

Navigating Service Encounters with Disabled Consumers: A Dignity-Based Approach

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Abstract

Vulnerability discourse addresses at-risk consumers' difficulties and needs, primarily highlighting essential resources (e.g., food, housing, clothing, and social support) or capabilities (e.g., digital competencies). Although essential for survival and fair market access, these approaches insufficiently meet the requirements of vulnerable consumers, including human dignity. Due to the limited research on dignity in services, this study aims to study human dignity in service encounters involving vulnerable consumers such as disabled people. The research utilized netnography to acquire data from a disability group on Reddit. The study findings demonstrate how agency, recognition, and equality may either uphold or undermine dignity in service interactions with disabled consumers. The study illustrates that services, especially transformative service research (TSR) and marketing, may significantly benefit from integrating dignity into vulnerability studies, offering a unique paradigm for both theoretical and practical progress.

Keywords: dignity, vulnerability, well-being

Track: Service Marketing & Service Innovation