

## Exploring The Challenges and Difficulties Faced by Sports Coaches, Trainers, And Managers During Their Career Opportunities in Pakistan

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### Abstract

**Background:** Pakistan's sports business depends heavily on sports coaching, training, and management however those who work in these domains face several obstacles that impede their ability to advance in their careers. **Aim:** The purpose of this study was to investigate the issues faced by sports coaches, trainers, and managers in Pakistan, with a special focus on their career possibilities, financial security, institutional assistance, and professional recognition. **Methodology:** This research was conducted both primary and secondary data-collecting techniques with a mixed-method approach. Semi-structured interviews and surveys were used to collect primary data, policy documents, and journal articles about Pakistan's sports sector to obtain secondary data. The selected population involved through sports coaches, trainers, and managers working in different sports organizations, educational institutions, and private institutions in Pakistan. Participants with appropriate coaching and sports management expertise were chosen using a purposive sampling way. Therefore, sports coaches (n=30) representing football, hockey, cricket, and athletics, sports managers from both public and commercial sectors (n=15) and sports trainers (n=20) were selected as samples who dealt with professional and amateur athletes. **Results:** The conversation brought to light several important issues such as low pay, a lack of assistance from the public and commercial sectors, restricted access to cutting-edge training facilities, and a dearth of professional development opportunities. In addition, a lack of organized policies and bad administration plague sports management which further limits their professional career progression prospects. The results also showed that sports-related occupations are undervalued in society which leads to employment instability and few career opportunities. **Conclusion:** The results highlighted the urgent needs for regulatory changes, more funding, and better infrastructure for the survival of Pakistani sports professionals in the field. For sports coaches, trainers, and managers, addressing these issues through institutional changes, private sector participation, and improved educational initiatives may contribute to the development of a more fulfilling and long-lasting professional path. Future studies should examine comparative studies with other nations to find effective solutions for addressing these hurdles.

**Keywords:** Sports coaching, Career challenges, Career development, Sports management.

### Introduction

Several obstacles in Pakistan's sports coaching, training, and management environment impede the growth of sports in the national and the professional advancement of coaches, trainers, and managers (Durandis, 2024). These issues cover a wide variety of topics such as public consciousness, facilities investment, and the larger sociopolitical landscape (Woetzel et al., 2017). The failure of appropriate organizational structure in sports programs, especially at the collegiate and high school levels is one of the main problems. Political involvement, parent connections, and administrative responsibilities all have a significant impact on how effective athletic programs are at educational institutions. For example, research on government girls' high schools revealed that organizational problems hurt the execution and effectiveness of sports programs (Saba et al., 2021).

The severe lack of qualified coaches and trainers has a substantial influence on the caliber of athlete's trainings. Coaches frequently do not have access to the training and chances for continuous professional development (CPD) that are essential for improving their knowledge and abilities through contemporary sports methods and procedures. Many coaches are not kept abreast of the most recent developments in coaching techniques because of the lack of organized CPD programs which lowers the standard of coaching that athletes may get overall (Ventista & Brown, 2023).

Another important obstacle is lack of funding. Financial limitations hinder many sports programs, particularly, those at the grassroots level from maintaining venues, recruiting appropriate staff, or giving participants access to enough resources. This lack of funding is bad for both the growth of sports and the nation's ability to retain talented athletes. To properly train players and create competitive sports programs, coaches and trainers must frequently work with restricted resources (Zia-Ul et al., 2019). Furthermore, political participation in sports frequently results in ineffective administration. Decisions that do not put the growth of sports or the well-being of players and coaches first may arise from sports governance driven more by political goals than by experts in the field.

The difficulties experienced by those engaged in sports coaching and administration may be exacerbated by this mismatch which may foster an atmosphere that limits the growth potential of sports (Saba et al., 2021). Sports have become a vital part of society, fostering physical health, harmony among the community, and pride in the country. In several undeveloped countries like Pakistan, the professional functions of sports managers, coaches, and trainers are still underappreciated and neglected. The increasing understanding of the socioeconomic importance of sports career prospects for professionals in Pakistan's sports sector is severely hampered by several factors worldwide such as poor infrastructure, a lack of funding, social undervalued status, and an absence of established procedures for developing abilities and career advancement (Khan, 2022).

Organizational limitations cause Pakistan's sports industry to lag behind its international peers in terms of professionalization. The creation of organized routes for prospective sports professionals is hampered by the lack of institutional resources and encouragement. Managers, coaches, and trainers usually face low social recognition, job uncertainty, and career stagnation. Inadequate equipment for training and a lack of policy execution exacerbate this problem, giving sports professionals limited opportunities to grow in their careers (Yousaf et al., 2019). These difficulties are made worse by the idea that athletics is an extracurricular pastime rather than a feasible professional path.

In addition to social constraints and a lack of financial incentives, many gifted people are discouraged from pursuing professions in coaching or sports management. As a result, Pakistan's sports business has trouble luring and keeping talented workers, which affects the sector's overall development and output (Ahmed et al., 2023). Globally, the sports business is a quickly changing sector that makes a substantial contribution to social integration, economic growth, and personal well-being (Hoye et al., 2015). These difficulties impede athletes' development and put obstacles in their way as they advance in their careers. Even if the nation has generated outstanding talent in squash, hockey, and cricket on a global scale, the systematic disregard for sports administration and coaching as a profession presents serious obstacles to long-term viability and success (Rasool et al., 2018).

Sports are essential for boosting national pride, social cohesiveness, and physical wellness. Sports like squash, hockey, and cricket have long garnered worldwide recognition in Pakistan. But the experts who work with the athletes-coaches, trainers, and managers frequently face difficult circumstances that limit their productivity and ability to advance in their careers. The present research examines these difficulties to highlight the structural problems that Pakistani sports professionals face (Johal, 2002).

A fundamental challenge is the lack of adequate sports infrastructure. Many training facilities are outdated, lack essential equipment, and are poorly maintained, limiting the ability of coaches and trainers to deliver effective training programs. This deficiency not only hampers athlete development but also restricts the professional growth of sports personnel who rely on quality facilities to implement advanced training methodologies. Pakistan Sports Board, established in 1962 to promote uniform standards in sports, has struggled to maintain and develop infrastructure contributing to the decline in various sports disciplines (Ali, Wright, & Dickson, 2023). For Pakistani sports professionals, the financial uncertainty is a major worry.

Talented people are less likely to pursue professions, as coaches and trainers because they frequently earn little pay, have no benefits, and have unstable job security. Because of the corporatization of sports, athletes and supporting staff's growth has been subordinated to profit which has led to a lack of investment in developing talent and offering steady work possibilities (Ganjera, 2007). Maintaining up with changing methods and tactics, managers and coaches must engage in ongoing professional developments. However, formal programs and certificates for sports professionals are fewer in Pakistan. This disparity hinders their capacity to improve their abilities and adjust to global norms which has an impact on the caliber of training that athletes get.

Emerging talent is the focus of initiatives like the Lahore Qalandars Players Development Program but there are not many programs like this for coaches and trainers (Aftab & Naveed, 2021). In Pakistan, governance problems and administrative inefficiencies frequently plague the sports industry. Sports professionals work in an uncertain environment due to frequent leadership changes, unclear regulations, and administrative roadblocks. For instance, Pakistan Football Federation has suffered internal disagreements and administrative issues resulting in problems with efficient management and support for coaches and managers (Oviedo, 2022).

Social expectations and cultural views may sometimes be problematic, especially for female athletes. The involvement and promotion of female coaches and managers are impeded by traditional gender stereotypes and the restricted acceptability of women in leadership roles. A major milestone was reached when Manizeh Zainli was appointed as the first female Secretary-General of the Pakistan Football Federation. However, her term was criticized due to gender prejudices which reflected the larger social issues that women confront in sports administration (Dutta, Mondal, & Raizada, 2022).

Numerous obstacles prevented Pakistani sports coaches, trainers, and managers from advancing in their careers and from helping the national sports industry grow. A comprehensive strategy including infrastructure development, funding, professional training, administrative changes, and social change is needed to address these problems. By putting these tactics

into practice, Pakistan can foster an atmosphere where coaches, trainers and managers along with athletes flourish which would eventually promote sports across the country

### Research Methodology

The present research used a descriptive and exploratory approach to identify the main obstacles to professional advancement, job stability, and career development in Pakistan's sports sector. This study examines the problems and difficulties experienced by sports coaches, trainers, and managers in Pakistan's career chances using a qualitative research technique. Both primary and secondary data collecting techniques are used in a mixed-method approach. Semi-structured interviews and surveys are used to collect primary data, and government papers, policy documents, and journal articles about Pakistan's sports sector are used to obtain secondary data.

The selected population involves sports coaches, trainers, and managers working in different sports organizations, educational institutions, and private academies throughout Faisalabad, Pakistan. Participants with appropriate coaching and sports management expertise are chosen using a purposive sampling way. (n=30) sports coaches representing football, hockey, cricket, and athletics. Sports managers from both public and commercial sectors (n=15) and trainers (n=20) who deal with professional and amateur athletes. Thorough semi-structured interviews with chosen athletes to learn more about the unique difficulties they encounter.

Quantitative information on employment trends, financial stability, and prospects for professional advancement is gathered using a standardized questionnaire. Examining the existing literature, sports policies and employment statistics need to understand broader industry trends. Qualitative Data: To find recurrent themes and patterns, interview transcripts are subjected to thematic analysis. Quantitative Data Descriptive statistics frequency and percentage analysis are used to examine survey responses.

### Findings

The study surveyed 65 sports professionals including sports coaches representing football, hockey, cricket, and athletics (n=30), sports managers from both public and commercial sectors (n=15), and sports trainers (n=20) serving different clubs and universities in Faisalabad. The participants' age was between 38 to 45 years  $M \pm SD$  ( $41.5 \pm 2.046$ ). Most respondents (57%) had more than 10 years of experience in the field. The Financial Constraints of  $M \pm SD$  are ( $4.1 \pm 0.880$ ). The significant level ( $p < 0.003$ ) and according to the respondents, 82% of sporting groups do not provide enough financial support. The Lack of Infrastructure of  $M \pm SD$  is ( $4.3 \pm 0.79$ ). The significant value of ( $p < 0.002$ ) and the participants expressed dissatisfaction with available training facilities during career growth opportunities of  $M \pm SD$  is ( $3.8 \pm 0.93$ ). The significant value considered of  $p < 0.004$ . According to 75% of respondents, there are not enough organized programs for job progression. The inadequate Government support of  $M \pm SD$  is ( $4.4 \pm 0.84$ ). The significant value considered of ( $p < 0.001$ ). According to 76% of the experts, there was not enough government financing or policy assistance. Insufficient professional development and training of  $M \pm SD$  is ( $4.2 \pm 0.90$ ) with the significant value of ( $p < 0.005$ ). Lack of access to specialist coaching certificates and training programs were mentioned by 69% of respondents.

A Pearson correlation analysis indicated a significant negative correlation between financial constraints and job satisfaction ( $r = -0.69$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ). Similarly, infrastructure limitations had a strong negative relationship with professional growth ( $r = -0.73$ ;  $p = 0.003$ ). The results pointed out important areas that need to be improved, especially in terms of infrastructure development, career advancement chances, and financial assistance for Pakistani sports professionals. To solve these issues and improve, the overall sports management structure, policy changes and calculated investments are required.

### Discussion

The discussion brings to light several important issues, such as low pay, a lack of assistance from the public and commercial sectors, restricted access to cutting-edge training facilities, and a dearth of professional development opportunities. In addition, a lack of organized policies and bad administration plague sports management, which further limits professional career progression prospects. The results also showed that sports-related occupations are undervalued in society, which leads to employment instability and few career opportunities.

The expansion and professionalization of the sports sector in Pakistan are greatly impacted by the obstacles and problems faced by managers, trainers, and coaches. This study identifies several obstacles that prevent sports from becoming a viable professional choice, such as a lack of institutional support, financial limitations, a lack of opportunity for career advancement, and sociocultural concerns. The financial instability in the sports industry is one of the main issues noted. A lack of government support, inconsistent payment schedules, and low salaries are common problems for coaches and trainers (Yasir et al., 2020).

Pakistan's sports business lacks a sustainable strategy that guarantees financial stability for professionals, in contrast to industrialized countries where athletes get organized financial help and sponsorship possibilities. Many coaches must rely on additional sources of money, which limits their capacity to give their jobs their all (Aftab & Naveed, 2021). A thorough structure for professional development programs catered to coaches and trainers as well as sports education is lacking in Pakistan. Their capacity to improve their abilities and adjust to contemporary coaching methods is restricted by the lack of standardized certification programs and possibilities for further education (Hussain & Cunningham, 2024). In contrast, nations with vibrant sports cultures make significant investments in coach education to keep coaches abreast of changing techniques.

Professionals are deterred from pursuing long-term careers in the sector by the lack of prospects for career advancement. Because there are no merit-based promotions and unclear career trajectories, many managers and trainers experience stagnation. Pakistan's sports industry frequently relies on personal ties and favoritism which lowers motivation among

committed professionals, in contrast to international sports organizations that have formal hierarchies and career development plans (Hussain, 2021).

The difficulties facing the sports sector are also greatly influenced by sociocultural issues. Sports management and coaching are not seen as prominent occupations in many areas which discourage young people from pursuing careers in these fields (Hayat et al., 2020). Possibilities are further restricted by gender-related hurdles since female managers and coaches frequently experience prejudice and are denied equal possibilities (Bhatti, Khan, & Bashir, 2020). These difficulties are made worse by the absence of strategic planning and government initiatives. Sports professionals' advancement is hampered by political meddling, corruption, and inefficient governance even in the face of numerous sports organizations. To maintain their sports businesses, nations with well-organized sports management frameworks, on the other hand, offer professional training programs, financial incentives, and defined career pathways (Noreen, 2020).

Government must put systematic measures into place to address these issues. Sports professionals' employment prospects may be greatly improved by creating uniform certification programs, expanding government backing, and establishing well-funded sports academies. Additionally, encouraging athletics as a viable professional path through the media and academic institutions can assist shift public attitudes and draw in young athletes (Laar et al., 2019).

## Conclusion

Several obstacles in Pakistan's sports coaching, training, and management environment limit professional advancement and opportunity. Despite the increased interest in sports, the industry still faces challenges because of a lack of professional development programs, poor infrastructure, and little funding. It is challenging for trainers and coaches to get worldwide exposure and advanced credentials, which hinders their capacity to develop players. Similarly, administrative inefficiency, corruption, and bureaucratic obstacles that impede the nation's sports growth are challenges faced by sports managers.

Social attitudes frequently downplay the importance of sports as a realistic vocation, deterring gifted people from going into management or coaching positions. These issues are made worse by the lack of formal rules and support networks which leaves many sector workers with unclear futures. Another layer of difficulty is the fight for gender equality in sports management and coaching, which restricts chances for female professionals. A multifaceted strategy involving institutional reforms, private sector investment, and government engagement is needed to address these problems. In Pakistan, career prospects for coaches, trainers, and managers may be greatly improved by establishing improved training programs, raising financial incentives, and encouraging a sports-friendly society. By addressing these issues, Pakistan may develop its sports sector and provide long-term employment opportunities for experts committed to promoting athletic brilliance.

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