

Analysing the lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting current situation and strategic insights

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the current state and challenges of sports news reporting in Afghanistan, particularly focusing on the lack of humanistic consideration and the neglect of less popular athletes and teams. Case Studies: Various instances of sports news reporting in Afghanistan and regional countries were examined to identify the underlying issues. Analytical Framework: Based on the perspective on news, the analysis emphasizes the importance of human emotions and the representation of "vulnerable groups" in media content. To identify the root causes of the lack of humanistic values in Afghan sports news reporting. To reveal the essence of sports spirit and the realities of less celebrated athletes. To enhance the standards of sports journalism in Afghanistan and promote the country's "soft power." Lack of Humanistic Consideration: There is minimal attention given to less popular athletes and teams, with a disregard for their feelings and experiences. Inappropriate Content Selection: Sports news reports often prioritize traffic over fairness, failing to uphold the true spirit of sports. Unprofessional Reporting Styles: The language and content often lack depth, reducing the portrayal of sports spirit to superficial narratives. This study aims to promote humanistic values in sports news reporting and strengthen Afghanistan's international standing.

Keywords: Sports news, News ethics, Humanistic concern, Marxist view of news.

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INTRODUCTION

Sports news plays a crucial role in informing the public about recent events, developments, and achievements in the world of sports. As a specialized form of journalism, sports reporting not only conveys facts but also shapes public perception and fosters community engagement. However, in the fast-paced environment of contemporary media, particularly with the rise of the Internet, the landscape of sports news reporting has undergone significant transformation. The increasing influence of market forces and economic imperatives has led to a shift in priorities for many sports media outlets. This shift often emphasizes sensationalism and entertainment over the ethical considerations that should underpin responsible journalism. Consequently, issues related to news ethics—such as accuracy, fairness, and the representation of athletes' experiences have come under scrutiny. One pressing concern is the apparent lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting, which can result in a dehumanizing portrayal of athletes and a neglect of their personal stories, struggles, and achievements.

This article aims to explore the implications of this lack of humanistic care within the context of sports journalism. By examining specific instances and patterns of reporting, we seek to identify the underlying causes of this trend. Furthermore, we will provide targeted suggestions for improving the humanistic aspects of sports news coverage, emphasizing the importance of empathy, context, and ethical responsibility in storytelling. Through this research, we hope to contribute to a more thoughtful and compassionate approach to sports journalism, one that honors the humanity of athletes and enhances the quality of sports reporting overall.

Objectives:

- Investigate the Causes of the Lack of Humanistic Care: Examine the reasons behind the lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting.
- Provide Strategic Recommendations for Strengthening Human Connections: Offer practical strategies and recommendations to enhance the humanistic aspects within sports reporting.

Research questions:

- What are the main causes of the lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting?
- What strategies can help improve humanistic care in sports news coverage?

Importance

In Afghanistan, sports serve not only as a source of entertainment but also as a unifying force that transcends cultural and regional divides. However, the portrayal of sports in the media often lacks the necessary humanistic perspective that can connect audiences with the athletes' personal stories, struggles, and triumphs. This lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting is particularly significant for several reasons:

1. *Cultural impact:* Afghanistan has a rich history of sports, from traditional games to contemporary athletics. Humanistic reporting can help celebrate this diversity and foster a deeper appreciation of local athletes and their contributions to society. By highlighting personal narratives, the media can enhance national pride and cultural identity.
2. *Role models for youth:* Athletes often serve as role models for young people. Reporting that emphasizes their journeys, challenges, and achievements can inspire the next generation to pursue their passions and overcome obstacles. Conversely, neglecting the human aspect of sports reporting can diminish the potential impact of these role models.
3. *Promotion of gender equality:* In a society where women's participation in sports is often marginalized, humanistic reporting can amplify the voices of female athletes, showcasing their

achievements and struggles. This can play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and encouraging more women to participate in sports (Lee et al., 2013).

4. *Social cohesion*: Sports have the power to bring communities together, especially in a country with a history of conflict. By focusing on the human stories behind sports, media can foster a sense of unity and shared experience, helping to bridge divides and promote peace (Lee et al., 2013).
5. *Ethical journalism*: Emphasizing humanistic care in sports reporting aligns with broader journalistic ethics, such as fairness, integrity, and accountability. In a rapidly evolving media landscape, maintaining these ethical standards is crucial for the credibility of the press and the trust of the audience. analyzing the lack of humanistic care in sports news reporting in Afghanistan is essential for understanding its broader social, cultural, and ethical implications. By addressing this gap, we can enhance the quality of sports journalism, foster a more engaged and informed public, and contribute to the overall development of a more compassionate and unified society (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017).

THE CONNOTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HUMANISTIC CARE

General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized at the symposium on the Party's news and public opinion work that we should "*strive to produce works with ideas, warmth and quality*". This is not only the requirement of the Party Central Committee for news and public opinion work, but also the mission of all journalists in the new era. The core concept of humanistic care lies in respecting people, taking into account the physiological and psychological needs of individuals, focusing on people-centeredness, and providing various methods and measures to promote individual creation and development (Zhou et al., 2023).

This concept helps to greatly promote the healthy development of individuals and society. It is essentially a respect and understanding of individuals, focusing on individuals, and clarifying the corresponding value orientation when dealing with surrounding affairs. Human beings are the main driving force for social development and historical progress, so the country and society need to pay more attention to people's living conditions and spiritual aspirations (Zhou et al., 2023).

In the field of news communication and reporting, the emphasis on humanistic care is regarded as a basic principle. This principle emphasizes putting human values and dignity at the core of reporting, and by choosing appropriate methods and strategies, ensuring that news reports are not only objective and accurate, but also reflect the diversity and complexity of society, and provide positive impetus for the overall development of society. This kind of care helps to establish a more balanced and beneficial social and news environment. In news reporting, the professional ethics of the media is crucial. In addition to conveying objective facts, humanistic care should also be reflected. The practice of humanistic care requires respecting the reported objects and their emotional experiences and adhering to the people-centred ethical values.

Journalists should inherit humanitarian values, adhere to the humanistic stance, deeply understand human nature, and ensure that people are always placed at the core of news interviews, reporting and production (Abed et al., 2024).

Only on this basis can news reports reflect people's core values to the greatest extent and realize their maximum value. Therefore, the essence of news reporting lies in emphasizing people-centeredness, and adhering to the principle of humanistic care is the concrete practice of this concept.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE LACK OF HUMANISTIC CARE IN MY COUNTRY'S SPORTS NEWS REPORTS

News editors: Topic setting pays less attention to unpopular athletes and teams

Under the guidance of the value orientation of mainstream media, my country's sports media has gradually shifted from the "gold medal theory" to the "people-oriented" concept, but some reports still pay too much attention to star athletes and highly-watched sports teams. When facing teams and athletes with extremely high traffic, most media use a lot of pages and length to report in news dissemination work, while those teams and athletes with low attention account for a very small proportion. On November 22, 2022, in the Group C match of the 2022 Qatar World Cup held at the Lugsail Stadium in Qatar, Argentina lost to Saudi Arabia 1-2.

In most media reports, the losing side Argentina became the protagonist of the report. The successive reports of articles such as "Unfortunate! Argentina lost", "Argentina: The winter in the Gulf is a bit cold", and "Argentina, is there still heat?" quickly gained "100,000+" traffic, while the dark horse Saudi Arabian team, which reversed the victory, received much less media attention than Argentina.

The Saudi Arabian football team defeated the favourite to win the championship by using its own unique methods. There was no need for long-term training or blindly going abroad, which vindicated the reputation of Asian teams. The players' hard work on the green grass and their technical and tactical preparations were all moving, but the media rarely reported on this. The media should focus more on the Saudi players winning glory for the country, focusing on the fact that they no longer blindly send players to play overseas, but focus on developing the domestic league and club youth training system. Under the spotlight of "stars first", other athletes are often indifferent and ignored by the media, and even referees and penalty technology have become the object of ridicule and attack (Bahir & ., 2021).

This narrow way of communication ignores the spirit of "people-oriented", which not only inhibits the patience of athletes to hone their skills and tactics but also goes against the essence of sports values.

News interviews: Ignoring the emotional acceptance of the subjects of the report and lacking language care

Nowadays, in order to pursue traffic and obtain exclusive news, some sports news reports try to pry into the privacy of athletes through interviews, ask some inappropriate questions, cause psychological harm to the interviewees and even affect their performance on the field (Rousseau, 1996).

Such interview reports ignore the feelings of the interviewees, hurt the athletes' own emotions, lack the attention and in-depth thinking of the athletes' physical and mental health and sports connotations with real meaning and correct value orientation, which is very different from the norms of sports news and the value connotation of Marxist news views. In the 100-meter breaststroke event of the Hangzhou Asian Games, Chinese breaststroke athlete Qin Haiyang won the championship with an excellent result that broke the record of the event. But in the post-match interview, the reporter asked him a question full of "fan circle flavour" - "Are you satisfied with your body?" Make him feel uncomfortable and ask the other party to change the question (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017).

When the athlete broke the record and won the gold medal to bring glory to the country and break through himself, the reporter was overly concerned about the athlete's opinion of his body shape in pursuit of hot topics during the interview and turned a deaf ear to the athlete's years of hard training and striving spirit of sports competition. This is a manifestation of lack of humanistic care (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017).

At the same time, the reporter's deviant behaviour is also a microcosm of the pan-entertainment of sports news in the new media era, ignoring "*humanistic care*", and sports reporters cater to the curiosity of certain audiences in order to gain more traffic, and their reporting focus is not on the essence of sports competitions.

News writing: improper content selection and language expression lead to lack of humanism

This article, through a detailed combing and analysis of negative news such as "*violence*" in domestic sports news, believes that the focus of these reports is "*non-standard*" dissemination content. That is, in the process of disseminating sports information, the media often exaggerates negative events such as violence and conflict, lacks a fair, neutral and balanced reporting attitude, and can neither effectively guide the audience to express their reasonable opinions nor respect the rights of the victims, which is contrary to the "*people-oriented*" news ethics code. On November 22, 2021, in the NBA regular season game between the Lakers and the Pistons, James and Stewart had a violent conflict. NetEase Sports published an article titled "*Conflict! James hit Stewart's face and bled. Both were expelled*". It only presented 5 bloody and violent fight details and did not analyse the event. There was no report on the punishment results. The number of replies totalled 84,956 times, causing a considerable impact (Lorenz & Murray, 2014). In competitive sports, it is inevitable that athletes will have physical contact and competition, so competitiveness and intensity have become an indispensable part of sports news reports. However, some media practitioners over-exaggerate conflict and controversial scenes in their reports, creating a tense atmosphere and a tendency to report negatively. Such behaviour not only fails to criticize such vicious sports accidents but also fails to alert people and provide correct guidance. This way of communication violates the principle of goodwill in news ethics (Abed et al., 2024).

Reporting thinking

Deifying athletes and dispelling the essence of sportsmanship Whether it is personal opinion or official media, the evaluation of athletes at the world's top level seems to have reached a level close to that of martial arts masters in novels. They frequently use words such as "*god*", "*king*" and "*queen*" to portray athletes as mythical heroes different from ordinary people. After track and field athlete Su Bingtian was called "*Su God*", breaststroke athlete Qin Haiyang was called "*frog king*", but he himself was not willing to accept the title of "*frog king*" for everyone. He is calm and introverted and does not want to get noisy "*psychological massage*" from the outside world (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017).

Under the trend of pan-entertainment, the image of athletes is no longer limited to the arena. Many off-field factors surrounding them can become the focus of the public, such as the athletes' appearance and personality. These off-field factors make the image of athletes more real and three-dimensional, and it is also easy to cater to the standards that the public likes to see (Greer, 2012).

Athletes who become popular and obtain a lot of resources through off-field factors, once they lose their excellent results, the things that were originally sought after will become a weapon to criticize the athletes.

But athletes and audiences are often swept up by the media wave of "*traffic first*". The media puts athletes on the altar and reports on athletes with only a few labels. Although it can enhance the commercial value of athletes, it often brings controversy (Murray, 2006). In the women's 100-meter hurdles competition of the Hangzhou Asian Games, Wu Yanni, the runner-up of the Chengdu Universiade, was disqualified for false start in the final, which pushed her controversial words and deeds to the forefront. With beautiful appearance, flamboyant personality, and good results in the Universiade, Wu Yanni has become the hurdle goddess of "*beauty and strength coexisting*" in the mouths of netizens. It is precisely because the media and the public use the standards of the entertainment industry to "*stare*" at athletes, let "*appearance*" and "*personality*"

prevail, and give her traffic; on the other hand, they use the stereotypes of traditional athletes to evaluate the performance of the competition, requiring "*performance*" and "*low-key*", suppressing her limelight. This high-handed gaze and verbal violence are also a kind of harm to other athletes. Sports journalism should view victory and defeat on the field with a more dialectical perspective and a more peaceful mindset, have a deeper understanding of the spirit of sports, report on athletes more comprehensively, and avoid deifying athletes in reporting. This will help athletes get rid of the unnecessary burdens imposed on them by the media, help athletes step onto the field more easily and lightly, and create a brighter and more brilliant future for China's sports cause (Flaminio et al., 1988).

SUGGESTIONS AND IMPROVEMENT MEASURES FOR THE LACK OF HUMANISTIC CARE

Guided by the Marxist view of journalism

The theoretical thought of the Marxist view of journalism adheres to the people-oriented nature. In the practice of sports news reporting, it is mainly reflected in the humanistic care of the media and journalists (Huang, 2023).

Sports are highly confrontational and have significant viewing value. With the successive international competitions in recent years, these competitions are characterized by leisure, entertainment, and participation, and the participation of the masses is strong. With the continuous expansion of the influence of the events, their event information can often attract the attention of public opinion at the first time (Zhou et al., 2023).

Only by always firmly establishing the "*Marxist view of journalism*" and guiding news work and practice with the Marxist view of journalism can we create "*three-have*" sports news and create a clean and upright sports news dissemination environment under the complex background of the times (He, 2017).

In the modern context, it is crucial to apply the theoretical thought of the Marxist view of journalism to the practice of sports news reporting. Journalists should have a comprehensive and profound understanding of the era background of today's news work, adhere to the basic principles of the Marxist view of journalism, and continuously expand and improve its practical application to ensure that sports news reports better meet social needs in the context of the new era. The Marxist view of journalism is not just a slogan put aside. Only by integrating it into reality in news reporting can news reporting better serve the Party and the people (Rui, 2023).

Pay attention to "vulnerable groups" while pursuing traffic

With the rise of new media, the exposure and online popularity of athletes are proportional to their commercial value and have become another dimension for judging their social status. At the Hangzhou Asian Games, Zhang Yufei, Wu Yanni, Qin Haiyang and Wang Shun were all star athletes who became popular on social media and became the focus of media reports (Freeman et al., 2012). Athletes' off-field factors such as appearance and personality can make the image of athletes more real and three-dimensional, and it is also easy to cater to the standards that the public likes to see and hear. Of course, it is understandable that media traffic focuses on the favourites to win the championship. This is a recognition and appreciation of the professional and technical level of sports (H. Bahir, 2020).

The media focuses the spotlight on the Asian Games champions to value and respect the athletes' professional and technical level and day-to-day persistence.

However, in news reports, we cannot ignore other athletes, only focus on stars with their own traffic, and marginalize sports competitions and stadium content.

We should use an equal and respectful reporting perspective to discover the positive spirit in sports, as well as the values of equality, respect and friendship among athletes.

Demonstrate the connotation of competitive sports spirit

The purpose of sports competition is not only to win the championship, but also to fully reflect the humanistic spirit and the spirit of hard work of athletes in the process of competition (He, 2017).

Sports news media should always adhere to scientific media values and guide each media worker to actively promote advanced sports culture concepts, aiming to more fully and accurately meet the needs of the general audience for sports culture content and promote the healthy development of competitive sports in my country. It is necessary to have a deeper and more accurate understanding of the rich connotation of the role of athletes, always adhere to the "people-oriented" concept, conduct scientific guidance under the principle of "audience-oriented", fully explore the deep connotation of athletes, and realize the true and accurate reporting of sports humanistic spirit (Izzo, 2012).

In addition, in the work process of sports event communication, the ability of empathy should be fully called upon, and the empathy with athletes should be strengthened, so as to truly feel the spiritual experience of athletes and discover news reports with sports spirit significance, so as to finally compile and publish sports news content with humanistic significance to meet the emotional experience needs of the audience.

Reporting angles are becoming more interesting

In the era of media convergence, various media organizations have presented news works in various forms, but more importantly, there have been changes in reporting concepts and content. The hairpin of Li Ling, the pole vault champion of the Asian Games, the background music that became popular all over the country in the arena, and the popular Asian Games volunteers (Freeman et al., 2012).

The news of the competition is no longer limited to the arena or the competition but has become more relaxed and more detailed. This has not only attracted more people but also attracted many people who were not "interested" in sports before to read the news, to understand these sports, to think about them, and to understand these sports. There are also more ways to report, such as showing the personality of athletes from aspects such as daily life and training, showing how they put sportsmanship into practice, or capturing some small episodes that occurred in major competitions from inside and outside the arena. These will increase the readability of information, and more and more stadium titbits have become a trend in social media (Abed et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Afghanistan, much like Hangzhou following the successful hosting of the 19th Asian Games, stands at a pivotal moment in its development, particularly in the realm of sports. As the country works to rebuild and promote its sports culture, the role of media in shaping public perception and engagement has never been more crucial. With advancements in network technology, news dissemination can occur at unprecedented speeds, reaching broader audiences across the region. However, alongside this rapid development, challenges related to professional ethics in journalism have also emerged. These issues can hinder the progress of sports news reporting and, by extension, the overall growth of sports in Afghanistan. In this new

landscape, it is essential to adopt a framework grounded in ethical journalism, reflecting a commitment to the principles of integrity, accuracy, and humanity. Media outlets should prioritize the voices and opinions of the Afghan people, focusing on the emotional narratives that resonate with audiences. By placing humanistic care at the forefront of reporting, sports journalism can capture the warmth and spirit of athletes' journeys, showcasing their resilience and triumphs amidst adversity. Furthermore, Afghan media must resist the temptation to cater solely to market demands. Instead, they should embrace their responsibility as a "mouthpiece" for the community, reflecting the rights and interests of the people they serve. As a vital component of the country's media landscape, sports journalism has the power to connect with and mobilize the public, fostering a sense of unity and shared identity. To achieve meaningful social impact, sports news reporting should highlight compelling stories and the emotional dimensions of sports. By doing so, it can promote a more engaged citizenry and contribute to the broader goals of national reconciliation and development. Ultimately, prioritizing humanistic care in sports journalism is not just an ethical obligation but a pathway to fostering hope, inspiration, and community in Afghanistan and the surrounding region.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Abdul Qadir Jalali collected, organized, and analysed the research data and prepared the summary of the study, and Mr. Hizballah Bahir designed the research methodology and conducted the literature review.

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