parker, S., & Gillinson, S. (2004). *Disablism How to tackle the last prejudice*. Available online: <https://www.betterworldbooks.com/Disablism-How-to-tackle-the-last-prejudice-p9780195341096.html>
- Mintz, S. B., & Fraser, G. (2024). *Placing Disability: Personal Essays of Embodied Geography*. Springer.
- Mladenov, T. (2017). *Disability and postsocialism*. Routledge.
- Morrison, E. W. (2011). Employee voice behavior: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management annals*, *5*(1), 373–412.
- Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *1*(1), 173–197.
- Morrison, E. W. (2023). Employee voice and silence: Taking stock a decade later. *Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior*, *10*(1), 79–107.
- Piechowski, L. D. (2011). Evaluation of workplace disability (DRAFT). *Oxford University Press*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/med:psych/9780195341096.001.0001>
- Pierce, L., & Rider, C. I. (2022). Supporting mental health at work (comment on “The epidemic of mental disorders in business”). *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *67*(1), 56–69.
- Preston, J. (2025). Disability Disclosure at Work. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *Routledge Companion to Disability and Work*. Routledge.
- Redhead, C.A.B., Frith, L., Chiumento, A. et al. Using symbiotic empirical ethics to explore the significance of relationships to clinical ethics: findings from the Reset Ethics research project. *BMC Med Ethics*, *25*, 66 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-024-01053-9>
- Reisigl, M. (2018). *Diskurslinguistik und Kritik*. Handbuc.
- Rembis, M., Kudlick, C., & Nielsen, K. E. (2018). *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190234959.001.0001>
- Rioux, M. H., Buettgen, A., Zubrow, E., & Viera, J. (2021). *Handbook of disability: Critical thoughts and social change in a globalizing world*. Springer Nature.
- Rötzmeier-Keuper, J., & Wunderlich, N. V. (2024). Who am i here? Care consumers’ identity processes and family caregiver interventions in the elderscape. *Journal of Consumer Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucac045>
- Santacreu-Vasut, E., & Wu, H. (2025). At the intersection of ableism and sexism: Conceptual and empirical applications. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05961-7>
- Schalk, S. (2013). Metaphorically speaking: Ableist metaphors in feminist writing. *Disability Studies Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v33i4.3874>
- Schur, L., Ameri, M., Kruse, D., & Blanck, P. (2024). Introduction to special issue: The new frontier of disability employment on the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, *24*(2), 279–282.
- Sharma, D., & Prabhu, G. N. (2025). Navigating competency in an ableist world: The lived experiences of disabled individuals in education and the workplace. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05958-2>
- Singal, N., & Wijesinghe, T. (2025). Education against (Dis)ableism. In O. Branzei & A. Zeyen (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Disability and Work*. Routledge.
- Speech, M. E. P., Badura, K. L., & Blum, T. C. (2023). Everything is negotiable, but not for everyone: The role of disability in compensation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *108*(4), 571–594. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001039>
- Starzyk, A., & Bauer, J. F. (2025). Three dilemmas of disabled employee voice. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-05964-4>
- Stone, D. L., & Colella, A. (1996). A model of factors affecting the treatment of disabled individuals in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, *21*(2), 352–401. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1996.9605060216>
- Suquet, J.-B., & Collard, D. (2024). Maintaining “Good” Care: An Articulation Work Perspective on Organizational Ethics in the Healthcare Sector. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *194*(3), 545–560. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-024-05616-z>
- Tronto, J. C. (1998). An ethic of care. *Generations: Journal of the American society on Aging*, *22*(3), 15–20.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2024). *Disability and Development Report 2024: Accelerating the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ADVANCED UNEDITED VERSION*. Accessed 24 June 2024
- Wang, M. S., & Tracey, P. (2024). Anti-stigma organizing in the age of social media: How social movement organizations leverage affordances to build solidarity. *Academy of Management Review*, *49*(4), 799–823. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2021.0388>
- Watermeyer, B. (2013). *Towards a contextual psychology of disablism*. Routledge.
- Watermeyer, B., & Swartz, L. (2024). Intersectionality and embodiment: Important issues for disability studies. *Disability & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2024.2433575>
- Watson, N., & Vehmas, S. (2019). Disability studies: Into the multi-disciplinary future. In *Routledge handbook of disability studies* (pp. 3–13). Routledge.
- Williams, J., & Mavin, S. (2012). Disability as constructed difference: A literature review and research agenda for management and organization studies. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *14*(2), 159–179.
- Winter, J. A. (2003). The development of the disability rights movement as a social problem solver. *Disability Studies Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v23i1.399>
- Wolbring, G. (2008). The politics of ableism. *Development (Cambridge, England)*, *51*(2), 252–258. <https://doi.org/10.1057/dev.2008.17>
- Wolbring, G. (2012). Ethical theories and discourses through an ability expectations and ableism lens: The case of enhancement and global regulation. *Asian Bioethics Review*, *4*(4), 293–309.
- Wolbring, G., & Lillywhite, A. (2021). Equity/Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in universities: The case of disabled people. *Societies*, *11*(2), 49. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc11020049>
- Wolbring, G., & Nasir, L. (2024). Intersectionality of disabled people through a disability studies, ability-based studies, and intersectional pedagogy lens: A survey and a scoping review. *Societies*, *14*(9), 176. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc14090176>
- Yousafzai, S., Ng, W., Sheikh, S., & Coogan, T. (2022). Research handbook on disability and entrepreneurship. *Research handbook on disability and entrepreneurship*. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.
- Zeyen, A., Branzei, O., Bruyere, S. M., Dorado, S., Jammaers, E., Singal, N., & Wolbring, G. (2022). Call for papers - Abilities and Ableism as Ethical Dilemmas of Organizing. *Journal of Business Ethics*. https://link.springer.com/journal/10551/updates/18683608?srsltid=AfmBOooolft834jkdidiI_tZmtlft1xpShdwKj0B6AOTZYRhmfHD8zF. Accessed 30 January 2025
- Zeyen, A., & Branzei, O. (2023). Disabled at work: Body-centric cycles of meaning-making. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *185*(4), 767–810. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05344-w>
- Zeyen, A., & Branzei, O. (2025). *Disability and Entrepreneurship: A global map and manifestor for stigma reversal*. Routledge.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.