

# INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

- ▣ **Introduction:**
- ▣ To investigate means to probe into any matter, to dig out facts which are tried to be kept hidden.
- ▣ Investigative journalism is a kind of journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a topic of interest, often involving crime, political corruption, or some other scandal.

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- ▣ **Investigative Interview:**
- ▣ Investigative interview is carried out to get behind the facts– to dig out the actual reasons of the accident/ train collision/ air crash/ and the real factors or persons responsible for the accident are brought on surface.

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## ▣ Difference Between Analytical & Investigative Reporting:

Analytical reporting takes data available and reconfigure it in different ways while the investigative reporter has to dig out the data from documents/reports and findings. Investigative reporting is a watchdog role of the media. He is a person who is supposed to be alert all the time and to sniff the wrong doings. He has to focus on the accountability of institutions and individuals.

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- ▣ **Strategy For Investigative Reporting:**
- ▣ An Investigative Reporter must form a strategy. Following acts would be helpful in getting facts: -
- ▣ **Observation:** Stroll through an unfamiliar neighborhood. Talk the people you meet there. This exercise will give you many leads/clues.
- ▣ **Personal sources:** Keep close contact with family, friends, Bosses and co-workers.
- ▣ Some time anonymous sources give you valuable information. Never ignore them.
- ▣ When you analysis the facts/ data, it will give further lead.

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- ▣ **Strategy For Investigative Reporting: (continued)**
- ▣ Studying neglected sources, such as archives, phone records, address books, tax record and license records. These could be very helpful in taking clues and lead to further proceed on the issue.
- ▣ **Check every fact:** Check every fact as well as the source of information. Accuracy of facts has a prime importance.
- ▣ **Know the law:** Check the law in your area related to journalism. If you violate the law you may have to face the consequences.
- ▣ **Work with research librarians:** They are trained to track information. If you consult the librarian, you will save the time in getting the required material.
- ▣ **“CAR” (computer assisted reporting).** In modern journalism the use of computer/Internet will give you great help.

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- ▣ **Qualities of a Good Investigative Reporter:**
- ▣ Besides those which are prerequisites for a person who aspires to be a journalist, the following qualities must also be an integral part of his/her personality:
  - ▣ Sharpness
  - ▣ Intelligence
  - ▣ Nosy
  - ▣ Inquisitiveness
  - ▣ Familiarity with the area of his investigation
  - ▣ Well versed in law
  - ▣ Tricky interviewer
  - ▣ Strong contacts

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- ▣ **Planning & Producing an Investigative Report:**
- ▣ The planning of investigative report involves great deal of research and knowledge of the area or the topic the reporter intends to probe into. Have a well planned start and minimize the chances of failure to the maximum. While planning an investigative report a reporter must go through the following step:

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## ▣ Identification of the problem:

First of all the reporter must have the precise knowledge of the matter he intends to make a report about. There are certain problems or matters which demand interpretative report and there is no need of investigative report. It is the quality of the reporter that how he smells something suspicious that needs to be investigated into. He comes to know that there is something about the incident that some forces are trying to keep secret or the real facts of some matter are being kept concealed deliberately. The reporter tries to dig out the real facts and then these facts are put on air in the form of an investigative report. Hence, unless the reporter knows the actual problem, he will not be able to make his direction to his destination.

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- ▣ **Make An Initial List Of Potential Interviewees:**

The next step after identifying the area of the reporting is to make a list of those people who are needed to be interviewed. These are the ones who are directly or indirectly involved in the issue.

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## ▣ Interviews of Affectees:

Investigative reporting is needed for such incidents in which due to some reason, people get affected. It can be because of any fraud, or because of accident owing to negligence of any person, or because of corruption, or because of nepotism. The expressions of those people who get injured or affected directly are very important to be recorded. The reason is that these are those people who have the right information about the happening of the incident.

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## ▣ Interviews of Probable Affecters:

This is very much important factor for investigative reporter to take special interview form the affecter that why he commits such type of crime as this will be the turning point and also will be advisable for the society.

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## ▣ Opinion of Experts:

The next step for investigative reporter is to also take opinion from the experts about that specific activity and also know about its detail as this will help the reporter to take full control over that story.

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- ▣ **Opinion of Concerned Authorities:**
- ▣ This is an other important step for a reporter to take opinion from the concerned authorities about that incident what progress they have shown so far and what is expected next.

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- ▣ **Useful Guidelines For Investigative Reporter:**
- ▣ Reporter must know the law.
- ▣ Know the procedure.
- ▣ Focus on research.
- ▣ Follow the lead.
- ▣ Just keep digging.
- ▣ Organize the information.
- ▣ Write the report.
- ▣ Check facts, Triple Check.
- ▣ Libel Check, Deformation check.

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- ▣ **Conclusion:**
- ▣ The goal of a good investigative story is to inform, educate and keep the interest of the reader/viewer. When an investigative report published in the print media or aired on electronic media, its impact on individuals and the institutions would be multidimensional.
- ▣ It is also advisable that the reporter must talk “off the record” sources before going under cover. It will facilitate him to reach the real sources/documents.

# REFERENCES

- ▣ Introduction to news reporting, Virtual University of Pakistan.
- ▣ Radio News Reporting & Production – MCM515, Virtual University of Pakistan.

That's All  
Thank  
You