

# Removing barriers in the 21st Century of World Politics through the medium of Strategic Communication and Sports Law

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## Abstract

The foundation of studying sports is rooted around areas like sociology, management, organizational behaviour, history and law. Strategic communication has in recent years become part of the disciplines under which the law of sports has been deconstructed.

Currently, sports is progressively taking advantage of many benefits and opportunities of globalization. Despite these opportunities, area of sports is progressively facing critical and complex challenges in managing organizations, teams and leagues. This paper will evaluate the impact of strategic communication and Law of sports in the removal of the political barriers in sports and will also analyse both important and problematic perspectives of managerial and cross-cultural issues in sports management. The concept of world politics forms part of the theory of Law of sports and strategic communication because of the economic and social effects of the sporting events. Therefore, this study will also evaluate the impact of sport communication in enticing new players and athletes, evaluating the concept of public relations intelligence and its application. Public relations as part of strategic communication is portrayed through the information gathered from education and sporting activities, which helps in removing barriers and strengthening the functionality of management

**Keywords:** Sport Communication, Strategic Communication, Public Relations, World Politics.

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## Introduction

Over the past years, sporting federations have faced significant challenges, especially in managing, handling, or supervising the different sports teams, organisations and sports leagues. Even though the foundations of sporting opportunities exist (which can reap great rewards when coupled with the benefits of globalisation), these challenges have greatly influenced its progression and growth over the past years. Overcoming such barriers necessitates that the sporting federations effectively implement and execute strategic communication in sports diplomacy since the turn of the century (Raphael & Nesbary, 2005). Over the past years, strategic communication has evolved, resulting in the construction of sports law. A proper sports law model and strategic communication are also significant in politics due to the effects of sporting activities. Thus, it is essential to assess and understand the significance of public relations and its application and investigate the significant impact of strategic communication in sports. It is equally critical for understanding how strategic communication appeals to athletes.

According to (Samwel, 2018) communication in sports is the branch of the study that emphasises critically investigating the relationship between the sport contexts and different communication processes. Seate states that the athlete's cross-cultural or individual identity is bound to influence their communication behaviours. Through interviews, she identified that the athlete belonging to a specific culture, ethnic, or gender group is bound to have different self-perceptions regarding self-esteem and communication approaches ((Scott, 2021).

Similarly, a flawed communication approach is bound to influence the relationship between sports players and their fans. Poor relationship with fans plays an equal role towards generating barriers through which the sports person's managing organisation could fail to respond at the time of crisis. (Danyi, 2018) opined that strategic communication could be one of the practical solutions to eliminate or avoid poor relationships by understanding the target audience, i.e. fans, and the intended goals of communicating with them. Besides, it is also crucial for the athlete or a sportsperson to understand how the audience reacts and perceives the communicated message. Even the sports organisations facing public relations issues or any form of political allegations must conduct research on the target audience, examine the message to be communicated, and evaluate its impact on the public's opinion. A positive response from the target audience would help the organisation effectively manage or handle such issues in compliance with relevant sports laws (Danyi, 2018).

## Objective

This research article mainly aims at investigating and demonstrating different solutions or political approaches through which different barriers that affect sports diplomacy could be eliminated. In the world of politics, quality measures and approaches comprise of effective use of strategic communication along with the integration of sports law for ensuring quality management by the sports managing organizations, teams, and leagues. Public relations is one of the critical aspects of strategic communication; thus, its impact or effect on sports diplomacy will also be assessed and addressed to represent quality solutions that would further help in overcoming barriers existing in the 21st century in world politics. This research article also focuses on determining the significant impact of sports communication, especially on enticing sports athletes and players. Sporting events are impacted by social and economic factors; thus, examining the positive as well as negative impact caused by these factors on sporting events is also considered as one of the major objectives of this article. The political system is also responsible for creating a gap between communication and sports; hence, showcasing effective political measures with the help of sports law to fill this existing gap also falls under the objectives of this research article.

## Critical Review of Literature

According to (Ryan, 2018; Samwel, 2018). Communication in sports is defined as the branch of the study that emphasizes critically investigating the relationship existing between the sport contexts and different processes of communication. It is identified that the cross-cultural identities or individual identity of the sports player or an athlete are bound to influence their communication behaviors.(Buchanan & Luck, 2008; Fulkerson, 2017) for resolving such problems, opined that strategic communication could be one of the effective solutions to eliminate or avoid



poor relationships by understanding the target audience i.e., fans as well as the intended goals of communicating with them. Even the sports organizations facing public relations issues or any form of political allegations must conduct research on the target audience, examine the message to be communicated, and evaluate its impact on the opinion of the public. A positive response from the target audience would help the organization to effectively manage or handle such issues in compliance with appropriate sports laws (Bibbo, Carli, Conforto, & Battisti, 2019).

(Buchanan & Luck, 2008) highlighted that use of effective strategic communication and the law of sports for maintaining good global public relations is considered to be important. Public relations could be defined as "a form of strategic communication directed primarily toward gaining public understanding and acceptance and the process of creating a good relationship between an organization and the public, especially with regard to reputation and to communication of information" (p. 1). For example, (Fulkerson, 2017) that on running sports events such as sports leagues in a specific location, the sports organizations should conduct effective research on the trends of the sporting events and responses of the public on sports events. The conduct of political campaigns and informing the public about different features of the events such as cultural activities or programs to be held during the event could increase the chances of succeeding the sports events on the targeted location. At the same time, effectiveness could be achieved by the sports organization through collaboration with the organizations such as Non-government organizations (NGOs). This could increase the opportunity for the organizations to deal with any form of barriers and successfully conduct sports events (Gavin, 2015).

However, when sending messages to the public or a large number of audiences across the world, sports organizations must not distort the facts. Sports organizations must also aim at attaining a competitive relationship with the Media and Communication Officers. "Increased communication influences not only regular working processes but also the tasks themselves, what may be termed issue displacement. Issues that are easily presented to the public are prioritized, whereas difficult and complex matters with low public appeal are pushed into the background. Policy information potentially becomes policy development" (Harris & Dowling, 2020) For enforcing sports-based policies that eliminate barriers and challenges in world politics, assistance from the local political official strengthens the plans on managing or conducting sports events effectively. In this context, Tennyson and (Ryan, 2018) also opined that when developing a communication plan, sports organizations must set goals and objectives, set target audience, establish a message, develop a communication strategy, create an effective action plan, and then evaluate its outcomes. The collaboration with the political actors during this stage could increase the chances of developing an effective strategic communication plan. also commented that similar to the changes enforced in the European sports policy, sports organizations in the US could also demand reformation of the laws and policies of the sport in terms of increasing participation at the global level. The integration of the socio-cultural model could favor overcoming cross-cultural barriers that prohibit the sports organization to manage sports events as well as barriers that restrict the athletes from participating in global sports events.

Adam,(Hazen, 2011; Ipole, 2018) further argued that by eliminating barriers that obstruct participation of the sports organizations or clubs, they must be treated as members association and governed accordingly as per the sports law and policies irrespective of their professional or amateur status. According to (Kioussis & Strömbäck, 2014) collaboration and communication with the political actors and set up an inclusion agenda for the introduction of inclusion policy under the sports law is necessary to eliminate the exclusion barrier of the sports organizations.

## Research Methodology

In this research article, interpretive research philosophy has been used to explore and further encompass the universal truth or fact behind the effectiveness of strategic communication and sports law for the law enforcement agencies and the national government on removing barriers existing in the 21st century of world politics. This philosophical approach was chosen because of its capability to allow the researchers to gain in-depth knowledge on the focused research topic in a global context (Lam, 2014; Real, 2013; Ryan, 2018). A qualitative research approach has also been used to effectively research identifying the political barriers and quality solutions to remove such barriers through the effective application of strategic communication concept and the sports law model. The implementation of a qualitative research approach helped in collecting secondary data (non-numerical) from different types of secondary sources. Besides, flexibility, feasibility, and time-efficiency in terms of collecting and analyzing the data could also be



portrayed as the crucial reason for the implementation of the qualitative research approach. Another feature of this research approach was its ability to portray the author's or the researcher's perspective regarding quality solutions and the importance of public relations in politics (Parent & Hoye, 2018; Raphael & Nesbary, 2005). Some of these secondary sources were used in this research article to understand the concepts of strategic communication, public relation, sports law, and different quality measures for eliminating the barriers that could be portrayed as journals, reports, and books. Information from secondary sources was selected through the application of the secondary data collection method to collect quality secondary information within the context of world politics (Samwel, 2018; Scott, 2021).

There are different types of qualitative data analysis methods that are implemented in a research report, and they can be portrayed as content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, grounded theory, and framework analysis method. Among these data analysis methods, grounded theory has been used to analyze the collected secondary data because of its significant features such as the ability to enquire, codify, and represent the final result obtained by analyzing the qualitative findings on solutions to remove the barriers in the world of politics. The implementation of the grounded theory approach also helped in assessing the effects of strategic communication and the sports law on sports organizations and athletes through a comparison of varying perspectives of the scholars and researchers (University of Minnesota Alumni, 1989).

### **The US Approach to Strategic Communication**

US history indicates that politics in sports is a significant hurdle for strategic communication (Moolakkattu, 2020; Parent & Hoye, 2018; University of Minnesota Alumni, 1989). Nevertheless, there is passionate support for sporting activities worldwide, which determined global diplomats can effectively leverage to help solve the issues in contemporary world politics. For example, India and Pakistan's well-documented border tensions can be effectively addressed through strategic communication in cricket, given the fierce passion of the sport on both sides of the border (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005; Meyer & Wynn, 2018). Also highlighted in the US context that, "Public affairs is the primary communication organisation of the service, similar to the public relations function of a large corporation" (p. 2).

The existing literature indicates that strategic communication and sports positively impact the law enforcement agencies and the government, as it helps remove the barriers of world politics. Collaboration with the public affairs communication organisation could help draw the attention of the American government. At the same time, it could also help them attract public attention. Sending a message with a request to access the communication medium such as the Voice of America (VOA) radio network with the help of the US Information Agency (USIA) could help reach a mass audience not only in the US but also across the globe. Thus, reaching a large audience could further help the sports organization highlight the barriers and challenges. Communicating these issues could also help generate national interest through effective communication mediums such as social media, as the majority of the public uses it. (Lozano et al., 2012; Mohajan, 2018) argued that sports organizations must alter their communication methods or patterns when targeting mass audiences from modern society to communicate with the targeted audience. Communicating or interacting with different salient actors such as public, political actors, bureaucracies, enterprises, and news media could also inform the barriers and challenges influencing the organisations' outcomes. Besides, it is equally critical to comply with the laws and regulations of the sport and further seek consent from such parties on acquiring their information (Lam, 2014; Lloyd, 2008).

### **Removing barriers and the role of sports organizations**

While sports authorities across different countries are undertaking improvements in sports diplomacy, some associated political barriers, such as access to sufficient spaces for engaging in sports, hinder such steps. Other barriers like social, economic, and cross-cultural issues obstruct these legal authorities from managing and participating in global sports events. Cost is another barrier for athletes because many sports events require fees for participating in them. In contrast, in some of the sports events, the availability of spots is limited. Social and cross-cultural issues also act as a barrier for the athletes to participate because they tend to generate interest when their



families or friends participate. The absence of knowledge and interest within the youths and their parents also creates a barrier for participating in any sports activity. The lack of confidence and competence within the athletes is also one of the factors that disengage players and athletes from participating in sports activities. Thus, a practical sports law framework and strategic communication could help eliminate such barriers at the regional/national level and enhance diplomatic relations between countries (Mack et al., 2005; Meyer & Wynn, 2018; Mohajan, 2018). Sporting activities could deliver positive or negative effects on the public at the same time. For example, the enforcement of political reforms by the sports authorities and political actors on allowing the sports organisations to conduct a sports event could bring the public from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds together. At the same time, political barriers could prohibit sports organisations from conducting or managing sports events and prohibit the athletes from participating in games. Public or fans follow their favourite sports athletes; thus, witnessing their exclusion from the sports games or events could negatively affect the relationship of the sports organisations and the public (Moolakkattu, 2020; Raphael & Nesbary, 2005; Samwel, 2018). When viewing from a global perspective, the lack of inclusion of sports organisations or sports athletes from managing the global sports events could affect the international relations among several different nations. However, the research finding also demonstrates quality measures to ensure the positive effects of sports, especially fostering international ties among other countries (Lloyd, 2008; Lozano et al., 2012).

(Danyi, 2018; Harris & Dowling, 2020; Lloyd, 2008) argued that sports organisations must investigate different plans and approaches, or methods followed by the competitors who operate in the same industry while planning the communication strategy. This could help them exercise the opportunity to craft a new unique strategic plan and increase the chances to manage and conduct the sports events effectively. Similarly, sports organizations must also follow this approach to overcome any form of political challenges and barriers. (Samwel, 2018; Scott, 2021; Windholz, 2020) also opined that when developing a communication plan, sports organisations must set goals and objectives, select their target audiences, establish a message, develop a communication strategy, create an effective action plan, and then evaluate its outcomes. The collaboration with the political actors during this stage could increase the chances of developing an effective strategic communication plan. (Parent & Hoyer, 2018; Raphael & Nesbary, 2005) also commented that similar to the changes enforced in the European sports policy, sports organisations in the US could also demand reformation of the laws and policies of the sport in terms of increasing participation at the global level. The integration of the socio-cultural model could favour overcoming cross-cultural barriers that prohibit the sports organisation from managing sports events and obstacles that restrict the athletes from participating in global sports events. "Analysing the relationship between these concepts is fundamental for understanding the future direction of EU sports policy. Academics, legal practitioners and sports administrators can trawl through EU case law and sports-related policy papers to form a view of where the relationship between sport and the EU currently stands" (Gavin, 2015; Hazen, 2011; Samwel, 2018). Adam, (Buchanan & Luck, 2008) further argued that by eliminating barriers that obstruct participation of the sports organisations or clubs, they must be treated as members associations and governed accordingly as per the sports law and policies irrespective of their professional or amateur status. According to (Lloyd, 2008) collaboration and communication with the political actors and establishing an inclusion plan for introducing inclusion policy under the sports law are necessary to eliminate the exclusion barrier of the sports organisations.

However, sports organisations must not distort the facts when sending messages to the public or a large audience worldwide. Sports organisations must also aim at attaining a cooperative relationship with the Media and Communication Officers. "Increased communication influences not only normal working processes but also the tasks themselves in what may be termed as issue displacement. Issues easily presented to the public are prioritised, whereas difficult and complex matters with a low public appeal are pushed into the background. Policy information potentially becomes policy development" (Harris & Dowling, 2020). To enforce sports-based policies that eliminate barriers and challenges in world politics, assistance from the local political official strengthens the plans to manage or conduct sports events effectively. In this context, (Samwel, 2018) argued that the sports organisations implementing strategic communication could face challenges if they do not comply with the sports law and policy. They must never provide staged or manipulated information when communicating because it could influence the perception of the public and the standard of sports diplomacy. They should act ethically, legally, and morally



when communicating with the political actors or informing the public about the challenges faced in gaining access to conducting sports events.

### **Politics, public relations and sports law**

(Buchanan & Luck, 2008) highlighted that effective strategic communication and sports law for maintaining good global public relations is considered essential. Public relations (PR) could be defined as "a form of strategic communication directed primarily toward gaining public understanding and acceptance and the process of creating a good relationship between an organisation and the public, especially concerning reputation and to the communication of information" (p. 1). For example, (Scott, 2021) stated that on running sports events such as sports leagues in a specific location, the sports organisations should conduct adequate research on the trends of the sporting events and public responses on sports events. Furthermore, running political campaigns and informing the public about different features of the events, such as cultural activities or programs to be held during the event, could increase the chances of succeeding the sports events on the targeted location. At the same time, the sports organisations could enhance their PR through collaboration with the organisations such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This could increase the opportunity for the organisations to deal with any form of barriers and successfully conduct sports events (Ryan, 2018).

PR is identified to be one of the critical elements in the field of world politics; thus, developing a good relationship with the public (i.e., sports audiences and fans) through the implementation of strategic communication has also been identified to favour them in constructing measures that would eradicate the existing barriers in the global politics. For example, the qualitative findings of (Scott, 2021) on running events in Romania indicate that the legal organisations could successfully conduct and manage the sports events if they coordinate with the sports organisations by setting up political campaigns for enforcing quality policies under sports law. Furthermore, regular communication and informing the global fans about the issues by selecting appropriate media such as blogs, text messaging, and online chat rooms could help strengthen their public relations (Samwel, 2018).

Like effective PR, establishing a proper sports law framework also evidences the positive influence of sports on politics. Complying with the sports law also creates opportunities for the law enforcement agencies and the government, especially in developing strong public relations. Furthermore, using sports as a tool, political actors can determine the political barriers the sports organisations face and construct solutions to remove such restrictions. Harris and state that "examples of this within international sports include using mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games by the host nations as a form of public diplomacy". These findings also underpin the positive influence of sports on world politics (Harris & Dowling, 2020).

Sports organisations and political parties need to understand their audience through effective research when constructing solutions or measures for overcoming barriers existing in world politics. In the political context, (Fulkerson, 2017) also stated that engaging or communicating with the general public favours the State actors like law enforcement agencies and the government to construct effective political measures. In the US, "Political PR is a tool for developing communication for both internal and external public. Political PR holds its origin from American Politics, which in fact for the use of techniques that are always helpful for campaigns to attract public in favour of American Presidents" (Buchanan & Luck, 2008).

Political decisions tend to affect the public either directly or indirectly, so political actors must ensure strategic communication to engage with the public to avoid such situations. They must implement appropriate communication media under the ongoing public trend such as tweets, blogs, text messaging and online chat rooms. Strategic communication could also use communication mediums such as social media platforms, print advertisements, or websites to connect with the public on different political issues and quality solutions to overcome existing problems. For example, informing the public about the political barriers faced by the sports organisations and the sports athletes, especially during the political campaigns, could help the legal enforcement agencies and the government enforce effective measures (Mohajan, 2018). Measures such as the enforcement of new policies like gender and diversity inclusion policies mandated by sports law for the sports organisations and the athletes could help in this regard.



Political actors and law enforcers (along with the sports organisations obviously) communicating with the global supporters or sports fans about conducting international sporting events could increase the chances of success of sporting events because of the shared passion, developed trust and common goal of watching their national/regional athletes succeed at the national/international level (Parent & Hoye, 2018). Even \ stated that the execution of the strategic communication concept and sports law could deliver productive and favourable results for the national government if they set a specific purpose or objective of communicating with the public. However, they must also create a message of political and public concern, examine the target audience and their preferred communication mode, and select an effective method of communication. Furthermore, evaluating the impact of communicating with the public on the issues could help the legal enforcers gain political and public experience and attain knowledge through effective future solutions on removing the political barriers (Danyi, 2018).

Similarly, in a global context, communicating with other countries could also foster international relations. Good international relations can also establish an excellent political foundation to help sports organisations participate in global sports events despite political barriers. Even (Kiouisis & Strömbäck, 2014) stated that "the exchange of symbols and messages between political actors and institutions, the general public, and the news media that are products of or have consequences for the political system" (Kiouisis & Strömbäck, 2014).

### **Collaboration between the State and sporting organisations**

Apart from implementing effective strategic communication and sports law models to avoid such situations, (Danyi, 2018) Begović et al. (2020) highlighted that the State actors such as law enforcement agencies and the national government must govern the sports organisations as members association. Accordingly, they should comply with the existing sports law and introduce formal practices and legal norms that would remove the political barriers of sports organisations and athletes to ensure positive effects on international relations. Notably, the political actors need to evaluate the effectiveness of the newer legal norms and formal practices on removing the existing political barriers faced by the sports organisations and athletes. At the same time, investigating political pressures and other obstacles faced by the sports athletes and the sports organisation at the national/international level could demonstrate its effects on sports activities. The Montenegro case is quality evidence that highlights the importance of researching political pressures faced by athletes and sports organizations ((Buchanan & Luck, 2008).

Effective interaction is one of the tools that assist the political system in bringing significant improvements by enforcing quality policies and regulations. Effective interaction between the government and the sports organisations also establishes transparency within these institutions, which further helps to understand the barriers existing in world politics. At the same time, it assists both institutions to understand different opinions and perspectives, which further helps construct collective quality measures to eliminate political barriers. Besides, it allows the law enforcement agencies and government to improve governance on the sports law and enforce quality policies such as inclusion policies in the sports law. Interactions also allow both institutions to establish common goals and shared interests towards attaining political stability. International relations also improve through effective interaction among the political actors from different nations. In this note, (Mack et al., 2005) also highlighted that creating transparency of different roles of the political actor in a global context can favour bringing significant improvement in the international sports law. For example, political agreements among other countries on conducting global sports events such as the Olympics are made possible through effective interactions among different countries (Lam, 2014).

At the international level, the collaboration between the sports organisations and the political actors is critical to removing the political barriers that affect their operations in a national and global context. The partnership also allows these sports organisations and political actors to strategically communicate about their issues and cooperate in formulating effective measures to ensure sports diplomacy at the highest standard. Collaboration with political organisations or associations also favours sports organisations to bring quality enforcements under the sports law and assist their players in participating in different sports events irrespective of their cross-cultural identity (Windholz, 2020). Even at the time of challenges or economic crisis in a nation, eliminating barriers could help sports organisations to manage and conduct sports events. The majority of the public at the global level follows sports events and sports athletes; thus, the collaboration with political parties allows the sports organisations to develop a sense of mutual purpose and bring



the public together irrespective of their nationalities, culture, or religion. Hence, the generation of public interest creates a strong foundation for sports organisations to attain supports and governance from law enforcement agencies and the government at the national and global levels (Windholz, 2020).

## Conclusion

The crucial finding of this research article is that strategic communications and sports law are the two critical components that need to be focused on by political actors when developing quality solutions to deal with political barriers. It is identified that socioeconomic and cross-cultural factors contribute to the development of the political barriers; thus, implementing the concept of strategic communication and sports law could play a key role in attaining political stability. Maintaining a good relationship with the public and sports fans is crucial for the political actors and the sports organisation; hence, it also becomes essential for them to conduct research and understand the public's responses before executing or making a decision. The secondary findings also indicate that when the political actors and the sports organisations communicate, it could help understand political barriers and formulate quality solutions. It is also equally crucial for the parties to understand the message, the communication objective, and the targeted audience. In terms of communicating with the public or fans, sports organisations must analyse and identify the latest communication mode followed by a majority of the global public. This could help select a suitable communication method and reach a mass number of people across the globe. After evaluating the effect of strategic communication and sports law in public relations, it has been identified that it helps sports organisations and athletes manage and participate in global sports events. It also creates opportunities for the nations to build a worldwide relationship and political stability with the other countries. Despite the positive impact of strategic communication and the sports law model, future research is essential due to the rapid globalisation and transformations in world politics. Different measures that act as resistance to the diverse political barriers should be constructed and implemented by the law enforcement agencies and the government of the various countries by collaborating with the sports organisations and communicating their opinions and ideas. Sport is also one of the significant commonalities of the public, and they watch and follow sports daily. Sports are also considered to reflect their racial, social class, sex, and national identity; thus, legal enforcement agencies must continue to research and bring future improvements to ensure effective governance over the sports organisations. This could help the sports organisations continuously manage and conduct sports events without any political issues, allow sports athletes to participate freely in such circumstances, and sustain good public relations in world politics in the future.

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