Paralympic Broadcasting in Sub-Saharan Africa: Sport, Media and Communication for Social Change

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Abstract
The purpose of this commentary is to discuss how Paralympic coverage in sub-Saharan Africa can be effectively mobilised to stimulate discursive and structural change around disability. Paralympic coverage has demonstrated its pedagogical power to engage public(s) and challenge stigma toward disability. Yet, the Global picture of Paralympic broadcasting is deeply uneven, with audiences in parts of the Global South afforded limited opportunities to watch the Games. Considering this, the International Paralympic Committee has begun to broadcast Paralympic coverage across sub-Saharan Africa with an explicit aim to challenge stigma toward disability. In this article, we draw on examples from research to argue that ideas from the field of Communication for Social Change (CfSC) can add value towards this aim. We begin by providing a brief overview of CfSC before critically examining one of the field’s key concepts – Communicative (E)ricologies. Following this, we critically reflect on the potential of Paralympic broadcasting as a vehicle for social change and disability rights agendas in sub-Saharan Africa. We argue that thinking with CfSC concepts show the importance of a ‘decentred’ media approach that engages with disability community advocacy groups, localised communication activities and practices, and culturally specific disability narratives.

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Introduction

In parts of the Global North, the Paralympic Games receive extensive broadcast coverage on Free-to-Air (FTA) television. A growing number of studies have pointed to the concomitant impact of Paralympic coverage on shaping more progressive public discourses around disability (Bartsch et al., 2016; Coats & Vickerman, 2016; Hodges et al., 2015; Pullen et al., 2021). For the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), whose vision centers on Paralympic sport as a vehicle for disability equality and inclusivity, evidence of the societal impacts of Paralympic broadcasting on progressive disability attitudes in some parts of the Global North (e.g., United Kingdom, Canada, Northern Europe) has been a positive force in the continued development of the Paralympic movement.

Yet, the Global picture of Paralympic broadcasting is deeply uneven, with audiences in some low to middle income countries (LMIC) in the Global South afforded limited opportunities to watch the Games. This disparity in coverage has implications for the Paralympic Movement and the potential benefits and progressive role Paralympic coverage can have in challenging disability stigma at a Global level; indeed, failing to impact communities in areas of the world where levels of disability exclusion and discrimination are of pressing concern (Meekosha & Soldatic, 2011).

In light of this, the IPC, in partnership with international Human Rights organisations, Governments, local communities, and disability advocacy groups, led an initiative to bring the Tokyo 2020 (2021) Paralympic coverage to areas of the Global South for the first time. This included on FTA television in 49 territories across Sub-Saharan Africa. This initiative marks a historic moment in the development and expansion of Paralympic broadcasting and is at the same time an example of how Paralympic media is being harnessed as a pedagogical force and instigator for disability development agendas in Sub-Saharan Africa (see also Forber-Pratt, 2015). Yet, it is critical to recognise that the power or ‘molding force’ (Hepp, 2012) of media to affect social change agendas by influencing “other fields of social and institutional practice” (Livingstone & Lunt, 2014, p. 70; see also, Skey et al., 2018) is deeply contingent on communication environments, cultural (disability) discourses, practices and histories, and political contexts. This is especially the case in Sub-Saharan Africa where there exist diverse media ecologies and cultures (not necessarily defined in opposition to media practices in the Global North), deeply stigmatising disability discourses and practices, and an absence or lack of enforcement of legislation, rights, and often with a fairly low political will to tackle disability inequality and discrimination (Novak, 2014).

Given the context outlined above, in this commentary we critically discuss how Paralympic coverage in Sub-Saharan Africa be effectively mobilised to engage public(s) and stimulate discursive and structural change around disability?
Clearly, this requires an understanding of local cultural contexts, practices, and communication environments and must engage with the complex dynamics of the media and everyday ‘lifeworlds’ of diverse people and communities (see Ekström et al., 2016). This approach has been described as ‘bottom-up’ analysis or ‘mediatization from below’ (Andersson, 2017; Skey et al., 2018). It builds on earlier calls in media studies to decentre the media (Morley, 2009) and shifts the focus away from the media text itself (broadcast) to the everyday lives of communities (i.e., potential audiences, see Pink & Leder Mackley, 2013) enabling engagement with an expanding interdisciplinary media and communications field (see Ekström et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2020; Obregon & Tufte, 2017).

Given this, and the social change agenda of the Paralympic project, we argue that there is valuable epistemological and methodological dialogue to be had with the Communication for Social Change (CfSC) discipline. CfSC has a long history of engaging with a diverse range of scholarship – such as Freirean pedagogical theory, feminist theory, post-colonial theory, social movement theory and more (Thomas & van de Fliert, 2014) – and as such brings a rich blend of interdisciplinary cultural inquiry to debates on mediatization, particularly as it relates to communication practices in LMIC in the Global South (Obregon & Tufte, 2017). To date, and despite social justice being an important topic of inquiry in the field of sport communication – see, for instance, the special double issue of Communication & Sport journal on sport communication and social justice published in 2020 (Jackson et al., 2020) – there has been relatively limited engagement with CfCS; Perhaps not overly surprising given the Western-centric focus of Sport Communication scholarship more generally (see Jackson et al., 2020) and Paralympic media more specifically (Pullen et al., 2021).

In the discussion that follows, we provide a brief overview of the current landscape of Paralympic broadcasting in the Global North and South before turning our attention to the way CfSC concepts can be harnessed by communication and sport scholars and practitioners to begin to answer the question posed above. We provide a brief overview of CfSC before critically examining one of key concepts within the CfSC field – Communicative ecologies – and its application to the development and mobilisation of Paralympic broadcasting. To that end, we reflect on the potential of Paralympic broadcasting as a vehicle for social change and disability rights agendas in Sub-Saharan Africa in addition to what this initiative might mean for future empirical inquiry around Paralympic media research and, more widely, sport, social change and social movements in the Global South. Our discussions and examples draw substantially on preliminary field work conducted by the authors in Malawi, Sub-Saharan Africa, in response to the question posed above.

Paralympic Broadcasting in the Global North and Global South

In some parts of the Global North, the Paralympic Games receive extensive broadcast coverage on FTA television and attracts a growing global audience base (IPC, 2017). Whilst audience numbers differ across regions and platforms, according to the IPC,
there is a clear trend toward the growing popularity of the Paralympic Games as a major sporting event.

Certainly, this rise to a position of mediated sporting event is a relatively recent phenomenon influenced by developments in broadcasting and commercial agreements, investment in production practices by national broadcasters, and the evolution of digital connectivity and outputs (see Brittain, 2018). Across some parts of the Global North, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, United States and parts of Northern Europe, FTA broadcasters are investing in the quantity and quality of Paralympic coverage (IPC, 2017).

There is now a considerable body of evidence that highlights the cultural impacts associated with the developments in Paralympic coverage on progressive disability discourses, public attitudes toward, and understandings of, disability (see, e.g., Bartsch et al., 2016; Coats & Vickerman, 2016; Pullen et al., 2021). Indeed, as perhaps the single most visible display of disability on broadcast TV, and one that attracts huge audiences, Paralympic coverage has demonstrated its pedagogical power to engage public(s) on issues related to disability that have contributed to challenging the negative associations, stereotypes and stigma toward disability (Pullen et al., 2021).

Whilst significant investments have been made in the development of Paralympic broadcasting across regions of the Global North, this is certainly not the case in the Global South. Despite the developments in the media economies of LMIC across the Global South and the increasing trends in the consumption of televised content and sports programming (see, Akindes, 2017), Paralympic Games coverage has historically been excluded from FTA television schedules.

Responding to this inequality in coverage, the last few years has seen the IPC cultivate a number of new broadcasting and commercial agreements with broadcasters across Africa, Asia and Latin America. For the first time in Paralympic broadcast history, highlights of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games were broadcast across 49 territories in Sub-Saharan Africa in addition to areas such Argentina, Malaysia and Taiwan (IPC, 2017).

Studies on Paralympic broadcasting (production practices, representations and audience reception) in areas of the Global North form a burgeoning area of scholarship (see, e.g. Brooke, 2019; Kolotouchkina et al., 202; Misener, 2012; Pullen et al., 2019). Yet, comparatively, there is an overwhelming absence of Paralympic media and communication research across LMIC regions of the Global South. Whilst this is perhaps not surprising given that the developments in Paralympic broadcasting across such regions are very recent, this scholarly omission does mean that there are limited empirical and cultural insights around effective mobilisation of broadcasting across this region that can be drawn on in this case.

With this in mind, we turn to the discipline of CfSC and explicate the role key concepts central to the field of CfSC play in better understanding mediatization processes in the context of Paralympic broadcasting in SSA.
Communication for Social Change: a Brief Overview

Communication for social change (CfSC) is a field of scholarship and practice within media and communication studies interested in how communication processes can contribute to social justice. It draws on a range of critical theories including feminism, Marxism, adult education, social movements, post-colonialism and decolonisation (Dutta, 2015; Thomas & van de Fliert, 2014; Tufte, 2017). Furthermore, CfSC emerges out of ‘communication for development’, which has a longer history of exploring the role and uses of media and communication as part of processes of international development cooperation. Tufte’s (2017) ‘three generations’ conceptual model summarises some of the key schools of thought and practices.

The first generation drew heavily on information dissemination and behavioural change communication, drawing on diffusion of innovation and related linear theories of communication. The second generation focused on educational and life skills communication, engaging more actively with communities to address social norms as well as individual behaviour, for example, through ‘edutainment’ (Singhal et al., 2004). The third generation draws on Freirean theories of adult education, which emphasises dialogue towards conscientization and collective action, viewing people themselves as the most important actors in driving and achieving social change, whether through ‘noisy’ activism or the slower, quieter work by civil society actors (Tufte, 2017). Though not directly chronological, Tufte notes that for example the experience of the HIV/AIDS pandemic propelled a new generation of communicators to rethink the narrow focus on communication for behaviour change; and likewise, the Arab Spring and other movements (more recently, Black Lives Matter, climate justice movements, etc.) raised awareness of citizen communication and mobilisation in generating structural change (Tufte, 2017). The third generation can also be seen as marking the shift from ‘communication for development’ to ‘communication for social change’, intended to move beyond the confines of international development assistance towards a broader view of social justice in a highly globalised, unsustainable, and deeply unequal world.

Mapping the Mediascape through Communicative Ecologies

A useful concept from CfSC research, which can complement the interest in sport and mediatization research is that of communicative ecologies. This is particularly important in Global South contexts since access and influence of media and technologies varies greatly between and within countries, meaning that the general trends of mediatization can be overstated (Tufte, 2017). Furthermore, uninformed and media-centric assumptions about media and technology access and use have often undermined communication efforts (Slater, 2014).

Communicative Ecologies is an analytical framework for developing holistic understandings of information and communication technology, structures, processes and practices (Tacchi et al., 2019). It pushes us to decentre media and focus our attention on
the practices, uses and appropriations of media and communication within everyday contexts (Tufte, 2017). As an approach to research, the process of communicative ecology mapping is typically influenced by ethnographic, action research and participatory approaches (Tacchi, 2015), engaging with participants to identify the ways in which people and networks draw on the communication resources available to them to achieve various goals. Resonating with the ideas behind mediatization from below, this approach seeks to understand information and communication consumption and production in relation to social goals, while recognising and accounting for the range of factors that impact on the availability and accessibility of different channels and flows and the social and cultural factors that allow for, encourage, or restrict their use in any given context (Slater, 2014; Tacchi et al., 2019).

Understanding the local communicative ecology in Malawi, for example, highlights problems with the assumption that by simply expanding broadcast reach the Paralympic Games can be a ‘global’ media event for social change. TV is seen as ‘elite media’ and as unaffordable for the majority of Malawians, restricted mostly to white-collar professionals in the cities and peri-urban areas, and to elites in rural areas. Owning a TV requires not only the expense of a TV set but also electricity, and a roof suitable for mounting a satellite dish. In Malawi only 12% of households have access to a TV, and in rural areas where the majority of people live, that percentage decreases to 5.4% (MACRA, 2020). There are also social and cultural aspects to consider. For example, the IPC and TV Media Sport (TVMS) (IPC’s broadcast partner responsible for distribution of the Paralympic broadcast) contracted the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) to carry the Paralympic coverage in Malawi, assuming it to be the main, nation-wide broadcast station. However, as a state-owned broadcaster there is a wariness among some audiences of the close association between the MBC and the incumbent ruling governments. What impact might the choice of carrier have on the social meaning of the Paralympic broadcasts, especially for those who possess opposing views to the party in power? A communicative ecologies approach can help us complicate and anchor media use in social contexts (Andersson, 2017).

Understanding local communicative ecologies can tell us about communication and information flows, barriers and opportunities in specific contexts. It can help us understand how information circulates within groups and networks and the levels of trust associated with particular communication channels and sources. It can also reveal spaces that might enable dialogical and participatory communication processes, which are crucial to facilitating social change (Tufte, 2017; Manyozo 2012; Thomas & van de Fliert, 2014). In Malawi it became apparent early on that relying on broadcast TV alone would severely limit the reach of the Paralympic Games. This informed the development of complementary community engagement activities to extend the reach and engagement in the Games in locally appropriate ways. This pointed us towards using mobile screenings, which have a history of use in educational, health and agricultural communication, and to the potential of ‘video showrooms’, which are small local businesses that show films and major global sports (especially football) at small trading centres around the country, as more appropriate platforms for extending the reach of
Paralympic media beyond urban, TV owning areas. Additionally, participatory theatre, a practice with a long and continuing history in CfSC activity in Malawi, was also identified as highly relevant for engaging in these things. Most group-villages have drama groups that perform cultural and entertainment dramas for fellow villagers, and are also used by NGOs and community-based organisations to disseminate theme-based messages for change. Furthermore, disability organisations report using theatre as part of their outreach efforts around topics of disability and stigma, further reinforcing the appropriateness of this medium in the Malawian context. Importantly, both mobile screenings and participatory theatre include a process of dialogue and debate at the conclusion of the screening/performance, which changes the engagement in Paralympics from one-way media consumption to much deeper and collective engagement with a stronger orientation towards social change.

Communicative ecology mapping processes also help us to understand where people would typically get information about both sport and disabilities. This can reveal flows of stigmatising information about disability, as well as the networks and spaces that are most influential, and importantly any spaces in which people with disabilities2 have a voice and are heard by community members. Working with a good awareness of communicative ecologies and understanding how Paralympic content might be most effectively communicated is crucial for community engagement activity around the Games. One of the aims of the IPC is to deliver not just the spectacle of the Games, but also a ‘social legacy’. For this, we know from our research so far, we need to engage and involve a range of people, groups, organisations and communication channels, including Church and religious leaders, chiefs and other traditional leaders, theatre groups, schools and other media forms such as radio and edutainment.

Narratives in Context

When considering communication resources within communicative ecologies, attention must also be paid to the role of narratives as an important socio-linguistic device for social change. Scholarship concerning the role of narrative in communication practices is expansive and cuts across a diverse range of fields (see Kim, 2016). Whilst there exists a myriad of terms related to, and definitions of, ‘narrative’, there is consensus that narratives are socio-linguistic templates that communicate, organise, and give meaning to lived collective experience, identities, and social practices (Gimenez, 2010; Kim, 2016; Smith, 2017). Yet, narratives as linguistic forms are also deeply culturally powerful and agential insofar as they operate to orientate affective responses and direct emotions towards objects, bodies and things (see Frank, 2010) that have material effects on social and political processes and discursive constructions. In this sense, narratives are both personal and public; material and cultural; textual and tangible.

In much of the Global North, the Paralympic Games is viewed by many disability scholars as the most visible and pedagogically persuasive mediated form in shaping cultural disability narratives (see, Pullen et al., 2020; Silva & Howe, 2012). Historically, mediated narratives of disability have positioned disabled2 people within
discourses of deviancy (e.g., as villains or ‘freaks’), vulnerability (in need of support and unable to participate in everyday life), ambivalence or abjectness, and/or heroism (seen as trivialising or patronising) (see, e.g., Riley, 2005) thereby contributing to cultural stereotypes, marginalisation and exclusion from participation in the media industry and wider civil society. However, there is burgeoning evidence that Paralympic coverage – particularly free-to-air television broadcast coverage – has stimulated shifts in the media representations and narratives of disability (Hodges et al., 2015; Pullen et al., 2021) and influenced greater civic awareness around disability issues. Indeed, whilst there certainly remain critiques around Paralympic coverage concerning the pervasiveness of the ‘supercrip’ narrative as a rearticulation of discourses of heroism (see, Silva & Howe, 2012; Kolotouchkina et al., 2021), many scholars are cognisant of the progressive shifts that have occurred in relation to Paralympic and wider disability related media that engage with the social and political dimensions of disability experience and the concomitant public awareness of disability issues.

In contrast, in Sub-Saharan Africa, disability is predominantly viewed as a negative identity, resulting in significant social, economic, and material exclusion (Eide et al., 2018). It is understood that a blend of influences may inform beliefs and understandings, including traditional religious and cultural beliefs, colonial and missionary practices of charity and medical segregation, as well as representations in media and popular culture. In many Sub-Saharan African societies, the causes of a disability are often believed to be linked with curses, disruptions in the spiritual world, ancestors or witchcraft (Chataika, 2013; Devlieger, 1995; Muderedzi & Ingstad, 2011; Stone-MacDonald, 2012). Additionally, disabled people are often assumed to be unable to achieve a full life, which limits access provision in education, employment and community life.

The representation of people with disabilities in formal media, such as TV, radio, film and print news, is both limited and at most reinforces a negative identity. Indeed, research in this area has demonstrated that disabled people and their families are represented through dominant media narratives (see, Chireboah-ansah, 2016) that are underpinned by discourses of dependence; public shame; witchcraft; misfortune or God’s will; and in limited instances, heroism. These narratives are also contingent on the gender and the severity of impairment (Tembo, 2014), with disabled females and those with more severe cognitive and/or intellectual impairments seemingly more likely to be portrayed through religious belief systems’ narratives where the ‘blame’ for disability centres on the individual, and/or narratives of shame and embarrassment that reinforce social and economic exclusion and often legitimise community violence toward people with disabilities (Tembo, 2014).

Certainly, it appears that stories of disability within communities across Sub-Saharan Africa “rely upon the potency of disability as a symbolic figure” (Mitchell & Snyder, 2006, p. 205) but fail to engage with the social, political – and we would add here, material (physical, lived, embodied) – dimensions of disability experience (see, Asare & Tennant, 2017). It is then important for the Paralympic broadcast to begin to
re-story disability or rearticulate ideas about disability in ways that can enable social change by transforming the multiple stigmatising discourses that are currently embedded within communicative ecologies and media representations. We would aver that this requires a considered analysis of narrative structures (counter narratives) developed within local community contexts that do not simply replicate or transpose Paralympic narratives from the Global North, but rather, facilitates shifts in disability understandings (at an emotional and cognitive level), and re-framing of identities and practices in relational contexts. This serves to recognise the multiple discourses embedded in dominant disability narratives as well as the ways in which narratives flow and circulate within communities.

Certainly, formal broadcast media are not the only, or the main, source of disability stories, and we must adopt a critical stance when considering the role Paralympic narratives play in disability stigma and discrimination. Paralympic broadcast makes up just one part of the effort to re-story or re-shape disability narratives that engage with social and political realities. Yet, achieving social change that addresses disability stigma requires more than the transmission of media content. Given our understanding of Malawi’s communicative ecology, there is a need to shift the focus away from the media text itself (broadcast) to the everyday lives of communities (see Pink & Leder Mackley, 2013) where stories of disability predominantly circulate.

**Communication for Social Change, Stigma and Social Movements**

It may be instructive to reflect on the concept of ‘stigma’ itself – a term we have used above. Traditional definitions of ‘stigma’ (Goffman, 1963; Link & Phelan, 2001), tend to associate stigma with individual problematic beliefs and attitudes that over emphasise and isolate interpersonal level interactions in a way that not only contradicts social and critical models of disability (Shuttleworth & Kasnitz, 2004), but also the values of CfSC. A CfSC lens can turn the frame towards the structural and social conditions of stigma, and highlight the need for holistic, justice-oriented communication responses. Just as the HIV/AIDS crisis propelled thinking about the role of communication from Behaviour Change Communication focussed on individuals towards a wider focus on social structures, policies and community-led collective action (Tufte, 2017), Parker and Aggleton (2003) argued for conceptualising stigma and discrimination as social processes underpinned by broader structures of power, inequality, and domination. For them, this conceptual shift impels a focus on community mobilisation and engagement with collectives to resist stigmatisation, together with interventions that challenge social structures. This emphasis on can be instructive also in the context of disability stigma.

Contemporary CfSC theory furthermore calls for connecting local communication spaces and movements with global social justice movements (Dutta, 2011; Tufte, 2017). Indeed, sporting events are an important cultural site for the collectivisation and visibility of social movements – bringing together both local and global activist
groups – and highlighting the role sport and athletes can have in debates concerning positive social change. There has been a burgeoning of research in the last year that has become attuned to the ‘noisy’ activism (Tufte, 2017) of mobilization, protest, and dissent and of activist-oriented movements in sport, for example, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement and the visibly symbolic protest of taking a knee (see, e.g., Cooper et al., 2019). Research thus far has indeed aided scholarly understanding of the importance of social movements and issues of social justice. Yet, despite the transnationality of many social movements, such as BLM, sport communication scholars have to date largely ignored the role they play in social justice campaigns (including through mediated sport) in many parts of the Global South. Furthermore, to date, sport communication scholars have not connected substantially with CfSC (Jackson et al., 2020).

The disability rights movement is in many ways one powerful example of a transnational movement, with disability rights activities from the Global South, including from Zimbabwe and Mexico (Chataika et al., 2020; Meekosha, 2011), recognised as playing critical roles in the recognition of the principles of ‘nothing about us without us’ and for contributing significantly to the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities respectively. Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) and disability activists have and continue to play crucial roles within the disability rights movement in local and regional African contexts. These groups challenge the historical dominance of top-down charity and medical models with a firmly rights-based agenda, and usually with a focus on legal and policy objectives (Chataika et al., 2020). They are also important for resisting Northern/universalising agendas and discourses in search of Afrocentric paradigms of disability activism drawing on African ontological frames where communitarianism and mutual support are core, such as in ubuntu (Berghs, 2017; Chataika et al., 2020; Haang’andu, 2020). They tend to use locally appropriate methods of advocacy and communication, beyond agitation for individually framed rights via institutions, including engaging with traditional leaders, religious leaders, teachers and other ‘civic educators’ (Haang’andu, 2020).

Therefore, to achieve social change through the Paralympic media phenomenon and related narratives, it will be vital for the Paralympic and disability sports movement to connect with and support existing networks of DPOs and disability advocacy groups.

**Reflections**

In this paper, we argued that CfSC perspectives have much to offer the study of sports communication in the Global South. Drawing on early insights from an implementation project designed to address disability inequality and stigma across Sub-Saharan Africa through Paralympic sport coverage, we have critically discussed how CfSC perspectives and interventions can be used to better understand the sport media and communication ecology across this region, and the role this can play in the mobilisation of the broadcast to stimulate audience engagement with the potential for wider discursive and structural change around disability.
Thinking with CfSC concepts, we have begun to reflect on the importance of a decentred media approach that engages with disability community advocacy groups, localised communication activities and practices, and culturally specific disability narratives. We have begun to highlight how CfSC has value in connecting mediation with mediatisation – that is, from communication practices to wider social-cultural processes of change (see Hepp, 2012) – in the context of Paralympic broadcasting in Sub-Saharan Africa. This can help better understand how Paralympic coverage can be most effectively communicated within the regional communication context and thereby affective in shaping disability ‘knowledges’ that can challenge culturally specific disability stigma.

Throughout our discussion we have maintained a critically cautious stance toward the role Paralympic broadcast can have in Sub-Saharan Africa without a decentred media approach that engages with a range of local stakeholders, DPO’s and disability advocacy groups. We certainly do not aver that Paralympic broadcasting can (or does) operate as a panacea for progressive disability social change. Indeed, we recognise the pedagogical value, complexities and limits of Paralympic disability narratives and the need for greater disability narrative resources more widely across different communicative contexts and genres for effective progressive social change.

Certainly, the examples from our preliminary field work we discussed in the paper provides a unique opportunity to aid the development of theoretical inquiry and knowledge about the power of sports communication as a vehicle for social change in parts of the Global South that, following Jackson et al. (2020), can help “de-westernize” (p. 442) the field and continue to ‘shape the epistemological borders’ (p. 436) of the field of communication and sport. Whilst the introduction of Paralympic broadcast to Sub-Saharan Africa and other Low to Middle Income Countries in the Global South demonstrates significant progress for the IPC, which is committed to improving the Global reach of Paralympic sport, further empirical insights are needed. This includes, for example, further exploration of the efficacy of the broadcast in connecting with diverse audiences and, importantly, longer term impacts on structural and discursive change around disability.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This research is part of Para Sport Against Stigma, a sub programme of AT2030. AT2030 is a programme funded by UK Aid and led by the Global Disability Innovation Hub which is testing ‘what works’ to improve access to life changing assistive technology. More information at AT2030.org.
Notes
1. The terms Global North and Global South are used to refer to global divisions between the centres of global colonial, capitalist and epistemic power and the periphery respectively. Rather than a specific geographical region, the term Global South collectivises peoples and nations with a shared experience of oppression from the intersection of patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism (de Sousa Santos 2014; Willems, 2014).

2. There is an active debate about the use of people-first (‘people with disability’) or identity-first (disabled people) language. In this paper we use both terms, recognising that different people have different preferences. For a thoughtful reflection this debate see https://www.ideasinall.com/disability-identity-neurodiversity-me-or-should-me-be-first/

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