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A call to action for disability and rehabilitation research using a DisCrit and Disability Justice framework

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Disability and ableism exist within a societal context that does not ignore the many facets of a person's identity, however often our disability research does not recognize how experiences vary based on the intersecting identities individuals hold. This article utilizes Intersectionality, Dis/ability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit), and Disability Justice to identify ways for rehabilitation researchers to adapt their research practices for maximum inclusivity and representation.

Materials and Methods: Using these three frameworks, we have developed a call to action including recommendations for rehabilitation researchers to consider as they design and implement research projects.

Results: Incorporating these frameworks provides an opportunity to reimagine current research practices

Conclusions: An accessible approach can help researchers better understand and report on the nuances of intersecting identities on the lives of disabled people.

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Intersectionality; disability justice; DisCrit; ableism; multiply minoritized identities

► IMPLICATIONS FOR REHABILITATION

- Disability identity and ableism must be viewed intersectionally, and disability related research must attend to the many facets of a person's identity.
- Intersectionality, DisCrit, and Disability Justice provide useful frameworks through which we can conduct more inclusive and accessible disability research.
- We present a call-to-action including seven general considerations that researchers can implement to guide the development of intersectional and inclusive disability research.

Introduction

What precisely do we mean when we say that something intersects with something else? Whether it be used narrowly so as to depict the intersection between different axes of power and identity categories, or broadly so as to include an infinite range of possible ontological intersections between levels and dimensions of reality, intersectionality gives rise to the question of the exact nature of intersection itself Gunnarsson [1, p. 114–115]

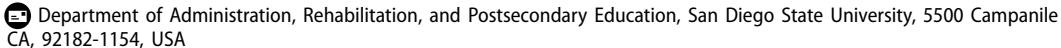
Historically, disability and rehabilitation research have treated disability identity and ableism as non-intersectional, focusing primarily on disability and less-so on the ways in which disability intersects with other minoritized identities. For decades, research and scholarly work in related fields have framed identity as fundamentally shaped by intersecting experiences and histories that constantly interact with and inform one another. While our lens is United States (US) centric it is crucial to note that intersectional issues of ableism, racism, sexism, cissexism, heterosexism and beyond are not only issues specific to US culture. With this in mind, we propose a framework and call to action for disability

and rehabilitation researchers to integrate more inclusive, intersectional, and radical practices into their work.

Author positionalality

This paper describes intersectionality and two disability focused conceptual frameworks that incorporate intersecting identities into their approaches. We also have developed a call-to-action that incorporates these three approaches into research. As rehabilitation scientists, we recognize the impact of our identities on how we interpret the field of rehabilitation. We follow other disabled and multiply-minoritized rehabilitation psychology researchers [2,3] in emphasizing the importance of understanding disability identity alongside other identities (racial, gender, sexual orientation) as important not only to the field of rehabilitation and related research, but to any work with clients. As such we begin this paper by identifying ourselves and how our identities impact our stance.

The majority of the writing team are counselor educators and rehabilitation researchers, while others bring their expertise in

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Although professional discourse often supports the use of person-first language in academic writing about disability, both person-first and identity-first language is used throughout this paper. Many of the authors identify as disabled, and we use both out of respect for the disability community about whom we speak.

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Dis/ability Critical Race Studies (DisCrit), disability justice, and disability studies from other related fields, including special education. The first author identifies as a disabled, white, heterosexual, cisgender woman and first-generation college student. As a wheelchair user, she is an insider in the disability community which influences her perspectives in this paper. The second author identifies as a mixed-race, cis-gender, woman of color with a chronic illness, offering her personal insight into the ways in which disability intersects with race, gender, sexuality, and health status. The third author identifies as a disabled, Latin American, heterosexual, cisgender, culturally Jewish woman. She is the older sibling to a sister that experiences autism. She is active within the disability community, which influences her perspectives within this paper. The fourth author identifies as a white, disabled cisgender woman with physical and learning disabilities. Her experiences with both visible and invisible disabilities shape her broader understanding of the complexity of identity, which informs the arguments in this paper. The senior author identifies as Iranian American, heterosexual, cisgender woman without a disability who has immigrated to another country and no longer resides in the United States context. Though not a member of the disability community, her research career has focused on disability and advocacy through various avenues.

Our goal for this piece is not to act as experts in these areas, but rather, to engage in dialogue that reimagines rehabilitation research practices to be more inclusive and intersectional. As rehabilitation researchers, we continue to learn, grow, and engage in this work, and recognize that we must consistently be attentive to these principles now and as they evolve. The suggestions below are not meant to be a comprehensive or linear checklist. Instead, they serve as considerations as rehabilitation researchers engage in and challenge current research practices and work to evolve new best practices that align with the nuanced perspectives of the disability community.

Intersectionality

With its roots in Black Feminism and Critical Race Theory, the theory of intersectionality emerged at the end of the twentieth century in an effort to emphasize the significant legal concerns of Black women who were both members of racial and ethnic minority groups. In her seminal essay, *"Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,"* key proponent Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw [4] presented the term as a means to expose the legitimized marginalization of Black women not only in antidiscrimination law, but even more insidiously, in the very movements intended to address racism and sexism in the United States. Crenshaw [5] followed her 1989 piece with a further expansion of the theory of intersectionality in her essay, *"Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color,"* which highlighted the ways in which women of color, particularly those from immigrant and socially disadvantaged communities, were largely ignored in social advocacy to address violence against women.

One of the important assumptions of intersectionality is that oppression in one place or for one group is intimately connected with all forms of oppression, in all places, and for all groups [6]. Within the context of rehabilitation, intersectionality would assume that power relations related to disability cannot be understood without also considering other relationships of power and oppression. Wånggren and Sellberg [7], in illustrating this point, paraphrased social philosopher Jacques Rancière by stating, "no power

relationships can be separated from the [entirety] of the social power continuum." bell hooks [8], author, educator, and champion of intersectional feminism argues that race and class must be recognized as feminist issues; in the same regard, disability cannot be divorced from those identities with which it intersects.

Intersectionality further assumes that social identities do not function independently, and it is interaction among identities that forms the lived experiences of the individuals residing at these intersections [4,5]. Collins [9] theorized intersecting identities as a matrix of power through which identities interact with one another to create life situations that are qualitatively different based on one's location in the matrix. These identities can create opportunities for both power and oppression depending on social context, thus positioning social identities as dynamic and fluid entities, rather than static and stable categories. Furthermore, the salience of disability as a social identity is likely to shift based on the context of how the individual or the sociocultural environment defines disability [10]. For instance, an Arab American disabled woman residing at the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and disability, may find that in certain contexts or periods in history, her most salient identities may interact in different ways depending on the socio-political environment.

Crenshaw's [4,5] landmark essays have served as a basis for broadening intersectionality to reflect a wide range of issues, social identities, structural power dynamics, and social systems [11]. Intersectionality is not limited to analysis at the levels of race and gender, and rather, the theory was conceived of as a tool to analyze the complexities of social identities that are embedded in structural conditions of power and oppression [12]. Carbado et al. [11, p. 304] note, "paying attention to the movement of intersectionality helps to make clear that the theory is never done, nor exhausted by its prior articulations or movements; it is always already an analysis-in-progress." While disability has not received its due consideration in discussions of intersectionality, a hallmark of the theory is that it endorses a stance of openness and continuous advancement that allows for the integration of disability into the concerns toward which the theory is directed. Intersectionality is, as Carbado et al. [11, p. 304] concede, a "work-in-progress."

Intersectionality and disability

Erevelles and Minear [13] argue that historically, disability has experienced exclusion as a critical category in first-wave theories of intersectionality. Disability has been seen as simply a nuance or descriptor of the individual, not as a legitimate category included in the intersections of multiple social identities [13]. To further substantiate the above claims, Blackwell-Stratton et al. [14] describe the ways in which multiply-minoritized people with disabilities have been subject to the pitfalls of single-identity politics. For example, historically, there has been a lack of a disability perspective in feminist theory and practice. Likewise, the disability rights movement failed to investigate how other marginalized social identities impact disability and vice versa [15]. This partitioning of objectives and ideologies resulted in ableist women's and civil rights movements and a disability rights movement that overlooked the experiences of multiply-minoritized people. In fact, while white women with disabilities enjoyed a fair amount of regard during the Disability Rights Movement (though less-so than White men), a search of the popular and academic literature on the experiences of people of color during the movement results in few formal historical accounts of these individuals. Social movements based on single-identity politics have "historically

conflated or ignored intra-group differences” [13, p. 129,2], and this has resulted in tensions *between* these movements, rather than collaboration *across* movements to promote social justice for all historically oppressed groups. Bilge [16, p. 406], using explicit examples from contemporary social movements such as the Occupy Movement and the SlutWalk, stated, “even movements positioning themselves as progressive can still lose sight of the tools that intersectional thinking makes available,” making clear that social movements often fail to represent the voices of those within the movement who have been held intersectionally invisible [17]. These practices, as Crenshaw [5] argues, selectively challenge, and seek to eliminate certain oppressive practices while simultaneously maintaining others.

To theorize and research experiences of privilege and oppression at the crossroads of multiple identities is a complex task. Due to the tendency to couch single – and dual-identity intersectional analyses within the experiences of the prototypical individual [17], disability and rehabilitation research enters dangerous territory in taking this approach toward research. The impact of having a disability and another minoritized identity fundamentally alters a person’s experience. For instance, if a person with an intellectual disability is also Black, they are at higher risk of police violence than someone without an intellectual disability or who is white [18]. Similarly, a wheelchair user who comes from a low socioeconomic background, surviving on government support, will have a very different experience from a wheelchair user with high income who can purchase the supports they need without second thought. These and many other intersections highlight the need for an intersectional lens in disability research.

In acknowledging that disabled people can, and often do hold multiple minoritized identities, calls for intersectional approaches have become more prevalent within rehabilitation research. [19–23] For example, Hartley & Saia [24] pushed for rehabilitation associations to embrace disability as it intersects with other cultural identities and systems of oppression. In a similar vein, rehabilitation researchers need to begin questioning how we can enhance research practices by evaluating the outdated and historical implications of ableism in research. Ableism is a system that places value on people’s bodies and minds, based on socially constructed notions of normalcy, intelligence, and excellence. These notions are deeply rooted in eugenics, Anti-Blackness, and capitalism. As TL Lewis, lawyer and activist working at the intersections of race, class, and disability, wrote, “Ableism & racism have always been inextricably linked. Each of these oppressions informs the other and depends on the other to survive and thrive. Therefore, it is impossible to end racism without ending ableism, and impossible to end ableism without ending racism. Ableism is also at the root of most every other oppression” (5 March 2019 posting by T Lewis to Tall Lewis Blog; unreferenced).

For years intersectionality has been celebrated and has even been slated as a buzzword in academia, but not without critique. It has been argued that academics implementing intersectionality are “flattening” it by ignoring its political goals or sources of structural inequities [16,25]. Some have also indicated the “whitening of Intersectionality” which happens when we exclude the work and contributions of multiply- minoritized scholars [26–28] Fellows and Razack [29] have also cautioned against competing marginalities, which ignores the hierarchical systems that work together to perpetuate the hegemonic discourse: “any theory, strategy, or practice based on competing marginalities and the race to innocence will inevitably fail because it ignores the relationships among hierarchical systems” [29, p. 336].

While we acknowledge some of the critiques of intersectionality, our goal is to advance intersectionality work in rehabilitation

to ensure authentic representation of multiply-minoritized disabled people in research. We believe intersectionality as a theory allows for a surfacing of critiques of rehabilitation research that challenge the field’s focus on individual intervention on “abnormal” bodies and minds. Instead, an understanding of intersectionality and its importance in rehabilitation research and practice refocuses on challenging larger systems of ableism, racism and capitalism that largely shape the experience of people with disabilities. Like Boda et al. [30] we aim to challenge researchers to think about how the erasure of disability in research inherently shapes how race and ethnicity identities experience structural oppression.

Conceptual frameworks

Drawing upon Black feminists’ call for intersectional analyses (Crenshaw, 1989; 6 May 1979 letter from A Lorde to Mary Daly; unreferenced), we present two major theoretical frameworks on disability that incorporate intersectionality into their approach, using the integration of these frameworks to recommend intersectional and radical practices in disability and rehabilitation research. These critical frameworks and ways of understanding disability and its intersections were developed by disabled people of color both inside and outside of academia, with potential for illuminating the experiences of multiply-minoritized people and, most essentially, making tangible structural change. Importantly, disability activists and community members have critiqued academia as a whole for co-opting disability justice with few tangible implications for, or partnerships with, disabled people of color, and little awareness of its historical and intellectual lineage. With this in mind, we acknowledge that the two frameworks we draw upon, DisCrit [31] and disability justice [15,32,33] have always and will always originate with disabled people of color as the experts, and we draw upon their expertise to push the field of rehabilitation forward.

DisCrit

DisCrit examines the inextricable relationship between racism and ableism in co-constructing dominant notions of normalcy in schools, teacher education programs, and research (e.g., white, nondisabled, male) [31]. The seven tenets of DisCrit expose the often-invisible ways in which racism and ableism work in conjunction with one another to produce compounding forms of oppression for multiply-minoritized people. While this theory focuses on educational spaces, our call to action for rehabilitation researchers will draw on these tenets and consider them in the context of rehabilitation research. Later, we will build upon their importance in the field by incorporating the 10 Principles of Disability Justice. The seven principles of DisCrit are [31]:

1. DisCrit focuses on ways that the forces of racism and ableism circulate interdependently, often in neutralized and invisible ways, to uphold notions of normality.
2. DisCrit values multidimensional identities and troubles singular notions of identity such as race or dis/ability or class or gender or sexuality, and so on.
3. DisCrit emphasizes the social constructions of race and ability and yet recognizes the material and psychological impacts of being labeled as raced or dis/abled, which sets one outside of the western cultural norms.
4. DisCrit privileges voices of marginalized populations, traditionally not acknowledged within research.

5. DisCrit considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of some citizens.
6. DisCrit recognizes Whiteness and Ability as Property and that gains for people labeled with dis/abilities have largely been made as the result of interest convergence of White, middle-class citizens.
7. DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance. [p. 19]

Applying DisCrit principles to rehabilitation research allows for an understanding of the impacts of being labeled as racialized or disabled as fundamental to the theoretical, conceptual, and practical underpinnings of the field. While much of the traditional understandings of disability treat aspects of “quality of life” or other metrics of well-being as simply intervention-based problems, DisCrit allows for a socially constructed view of identity that grounds the “problem” of disability in societal conceptions of normalcy. Similarly, DisCrit’s explicit focus on representation of minoritized populations implores rehabilitation research to treat people disabled people of color, marginalized by both racism and ableism, as the primary experts and drivers of policies, practices, clinical work and research that impacts them.

Disability justice

Like DisCrit, a disability justice framework, moves beyond the single-issue focus of disability rights and focuses on the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class, and more [15]. Although the disability rights movement laid foundational groundwork towards justice, it also further invisibilized people who lived in the intersections of systems of oppression such as disabled people of color, disabled immigrants and queer disabled people [32]. Disability justice was created to promote the leadership of Black, brown, and queer disabled people and works toward the liberation of all oppressed people. Further, it rejects the notion that disabled people need to be fixed or cured, ideas deeply rooted in ableism [34]. The 10 principles of disability justice include [15]:

1. **Intersectionality:** embraces the array of identities disabled people have, including experiences on race, class, sexuality, age, religion, socioeconomic status, religious background, geographical location, immigration status, and more. Consideration of these identities is fundamental to understanding the experiences of disabled people.
2. **Leadership of those most impacted:** puts queer, disabled people of color and their experiences at the forefront of dismantling oppressive systems and leading social justice movements, addressing real-life challenges, and developing creative approaches to addressing oppressions.
3. **Anti-capitalism:** challenges the historically oppressive system of capitalism that thrives on mass production and exploitation of peoples, bodies, minds, and health for the sake of profit and wealth.
4. **Cross-movement solidarity:** emphasizes collaboration and partnership with other social justice movements, an important and vital aspect of ensuring justice and liberation for all.
5. **Recognizing wholeness:** disability justice honors all people and their experiences, and history as part of the whole human experience.

6. **Sustainability:** challenges the capitalistic-imposed state of urgency, promoting a more sustainable approach to living that emphasizes the body, mind, and experiences to honor gradual, progressive, and transformative change to attain justice and liberation.
7. **Cross-disability solidarity:** promotes and values all disabled community members, eliminating the hierarchy of disabilities and elevating the voices of those left out of political discussions. Impenetrable solidarity allows for collective liberation and reduction of isolation.
8. **Interdependence:** rejects the colonialist ideas of independence. Disability justice promotes and creates an environment where interdependence is valued, honored and achieved collectively.
9. **Collective access:** acknowledges that all people fall on the spectrum of functional and access needs depending on their context and environment. It eliminates the shame often faced by access needs on an individual and collective level. There is recognition that collective access is possible when everyone shares the responsibility to create access.
10. **Collective liberation:** honors the individuality of all body-minds and their intersectional identities. And that together, all people are valued, seen, and included.

These core principles, taken collectively, have important implications for the work of rehabilitation researchers; they challenge the idea that disability is a monolith and contribute to an understanding of disability that is more complex, interconnected, and whole (12 February 2011 posting by M Mingus to Leaving Evidence Blog; unreferenceed). This is consistent with sentiments from Audre Lorde’s 1982 speech where she proclaimed, “we do not live single issue lives.” Rehabilitation researchers must explore power dynamics, values, and contradictions of identities, including contradictions about the need or utility of rehabilitation itself, and recognize the reality that individuals can be oppressed and privileged by the same identity. In other words, we have all survived harm and contributed to harm in some way (3 November 2018 posting by M Mingus to Leaving Evidence Blog; unreferenceed). Furthermore, disability justice carefully examines how diverse systems of oppression interact and reinforce one another. It is important for researchers to consider this question asked by disability justice activists: “how do we move together as people with mixed abilities, multiracial, multi-gendered, mixed class, across the orientation spectrum—where no body/mind is left behind?” [33, p. 229]. It is important to note that there is no one way to answer this question; rather it should serve as a guide and area of reflection throughout all stages of the research process, from the research question to data collection, dissemination, and everything in between.

Call to action

While understanding the lineage of theories of intersectionality and their further exploration in DisCrit and disability justice frameworks, we also believe it is essential that disability and rehabilitation research continuously and actively engages with these ideas in a tangible way. As stated above, we as the authors see ourselves as part of this ever evolving work to address the underrepresentation of multiply-minoritized disabled people in research. As such, in this section we present a call to action and a commitment to engage in conversation with the intention of reimagining our current research practices to meet the needs of diverse communities.

- **Value Intersectional and Multidimensional Identities:** Applying an intersectional approach to research requires researchers to reflect on the theories utilized in developing research and the methods used to gather data. Rehabilitation researchers interested in aligning themselves with a critical approach to disability should thoughtfully consider the theoretical frameworks they use in their work, and include perspectives that center disabled people of color such as DisCrit, disability studies and other critical understandings of the embodied experience of disability and its intersections. Qualitative research methods may provide the opportunity to assess beyond quantitative rehabilitation research science. By using a multidimensional approach and obtaining first-hand contextual information, a more accurate reflection of the lived experiences of those that are oppressed and minoritized gives added value to quantitative information [35]. More specifically related to qualitative research, designing interview guides that truly reflect intersectionality, rather than treating identities in an additive manner is crucial. Historically, critics reject the additive approach because it conceptualizes people's experiences as separate, independent, and summative [36–38]. As such interview questions meant to address intersectionality should focus on the systems that reinforce oppression, discrimination, and prejudice rather than individual demographics of the participants [39]. In doing so, this promotes the advancement of rehabilitation researchers to have a holistic understanding of those experiences, provides opportunities to find solutions to systemic inequities, and supports the work of disability justice and Dis/Crit.
- **Amplify Voices and Experiences of Historically Excluded Populations:** Foster an environment that creates a space where disabled experiences are represented, showcased, and valued. The importance of building a trusted environment can not be overstated in an effort to address the mistrust that exists within the community due to historical exploitation, exclusion, and systemic racism. Encourage intersectional research and perspectives including hiring diverse disabled academics, cultivating a diverse research team, and sharing intersectional literature that includes disabled people of color. Include perspectives outside of the world of academia, recognizing that many people may not have the resources to engage in academic settings due to ableism and or systemic oppression. Recognize that not all voices may be spoken and include also other valid ways of communication through sign language, written expression, and assistive technology, and other languages.
- **Prioritize Access:** Accessibility is an ongoing practice that must be prioritized by the entire research team. For example, if one aspect of the research design changes, there may be accessibility barriers that are consequently created. Prioritizing access at the beginning of the planning process and maintaining the focus throughout reduces the risk of having to continuously adapt throughout the research processes. Multiple forms of access should be prioritized in all parts of a project, from budgeting for accessibility needs to how the research study is designed, how recruitment is carried out, and how completed research is disseminated. Research access needs may include, but are not limited to hiring interpreters, providing plain language materials, conducting research in physically accessible settings, ensuring chemical and fragrance-free environments, and adapting research modalities to increase the representation of diverse disabled people. This may also include providing alternatives that increase inclusivity, such as virtual options, chat-based or multiple methods of participating outside of traditional means (verbal interview-based, etc.). Recruitment approaches and research methodologies should be careful not to exclude people based on identity or social status (e.g., disability type, socioeconomic status, education status, etc.). Recruitment materials, surveys, and methodological approaches should be evaluated for identity-based bias.
- **Recognize Wholeness:** As researchers, it's instinctive to categorize and dilute the human experience into subcategories to gather data. However, disabled people are not "just disabled." Historically, disabled people have been studied through a medicalized lens conflating their entire identity on what society and research deems as "abnormal" or "invalid" and dependent on oppressive data and research to "fix" or "cure" the problem, versus embracing disability as an additional component to identity. This has an impact on disabled people of color for whom disability labels often mean compounding negative outcomes, lack of access to supports, and increased stigma. Wholeness, in other words, also includes complexity. Disabled people are complete people with full and fulfilling lives and ensure that these full and fulfilling lives are respected in your work.
- **Choose Inclusive and Intersectional Methodologies:** As the leaders in research design and methodology, researchers may unintentionally signal who is and is not welcome to participate [40]. Methods that intentionally center people of color with disabilities can shift this dynamic, including multiple means of understanding individuals' stories. For example, Miller & Kurth [41] utilize a DisCrit theoretical framework alongside photovoice methodology, an arts-based method, to explore the experiences of disabled girls of color. To begin this work, develop relationships with stakeholders and ensure that all stakeholders have a valued seat at the table. When developing research projects, utilize flexible methodologies, such as co-design, that can account for or include multiple identities, coexisting disabilities, and other variations in experience. Be purposeful in sampling, to ensure variation is sufficiently represented. This may mean recruiting larger samples so that the impact of intersectionality can be addressed in quantitative studies. Additionally, work with community partners to identify community trusted leaders who can serve as a guide on respectful and supportive ways to recruit, engage, and support your participants throughout the research process[42].
- **Apply an Anti-Capitalist Stance:** Ensure that research does not use people for profit, including academic profit (papers, presentations, grant funding), without ensuring that participants are receiving sufficient compensation that is meaningful for them. Disabled people have been exploited throughout history and expected to share their story and their body with researchers, some through coercion, and by altruism, however, this practice has done more harm than good and contributed to the eugenics of Black, Latino/a/x, and Indigenous groups, and disabled people in the United States. Thus, appropriate compensation, which is meaningful to the participant, is vital to ensuring equity. Compensation should be equivalent to

the standards of nondisabled participants. Recognize the cost of transportation to the research facility, the time commitment it takes to participate, and the expertise of lived experience that the participant is sharing. Willing participants must factor in the cost of participation fiscally and physically. To determine appropriate compensation individual barriers a participant may face should be considered.

- **Consider Co-Existing Experiences:** Recognize the impact of co-occurring/coexisting disabilities or illnesses on participant lives. It is important to acknowledge the emotional, physical, and societal impact of being labeled with coexisting disabilities or illnesses in a world that prioritizes the experiences of non-disabled people. Disability justice activists have called attention to early disability rights advocacy's focus on white people with physical disabilities, particularly physical access, and accommodations for wheelchair users. A more expanded vision and understanding of co-existing experiences allows for not only visible and invisible disabilities to be equally acknowledged, but for their relationship to be fully understood in rehabilitation research.

Conclusion

While intersectionality in disability and rehabilitation research has often focused on race, ethnicity, and gender, there has been a historical practice of conflating disabled identities and communities into one and dismissing the multiple and intersectional identities disabled people and disabled people of color hold. This proposed call to action applies the conceptual frameworks of DisCrit and Disability Justice to disability and rehabilitation research to represent disabled lives and experiences authentically. Implementing these action steps challenges the status quo, and employs new ideas while centering disabled people in a deliberately inclusive and accessible way. Furthermore, the proposed framework acts as a foundation for disability and rehabilitation researchers to reflect upon their personal biases, ethical responsibilities, and current research practices to utilize intersectional, and disability community-centric frameworks carefully and intentionally. Moving forward, our research must recognize and incorporate the nuance of intersecting identities on people's lives through intentionally and maximally inclusive research approaches.

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