Reimagining SDG4 through an intersectional and decolonial 'Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach'

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This paper will address how Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) might look if it were written through a hybrid theoretical framework I am calling the Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach (CDCA). This framework combines elements of Sen's (1999) Capabilities Approach (CA), Annamma et al's (2013) Disability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit), and decolonial and postcolonial thought, as it relates to dis/ability and education. I articulate a new SDG4 that emphasizes human freedoms, well-being, and agency, specifically for multiply-marginalized individuals, including those at the intersections of race and dis/ability. The goal emphasizes an explicit need to teach about power, privilege, and domination, and how these have been operationalized in local, regional, national, and global contexts to create and sustain oppression, "isms," and intersectional 'dis(cap)abilities' of 'Others.' I also emphasize the need to teach learners about advocacy, protest, and resistance strategies to add to their capability toolkits (to prevent, protect, and fight back against oppressive actors and systems). I explore how this newly imagined goal would theoretically impact the implementation of the SDG4 on the ground for multiply marginalized students, particularly those with disabilities in the Global South.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goal 4; Inclusive Education; Capability Approach; Disability Critical Race Theory; Decoloniality; Intersectionality

Introduction and Background

Scholars of both the Capabilities Approach (CA) and Disability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit) agree that it is necessary to challenge dominant discourses, values, and education, among other realms of the social world, as exclusionary to those who fall outside of current social, political, and economic power structures (i.e. see Annamma et al., 2013, 2022; Biggeri et al., 2011; Broderick, 2018; Connor et al., 2015; Mitra, 2006; Sen, 2000). Education is supposedly a 'right', but as Capabilities Approach and Disability Critical Race Studies scholars would ask, who has access to this education and who benefits from it? Both frameworks suggest that people who have the capabilities to obtain and benefit from traditional forms of education and development are those already privileged by existing power structures (Dyer, 2001; Iqtadar et al., 2021; Robinson-Pant, 2001; Tikly, 2004, 2017; Ziai, 2013). Ramalingam (2015), for

instance, argues that the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG4 (United Nations, 2015), are filled with the attitude that developing countries are simply vessels to be filled with ideas and knowledge. Cummings (2017: 22) claims that 'the SDGs are fundamentally flawed because they are not based on local realities and local knowledge.' Cummings et al. (2018) later conducted a Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the dominant discourses at the advocacy and negotiation levels of SDG formation and then at the levels of publication and implementation. Their genealogical CDA approach allowed the authors to identify two major categories of discourses evident from conceptualization through publication and implementation of the SDGs: 1.) techno-scientific-economic discourses (those dominant in government policies of the US, Japan, the EU, and Singapore) and 2.) pluralist-participatory discourse (championed, for example, by UNESCO). The former's conceptual origins lie in knowledge-based economies, and it prioritizes scientific and technological knowledge over local knowledges and cultural and linguistic diversity. This type of discourse prioritizes the economic instrumentalism of knowledge and symbolic power of socioeconomic development of knowledge for monetary value. The latter (pluralist-participatory discourses) prioritizes lifelong learning for all and universal access to knowledge. It humanizes the process of global development, the transformational value of knowledge, and the need for multiple knowledges for solving complex problems. Here, knowledge and education are known as public goods and (I argue) can be recognized as capabilities or chosen life functionings (Sen, 1999). Cummings et al. (2018) found, through analyzing the SDG's formation process (including advocacy documents, committee meeting reports, parliamentary debates, press statements) and outcome documents, that the SDGs, 'despite the presence of the pluralist-participatory discourse in vision and strategy, at the level of implementation and goals and targets, the techno-scientific-economic is dominant' (735).

In response to this, this paper seeks to address how Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) might look if it were written through a hybrid theoretical framework I will be calling here, a Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach (CDCA). The Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach combines aspects of Sen's (1999) Capability Approach with Annamma et al.'s (2013) DisCrit.

Theoretical Frameworks

The Capability Approach

Amartya Sen is an Indian economist, philosopher, and Nobel Prize winner in economics, who outlined his Capability Approach in his 1999 book, 'Development as Freedom' (Sen, 1999). The text lays out a supposedly more just conceptualization of development, where Sen argues that development must be an integrated process of expanding interconnected, substantive freedoms; human freedoms must be both the ends and means of development under the CA (1999). Sen emphasizes that GNP and individual income can expand freedoms for people, but

that freedoms depend on other determinants, such as social and economic arrangements (i.e. education and healthcare) and political and civil rights (i.e. freedom to participate in public discussion and scrutiny). Development requires removal of major sources of 'unfreedoms', including poverty, poor economic opportunity, tyranny, neglect of public facilities, systems of social deprivation, inaccessible environments, and the overactivity of repressive states. Economic and political unfreedoms can foster social unfreedoms and vice versa. Sen argues that the assessment of developmental progress should focus primarily on whether freedoms of people have been enhanced, and achievement of development is only effective when people have free and sustainable agency and choice. The CA insists that free agency and capabilities contribute to strengthening free agency and capabilities of other kinds. Having the capabilities to receive and benefit from education, for example, generally expands capabilities to choose desired career paths, choose where to live, and more effectively participate in public debate. Having capabilities to choose where to work and live, on the other hand, can generally expand capabilities to choose desired education and healthcare settings for individuals and family members. Here, people's capabilities, access, and freedoms are influenced by what opportunities are available in their communities (including education, disability, and health services). These freedoms do not have to depend on their indirect or direct contributions to growth of GNP or promotions of industry; they are, however, effective in contributing to economic progress in themselves. Sen argues that high GNP or individual income does not equate to better health or life. While there is a connection between income deprivation and capability deprivation, the linkages may be weak and heavily contingent on other measures (i.e. inclusive, contextualized education one has reason to value, positive social relations and representations, participation in political and civil society, among other capabilities and freedoms).

DisCrit

Subini Annamma, Beth Ferri, and David Connor conceptualized and first introduced Dis/ability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit) in their collaboratively written article, 'Dis/ability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the Intersections of Race and Dis/ability' (Annamma et al., 2013). DisCrit is a framework via which to engage with Disability Studies (DS) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) dynamically and simultaneously. DisCrit draws heavily from Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), which seeks to address how multiple forms of inequalities and social locations are interlocking and interdependent across different contexts. The paradigm then 'explores ways in which race and dis/ability are socially constructed and interdependent' (Annamma et al., 2013: 13). Annamma and colleagues expanded upon their initial article into an edited book entitled 'DisCrit–Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education' (Connor et al., 2015), which addresses interlocking issues of race and disability through topics such as: the achievement/opportunity gap; overrepresentation of children of color in special education; the school to prison pipeline; how compliance and docility in schools is often conflated with "smartness," "goodness," "Whiteness," and "able-bodiedness";

how nations structure "normalcy" around race, class, and ability; racializing ability/disabling race (i.e. pseudoscience historically being used to justify segregation and inequitable treatment of people of African descent); how (even identical) disability labels materialize qualitatively differently for children of color than for their White peers.

DisCrit offers a set of seven tenets to operationalize some of the above-mentioned issues and others most negatively affecting multiply-marginalized, dis/abled and raced bodies that can be illuminated when employing this framework. The seven tenets are as follows:

1. DisCrit focuses on ways that racism and ableism circulate in neutralized and invisible ways to uphold notions of normalcy.
2. DisCrit values multidimensional identities and troubles singular notions of identity such as race and dis/ability or class and gender or sexuality and so on.
3. DisCrit emphasizes the social constructions of race and ability, yet recognizes the material and psychological impacts of being labelled as raced or dis/abled which sets one outside of the Western cultural norms.
4. DisCrit privileges the voices of marginalized populations, traditionally not acknowledged within research.
5. DisCrit considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of citizens.
6. DisCrit recognized Whiteness and Ability as property and that gains for people with dis/abilities have largely been made as a result of interest convergences of White, middle class citizens.
7. DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance

(Connor et al., 2015: 19).

An Intersectional and Decolonial Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach

There is a growing number of scholars publishing work about how the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) can be conceptualized and employed for research and praxis on inclusive education and dis/ability (see for example Broderick, 2018; Mitra, 2006; Terzi, 2007). Mitra (2006:236) for instance, explores how the CA can help researchers analyze disability at 'a.) the capability level; b.) potential disability; and at the functioning level; c.) actual disability.' Broderick (2018) uses the CA to analyze the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006). Van Aswegen and Shevlin (2019) use the CA to inform their Critical Discourse analysis of an Irish disability employment policy and to explore the harms of neoliberalism for people with disabilities.

Most of those who have employed Sen's (1999) Capability Approach to address issues of disability, though, either align with a medical deficit model of disability or are less critical of

it than is necessary for socially just and decolonial work; others align more so with the social or human rights models of disability but fail to or avoid addressing intersectionality sufficiently. There is also a paucity of work on the Capability Approach explicitly addressing the intersections of dis/ability with the violence of colonialism. There is a need to hold the Capabilities Approach in conversation with Disability Critical Race Theory (and intersectionality) for several reasons addressed in this section. Put simply, those who are White and able-bodied in their current sociocultural contexts and who are considered as adhering to those and other dominant social locations on the world stage, are positioned by discourses, systems, and institutions, to have greater capabilities to achieve chosen life functionings. Those who are oppressed by multiple, interlocking, and marginalized social locations, have lesser capabilities to achieve chosen life functionings than do those experiencing less oppressed social locations. The Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach (CDCA) then equates 'unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999), which can result in lack of individual choice and agency to achieve chosen life functionings (hindering Sen's reorientation of development), with societal barriers and lack of accommodations framed within the sociocultural, human rights, and other non-deficit models of disability (as some scholars have alluded) (see for example Mitra, 2006; Broderick, 2018). In this framework, stigmatization, lack of positive representation, lack of accommodations for all types of bodies and minds to achieve *chosen life functionings* for 'good' lives that one has reason to value (as Sen (1999) argues is necessary for development), limit free agency and choice. This can in turn 'cause' dis/ability or dis(cap)ability. CDCA scholars would argue that those experiencing *most* unfreedoms, are those living at the intersections of multiply-marginalized social locations (i.e. non-Whiteness and dis/ability in the global South), with less capabilities to achieve chosen life functionings than do dominant groups benefiting from hegemonic and exclusionary environments, representations, and discourses (including traditional international development and education policies).

Leonardo and Broderick (2011), for instance, state that docility and submissiveness in Western, Eurocentric (and colonial) school contexts equate with 'goodness' and 'smartness,' and those not meeting these standards of docility in predominantly White, Eurocentric schools are often subjectively labelled as having dis/abilities. Tikly (2017) highlights how traditional education promotes docile subjects to contribute to capitalist society. Furthermore, Black students are more often labelled with dis/abilities and are pushed out of mainstream education classrooms and schools for not meeting White, Western cultural standards of docility, thought, and production (Boveda & Aronson, 2019; Connor et al., 2015; Erevelles, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2021; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). This leads to lack of access or capabilities to learn alongside their peers, and therefore, can limit chosen life functionings and free agency (most literally when Black and Brown bodies are pushed out of schools, criminalized, and imprisoned) (Annamma et al., 2014; Annamma, 2018; Connor et al., 2015; Kearl, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2021; Watts & Erevelles, 2004).

Theorists of both the Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1999) and Disability Critical Race Studies

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(Annamma, et al., 2013) propose a restructuring of current, hegemonic education and development paradigms, in terms of what should be the 'end goals' and the means to achieve these end goals. For instance, Sen (1999) challenges dominant and narrow views of development such as the idea that certain social and political freedoms (i.e. liberty of political participation or the opportunity to receive basic education and expand knowledge) are only conducive to 'development' when they contribute to GDP growth and industrialization. He argues, rather, that these substantive freedoms must be valued as 'constituent components' (1999:5) of development. Their relevance for development does not need to, directly or indirectly, contribute to growth of GDP or industrialization (recall the pluralist participatory discourses presented for but then excluded from the Sustainable Development Goals) (Cummings et al., 2018). Sen's CA argues that social and institutional arrangements should enact the value of equal concern, by aiming at *equalizing people's capability to function.* It is through capabilities (real opportunities for functionings or real freedoms) and functionings (valued beings and doings) that educational equity, for example, (as supposedly promoted in SDG4) can be outlined. Sen essentially says people should be afforded the resources that will translate into capabilities and allow for their *choice* of functionings. It is clear, however, that the SDGs do not allow for people to enjoy unrestricted freedoms or choices, seeing as, due to a particular power configuration within the UN (an international organization (IO) with an already global North majority), they are written to further dominant, exclusionary discourses (Carant, 2017, Cummings, 2018)

In terms of education, Terzi (2007) argues that the Capabilities Approach substantially contributes to the conceptualization of educational equality by focusing on the fundamental choice of functionings promised by education, yet which are limited due to the stipulations and neoliberal expectations set in SDG4 (Cummings, 2018). The CA in education emphasizes that the capability to be educated, 'makes the formation and expansion of other capabilities and hence, the contribution it makes to people's opportunities for well-being and for their effective freedoms' (Terzi, 2007: 759). Terzi also states that education must provide resources for important aspects of agency for the enhancement of individuals' effective freedoms, within various contexts, and reflect on valued goals. Many people, though, who lack capabilities due to social, political, and economic barriers, are not afforded access to or do not benefit from formal, Westernized education.

Disability Critical Race Studies scholars also argue that not everyone has the capability to access or benefit from dominant Western education, most often those at intersections of Blackness (or other racial minority identities) and dis/ability in the global South (Sarkar et al., 2022). They also track the impacts of societal barriers (equated here to Sen's 'unfreedoms') that hinder multiply-marginalized oppressed persons (Annamma et al., 2022; Connor et al., 2015; Iqtadar et al., 2021; Padía & Traxler, 2021; Padilla, 2021; Sen, 1999). Just as Sen (1999) proposes a paradigm shift in terms of the understanding of development from valuing GDP/economic growth towards a higher prioritization of human 'well-being', choice, and

equalizing human capabilities, DisCrit scholars also propose a paradigm shift regarding the understanding of dis/ability and race. They encourage deconstructing and problematizing historical and existing power relations, specifically via the paradigm's seven tenets. Drawing from Critical Disability Studies, DisCrit argues that dis/ability can refer to a body's incongruence within 'space and in the milieu of expectations' (Garland-Thomson, 2002:20) (i.e. whiteness and able-bodiedness vs. 'Other') and is materially impacted by power structures, particularly its exclusions and hierarchies in institutions and discourses, as Tremain (2017) states. Hall (2019) argues that specific attention must be paid to abnormality, hierarchies of capability and other exclusionary constructions, and how these phenomena interact with racism, sexism, and other sources of oppression, in order to understand disability politically and socially. This is a departure from the traditional medical deficit view of disability, in which 'individual impairment is both the target and source of deficit, and as the object to be treated' (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2020:16). Balgieri and Lalvani (2020) state that the social model framework (in contrast to the medical deficit model), argues that there are wide variations between humans in terms of bodies and minds, and recognizes these differences as being natural, inevitable, and necessary for society to accommodate. I would also argue that DisCrit scholars are essentially calling for equalizing the unevenness between the capabilities for chosen life functionings and agency of multiply-marginalized bodies, including those who are dis/abled and raced against the global and local 'norms,' with those of dominant groups (White, global Northern, male, cis-gendered, able-bodied, for example). This is not to suggest an approach standardizing capabilities, because as Annamma et al. (2013) and Sen (1999) acknowledge, there is human variation in terms of corporality, language, culture, religious beliefs, family values and so on, and that the end goals of both development and education should again, focus on well-being, agency, and chosen life functionings, as opposed to standardization of what 'ideal' human capabilities and desired functionings should be. This would ultimately recreate universalist ideas of inclusion that are causing harms in the first place.

Consequences of transporting CDCA – Avoiding Uncritical Adaptation

While standardization of capabilities would only maintain positioning against the global dominant measuring stick, there is cause for caution when applying even supposedly transformative and emancipatory theories within regions outside of their foundings (Sarkar, 2022). This includes the Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach. CDCA scholars must be ever cognizant of tensions of Northern theoretical and discursive imports that are universalized in international development, human rights, and social justice policies and jurisprudence that are imposed onto so-called 'underdeveloped' regions, and this is particularly true within the realm of dis/ability and education (Carant, 2017; Grech, 2015; Padilla, 2021; Robinson-Pant, 2001; Soldatic, 2015; Tikly, 2004, 2017; Titchkosky & Aubrecht, 2015; Watermeyer et al., 2019; Wernecke et al., 2021). Grech (2015:6), for example, states that many Northern disability studies scholars have recently adopted the terms 'decolonize' and 'colonization' but that the

words often remain de-historicized and abstract metaphors in Eurocentric academic projects. He emphasizes that this is insufficient and that 'decolonisation, just like colonialism, is not a metaphor. Instead, it is a continuous violent and political process owned by the global South but open to collaboration, drawing on forms of resistance that have long colonial lineages' (6). Disability Critical Race Studies (Annamma et al., 2013) would support this kind of resistance, for example, as stated in Tenet 7: 'DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance' (Connor, et al., 2015: 19). Grech (2015) goes on to argue that Northern Disability Studies projects often simplify, homogenize, and decontextualize dis/abled bodies in the Southern context and ignore Southern epistemologies and ontologies. This, according to Atalas (2003:601 cited in Grech, 2015) sustains 'academic neo-imperialism' that traces back to the violent colonial project.

Sarkar et al. (2022) are scholars who explicitly question whether DisCrit can 'travel' into the South and what are the excess theoretical 'baggage fees' associated with its import (81). The authors begin by addressing how Northern conceptualizations of inclusive education and the underlying problems within it (i.e. misapplied principles from special education, overreliance on the social model, and tensions between neoliberal policy and social justice) have been imposed onto the South. This promotes parallel education systems sustaining exclusions and binaries, distorting the original intention of inclusive education, especially when applied without consideration of local contexts of disability and education by international organizations (Kalyanpur, 2016). Sarkar et al. (2022) however, argue that DisCrit has the potential to positively be applied to the global South because it can 'critique intersecting oppressions enacted through policy, privilege activism, and resistance of marginalized communities and focus on how these can help forge solidarities between grassroots disability rights movements and activism' (90) between the North and South. The authors argue that those carrying DisCrit in their theoretical baggage must be ever aware of their positionalities and theoretical inclinations so that DisCrit 'travels' carefully and critically, without being imposing.

The Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach, therefore, challenges various understandings of dis/ability that are traditionally lacking within international dis/ability and educational discourses, including within SDG4, particularly those of indigenous communities. The CDCA also makes transparent the widespread effects of imperial and colonial violence, in the geohistorical formation of dis/ability, race, and their intersections. CDCA, although conceptualized by a Northern White, dis/abled woman, understands this and calls for collaboration with multiply-marginalized, raced and dis/abled bodies in the South, as well as self-reflexivity and transparency. Critical Dis(Cap)Ability scholars must, therefore, be explicitly decolonial and address colonialism's effects on multiple-marginalized bodies clearly in all work. The CDCA also ensures to engage critically with Southern, decolonial, and postcolonial scholarship (chosen based on reason for and context of research, policymaking, and praxis).

Methodology

I chose to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015) and its related policy documents, via a Critical Discourse Problematization Framework (CDPHF) (Van Aswegen et al., 2019) while employing a CDCA lens. Regarding my process, I initially read through the SDGs in their entirety, SDG4 specifically, and through related United Nations documents. I analyzed, for example, the SDG 2022 implementation report (United Nations, 2022) (and specifically focused on the SDG4 section) through a CDCA lens. I critically analyzed and problematized policy 'warrants' (justifications for proposed policy solutions) (Hyatt, 2013) and answered Bacchi's (2009) six questions that partly structure the CDPHF, specifically referencing DisCrit tenets and aspects of the Capability Approach (Sen 1999). Similar to Van Aswegen et al. (2019), I also viewed silence as discourse, and I attended to power, genealogies, and binaries to contextualize the documents, remembering that policy does not stand alone.

Findings

Reorienting SDG4 through a CDCA lens

My findings indicate a significant need to deconstruct SDG4 and reorient it with explicitly decolonial, intersectional, and contextual policy discourse. There must be a reorientation of the goal (and related documents), emphasizing human freedoms, well-being, and agency (and resisting neoliberal capitalist discourse) specifically for multiply-marginalized individuals, including those at the intersections of race and dis/ability. There also must be explicit emphasis on teaching students about (imperial, colonial, global Northern, White, able-bodied, English/European language) power, privilege, and domination, and how these have been operationalized in local, regional, national, and global contexts to create and sustain oppression, "isms," and dis(cap)ability of "Others" (i.e. indigenous and non-White persons). I also emphasize the need to teach learners about advocacy, protest, and resistance strategies to add to their capability toolkits (as tools to prevent, protect, and fight back whenever necessary). I combine, in this section, my findings with my proposed reorientation of SDG4, through the Critical Dis(Cap)Ability Approach, that may lead to more inclusive and decolonial translation on the ground. Firstly, I specifically attend to the silences within SDG4, the SDGs, and other United Nations documents, related to power, violence, exclusion, hierarchies, and labelling that have historically contributed (and continue to contribute) to intersectional dis/ablement and capability deprivation. I found that there is a lack of intersectional language or explanation as to why children with disabilities are excluded in the first place, specifically relating back to the colonial project (Grech, 2015a; Soldatic & Fiske, 2009; Titchkosky & Aubrecht, 2015). International organizations dominated by actors at the top of the Ivory Tower avoid claiming responsibility for any aspect of educational segregation within SDG4 or any of the SDGs. The justifications (the 'warrants') (Hyatt, 2013; Van Aswegan et al., 2019) that the UN provides in

introductory documents and on their official sites, include abstract claims of the global quest for 'human rights,' but as others have found, they are still promoting harmful neoliberal discourses, including those surrounding education (Cummings et al., 2018; Van Aswegen & Shevlin, 2019). This ultimately prohibits individuals and communities from obtaining the capabilities to achieve these 'human rights' that the UN promises. The true justification as to why inclusive education is actually needed, however, is largely due to colonial segregation and creation of 'Other' racial and ability categories. There is no acknowledgement of whiteness or ability as property (DisCrit Tenet 6) (Connor et al., 2015). The SDGs must, therefore, encompass new 'warrants' (Bacchi, 2009) for deconstructing violent colonial legacies that most negatively affect multiply-marginalized bodies and their capabilities to obtain chosen life functionings, including equitable education.

Secondly, The Critical Dis(Cap)Ability framework would challenge the articulation of the title of Goal 4 itself ('Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all') in that what constitutes 'education' is not specified, nor are the end goals of what education is meant to achieve. This is problematic, because historically, Northern (inclusive) education has been forced upon colonized regions (and marginalized groups within Northern countries) as a form of neo-imperialist control (Tikly, 2017). If CDCA scholars reimagined the title of SDG4, it would perhaps read more as a set of expectations (as the current title is far too reductive):

- Ensure free, inclusive, and equitable quality education that necessitates all types of bodies and minds be integrated into non-segregated (based on race, class, gender, ability, their intersections, etc.) learning environments, that are to be determined by individuals, families, and community members, that are free of infrastructural, curriculum, policy, locational, and other barriers.
- Problematize and deconstruct dominant, colonial, and exclusionary educational spaces, policies, and curricula that stifle non-Western/non-Eurocentric ways and goals of being, doing, and learning.
- Rebuild by ensuring the modes and content of curriculum are contextually determined by collaborating individuals, families, social activists, teachers, local policy makers, and stakeholders, while specifically privileging the needs of multiply-marginalized groups and those historically violated, excluded, and dis/abled by those in power.
- Center lessons that attend to power, privilege, and domination, and explore how these have been operationalized in local, regional, national, and global contexts to create and sustain oppression, "isms," and "Othering."
- Expand the curriculum to explore advocacy, protest, and resistance strategies so learners can expand their capability toolkits (with tools to prevent, protect, and fight back against oppressive actors and systems).

- Ensure to employ universally designed frameworks, to guarantee individuals and communities are afforded varied means of educational engagement, representation, involvement, and expression.
- Provide capabilities for individual agency and personalized understandings of success, within immediate community environments.
- Ultimately, foster interdependence and choice of functionings throughout the lifespan.

This rearticulation of SDG4 prioritizes choice and agency for all individuals, as Sen (1999) and Annamma et al. (2013) would argue is important. It centers interdependence and community collaboration and engagement throughout education processes. These values are oftentimes more in line with how indigenous communities and communities of color conceptualize 'success' (Love et al., 2021; Phasha et al., 2017; Tachine, 2022; Walton, 2018) than individualistic and competitive framings of 'success' in colonial, Western education settings. This SDG4 revision also calls out powerful actors as being a major reason for existing educational inequalities and emphasizes teaching advocacy and resistance strategies. Teaching learners practical strategies for defending or reclaiming their self-identified social locations and sovereignty of their communities falls in line with DisCrit (Annamma et al., 2013:19) Tenet 7 ('DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance') and Grech's (2015) assertion that decolonization needs to be more than simply a metaphor, but a continuous political process.

This new 'title' would also closely align with revised SDG4 targets and indicators. For instance, those employing the CDCA here would likely call for a revising of Target 4.4: 'By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship' (United Nations, 2015). Scholars of this new framework would likely propose a shift regarding the acquisition of 'relevant' skills for the contribution to the global capitalist economy (techno-scientific-economic ideology) (Cummings, 2018), towards the acquisition of 'relevant' skills to ultimately obtain individual and community substantive freedom and choices (Sen, 1999). CDCA would likely also challenge the individualistic nature of Target 4.4 and problematize the target's promotion of the rhetoric of responsibility that perpetuates the idea that specifically multiply-marginalized raced and dis/abled individuals are solely responsible for the negative situations they face (Annamma, 2017). In this case, failing to obtain a 'decent' or 'relevant' job, for example, would be the reason for individual impoverishment – a dis/abling 'unfreedom' in itself. Both the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) and DisCrit (Annamma, et al., 2013) recognize social, political, economic, and other barriers hindering 'success' and perpetuating inequality and therefore, might propose Target 4.4 be written as such:

> By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have skills and resources relevant to their choices of life functioning that will contribute to their overall well-being, in terms of health, happiness, economic stability, and physical, political, and economic safety. This can be accomplished via inclusive education that is

contextually relevant and aligns with SDG4's title expectations.

Regarding Target 4.6: 'By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy' (United Nations, 2015), scholars looking through the CDCA lens would argue for the specification of 'literacy' due to high value placed on traditional, spoken English throughout global colonial history, as well as contest the high value placed on typical English instruction in dominant development discourse. According to Dyer (2008), typical English education is only conducive to perpetuating the Global Northern, capitalist agenda in postcolonial and semi-postcolonial 'developing' nations. Critical Disability Studies, DisCrit, and language scholars Phoung and Cioè-Peña (2022) argue that informal and formal language and literacy education are agentive of policing students' bodies and minds into docility, pathologizing certain language practices against dominant and hegemonic education structures, rooted in racism and ableism. The CDCA framework might call for employing Phuong and Cioè-Peña's Critical Disabilities Raciolinguistic (CDR) theory, presented in Annamma et al.'s (2022) *DisCrit Expanded*, when considering revisions to SDG4. CDR emphasizes that language becomes a proxy for race and disability and can be used in justifying the construction and labeling of both. This is true in that the pathologization of non-dominant linguistic practices often leads to placement in restrictive classroom environments for language instruction, before further segregation into special education classrooms (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Phuong & Cioè-Peña, 2022). CDR claims language and literacy 'competence' can be used as a marking for citizenship and belonging and that other forms of communication (i.e. languages other than English, signaling via eye contact, use of assistive technologies for non-verbal speakers, etc.) are not considered 'language' and do not demonstrate being 'literate' within the dominant white, able-bodied, global North power structure. Given these considerations, Target 4.6 of SDG4, under the lens of CDCA, might read:

- By 2030, ensure that all youth and adults, regardless of race, class, gender, ability, or other social or physical locations (and their intersections), obtain a level of literacy that is contextually relevant to their unique communication and social needs, allowing them the capabilities to achieve their choice of life functionings, within their immediate areas.
- Ensure the language of instruction aligns to the greatest extent possible (based on language of teachers and funding for teacher language expansion) with learners' home languages. This necessitates the refusal to teach and test in the dominant language of oppressors.
- Ensure all children and adults receive continuous informal (or formal) education and exposure to alternative forms of communication, including non-verbal cues, assistive technologies (if available), languages of surrounding cultures, and other communication necessary for free agency and fostering relationships in their localized areas (or areas where they intend to travel or migrate).
- Ensure all children and adults also receive relevant numeracy instruction that is necessary for basic handling of individual and family finances, within their cultural identity groups.

- Ensure education sources offer intermediate and advanced mathematics opportunities for students who choose to pursue some or all of them for their life functionings.
- Ensure this instruction is implemented through a contextualized universal design for learning framework.

This rearticulation of Target 4.6 emphasizes Sen's (1999) choice, agency, chosen functionings, and wellbeing. It establishes a culturally and contextually relevant expectation for education, accounting for traditionally marginalized (and multiply-marginalized) groups, as DisCrit scholars necessitate (Annamma, 2013; Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Blanchett et al., 2009; Kearl, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2021; Yee, 2020). It calls for resisting teaching via languages of domination and exclusion and, instead, teaching and valuing learners' home languages.

It may be argued that sister documents and appendices accompanying the SDGs do emphasize a more inclusive discourse elaborating on the vague language of the SDGs, including SDG4. This is, however, insufficient for more intersectionally inclusive implementation on the ground, for two main reasons. Firstly, the language of various implementation reports (see for example United Nations, 2022) refer back to neoliberal dominant understandings of education that Sen (1999) and Annamma et al. (2013) would resist. Regardless, therefore, of any accompanying, clarifying or follow up documents to SDG4, assessments based on traditional, hegemonic understandings of education are evident. Secondly, these supplemental, clarifying documents are circulated and promoted on the world stage to a far less extent than the SDGs. It is improbable that those who are 'illiterate' (as implicitly or explicitly defined by the UN) and those who have no or minimal access to internet services (again, the most negatively affected being multiply-marginalized, dis/abled bodies in the global South) will see or directly benefit from these documents. The SDGs, as one of the most widely promoted international development policy discourses, must be intersectional and decolonial up front, so that explicitly intersectional and decolonial language is no longer silenced on the backburner, descended into the 'fine print,' or relegated to the sea of development documents that most on the ground will never read.

Concluding Discussion: Implications for Practice

Reframing SDG4 via the CDCA can have direct implications for educational practitioners and learners on the ground. Sutton and Levinson (2001:3) argue that '[p]olicy serves at various levels of government as a legitimating charter for the techniques of administration and as an operating manual for everyday conduct; it is the symbolic expression of normative claims worked into a potentially viable institutional blueprint.' Discursive constructions within policy, therefore, become implicated in material educational experiences of teachers and learners. Let us look at the relationship of international and South African inclusive education policy (and jurisprudence) with practice in South African schools, as an example. There is a growing call among South African scholars and education practitioners for the decolonization of (inclusive)

education and the incorporation of indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and axiologies into the curriculum, policy, and learning systems more generally (Musitha & Mafukata, 2018; Watermeyer et al., 2019). Walton (2018) argues that in order for inclusive education to work in the South African context, the conceptualization of (inclusive) education must be reoriented at the foundational and structural levels. She argues that SA must resist including students with dis/abilities (and intersectional dis[cap]abilities) into existing 'full-service' schools perpetuating Eurocentric and neoliberal values (i.e. standardization guised as 'equality' and valuing independence over interdependence). These values contradict the South African philosophical concept of 'Ubuntu' (meaning, collaboration, togetherness, and reciprocity) (Akabor & Phasha, 2022) and largely promote individualistic, capitalistic, and competitive standards. South African Disability Studies scholars and educational practitioners also call for challenging the very policies structuring the South African inclusive education framework which prioritize global Northern framings of dis/ability and education (Engelbrecht, 2020; Phasha et al., 2017; Walton, 2018), including that which is espoused within SDG4. Many, for instance, challenge the social model of dis/ability that dominates international inclusive education treaty/policy discourse and which is mirrored in Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001), South Africa's primary inclusive education document (Engelbrecht, 2020; Kanter, 2015). The Eurocentric social model framing is meant to guide 'inclusive' education in South African schools that are still experiencing apartheid legacies of racism and dis/ablement. This includes a nationally mandated curriculum that is far from culturally relevant for non-White learners (Musitha & Mafukata, 2018), history taught through a Eurocentric prism (Mawere et al., 2022), language policies that require learning and testing via the language of the apartheid oppressors (Kretzer & Kaschula, 2021), and centering concerns for individual performance and extrinsic motivation (i.e. grades and gold stars) (Akabor & Phasha, 2022)

Walton (2018:31 italics in original), however, argues that 'decolonization *through* inclusive education' involves deconstructing and problematizing goals of current (inclusive) education and the framings of dis/ability in inclusive education policy discourse, to further align with indigenous values. The reorientation of SDG4 that I propose above would call for South Africa to problematize its primary inclusive education policies that mirror international inclusive education discourses. Reorienting South African policy to mirror the CDCA version of SDG4 would require including expectations for teaching in learners' home languages, involving communities in teaching and learning, placing higher value on interdependence and collaboration ('Ubuntu'), and ensuring the curriculum is culturally and contextually relevant. Perhaps most importantly, for South Africa to align its inclusive education policies with SDG4 and other international documents, it would have to replace a White-washed, Eurocentric history curriculum with one that centers teaching explicitly about apartheid legacies of racism, ableism, and intersectional capability deprivation (see SDG4's reimagined 'title' regarding exploring power and domination). This goes hand in hand with teaching learners strategies for resistance, protest, and advocacy so that they can assist in decolonization efforts and fighting

back against oppression in the future.

It is clear that with how the SDGs (and in particular SDG4) are written, there is limited opportunity for people, particularly marginalized people (i.e. those with dis/abilities) to employ free choice and agency or have equal opportunities to achieve desired functionings, as both the CA and DisCrit emphasize. The CDCA framework then employs the argument that the Eurocentric education being further globalized through the SDGs is only furthering "development" for some. As Tikly (2004:174) states, 'taken together, discourses around education and development have the effect of rendering populations economically useful and politically docile in relation to dominant global interests', and SDG4 perpetuates this. Connor et al. (2015) and Sen (1999), might argue for reorienting the discourse within SDG4 (and the SDGs more broadly) using a CDCA paradigm to not only incorporate the voices and opinions of the most marginalized (i.e. people at the intersections of race and disability), but also to stress well-being and capabilities for chosen life functionings over economic growth, and that this will promote more inclusive change for the better.

Conflicts of Interest

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