Rights Deferred, Sustainable Futures Denied: Indigenous/Adivasi Lessons for Interrogating Tensions in Rights Education

Naivedya Parakkal
University of Michigan

Human rights have been framed as integral to development. Yet, despite decades of development programming, human rights violations prevail. This article examines Adivasi/Indigenous Peoples' encounters with development in Attappady, India, especially in relation to their identity and expertise as casteist-colonial India's Indigenous Peoples. Comparing Adivasi interlocutors' counter-colonial narratives with a thematic analysis of UNESCO's recent recommendations on human rights education reveal how interlocutors are noting the disconnect between policy promises of the right to dignity and everyday assaults on Adivasi personhood. Meanwhile, development programs that prioritize profits over ecological balance continue to jeopardize their right to sustainable futures. These *findings emphasize the relevance of redirecting gaze in rights education, from the perceived deficits of Global South actors towards those who benefit from sustaining unjust global hierarchies, while legitimizing the rights violations that arise from them. As the often-overlooked experts of relational living in a world rendered precarious by an inherently unsustainable development paradigm, this article's interlocutors emphasize the significance of centering Indigenous/Adivasi expertise in imagining systemic shifts in rights education.*

Keywords: coloniality, Global South, human rights education, Indigenous expertise, unsustainable development.

Introduction

"I know the forest and the forest knows me," explained Murugan,[1] an Indigenous/Adivasi man from the Irula tribe in the South Indian state of Kerala. We were sitting by the banks of the Bhavani River, surrounded by the forests and mountains that were an important part of Murugan's childhood. As a boy, Murugan could roam the forests freely without being afraid of wild animals because he had "learned that the beings in the forest will do no harm if they know that we respect them." Murugan's adventures in the forest ended in the mid-2000s when development and conservation projects supported by the Kerala State Schedule Tribes (ST) Development Department introduced restrictions on Adivasi peoples' entry into forest land (Suchithra, 2013; Thomas, 2018). Today, access into Murugan's home hamlet, Thanchiyoor, which is one of 192 hamlets in the 'tribal development block' of Attappady, Kerala, is regulated through a police check-post, and Indigenous Peoples' entry into the forest is mediated through

[1] **Names of research sites and people are pseudonyms.**

the state's development and forest departments. For Murugan, this means that he and his fellow Irular "no longer share the relationship [they] had with the forest and land."

Murugan is joining Indigenous Peoples in India and around the world who assert that various forms of development interventions are severing relations that they have nurtured with sentient beings around them for centuries (Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019; Quay, 2021; Todd, 2016). Moreover, burgeoning scholarship demonstrates how development programs in the Global South, which neither consult nor substantively engage with Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and expertise, are introducing new forms of socio-political and environmental precarities (bodhi & jojo, 2019; Huaman, 2019; Tuck, 2009). Yet, mainstream global education recommendations and their national adaptations continue to frame development as essential for ensuring human rights (UNESCO, 2023; Uvin, 2007).

Against this background, this article reflects on a key question posed by this special issue—how should human rights education be reconfigured to meet the needs of current and future generations? This inquiry is guided by the following research question: How do people living in a 'tribal development block' navigate daily encounters with development, especially in relation to their identity and expertise as Adivasi peoples? The goal of this exploration is to interrogate the tensions between policy promises and Adivasi peoples' lived experiences and their implications for human rights education. To do this, I draw on semi-structured narrative interviews (Clandinin, 2022; O'Toole, 2018) with six Adivasi interlocutors whose "counter-colonial narrative" excerpts (Ritchie & Rau, 2010) illuminate the link between development and rights violation in Attappady.

As a comparison between these narratives and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Recommendation (UNESCO, 2023) and Explainer (UNESCO, 2024) on Education for Peace and Human Rights highlights, policy promises to affirm the right to dignity and the right to sustainable futures remain unfulfilled. With these very policy interventions exacerbating precarities in Attappady, the presumed "vulnerable" and "disadvantaged" targets (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020; UNESCO, 2017) of these policies are adopting strategies to navigate an inherently unsustainable development paradigm. Drawing on the tensions between policy and narratives, this article makes a case for the urgent relevance of centering the intellectual and pedagogical expertise of Indigenous/Adivasi Peoples to transform the interconnected structures of exclusion and colonial violence that have come to define mainstream education, development, and the human rights agenda (Patel, 2016; Spivak, 2004; Sriprakash, et al., 2020). The paper invites those involved in what Stein et al. (2022) refer to as "low-intensity" struggles, in which I include myself, to cultivate an openness to learn from "high-intensity learners" to understand what stands in the way of reimagining Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on Quality Education and Human Rights Education (HRE). According to Stein et al. (2022), "people in low-intensity struggles have had their sensibilities forged by privilege or aspirations for privilege"

(p.280) while benefiting differentially from the injustice wrought by an inherently unsustainable and exclusionary status quo. Conversely, those involved in high-intensity struggles "are fighting for their lives as a result of the very system that many of us in low-intensity struggles are fighting to maintain" (Stein et al., 2022, p. 280).

Adivasi interlocutors who are engaged in high-intensity struggles illustrate how mainstream education policy is steeped in the principle of separability (Battiste, 2005; Silva, 2016), which normalizes the separation of the world's peoples through manufactured categories based on caste, race, and species. They also demonstrate how educators and policymakers involved in low-intensity work are "cognitively and affectively" ill-equipped to imagine educational alternatives outside the dominant worldview (Andreotti, 2016, p. 105). By centering Indigenous/Adivasi Peoples and their insights, this article contributes to growing voices in the field of Comparative and International Education that are calling for multi-scalar, pluriversal, and geo-epistemically diverse reimaginations of education (Manion et al., 2019; Nguyen, 2010; Sultana, 2019). Additionally, the tensions between mainstream HRE policy and Adivasi Peoples experience presented in this article respond to critical policy scholarship advocating for a redirection of gaze in education, development, and human rights—from the manufactured deficits of actors in the Global South to the denials and interconnected structures of colonial violence that Global North[2] actors perpetuate through education (Becker, 2021; Patel, 2016; Simmonds, 2022; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013).

Research Context and Background: **Indigenous Peoples in Casteist-Colonial India**

Adivasi, Indigenous Peoples of India, Scheduled Tribes (ST),[3] and tribals are just a few of many names and categories attributed to one of the earliest inhabitants of the South Asian subcontinent (bodhi & ziipao, 2019; Da Costa & Da Costa, 2019). Adivasis, translatable in many Indian languages as '*Adi*-First, *vasis*-inhabitants,' are not categorized as Indigenous Peoples by the Indian state and therefore do not come under the jurisprudence of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. However, in a historical exploration of Indigeneity in South Asia, Adivasi scholar and poet Virginius Xaxa (1999) asserts that over 750 tribe groups that live across the country are indeed the

[2] My use of this terminology is informed by decolonial scholarship and the assertion that Global North and South are not geographical descriptors, but a relational, onto-epistemic orientation (Dados & Connell, 2012; Kamal & Courtheyn, 2024). Global North actors are largely oriented towards and benefit from the dominant but destructive, modern-colonial status-quo, irrespective of their physical location in the world (Byrd, 2014; Spivak, 2004).

[3] In this article, I use the abbreviation ST (Scheduled Tribe) to refer to young Indigenous interlocutors because they have stated it to be their preference. Indigenous elders in Attappady generally use the term 'Adivasi', the English term 'tribe', and/or the name of their tribe group.

Indigenous Peoples of India, even if the state continues to draw on colonial anthology to classify people as ST.

Home to members of three tribe groups—the Irula, the Muduga, and the Kurumba, Attappady is designated as a "tribal development block" primarily due to a concentrated population of Adivasi communities in the region. This means that the everyday lives of ST peoples, including education, health care, housing, and access to public services, are mediated through a state and state-supported development apparatus (Escobar, 2012; Ferguson, 1994; Kjosavik & Shanmugaratnam, 2004). This apparatus operates under the conviction that the "path to ST development lies in the transition from low-income jobs to high income occupations […] sustainable means of livelihood, and industrial production" (Kerala State Planning Board, 2021, p. 270). Adivasi peoples are noting the colonial continuities embedded in the development apparatus that shape their everyday experiences. Preetha, one of the interlocutors in this article, articulates this significant aspect of the research context when she states, "whatever the British used to do, the way they used to see Indians, that is how these [development] officers and Malayalees look at STs now."

Guiding Concepts: Coloniality, Education, and the Human Rights-in-Development Regime

Linking SDG 4 and HRE through the "Human Rights-in-Development" Regime

This paper regards global education agendas like SDG 4 and HRE as part of a "human rights-in-development" regime, which has redefined human rights as a sub-category within global development goals (Donnelly, 1999; Sano, 2000; Uvin, 2007). As Uvin (2007) argues, the incorporation of human rights into development is relatively recent and can be traced back to the 1970s and debates on the 'right to development' in the New International Economic Order (pp. 597-598). Education is designated a central role in the human rights-in-development regime as a tool that can provide the skills to achieve development goals and ensure universal rights (Kendall, 2008; Moghli, 2020; Zembylas, 2020), and to facilitate the incremental inclusion of 'developing' nations into the 'developed' world (Ferguson, 2005). For instance, in target 4.7 of SDG 4, knowledge of human rights is listed as one of many skills that learners must acquire to ensure sustainable development (UNESCO, 2016). UNESCO's (2023) most recent recommendation for ensuring peace, human rights, and sustainable development, which is a revision to the 1974 Recommendation for Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom, asserts that the revision was done with a view of "firmly embedding the role of education in fostering human rights… and sustainable development" (p. 1). Even though this article's findings focus on interlocutors' encounters with development and how they navigate rights violations, the policy connections between education and the human rights-in-development regime make interlocutors' pedagogical insights crucial for reimaging HRE.

Multiple Logics and Practices of Coloniality

This research is informed by scholarship that insists education, development, and human rights are ensconced in the logic and practices of coloniality (Pashby & Sund, 2020; Shahjahan, 2013; Takayama et al., 2017). Decolonial scholars use the term coloniality to refer to the hierarchies and patterns of power (Grosfoguel, 2007; Quijano, 2007) that continue to "define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production" (Maldonado-Torres, 2017, p. 97) in the modern world. Coloniality, therefore, is the "darker side" or shadow of modernity (Mignolo, 2011), and as an analytical category it highlights the "spatiality (expansionist control of land), onto-epistemic racism (elimination and subjugation of difference), and the geopolitics of knowledge production (Andreotti, 2016, p. 103), that constitute the "colonial-modern" (Mignolo, 2011) world we live in.

South Asian scholars have extended this framing of coloniality by challenging the tendency within strands of decolonial scholarship to "begin, end, and orient all conversations about colonialism, nationalism, and imperialism to Europe and the West" (Da Costa & Da Costa, 2019, p. 58). Such an orientation is relevant in this research context since the Indian state and dominant caste/class Indians have long regarded Adivasi/Indigenous dispossession as an inevitable aspect of national development (bodhi & jojo, 2019; Xaxa, 1999). This research begins with the assumption that the interlocutors in this article have already stated—we live in still-colonial conditions characterized by multiple, co-existing articulations of colonialism generated via "development projects, conservation-led displacement, and various uneven forms of migrations that foster ongoing settlement on Indigenous land" (Da Costa & Da Costa, 2019, p. 54). I employ the term "counter-colonial" (Ritchie & Rau, 2010) to refer to scholarship and perspectives that interrogate the workings of multiple colonialities in education and development. I view counter-colonial theorizing as including postcolonial, decolonial, Indigenous, and Southern perspectives and aiming towards a "proactive dialogical openness to 'counter-ing' colonized thinking with alternative narratives reflective of hope, regeneration, and transformational shifts" (Ritchie & Rau, 2010, p. 362).

'Otherwise' Possibilities in Education

This article builds on scholarly explorations for 'otherwise' possibilities in education to make a case for centering the intellectual and pedagogical expertise of Indigenous/Adivasi Peoples in reconfiguring education outside the logic of coloniality (Nakata et al., 2012; Ritchie, 2013; Smith et al., 2019). 'Otherwise' possibilities, as Crawley (2016) asserts, "announces the fact of infinite alternatives to what *is*… as a means to disrupt the current configurations of power and inequity" (p. 3). It also underscores that ongoing rights violations and inequity are not simply the consequences of development gone wrong. Rather, exclusion and violence constitute development and

are what divides the world into 'developed' and 'developing' (Ferguson, 2005; Stein et al., 2022).

Methodological Framework: Comparing Narrative Interviews and Policy

My professional and personal experiences while living in Attappady for two years (2014–2015 and 2021–2022), and over a decade-long engagement with ST youth and activists in India have informed the development of this article. Specifically, I draw on interview data that was generated during a Comparative Case Study (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017) of inclusive education that I conducted in Thanchiyoor from September 2021 to July 2022 as part of my dissertation research.

Six Interlocutors: Brief Profiles

The interlocutors of my dissertation included 40 Irula and Muduga tribe members between the ages of 17 and approximately 70 years old, engaged in formal education and employment, political activism, daily wage labor, and storytelling. In this article, I draw on the insights of five Irula tribe youth and one Irula elder living in Thanchiyoor, since they make explicit connections between development, rights, and alternate possibilities for education. Bhuvi and Jinu, who were interviewed together, are currently pursuing post-secondary education in Palakkad town, an hour-long bus ride from Thanchiyoor. Murugan is a storyteller and farmer who discontinued formal education after tenth grade and has been dabbling in daily wage and contract work in and around Attappady for over a decade. Soumya has a diploma in Teacher Education and recently received a permanent position as an elementary teacher in a government school near Thanchiyoor. Preetha is a student in a master's program in sociology and an activist holding leadership positions in multiple youth and ST advocacy groups. Nenjan Moopan is the head of Thanchiyoor hamlet. He withdrew from political activism in his late 40s after what he described as "having had enough" and is now pursuing intermittent daily wage work.

Relevant Data Generation Methods

The data I present in this article is drawn from larger dissertation research in which I combined multiple ethnographic methods[4] with thematic policy analysis. This article draws on five audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated semi-structured interviews.

[4] I lived near Thanchiyoor hamlet for a year, and hamlet elders invited me to participate in everyday activities, which included helping with the community kitchen, teaching conversational English, and accompanying hamlet women to their work site. A few of the hamlet's youth who are members of a prominent, left-wing youth organization graciously included me in their meetings and activities. Eight of these youth and I co-founded the Youth Researchers of Attappady Collective (YRAC) and we employed YPAR methods (Bellino, 2023; Cammarota & Fine, 2008) to make sense of the persistent exclusion that ST youth experience in educational spaces and everyday life. The participant observation conducted over a period of eight months was documented through field notes and memos. Data generation methods also included group discussions and life-story interviews (Atkinson, 1998).

Interviews were conducted between January and June 2022 and lasted between one and a half and two hours. Daily field notes and analytical memos (Maxwell, 2013) informed the interview guides, which were tailored specifically for each participant. Semi-structured interviews were followed up with unstructured, member-checking interviews, documented through jottings and reflective memos (Emerson et al., 2011), and appended to the interview transcript.

I employed a narrative analysis lens (Clandinin, 2022; Hickson, 2016; O'Toole, 2018) to conduct and analyze interviews, which means that I paid attention to how interlocutors tell and employ stories to interpret their experiences. During data analysis conducted using the qualitative analysis software, NVivo, I employed initial and focused coding (Charmaz, 2006) to generate "storied themes" (Hunt et al., 2006) related to the research questions. A key limitation of my data selection is that I draw from interviews that were conducted based on interview guides that addressed my dissertation research questions, which centered on inclusive education within the SDG 4 agenda, rather than on rights education. Therefore, this article draws on a smaller number of interlocutors who made explicit connections between rights and development in their interviews. Additionally, as I discuss next, policy selection was limited to recent global documents, which have not yet been adopted by India's Human Rights Commission.

Comparing Policy and Narratives: Rationale and Analysis

The core assumption of SDG 4 policies is that providing skills will eventually lead to universal development and human rights (Mason et al., 2019; Wulff, 2020). However, the world is more formally educated than it has ever been, and yet actors involved in high-intensity struggles continue to experience persistent rights violations under populist and techno-bureaucratic regimes (Benavot & Smith, 2020; Wulff, 2021). To make sense of this conundrum, it is not sufficient to study the definitions and dividing practices (Ball, 1998) of policy texts. Rather, it is crucial to understand the constructions and experiences of development as "embodied in the social, cultural, and ideological underpinnings of the local context" (Nguyen, 2010, p. 353). To compare the tensions between policy and narratives, I purposefully selected two policy documents published recently by UNESCO: (1) a Recommendation on education for peace and human rights, international understanding, cooperation, fundamental freedoms, global citizenship, and sustainable development, which was adopted by United Nations members in November 2023, and will be referred to from hereon as the Recommendation; and (2) Recommendation on education for peace, human rights, and sustainable development: An explainer (UNESCO, 2024), which outlines the practical implications of the Recommendation for educational stakeholders, and will be referred to from hereon as the Explainer.

Policy selection was purposeful and based on two criteria. One, as I described in a previous section, these documents affirm the link between education and human rights-in-development. Two, India's national education policy is guided by the targets

and indicators of the SDG agenda and draws directly from United Nations policy recommendations (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020, p. 3; Ministry of Education, 2022, p. 12). This means that the new Recommendation is likely to be adapted into national and state policy implementations that this article's interlocutors may encounter. The policy documents were thematically analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and to examine the tensions between policy and experience, I compared the policy themes with ST interlocutors' storied themes. The comparison was guided by the following questions: (1) How are education, development, human rights, and the relation between the concepts framed? (2) What goals and actions are assigned to education in relation to human rights and SDG 4?

Researcher Positionality and Negotiating Access

I am a dominant caste, lighter-skinned, middle-class person with what Adivasi interlocutors will refer to as "high-level" education. Even though I was born and raised in Kerala, my early engagements with ST peoples in Attappady (2012–2015) were shaped by a mode of solidarity critiqued by Indigenous Peoples around the world—the impulse to 'help' (Cook, 2008; Grande, 2019; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). This means that my work was driven by an uncritical belief in the transformative power of education in fulfilling the promises of tribal development and empowerment. Over the years, Adivasi co-workers, teachers, and collaborators have taught me to shift from what Tuck (2009) refers to as a "damage-centered" orientation, which highlights the imaginary deficits and real pain of Indigenous while obscuring colonial violence and the Global North's complicity. It is this shift in orientation, rather than official permission letters from state departments or my prior experiences in Attappady, that facilitated my access and ability to build trust and reciprocal relationships in Thanchiyoor hamlet. This is implied by Sradha Chechi, who is a hamlet member and one of my research mentors, when she told me that people in the hamlet would engage with me if I were able to demonstrate that I wasn't interested in "surveys" or their "difficulties" (Fieldnotes 2021, December 2).

Findings: Right to Dignity Deferred, Sustainable Futures Denied

The Right to Dignity: Policy Assumptions versus Lived Experiences

The right to dignity has been central to policy conceptions of human rights. For example, Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) asserts that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (p. 2). This assertion is revised and affirmed in UNESCO's (2023) Recommendation, which defines transformative education as teaching and learning that "recognizes and valorizes the dignity and diversity of learners" (p. 5). Amidst reports of an alarming rise in cases of human rights abuse in India following the ascent of the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (Human Rights Watch, 2024), it is important to note that the Indian state has been violating ST peoples' right to dignity for decades (Hembrom, 2022; Xaxa, 2016). Most relevant to this article are the assaults against ST peoples' dignity and personhood

enacted by the state, the news media, and dominant caste Indians through the classification of ST peoples as "backward sections." For example, in the annual reports published by India's Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2020), the criteria for specifying a community as a Scheduled Tribe include "primitive traits," "shyness of contact," and "backwardness" (p. 40). The Kerala State Planning Board (2021) proclaims that the "present status of the tribal community is characterized by social backwardness… and low educational standards" (p. 13).

ST interlocutors are noting the disjuncture between the promises of the right to inalienable dignity and the realities of life in a casteist-colonial context. For example, Bhuvi and Jinu explained that they are tired of being categorized as "pinoka vibhaagam" (backward section). In the following narrative, they describe how they are intentionally sidelining the knowledge passed on by their grandparents to get a job and hopefully be respected:

> **Jinu**: I used to go to the forest with my grandfather and he would show me different types of plants, and how to take honey without angering the bees… but knowing all that will not bring us respect among others… my parents do not allow me to go and play in the forest anymore. I have to sit at home and study all the time. In school we must study all the subjects and become big, big doctors or government officers, only then we will receive respect from society.
>
> **Bhuvi**: Respect is very important. But everyone calls us backward. If we go out of Attappady and say that we are from here, Malayalees will ask if we are Adivasis and they will mock and laugh at us… but if an Adivasi girl gets a high-level position like doctor or Indian Administrative Service officer then maybe she will get respect from society.
>
> – Jinu and Bhuvi, Interview transcript, May 2022

In this discussion, Bhuvi and Jinu are responding to Keet's (2012) call to "make visible the complexities of human rights as both a discourse and a material reality" (p. 9). Unlike mainstream human rights policy and discourse, which insists on the right to dignity as an "inalienable right," Bhuvi and Jinu must choose formal education over intergenerational knowledge to be worthy of respect. This difference between policy and experience may be attributed to a taken-for-granted assumption about the 'human' in human rights.

Rights Deferred: Unsettling the 'Human' in Human Rights

UNESCO's Recommendation (2023) and Explainer (2024) mirror prior policy assumptions that human rights are an inherent and universal right that people have simply because they are human (Zembylas, 2017a). However, such a conceptualization does not account for how the human in human rights is founded on the assumption that only certain kinds of subjects are intelligible as human while Others are constituted as "(non)(sub)(in)human" (Khoja-Moolji, 2017, p. 380), through racialized, gendered,

caste-based, and other normalized practices (Mignolo, 2009; Wilkerson, 2020; Wynter, 2003). There is robust literature mapping how universalizing concepts like development, rights, and freedom affirm and affect the colonial division of humanity. For instance, Lowe (2015) illuminates how modern promises of universal development and rights are shaped and sustained by an "economy of affirmation and forgetting," affirming the rights of a privileged few while relegating the majority of Others to spaces "that are constituted as backward" (p. 39) and forgetting the violent encounters that have naturalized these divisions. In the context of global development, this economy also upholds a "damage-centered" (Tuck, 2009) hierarchical division of humans. That is a majority of the world's peoples are assumed to be delayed or set back in their path to development because of imaginary deficits and are expected to "catch up (but never can) to the settler/unpained/abled body (or community or people or society or philosophy or knowledge system)" (Tuck & Yang, 2014, p. 231).

The disavowal of this colonial division of humanity is central to mainstream human rights policy commitments (Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Spivak, 2004). Therefore, even though the "inherent dignity of the human person…is universal, indivisible, inalienable, and interrelated" (UNESCO, 2023), Bhuvi and Jinu are noting that in reality, their right to dignity is inextricably linked to their geo-politic ("backward" Attappady) and body-politic ("backward" Scheduled Tribe) situatedness (Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Mignolo, 2009). Moreover, they are keenly aware that their right to dignity is not contingent upon their humanity but on their ability to catch up by getting a prestigious job. This path to acquiring that right to dignity aligns with mainstream global education policy promises of social mobility through education—be educated, get a "high level" job, and "fight for the respect that everyone else is given without question" (Jemisin, 2015, p. i).

Right to Sustainable Futures: Development as Rights Violation

The SDG 4 agenda expresses a concern for future generations and their well-being (UNESCO, 2016). UNESCO's (2023) Recommendation is grounded in a rights perspective and is invested in "empowering learners as rights-holders" (p. 7), promoting an "ethic of solidarity" by encouraging "convivial relations, neighborliness and a sense of belonging" and raising awareness about the "interdependence of individuals…societies…natural resources and ecosystems" (p.8). To meet these guidelines, the Explainer (UNESCO, 2024) recommends that all educational activities and programs should be geared towards the achievement of 12 learning outcomes that include "respect for diversity" and "a sense of belonging to a common and diverse humanity and planet earth" (p. 8). The Explainer also provides examples of actions for achieving these outcomes, which include "ensuring that textbooks are anti-racist and checked for biases and stereotypes," "integrating multiple and diverse perspectives into history teaching," and "using the outdoors as learning spaces to teach about sustainability and climate change" (UNESCO, 2024, p. 12). Even as HRE policies emphasize the interconnectedness between individuals and ecosystems, in the next

section, Murugan, Soumya, and Nenjan Moopan illustrate how ongoing development programs that prioritize profits and exclusion are breaking relations between ST peoples and their more-than-human kin.

Broken Relations and Precarious Living in Attappady

> When I was a boy, I used to accompany my uncles and cousins into the forest… I have always felt that the forest knows me, and I know the forest. Like we understand each other. And the animals won't hurt us if they know that we respect them... All this changed when AHADS (Attappady Hill Area Development Society) started in Attappady. They and the forest department limited our entry into the forests. They still justify it saying that they want to protect the forests, but we never harmed the forest. In the late 2000s, AHADS started recruiting young ST men as forest guards and watchers. Their duty was to roam the forest and to report anyone who entered the forest to take firewood or collect honey. And that is how they turned our own people against us… About six years ago, a DFO (district forest officer) passed an order stating that ST peoples must not enter the forest with any type of sharp object... Many of us protested at the check-post until the order was revoked… But we no longer have the relationship we had with the forest and the land.
>
> – Murugan, Interview transcript, February 2022

Murugan's narrative highlights the role of a specific development project that separated him from the forest that he loves. Stories by Indigenous Peoples in India and around the world are replete with themes that emphasize the importance of maintaining reciprocal and respectful relations with sentient beings with whom humans share space (bodhi & ziipao, 2019; Ormond et al., 2020; Tynan, 2021). However, relation-breaking and rendering more-than-human beings as property that must be sold, protected, or destroyed for profit is a defining feature of development (Battiste, 2013; Coulthard, 2014; Grande, 2019). Therefore, Murugan's quiet sense of loss about being denied entry into the forest is not merely about losing access to the land and its resources. Rather, his assertion that he and the forest "understand each other" affirms the experience of Indigenous Peoples around the world who view the loss of relations as an abnormal severance of a spiritual and ontological bond with the land and the beings around them (Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019; Quay, 2021; Todd, 2016).

Mainstream conservation-for-development projects have traditionally been aimed at resource and biodiversity protection for future generations and the planet (Mitchell, 2020; Spash, 2022). However, critical examinations of such projects have revealed numerous instances of Indigenous dispossession and habitat loss. (Chattopadhyay, 2014; Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Murdock, 2021). The Kerala State Planning Board, KSPB (2010) report on the AHADS project that Murugan refers to describes it as the most comprehensive development and ecological restoration project implemented in Attappady (p. 5). However, news reports from the time add that even though AHADS

restored over 12,000 hectares of land, it was done by planting non-native species of trees. The KSPB's (2010) report confirms these assertions by stating that forest regeneration was achieved by planting "suitable income-fetching tree plantations" (p. 10).

The consequences of an ecological conservation project that prioritized the planting and protection of "income-fetching" trees are being experienced by ST peoples living in hamlets like Thanchiyoor that are close to the forest. Soumya, explains how:

> …we have a lot of elephants and wild boars coming down from the forest into the hamlet. You saw the land just behind my house? My sister and I had a little fruit and vegetable garden there. We grew tomatoes, spinach, some peppers, a couple of plantain palms. And a small pineapple. We were so proud… But just after the big rains a few months ago, an elephant came and took it all. I am grateful that we were all safe because you know that elephants have already killed three people in the past month. Still, I was really sad about losing everything that we grew. Especially that pineapple.
>
> – Soumya, Interview transcript, April 2022

The precarities described by Soumya are becoming frequent in Kerala, and in other forest regions of India that were previously under the guardianship of Adivasi peoples. For instance, in the year 2023-2024, 98 people were killed by elephants in Kerala alone, and at least 25 elephants were electrocuted (The Indian Express, 2024; Kallungal, 2023). Even though Adivasi households are disproportionately affected by wildlife incursions, I rarely observed electric fences around ST farmlands in Thanchiyoor—a mechanism that is commonly used to deter wildlife from entering human settlements. When I asked Nenjan Moopan about the absence of fences, he said:

> Why do you think they started coming down from the forest? The forest department and AHADS planted eucalyptus, sandalwood, and some other trees in the forest. Elephants like variety. They want grass and bamboo and fruits. There is hardly any grass in the forest now. The sandalwood trees are guarded by the forest police, and elephants hate eucalyptus. So, they have no choice but to come down here for food. And here we have plantains and jackfruits and black plums. They take it and become happy, we become sad. All we can do is bow in obeisance and hope that they don't take our lives.
>
> – Nenjan Moopan, Interview transcript, February 2022

For Nenjan Moopan, elephants who come to feed in and around the hamlet are not problems to be fixed by installing electric fences or through capture and removal. Rather, they are beings whose rights have been violated and whose homes have been dispossessed by a development paradigm that prioritizes economic gain over ecological balance. Despite being at the frontline of the consequences of development planning, Moopan's response to the elephants coming into his home is rooted in humility and kinship rather than violence. Such a response is akin to what Trawlwulwuy scholar

Lauren Tynan (2021) refers to as a "relational reality," which is not simply an understanding of the world as relational "but [to] feel the world as kin" (p. 600). To feel the world as kin is not a skill that can be learned as part of a rights-based curriculum. Rather, it requires embracing relationality as a practice and a responsibility (Graham, 1999; Kovach, 2021). As Moopan explains, this relational reality is a complex one to navigate and requires employing strategies to respect the rights of beings with whom they share the land while simultaneously confronting everyday precarities (Bishop & Tynan, 2022; Jukes, 2023; Tynan, 2021)

The tensions between UNESCO's Recommendation and the everyday experiences of people like Murugan, Soumya, and Nenjan Moopan are stark. The Recommendation's declarations of respect and interconnectedness and the Explainer's examples of action, like outdoor learning for sustainability, do not prepare current or future learners to navigate the precarities that those in the Global South are navigating currently. Additionally, the Recommendation does not acknowledge that the dominant development paradigm and the worldviews it normalizes are instrumental in perpetuating the most violent human rights crises of our times—climate change. This denial presents a dilemma for reorienting HRE. HRE in its current form is inextricably linked to a destructive development model that breaks relations between human and more-than-human interlocutors while exacerbating precarities in the Global South (Andreotti et al., 2015; Bryan, 2022; Manion et al., 2019). Therefore, policy promises about the right to sustainable futures for all are bound to be broken as long as the human rights-in-development paradigm remains unchanged.

Discussion

Interrogating Separability and Unintelligibility in Rights Education

In a scathing critique of the "rhetorical-formulaic" discourse that has come to define the human rights-in-development regime, Uvin (2007) asserts that declarations affirming that development is a universal human right are "surely beautifully worded" but is "operationally meaningless" (pp. 598-600). This sentiment remains valid and lives on in UNESCO's (2023) Explainer, for instance, in the following recommendation for educators:

> "Raise awareness of the increasing interdependence of individuals, communities […] and ecosystems, and cultivate an ethic of shared responsibility for peace, human rights and sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2023, p. 7).

While this guideline may be worded to highlight the importance of an educational agenda that attends to some form of relational responsibility, it does little to acknowledge the kind of rights violations that actors involved in high-intensity struggles like this article's interlocutors experience daily. Vague assertions that HRE must "instill an ethic of care, compassion and solidarity" are supported by simplistic calls for

developing "collaborative skills, adaptive skills, citizenship skills, and respect for diversity" (UNESCO, 2024, pp. 9-10). This might register as a necessary action for most low-intensity actors since it is compatible with the status quo that we benefit from, albeit differentially. However, as Adivasi interlocutors demonstrate, such recommendations do not address ongoing rights violations for those involved in high-intensity struggles. What are the implications of these findings for educators involved in low-intensity struggles?

Recognizing Separability

These tensions between policy and experience suggest that the "principle of separability" stands in the way of reconfiguring rights education. In an invitation to imagine a social world in which difference is understood without separability, Denise Ferreira da Silva (2016) argues that the modern-colonial social world is invested in constructions of cultural difference that require separation between human and more-than-human beings, as well as between groups that are considered to possess fixed attributes and identities. Battiste (2005) has long asserted that formal education in its current form is "diffusionist" in that it divides the world into two categories—those who invent, progress, and provide, and those who "receive progressive innovation by diffusion" from the former (p. 124).

The normalization of separability in SDG 4 and HRE (Brissett & Mitter, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017) means that global and national policies consistently represent the Global South as the vulnerable and disadvantaged 'beneficiaries' of human rights-in-development interventions (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020; UNESCO, 2017). However, as Adivasi interlocutors illuminate, this categorization is intensifying different forms of rights violations. Bhuvi and Jinu's everyday right to dignity is deferred through categories (the backward Adivasi) imposed by the state and dominant caste Indians. AHADS separated Murugan and the forest through colonial strategies that "remake land as property" (Coulthard, 2014). The presumed superiority of the state's scientific expertise in reforestation justified the decision to replace trees that are native to the region with "income-fetching" species. What, then, is the 'otherwise' educational task of reconfiguring HRE, especially for actors whose worldviews normalize the separation and categorization of beings?

The Challenges of Intelligibility

Learning from the insights of the interlocutors in this article and the work of decolonial and post-humanist scholars, I argue that the 'otherwise' educational task for actors involved in low-intensity struggles not only involves understanding and relaying information about colonial strategies like the normalization of separability in education policy. Rather, it requires intervention at the relational and ontological levels of learners' framing of rights and their investments in ways of knowing and being that implicate them in rights violation. (Amsler, 2019; Kerr & Andreotti, 2018; Zembylas, 2017b). In her

vision for an 'otherwise' education, Preetha emphasizes the significance of this relational shift:

> I have two important principles that I try to follow. Do not hurt anyone intentionally and have respect for everyone and their different circumstances. That is what I have learned through my own 'life experiences.' This is an important lesson, but I did not learn it in school or college…There can be competition, no problem, but people must learn to care and respect others. This should be taught in school, especially to 'upper caste' people because they don't know how to think about other peoples' situations. They only know how to think about their job, their family, their 'status'…I am not blaming them. That is what society teaches them.
>
> – Preetha, Interview transcript, May 2022

At first glance, Preetha's elegantly articulated call for education that prioritizes dignity aligns with UNESCO's (2024) Explainer and its emphasis on respect for diversity and self-awareness (p. 10). However, unlike this conception of human rights that is rooted in depoliticized and generalized notions of respect and belonging, Preetha's vision for transforming education addresses what Andreotti (2016) refers to as the cognitive and affective "challenges of intelligibility" (pp. 105-106). The greatest challenge, Andreotti argues, that educators involved in low-intensity struggles encounter while attempting to imagine educational alternatives is that *we* are cognitively and affectively ill-equipped to imagine outside the dominant worldview, especially when this worldview is considered "neutral, universal, [and] benevolent" (Andreotti, 2016, p. 105). It is this challenge of intelligibility that Preetha *makes legible* when she asserts that "upper caste people" cannot be blamed for only prioritizing "their job, their family, their status" since "society teaches them" to prioritize individual success and well-being over collective care and respect.

Conclusion: Indigenous/Adivasi Lessons for Rights Educators

As a testament to Ghosh's (2016) assertion that the Anthropocene is characterized by a "reversal of the temporal order of [colonial] modernity" (p. 46), ST peoples of Attappady and their more-than-human kin are part of a majority who are the first to experience the most devastating precarities and violence induced by the current human rights-in-development paradigm. Yet, the global education agenda and its national adaptations rarely consult people like Bhuvi, Jinu, Murugan, Soumya, Preetha, and Nenjan Moopan, who are navigating development-induced precarities and are experts in sustainable and relational living. This article highlights the expertise of Indigenous/Adivasi Peoples in interrogating the tensions between human rights-in-development policy promises and their lived experiences, while also illuminating the implications of these tensions for rights education, particularly for educators and policymakers involved in low-intensity struggles.

Adivasi interlocutors in this article highlight two key tensions between policy and experience. One, they are noting the disconnect between policy promises of the inalienable right to dignity (UNESCO, 2023) and the everyday assaults against Adivasi personhood, especially through the classification of ST peoples as "backward sections" of society. Two, interlocutors highlight the tensions between HRE policy affirmations of the right to sustainable futures and their experiences of development programs that introduce new forms of precarities. Drawing on these findings, I argue that two principles stand in the way of reconfiguring HRE in ways that are especially significant for low-intensity actors who are learning to imagine education outside the logic and practices of coloniality. One, the principle of separability normalizes education policy representations of the Global South as vulnerable beneficiaries of human rights-in-development interventions, while low-intensity actors in the Global North are assumed to possess the expertise to design and implement these interventions. Two, actors involved in low-intensity struggles are those who benefit from the unsustainable and destructive development paradigm, which means that strategies and actions for justice that are outside the dominant worldview are often unintelligible to these actors.

The task of learning to live in an increasingly uncertain world requires an education that does more than acknowledge the interconnectedness of rights and cultivate depoliticized and decontextualized skills in the hope of ensuring rights for all. Rather, it requires an openness to be taught by actors like this article's interlocutors, who are experts in entangled and relational living. This article contributes to educational imaginings arising out of scholarly collaborations between low and high-intensity actors (Bellino & the Kakuma Youth Research Group, 2018; Nixon et al., 2022; Wadhwa, 2021). This means that even though this research does not include the perspectives of "settlers"[5] living on alienated Adivasi land, these findings open up opportunities for collaborative learning and for further research. Notably, it invites inquiry into how the critical expertise and knowledge of Global South actors are experienced by learners in the Global North, especially when their normalized worldviews and sense of self are unlikely to be upheld.

Acknowledgments

I thank the anonymous reviewers for their generative and generous feedback. I am always grateful to Dr. Michelle J. Bellino, Jenny, and Andrews Parakkal for their encouragement and caring mentorship. This research was supported by the Karl C.K. Ma Endowed Scholarship, Rackham Graduate School, and Marsal Family School of Education, University of Michigan. Local institutional affiliation was provided by the Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, India.

[5] Adivasi peoples, government officials, and the migrants themselves refer to non-Adivasi peoples living in Attappady using the English term "settler."

Naivedya Parakkal *has a Ph.D. in Educational Foundations and Policy, and she examines colonial continuities in global education frameworks and their regional adaptations. Her work centers youth navigating persistent exclusion in their everyday lives, and their expertise in imagining systemic and relational shifts in education.*

References

Amsler, S. (2019). Gesturing towards radical futurity in education for alternative futures. *Sustainability Science*, *14*(4), 925–930. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00679-8

Andreotti, V. (2016). The educational challenges of imagining the world differently. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, *37*(1), 101–112. https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2016.1134456

Andreotti, V., Stein, S., Ahenakew, C., & Hunt, D. (2015). Mapping interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, *4*(1), 21–40.

Atkinson, R. (1998). *The Life Story Interview*. Sage Publications.

Ball, S. J. (1998). Big policies/small world: An introduction to international perspectives in education policy. *Comparative Education, 34*(2), 119-130. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050069828225

Bartlett, L., & Vavrus, F. (2017). *Rethinking Case Study Research*. Routledge.

Battiste, M. (2005). You can't be the global doctor if you're the colonial disease. In P. Tripp & L. Muzzin (Eds.), *Teaching as Activism: Equity Meets Environmentalism* (pp. 121–133). McGill-Queen's Press.

Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*. UBC Press.

Becker, A. (2021). Decolonial human rights education: Changing the terms and content of conversations on human rights. *Human Rights Education Review*, *4*(2), 50-68. https://doi.org/10.7577/hrer.3989

Bellino, M. J. (2023). Shifting ground or moving furniture around: Youth participatory action research in Kakuma Refugee Camp. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 54*(4), 414-428, https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12463

Bellino, M. J. & the Kakuma Youth Research Group. (2018). Closing information gaps in Kakuma refugee camp: A Youth Participatory Action Research study. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *62*(3–4), 492–507. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12277

Benavot, A., & Smith, W. (2020). Reshaping quality and equity: Global learning metrics as a ready-made solution to a manufactured crisis. In A. Wulff (Ed.), *Grading Goal Four: Tensions, Threats, and Opportunities in the Sustainable Development Goal on Quality Education* (pp. 238–261). Brill Academic Publishers.

Bishop, M., & Tynan, L. (2022). Finding perspective through our more-than-human kin. In K. Sims, N. Banks, S. Engel, P. Hodge, J. Makuwira, N. Nakamura, J. Rigg, A. Salamanca, & P. Yeophantong (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Global Development* (pp. 593–604). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003017653-57

bodhi, s. r., & jojo, b. (Eds.). (2019). *The Problematics of tribal integration: Voices from India's alternative centers*. The Shared Mirror and Tribal Intellectual Collective India.

bodhi, s. r., & ziipao, r. r. (Eds.). (2019). *Land, Words and Resilient Cultures: The Ontological Basis of Identity*. Tribal Intellectual Collective India.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brissett, N., & Mitter, R. (2017). For function or transformation? A critical discourse analysis of education under the Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, 15*(1), 181–204.

Bryan, A. (2022). Pedagogy of the implicated: Advancing a social ecology of responsibility framework to promote deeper understanding of the climate crisis. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, *30*(3), 329–348. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2021.1977979

Byrd, J. A. (2014). A return to the South. *American Quarterly*, *66*(3), 609–620. https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2014.0051

Cammarota, J., & Fine, M. (2008). *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. Sage.

Chattopadhyay, S. (2014). Postcolonial development state, appropriation of nature, and social transformation of the ousted Adivasis in the Narmada valley, India. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, *25*(4), 65–84. https://doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2014.966314

Clandinin, D. J. (2022). *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Cook, N. (2008). Shifting the focus of development: Turning 'helping' into self-reflexive learning. *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, *2*(1), 16–26.

Corntassel, J., & Hardbarger, T. (2019). Educate to perpetuate: Land-based pedagogies and community resurgence. *International Review of Education*, *65*(1), 87–116. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-018-9759-1

Coulthard, G. S. (2014). *Red skin, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. University of Minnesota Press.

Crawley, A. T. (2016). *Black Pentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility*. Fordham University Press.

Da Costa, D., & Da Costa, A. E. (2019). Introduction: Cultural production under multiple colonialisms. *Cultural Studies*, *33*(3), 343–369. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2019.1590436

Dados, N., & Connell, R. (2012). The Global South. *Contexts*, *11*(1), 12–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504212436479

Domínguez, L., & Luoma, C. (2020). Decolonising conservation policy: How colonial land and conservation ideologies persist and perpetuate Indigenous injustices at the expense of the environment. *Land*, *9*(3), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.3390/land9030065

Donnelly, J. (1999). Human rights, democracy, and development. *Human Rights Quarterly*, *21*(3), 608–632. https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.1999.0039

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press.

Escobar, A. (2012). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the Third World* (2nd ed.). Princeton University Press.

Ferguson, J. (1994). *The anti-politics machine: "Development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. University of Minnesota Press.

Ferguson, J. (2005). Decomposing modernity: History and hierarchy after development. In A. Loomba, S. Kaul, M. Bunzl, A. Burton, & J. Esty (Eds.), *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* (pp. 166–181). Duke University Press.

Ghosh, A. (2016). *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. University of Chicago Press.

Graham, M. (1999). Some thoughts about the philosophical underpinnings of Aboriginal worldviews. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*, *3*, 106-116.

Grande, S. (2019). Refusing the settler society of the spectacle. In E. A. McKinley & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Indigenous Education* (pp. 1013–1029). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3899-0_42

Grosfoguel, R. (2007). The epistemic decolonial turn: Beyond political-economy paradigms. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 211–223. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162514

Hembrom, R. (2022). Cohabiting a textualized world: Elbow room and Adivasi resurgence. *Modern Asian Studies*, *56*(5), 1464–1488. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X22000117

Hickson, H. (2016). Becoming a critical narrativist: Using critical reflection and narrative inquiry as research methodology. *Qualitative Social Work*, *15*(3), 380–391. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325015617344

Huaman, E. (2019). Comparative Indigenous education research (CIER): Indigenous epistemologies and comparative education methodologies. *International Review of Education*, *65*(1), 163–184. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-018-09761-2

Human Rights Watch [HRW]. (2024, January 11). *India: Increased Abuses Against Minorities, Critics Violence, Discriminatory Policies Set Back Global Leadership Role*. HRW. https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/01/11/india-increased-abuses-against-minorities-critics

Hunt, J., Romero, P., & Good, J. (2006). *Stories from the mobile workplace: An emerging narrative ethnography*. Proceedings of the 18th Workshop of the Psychology of Programming Interest Group, University of Sussex, September 2006, 153–167. Retrieved from www.ppig.org

Jemisin, N. K. (2015). *The Fifth Season*. Orbit Hachette Book Group.

Jukes, S. (2023). *Learning to Confront Ecological Precarity: Engaging with More-than-human Worlds* (Vol. 13). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-34200-4

Kallungal, D. (2023, December 17). Kerala lost 25 elephants due to electrocution in last five years. *The Hindu*. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/kerala-lost-25-elephants-due-to-electrocution-in-last-five-years/article67648088.ece

Kamal, A., & Courtheyn, C. (2024). Where is the North? Southern ruptures in decolonizing theory. *Political Geography*, *108*(103029). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2023.103029

Keet, A. (2012). Discourse, betrayal, critique: The renewal of human rights education. In C. Roux (Ed.), *Safe spaces: Human rights education in diverse contexts* (pp. 7–28). Sense Publishers.

Kendall, N. (2008). "Vulnerability" in AIDS-affected states: Rethinking child rights, educational institutions, and development paradigms. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *28*(4), 365–383. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2007.10.003

Kerala State Planning Board. (2010). *Socio-economic impact of AHADS in Attappady: A quick evaluation study* (88; Evaluation Series). Government of Kerala. https://spb.kerala.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/EVN03.pdf

Kerala State Planning Board. (2021). *Kerala Development Report: Initiatives, Achievements, Challenges*. Government of Kerala. https://spb.kerala.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/Kerala-Development-Report-2021.pdf

Kerr, J., & Andreotti, V. (2018). Recognizing More-Than-Human Relations in Social Justice Research. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *27*(2), 53–67.

Khoja-Moolji, S. S. (2017). The Making of Humans and Their Others in and through Transnational Human Rights Advocacy: Exploring the Cases of Mukhtar Mai and Malala Yousafzai. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *42*(2), 377–402. https://doi.org/10.1086/688184

Kjosavik, D. J., & Shanmugaratnam, N. (2004). Integration or exclusion? Locating Indigenous Peoples in the development process of Kerala, South India. *Forum for Development Studies*, *31*(2), 231–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/08039410.2004.9666282

Kovach, M. (2021). Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts. *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts, Second Edition*, 1–313. https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-1333715

Lowe, L. (2015). *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822375647

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2017). On the Coloniality of Human Rights. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, *114*, 117–136. https://doi.org/10.4000/rccs.6793

Manion, C., Anderson, E., Baily, S., Call-Cummings, M., Iyengar, R., & Shah, P. P. (2019). *Interrogating and Innovating Comparative and International Education Research*. Brill.

Mason, M., Crossley, M., & Bond, T. (2019). Changing modalities in international development and research in education: Conceptual and ethical issues. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *70*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2019.102080

Maxwell, J.A. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Sage.

Mignolo, W. D. (2009). Who Speaks for the "Human" in Human Rights? *Hispanic Issues On Line*, *5*(1), 7–24.

Mignolo, W. D. (2011). *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Duke University Press.

Ministry of Education. (2022). *Samagra Shiksha: An Integrated Scheme for School Education*. Government of India. https://samagra.education.gov.in/docs/ss_implementation.pdf

Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Ministry of Tribal Affairs. (2020). *Annual Report*. Ministry of Tribal Affairs. https://tribal.nic.in/AboutMinistry.aspx

Mitchell, A. (2020). Revitalizing laws, (re)-making treaties, dismantling violence: Indigenous resurgence against 'the sixth mass extinction.' *Social & Cultural Geography*, *21*(7), 909–924. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2018.1528628

Moghli, M. A. (2020). Re-conceptualising human rights education: From the global to the occupied. *International Journal of Human Rights Education*, *4*(1), 1–35.

Murdock, E. G. (2021). Conserving dispossession? A genealogical account of the colonial roots of western conservation. *Ethics, Policy & Environment*, *24*(3), 235–249. https://doi.org/10.1080/21550085.2021.2002625

Nakata, N. M., Nakata, V., Keech, S., & Bolt, R. (2012). Decolonial goals and pedagogies for Indigenous studies. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, *1*(1), 120–140.

Nguyen, T. X. T. (2010). Deconstructing *education for all*: Discourse, power and the politics of inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *14*(4), 341–355. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110802504564

Nixon, J., Habtom, S., & Tuck, E. (2022). Rupture, not injury: Reframing repair for Black and Indigenous youth experiencing school pushout. *Journal of Visual Culture*, *21*(1), 132–160. https://doi.org/10.1177/14704129221088300

Ormond, A., Kidman, J., & Jahnke, H. T. (2020). An Indigenous Māori perspective of Rangatahi personhood. In S. Swartz, A.Cooper, Batan, Clarence, & L. Causa

(Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Global South Youth Studies*, 97–108. Oxford University Press.

O' Toole, J. (2018). Institutional storytelling and personal narratives: Reflecting on the 'value' of narrative inquiry. *Irish Educational Studies*, *37*(2), 175–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2018.1465839

Pashby, K., & Sund, L. (2020). Decolonial options and foreclosures for global citizenship education and education for sustainable development. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education (NJCIE)*, *4*(1), 66–83. https://doi.org/10.7577/njcie.3554

Patel, L. (2016). *Decolonizing Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability*. Routledge.

Quay, J. (2021). Wild and willful pedagogies: Education policy and practice to embrace the spirits of a more-than-human world. *Policy Futures in Education*, *19*(3), 291–306. https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210320956875

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and modernity/rationality. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 168–178. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353

Ritchie, J. (2013). Indigenous onto-epistemologies and pedagogies of care and affect in Aotearoa. *Global Studies of Childhood*, *3*(4), 395–406. https://doi.org/10.2304/gsch.2013.3.4.395

Ritchie, J., & Rau, C. (2010). Kia mau kite wairuatanga: Counter-colonial narratives of early childhood education in Aotearoa. In G. Cannella & L. Soto (Eds.), *Childhoods: A Handbook* (pp. 355–373). Peter Lang.

Sano, Hans-Otto (2000). Development and human rights: The necessary, but partial integration of human rights and development. *Human Rights Quarterly*, *22*(3), 734-752.

Shahjahan, R. A. (2013). Coloniality and a global testing regime in higher education: Unpacking the OECD's AHELO initiative. *Journal of Education Policy*, *28*(5), 676–694. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2012.758831

Silva, D. F. da. (2016). On Difference without Separability. In J. Volz & J. Rebouças, *Catalogue of the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, 'Incerteza Viva'* (pp. 57–65). São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.

Simmonds, S. (2022, September 29). *Human rights (education) in a posthuman world: Thinking with curriculum inquiry.* [Inaugural lecture].

Smith, L. T., Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (Eds.). (2019). *Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education: Mapping the long view*. Routledge.

Spash, C. L. (2022). Conservation in conflict: Corporations, capitalism and sustainable development. *Biological Conservation*, *269*(2022), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2022.109528

Spivak, G. C. (2004). Righting wrongs. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, *103*(2/3), 523–581. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-103-2-3-523

Sriprakash, A., Tikly, L., & Walker, S. (2020). The erasures of racism in education and international development: Re-reading the 'global learning crisis.' *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *50*(5), 676–692. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2018.1559040

Suchithra, M. (2013, July). Victims of development. *Down to Earth*. https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/victims-of-development-41614

Stein, S., Andreotti, V., Suša, R., Ahenakew, C., & Čajková, T. (2022). From "education for sustainable development" to "education for the end of the world as we know it." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *54*(3), 274–287. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1835646

Sultana, F. (2019). Decolonizing development education and the pursuit of social justice. *Human Geography*, *12*(3), 31–46.

Takayama, K., Sriprakash, A., & Connell, R. (2017). Toward a postcolonial comparative and international education. *Comparative Education Review*, *61*(1), S1–S24. https://doi.org/10.1086/690455

The Indian Express. (2024, January 18). *Express view on Kerala declaring human-animal conflict as state disaster: Terms of co-existence.* The Indian Express. https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/express-view-on-kerala-declaring-human-animal-conflict-as-state-disaster-terms-of-co-existence-9202030/

Thomas, K. V. (2018, February 27). *What Happened to Attappadi?* Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR). https://www.cppr.in/centre-for-comparative-studies/what-happened-to-attappadi

Todd, Z. (2016). An Indigenous feminist's take on the ontological turn: "Ontology" is just another word for colonialism. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, *29*(1), 4–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12124

Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, *79*(3), 409–428.

Tuck, E., & Gaztambide-Fernández, R. A. (2013). Curriculum, replacement, and settler futurity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, *29*(1), 72-89.

Tuck, E., & Yang, W. (2014). R-words: Refusing research. In D. Paris & M. T. Winn (Eds.), *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities* (pp. 223–247). Sage Publications.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Scholar.

Tynan, L. (2021). What is relationality? Indigenous knowledges, practices and responsibilities with kin. *Cultural Geographies*, *28*(4), 597–610.

United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]. (2016). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2016: Education for people and planet*. UNESCO Publishing. https://doi.org/10.54676/AXEQ8566

UNESCO. (2017). *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*. UNESCO Publishing. https://www.inclusive-education-in-action.org/resources/guide-ensuring-inclusion-and-equity-education

UNESCO. (2023). *Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*. UNESCO Publishing.

UNESCO. (2024). *Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development: An explainer.* UNESCO Publishing

Uvin, P. (2007). From the right to development to the rights-based approach: How 'human rights' entered development. *Development in Practice*, *17*(4–5), 597–606. https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520701469617

Wadhwa, G. (2021). Silence as Collective Resistance among Adivasi Youth in India. In S. Swartz, A. Cooper, C.M. Batan, & L. Kropff Causa (Eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Global South Youth Studies* (pp. 471–483). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190930028.013.43

Wilkerson, I. (2020). *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents*. Random House.

Wulff, A. (Ed.). (2020). *Grading goal four: Tensions, threats, and opportunities in the sustainable development goal on quality education*. Brill Sense.

Wulff, A. (2021). Global education governance in the context of COVID-19: Tensions and threats to education as a public good. *Development*, *64*(1–2), 74–81. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41301-021-00293-1

Wynter, S. (2003). Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation—An argument. *New Centennial Review*, *3*(3), 257–337. https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015

Xaxa, V. (1999). Tribes as Indigenous People of India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *34*(51), 3589–3595.

Xaxa, V. (2016). Tribes and Indian National Identity: Location of Exclusion and Marginality. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, *23*(1), 223–237. https://doi.org/10.2307/26534720

Zembylas, M. (2017a). Re-contextualising human rights education: Some decolonial strategies and pedagogical/curricular possibilities. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, *25*(4), 487–499.

Zembylas, M. (2017b). The quest for cognitive justice: Towards a pluriversal human rights education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *15*(4), 397–409. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2017.1357462

Zembylas, M. (2020). A Posthumanist critique of human rights: Towards an agonistic account of rights in inclusive education. In M. K. E. Thomas, L. Heng, & P. Walker (Eds.), *Inclusive Education is a Right, Right?* (pp. 9–20). Brill Sense.