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FIELDS TO FRAMEWORK: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL UNDER INDIAN AND SPANISH SPORTS LAW

AUTHORED BY - SANTHOSH KRISHNA GM
Christ (Deemed To Be) University, Pune, Lavasa Campus

ABSTRACT

Football has transformed into an institutional ecosystem based upon intricate regulatory structures that cross national, regional, and international levels of governance, and which have developed to this day as a recreational pursuit. The present paper is a comparative legal study on the legal processes of football management and institutional control under the Indian and Spanish sports legislation, and how two different legal traditions have resolved the issue of federative jurisdiction versus state control, compliance in international sports standards and corporate accountability. The football management in India is an area that has continued to experience structural inadequacies, financial misinformation, and judicial interferences, owing to the football governance, which was mainly administered under the National Sports Code 2011, as well as the newly instituted National Sports Governance Act 2025. Conversely, Spain has a more advanced and centralized system of governance in which the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) and the LaLiga can be applied within a similar hybrid model which includes public law oversight undertakings and privately regulated regulation with a clear scheme of demands and controls similar to those enforced by the licensing and finances of the UEFA. This paper presents an assessment of the institutional design as well as financial regulation, licensing systems and dispute resolution systems in the two jurisdictions through a doctrinal and comparative analysis. It claims that although the model used in Spain cannot be exported wholesale to the Indian setting some of its structural elements especially the statutory oversight, financial sustenance regulations and professionalism reigned league governance can be applied successfully in enhancing institutional control and accountability in the administrative management of Indian football.

KEYWORDS: Football Governance, Sports Law, Federative Autonomy, Institutional Control, Financial Regulation, Club Licensing, Dispute Resolution, Indian Sports Law, Spanish Sports Law.

I. Introduction

Football has transformed from a mostly unstructured pastime into a highly structured worldwide enterprise regulated by a complex framework at national, regional, and international levels. In the modern era, football governance transcends mere competition organisation or on-field regulation; it includes intricate matters such as federation electoral governance, club financial sustainability, dispute resolution mechanisms, ethical compliance, and adherence to international standards set by transactional sports organisations. With the increasing economic, cultural, and political importance of football, issues of responsibility, transparency, and regulatory oversight have emerged as crucial topics in sports law discussions. The regulation of football poses a distinctive legal difficulty. International sports organisations, such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the Union of European Football organisations, underscore the notion of federative autonomy, necessitating that national organisations function independently of political involvement. Conversely, domestic legal frameworks must guarantee that entities executing public duties, using public resources, or impacting constitutional rights are subjected to adequate supervision.¹ The tension between autonomy and accountability lies at the heart of football administration across the jurisdiction.² This paper undertakes comparative legal analysis of football administration and institutional control mechanisms under India and Spanish sports law. India and Spain represent two contrasting governance models shaped by different constitutional traditions, legal cultures and level of professionalization. India football governance, administered primarily through the All India Football Federation, has historically relied on executive policy instruments such as the National Sports Court, 2011, supplemented by judicial intervention to correct governance failures.³ Persistent issues relating to electoral irregularities, tenure extensions, financial opacity and administrative stagnation have prompted repeated involvement of constitutional courts, culminating in indirect Supreme Court intervention to enforce governance response aligned with both constitutional principle and FIFA statutes.⁴ The enactment of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 marks a significant attempt to transition from policy based regulation to a statutory framework, although its practical effectiveness remains to be assisted.⁵ In contrast, Spain offers a comparatively mature and institutionalized governance model.

¹ Zee Telefilms Ltd. v. Union of India, (2005) 4 SCC 649 (India); see also BCCI v. Cricket Ass'n of Bihar, (2015) 3 SCC 251 (India).

² James A.R. Nafziger, *International Sports Law* 45–47 (2d ed. 2004).

³ Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 (India).

⁴ All India Football Federation v. Rahul Mehra, Order dated Aug. 23, 2022 (Supreme Court of India); FIFA, Media Release on Suspension of AIFF (Aug. 2022).

⁵ National Sports Governance Act, No. ___ of 2025, India (pending/assented statute).

Spanish football operates under a hybrid framework in which federative autonomy is preserved but discipline through a statutory oversight.⁶ The Royal Spanish Football Federation and La Liga function with a clear legislative structure supervised by the Consejo Superior de Deportes.⁷ Financial regulation, licensing systems and dispute resolution mechanisms are embedded within law rather than enforced through an episodic judicial intervention.⁸ Moreover, Spain's governance framework is closely aligned to UEFA regulatory architecture, particularly in relation to financial sustainability and club licensing.⁹ Against this background, this paper seeks to examine how institutional control over football administration structured in India and Spain, how international football regulation are incorporated into domestic legal systems, and how financial regulations, licensing and dispute resolution mechanisms operate in practice through comparative analysis, the paper aims to identify aspects of Spain's governance framework that can be adapted rather than transplanted wholesale to stand in institutional control in Indian football. In doing so, the paper contributes to broader debates on sports governance, regulatory autonomy, and the role of law in disciplining private sporting bodies.¹⁰

II. Literature review

The existing literature on football governance is majorly on the view that modern sport had transitioned from a purely private activity to a full time regulated institutional system which desperately requires a structured oversight, transparency and accountability. Of all the research available on Comparative analysis on sports law the main point highlighted is that while federative autonomy remains a foundational principle of global sports governance. Unchecked autonomy will eventually lead to governance failure, financial instability and democratic deficits¹¹

A significant number of literature examines the legal structure and governance of sports organisations, their key emphasis lie on the clear statutory frameworks to balance autonomy along with public accountability¹². European and Spanish literature in particular documents

⁶ Antonio Millán Garrido, *Sports Law in Spain*, 12 Int'l Sports L.J. 67, 70–72 (2012).

⁷ Ley del Deporte [Sports Act], Law No. 10/1990, July 15, 1990 (Spain); Consejo Superior de Deportes (CSD).

⁸ LaLiga, Economic Control Regulations (Spain); UEFA, Club Licensing and Financial Sustainability Regulations (2023).

⁹ UEFA, Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, arts. 1–4 (2023).

¹⁰ Michele Colucci & Luigi Fumagalli, *The European Model of Sport* 89–93 (T.M.C. Asser Press 2014).

¹¹ Richard Parrish, *Sports Law and Policy in the European Union* (Manchester Univ. Press 2003).

¹² Basel Inst. on Governance, *Preventing Corruption in Sport: Governance Models for Sports Organisations*

how legislative embedding of sports governance through instruments such as Spain's sports act, this legislative framework has enabled a predictable oversight without excessive state interference which will aid for the development of sports in the country without political imbalance¹³. It also has been a pattern of notice that financial regulation has been a core issue in this football world. UEFA's Financial fair play and club licensing standards have helped sustainability over short term sporting success.

In contrast, Indian sports law has been identified with as weak enforcement mechanism, fragmented oversight and it majorly had excessive judicial intervention as a governance challenge¹⁴ The AIFF crisis and FIFA's 2022 suspension of India underscores how reactive compliance with international norms can expose the structural deficiencies in domestic governance.¹⁵The recent review of the National sports governance act 2025 suggests that while the act is moving towards a statutory regulation there still exists concerns regarding the regulatory independence and implementation capability of the sports bodies¹⁶

While the existing literature separately examines the governance structures, financial regulations and the dispute resolution. There are only very limited papers to compare the institutional control of football across Indian and Spanish football governance. This paper seeks to bridge that gap by conducting an analytical comparison between these both countries and their regulatory coherence.

III. Conceptual Framework Autonomy, Institutional Control, and Sports Governance

Federative autonomy is the idea on which the administration of the football federation is founded. Within the concept, Sporting Associations are considered to be private and self-governing organisations that have the power to govern their own internal affairs such as membership, election, discipline, and even competitive structure. The law of FIFA clearly states that the associations of the countries must be independent and not directly affected by

(2019).

¹³ Michele Colucci & Luigi Fumagalli, *The European Model of Sport* (T.M.C. Asser Press 2014).

¹⁴Law Comm'n of India, *Report on Sports Governance in India* (2017).

¹⁵ CNN, FIFA Suspends India's Football Federation over "Undue Influence" (Aug. 16, 2022), <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/08/16/football/india-football-suspension-fifa-aiff-spt-intl>.

¹⁶Law Sch. Pol'y Rev., *National Sports Governance Act, 2025: Reform or Reinforced Control?* (Sept. 5, 2025), <https://lawschoolpolicyreview.com/2025/09/05/national-sports-governance-act-2025-reform-or-reinforced-control/>.

foreign forces, including the state¹⁷. Lack of adherence to this regulation can attract punishment such as the inability to participate in international events. Nonetheless, there is no complete freedom of judicial scrutiny of autonomy in sports governance. Where the bodies that carry out the functions of sports have an element of the public character (representation of the country globally), that are linked with the professional career regulation or the management of the funds, which the state holds, there is a legitimate interest of the state to ensure the legality, justice and transparency. Courts across countries have come to increasingly hold the view that sports associations, despite being legally private in nature, exercise a regulatory role that does have significant public effects. The institutional control is defined as the legal and administrative mechanisms of managing, controlling, and limiting the autonomy. Such measures are legislative supervision, financial audit, legal licenses, election procedures, conflict of interests restrictions and independent dispute resolution tribunal. Good institutional control is not one that kills autonomy but one that operationalises it in a system of responsibility and good governance. There is yet another element of challenge in international sports governance. FIFA, UEFA, and Court of Arbitration for sport are an international regulatory system that interferes with local systems of governance. Participation in worldwide football requires adherence to international standards, yet the local law needs to ensure that such adherence does not conflict with constitutional values, judicial examination or oversight by the populace. The dilemma facing the national legal system is the need to settle the international legal system of sports and the local public requirements¹⁸

IV. Football Government System in India

A. Institutional Structure

All India Football Federation is the primary governing body of football in India. As a domestic law society, AIFF has the responsibility to oversee national tournaments, regulation on state organisations, running of national teams and representing India in FIFA and Asian Football Confederation. In spite of its privatized legal status, AIFF has a role to undertake that has definite public implications particularly due to the increased professional and commercial nature of football in India.¹⁹

¹⁷ Antoine Duval, *LEX SPORTIVA: A PLAYGROUND FOR TRANSNATIONAL LAW* (T.M.C. Asser Press 2016)

¹⁸ Court of Arbitration for Sport, *CAS Jurisprudence Digest 1986–2015*, vol. II (2019)

¹⁹ Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, *National Sports Development Code of India*, 2011

Since time immemorial, the management of AIFF has been guided by the National Sports Code, 2011, which is an executive-level policy document published by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Sport Code provides regulations regarding age and tenure requirements, the transparency of elections, the representation of athletes and their financial accountability. Non-statutory nature has however limited on its enforcement allowing federations to make decisions on whether to comply or fight its implementation.

One remedial action suggested by the National Sports Governance Act, 2025²⁰, is a legislative initiative. The Act aims at creating standards of legislative governance, creation of autonomous regulatory framework, and reduction of reliance on judicial intervention. Although the Act is one of the tendencies in the direction of institutionalised control, its performance depends on effective implementation, independence of the regulation, and adherence to the international sports law principle.

B. Judicial Intervention and Constitutional Surveillance.

The judicial intervention has been characteristic in the administration of Indian football. Repeatedly, the Supreme Court has come to the rescue to overcome the administrative stagnation, voting fraud and the lack of adherence to the principles of governance. The situation in the case of AIFF was one where after many years of non-conduction of elections according to the Sports Code, a Committee of Administrators was formed to conduct the business of the federation.

Though the administrative order was momentarily restored through court intervention, imbalances in the system were also pointed out. The suspension of AIFF by FIFA during CoA tenure highlighted the dangers of too much judicial involvement in sport management. Though the Supreme Court ultimately had no problem with allowing the observance of FIFA laws, the experience highlighted the weakness of the Indian governance system and its reliance on courts as an ad hoc regulator.²¹

Judicial review, though significant in the event of weak internal checks, is essentially reactive. Courts do not suit well to engage in constant regulatory oversight, particularly in the technical

²⁰ National Sports Governance Act, 2025 Acts of Parliament, India (2025).

²¹ *Board of Control for Cricket in India v. Cricket Ass'n of Bihar*, (2015) 3 SCC 251 (India).

fields like sports management. The example of India demonstrates the constraints of judicial intervention as an alternative to the successful institutional control systems.²²

C. Regulatory Weaknesses

The Indian football administration is still faced with serious challenges. The process of electing officials in the federation has been often accused of being non-transparent and undemocratic. There is imbalance in financial disclosures and implementation of club licensing policies is still poor. Absence of an independent sports regulating body has contributed to the issues of fragmented monitoring with the government, judiciary and international agencies sharing various duties. These organisational shortcomings are obstacles to long-term planning, financial sustainability, and trust by stakeholders.

V. Spanish Football Governance Framework.

A. Institutional Structure

The football governance in Spain is unique due to the existence of two institutional structures. The Royal Spanish Football Federation is in charge of football on the national level, including the development of grassroots, as well as national teams, whereas La Liga is the governing body of professional club tournaments. This division of labour enhances professionalisation and reduces concentration of power in one institution.

RFEF and La Liga are both governed by statute with reference to the Spanish sports laws. Supervisory functions such as legislation approvals, election supervision and financial supervision are performed by the Consejo Superior de Deportes which is a governmental organ. Importantly, it is a well-structured and predictable supervision that does not consider ad hoc participation.²³

B. Statutory Control and Public Law Control.

Spanish sports law entrenches institutional oversight in the law as opposed to judicial redress. Federations are also subject to the public law obligations such as transparency provisions, disciplinary accountability and financial audits. The federative autonomy is ensured by the CSD supervisory post that ensures compliance. This legal form eradicates governance

²² Fédération Internationale de Football Association, Decision on the Suspension of the All India Football Federation (Aug. 2022)

²³ José Luis Pérez-Triviño, *Sports Governance and Public Law in Spain*, 12 INT'L SPORTS L.J. 89 (2012).

uncertainty and limits litigation. Conflicts are usually resolved through administrative or arbitral systems and this ensures stability and continuity in institutions.²⁴

C. Financial Regulation and Professionalisation.

The financial control is strict in the football governance structure of Spain. La Liga has stringent financial policies that restrict expenditure of teams due to income that can be verified. These limits, which are in line with the financial fair play regulations of UEFA, aim at preventing high levels of debts and improving long-term sustainability. The licensing systems correlate the participation in the contests with the adherence to the financial, infrastructural, and administrative standards. Such a professionalised method has enhanced financial discipline and has also played the role of making Spanish football competitive in the global arena.

VI. Adoption of International Football Regulations

A. India's Approach

India has been non-proactive with regard to interaction with international football rules. Institutional design and compliance with FIFA²⁵ and AFC²⁶ rules have usually been triggered by outside pressure or even by judicial decrees and not by purpose. Such a reactive position has given rise to recurring conflicts between changes of governance internally and autonomous needs internationally.

B. Spain's Approach

Spain has a more integrated approach of compliance. The international rules are internalised in home legal systems which ensures that there is no constitutional conflict. The regulation system at LaLiga is contained within the regulations of the Uefa licensing, which guarantees a seamless compliance system.

C. Comparative Assessment

The contrast between India and Spain highlights the need for the consistency of institutions. The integrated approach in Spain reduces tension between national and international commitments, whereas in India with its disjointed approach, the state worsens the situation of

²⁴ Michele Colucci, *Public Law Control of Sports Organisations in Europe*, 6 GLOBAL SPORTS L. REV. 41 (2018).

²⁵ Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), *Suspension of the All India Football Federation* (Aug. 2022), <https://www.fifa.com>.

²⁶ *All India Football Federation v. Rahul Mehra*, (2022) SCC OnLine SC 1334 (India).

instability in governance.²⁷

VII. Financial Regulations, Licensing and Dispute Management

One of the major pillars of institutional control is financial governance. There is the lack of finances in monitoring Indian football and intermittent compliance with the license regulations. The financial control systems of Spain, on the contrary, enhance sustainability and transparency.

The two systems are also divided by dispute resolution processes. There is no single sports tribunal in India, which also means that it will require months of legal action in constitutional courts. Spain uses expert administrative and arbitral frameworks, which are supplemented by CAS, to settle disputes efficiently and reduce the number of cases in courts.

VIII. India and Spain Comparative Analysis.

Comparative case study of football governance in India and Spain reveals the basic differences of the way institutional control is created, managed and executed. The legal and administrative means whereby football federations balance their autonomy with responsibility vary significantly even though both regimes constitutionally recognize the autonomy of those federations.

The institutional control of football in India is disjointed and responsive. The control is realized to a great extent through administrative policy, like the National Sports Code, 2011, and through the court, by constitutional courts.²⁸ Although these strategies have been important in rectifying the shortcomings of governance in the AIFF,²⁹ They are not very consistent and predictable. Directives of the executive are frequently flawed in their implementation, the court is only likely to take action at the end of long-term non-conformity. This leads to the fact that the institutional control in India is mostly remedial and not preventative.

Spain, in its turn, is a structural and preventive type of institutional control. Football governance is embedded within a legislative framework that outlines the legal position, the powers and the responsibilities of the football institutions in a clear manner. Public

²⁷ Court of Arbitration for Sport, *Code of Sports-related Arbitration* (2023).

²⁸ Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, *National Sports Development Code of India, 2011*.

²⁹ *All India Football Federation v. Rahul Mehra*, (2022) SCC OnLine SC 1334 (India).

administration activities are provided by the Royal Spanish Football Federation under legislative control, whereas professional football is regulated by La Liga in a legally recognized framework. The accuracy of such distribution of functions reduces institutional overlap and curbs discretionary governance maximising accountability.

This disparity is further advanced by financial regulation. Financial management of football federations and clubs is still poor in India as there is a lack of transparency in the disclosure requirements and enforcement of licensing limitations. Financial sustainability is recognised as a major issue of governance in Spain. The centralised financial management techniques, compliance with the requirements of the UEFA,³⁰ enhance budgetary discipline and minimise the systemic risk. Institutionalisation creates stability that is long-term in nature and is enforced.

The process of dispute resolution is also very different. There is no specific and fully efficient system of sports dispute resolution in India, so, the time is wasted and the decisions are unfair. Spain boasts of a multilayer conflict resolution system that includes inner authorities, administrative courts, and the right to international arbitration, which guarantees the transparency and consistency of the procedures in accordance with the international standards. Altogether, the experience of Spain can be viewed to show how the issue of institutional control can be adopted without harming the federative power, even though in India the practice of supervision ad hoc shows its limitations.

IX. Indian Football Governance Lessons

The Spanish system of football organization has certain valuable lessons to offer India; but these lessons need to be modified with the Indian constitutional system, administrative capability and athletic ethic in mind, not copied blindly. What was relevant in the experience of Spain was not its wholesale transplantability, but the principles of institutions it points to as the means to balance the power with responsibility in the administration of football.³¹

The first and the most important lesson is with regard to the role of legislative observation with reference to sports regulation. The experience of Spain indicates that by creating standards of

³⁰ UEFA, *Club Licensing and Financial Sustainability Regulations* (2022); LaLiga, *Economic Control Regulations* (2021).

³¹ Richard Parrish, *Sports Law and Policy in the European Union* 109–15 (2017).

governance within a definite legal framework, stability, legitimacy and continuity are provided, which can be achieved solely by policy-based regulation. Spanish sports federations are formed by the laws that clearly state their legal nature, their public roles and the methods of supervision therefore avoiding misapprehension on the extent of state control. Conversely, the reliance on the executive tools, including the National Sports Code, 2011 in India,³² has led to unequal application and a long period of resistance to the application by sports federations. The enactment of the National Sports Control Act, 2025 is an indication of a radical shift to legislative control in Indian sport. The Act can change the Indian football administration system that has hitherto been characterised by informal judicial corrective procedures into a more foreseeable and rule-driven regulatory system because it has established a legal framework that governs standards of governance, transparency requirements and institutional accountability. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the statutory monitoring will depend ultimately on the integrity of regulatory organisations and frequency of enforcement tools usage.

The second important lesson can be seen in the method of the professionalised league governance in Spain. The legal potentials and operational effectiveness of Spanish football have been achieved through the institutional distance between the federative and commercial league administration. In Spain, the Royal Spanish Football Federation retains authority on the national representation, regulation issues, whereas La Liga retains the delegated responsibility on professional competitions, commercial rights and financial control. This variety of responsibilities has reduced institutional concentration of power and given way to specialist forms of governance. In the Indian case, the governing of football has always been centralised by the federative governments with little demarcation between the regulatory and commercial functions. Providing professional leagues with greater functional autonomy in a well-articulated legislative and regulatory context could be more efficient in administration, engage investment, and support commercial expansion, and yet prevent institutional control through licensing and oversight processes.

Third, the Spanish model emphasizes the importance of addressing the issue of financial sustainability as a governing goal in itself and not as a secondary one. The financial structure of control in Spain shows that stringent budgeting rules, well-defined accounting standards, and controlled licensing frameworks can prevent the systemic financial crisis of professional

³² National Sports Governance Act, No. of 2025 (India).

football. Through linking the financial limitation of the municipal authorities with the Financial Fair Play demands by UEFA, Spanish football authorities have had the chance of dealing with the habitual club debts and fostering long-term economic sustainability. Conversely, Indian football has poor financial control, low disclosure obligations and inadequate implementation of licensing requirements. Making Spanish ideas fit India would require the extension of club licensing frameworks, requiring periodic disclosure of finances, and institutionalisation of independent audit procedures that would monitor compliance. These measures will not only add to the transparency, but will also contribute to overall credibility and sustainability of the Indian football administration.

Lastly, the case of Spain emphasizes the importance of effective conflict management institutions in maintaining the legitimacy of a government. An organized and professional process of conflict resolution will ensure that the issues are resolved in a timely manner, regularly and within the framework of the requirements of the international sports law. Spain deploys a system of internal review committees, administrative courts and access to international arbitration; this ensures that there is minimum uncertainty and the courts do not overstep their limits. In India, the absence of an effective and expert sport dispute resolution body has sometimes led to a lengthy court battle and unfair endings. One of the possible steps in this regard is the introduction of the sports tribunals in accordance with the National Sports Governance Act, 2025. The effectiveness of such tribunals will however depend on how independent the institutions used are, technical knowledge, accessibility of procedures and their ability to elicit trust in the stakeholders.

Collectively, these observations indicate that effective football governance requires more than change or judicial oversight at intervals. The experience of Spain highlights the benefits of institutionalised law, professionalised governance systems, financial controls and reliable systems of dispute resolution. In the case of India, adherence to such principles in a manner that is consistent with the local legal and administrative limitations provides a realistic alternative to enhancing institutional control and yet remain autonomous as required by international football governance principles.

X. Recommendations

To continue with Indian football, the governance would have to be carried out beyond a change of crisis situation, the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 should be converted into a working regulatory system out of the legislative promise. This requires that relevant subordinate laws that explicitly lay down governance principles, process of elections, financial disclosure requirements and enforcement mechanisms of national sports federations be enacted in time. In the absence of this useful interpretation, the Act has a real risk of repeating the errors of the previous policy-founded Sports Code where adherence was intermittent and largely relied on force.

It is also important to build effective independent monitoring bodies that have technical and specialized skills in sports management, finances, and law. Supervision cannot be limited to token supervision but should involve constant monitoring, regular audits, and the authority to impose relative penalties in case of non-compliance. An autonomous regulator would reduce the current excessive dependence on the courts and ensure that governance problems are dealt with on an institutional level and not through a protracted legal process. It is also this reform that would assist in protecting the governance of sports against political influence and retain social responsibility.

One of the fundamental reform objectives should be professionalisation of league governance. It could prove highly efficient and transparent with the federation level regulatory activity being separated with the league level commercial and operational administration following the La Liga model in Spain. Licensing, financial sustainability and conflict of interest standards should be used to regulate professional leagues so that teams can perform within foreseeable and implemented structures. This type of professionalisation will enhance the competition integrity and also instill more investor and stakeholder confidence in Indian football.

Restructuring to harmonise with FIFA requirements needs to be achieved through internal governance change as opposed to stern compliance due to international sanctions. Rather than viewing international standards of autonomy as limitations, the principle of incorporating them in the domestic regulatory framework needs to be adopted in a manner that does not conflict with constitutional principles. The inclusion of a clear legal contract with FIFA and thriving principles of good governance at the local level would reduce the tension between the local monitoring and foreign participation aspects, avoiding governance stalemates and bans.

Lastly, the judiciary should be redefined as a constitutional right instead of a common administrative measure. Courts also play a significant role in maintaining law and order upholding rights but cannot replace good regulatory bodies. A governing model, which relies on judicial redress, implies a systemic failure instead of success. The Indian football governance could move towards a stable, predictable, self-correcting operating regime by adding more statutory monitoring measures, financial control and dispute resolution measures which does not ignore the federative autonomy but still holds itself responsible in the service of the greater good.

XI. Conclusion

This article has undertaken a comparative legal examination of football administration and institutional control under Indian and Spanish sports legislation. The study demonstrates that while both jurisdictions legally guarantee the autonomy of football federations, they vary greatly in how this liberty is paired with measures of accountability and oversight.

In India, football governance has mostly relied on administrative policy tools and continuing judicial engagement to correct structural issues. While these tactics have achieved major advances, they remain essentially reactive, episodic, and institutionally unpredictable. Spain's experience, by contrast, indicates that effective institutional control may be based within powerful statute frameworks that provide legal clarity, regulatory predictability, and alignment with international football governance rules.

The core contention of this paper is not that India should mirror the Spanish governance model in its entirety, but rather that specific structural elements namely statutory oversight, professionalised league administration, enforceable financial sustainability norms, and credible dispute resolution mechanisms can be selectively adapted to the Indian context. As football governance in India continues to evolve, the key difficulty lies in establishing a regulatory system that protects federative authority while also guaranteeing transparency, accountability, and long-term institutional stability. Achieving this balance will not only increase local football governance but also enhance India's institutional legitimacy and credibility within the global football ecosystem.