


The Journal of Media and Rights: A platform for global epistemologies beyond borders

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In the ongoing pursuit of knowledge and a deeper understanding of the world around us, the role of academic research and knowledge production should not be overstated. Scholarly efforts can help to shape our perceptions and provide lenses through which we can begin to understand the complexities of the realities that make up our surroundings. However, it is important to acknowledge that the present global academic landscape is still far from being a level playing field (Demeter 2020).

While scholars from well-resourced, economically developed regions often assume leadership and prominence within scholarly debates (Medie & Kang 2018), their counterparts from less affluent areas can often encounter a series of systematic barriers that curb their visibility and impact in global academic conversations. Such places would typically be grouped under broad and, arguably, reductive labels such as 'Third World', 'Global South', 'developing', or 'underdeveloped' countries (Chilisa 2019). Scholars from regions such as Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania, contend with the enduring impact and effects of colonial legacies, economic disparities, and political unrest. These factors heavily influence the thematic nature and scope of work produced within these regions.

In addition to this, they also face significant obstacles in disseminating scholarly work, which include limited access to funding, language barriers, and underrepresentation in prominent publications. Such challenges often result in the sidelining or overshadowing of non-Western scholarly ideas, thus preventing an array of locally and indigenously informed knowledge from enriching the global academic landscape, resulting in fundamental knowledge gaps that can skew the comprehensiveness of research outcomes.

In 'Epistemologies of the South', author Santos (2014) postulates that when the diversity of epistemologies is overlooked, academic work risks perpetuating biased narratives that privilege Western paradigms. By failing to integrate these voices into research, academia widens the gap between 'mainstream' and 'other', and diminishes the potential for an inclusive, innovative, and truly representative body of global knowledge that informs more astute, insightful outcomes. These predicaments highlight the importance of platforms such as the *Journal of Media and Rights* (JMR). Through its editorial commitment to addressing such asymmetries, JMR aims to raise the volume of lesser-heard voices while encouraging a vital rethinking of established academic publishing practices. The journal serves as a collaborative space, where diverse ways of thinking, researching, and understanding are not only included but are also crucial in fostering a more comprehensive academic dialogue.

As a researcher from Latin America, who focuses on indigenous media for social change, I believe it is crucial for journals to champion more for the integration of local traditions and perspectives within academic research. Drawing upon the works of environmentalist Agrawal (1995), who questioned the divisive approach between indigenous wisdom and scientific research, it is important to call upon a more open-minded and unified academic approach through the combination of traditional forms of knowledge and respectful ongoing dialogue.

A successful representation of this lies in the works of Krenak (2020), a Brazilian-indigenous author and activist, who recently became the first indigenous person inducted into the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL), the foremost institution for Portuguese language and literature in Brazil. His work 'Ideas Para Adiar o Fim do Mundo' (Krenak 2020), provides a profound exploration of the human-earth relation grounded in indigenous wisdom. His distinctly unique insights have been translated into more than 10 languages worldwide. Krenak's (2000) critical stance on the Western pursuit of unending growth shines light on the dire impact and consequences of environmental issues faced within indigenous communities. His research formally highlights

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the invaluable contributions and perspectives that indigenous voices can provide to scholarly conversations, when afforded equal opportunity. Guba and Lincoln (2005:2012) support this inclusivity by stating that: 'Research needs emancipation from hearing only the voices of Western Europe, emancipation from generations of silence, and emancipation from seeing the world in one colour'.

By laying a foundation for voices traditionally underrepresented, the *Journal of Media and Rights* reaffirms its dedication to amplifying diverse scholarly work. Encouraging academic dialogue informed by a broader spectrum of global encounters, JMR seeks to promote authenticity and, in turn, a more holistic perspective of the complex issues that confront us on a global level. Within its mission, JMR is committed to presenting scholarly work that echoes the nuanced realities of diverse cultures, economies, and ecosystems, by attuning to the subtleties of local context and global impact. Thus, in the spirit of fostering an environment of intellectual diversity and inclusivity, the *Journal of Media and Rights* invites scholars

from all corners of the world to engage and contribute their insights. These contributions are vital in helping to build an academic dialogue that mirrors the diversity and dynamism that is so intrinsic to the world we live in.

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