Democratising Participatory Research

Pathways to Social Justice from the South

Carmen Martinez-Vargas

https://www.openbookpublishers.com

Cover image: Sander van Leusden (Studio SanArt), *Transmorphosis* (2016), all rights reserved. Cover design by Anna Gatti.

7. Broadening Our Participatory Evaluations: A Southern Capabilitarian Perspective

All my life I have been taught to give respect, but to give the most respect to a white man.

My father is a farmer, finished matric at a young age, worked in a couple of jobs and ended on a farm. I do not know what life is like for my father, but, I can see the scars behind his smile.

Although my father finished matric with good grades, he came from a poor family; they could not afford tertiary education. I was already born by that time and as a father, he had to provide.

My father has worked for two or three farmers in his life. He has worked on the farms for more than twelve years of his life but all the time he made it look like it was great, he put a big smile on his face and guaranteed to me that everything was okay.

Years went by, everything was yet the same. But then my father began to change, his big smile didn't look the same. I only found recently what it was like for my father to work on the farms. You get insulted and called harsh names, you are kicked and slapped on the head and treated like less of a man. All you have to do is do as you are told, no questions asked. Although it hurts so much you have to go through all the pain just to put food on the table for your children. Most farm workers are underpaid, overworked and yet they have to stay and keep on working for their families.

Who will speak up for them?

How many people worked on the farms and were unfairly dismissed?

How many of them are still called kaffir?

Racism still exists, go to the farms and let the workers speak for themselves.

Who will be the voice of the voiceless?

We will not keep quiet.

Narratives on Social Injustices: Undergraduate Voices, 2018

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the experiences of two of the twelve co-researchers on the DCR project. These two members were selected to illustrate how the Capabilities Approach can provide a more adequate evaluative frame for participatory practices and fulfil the fifth principle of the DCR frame as part of the facilitator's role. Exploring a participatory project through a capabilities lens requires more than an evaluation of general capabilities, as presented in Chapter Five. Focusing on individual valued capabilities contributes to the expansion of co-researchers' valuable freedoms, as defined by the members themselves. It also contributes to the acknowledgement of invisible power structures that operate within the group, by highlighting differences among members. In this manner, the Southern potential of the Capabilities Approach, and its capacity to acknowledge different contexts and lived experiences, is enhanced.

Hence, the two cases displayed here demonstrate the potential of a capabilities evaluation. First, a broad explanation of each member's life experiences is provided in order to better understand their valuable capabilities. Second, each member's valuable capabilities are explored in detail in order to understand why they are important and how the project has achieved these capabilities, if indeed they have. The capabilities presented for each case are distinct, according to the formulation process by the participants. Furthermore, each case concludes with a summary reflection on how the project has contributed—or not—to the enhancement of each member's capabilities, aside from the general view explored in Chapter Five.

The chapter concludes by outlining the three main contributions of the Capabilities Approach to participatory evaluations. First, it expands the informational basis of the evaluative space. It expands the evaluation from an outcome perspective (functionings) to a freedoms-outcome perspective (capabilities-functionings), giving primacy to the valued capabilities of the co-researchers to evaluate the outcome. Second, it provides an individual, centred perspective, acknowledging power structures and differences among the members, if the facilitator wishes to do so. It captures the differences between members and shows how different colonial conversion factors affect their personal capabilities before and after the process. And third, it avoids a paternalist evaluation

and Northern assessments, or evaluations drafted and implemented mainly and only by external actors. The Capabilities Approach does not provide an external or foreign evaluative frame. Conversely, it constructs an individual frame based on capabilities that are contextually valuable for the members and explores whether or not a practice has achieved valued functionings.

7.2 Shifting Our Informational Basis

Minenhle and Siyabonga, the two cases presented here, share some common features. For example, they both study at the same university as undergraduate students, they are black, and they live in a post-1991 South African context. These features cause them to share some similarities. However, Minenhle and Siyabonga are not the same. For instance, their gender and socio-economic status are different. These differences between them truly matter when it comes to evaluating our participatory projects and fulfilling our fifth principle of the DCR project. Thus, this chapter explores each of these individual cases, in order to understand what a capabilities evaluation of our DCR practices looks like, and what it brings to participatory evaluations from a Southern perspective. This shifts our evaluation away from generalities, to focus on the specificities of the team members.

7.2.1 Minenhle's Story

At the time of the project, Minenhle was a young woman of twenty-one years of age in her third year of studying political science. She comes from a township close to Bloemfontein, due to the racial segregation experienced by her family in the past. The township is relatively far from the city so every time she has to go to town, including to attend her university classes, this involves taking different taxis for over two hours, and traversing not-so-secure areas of the town. Besides this, the township is a lively place and constitutes a part of Minenhle's identity.

Regarding her family, Minenhle has a stepbrother, with whom she is no longer in contact. She identifies herself as Xhosa, even though her mother is Sotho and her father Xhosa. Minenhle never had the opportunity to spend time with her father because he was incarcerated

and died while she was very young. Her childhood was not easy. She remembers her mother struggling to provide, even in terms of daily meals for the family, especially after the death of her father. Eventually, her mother moved in with another man and this situation did not benefit Minenhle. Minenhle's mother and her partner verbally abused her for years. Without a doubt, Minenhle would have wished for a more supportive mother due to all the challenges she has experienced in her life, but this was not the case.

Minenhle attended a public, fees-free primary and secondary school where the unofficial language of instruction was Xhosa. Both schools were deficient in resources and did not provide an adequate education for her to be able to access higher education easily, as happens with most of the children in her township. However, she fondly remembers a teacher at the high school who was supportive and helped her during that period.

In her community, she did not have much contact with white people. During high school, she did an assignment on racism, which, to some extent, made her feel frustrated and angry towards white people, because of all the horrible stories she heard from the individuals she talked to.

At university, she chose politics and started her first course of education in English, as the first person in her family to access higher education. She wanted to study politics because it is a male-dominated field and she wanted to demonstrate to her community that a girl can make it through even if you have to study in English, as she is certain to do. This desire in particular arises from all the negative messages that she received from her immediate community and family members, but also from all the barriers that she encountered in entering the local university. Minenhle was continually told that she would end up in jail like her father, and continually reminded of her insufficient economic status to pursue the education she wanted. However, none of these comments broke Minenhle down. On the contrary, she used them as a reminder of who she did not want to become, and who she did want to be, despite these difficulties.

Her first encounter with university was after her acceptance, when she arrived there with a friend to register as a student. This friend was looking for bursaries and knew someone who could help them.

Fortunately, this person was very helpful for Minenhle too. He paid her tuition fee—because she did not have the money for it—looked for accommodation on campus, and provided her with a bursary, which covered the entire three years of her undergraduate studies. This bursary, although not huge, was fine for her. She said, 'for someone who is from my background, it is enough'. Thus, in many cases she used part of this money to help other friends and her family. However, as the year of the project (2017) was her final undergraduate year, she was worried about how to finance her postgraduate studies, because she wanted to continue studying despite being unable to pay her tuition fees or her expensive student life. Minenhle understands the importance of education as a way to challenge her background, change her future and that of her loved ones, and as a way to overcome her financial marginalisation by accessing a decent job and helping others to do so too.

Minenhle's enjoyment of being on campus did not last very long, due to the racism she encountered there multiple times during her second year. She remembers some incidents that took place outside of her residence, such as one case involving security guards, and the incident at Shimla Park.[1]

Minenhle is determined to work hard to become the person she wants to be. She wants to be the first woman to become President of South Africa. She is really determined to fight against injustices and show other people that they can do it too. She thinks that it does not matter what has happened to you in the past, or how bad it was; you should not allow these circumstances to define you or determine who you are.

In conclusion, Minenhle's story determines her own valuable and insurgent capabilities, capabilities that are highly significant for overcoming her marginalisation. The context and the historical moment into which Minenhle was born are substantial for understanding what kind of life she wants to lead and the things she wants to do, as well as what is preventing her from achieving her goals. Minenhle is similar to many students around this campus, especially the majority of first-generation black students, but also different in many cases, having experiences that have shaped her in unique ways. Therefore,

---

1   See Chapter Five for more information about the Shimla Park incident.

her capabilities choices are better understood with an awareness of these abovementioned experiences. At the time of the project, Minenhle highly valued four capabilities. These were (A) Human recognition, (B) Ubuntu, (C) Self-Development and (D) Epistemic capabilities. However, these capabilities are not static, as the insurgent term highlights, nor are they entirely separate categories. These capabilities intersect with one another through functionings.
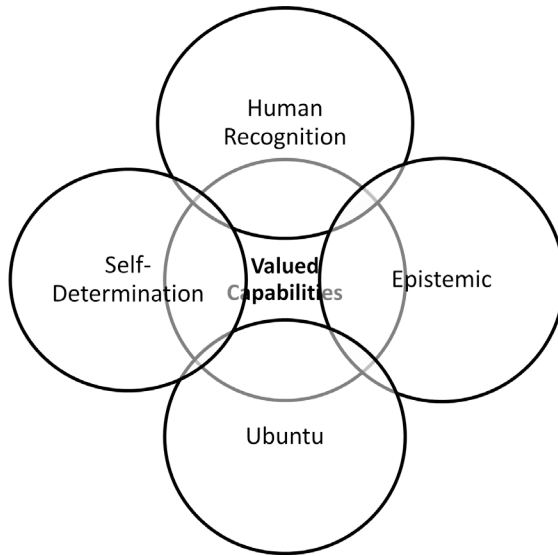
Figure 7: Minenhle's Valued Capabilities (image by the author, 2021).

The following sections will explore each of Minenhle's capabilities, first by showing why this capability is important for her and then continuing with an exploration of how the project has expanded the relevant freedom, if indeed it has.

Human Recognition Capability

For Minenhle, human recognition is strongly linked to her life experiences and her past. The constant influence of the community, family members, and broader society on her self-perception acted as a degenerative conversion factor. Minenhle's freedom to be recognised as a full human being was significantly reduced by the derogative perceptions of her community. However, this still persists today, due to her context, and

the different colonial conversion factors that make Minenhle more vulnerable than others. For instance, her racial group, gender, and financial status intersect, preventing Minenhle from exercising her own valuable capabilities, such as human recognition.

Minenhle has had multiple experiences which degraded her own self-perception; a situation which had been further reinforced by others in her immediate context. As mentioned in previous chapters, these constitute some of her colonial conversion factors as well as some of her epistemic exploitation and marginalisation (Goetze 2018). As Berenstain (2016) explores, what we are talking about here is not individual conversion factors, but rather colonial structures that gaslight individuals and distort their own perception. These undermine a person's confidence in their own understanding of reality, leading to a sense of self-doubt. In this case, Minenhle's security and self-perception are mediated by the derogative perceptions surrounding her, due to the circumstances of her life, thus minimising her own capability to value herself for who she is rather than what is around her or what people think about her.

The project had an effect on this capability. As she explained, the group was not a judgmental space; we respected each other and provided a space to value our opinions and ourselves. She said:

> 'The group… it does allow you to be yourself and obviously, they don't judge you…I never… they don't judge. That is one of the things that I love about it because I was worried…because I have this face that is like…I don't wanna talk to you…which…but…they are actually quite friendly… because at the beginning I thought…mmm…they will look at me…and…I don't know…but they are…actually…a bunch of friendly people and not so judgmental as…people that I normally meet with outside.' (second interview)

During the last interview, she said:

> 'The project did give me…some…value…in terms of…discussing certain issues and then…also being heard…also the…the other people…who I told my opinion, like how I feel about certain things…and to recognise that my opinions also do matter, like…other people's opinions…mmm… matter…' (third interview)

To a certain extent the project provided a space in which she felt relevant, and recognised as an individual who deserved to be heard. Moreover, this capability is closely related to outcomes—functionings—such as

voice and participation. Minenhle wants to be an activist and participate in changing her society due to this insurgent capability. Therefore, she must acquire a position of leadership that allows her to do something about the inequalities she has experienced and continues to experience. However, the combination of different colonial conversion factors has reduced Minenhle's chances of raising her voice. Minenhle did not have many spaces or platforms in which to raise her voice or feel like a valuable person. Moreover, she did not, and does not, have appropriate spaces for active participation within the university context, nor many spaces to feel recognised and valued. She said during the interviews that, actually, the project helped her to find and use a voice for the first time:

> 'In the sessions I am able to say something, I have the confidence to say something and the environment allows me to say something and in classes there are a lot of people and most of them are not...so...they are very different from the normal setting that we have in the normal sessions [workshops], so I guess I would say I still don't have that confidence to say something in class but also the environment of the class does not allow you to say something because you feel like...I mean...in class...I am learning about something that I've never heard before, so...I don't really know anything and if I would say something what if they laugh at me, so...it's different in that sense and also...that in class you can say something at whatever, the topic that might be that day but he [the lecturer] being in front telling you what is right and what is wrong, so you can't really say "Sir I feel like this theory is wrong," or whatever, so it's different in that sense.' (second interview)

She said that the project had not only helped her to talk within the project meetings but also outside of them, and therefore it enhanced this valuable capability:

> 'It has helped with my confidence, just being able to speak in front of people and tell them my perspective confidently [...] It builds that thing of...if I can tell this to these people about this and that, then I am able to do so outside of the session which, it really helps.' (third interview)

She continues:

> 'So it also helped...in that because, now I'm able to stand up...for myself or for other people, [...] I'm able to participate on campus...with such things...like res [student residence], when they talk about...whatever

that is happening, like feminism, I'm able to take a leadership position
and stand up for what I know […] Yeah…that's after…after…joining the
project, when the project started…because before then I wasn't so vocal,
I know…I know that I am…umm…I'm opinionated but most of the time,
I keep that to myself…I felt…felt…something about a certain issue…I
just keep it to myself or I just say it to a close friend…so that's how…I
feel…that's not right…it really helped in giving me the confidence to…to
stand up…not just knowing that…sorry…it gave me the confidence to…
stand up in front of other people and tell them how…I feel about certain
things…so yeah…it really helped.' (third interview)

The project not only helped Minenhle to find her voice and expand her
participation freedoms in different spaces (as achieved functionings),
but also expanded her capability of recognition, despite the degenerative
colonial conversion factors surrounding her. In addition, the group
helped her to be proactive in exploring issues that affected her from a
leadership and activism point of view. For Minenhle, racism was really
important due to her past experiences and the injustices surrounding
her. To a certain extent, the project's research focus on racism provided
her with a platform to explore these issues. While her context does
not allow her and other students to openly discuss it due to colonial
conversion factors, the project allowed her and the other members to
openly discuss these issues:

'Race, I find race very relevant because of the current situation in…
generally in the country, not only at the university. I find it relevant,
which is something that I feel, it's something that needs to be discussed
more, and not suppress it like it's not there, because it is there.' (second
interview)

In conclusion, it seems that Minenhle was not able to fully exercise her
recognition capability, and this impeded her from raising her voice
among many other functionings. Therefore, this diminished her active
participation in matters that were important to her, and also restricted
her possibilities of achieving a position of leadership, which Minenhle
valued. Conversely, the project acted as an interruption between some
of her colonial conversion factors and her capabilities. She achieved
certain functionings, and it also helped her to enhance her capability.
Nevertheless, it must be said that this capability expansion is neither
complete, nor perfect. It is actually fluid, according to both past

experiences and future experiences that are yet to come for Minenhle. Human recognition was compromised by Minenhle's experiences and her own personal perceptions, and exacerbated by her marginalisation. The project helped her to understand herself differently and to achieve certain functionings, as well as considerably expanding her freedom. However, Minenhle still has to deal with the context and the society that surrounds her, which, to some extent, can limit her recognition capability in the present and the future.

Ubuntu Capability

As Minenhle did not have her mother's support, nor care from the community or many family members, she highly valued support and care, due to her lack of this capability. One can see, however, that this capability was not entirely absent, as evidenced in the examples she provided of people who had given care, such as her secondary education teacher or the person that helped her to get a bursary for her higher-education studies. However, to a certain extent, this lack of care and support has continued throughout her current student life and the experiences that she has encountered when living in a new environment, so much so that her marginalisation is clear. Much of Minenhle's survival on campus depends on the people surrounding her and their willingness to support her in diverse matters. Nevertheless, the urgency of this for Minenhle does not necessarily mean that the context will automatically provide her with this substantial freedom. Conversely, as Minenhle's self-perception was diminished due to colonial conversion factors in place, this has influenced the way in which she engages with other students and individuals, directly affecting this Ubuntu capability, not necessarily as a giver but mostly as a receiver.

The research group provided a supportive space where many of the members were like family for her. Even though the purpose of us coming together was to implement our research, the members were also there to assist with personal issues. Minenhle said:

> 'When we come to varsity and we meet new people, or some of them, obviously… you meet different people, some of them were good for you, some of them not so much… they are just there for the sake of being there, and then… they don't really bring value into your life, but the

> project... enabled me to meet some of the most amazing people who...
> have taught me so much about... even... about things... outside of the
> project like we do... talk about other things like life generally, so it did
> help in terms of affiliation... having that support, knowing that, if you
> need something sometime you are able to call one of the people within
> the group.' (third interview)

Minenhle also talked about how difficult it was for her to have female
friends, and how the project helped her to meet other girls and challenged
her own stereotypes,

> 'I normally say to people like... I don't get along with girls, I don't
> really have good friends who are girls... no... umm... but meeting the
> different girls in the group... like... it really taught me something, that
> not every girl is the same, not every girl is too dramatic... or... yeah [...]
> so... meeting... having those friendships with them, was really great and
> amazing... we always get along, which is something that I'm not used
> to... so yeah.' (third interview)

Moreover, the project helped Minenhle to understand herself differently,
as seen in the previous capability. This contributed towards changing
the way she usually relates to others, facilitating her affiliation, at least
with the group members. She said:

> 'Actually, I cannot wait... for sure I cannot wait to... to... see them again...
> which is quite... which is quite interesting. Because one would say
> that... I am not comfortable with people that I live with, but I am not so
> comfortable with them, I am more comfortable with the group, which
> also they... they give you that thing to value yourself more... so yeah...
> yeah.' (second interview)

All of this permitted Minenhle to establish support networks that are
basic and necessary for her to overcome the many colonial conversion
factors that affect her life negatively. She said:

> 'In the group I know there's at least one or two people that I can actually
> come and say ehh, I don't have food, do you have food? Can I have...
> do you know what I mean... so that they're very supportive.' (second
> interview)

These networks helped her in different ways, as a way to ensure primary
needs, as food security, but also to get valuable information about
bursaries and knowledge that can benefit her in the future. She said:

> 'Yeah... it also helped, like finding bursaries... and... umm... just having the help... knowing people... like you who know where I can get certain knowledge about bursaries... or help with my academic work, or yeah... in terms of that it did... help.' (second interview)

And:

> 'Knowing that [the facilitator] can know where to find bursaries, finding what what what or what what... it was helpful... instead of being alone... not having someone to tell you that if you have financial problems you have to go to this institution or whatever place. It maybe... so it was relevant as well.' (third interview)

Therefore, Minenhle was able to expand this capability due to the project and achieved it through different functionings. Her enrolment in the group provided her with supportive networks. Nevertheless, this also expanded her capability for creating meaningful friendships and accessing networks of support in different ways, thus challenging the way she used to relate to others, at least in the university space and with this particular group.

Self-Development Capability

The self-development capability discussed here supports the development of one's valuable life through critical thinking, which is closely related to Minenhle's case and her life experiences, particularly the negative social stereotypes that have been present in her life, and her desire to change her past and secure her capabilities in the future.

Minenhle's self-development was not a capability that was absent before the project. Her story says a lot about how she managed to overcome the negative effects of colonial conversion factors in her life. Her resilience and perseverance highlighted how this capability was available and how it was achieved, as evidenced in her desire to be different and her success in making drastic changes in her life, and becoming the first person to access higher education in her family.

Despite this capability already being available for her, the project managed to expand it a little further. She said, 'it really has changed me, it changed me, myself... yeah... because I got to learn, emotionally, intellectually, learn something about myself that I didn't know, so

yeah...' (third interview). This is also evident in the second interview, when she stated, 'yeah... it helps your growth' (second interview).

To a certain extent, the project not only helped her to gain knowledge which had an impact on her, but also to learn from the time spent together and the shared experiences, so as to form an idea of who she is and what she wants for the future. She said:

> 'the group really motivated me to work hard, to better myself, be open-minded and not judge people because of their mistakes, or because of who they are and really... yeah... just be open-minded about... about things.' (third interview)

Minenhle was determined to lead her life in the way she wanted. However, the project expanded the information available to her in order to assess that life. Equally, it provided her with the spaces to achieve (functionings) some of her personal aims, for instance, the possibility to learn more about the issues that concerned her, or to provide her with an adequate platform to fight against these injustices in various ways.

Epistemic Capability

For Minenhle, this capability is key, not only as an end, but also as a means of achieving other things that she wants to in her life. Ultimately, Minenhle wants to know more about the things she is passionate about, she wants to expand her critical thinking and be able to challenge her assumptions. On the other hand, Minenhle considers this capability as essential for her financial freedom, especially when talking about formal learning, and the educational system that has excluded her family for generations. Minenhle's life conditions did not make it easy for her to access higher education. There have been many colonial conversion factors on the way and others continue to exist. Nevertheless, she highly values her education as a way to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to access a job that can provide for her and her family economically, and, therefore, to challenge her present and past situation.

However, the university context was not always as open and plural as Minenhle wished. Colonial conversion factors such as the racism Minenhle experienced and the hierarchical structure of the institution, along with her gender, limited her capability to learn from other students

and share her own knowledge, not to mention her opportunity to learn beyond Eurocentric frames favoured by the institution.

On this matter, the project provided Minenhle with a space for mutual learning as giver and receiver of epistemic materials (Fricker 2015). She said:

> 'It's been good... mmm... I've learnt a lot, especially from the other participants, yeah... It's been really great and really helpful.' (second interview)

This space for learning and gaining knowledge from each other was significant for her. Equally, hearing different perspectives from diverse individuals, among the group members and beyond, helped her to expand her own thinking, as well as to share her own knowledge with others:

> 'The people that we met and the team as well. Meeting the different individuals that I met, my knowledge... I was able to share my knowledge with them, and they also shared what they know, their knowledge, with me. So that allowed me to have a broader... umm... perspective on certain things... getting... having knowledge about... for example Kungawo... telling us about the LGBTQI community... which I didn't know what it meant... I didn't know... I didn't know fully what they go through [...] having other people that explained such things... to you, the knowledge they pass to you was really vital because you are able to think critically in the future.' (third interview)

On the other hand, as noted above, this capability is a means for Minenhle. Higher education can help her to achieve the dignified life that was denied to her family due to unfair existing colonial structures, which limited their access to sufficient financial means. In this way, the project had academic benefits for her, but it also provided her with skills that might be helpful for her employability in the future. In terms of academic benefits, she said:

> 'You talked to us about different methodologies, it was very important to me to know that, because I've been failing my assignments, so it was really important to me. Because it really helped me a lot. It helped me a lot with my assignments, because I always failed my assignments and for the first time I got above 60%.' (second interview)

Access to the epistemic system of the university was essential for her due to her hermeneutic marginalisation (Goetze 2018). Knowing how

knowledge is produced in these institutions and somehow starting to become an active contributor affected this capability positively, as seen in the passing of her assignments. Moreover, the project also helped Minenhle to develop different skills, such as academic writing, research, or the use of different software that was useful for her studies, all of which increase her prospects of a career in the future:

> 'It did... especially in terms of... writing my assignments, it... it was an improvement with my references thing, how I go about my assignments... although I still have a lot of work to do, but it really helped me with writing my assignments, and doing research... so it helped me in that instance.' (third interview)

She continued:

> 'Definitely, definitely, timing... umm... Writing skills, critical thinking skills... umm... just... communication skills. And also the different programs... that you taught us how to use... that is gonna be really helpful [...]. The editing one, the video and also the one that you, that you normally do, like... voice thingy and then, you transcribe.' (third interview)

Minenhle not only expanded knowledge useful for her studies, but also knowledge helpful for her future, receiving and sharing knowledge as a multidirectional relationship with others; some aspects being more instrumental and others being ends in themselves. This is important because, as highlighted by her experiences, many colonial factors impede her from accessing epistemic systems such as the academic one, as well as from considering herself a worthy testifier and contributor to the pool of knowledge (Fricker 2015), which is essential for her identified capability. Moreover, the project allowed her to challenge her assumptions about those things that were important to her and others, in a space of mutual learning, bringing her self-development capability and epistemic capability into conversation with one another.

Minenhle's Incomplete Story

Minenhle's story is an incomplete story, but that incompleteness does not impede us from understanding her circumstances, improvements and limitations. That is why, after this section which has explored the minor details of her capabilities choices, we can say that there are significant

improvements in her Ubuntu and human recognition capabilities. Both of these capabilities were strongly affected by the conditions in which Minenhle lived, which impeded her enjoyment of them. For instance, we can see how colonial conversion factors produced negative effects in these freedoms before she began the project, as for instance in her educational background, due to her socio-economic background intersecting with other features such as her gender. During and after the project, we can see significant variations according to her own perceptions, as explored in the previous section. This is not to say that these freedoms are now available, but that she has managed to enhance them thanks to the fact that she and others in the research project have achieved certain functionings.

Equally, regarding her self-development and epistemic capabilities, we see how these are intrinsically linked in Minenhle's case. Minenhle came to the project already enjoying these freedoms in some way. Her self-development freedom was very evident, despite the degenerative conversion factors surrounding her, although it certainly grew somewhat during the project thanks to the contribution of her epistemic capability. We could also see that her epistemic capability was not absent, since she had managed to enter a higher-education institution despite her background. She clearly possessed and shared valuable knowledge before the project. Nevertheless, we can appreciate variation according to her perceptions, as reflecting about her enhancement of voice and participation. I will now introduce our second story, that of Siyabonga.

7.2.2 Siyabonga's Story

Siyabonga is a twenty-two-year-old male born in the Free State, who has lived in different parts of the country throughout his life. He is the middle of three siblings and maintains a good relationship with both his parents and his brothers. His father holds a higher-education degree and works as a consultant, providing for the family. His mother worked as a primary school teacher until he was born, then she dedicated herself to the children and home as a housewife. All three siblings, he and his two brothers, went to private primary and secondary schools, with English as the language of instruction. At home, all his basic needs were covered. However, Siyabonga's father was absent at important

moments during his childhood, due to work commitments. Moreover, Siyabonga's mother suffered from depression, leaving Siyabonga with a deep concern for mental health.

He enrolled in various sports during his academic life, such as rugby, cricket, action cricket and squash. Thanks to these sports, he had the opportunity to travel overseas for tournaments. However, Siyabonga's childhood was not always easy, despite his well-off financial situation. As a black child enjoying a certain financial comfort, it occasionally put him in uncomfortable situations. Colonial conversion factors in South Africa work multidirectionally, and his economic comfort did not fully inhibit any negative impact on his freedoms, although it affected him differently than Minenhle. For instance, black friends accused him of being too white—in terms of lifestyle and comfort—and white students did not like the idea that he was going out with black friends. All of this situated him in an identity loophole, which still persists today.

Around the time of his matric year (the final year of high school in South Africa), he was very busy working alongside his studies and his mother had some health issues which affected him deeply, leading Siyabonga to fail matric. Thus, he had to repeat a year to increase his marks. In the end, in order to access the degree he wanted to study, he had to go through the extended programme at the university.[2]

In addition, Siyabonga did not play a very active role during his application process. His parents decided which university to send him to and took care of his application. His parents wanted him to stay away from distractions, so he could focus on his studies. Equally, his parents provided economic support for his education, giving him a monthly allowance, schooling materials, accommodation, transport and tuition fees.

Siyabonga enjoys his student life, especially during the year of the study (2017). He is relaxed as he is only studying a few modules. However, he is worried as he is repeating the modules he failed last year and this will be his last chance to continue with his studies. Actually, Siyabonga wants to finish his degree for his parents, to give them peace of mind that he can provide for himself. Nevertheless, he is thinking

---

2   The extended degree programme involves students who have insufficient access points upon entering the university. This programme adds an additional year to the mainstream degree.

about studying for an Honours degree while working in a bank, but he thinks there is no rush; he can always go back to his parents' house. Siyabonga is also considering saving for a few years while working as an accountant, and then investing that money to create an income. He also wants to create a company and become a CEO at some point in the future. In this way, he will be able to help his girlfriend's family and build big houses in which they can all live close to each other—his family and his girlfriend's family, along with them.

In this case, Siyabonga has a different compilation of valuable capabilities when compared to Minenhle, and less insurgent capabilities linked to his context and colonial conversion factors. He considered the following to be important capabilities: (A) Ubuntu, (B) Epistemic, (C) Human recognition, (D) Free time and leisure, and (E) Health.
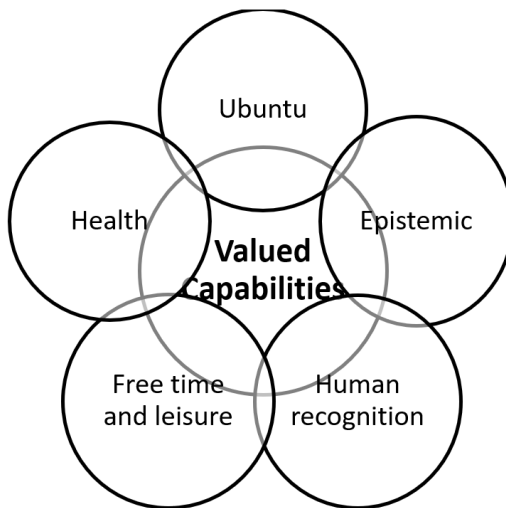
Figure 8: Siyabonga's Valued Capabilities (image by the author, 2021).

Like Minenhle, his capabilities are not clearly separated; they are interconnected. Hence, to explore these capabilities one by one, the following section investigates Siyabonga's capabilities and whether or not the project helped him to enhance or achieve them, exploring the colonial conversion factors that affected his valued capabilities, especially his conditions as a middle-class black student in South Africa.

Human Recognition Capability

For Siyabonga, the capability of recognition was not absent in his life, or affected to the extent that it was in Minenhle's case. Siyabonga enjoyed a good, secure self-perception that influenced his way of approaching others. This positive self-perception also helped him to share and defend his opinions easily. In particular, his economic status and gender benefitted this capability in various ways. All of this was visible in the way that Siyabonga behaved within the group and the number of times Siyabonga intervened to give his opinion, in comparison to Minenhle.

Nevertheless, although Siyabonga's case differs greatly from that of Minenhle, the Capabilities Approach allows us to explore both cases deeply, uncovering colonial conversion factors that impede Siyabonga—to a much lesser extent than Minenhle—from fully enjoying his capability of recognition. In this case, Siyabonga valued his recognition capability not because of the low enjoyment of this capability in his life—as was the case for Minenhle—but due to certain structural, mainly colonial, challenges that prevented him from enhancing this capability to an even greater extent. These are nuances that will be difficult to identify without carefully exploring each case.

In Siyabonga's case, two major colonial conversion factors negatively affect his enjoyment of this capability. First, despite his comfortable socio-economic status, he still falls into the category of black, in a post-1991 context in South Africa, which is a clear colonial conversion factor (Mattes 2015). While he is able to enjoy this capability to a certain level, he still lacks certain aspects of this human recognition, due to the race structures surrounding him. Secondly, he is situated in a hierarchical and patriarchal society where respect for elders is a social imperative, especially for males, and this ultimately affects him negatively. As a young man, Siyabonga has to respect those who are older than him and show them respect to a point that diminishes his own recognition from other individuals.

To provide some examples of these structures that somewhat reduce Siyabonga's recognition capability, the text will first highlight some racial challenges in Siyabonga's life. Siyabonga spoke about incidents in high school:

> 'When I got to the school I was in, I was one of four or five black kids, but in Grade Ten I was like the only black kid, so I was like almost being

> indoctrinated into being a part of the whites, and seen as a white guy. So, because I was in a black school before I went to the white school, when my black friends came, I obviously still wanted to hang out with them. It wasn't because now I'm only around white people, I don't wanna hang out with them... like I'm better or whatnot. But that caused a lot of troubles in my life, because the white people were angry or my white friends were angry because I wanted to hang out with the black friends and the black friends were angry because they said I was too white, and I didn't understand their issues.' (third interview)

For Siyabonga, recognition was significant due to his identity challenges, and less related to self-perception and voice, as it was in Minenhle's case. To a certain extent, colonial conversion factors, such as racial division, do not allow individuals to be recognised above and beyond these racial categories. Therefore, due to Siyabonga's circumstances, he has to battle against both.

However, despite the double recognition Siyabonga deals with, at the end of the day his skin is still dark in South Africa, and therefore he does not have as much freedom as he would like to voice his opinions, especially when they are related to racial issues, because of colonial conversion factors:

> 'Back then... the people in power, the white people... if you ask too many questions, if you... if you... are talking too much, don't expect to be around next week, that's the truth about it... You will be killed or... whatnot... so... you know... also the older parents... who know how it was and how it still is. Kids keep quiet, you don't know... these people might not be happy with you talking about it... things might happen to you or whatever... so I think it is also a precautionary matter, like being careful what you say. You might say the wrong thing, to the wrong person, or about the wrong person, and things would happen.' (third interview)

Siyabonga did not generally lack this capability, as Minenhle did, but he was especially affected by his racial classification in the country, and the fact that he could not openly talk or make his opinions on social injustice heard, due to his country's past.

On the other hand, despite Siyabonga's gender, there are other hierarchical and patriarchal structures that can affect him, such as the issue of respect towards elders, or the educational level of the person he is talking to. These structures constrain the recognition of young voices

and opinions, such as those of Siyabonga and Minenhle, to a much greater extent than those youth voices in the Global North. Explaining what would happen if he gave his opinion about racism to another adult person, he said:

> 'Ah... you are disrespecting me! Ah, you young people are disrespecting me! How can you ask? I'm your elder... whether you are right to ask or not. I am your elder, you should not be asking questions like that... yeah... it's one of those... taboos... you know.' (third interview)

Regarding educational level, he mentions having had a conversation with his father, who is highly educated, and how ridiculous it feels to him to talk from his position:

> 'Or for instance maybe speaking to my father about something like that... I wouldn't say dangerous but a little bit of... because of my dad is... highly educated or whatnot... He would say... hey you are naive, naive in your train of thought or whatnot... you know it's like when you speak... when you are speaking to like a rocket scientist but all you have is like grade eight math you... so how do I factorise? He is gonna be like... Ah... this is so beneath me.' (second interview)

Additionally, he mentioned a debate on the radio, which asked the audience whether students should or should not participate in political debates. He said, 'there was a topic on the radio the other day, it was speaking about should it be okay, or should students even be allowed to argue about politics? Because they are students!' (third interview). Actually, Siyabonga knew and had the voice to say that he had a right to discuss many of these political issues, despite contextual constraints. However, he identified the project as helping him to discuss sensitive issues that would be difficult for him to explore in other contexts, or outside of the project:

> 'How can I not debate that or speak about it? So... because I am a student I'm not allowed to speak about it... so... It [the project] helped me because I could speak about it, you know, yeah... it certainly enlightened me, it made me more aware, but it was also exciting because, I mean, it was... getting to work with people on topics that are quite hard, it's still... not really accepted in society [...] Those were the topics that we were looking at... so... yeah... it was exciting because I would say that was a taboo. Or... but it was exciting... when we get to talk about something that we are not allowed to talk about... and yeah.' (third interview)

Siyabonga's case is very different from Minenhle's case. While Minenhle had an initially low level of this human recognition that was significantly expanded by the project, Siyabonga, on the contrary, enjoyed more freedoms in terms of recognition due to his socio-economic status and gender. In Minenhle's case, self-confidence, voice, and participation were essential to enhance this capability. However, for Siyabonga, it was more a matter of identity and voice, referring to being able to discuss sensitive issues but also being recognised as a worthy member in a racially divided community (Cornell & Kessi 2017; Sutherland 2013). Therefore, the Capabilities Approach is able to mark an initial stage before the project and explore the transitions of different individuals. Moreover, a capabilities perspective is able to appreciate the redistribution of power and its implications for capability expansion and achievement within a group. While Siyabonga could not achieve a higher level of this capability, his presence as a member of the group contributed to the expansion of this capability in others. As highlighted in the previous sections, this is because capabilities are not stable categories; they are collective capabilities (Ibrahim 2006):

> 'I'm being recognised for what I believe in… I am being recognised and I'm recognising them or we are recognising each other. […] No… you know… but in terms of a group… I think… yeah… we do… recognise each other and respect each other… that I think is great.' (second interview)

In this case, Minenhle and other members found themselves in a space where someone who was a male, went to a private school and did not have financial problems, was listening to them, recognising them and their opinions, thus, other individuals' freedoms were also being influenced.

Ubuntu Capability

Without any doubt, when Siyabonga arrived at the project he enjoyed this capability, especially financial support, which was scarce among the members of the group. However, emotional support was notably deficient for him in the case of his family:

> 'I don't go to school with a bursary, my parents pay for me. So… you know… it just does… looking at the differences like, there are kids that are with a bursary, even my girlfriend is with a bursary. But I'm not…

but like my girlfriend her mum calls every day you know like they have that connection. I am financially stable, but I don't have that connection.' (second interview)

This emotional deficiency caused Siyabonga to give special importance to friendships, creating his own networks to fulfil the emotional support he needed in different ways. However, at times this was not easy, especially given Siyabonga's battle between two social groups that were antagonistic. Conversely, the project helped him to make new friendships, to engage with a group of people without it mattering where he came from:

'When I got to the group, we were strangers but we ended up being those people in each others' lives, who... umm... can care and support each other, especially... because we were disclosing personal, harmful... or... ahh... I don't know. If I can say... private things about ourselves... things that we felt and pains... so... we are those people for each other now... those friends that we are caring for and supporting each other.' (third interview)

Siyabonga enjoyed support within the project, in the sense that the issues he had in terms of identity were no longer issues in that space. The group was a family despite the colour of our skin, our socio-economic status, religion or nationality, even if we were conscious of our positionalities as blacks or whites. This allowed Siyabonga to create support networks easily, as well as supporting others and enhancing their freedoms.

To a certain extent, the project was also financially supportive, providing a small but significant contribution to the members. Siyabonga explained how he helped other friends and therefore this money was really useful for him. For Siyabonga, it was also important to care for and support others, beyond getting the support he needed, as this Ubuntu capability is conceptualised:

'There have been a couple of times that I've lent my friend my allowance, it was half of my allowance this month... so like I've been broke the past week so like you know this hundred bucks would be great cause I thought I'd like some cool drink, maybe I'll get some milk and some tea or whatever... and now I can go and get those things.' (second interview)

Therefore, Siyabonga was not lacking this capability in any way before the project. Conversely, this available capability allowed him to support others financially, while receiving emotional support in return. Thus,

the project enhanced this capability, achieving some functionings through his new friendships within the group, the help that he was able to provide to others, and the help received from other members in the group.

Epistemic Capability

Siyabonga's case differs greatly from that of Minenhle. Minenhle had extensive experiential knowledge about injustices, as she experienced them in different ways. Moreover, Minenhle understood knowledge as an end in itself, in the sense of being able to learn and to gain knowledge for knowledge's sake, not only as a means of ensuring a good life (which was nonetheless also important for her). Siyabonga has a more instrumental perspective of knowledge. He wants to gain knowledge in order to be able to provide a decent standard of living for his family and himself, especially for his girlfriend's family. For instance, he wants to pass his courses in order to be an accountant, and therefore have a stable job and good income. Moreover, this educational success was especially relevant for him because, despite having access to a first-class education, he was—and is—not doing so well in his academic work. Therefore, for him, knowledge for passing his courses and graduating was his main concern at the time of the project.

Nevertheless, it seems that the project provided him with a platform to reconsider knowledge beyond its instrumental advantages. Siyabonga said that the project provided an adequate space to expand his learning and knowledge in general:

> 'Looking at epistemologies and whatnot... methodologies. Actually doing research. So I feel like... I got to do a lot of learning and gain knowledge... that's not... although it's formal... education... formal... we were just coming and speaking to each other, doing a research project in our own time... so I feel like I learned a lot from the research project... from that aspect...' (second interview)

However, he also added that it was a space in which to challenge his own thinking and challenge other's opinions, and he enjoyed this aspect because it was actually something that he would not do in other company:

'I really enjoyed the workshops, yeah... I really enjoyed talking to other people... ahh... I... yes, you could say the joyful environment... where... you were challenging yourself and they were willing to challenge you... we really were able to... really... critically analyse stuff that maybe when you are with your friends, you wouldn't talk so deeply about... or whatnot... so I really enjoyed that.' (third interview)

Siyabonga had not previously been exposed to discussions about social issues in particular. To a certain extent, his lifestyle and undergraduate studies on finance limited his ability to engage critically with these types of challenges. The project expanded his knowledge of some of these matters. For Siyabonga, his learning about gender and LGBTQI inequalities was especially noteworthy, as he had not been aware of them before the project. For instance, he reflected on his positionality as a man:

'I don't know, looking at it in terms of gender... I'm a man, so I'm unintentionally, I'm already causing an inequality because of my... I can... you can say, the patriarchy or whatever... it's because I'm a man [...] it's something to learn from the project... or it was something that we help each other to understand.' (third interview)

Although Siyabonga presented very conservative ideas about gender roles and sexual orientation at the beginning of the year, the project helped him to challenge these assumptions and reflect on his own positionality. Equally, he had the chance to better understand the lives of other students:

'I feel like it's... it's just the way to remind myself that there are people out there struggling or whatnot... who would kill for the opportunity to be where I am so just keep working hard even if days are tough even if you feel like not studying just remember that one day something might depend on you... you know... because you went to school you have a salary, maybe you could send the kids to school, whatever, or do something so now that you're there try your best at what you are doing [...] Definitely, yeah... and learn more from them, not just look at them, like it was just a bad life experience.' (third interview)

However, despite the general knowledge about social issues surrounding him, Siyabonga valued learning useful skills for the future, skills that might enhance his capacity to find a secure job. He mentioned different skills developed by the project that could help him in the future in

various ways, 'I guess the main thing I learned is being able to use the PC better, the laptop a lot better...' (third interview).

He added that team work was also an important skill gained from the project:

> 'I did definitely learn how to work in a team, because we have to work on a research project together. So I really got to learn the dynamics of working together in a team and working with people and working specifically with people that are doing different things so there are many different challenges... umm... and barriers... that get in the way of teamwork, and I really got to learn how to combat those barriers, umm... but ultimately it was about learning to work with people toward a common aim, and I feel like I definitely got to learn that from the DCR project.' (third interview)

Siyabonga not only gained knowledge that will benefit him in the future and will be applicable for other things that he considers important in his life. He also started to value knowledge for the sake of learning about—and understanding—the reality that surrounds him, and the many injustices that impact other members of his community, thanks to being part of the group and listening to others.

Free Time and Leisure Capability

Siyabonga highly valued the capability of enjoying free time and time to dedicate to things outside his formal responsibilities. He valued his free time, and dedicated it to playing sports, as well as playing music with his friends. To a certain extent, Siyabonga enjoys and achieves this capability in various ways thanks to his family's socio-economic status and the circumstances surrounding him.

In this regard, the project allowed Siyabonga to enjoy his free time doing something that was significant for him. He did not consider the work done during the project as a job or a responsibility, but conversely as a leisure activity, and something that he was interested in:

> 'Although we were working on the project... it was a less stressful environment... where I was... still learning and increasing my knowledge... I was still participating and interacting with other students, not just people. And ultimately, you can see it as leisure time that we have spent, or easy time in terms of... I was doing something, that I was actually interested in... and at the end of the day—a hobby or something—you are doing something you are interested in... that

doesn't pretend necessarily to be work... that's very serious or stressful.' (third interview)

Therefore, the project in itself did not significantly expand this freedom for Siyabonga, as he already enjoyed the right circumstances for this capability in his life. Conversely, it could be said that the project helped him to achieve certain functionings related to this capability, such as being able to enrol in a leisure activity other than his formal education and existing hobbies.

Health Capability

Siyabonga did not suffer from any serious illness, although his life was marked by his mother's mental health. This situation, together with the lack of emotional support previously mentioned, caused Siyabonga to highly value health in general, particularly the balance between mental and physical health. In this case, Siyabonga's capabilities, especially his free time and leisure and health capabilities, are related to his middle-class status in South Africa. These capabilities (free time and leisure and health) highlight how some communities have accessed and adopted capitalist, middle-class lifestyles, as well as the language to situate themselves in the society they live in, despite conserving certain other capabilities—such as insurgent capabilities—to struggle against their past and present experiences. Hence, Siyabonga experiences and makes sense of his life and valued freedoms in different terms than Minenhle does.

It is certain that his health capability was not expanded by the project, due to the nature of our work. However, this case can be seen as part of—or related to—the expansion of emotional support in the previous capability and how this has improved Siyabonga's general well-being. Thus, although both cases may refer to similar ideas, the context, conditions and understandings of their lives lead them to conceptualise these features within different categories. The middle-class status of Siyabonga influences his cosmovision as well as his capabilities and insurgent capabilities. For a black, middle-class undergraduate student, whose mother previously required counselling services, well-being might be associated with psychology and with health. Conversely, for Minenhle this is a self-development aspect and Ubuntu-related

dimension that tells an individual to become better than they were and contribute to the betterment of others in the face of colonial oppression and its associated colonial conversion factors.

Siyabonga's Incomplete Story

Siyabonga's story tells us that before becoming part of the project, his conditions were quite favourable. His capabilities were already there, to a lesser or greater extent. Siyabonga enjoyed his leisure and free time capability, along with the health capability, despite his mother's issues: they were possible because of the new, middle-class perspective to which Siyabonga was exposed. Furthermore, his human recognition, Ubuntu and epistemic capabilities were fairly protected by the conditions in which he had grown up, with some insurgent capabilities that reflected the oppression Siyabonga experienced despite his family having overcome the economic oppression of their elders. Despite some favourable conditions, we have seen that Siyabonga also experienced colonial conversion factors that diminished some of these capabilities for him, although not to the same extent as Minenhle. Siyabonga experienced discrimination from his friends and had to battle between two antagonistic identities in a difficult context such as South Africa, as is evident in his capabilities choices (Bhana 2014). Nevertheless, we can see how Siyabonga also benefitted from the project in some ways, although again to a different extent than Minenhle did. First of all, he was able to enhance his epistemic capability, enhancing his factual knowledge about certain matters, but also valuing knowledge in its own right. Furthermore, his human recognition was enhanced thanks to the relations between the members of the group, but also thanks to his Ubuntu capability of being able to help others, even if this was not always achieved in the exact way he wanted.

7.3 Discussing the DCR Contributions to a More Adequate Southern Participatory Evaluative Framework

The two cases presented above have highlighted that, actually, the same participatory process can affect diverse members of the same

group differently. Thus, their experiences are divergent due to their personal backgrounds and the actual conditions under which they live. Participants begin the project with different valuable and insurgent capabilities, which they also enjoy to different degrees, as has been shown. Siyabonga and Minenhle both valued the Ubuntu capability, although the ways in which they enjoyed this capability before the project differed, and this is important to understand when assessing our participatory practices. The Capabilities Approach as a way to evaluate participatory practices adds a broader range of information that can capture Southern cosmovisions. This range of information not only expanded our own understanding of the DCR practice, but also oriented the practice as a way to improve the lives that the individuals involved have reason to value in different contexts, and with different aspirations.

Moreover, the Capabilities Approach does not simplify outcomes into a polarised distribution of advantaged versus disadvantaged. Conversely, it recognises the complexity of both cases. First, it shows us that, despite the better-off situation of Siyabonga, and the limited capabilities of Minenhle, both cases are worth exploring carefully, as different colonial conversion factors affect them in different ways. Thus, we need to understand these cases from a broader informational perspective that can capture how similar conditions affect different individuals. It can be generally said that the project has been more beneficial for Minenhle than Siyabonga. A capabilities analysis helps us to identify the complexities buried in our participatory practices and to show how individual personal experiences and challenges intersect with them, as well as how one individual's capabilities interact with the capabilities of others. This is basically to acknowledge that participants are not the same, by highlighting power dynamics within the group and how members of the participatory group are positioned in wider society, therefore acknowledging their own social and cultural specificities.

In conclusion, after a careful review of these two cases in this chapter, and the general analysis provided in Chapter Five, four main contributions can be highlighted, to defend the need for the facilitator to explore capabilities, but also to highlight the importance of capabilities in other participatory practices. From a capabilities perspective, these contributions are important for understanding the impact on co-researchers. The capabilities perspective contributes to the evaluation

of participatory practices because it expands the informational basis of the evaluative space, through greater sensitivity to Southern perspectives. The evaluative space therefore moves beyond the tangible effects (achieved functionings) of participatory practices on a particular individual. For instance, without this perspective we would not have been able to understand Minenhle's individual definition of the human recognition capability, nor would we have known that this capability was important for her at that moment of her life as a reaction to certain colonial conversion factors affecting her capabilities. Equally, we would not have taken into consideration the initial positions of Minenhle or Siyabonga, which would have restricted our knowledge of their specific backgrounds prior to the project, and which would thereby narrow our understanding of the effects of the project on their valuable and insurgent capabilities.

The Capabilities Approach provides an individual and collective perspective. As the chapter has revealed, this can acknowledge both power asymmetries and freedoms of the co-researchers. The outcome of the same participatory practice might differ considerably among individual co-researchers. Hence, individuals and contextual group capabilities should remain at the centre of our exploration, with a particular focus on the lives they have reason to value, in order to recognise Southern perspectives. Thus, we, as facilitators, must ensure a deeply relational space in order to enhance and to achieve the capabilities that are important to them. The evaluative space does not aim to compare, but rather to explore and understand each case and its own complexities. It does so, as this chapter has examined, by not homogenising contexts and cultural aspirations. It does not simply say that the project has been more beneficial for Minenhle, but rather that it has been more beneficial for Minenhle in terms of the way she wants to lead her life.

Therefore, as with the previous point, it avoids paternalistic evaluations and Eurocentric assessments. Whereas evaluative spaces are mostly framed as determined by criteria external to the co-researchers and their contexts, the Capabilities Approach offers a set of criteria that are determined by the individual. These criteria, the valuable and insurgent capabilities that the individual has reason to value to lead the life they want to have, constitute the cultural and contextual evaluative

space. Hence, this process contributes to the co-researchers' aims as opposed to external, institutional or universal aims, which are secondary or less relevant to their own lives, contexts and specific circumstances.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored two different stories, through two members of the DCR group. These two individuals presented different preferences, and therefore diverse valuable capabilities, at the beginning of the project. Each case has been analysed, exposing whether or not the project helped them to enhance their freedoms (valuable/insurgent capabilities), or to achieve functionings (tangible outcomes). Therefore, the chapter has revealed that adding a capabilities perspective to our evaluative space for DCR, following the fifth principle of the facilitator's role, is a gain in itself. It substantially changes the way we understand our evaluative spaces, orienting them towards the co-researchers' aims, and contextualising our participatory projects beyond institutional or universalistic goals. There are three major contributions of this capability perspective to the field of participatory evaluations and DCR. The first of these is the expansion of the informational basis, which moves beyond an outcome analysis and collection of information prior to the project to understand the members' individual cases and to be sensitive to their Southern perspectives. The second of these is the individual perspective that allows us to explore the complexities of each co-researcher and to better understand how a participatory practice affects each of the members of a group, whilst recognising asymmetries. The third is that the evaluative space is not determined by external or universalistic criteria, but instead the criteria are determined by the individual and/ or group, in the extent to which the project has helped this individual to lead the life they have reason to value in a deeply relational space.

Hence, to conclude, the chapter exploring these two cases presents how a DCR facilitator can undertake her or his evaluation of a DCR project alongside a more generic analysis as completed in Chapter Five. This enhances the ways in which current practices are assessed, and promotes a better Southern framework with which to democratise participatory practices through a Capabilities Approach.

References

Berenstain, N. (2016). Epistemic exploitation. *Ergo*, *3*(22), 569–590. https://doi.org/10.3998/ergo.12405314.0003.022.

Bhana, D. (2014). Race matters and the emergence of class: Views from selected South African university students. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *28*(2), 355–367. https://doi.org/10.20853/28-2-335.

Cornell, J., & Kessi, S. (2017). Black students' experiences of transformation at a previously 'white only' South African university: A photovoice study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *40*(11), 1882–1899. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1206586.

Fricker, M. (2015). Epistemic contribution as a central human capability. In George Hull (ed.). *The Equal Society: Essays on Equality in Theory and Practice* (pp. 73–90). Lanham: Lexington Books. https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781498515719/.

Goetze, T. S. (2018). Hermeneutical dissent and the species of hermeneutical injustice. *Hypatia*, *33*(1), 73–90. https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12384.

Ibrahim, S. S. (2006). From individual to collective capabilities: The capability approach as a conceptual framework for self-help. *Journal of Human Development*, *7*(3), 397–416. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14649880600815982.

Mattes, R. (2015). South Africa's emerging black middle class: A harbinger of political change? *Journal of International Development*, *27*(5), 665–692. https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3100.

Sutherland, A. (2013). The role of theatre and embodied knowledge in addressing race in South African higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, *38*(5), 728–740. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.593620.

Walker, M. (2005). Rainbow nation or new racism? Theorizing race and identity formation in South African higher education. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, *8*(2), 129–146. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320500110501.