

## Exploring the Absence of Investigative Reporting in Sports Journalism in Peshawar, KP, Pakistan through Qualitative Thematic Analysis

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## **Abstract**

Investigative sports journalism in Peshawar is the focus of this study in order to comprehend the challenges and opportunities in this field. What makes the study important is its contribution to enhancing transparency and accountability in the sports industry. By providing guidance on overcoming challenges and optimizing the impact of investigative reporting it can assist sports journalists in advancing their careers. The study uses the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism as a theoretical framework to look at the challenges and opportunities. Sports journalists face several challenges such as a lack of resources and a fear of repercussions the study found. Incentives such as cash compensation and recognition can promote investigative reporting. Media outlets must provide support and resources and the government must establish regulations that promote investigative reporting. Media outlets journalists' sports organizations and the general public are provided with guidelines to promote investigative reporting in sports journalism. The importance of transparency and responsibility in sports journalism is underlined.

**Keywords:** *Peshawar, Sports Journalism, Social Responsibility Theory, Investigative Reporting, Transparency.*

## **Introduction**

Covering subjects like crime corruption and unethical behavior is part of investigative reporting. To do this a thorough investigation of the matter is conducted in order to generate an exhaustive report. This is typically done for the general public's benefit. This serves as justification for the investigations emphasis on moral and ethical matters. This kind of journalism takes a long time because it requires a lot of research before the report is made public. Consequently journalists work hard to find the whole truth about the topic of their investigation (Stuart p. 67). In the modern world investigative journalism is crucial. This is due to the fact that investigative journalism has many benefits. Investigative journalism contributes significantly to society by researching and compiling data on fraud crime dishonesty and other immoral behaviors (Newman and Gibson p.82). Investigative journalism has remained an essential part of social justice enabling lobbying and activism to provide the justice that had been denied to the harmed parties (Goldman & Papson p. 72).

Following sporting events describing and analyzing them offering analysis and even investigating the darker aspects of sports are all part of the specialized field of sports journalism (Amour 2022). Investigative journalism is a vital part of sports reporting (Taylor & Francis eBooks). Sports journalists play a crucial role in identifying integrity violations in sports (Kristen Sparre 2019). In sports journalism investigative reporting means thoroughly analyzing and researching athletic events and topics. It makes public knowledge that has been covertly suppressed whether intentionally or inadvertently (Shannon Taylor 2023). Because the relationships between sports journalists and their subjects are so delicate investigative reporting in sports journalism can be challenging (Pooja Shah 2019). Investigative sports' reporting is essential since it helps uncover doping match-fixing corruption and other unethical sports practices (Taylor & Francis eBooks). It also helps to hold sports organizations and athletes accountable for their actions (Shannon Taylor 2023). Investigative reporting in sports also highlights issues of equity and social justice. There are a number of explanations for the current state of affairs. Sports news stories often have the power of their own popularity because they are economically significant in drawing mainly male readers to news publications as Rowe (2007) points out. However due to their popularity and belief in what appeals to their target audience the majority of sports journalists avoid covering the social aspects of sports (Rowe 2007).

According to the international survey on sports journalism newspaper journalists generally paid very little attention to issues pertaining to sports and society and they rarely conducted investigative reporting that could uncover crimes like corruption match fixing and doping (Horky and Nieland 2011). Everyday sports are covered in a very similar manner by media outlets worldwide. The great majority of news stories or 77 percent were directly related to sporting events such as match reports performance reviews and previews of upcoming contests or matches according to a 2011 international study of sports journalism that used articles from 80 newspapers in 22 countries across five continents. Despite the fact that the specific sports covered varied depending on national interests' football was the only sport covered by the global media and accounted for over 40% of all articles in the sample (Horky and Nieland 2011). Furthermore the study found that athletes coaches club or team representatives spokespersons or representatives of sports organizations made up 60% of the sources referenced in the stories (ibid.).

Rowes (2007) and other researchers earlier research is supported by this conclusion. Through media events and press conferences sports organizations usually carefully manage access to athletes which can result in sports journalists becoming involved with athletic bodies or administrators (English 2016). Because they fear losing access to crucial sources if they are too critical journalists are encouraged to self-censor as a result of this dependence (ibid). In exchange for player interviews journalists agree to mention sponsors or marketers which further the commercialization of sports journalism. According to a study by Jones and James (2019) investigative reporting in the field of sports journalism has gained a lot of recognition. This is partly due to the numerous high-profile cases that have been made public by dedicated investigative journalists. As an excellent illustration Jones and James (2019) cite an investigation published in The Sunday Times that exposed widespread doping in sports by athletes coaches and even national anti-doping agencies.

Smith (2020) asserts that the thorough documentation and testimonies in the study sparked a lot of debate and resulted in significant adjustments for the sports sector. How doping was managed and controlled was greatly impacted by the information gathered from this investigation (Smith 2020). The importance of investigative sports reporting has been acknowledged by numerous organizations. For example the Thomson Reuters Foundation offers a program for African

journalists who wish to report on the ways in which sport can promote tolerance and equality. ProPublica a non-profit journalism group has compiled a list of the top sports-related investigative stories that cover topics like sexual assault horse racing and steroid use (Cora Currier and Suevon Lee 2012). Nevertheless it seems to be noticeably underrepresented in the sports journalism landscape of Peshawar (Khan 2012).

Investigative journalism thrives when it digs deep into subjects unearths undiscovered information and promotes change. Peshawar media is heavily biased towards politics just like the rest of Pakistan (Afridi 2016). It's common to overlook sports coverage in favor of front-page stories about crime or politics. Cricket the most popular sport has a propensity to eclipse other sports leading to a narrow perspective (Javed 2017). Investigative journalists may overlook important issues like player abuse financial exploitation and unprofessional conduct if they don't conduct additional research. In addition to reducing the impact of sports journalism this shortcoming have serious implications for the overall legitimacy openness and honesty of sports organizations and professionals. In Peshawar KP Pakistan the lack of investigative sports journalism is still a major issue. It is necessary to rethink journalism education and allocate funds in order to encourage in-depth reporting. Academics like Anthony Feinstein (2000) have argued that influential media companies should lead this change and the broader media community has a role to play as well. Are we ready to bring investigative sports journalism in particular to Peshawar KP Pakistan?

## **Literature Review**

Investigative journalism in sports reporting has produced some notable stories over the years. One important strategy for increasing public awareness of the problem during the 2000s was media coverage of competition manipulation in sports. Notable instances of competition manipulation cases that garnered widespread media coverage include the 2010 Bochum football match-fixing scandal which led to Germany's largest competition manipulation trial the 2004 Golden Whistle match-fixing scandal in Portuguese football and the 2010 cricket spot-fixing scandal involving Pakistani national team players. Journalists have also uncovered scandals involving professional cycling and FIFA corruption (UNODC Report 2021).

However investigative journalists who examine the sports industry often from a freelancer's point of view have played a critical role in fulfilling some watchdog duties. For example the recent

sports scandals involving the widespread corruption within FIFA and the systematic doping of athletes in Russia were largely the result of independent journalists. Investigative journalists such as Jens Weinreich and Andrew Jennings diligently documented FIFAs mismanagement for years until the American FBI finally took notice (Jennings 2015b Sparre 2011). The Russian doping crisis was sparked by a documentary that independent journalist Hajo Seppelt produced and broadcast on the German television network ARD. A corrupt system allegedly concealed positive test results and up to 99 percent of the Russian Olympic team engaged in doping according to the documentary (Oltermann 2014).

In a new documentary published in March 2016 Seppelt made additional accusations of misconduct by the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (WADA 2016). The disclosures made by investigative journalists also give regular sports beat reporters more grounds to talk about doping and corruption. When a freelancer or official source reveals a corruption issue things may change. According to Numerato (2009) many media outlets acquiesce in corruption in sports. When an event gains notoriety in this way a journalist covering a sporting infraction won't have to worry about losing access to sources because other journalists will be covering the story as well. In 2007 ESPN's *Outside the Lines* revealed that the NBA's Atlanta Hawks had been underreporting their ticket sales revenue for almost two decades (Gardner 2007). The club was able to avoid paying millions in luxury taxes by underreporting its ticket sales by \$50 million according to the investigation. According to reports in the *Miami Herald* and *Tampa Bay Times* the University of Miami was allowed to recruit football players from high school teams throughout the state in 2019 by the Florida High School Athletic Association (Gutman 2019).

The results of the investigation revealed that by paying for the players transportation and providing them with free food the FHSAA had permitted the organization to violate its own rules. In 2020 a *Los Angeles Times* investigation focused on the football program at the University of Southern California (Hirsch and Winton 2020). During the investigation a culture of abuse and intimidation was found including allegations that teachers had subjected players to physical and psychological torture. The investigation also demonstrated that the organization had failed to investigate allegations of abuse in detail. The AIBA was banned from the 2020 Olympics and underwent organizational changes as a result of financial fraud and corruption exposed by investigative reporting (Shannon Taylor 2023). Investigative journalism exposed a system of

financial incentives for injuring rival players which led to the New Orleans Saints football team facing penalties and increased scrutiny of player safety in the NFL (Cora Currier and Suevon Lee 2012).

According to Sean Ingle (2016) investigative journalism exposed a widespread scheme of bribery and corruption within college basketball leading to the arrest and conviction of several coaches and officials as well as increased oversight of the NCAAs policies. After investigative reporting exposed the sexual assault of hundreds of young gymnasts by former USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar several high-ranking officials resigned (Cora Currier and Suevon Lee 2012). Jerry Sandusky was convicted and several high-ranking officials resigned after investigative reporting revealed his sexual abuse of young boys (Cora Currier and Suevon Lee 2012). The New England Patriots were subject to fines and penalties as well as increased scrutiny of NFL rules and regulations after investigations showed that the team had been unlawfully recording the signals of rival teams (Sean Ingle 2012). Investigative reporting exposed a Russian state-sponsored cyber-attack during the 2018 Winter Olympics raising awareness of the dangers of cyber-attacks in sports and bolstering security measures (Joaquin Sapien 2017).

Many senior executives resigned as a result of investigations into the International Weightlifting Federations corruption and bribery and organizational changes were made (Kirsten Sparre 2019). The establishment of specialized units which usually concentrate on competition manipulation is one way that numerous significant sports governing bodies have enhanced their own investigative capacities. This is due to the fact that investigative reporting in sports journalism is evolving and with it the necessity of addressing corruption in sports. To aid in internal investigations numerous sports organizations have implemented comprehensive anti-corruption policies that for example restrict participants betting activities and prohibit any form of corrupt behavior. According to their regulations investigators can also access financial data such as bank records and information stored on suspects electronic devices.

The UNODC Report from 2021 states that in addition to all of these rules offenders should face a variety of punishment options including life in prison for the most serious integrity-related offenses. It has been observed that Pakistan and more especially Peshawar Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have overlooked the growing popularity of investigative sports journalism worldwide. Understanding the reasons behind this lack of investigative reporting and its effects on the

industry is crucial. Few studies specifically address sports journalism in Peshawar so the purpose of this research paper is to investigate the root causes of this issue and its implications for the field. Through in-depth analysis we hope to pinpoint the challenges that sports journalists encounter when pursuing investigative reporting and offer workable solutions to help this type of reporting.

### **Significance of the Study:**

By focusing on investigative sports journalism in Peshawar, the study closes a knowledge gap of great consequence. It thereby also helps the quest for greater accountability and transparency in this sector by raising awareness about the problems and potential in the sports industry. It can therefore assist in the advancement of careers in sports journalism by providing methods of overcoming obstacles and optimizing the impact of investigative journalism.

### **Objective of the Study:**

The main objective of this study is to explore the issues, challenges, and possibilities of conducting investigative journalism in sports reporting in Peshawar. It will propose to assess the barriers journalists face and search for opportunities for investigative journalism as well as offer solutions for the enhancement of the practice of investigating journalism in the field of sports.

**RQ 1:** What are the reasons why Peshawar's sports journalism lacks investigative reporting?

**RQ 2:** How might investigative reporting be fostered among sports journalists in Peshawar?

### **Theoretical Framework:**

In the realm of journalism studies the Social Responsibility theory of journalism remains a prominent and well-known concept. The book *Four Theories of the Press* by Siebert Peterson and Schramm was the first to introduce it. It gives continuing conversations about media ownership regulation and ethics some context. Demands for greater accountability and transparency in the media industry are also based on it. This viewpoint has greatly influenced our understanding of the public's obligation to the media and its role in society. It recognizes that in addition to being for-profit industry journalism is also a social institution with social obligations. By acknowledging that the media has an obligation to act in the public interest promote transparency and hold institutions accountable the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism sets a standard for ethical and responsible journalism.

This concept has wide-ranging effects when applied to sports journalism. Investigative sports reporting have the potential to be a powerful tool for promoting accountability transparency and the revelation of misconduct in the sports industry. By exposing corruption drug scandals match-fixing and other unethical practices that could jeopardize the integrity of sports journalists can serve the public interest. This is a component of their social duty. The Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism places a strong emphasis on the Fourth Estate which acts as a check and balance on the power of the state and other institutions. In the realm of sports journalism investigative reporting contributes to the overall responsibility of the sports industry acting as an extra check and balance on it. The opportunities and challenges of investigative sports journalism in the unique context of Peshawar are examined using the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism as a theoretical framework. Using this theory the study aims to understand the role that investigative reporting plays in making the sports industry more transparent and accountable as well as how it relates to the medias social responsibility. It is also feasible to think about how the government and media organizations should encourage sports investigative journalism thanks to the Social Responsibility Theory. Media companies should help investigative journalists by providing them with the resources safety and education they need.

Additionally the government must enact legislation that encourages investigative sports journalism and ensures that reporters can carry out their duties without worrying about reprisals. This research uses the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism to shed light on the importance of sports journalisms investigative reporting and its possible social effects. It draws attention to the necessity of cooperation between the government writers and media organizations in order to uphold the principles of transparency accountability and the general well-being of the sports industry.

### **Methodology:**

The current study set out to investigate the challenges and opportunities of investigative reporting in sports journalism in Peshawar. To achieve the study objectives a qualitative research design was employed. Participants were selected for the study using the purposive sampling technique. Only sixteen sports journalists were selected based on the resources available and the practical concerns of the research scope. It was decided that it was feasible to perform in-depth interviews with this many people given the time and resource limitations. Senior sports journalists with over

15 years of experience in the field who work for Urdu and English daily newspapers magazines and electronic media are selected as part of the sampling process.

It was designed to include journalists from different media platforms in order to gather a range of perspectives on investigative reporting in sports journalism. Importantly however only male journalists were selected to participate. For a variety of reasons including the underrepresentation of female sports journalists in the region and their availability for participation the study sample size of female journalists was too small for a separate analysis. Nonetheless by including female journalists in the sample efforts were made to guarantee a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by sports journalists. As part of the data collection process semi-structured interviews were performed with the selected participants. A more comprehensive analysis of the research questions was made possible by these in-person interviews.

With an average interview duration of 25 to 30 minutes participants had ample opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences regarding investigative sports journalism. The interview questions were thoughtfully constructed to address the specific research objectives which included discussing the challenges that sports journalists face when performing investigative reporting the opportunities for investigative reporting in sports journalism the significance of editorial policies the degree of support garnered from media organizations incentives for investigative reporting and the resources needed to improve investigative reporting. The data collection process was given two weeks which was sufficient time to enable participants to provide comprehensive information.

We used thematic analysis to examine the information obtained from the interviews. Thematic analysis is a popular qualitative research method that involves coding the data classifying the codes according to similarities and using the codes to identify themes. Finding trends and insights related to the research problems was made feasible by this approach. At every step the research ethics were carefully taken into account. The study objectives were explained to the participants along with their freedom to withdraw at any time without facing consequences or unfavorable comments. Prior to the recording of the interview each participant gave their informed consent. In order to preserve anonymity throughout the reporting and analysis stages participant identities were concealed and pseudonyms were used. The study aimed to provide a comprehensive

understanding of the challenges and opportunities of investigative reporting in Peshawar sports journalism by employing this rigorous methodology. In order to benefit both reporters and the public at large the findings of this study can help develop strategies and policies that support and enhance investigative reporting in the field of sports journalism.

## Results and Findings

Table 1: Challenges faced by sports journalists in conducting investigative reporting

Theme	Percentage
Lack of resources	45%
Fear of repercussions	20%
Editorial pressures	15%
Unfamiliarity with I.R.	10%
Lack of support	10%

45% of those surveyed stated that the largest issue is a lack of resources. 25% of respondents expressed concern about potential repercussions for their investigative work which is another significant barrier: fear of consequences. 10% of journalists claimed to be untrained in investigative reporting and fifteen percent claimed to be struggling with editorial demands. A further challenge mentioned by 10% of respondents was the lack of support from media organizations.

Table 2: Importance of investigative reporting in sports journalism

Theme	Percentage
Transparency	40%
Accountability	30%
Public interest	15%
Ethics	10%
Other	5%

Most respondents (40 percent) thought that transparency was the most crucial component of investigative reporting. One of the main motivations for investigative reporting according to thirty percent of journalists is accountability. But just 15% and 10% of respondents respectively stated that they were aware of ethical and public interest issues. Other themes not included in the data are given the remaining 5%. Issues like inclusivity sustainability and innovation are covered by these themes.

Table 3: Role of editorial policies in discouraging investigative reporting

Theme	Percentage
Fear of legal action	35%
Lack of autonomy	20%
Corporate pressure	20%
Lack of resources	15%
Lack of interest	10%

According to 35% of respondents fear of legal action deters investigative reporting because they are concerned about potential consequences. 20 percent of respondents pointed to corporate pressure and a lack of autonomy as contributing factors suggesting that editorial policies may limit journalists' ability to carry out investigations. A lack of resources and a lack of focus from media organizations were mentioned as major factors by 15% and 10% of respondents respectively.

**Table 4: Satisfaction level of sports journalists with their current role**

Theme	Percentage
Dissatisfied	50%
Satisfied	15%
Neutral	20%
No response	15%

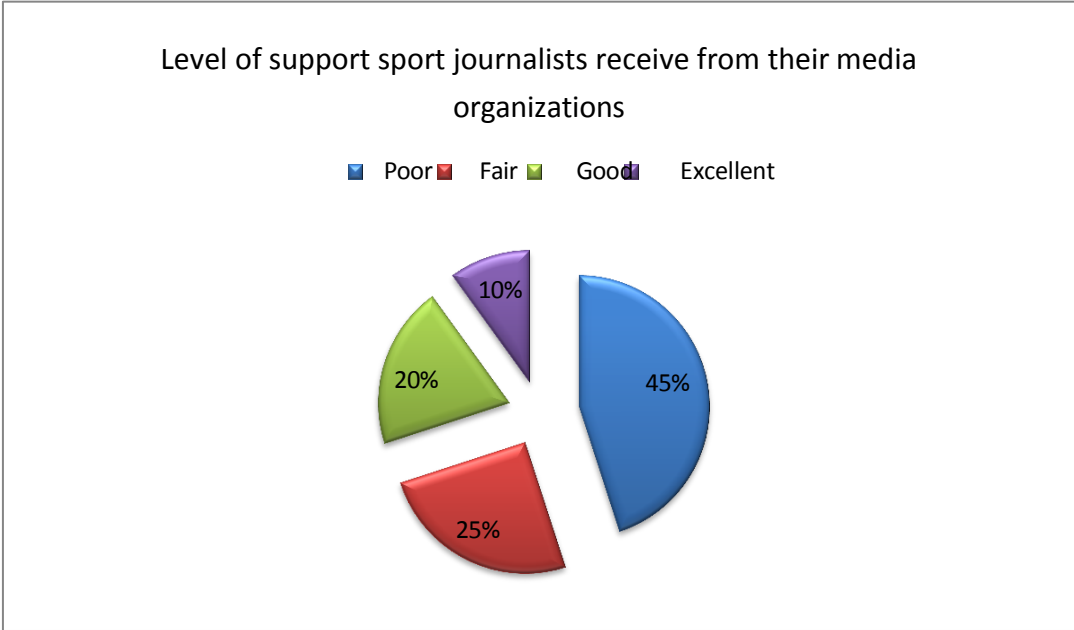
The majority of sports journalists (50%) said they were not happy with their current position. Only 15% of respondents said they were satisfied, 20% said they were neutral, and 15% did not respond.

**Table 5: Future of investigative reporting in sports journalism in Peshawar**

Theme	Percentage
Bright	30%
Optimistic	35%
Neutral	15%
Pessimistic	10%
No comment	10%

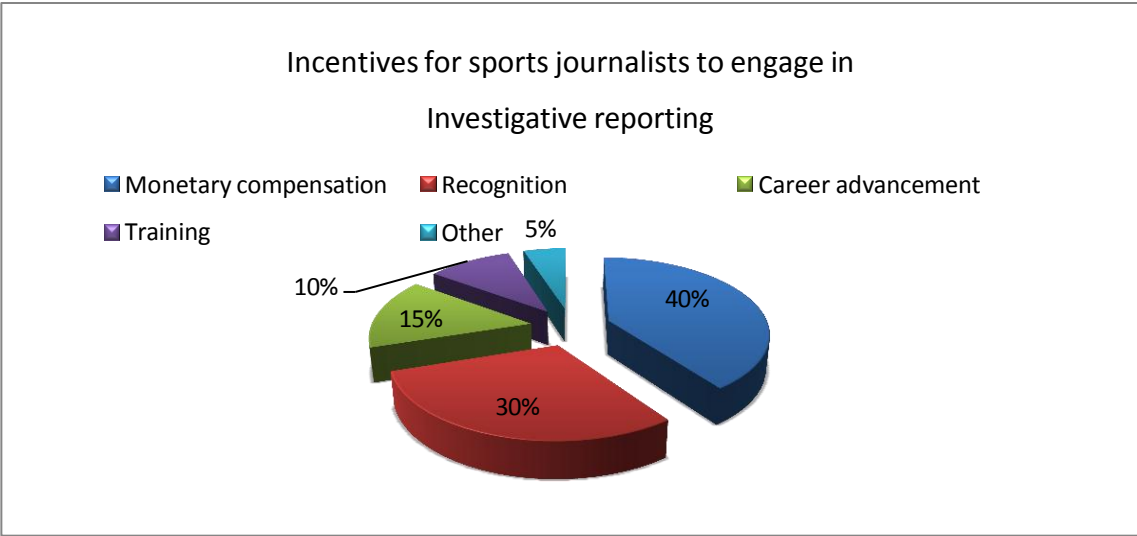
30% believed that the future of investigative reporting in Peshawar sports media would be bright and 35% expressed optimism. 10% of respondents were pessimistic 15% were neutral and 10% did not reply indicating a significant percentage

Figure 01: Level of support sports journalists receive from their media organizations



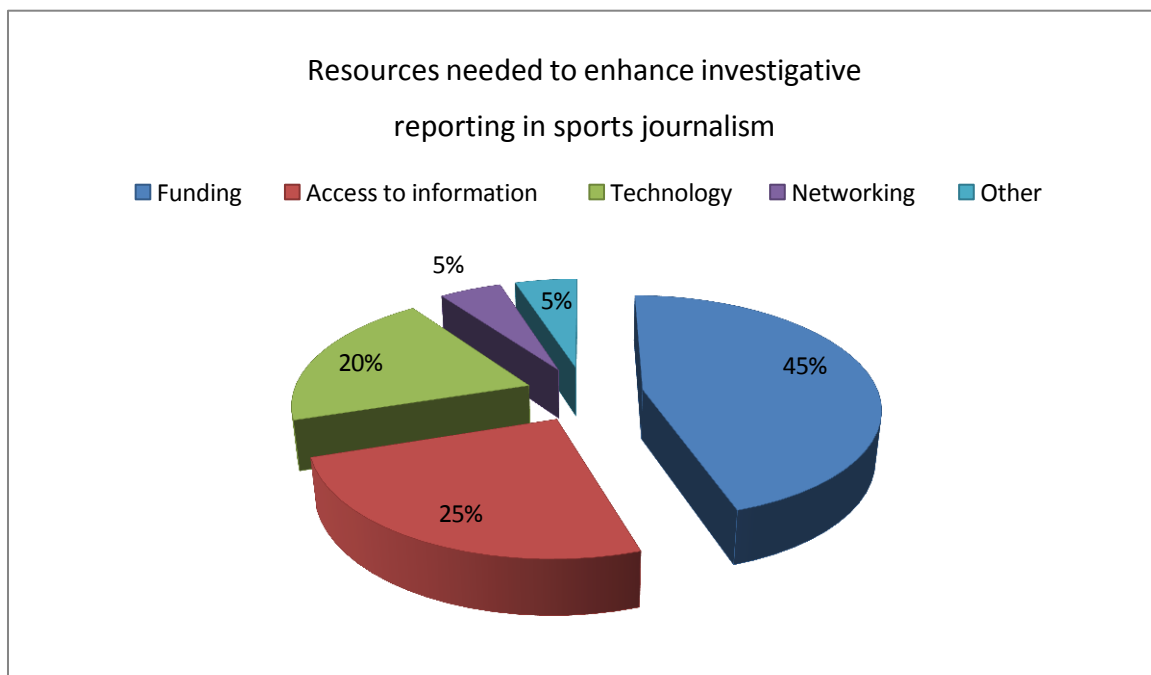
Most sports journalists (45%) expressed dissatisfaction with their media outlets lack of assistance. 25% said the support was good 10% said it was great and 25% percent said it was fair.

Figure 02: Incentives for sports journalists to engage in investigative reporting



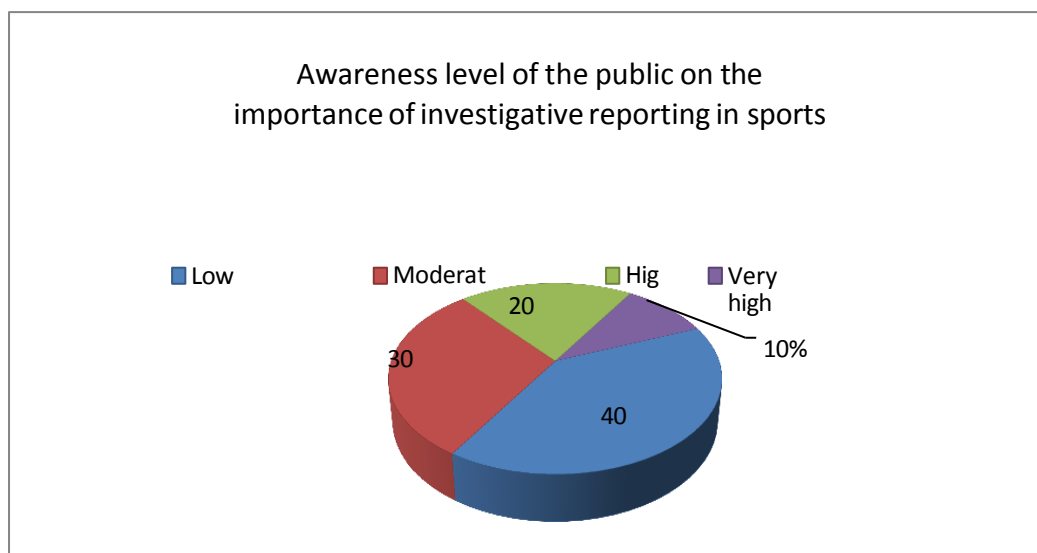
40 % of respondents emphasized the importance of financial compensation as the primary motivator for sports journalists to carry out investigative reporting. Also 30% of journalists cited recognition as a driving force. Training accounted for 10% of respondents’ motivation while career advancement accounted for 15%. Five percent of sports journalists cited personal fulfillment the pursuit of truth or the desire to positively impact the sports industry as motivators.

Figure 03: Resources needed to enhance investigative reporting in sports journalism



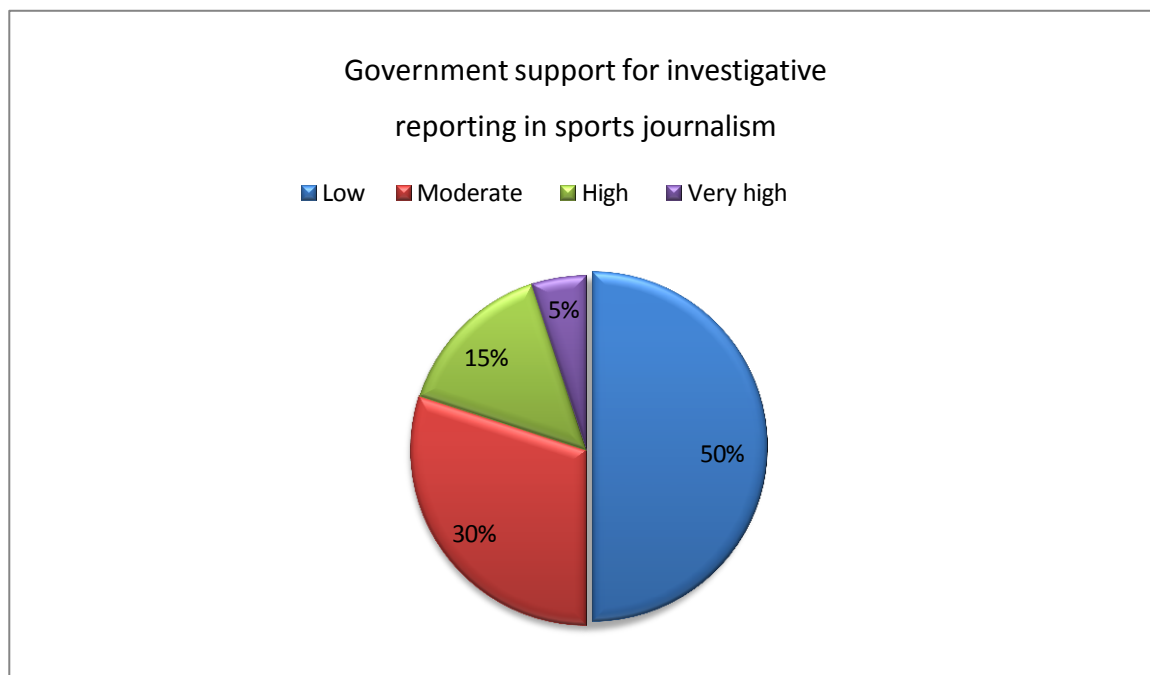
According to 45% of respondents funding is the most crucial resource needed to enhance investigative reporting. Also 25% of journalists recognized technology as a crucial resource while 20% recognized information access. The percentages for networking and other resources were 5% each.

Figure 04: Awareness level of the public on the importance of investigative reporting in sports



40% of the respondents believed that the public did not fully comprehend the importance of investigative reporting in sports. 10% believed it to be extremely high 20% believed it to be high and 30% believed it to be moderate.

Figure 05: Government support for investigative reporting in sports journalism



50% of sports journalists believed that the government did not help journalists with their investigative work. 15% believed it to be high 5% thought it to be extremely high and 30% thought it to be moderate.

## Discussion

Investigative reporting in sports journalism presents both challenges and opportunities as revealed by the data collected from the interviews conducted with sports journalists in Peshawar. The study research questions and the theoretical foundations of the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism can be used to analyze the findings. The first area of study focused on the reasons why there isn't much investigative reporting about Peshawar in the sports media. Numerous noteworthy challenges faced by sports journalists were revealed by the study. Lack of resources was cited as the biggest challenge by 45% of respondents making it the most significant issue.

The Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism which places a strong emphasis on media companies obligations to fund and support investigative journalists say that this is consistent with the practice. Lack of resources can hinder sports journalists' ability to carry out in-depth investigations which can also have an impact on the scope and depth of their reporting. Fear of repercussions was another significant barrier as 20% of respondents said they were concerned about potential harm to their research.

This fear could be attributed to the lack of legal protection for journalists as well as the potential for backlash from powerful sports organizations or individuals. According to the data 15% and 10% of journalists respectively reported difficulties meeting editorial requirements and lacking investigative reporting experience. These findings suggest

that media organizations should create an atmosphere that encourages and facilitates investigative reporting and those journalists should be guided and trained to improve their investigative abilities. The second study question focused on how sports journalists in Peshawar were encouraged to do investigative reporting. Financial reward was mentioned by 40% of respondents when asked about incentives for doing investigative reporting indicating that there are several effective strategies. This suggests that media companies provide financial incentives and awards for investigative work in order to motivate sports journalists to invest the time and energy necessary to carry out in-depth investigations. The importance of recognizing and applauding investigative journalists efforts is demonstrated by the fact that 30% of journalists stated they valued recognition. Media companies should provide sports journalists working on investigative stories with clear paths for growth and development according to 15% and 10% of respondents respectively who mentioned training and opportunities for career advancement as incentives.

The results showed that according to 45% of respondents the most crucial resource required to enhance investigative reporting was money. This is consistent with the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism which highlights media organizations duties to supply the tools needed for investigative reporting. Other essential resources that were recognized included technology and information access underscoring the need for media outlets to make investments in tools and platforms that facilitate investigative work. Investigative reporting can be made more effective and impactful by establishing networks and working with other journalists and organizations as demonstrated by the 5 percent of respondents who mentioned networking and other resources. The findings also shed light on how investigative reporting is impacted by editorial standards. 35 percent of respondents said they were concerned about potential legal ramifications indicating that fear of legal action was the primary contributing factor. This highlights the need for governments and media organizations to enact laws that protect reporters and provide a safe environment for investigative reporting. Concerns about corporate pressure and a lack of independence were also raised highlighting the need for media organizations to shield reporters from outside forces that might obstruct their investigative work. Additionally the data demonstrated the importance of investigative reporting in sports journalism. Of the respondents 40% stated that they thought transparency was the most important factor.

This aligns with the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism which emphasizes the role of the media in promoting transparency and accountability in society. The

significance of investigative reporting in holding sports-related organizations and individuals accountable for their actions was underscored by the fact that 30% of journalists brought up accountability. Investigative reporting can uphold sports journalism's ethical standards and promote the public's right to know as evidenced by the acknowledgement of public interest and ethical considerations albeit to a lesser extent. The majority of respondents (50 percent) to a study on sports journalists' level of job satisfaction expressed dissatisfaction. This demonstrates that addressing the problems and providing the tools and support are essential to raising the job satisfaction and motivation of sports journalists. According to a study conducted in Peshawar on the future of investigative reporting in sports journalism thirty percent of respondents believed that the future was bright and thirty-five percent were hopeful.

This demonstrates that despite the challenges sports writers still have space to advance their investigative reporting skills. The data also showed how much assistance sports writers receive from their media outlets. Most respondents (45%) pointed to a lack of support highlighting the need for media organizations to prioritize and finance investigative reporting. In a study on public awareness of the importance of investigative reporting in sports most participants (40 percent) believed that the general public did not fully comprehend the importance of such reporting. This suggests that media organizations and journalists should educate the public on the importance of sports investigative reporting and how it promotes transparency and accountability. Lastly the data revealed that sports journalists thought the government did not provide much support for investigative reporting in the sports media industry. This demonstrates the significance of government policies that support and safeguard investigative journalists. The social responsibility theory of journalism emphasizes how the government can support investigative reporting and promote transparency and accountability in society.

## **Conclusion**

Drawing a Conclusion Based on data extracted from the interviews of the sports journalists in Peshawar, several conclusions can be drawn about the challenges and opportunities of investigative reporting in the field of sports journalism. The results pinpoint major challenges for sports journalists, including limited funds editorial pressures fear of repercussions and a lack of experience when it comes to investigative reporting. Such challenges could narrow the range and quality of sports journalists' coverage and restrict their ability to investigate thoroughly.

However there are multiple places where things could be handled better. Focusing on

financial compensation professional acknowledgement training and promotion can help sports journalists turn to investigative reporting Media organizations must invest in investigative journalism by providing the necessary support such as funding information access and technology to strengthen the future of investigative reporting. By collaborating with other organizations and journalists investigative reporting can be more able and impactful.

This is obviously significant because investigative reporting in sports media must not only include accountability but also transparency. Investigative reporting can bring transparency and accountability in sports related organizations. It also assists the public and reinforces moral behavior in sports media. Indeed, if media companies are going to overcome obstacles and seize opportunities as they come their way they are going to need editorial policies built to encourage reporters and protect investigative reporting. The government also works to promote an environment conducive to investigative journalism by laws that support and protect journalists. However, Peshawar-based sports reporters hope for investigative journalism as they feel there is room for both development and a step forward in this regard. Sports journalists should work to re-engage themselves with their craft, while media companies should support these journalists with grants in order to make their job more engaging and fulfilling. This study presents a discussion on the importance of the Social Responsibility Theory of Journalism in understanding sports journalism investigative reporting challenges and opportunities. This belief is that investigative reporting is a duty of government and media in the interests of accountability transparency and the public good. Investigative sports journalism can help develop a transparent and accountable sports industry in Peshawar by overcoming the problems and seizing the opportunities.

### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendations are offered in light of the study findings:

Media companies ought to establish policies that encourage sports journalism inquiries and provide reporters with tools and instruction. The government ought to implement laws that protect journalists and facilitate information access for the general public. In order to promote public trust sports organizations should encourage investigative reporting and establish transparent accountable processes. Journalists should use safety procedures and methods to lessen risks when conducting investigative reporting. Investigative journalists should collaborate with other media organizations to share resources and increase their impact. Newsroom managers ought to ensure editorial objectivity and encourage investigative reporting. Establishing investigative reporting

departments should be a top priority for media organizations in order to promote accountability and transparency. Sports journalists can enhance their reporting and reach a wider audience by utilizing digital and social media platforms. Media training programs should include instruction in investigative reporting and journalists should be given practical training. The public should support investigative journalism by reading it and promoting its merits.

### **Limitations:**

The small sample size of the study is one of its limitations which would limit the generalizability of the results to a wider population. The results of the study may not apply to younger sports journalists or those employed in different settings because it only looked at senior sports journalists in Peshawar. Nonetheless the study provides important information about the challenges and opportunities of investigative reporting in sports journalism in Peshawar.

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