

# Comparative Analysis of Players' Perceptions on Good Governance in Athletics Federation and Badminton Association of India

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Article Info	Abstract
Received : July 28, 2024 Accepted : October 15, 2024	<i>This study compares the opinions of players within the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) regarding governance dimensions to identify areas of strength and improvement. Utilizing a descriptive research design and statistical analyses, perceptions on various governance dimensions were collected from 350 respondents via standardized questionnaires. Significant differences were found in opinions across dimensions such as organization transparency, reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation. Stakeholder representation emerged as a critical dimension with notable disparities observed in both associations. The findings underscore the importance of tailored governance strategies to address specific concerns and enhance transparency, integrity, and stakeholder engagement within sporting organizations. The higher number of significant disparities observed in the BAI compared to the AFI suggests pronounced challenges in governance practices within the former, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Overall, the study provides valuable insights for guiding targeted governance reforms aimed at ensuring the sustainability and success of these sporting organizations.</i>
<b>Keywords</b> <i>transparency, accountability, control mechanisms, stakeholder representation, good governance</i>	
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## Introduction

Good governance is essential for the integrity and sustainability of sports organizations. This study compares the opinions of players within the Athletics Federation of India and the Badminton Association of India regarding governance dimensions to identify areas of strength and improvement.

Serious concerns have been raised concerning the governance of sport organizations in recent decades due to the disclosure of dubious governance methods (Sterling et al., 2022). Sport governance is now a hot topic in public discourse due to cases of corruption scandals in governing bodies (McLeod, Adams, et al., 2020), the need to fully comprehend the environment of sports organizations (Dowling et al., 2018), and a greater strategic and organizational performance orientation (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). Sport organizations, and federations in particular, are under tremendous pressure to implement strong governance processes that reduce dishonest practices and foster sports success as a result of this essential and reflective process (Chappelet, 2018). A number of principles that have been extensively explored in the literature, including transparency, accountability, efficacy, efficiency, prudent financial management, and anti-corruption (Geeraert et al., 2013).

It has been said that the idea of governance is nebulous and unclear. Dowling et al. (2018) found up to seven distinct definitions of governance in sport that are employed by scholars and vary somewhat from one another in their scoping study of the topic. This may give the impression that the phrase is too multifaceted to be of any value (Rhodes, 1996). Definitions of governance vary depending on the researchers' work or the issue being studied, claim Geeraert et al. (2014). Dowling et al. (2018) used the three broad methods or styles of governance that Henry and Lee (2004) predicted—political, systemic, and organizational—to classify the many studies that they examined in their investigation. As per the

authors "organizational governance" as acknowledged norms, principles, and procedures pertaining to the management and governance practices of sports organizations, or morally grounded standards of managerial action. Competition, collaboration, and mutual adjustment among organizations within a certain organizational system—in this example, sport—are the main themes of "systematic governance." Lastly, "political governance" refers to the ways in which governments or any sports regulating authority "directly" or "indirectly" affect how organizations behave. Therefore, it can be argued that the study of governance considers how organizations are structured and run, as well as their function within a larger network of interrelated stakeholders that are influenced by the sports systems in which they are located (McKeag et al., 2022; Renfree & Kohe, 2019).

According to McLeod, Shilbury, et al. (2020), there is currently no universal code of good governance that is utilized by the majority of the actors that comprise the sport sector, despite the existence of some national and international guidance documents that serve to provide some sort of training and knowledge base structures. However, there is some uniformity in the broad ideas that are supported throughout all of the codes and evaluation checklists created by researchers and practitioners. The specifics of what these principles entail for each of the various codes created may differ, despite the fact that they are commonly used (Parent, Hoye, et al., 2018). As McLeod, Shilbury, et al. (2020) note, for instance, a code may consider transparency in a specific form, like the release of annual reports, or it may involve a wider range of standards, such the release of board meeting minutes. Parent, Hoye, et al. (2018) and Parent, Naraine, et al. (2018) also noted variations in the governance codes' implementation requirements. Following a governance code may be required by law, optional, or a necessity for obtaining public money, depending on how sport organizations are defined. These discrepancies, according to the authors, are preventing scholars from delving deeper into which standards enhance governance effectiveness. Despite these challenges, authors like McLeod, Shilbury, et al. (2020) pointed out that, in reality, there is enough consistency among governance rules to assert that there is a broad consensus about what constitutes excellent governance in sport federations. Chappelet and Mrkonjic (2019) state that the values of accountability, democracy, and transparency are particularly prevalent in almost all manuals. principles and rules designed to make sure sports organizations are run effectively and morally (Stenling et al., 2022).

In contrast, Geeraert (2018) noted in his work on indicators and guidelines for evaluating good governance in national federations that there are generally four fundamental principles of good governance, which also, according to authors like Brown and Caylor (2009), result in favorable organizational outcomes and economic growth. Research indicates that societal responsibility, internal accountability and control, openness, and democratic procedures are all fundamental components of effective governance (Geeraert, 2018). For example, transparency may be used to help stakeholders challenge management (Mulgan, 2003) and is a useful tool for democracy and corruption mitigation (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009). A number of studies have also demonstrated the advantages of sport organizations adopting a comprehensive perspective on democratic and participatory procedures that result in the creation of policies that take stakeholder interests into account (Kohe & Purdy, 2016; McKeag et al., 2022; Renfree & Kohe, 2019). For instance, by considering the representation of various groups in leadership roles, such as women (Nielsen & Huse, 2010; Post & Byron, 2015), general assemblies (Geeraert et al., 2014), or independent board members (Sport England, 2016). Regarding accountability and internal controls, a high level of implementation of measures associated with this principle would encourage democratic measures to monitor and control governance conduct, prevent the growth of power concentrations, and improve management effectiveness and learning capacity (Aucoin & Heintzman, 2000; Bovens, 2007). Since accountability is the guiding concept that guides the procedures by which persons in positions of power are held accountable, the authors themselves recognized it as a fundamental component of governance (Aucoin & Heintzman, 2000). Lastly, there is general agreement that organizations involved in sports should encourage social responsibility (Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2019; Renfree & Kohe, 2016). The purpose of this study was to investigate the governance situation of India's National Sports Governing Bodies (NSGBs) in detail. The main goal of the study is to evaluate these entities' overall excellent governance. The study specifically aims to accomplish two goals: first, to better identify the demographics of stakeholders associated with different

NSGBs; and second, to assess the governance processes that are already in place inside these organizations.

### Methods

A descriptive research design was employed to investigate the level of good governance in National Sports Federations. This design facilitated the acquisition of precise and relevant data regarding governance practices. Data for the analysis was collected through primary sources, specifically from players of selected Sports Federations. A standardized questionnaire was used to capture perceptions on various governance dimensions.

The manuscript employs the BIBGIS tool, developed by Jean- Loup Chappelet and Michaël Mrkonjić. This tool has been utilized in significant studies, including "Applying BIBGIS to the IOC before and after its 1999 reforms" and "Trial application of BIBGIS for benchmarking the IOC and FIFA in 2012." These applications highlight its robustness and credibility in assessing governance practices within international sports organizations. Providing further clarification on its reliability and adaptability for the Indian context will enhance the validity of the study's findings. The questionnaire underwent pre-testing to ensure validity and comprehension. Reliability was assessed using the test-retest approach. The test-retest process involved administering the same questionnaire to a subset of participants on two separate occasions, with a time interval of two weeks between the tests. This time frame was chosen to minimize the influence of memory effects while ensuring that the context of the participants' responses remained stable. The results from the first and second administrations were compared using correlation analysis to assess the consistency of responses over time. A high correlation coefficient indicated that the questionnaire produced stable and reliable results. The results of the test-retest process for the different dimensions of good governance are summarized with high correlation coefficients for both Athletics and Badminton. Specifically, the 'Intra Class Correlation' coefficients for the dimensions of Organizational Transparency, Reporting Transparency, Democratic Process, Control Mechanism, Sports Integrity, Solidarity, and Stakeholder Representation ranged from 0.894 to 0.956, all of which were significant at the 0.05 level, indicating strong reliability in the responses for both federations.

Two Federations (Athletics Federation and Badminton Association) of India were sampled, focusing on international players. Data from 350 respondents was collected via convenience sampling. The population is defined as the stakeholders such as Players, Coaches, Officials who have participated in the International level competitions during the year 2019-20 and the Administrators who are holding the term limit of the same year in the study organizations. The population of the study is 544 stakeholders during the study period in the study organizations. Though maximum efforts were taken by the researcher to collect data from all the 544 respondents, the researcher could collect data only from 350 respondents, which is 65% of the sample population. As the sample size is 65% of the population and as maximum efforts were made by the researcher to collect data through questionnaires directly from the respondents, this would very well represent the population and the study findings could also be generalized. Therefore, the sample size (350 respondents) drawn from the population based on the availability is authentic.

The administration aimed to assess governance in National Sports Federations, adapting the BIBGIS tool for the Indian sports context. Data was collected directly through standardized questionnaires and Google Forms, ensuring a systematic approach. This method provided firsthand insights into stakeholders' perceptions on governance.

### Results

The comparison of players' perceptions regarding good governance within the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of governance practices within these sporting organizations. Through a rigorous analysis utilizing one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), the study reveals significant differences in opinions across various dimensions of governance, encompassing organization transparency, reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation. The statistical significance of these differences underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of players' perspectives to inform targeted governance strategies tailored to the specific needs of each association. The results are given in the table 1.

**Table 1**

*One-way Analysis of Variance of Players in Athletics Federation and Badminton Association of India About Good Governance*

S. N	Groups	D.f	Sum of Square	Mean sum of Square	Mean	Statistical Inference
1	Between Groups (Athletics Federation)	6	2516.03	419.33	G1=17.24 G2=22.91 G3=20.44 G4=19.62 G5=15.84 G6=15.84 G7=16.68	F=22.69* P=0.00 P<0.05 Significant
2	Within Groups (Athletics)	399	7378.81	18.49		
3	Between Groups (Badminton)	6	2530.04	421.67	G1=16.87 G2=24.21 G3=20.75 G4=19.75 G5=15.87 G6=16.56 G7=24.71	F=20.23* P=0.00 P<0.05 Significant
4	Within Groups (Badminton)	217	4522.813	20.84		

*G1=Organization Transparency*  
*G3=Democratic Process*  
*G5= Sports Integrity*  
*Representation*

*G2= Reporting Transparency*  
*G4= Control Mechanism*  
*G6= Solidarity*  
*G7= Stakeholder*

The one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) conducted for players within the Athletics Federation of India and the Badminton Association of India revealed significant differences in opinions regarding various dimensions of good governance. In the Athletics Federation of India, significant differences were found among mean opinions across dimensions (G1 to G7), with  $F(6, 399) = 22.69$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , indicating notable variations in perceptions of good governance among players. Similarly, for the Badminton Association of India, significant differences were observed across dimensions, with  $F(6, 217) = 20.23$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , indicating significant variability in perceptions of good governance within the association. While the between-groups variance was slightly higher for the Badminton Association of India, both associations displayed statistically significant disparities across dimensions. Stakeholder Representation (G7) emerged as a crucial dimension with significant differences observed in both associations, underscoring its perceived importance in the context of good governance. These findings suggest the need for tailored governance strategies to address specific concerns within each association, emphasizing transparency, integrity, and stakeholder engagement to foster effective governance practices. Since the ‘P’ value was significant, the Scheffe’s Post Hoc test was computed further in order to find out the pairwise mean difference between the dimensions of the players with regards to good governance. This additional analysis is crucial for understanding the specific areas where significant differences exist and providing detailed insights into the variations in perceptions among players within each association, ultimately guiding the development of effective governance strategies tailored to the specific needs of each association.

The Scheffe’s Post Hoc Test conducted for both the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) offers a detailed examination of the differences in players’ perceptions of good governance across various dimensions within each organization. This statistical analysis serves to elucidate the nuances in player opinions regarding organization transparency, reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation. By identifying significant mean differences and associated levels of significance, the Scheffe’s Post Hoc Test provides valuable insights into the specific areas where divergent viewpoints exist among players within each association. The results are given in table 2 and table 3 below.

**Table 2**

*Scheffe's Post Hoc Test of Significance and difference among the Mean of Opinion of the Players in Athletics Federation of India on Good Governance*

G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	Mean Difference	Significance
17.24	22.91	-	-	-	-	-	5.67*	0.000
17.24	-	20.44	-	-	-	-	3.20*	0.014
17.24	-	-	19.62	-	-	-	2.37	0.184
17.24	-	-	-	15.84	-	-	1.39	0.801
17.24	-	-	-	-	15.84	-	1.39	0.801
17.24	-	-	-	-	-	16.68	0.55	0.998
-	22.91	20.44	-	-	-	-	2.45	0.149
-	22.91	-	19.62	-	-	-	3.29*	0.010
-	22.91	-	-	15.84	-	-	7.06*	0.000
-	22.91	-	-	-	15.84	-	7.06*	0.000
-	22.91	-	-	-	-	16.68	6.22*	0.000
-	-	20.44	19.62	-	-	-	0.82	0.982
-	-	20.44	-	15.84	-	-	4.60*	0.000
-	-	20.44	-	-	15.84	-	4.60*	0.000
-	-	20.44	-	-	-	16.68	3.75*	0.001
-	-	-	19.62	15.84	-	-	3.77*	0.001
-	-	-	19.62	-	15.84	-	3.77*	0.001
-	-	-	19.62	-	-	16.68	2.93*	0.038
-	-	-	-	15.84	15.84	-	0.00	1.000
-	-	-	-	15.84	-	16.68	0.84	0.981
-	-	-	-	-	15.84	16.68	0.84	0.981

P < 0.05

G1=Organization Transparency  
G3=Democratic Process

G2= Reporting Transparency  
G4= Control Mechanism

G5= Sports Integrity  
G6= Solidarity

G7= Stakeholder Representation

**Table 3**

*Scheffe's Post Hoc Test of Significance and difference among the Mean of Opinion of the Players in Badminton Association of India on Good Governance*

G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	Mean Difference	Significance
16.87	24.21	-	-	-	-	-	7.34*	0.000
16.87	-	20.75	-	-	-	-	3.88	0.079
16.87	-	-	19.75	-	-	-	2.88	0.389
16.87	-	-	-	15.87	-	-	1.00	0.993
16.87	-	-	-	-	16.56	-	0.31	1.000
16.87	-	-	-	-	-	24.71	7.84*	0.000
-	24.21	20.75	-	-	-	-	3.46	0.166
-	24.21	-	19.75	-	-	-	4.46*	0.021
-	24.21	-	-	15.87	-	-	8.34*	0.000
-	24.21	-	-	-	16.56	-	7.65	0.000
-	24.21	-	-	-	-	24.71	0.5	1.000
-	-	20.75	19.75	-	-	-	1.00	0.993
-	-	20.75	-	15.87	-	-	4.88*	0.007
-	-	20.75	-	-	16.56	-	4.19*	0.040
-	-	20.75	-	-	-	24.71	3.96	0.065
-	-	-	19.75	15.87	-	-	3.88	0.079
-	-	-	19.75	-	16.56	-	3.19	0.258
-	-	-	19.75	-	-	24.71	4.96*	0.005
-	-	-	-	15.87	16.56	-	0.69	0.999
-	-	-	-	15.87	-	24.71	8.84*	0.000
-	-	-	-	-	16.56	24.71	8.15*	0.000

P < 0.05

G1=Organization Transparency

G3=Democratic Process

G2= Reporting Transparency

G4= Control Mechanism

G5= Sports Integrity

G6= Solidarity

G7= Stakeholder Representation

The analysis reveals significant disparities in opinions regarding good governance among players in the Athletics Federation of India and the Badminton Association of India. In both associations, aspects like organization and reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation were evaluated. While both associations showed significant differences in opinions across various dimensions, the Badminton Association of India displayed a higher number of significant disparities compared to the Athletics Federation of India. Particularly, stakeholder representation emerged as a crucial aspect with significant differences observed across multiple dimensions in both associations.

### Discussion

The findings from the analysis of players' perceptions within the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) shed light on significant disparities in opinions regarding good governance practices within these sporting organizations. Across various dimensions such as organization transparency, reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation, players exhibited varying levels of satisfaction and perception.

In both the AFI and BAI, significant differences were observed among mean opinions across different dimensions of good governance, as indicated by the calculated F-values and associated p-values. These results highlight notable variations in players' perceptions of governance, suggesting that certain aspects may be more positively perceived or prioritized compared to others within each organization. Notably, stakeholder representation emerged as a critical dimension with significant differences observed across multiple dimensions in both associations. This underscores the perceived importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making processes and ensuring their voices are heard within the governance structure of sporting organizations. Furthermore, the higher number of significant disparities observed in the BAI compared to the AFI suggests that there may be more pronounced challenges or discrepancies in governance practices within the BAI. This finding underscores the need for targeted interventions and tailored governance strategies to address specific concerns within each association.

These results are consistent with previous studies on sports governance, which frequently point up comparable difficulties and potential areas for development. Chappelet and Mrkonjic (2019), for example, stress the need of democratic procedures and social accountability in sports governance, which is consistent with the need for more diversity and community involvement noted in this study. According to Constandt (2019) and Brandt (2024), insights from English football highlight the crucial role that social dynamics and ethics management play in sports governance, which reinforces the necessity for extensive governance changes.

The governance problems inside the AFI and BAI seem to be more noticeable when compared to other studies, such as those that concentrate on European sports federations. According to García and Welford (2015), Indian sports federations have a longer road to excellent governance standards since European football governance has comparatively greater levels of accountability and openness. Similar to the findings in the Indian context, Geeraert (2018) discovered that international sports federations have trouble with accountability and transparency. Furthermore, Chappelet and Mrkonjic (2019), who stress the significance of democratic procedures and social responsibility in sports administration, agree with the conclusions of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI). This is in line with the noted need for these Indian federations to be more inclusive and to involve their communities.

### Conclusion

The comparison of players' perceptions of good governance within the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) has provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of governance practices within these sporting bodies. Through rigorous statistical analyses including one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe's Post Hoc tests, significant differences in opinions across various dimensions of governance have been revealed. These dimensions encompass organization transparency, reporting transparency, democratic processes, control mechanisms, sports integrity, solidarity, and stakeholder representation. The results underscore the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of players' perspectives to inform targeted governance strategies tailored to the specific needs of each association. Stakeholder representation emerged as a critical aspect with significant differences observed across multiple dimensions in both the AFI and BAI. This highlights the importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making processes to ensure their voices are heard within the governance structure of sporting organizations.

Moreover, the higher number of significant disparities observed in the BAI compared to the AFI suggests pronounced challenges or discrepancies in governance practices within the former. This emphasizes the need for targeted interventions and tailored governance strategies to address specific concerns within each association. It emphasizes the importance of transparency, integrity, and stakeholder engagement in enhancing overall governance effectiveness within sporting organizations. By addressing the specific areas of concern highlighted by players' perceptions, both the AFI and BAI can work towards fostering a more positive and conducive environment for all stakeholders involved in the sport. These insights can guide the development of targeted governance reforms and initiatives aimed at improving overall governance practices and ensuring the continued success and sustainability of these sporting organizations.

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