

https://dspace.org/

A South African NGO engaged in Physical and Sensory Disabilities: A Case Study of the paradigms of Charity and Social Justice.

April, Nqabakazi

2018

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/26608

April, Nqabakazi (2018) A South African NGO engaged in physical and sensory disabilities:a case study of the paradigms of charity and social justice, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/26608>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

This study explores how a South African non-governmental organisation engaged in service provision to people with physical and sensory Disabilities makes sense of its position within the differing paradigms of charity and social justice. The lives of disabled people are at the hands of service providers who intervene on their behalf. Acts of goodwill by non-governmental organisations are often not the result of the dominant and exclusionary medical model of disability that oppresses and marginalises disabled people. These acts of goodwill by organisations are often co-opted by dominant positions of power that valorize the non-disabled at the expense of disabled people occupying non-dominant positions. South Africa is amongst the countries that struggle with issues of social justice and often, but not all the time, organisations representing disabled people are accused of promoting dependency on their services rather than pursuing social change/development. Using a case study as a qualitative inquiry method, the researcher sought to establish evidence of how this organisation makes sense of its position between the differing paradigms of charity and social justice. The research sample constituted of ten participants; four were beneficiaries at the organisation (two males who identify as deaf and two females who identify themselves as disabled with Cerebral Palsy; four Social Workers; the CEO and a Job Placement Officer). These participants enabled the researcher to understand the process of sensemaking holistically. An interpretive technique, in the form of semi-structured interviews, was used for data collection as well as a professional interpreter for participants using Sign Language. Finally, thematic analysis was used to develop themes and an Atlas.ti software for coding and data capturing. The findings of the research indicate that the organisation uses both the charity and social justice paradigm, but that the charity paradigm is more prevalent than the social justice paradigm. The participants argued that to practice social justice is very costly and as a result, the organisation tends to do more charitable work rather than pursue social justice issues.

Keywords: *Physical and Sensory Disabilities, Charity Paradigm, Social Justice Paradigm, NGO*