

"Ableism as a regulator of social practice and disabled peoples' self-determination to participate in sport and physical activity"
Ian Brittain, Rui Biscaia and Simon Gerard, Coventry Business School

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[2021/11/26 08:39] Elektra Panthar: Hello everyone.

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IB: Ian Brittain (Paralympiman),

RB: Rui Biscaia (RBis6),

SG: Simon Gérard (sGerard)

[2021/11/26 08:42] Don Setzer: Hello, and welcome to the 10th annual International Disability Rights Affirmation Conference. I am so glad you all could come today. I am Don Setzer and I'm excited to introduce this presentation today, "Ableism as a regulator of social practice and disabled peoples' self-determination to participate in sport and physical activity".

This presentation has some connections to my own background. In real life I have the disability of arthrogryposis and use a power wheelchair to move around. My background falls into physical activity with Dance and I have been dancing professionally for over 30 years, modern and ballet. I received my bachelor of arts in dance from Texas Woman's University in 1999.

And now I would like to welcome our presenters today, Doctors Ian Brittain and Simon Girard From Coventry University in the UK. And Doctor Rui Biscaia from University of Bath in the UK. All three of them have background and work with disability and sports/physical activity and organizations that work with people with disabilities.

Each of them come from their own specialization in working with people with disabilities. Doctors Brittain, Biscaia and Gerard will build their presentation on the theories of ableism, social practice and self-determination. They propose a framework to explain why disabled people are less likely to access and participate in sport and physical activity.

I hope you enjoy the presentation, "Ableism as a regulator of social practice and disabled peoples' self-determination to participate in sport and physical activity". Audience, please hold your questions and comments to the end, so as not to interrupt our presenter, who is new to Second Life. Welcome, Dr. Brittain, Biscaia and Gerard. The floor is yours.

[2021/11/26 08:44] Paralympiman Resident: Good day everyone. I'd like to start by thanking the organisers for this opportunity to present our work here today and hopefully gain some valuable feedback on how we might develop it further.

What we are going to present is a framework we designed investigating the links between ableism, social practice as theorised by Bourdieu and disabled people's ability to self-determine their access to sport and physical activity opportunities.

Although the focus is on sport and physical activity, we do believe the framework itself is just as applicable to many other areas and activities within society.

The idea for the framework was quite a long time in the making.

As someone who works in sport, I noticed that many authors would use Bourdieu's theory of social practice

to explain why disabled people had problems accessing sporting opportunities, but none of them appeared to explain what the regulatory method was that prevented access to various forms of capital and how this might work in practice. Following several conversations with my co-authors, we came up with a framework that we hope at least begins to explain this process and that is what we will present here today.

For anyone interested in the published version of the work, we have included details at the end of the PowerPoint for anyone wanting a pre-publication word file, as well as the full citation for the article for those who can gain access to journal articles.

And so with no further ado I shall begin...

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Disabled people face multiple environmental and attitudinal barriers to sport participation, and are often less physically active than non-disabled people. The importance of increasing the levels of sport and physical activity amongst disabled people has been regularly highlighted due to the associated physical and mental health, as well as the social benefits.

This has been a generalised concern globally, particularly with the advent of human rights legislation such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

which includes an article (number 30) that guarantees the right for disabled people to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport. This social model of disability-based approach has broadened the understanding of the issues faced by disabled people in the wider society. However, what has been lost is an understanding that disability only really occurs when these barriers are socially imposed.

Modern day understandings of disability have their roots in Western eugenic policies of the 1890s

that “drew upon the notion of the able body as a cultural signifier of not only beauty and function but also of traits of ‘human goodness’, such as acceptability, normality and worthiness”.

McClennen argues that this underscores the modern concept of disability, which she claims is a by-product of capitalism.

Goodley further claims that such normative values mean that “dis/ability, neoliberalism and capitalism feed upon one another’s existence”

and points out that “those bodies that fail to meet the debilitating impacts of labour will be impoverished not only economically but also psychologically”.

Therefore, to be ‘disabled’ in the current era is to be a worker who is unable to sell their labour,

particularly when ‘all liberal capitalist democracies are structured by power and run for the benefit of particular groups’.

As such, the concept of ‘disability’ is a form of social oppression of people with impairments that maintains itself through a mixture of structural, psycho-emotional and economic dimensions

that have become part of everyday, almost sub-conscious, social practices for many within society that may leave some disabled people feeling worthless and ashamed.

To increase the levels of sport and physical activity among disabled people it is vital to understand the factors that drive and constrain such social practice.

Previous studies have drawn out the links between the body, barriers and personal factors,

and have used elements of the Bourdieusian theory of social practice to examine sport participation among various groups or in the area of Paralympic and disability sport.

However, to our knowledge, what is missing is an explanation of the mechanisms by which social practice is regulated (and social oppression maintained)

such that it impacts upon opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity by disabled people and allows for social closure by dominant groups (e.g., non-disabled people).

Patillo defines social closure as the establishment and sustenance of boundaries formed by the group that dominates a particular field in an effort to keep out potential newcomers.

As noted by Saxton, it is now important to focus on the larger society as the arena where exclusion may occur to better understand the mechanisms that regulate sport and physical activity,

thus leading to a wider engagement and creating the foundation for personal empowerment of disabled people.

Ableism has been suggested as a useful lens to investigate the participation of disabled people in sport and physical activity,

as it encompasses both the impact of the environment and societal attitudes as forms of social oppression that can lead to barriers to participation. It also lends 'support to economic and material dependence on neoliberal and hyper-capitalist forms of production' that have the potential to compound these environmental and attitudinal barriers. In this sense, ableism may act as a regulatory mechanism that impacts upon social practice (i.e.. habitus, capital and field) through multiple ways to both maintain power by the dominant non- disabled people within society, as well as maintain the social oppression of disabled people. In addition, the self-determination of disabled people has been highlighted as a contributing factor to whether they participate in sport and physical activity or not. Thus, one may argue that when ableism is operated as a regulatory mechanism upon social practice it will likely impact the self-determination of disabled people to engage in sport and physical activity, and that ableism (and internalised ableism) may be reinforced through the self-determination process.

Whilst extant research has contributed to our understanding of the barriers faced by disabled people in accessing and participating in sport and physical activity, to date no comprehensive model has been created to provide a global understanding of how these barriers are maintained and how this access is regulated.

Such a model is vital to address calls for more research about disability in sport and leisure environments,

and act as a starting point to promote the empowerment of disabled people through their increased engagement in sport and physical activity.

Thus, the aim of this research is to propose a model to aid in providing an explanation as to why disabled people are less likely to engage in sport and physical activity

by linking the theories of ableism, social practice and self-determination.

Four key issues are important to outline in the construction of this framework.

Firstly, the term disabled people is used throughout, rather than a person-first approach as this term is often used by disabled people themselves to denote they are disabled by a world that is not equipped to allow them to participate and flourish, making them less likely to be physically active.

Secondly, although it needs to be stressed that disabled people are not a homogenous group with visibility, types, time of onset and levels of impairment and support needed,

in terms of attitudes amongst non-disabled people they are often lumped together under the banner heading of 'the disabled'.

Therefore, whilst understanding the heterogeneity and diversity of disabled people our aim is to highlight the potential implications of non-disabled attitudes within society upon the lives of disabled people,

whilst at the same time acknowledging that the impacts of these attitudes will vary greatly from individual to individual.

Thirdly, whilst acknowledging the issues connected with taking a binary approach, this paper focusses upon the dichotomy between disabled people and non- disabled people

to highlight the social origins of many of the issues faced by disabled people in much the same way the social model of disability uses the dichotomy between disability and impairment.

Finally, we acknowledge that disabled people are not without agency in resisting and challenging ableist perspectives

the same way as the social model of disability was, and still is, used to challenge the medical model perspective.

Our aim with this framework is to highlight the potential damage that an ableist perspective may wreak upon the lives of disabled people, particularly when trying to become involved in sport and physical activity, if left unchallenged.

Figure 1, which can be seen in the PowerPoint, depicts the proposed framework for understanding the linkages between ableism,

Bourdieu's concept of social practice (habitus, capital and field) and self-determination of disabled people to access sport and physical activity.

We will begin by outlining the key elements of ableism as a regulatory mechanism for disabled people on social practice within the arena of sport and physical activity.

Next, we will highlight ableism's potential to regulate each of the elements (habitus, capital and field) and sub-elements (e.g., different forms of capital) of Bourdieu's concept of social practice.

This will be followed by a discussion of how this regulation might impact the possibility for disabled people to self-determine

(i.e., through competence, autonomy and relatedness) their access to and participation in sport and physical activity.

It is also acknowledged that ableism can impact upon self-determination and that social practice can reinforce ableist perceptions.

Ableism

Ableism has been the subject of extensive research focused on the way disabled people are treated within the wider society. In the context of disabled people.

"Ableism describes prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviours toward persons with a disability",

which are related to one's understanding of the ability and the rights and benefits afforded to persons deemed "normal".

Ableism is, therefore, associated with norms and normalcy and the resultant imposition of normative values for maintaining the power of one group over another.

That is, those who best fit the construed norms uphold power over those who diverge from them).

Indeed Kearney et al. claim that while normalcy is existent in the background and is unobtrusive in everyday life for people meeting the established criteria of 'normal', for those perceived to deviate from the 'norm' it often exists in the foreground of their realities and is more prevalent in their perceptions of lived experiences within the social order.

The prioritisation of non-disabled sport and physical activity and non-disabled bodies within society devalues this activity for disabled people and potentially undermines much of the work done by disability activists to gain acceptance for disabled people in all walks of life.

Ableism, therefore, can act to devalue disabled people and result in segregation, social isolation, and social policies, such as the current UK Government 'Fitness for Work' Assessments, that can limit opportunities for full societal participation for some disabled people. The two primary mechanisms through which this occurs are the ableist attitudes that nearly all people within society are socialised (to varying degrees) into and an inaccessible environment that is generally designed with only those who most closely embody normative values in mind. These two, combined with the strong links between ableism and capitalism underpin the economic, structural and psycho-emotional oppression encountered on an almost daily basis by many disabled people. However, it should be acknowledged that disabled people's own experiences and socialisation vary greatly, and that they are not a homogenous group. Indeed, Darcy et al. found that impairment effects were not uniform across disability types or level of support needs for any of the seven constraint factors (time, facilities/services, accessibility/financial, lack of partners, lack of knowledge, individual psychological, and lack of interest) that they highlight associated with participation in sport and physical activity for disabled people.

As such, the potential impact of ableism upon disabled people is not uniform, particularly given the heterogeneity not just amongst disabled people in general, but also amongst individual impairment groups.

However, the impact of the oppression that comes with it still has a high potential to negatively impact on their lives, especially when compared to non-disabled people. Based on this almost ubiquitous perception of disability as a pathological issue leading to a digression from a socially expected physical norm, both non-disabled people and disabled people within society are encouraged, through numerous sources, to internalise many of the perceptions of disability embedded within an ableist approach to disability.

Consequently, despite challenges to this perception by disability activists via the social model of disability, it appears to some disabled people that the causes of many of their problems lie within them and their own impairments.

This leads to what Reeve terms 'internal oppression', or as more commonly termed internalised ableism.

Within an ableist perspective, the existence of disability is often merely tolerated rather than celebrated as a component of human diversity and internalised ableism commonly forces some disabled people to assimilate ableist norms by assuming an identity other than their own.

Campbell further argues that internalised ableism operates a two-pronged approach:

(i) dispersal - distancing of disabled people from each other; and (ii) emulation, whereby disabled people adopt and internalise ableist norms.

Reeve claims that "dispersal can be seen at work within hierarchies of impairment whereby disabled people position themselves relative to other disabled people".

This is highlighted by Deal who ranked different impairments by their degree of perceived social acceptability, which often relates with how far an impairment deviates from socially accepted norms.

Dispersal, therefore, "actively promotes separation between and within groups of the so-called 'stigmatised' peoples".

Emulation, which also appears to carry elements of dispersal within it, is described by Campbell as the compulsion to emulate ableist regulatory norms in order to give the appearance of being closer to the dominant norms than may actually be the case in order to try and fit in.

However, it should be noted that this may be easier for some impairment groups than others, as the further they deviate from the socially accepted bodily norms the harder emulation will become.

According to Goodley, ableism emphasises discrimination in favour of non-disabled people - based upon ability, whereas disablism emphasises discrimination against disabled people - based upon 'a failure to fit the capitalist imperative'.

The role of the social oppression we highlight above is, therefore, to both benefit those closely associated with the desired normative values and to marginalise those that differ from them through social closure.

In this framework, we highlight the dual impact of both ableism and disablism upon social practice and ultimately the ability of disabled people to self-determine their participation in sport and physical activity.

Therefore, we use the term ableism throughout the presentation, but our use of it is to encompass this duality rather than differentiate between the two.

I'll now hand over to Rui to talk about how ableism might relate to Bourdieu's theory of social practice.

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[2021/11/26 09:09] RBis6 Resident: Thank you, Ian.

Bourdieu's theory of practice is a social reproduction theory set within an economic framework.

Social reproduction is related to "different social classes based upon their control of various economic, political, and social structures".

Practice can be seen as the outcome of a combination of capital, habitus and field, which are all interlinked.

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The first Social Practice I will discuss is Capital.

Capital is defined as sums of money or assets put to productive use. For Bourdieu, "capital comes in three species: economic, cultural, and social. A fourth species, symbolic capital, designates the effects of any form of capital when people do not perceive them as such."

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Social Capital

Social capital, derived through participation in sports and extended involvement with others in sports communities is an important benefit for disabled people that is often overlooked.

Bourdieu conceptualises social capital as the resources that flow to individuals from their membership of social networks.

- According to Mithen et al., disabled people have lower social capital than non-disabled people due to the resources available to them through their social networks.

By way of a partial explanation, DeFilippis states “people who realize capital through their networks of social capital do so precisely because others are excluded”.

We can also draw distinctions between three different types of social networks: bonding, bridging and linking.

Bonding networks refer to close informal networks of families and friends that are often regarded as a means to ‘get by’.

Bridging networks tend to be weaker and heterogeneous ties between people from dissimilar backgrounds such as age or ethnic group with potential to generate resources not available through bonding networks and that enable people to ‘get ahead’.

Finally, linking social networks refer to “relationships with those in positions of power and authority, which likewise offer the potential resources to ‘get ahead’”.

- Many disabled people are often reliant on their bonding networks for the majority of their day-to-day needs, including accessing sport and physical activity, as they may require them to provide transport assistance or support during the activity itself.

- Bridging networks may include other individuals with which to participate in activities and whose reaction to the participation of disabled people may determine whether that person returns or not.

- Linking networks may include sport and physical activity providers upon whom disabled people are dependent to provide accessible opportunities to participate.

- Some authors claim that for a large number of disabled people their difference (from social norms) and the ensuing disempowerment tends to limit them to bonding networks of immediate family members or paid professionals.

Loja et al. further note that ableist thoughts and practices prevent access to all forms of capital for disabled people through the imposition of barriers to public spaces (including sport and physical activity facilities) and opportunities to build the social relationships necessary to gain social capital.

This lack of access to social networks may lead to loneliness and social isolation.

This can, in turn, lead to a heightened sensitivity to social threats, and highlights the importance and potential benefits of accessing sport and physical activity by disabled people.

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Cultural Capital

Regarding Cultural Capital, Bourdieu distinguishes three types— embodied, objectified and institutionalised.

Embodied cultural capital consists of both consciously acquired and passively inherited features that define ways of being and feeling, such as language, tastes, patterns of communication and behaviour.

It is acquired over time, through socialisation.

- Although Bourdieu framed it mainly in terms of class distinctions, regarding ableism this is the area in which normative bodily values are transferred, translated, reinforced and in the case of disabled people themselves – internalised.

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- Embodied cultural capital is, therefore, closely linked to Bourdieu’s concept of habitus and may adversely impact the self-efficacy of disabled people to participate in sport and physical activity.

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- Objectified cultural capital consists of physical objects owned and perceived as having material and economic value within society.

Such items can be both sold for economic profit or simply be used to convey 'status' and differentiating the owner from those who do not have access to the same level of cultural capital.

There are examples of disabled people achieving high level jobs.

However, in general, a large proportion of disabled people are prevented from gaining the necessary economic capital that would allow them to gain access to objectified cultural capital, unless they are born into a family circumstance where it is already present.

In reality, as noted in some studies, a large proportion of disabled people live at or below the poverty line, which can make sport and physical activity opportunities difficult.

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- Institutionalised cultural capital consists of institutional recognition, often in the form of academic credentials or qualifications.

However, for some disabled people, accessing this kind of capital is problematic, as access to education is often difficult due to economic cost, but also because they may be forced into segregated educational settings for fear of holding back the non-disabled students or even due to access challenges to buildings or educational materials that prevents them from fully engaging with the educational process

Similar issues may arise where disabled people wish to take sport and physical activity related coaching or officiating qualifications.

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Economic Capital

Economic capital includes financial resources such as income, money or loans that play a key role on individuals' ability to access social and cultural capital.

To this respect, it is worth noting that the "modes of ableist cultural reproduction and disabling material conditions can never be divorced from multiple modes of oppression, including capitalism.

- The global economic climate is also likely exacerbating the situation for disabled people. For example, in the UK there were restrictions to state benefits (a form of social closure).

Ryan further notes that disabled people in the UK are enduring "nine times the burden of cuts compared to the average citizen, with people with the most severe disabilities being hit a staggering nineteen times harder".

Saxton also states that disabled people tend to be associated with a low economic status, while Darcy et al. verified that economic constraints are among the factors inhibiting disabled people from participating in sport and physical activity.

This may increase the difficulties for disabled people to accumulate other forms of capital and helps maintain non-disabled dominance over all forms of capital, as well as the disempowerment of disabled people.

- In connection to the UK government benefits policies, the Activity Alliance showed that despite 83% of disabled research participants wishing to be more active, 43% were fearful of losing their benefits.

It would appear, therefore, that social and economic policies can, perhaps inadvertently, lead to barriers to accessing S&PA and enhance social closure within this arena in favour of non-disabled people.

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Symbolic Capital

Symbolic capital is the summation of cultural and social capital that affords prestige and leads to others paying attention to an individual or group.

- Using symbolic power against another individual or group implies a form of symbolic violence that may take such forms as judging the individual or group as inferior based upon the perception of their symbolic capital.

- In addition to preventing outsiders from entering a field through social closure, this has the added effect of producing “opportunity hoarding” by members of the dominant group within a field.

This power may be dispensed without words through actions such as the continued construction of a built environment (including sport and physical activity facilities) that is inaccessible to disabled people, which is both an exercise of power and a value judgement.

- That is, disabled people may not be seen as important enough to be worth the perceived extra costs of making the necessary alterations in the built environment.

- Symbolic capital engenders a sense of duty and inferiority in others who look up to those who have that power, which in the case of disabled people often takes the form of internalised ableism.

- So, we posit that the mixture of symbolic violence and internalised ableism can act as a strong deterrent for some disabled people to become involved in sport and physical activity, as well as other areas of social life.

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Let us now talk about Habitus

- “The Habitus is located within the body and affects every aspect of human embodiment”.

Bourdieu’s use of habitus highlights how an individual’s socialisation causes social rules and structures to become embodied frames of reference, which in turn influence their behaviour in a seemingly unconscious manner.

This in turn impacts upon what individuals perceive can/cannot be achieved within particular areas of their lives.

- This applies to perceptions of both non-disabled people and disabled people through the process of internalised ableism described by Ian.

- As noted by Marks, internalised ableism by disabled people is not the cause of our mistreatment; it is the result of our mistreatment.

It would not exist without the real external oppression that forms the social climate in which we exist. Once oppression has been internalized, little force is needed to keep us submissive.

- As noted before, internalised ableism produces two consequences for disabled people: distancing from each other and emulation of ableist norms.

The impact is that the type or degree of impairment of an individual can place one to be less or further divergent from the social and cultural ‘norms’ and lead to a hierarchy of impairment.

This means that societies construe hierarchical ideals of what are ‘acceptable’ impairments, which helps explain why people with differing impairments may have different problems when trying to access Sport and physical activity.

- An example would be that a single arm amputee would find it easier to enter a Sport facility that has only steps for access than someone who uses a wheelchair.

Also, it reiterates that an individual's socialisation (i.e., habitus) leads to the internalisation of social rules and structures that become embodied frames of reference and influence behaviour in an unconscious manner.

- Social classifications are, therefore, taken into an individual's habitus and shape how they react and relate to different stimuli, events and people
- This can either empower or disempower an individual and thus influence the willingness to participate in sport and physical activities

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Now focusing on ... The Field of sport and physical activity

Bourdieu uses the idea of field as a social arena where people compete for resources, making it a system of social positions based on structure in power relationships within that particular arena.

- In the case of this presentation, the field is sport and physical activity. The competition is for access to opportunities to take part and access the best and most relevant facilities in which to participate.

Sport and physical activity provides many opportunities and benefits to disabled people.

Aside from the physical benefits, sport and physical activity has proven to generate psychological and social benefits for disabled people such as increased empowerment, social capital, sense of belonging to a community and a better self-perception that contributes to psychological health.

- Conversely, sport and physical activity may also generate negative consequences for some disabled people.

Some studies found that participation in sport and physical activity may have both positive and negative effects on identity development of young disabled men, whilst also highlighting deviation from bodily norms, and thus reinforcing the idea that bodily function is somehow inferior or less valued in disabled people.

- It should also be noted that negative interactions with non-disabled people in a sport and physical activity setting can act as a deterrent for disabled people to be seen with non-disabled people.
- Martin reported that non-disabled children showed concerns of becoming victims of such teasing if they had to play with a disabled child. In this way social closure is further maintained and the importance of being part of the dominant group reinforced.

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- To sum up, the Impact of ableism on the various elements of Bourdieu's social practice can be seen in Table 1.

- Overall, ableism is a socially constructed and construed conception of the value of certain abilities and/or characteristics over others.

- It is promoted by social groups and structures that hold power within a field.

- Ableism is taught and reinforced through an individual's habitus and is used to regulate access to all forms of capital.

- This then makes operating and succeeding in a field such as sport and physical activity more difficult for disabled people.

- In segregated sport and physical activity settings this is a self-reinforcing process, as by separating disabled people from non-disabled people they perform their disability (or their deviation from the dominant norm) in a separate, but visible space.

- This, in turn, reinforces the consequences of deviation from the dominant group norm and highlights the importance and benefits of the dominant group membership.

- This leads to a perceived increase in the symbolic capital connected with being part of the group that most closely aligns with the normative values of the dominant group.

- In non-segregated settings disabled people run the risk of both making their impairment even more visible, and potentially being the victims of staring and rude comments that may deter them from future participation in sport and physical activity.

Next, my colleague Simon will talk about self-determination.

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[2021/11/26 09:29] sGerard Resident: Thank you Rui...

Self-determination theory (SDT) refers to the extent to which an individual has the freedom to be self-motivated or what Deci and Ryan describe as “the experience of freedom in initiating one’s behaviour”.

- Self-determination, therefore, closely aligns with the idea of empowerment defined by Jeffress and Brown as “the transfer of power and control over decisions, choices, and values from external entities to the consumer of disability services”.

- A better understanding of how ableism influences self-determination has the potential, therefore, to highlight social mechanisms that can lead to the empowerment or disempowerment of disabled people.

- Hawkins et al. claim that self-determination is underpinned by three key constructs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) that we outline below.

- Previous studies have highlighted that opportunities for self-determination are diminished by the presence of a disability.

- Self-determination has been suggested to be a key factor in achieving individual goals, “making this construct, as it is practiced in mainstream society, an important example of cultural capital”.

- Indeed, Condoluci et al. argue that practices supporting disabled people to expand their social networks are often recognized as effective ways to build social capital, which fosters both greater self-determination and improved life quality.

- Trainor further claims that although self-determination is often couched as a psychological construct located within the individual (i.e., the habitus), other factors located outside of the individual can also impact their experiences.

- Trainor concludes that the successful practice of self-determination requires both social and cultural capital.

- Citing Bourdieu, Trainor states that all forms of capital can mediate the acquisition and use of power and, therefore, the connections between self-determination, empowerment, and the rights for disabled people.

- Thus, the successful practice of self-determination is closely associated with the notion of power.

- As outlined earlier, it is our contention that ableism is, in itself, an exercise in power and control.

We now draw out links between the impact of an ableist discourse on three key areas of Bourdieu’s concept of social practice (habitus, capital and the field) and how these may lead to opportunities for disabled people to successfully self-determine, particularly in accessing sport and physical activity.

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In Table 2, we highlight links between the three key areas of self-determination (autonomy, competence and relatedness), Bourdieu's concept of social practice and the regulatory role ableism may play for disabled people.

I don't have the time to go through the whole table here and so will simply highlight a couple of links between ableism, social capital and self-determination.

For example, a lack of social capital can impact:

- Autonomy by reducing access to social networks thus decreasing opportunities across all spheres of social life and restricting autonomous choice.
- Competence by reducing autonomy through lack of access to social networks and thus increasing feelings of failure and lack of competence.

Relatedness by reducing access to social networks, especially linking social networks, thus reducing connectedness or a sense of belonging and increasing social isolation.

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I'd now like to talk about Autonomy in a little more detail. Autonomy is defined by Deci and Ryan as being the perceived origin or source of one's own behaviour. As noted by Ells, autonomy is an important moral value that should be grounded on a theory of the self.

- In line with this and in response to a question from someone on Twitter who wanted to make a YouTube video on the misconceptions of disability, Tanni Grey-Thompson, British Paralympian, disability activist and member of the House of Lords replied that the "biggest misconception I experience is that I can't make my own decisions".

- In addition to impacting upon their sense of competence, this ableist perspective of the abilities of disabled people, and a belief that they are unable to do things for themselves, can erode the belief in autonomous control over their own actions.

- Non-disabled people making assumptions on behalf of disabled people takes away their autonomy and undermines their sense of self-competence.

Autonomy is also decreased through symbolic violence that decreases access to both social capital and the field of sport and physical activity through architectural barriers and negative attitudes to disability leading to a lack of participation opportunities.

- For example, the ableist assumption by sport and physical activity providers that disabled people are incapable or uninterested is often an excuse to not provide participation opportunities.

- This, in turn, negatively influences the habitus through internalised ableism and further lowers their ability to, and belief that they can, compete for resources.

- When children with disabilities in mainstream schooling are prevented from taking part in sport or physical education lessons by teachers who are either untrained or fearful to include them, this not only highlights the child with a disability's inability to question teachers' authority, but also begins the process of internalising that sport and physical activity may not be for them.

- According to Coates and Vickerman, "where opportunity lacks, motivation to participate in sport decreases" assisting non-disabled people to maintain control over the field of sport and the resources within it.

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According to Deci and Ryan, competence is defined as feeling effective in one's on-going interactions with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express capacities.

- This is an important aspect given that self-perceived competence and body image are commonly suggested to be related to sport participation.
- For example, Smith and Sparkes highlight that diverse narratives and different kinds of hope are used by disabled people to reconstruct their body-self relationships that can in turn impact upon competence self-perception.
- In addition, Stephens et al. highlight through what they term 'incidental learning' how participation in sport and physical activity can assist with self-competence, empowerment and even in combatting internalised ableism.

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Finally, Relatedness refers to the need to feel connected to others in the domain of physical activity.

Coates and Vickerman further describe relatedness as "a person's feeling of shared experience and belongingness".

- There is a strong link between relatedness and social capital as access to social networks and experiences of interactions within those networks will strongly impact upon an individual's sense of belonging within that network and their likelihood to maintain links.
- The repercussions for participation in the field of sport and physical activity are fundamental to the continued participation of disabled people, because sense of belongingness plays a key role in the sport domain.
- D'Eloia and Price point out that "persons lacking a sense of belonging within a setting can feel left out, ignored, and may be disinclined to participate".
- Widdop et al. further claim that "social networks both facilitate and constrain sports participation".

We argue that the converse is also true – lack of provision and opportunity and an inaccessible environment act as a double barrier preventing disabled people from building social networks, whilst at the same time decreasing their motivation to participate.

- This forms just a part of the process of social closure, discussed earlier, that maintains the dominance and benefits within the field of sport and physical activity for those in a dominant position, for instance non-disabled people and organisers). Overall, the impact of ableism upon social practice can lead for some (but not all) disabled people to a 'perfect storm' of issues that prevent their participation in sport and physical activity by undermining their ability to self-determine through the partial removal of a sense of autonomy and competence and limiting access to social networks, thus taking away any sense of relatedness or belongingness.
- As noted by Misener, the low levels of sport participation among disabled people are also reflective of low engagement in community life.
- This partially results from the application of the social oppression described by Thomas in the form of ableism that acts upon social practice to discriminate both in favour of non-disabled people via social closure and opportunity hoarding and against disabled people by marginalising them from the economic and social opportunities necessary to thrive within modern society.

I'll now pass back to Ian to discuss some of the conclusions and possible implications of this framework.

[2021/11/26 09:43] Paralympian Resident: Building on the theories of ableism, social practice and self-determination, this presentation proposes a framework to aid explaining why disabled people are less likely to access and participate in sport and physical activity. We argue that ableism acts as a regulatory mechanism for each of the elements (habitus, capital and field) and different forms of capital (social, cultural, economic and symbolic) of Bourdieu's concept of social practice. In addition, we contend that this regulation of social practice also impacts the potential for disabled people to self-determine their access to and participation in sport and physical activity due to their perceived competence, autonomy and relatedness.

In turn, we acknowledge that ableism can impact directly upon self-determination and that social practice within the arena of sport and physical activity may also reinforce ableist perceptions. Whilst the promotion of human rights appears to be an increasingly important aspect when bidding for and hosting sport mega events, the current framework elaborates on aspects limiting the access to and participation in sport and physical activity by disabled people. This may act as a roadmap to help tackling this issue and guide future empirical research, whilst contributing to ensuring that their human rights are upheld. By better understanding the mechanisms by which exclusionary practices are maintained practitioners can be made more aware of the indicators of such practices and start the process of combatting them in order to better empower and include disabled people within sport and physical activity.

Consistent with this view, future research could develop a longitudinal examination of the proposed model by monitoring disabled people with different levels/types of impairment to further understand the potential dynamic linkages between ableism, social practice and self-determination, and help tackling the low levels of sport and physical activity participation amongst disabled people. This may assist practitioners to find new ways to allow disabled people to freely access sport and physical activity by highlighting ways that their ability to self-determine might be enhanced, ultimately aiming to empower them. Another research perspective would be to test to what extent this framework can be applied to a wider audience and shed new light on discriminatory practice-based dynamics around issues such as gender, class, age or sexual orientation and their intersections. As an example of this last point Simon will briefly introduce you to a piece of research relating to Gender and sport carried out by one of his Master students last year.

[2021/11/26 09:47] sGerard Resident: (next slide)
The framework we have outlined here has already led to further research in relation to gender equity in sport.

Investigating the field of the Higher Education sport sector in the United Kingdom, Naidu-Young analysed for her Master thesis in sports management how ableism regulates women's access to various forms of capital and their ability to self-determine access to leadership positions.

More specifically, the research investigated:

- to what extent ableism and women's capital are currently linked within sports leadership;
- whether ableism acts as a regulator for women's capital and self-determination to access leadership positions in sports;
- to what extent internalised ableism prevents women from accessing leadership positions in sport.

- Based on semi-structured interviews, the research demonstrated how ableism – and in particular internalised ableism - regulated both the accumulation of capitals and women's self-determination to attain leadership positions.

In addition, the study highlighted the importance of a new form of capital – physical capital – which relates to how ableist perception of women's bodies and women's abilities can prevent them from self-determination.

I'll now handover to Rui to very briefly outline our future plans for developing the framework further.

[2021/11/26 09:49] RBis6 Resident: Based on the proposed framework, and considering its potential wider intersectional audience, we have some research directions in mind:

A. A longitudinal examination of the proposed model, as just highlighted, by monitoring different groups who may feel face ableism related issues as a way to further understand the potential dynamic linkages between ableism, social practice and self-determination, and help tackling the low levels of sport and physical activity amongst disabled people.

B. Testing of the model through qualitative interviews with different groups to better understand the nuances of ableism and its regulatory role in sport and physical activity,

C. Build on the knowledge from the qualitative interviews to create a questionnaire and test the linkages between ableism, social practice and self-determination with a larger sample.

The ultimate aim is to create a measurement tool that helps monitor these relationships and identify the best ways to promote empowerment conducive to increased sport and physical activity

[2021/11/26 09:51] Gentle Heron: Thank you gentlemen,.

This was a fascinating presentation

[2021/11/26 09:51] Shendara Destiny: *.*.*.*.*(*.*.*.*.*♥.*.*.*.*)*.*.*.*.*

[2021/11/26 09:51] Shendara Destiny: .*.*.*.*.*♥.*.*.*.*.*APPLAUSE!*.*.*.*.*♥.*.*.*.*.*

[2021/11/26 09:51] Shendara Destiny: *.*.*.*.*(*.*.*.*.*♥.*.*.*.*)*.*.*.*.*

[2021/11/26 09:51] Sheila Yoshikawa: Thank you, very interesting!

[2021/11/26 09:51] Stepin (Stepinwolf Darkstone): /me claps

[2021/11/26 09:51] Elektra Panthar: 🎵🎵🎵🎵 Applauds🎵🎵🎵🎵

[2021/11/26 09:51] OliveTree Lighthouse: /clap

[2021/11/26 09:51] Varahi Lusch: thank you so much for your deep thoughts!

[2021/11/26 09:51] Buffy Beale: Cheering wonderful presentation!

[2021/11/26 09:52] Marylou Goldrosen: Thanks -- great ideas!

[2021/11/26 09:51] sGerard Resident: Thank you for your attention

[2021/11/26 09:51] Mook Wheeler: COMMENT: I agree with your general theme. Can I suggest that while habitus is the practice of variety within a person's finite acquisition of possibilities, those possibilities *depend* upon the reproduction of the means of (ableist) production by society -- from (infra)structures to the practice. I suggest linking Bourdieu's notions not just to Patillo and Goodley, but tentatively Gibson's concept of affordances, and all the way back to Althusser and even Marx, to underscore that ableism is a mythic constant which requires the reproduction of its very means of production, in order to maintain the cycle of ideology, unbroken and perpetuating.

[2021/11/26 09:52] LV (LoriVonne Lustre): [2021/11/26 09:51] Gentle Heron: QUESTION- Prior to this conference, I read Howe and Silva's paper titled "The fiddle of using the Paralympic Games as a vehicle for expanding [dis]ability sport participation." <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/17430437.2016.1225885> They say the goals of the Paralympics are "assumed to be valid for all people with a disability, yet in terms of widening participation, their utility is limited, as the Paralympics themselves are exclusionary." They state that we should be advocating for "sport for all" by promoting a "capabilities approach" to "educate the public about the need for equality of access to sporting participation opportunities." How can both the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and we disabled folks work better toward this education effort?

[2021/11/26 09:53] Carolyn Carillon: IB: I only got two thirds before it disappeared from my screen

I agree with the statement

My argument has always been that the paralympic games as a media-saturated event

Are the only and best platform

To begin a discussion around disability issues

I wouldn't want to say we should get rid of it because they're not doing what they claim to do

They do make some claims

But I wouldn't get rid of them

That's throwing the baby out with the bath water

They need to be better used by the paralympians themselves

But also activists

To start a debate

And using that concentrated media window

GENTLE: thank you for coming all this way

I hope you will come back and keep us up to date with your progress

<<transcription ends>>