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Comparative Study of Organizational Governance in University and Community Handball Clubs in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory qualitative study compares how organizational regulations, structures, and decision-making practices are described by representatives of Unit Activity Student (UKM) Handball University State Surabaya (UNESA) and GIRI Handball Club in Indonesia. Written responses to a common set of semi-structured questions were obtained through Google Forms from two purposively selected informants: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. Responses were organized and compared thematically across regulations, organizational structure, and governance practices. Both accounts emphasized the distribution of duties, communication, coordination, and deliberative decision-making. The university organization representative particularly emphasized training discipline, cooperation, and the fulfilment of assigned responsibilities, while the club representative described formal rules, including the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), work programmes, functional divisions, and evaluation procedures. These findings reflect differences in informant emphasis rather than verified differences in organizational performance. The small sample, non-equivalent informant roles, and absence of documentary corroboration prevent conclusions about relative governance quality. The study offers a preliminary basis for developing a more comprehensive comparison of governance arrangements in Indonesian handball organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

Effective sport organizations require more than technical training and competitive achievement. Their operations also depend on effective organizational management, clearly defined responsibilities, decision-making arrangements, communication, and mechanisms for coordinating members to ensure that activities are carried out in accordance with organizational goals. In sports organizations, governance provides a useful perspective for examining how authority is exercised, responsibilities are assigned, and organizational activities are overseen (Hartarto et al., 2021; Parent et al., 2018). Effective management and leadership can help sports organizations operate in a more organized and directed manner (Hartarto et al., 2021). In higher education settings, relationships between sports organizations, universities, and activity managers are also important aspects of organizational governance (Matsuse, M., Sano, M., & Kaneda, 2021).

Organizational regulations are an important component of sports organization management because they provide guidelines for organizational status, leadership, membership, authority, responsibilities, procedures, and decision-making processes. Clear regulations can support task allocation, supervision, and accountability within an organization. Inaba, (2020) explained that regulations in sports organizations are necessary to clarify the basis for carrying out responsibilities and managing organizational activities. However, the practical value of regulations depends not only on the existence of written provisions but also on how members understand and implement them. Matsuse, M., Sano, M., & Kaneda, (2021) indicated that relationships between universities and sports clubs may encounter challenges when the distribution of responsibilities and supervision systems are unclear. Therefore, regulations should not be viewed merely as rules that must be followed, but also in terms of how they are communicated, understood, and applied by the people involved in managing the organization.

In addition to regulations, organizational structure is an important element in determining the distribution of roles, duties, authority, and working relationships among members of a sports organization. Organizational structure provides an overview of the positions within an organization and how relationships between those positions operate. Czekanski & Lower, (2018) found that collegiate sport clubs may have relatively simple structures, low levels of specialization, informal operations, and more centralized decision-making. Similarly, Springer et al., (2025) indicated that collegiate sport clubs tend to have simple and flexible structures, informal coordination mechanisms, and centralized decision-making. Yuce et al., 2019) also emphasized the importance of clear job descriptions and the distribution of responsibilities in sports organizations because individual clubs may have different hierarchical structures and task allocation arrangements. These findings suggest that organizational effectiveness should be considered in relation to both formal positions and the working relationships through which organizational activities are carried out.

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University-based sports organizations and community sports clubs operate in different institutional contexts. University-based sports organizations operate within the university environment and may be subject to institutional supervision, whereas community sports clubs generally have more independent organizational settings for conducting their activities. These differences may influence how authority, responsibilities, leadership, and coordination are managed (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025). Matsuse, M., Sano, M., & Kaneda, (2021) indicated that the governance of university sports clubs involves relationships between universities and sports organizations, including the management of coaches and the supervision of activities. Meanwhile, Czekanski & Lower, (2018) showed that collegiate sport clubs may develop simple and informal organizational structures to manage their activities. Seippel, (2019) also indicated that the development of sports organizations may be associated with professionalization, increased organizational knowledge, and improvements in organizational structure. These conditions suggest that institutional context should be considered when comparing different sports organizational structures and governance arrangements Parent et al., (2018). Nevertheless, contextual differences should not automatically be assumed to produce particular governance outcomes without supporting evidence.

In the context of handball in East Java, GIRI Gresik Handball Club has been examined in previous research (Taroreh et al., 2025). Iklil et al., (2021) investigated the coaching management of GIRI Gresik Handball Club using a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through semi-structured interviews with the club chairperson and coach. Their study indicated that club management involves various organizational functions, including planning, organizing, implementation, communication, and coaching. These findings provide an overview of the roles played by management members and coaches in operating a handball organization, while related research has also discussed the broader context of sports organization management (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2025). In addition, research on the organizational structures of collegiate sport clubs suggests that the experiences and perspectives of people directly involved in an organization can help explain how organizational structures and processes operate in practice (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025; Wagner et al., 2011).

Although previous studies have examined university sports governance, sport club structures, and the management of GIRI Gresik Handball Club, there remains room for research specifically comparing organizational regulations and structures between a university-based handball organization and a community handball club in Indonesia. Iklil et al., (2021) focused on coaching management at GIRI Gresik Handball Club, whereas Czekanski & Lower, (2018) and Springer et al., (2025)) examined sport club structures in collegiate settings. Matsuse, M., Sano, M., & Kaneda, (2021) focused on university sports club governance and its management relationships with universities. These differences in research focus and context indicate the need to examine more specifically how regulations and organizational structures are understood by people directly involved in handball organizations in Indonesia. Previous studies provide a foundation for examining these issues,

but further exploration is needed to understand how organizational regulations, role distribution, decision-making, communication, and coordination are described in different handball organizational settings (Lower-hoppe et al., 2025; Springer et al., 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze and compare the organizational regulations and structures of UKM Handball Universitas Negeri Surabaya (UNESA) and GIRI Handball Club. The study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-comparative design and examines the perspectives of the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. Both informants are asked the same set of questions to obtain information about organizational regulations, authority and responsibilities, decision-making processes, organizational structure, task allocation, and relationships and coordination between organizational positions. This approach is consistent with previous studies that have used the experiences and explanations of people directly involved in sports organizations to understand the structures and management of sport clubs (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Iklil et al., 2021; Springer et al., 2025). The data are analyzed thematically to identify similarities and differences in the regulations and organizational structures of the two organizations, contributing to the broader discussion of sport governance in different organizational settings (Cho et al., 2024; Hallmann et al., 2025). Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions: (1) How do the two informants describe the regulations governing their organizations? (2) How do they describe organizational positions and the distribution of responsibilities? (3) What similarities and differences emerge in their accounts of decision-making, communication, coordination, and evaluation? The objective is to provide an exploratory comparison of governance arrangements rather than to audit or rank the governance performance of the two organizations.

METHODS

Research Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-comparative design to examine how organizational regulations and structures are understood and implemented in two different sports organizations: Universitas Negeri Surabaya Handball Club (UKM Handball UNESA), a university-based sports organization, and GIRI Handball Club, a club-based sports organization. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to explore the experiences and perspectives of individuals directly involved in organizational activities, particularly regarding regulations, authority, responsibilities, decision-making processes, and organizational structures. This approach is appropriate for understanding organizational processes and conditions from the perspectives of individuals within the research setting (Camic, 2021). Meanwhile, the descriptive-comparative design enabled the researcher to identify similarities and differences in organizational governance practices between the two organizations (Taroreh et al., 2025).

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The informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique used to identify individuals with relevant knowledge and experience related to the research focus (Duan & Hoagwood, 2015). This study involved two informants: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA, representing a university-based handball organization, and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club, representing a club-based handball organization. Both informants were selected because of their direct involvement in organizational activities and their expected ability to provide information about organizational regulations, structures, the distribution of authority and responsibilities, and decision-making processes. Selecting informants who are directly involved in sports organizations can help researchers understand organizational management and governance practices based on the experiences of those responsible for implementing them (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Iklil et al., 2021; Springer et al., 2025).

However, the two informants held different organizational positions: one was a chairperson, while the other was a coach. Therefore, their roles and responsibilities were not equivalent, which is an important limitation when interpreting differences in their accounts. The comparison consequently focused on the organizational information and governance practices described by each informant, while taking their different roles and organizational contexts into consideration.

Data Collection

Data were collected using a written qualitative questionnaire consisting of semi-structured questions administered through Google Forms. Both informants received the same set of questions and provided their responses in Indonesian, allowing their answers to be compared systematically. The use of written questions was appropriate for this study because the available data consisted of written responses rather than recorded oral interviews. The questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument for exploring organizational regulations and structures in UKM Handball UNESA and GIRI Handball Club.

The questions focused on two main aspects: organizational regulations and organizational structure. The organizational regulations aspect covered the existence and basis of organizational rules, organizational status, the formation and changes of management, decision-making authority, the distribution of responsibilities, the implementation of rules in organizational activities, problem-solving, and regulatory changes. Meanwhile, the organizational structure aspect addressed organizational positions, leadership roles, the role of the coach, the distribution of tasks and responsibilities, relationships between positions, and coordination among management, coaches, and members. These aspects were examined to identify similarities and differences in organizational governance practices between the university-based and club-based handball organizations.

The question guide was developed with reference to the framework for developing semi-structured interview guides described by (Kallio et al., 2016). This framework includes identifying the need for semi-structured interviews, using previous knowledge, formulating a preliminary guide, pilot-testing the guide, and developing the final guide. The formulation of the questions also considered previous research on the structure and governance of sports

organizations (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Iklil et al., 2021; Matsuse, M., Sano, M., & Kaneda, 2021; Springer et al., 2025). Semi-structured questions provided clear guidelines for data collection while allowing informants to explain their knowledge, experiences, and perspectives regarding their respective organizations (Ji et al., 2023; Lewis, 2015).

Both informants were asked to answer the questions based on their respective knowledge and experiences. Participation was based on their willingness to take part in the study. The written responses were collected in Indonesian and used as the primary data for subsequent analysis. The responses were then examined in relation to the two research aspects to identify patterns, similarities, and differences between the organizations. Because the informants held different organizational positions the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club their responses were interpreted in consideration of their respective roles and organizational contexts. The manuscript indicates that data collection was scheduled for Saturday, October 17, 2026, using Google Forms. However, the actual collection date and the documentation of informed consent should be verified against the research records before publication.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach to identify and interpret patterns of meaning in the informants' written responses (Clarke & Braun, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017). This method was selected because it enables researchers to systematically organize qualitative data and identify themes relevant to the research objectives. The analysis focused on comparing organizational regulations and structures, as well as decision-making, coordination, and evaluation practices in Universitas Negeri Surabaya Handball Club (UKM Handball UNESA) and GIRI Handball Club.

The analysis process involved six stages. First, the researcher read the written responses repeatedly to become familiar with the data. Second, initial codes were assigned to relevant parts of the responses based on the research objectives. Third, codes with similar meanings were grouped into potential themes. Fourth, the potential themes were reviewed to ensure that they accurately reflected the informants' responses. Fifth, the themes were clarified and named according to their content. Sixth, the findings were organized into a descriptive report supported by relevant excerpts from the informants' responses, where available (Braun et al., n.d.; Clarke & Braun, 2018).

To facilitate comparison, the responses from both informants were examined using the same analytical categories: (a) organizational regulations, (b) organizational structure and responsibilities, and (c) decision-making, coordination, and evaluation. The themes identified within these categories were then compared to determine similarities and differences between UKM Handball UNESA, a university-based sports organization, and GIRI Handball Club, a club-based sports organization. During interpretation, the researcher also considered the different organizational positions of the informants, namely the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club, as their responsibilities and perspectives might differ.

The analysis aimed to provide a descriptive understanding of organizational governance practices based on the informants' accounts rather than to measure relationships between variables or determine which organization was better. As the available manuscript does not include a detailed coding log or verbatim excerpts from the original responses, claims regarding coding reliability and direct quotations are not presented unless supported by the original research records.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the data was addressed through consistency, reflexivity, and transparency throughout the research process. First, both informants received the same set of questions, and their written responses were analyzed using the same analytical categories to maintain consistency in comparing organizational regulations, organizational structures and responsibilities, as well as decision-making, coordination, and evaluation practices. The researcher also documented the coding process and analytical decisions to make the interpretation of the data traceable (Nowell et al., 2017).

Reflexivity was also considered because the researcher is both a player and a member of Universitas Negeri Surabaya Handball Club (UKM Handball UNESA) and GIRI Handball Club. This experience provided an initial understanding of the contexts of both organizations; however, it could also influence how the informants' responses were interpreted. To address this potential influence, the researcher applied the same analytical categories to both organizations and considered personal assumptions that might affect the interpretation of the findings (Clarke & Braun, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017). These measures were considered in relation to the qualitative research quality criteria described by Tracy, (2010), particularly credibility, reflexivity, and transparency throughout the research process.

The scope of the findings was limited to the perspectives reported by the two informants: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. The available research materials did not include organizational constitutions, meeting minutes, financial reports, or observation records for independent verification. Therefore, the findings reflect the informants' accounts of organizational governance practices and do not independently establish whether particular practices were consistently implemented or whether one organization had stronger governance than the other. Furthermore, the researcher did not claim that the findings had been returned to the informants for review unless this procedure had actually been conducted and documented. These limitations were taken into consideration when interpreting and presenting the comparative findings.

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RESULTS

Overview of the Research Findings

University State Surabaya The data were obtained from two informants: the Chair of Universitas Negeri Surabaya Handball Club and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. Based on their responses, the two informants had different lengths of experience in their respective organizations. The Chair of Universitas Negeri Surabaya Handball Club had been involved for approximately one year, whereas the Coach of GIRI Handball Club had been involved for four years.

The findings were grouped into three themes: organizational regulations, organizational structure, and evaluation of organizational governance. These three themes were used to describe how rules were implemented, how tasks and responsibilities were distributed, and which aspects of organizational management needed to be maintained or improved.

Organizational Regulations

The Chair of UKM Handball UNESA emphasized the importance of punctuality, discipline during training sessions, compliance with organizational rules, and appropriate conduct among members. These responses indicate that the regulations described by the chair were primarily associated with members' daily behaviour and the implementation of discipline in organizational activities. Punctuality and discipline can be understood as important aspects of maintaining commitment, order, and consistency within a university-based sports organization.

Meanwhile, the Coach of GIRI Handball Club referred to more explicit organizational references, including the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), internal organizational regulations, work programmes, and handball rules. These references suggest that the coach's explanation placed greater emphasis on the formal frameworks and operational guidelines used to support organizational activities. The inclusion of work programmes also indicates that the response addressed how organizational plans and sporting regulations guide the implementation of activities.

Overall, the difference between the two responses lies in their emphasis: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA highlighted discipline and members' conduct, whereas the Coach of GIRI Handball Club referred to formal organizational documents and operational guidelines. However, this contrast reflects the content of the informants' responses rather than a definitive difference in the existence of written regulations. The available data do not establish that UKM Handball UNESA lacks formal regulations or that the regulations mentioned by GIRI Handball Club are implemented more consistently. Further examination of organizational documents would be necessary to verify the formal status and practical implementation of regulations in both organizations.

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Structure and Distribution of Responsibilities

The representative of UKM Handball UNESA identified several key positions within the organization, including the chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and information and communication division (infokom). Each position has specific duties and responsibilities assigned according to its respective role. This arrangement indicates that the distribution of tasks within UKM Handball UNESA is based on the organizational positions held by its members, allowing responsibilities to be divided among different individuals. The clarity of these roles is important for supporting the coordination of organizational activities and ensuring that members understand their respective responsibilities.

Similarly, the representative of GIRI Handball Club described comparable leadership and administrative roles, while also identifying functions related to athlete development, competitions, and facilities and infrastructure. These functions reflect the range of responsibilities involved in supporting the club's organizational and sporting activities. The inclusion of these areas illustrates how task distribution within GIRI Handball Club encompasses both administrative responsibilities and functions directly related to the development and implementation of sports activities.

Despite these differences in the roles and functions described, both informants emphasized the importance of communication among members responsible for carrying out organizational tasks. Communication serves as a means of coordinating responsibilities, exchanging information, and supporting the implementation of assigned duties. Overall, both accounts indicate that the distribution of tasks is linked to the organizational positions and functions held by members, with communication playing an important role in coordinating their respective responsibilities. However, the main difference lies in the specific functions highlighted by each informant, particularly the athlete development, competition, and facilities-related functions described by the GIRI Handball Club representative.

Decision-making, Coordination, and Evaluation

Both informants described deliberation as an important practice in organizational decision-making. In UKM Handball UNESA, the representative explained that decisions were discussed collectively, although the chair retained the final decision-making authority. When disagreements arose, the organization sought to find common ground through discussion. This approach indicates that deliberation provides an opportunity for members to express their views and consider different perspectives before a decision is finalized. At the same time, the chair's authority serves as the final point of decision-making when a conclusion needs to be reached.

Similarly, the GIRI Handball Club representative described meetings and discussions as part of the decision-making process. These discussions provide a forum for exchanging opinions and considering organizational matters collectively. When agreement cannot be reached, voting may be used in accordance with the applicable organizational procedures. This indicates that the decision-making process described by GIRI Handball Club includes

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an alternative mechanism for resolving differences of opinion when deliberation does not produce a shared conclusion.

Coordination practices were also described by both informants, although the emphasis differed. In UKM Handball UNESA, coordination was associated with communication among divisions to support the implementation of organizational responsibilities and activities. In GIRI Handball Club, coordination involved meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and activity evaluation. These practices provide channels for sharing information, monitoring the progress of activities, and discussing matters that require further attention. Activity evaluation also provides an opportunity to review the implementation of programmes and identify aspects that may need improvement.

Overall, both accounts highlight the importance of deliberation, communication, and coordination in organizational governance. However, the responses differ in the specific mechanisms emphasized. UKM Handball UNESA's account highlighted the chair's final decision-making authority and efforts to reach common ground, whereas GIRI Handball Club's account included the possibility of voting when agreement could not be reached. Similarly, the first account emphasized communication among divisions, while the second described a broader set of coordination practices, including meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and activity evaluation. These differences reflect the practices reported by the two informants and do not, by themselves, establish that one organization has a more effective decision-making or coordination system than the other.

Comparison of Organizational Regulations and Structures

Table 1. Comparison of Organizational Regulations and Structures

Dimension	UKM Handball UNESA	GIRI Handball Club
Regulatory basis	Emphasizes training discipline, punctuality, compliance with organizational rules, and appropriate conduct among members.	Refers to the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), internal organizational regulations, work programmes, and handball rules.
Organizational structure	Identifies the chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and information and communication division (infokom).	Describes leadership and administrative roles, as well as functions related to athlete development, competitions, and facilities and infrastructure.
Task distribution	Tasks are assigned according to organizational positions and coordinated through communication among divisions.	Tasks and responsibilities are distributed according to organizational positions and divisions, supported by coordination and reporting.

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Decision-making	Uses deliberation, with the chair retaining final decision-making authority.	Uses meetings and deliberation, with voting possible when agreement cannot be reached under applicable procedures.
Problem-solving	Seeks common ground when differences of opinion arise.	Involves communication, clarification, collective discussion, and evaluation.
Coordination and evaluation	Emphasizes communication among divisions, monitoring, and evaluation.	Involves meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and activity evaluation.

Based on Table 1, both UKM Handball UNESA and GIRI Handball Club share several similarities in their reported governance practices, particularly in the distribution of responsibilities, communication, coordination, and problem-solving. Both organizations also use deliberation as an important decision-making method. These similarities indicate that communication and the involvement of organizational members are important elements in the governance practices described by both informants.

However, differences can be observed in the regulatory foundations and the organizational functions emphasized in their accounts. The Chair of UKM Handball UNESA placed greater emphasis on training discipline, punctuality, appropriate conduct, and communication among organizational divisions. In contrast, the Coach of GIRI Handball Club referred to more explicit regulatory documents, including the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), internal organizational regulations, work programmes, and handball rules. The GIRI Handball Club account also described functions related to athlete development, competitions, facilities and infrastructure, and administrative coordination.

Differences were also evident in the decision-making and coordination mechanisms described by the informants. In UKM Handball UNESA, the chair retained final decision-making authority, while disagreements were addressed by seeking common ground. In GIRI Handball Club, meetings and deliberation were used to discuss organizational matters, with voting possible when agreement could not be reached under applicable procedures. Regarding coordination, UKM Handball UNESA emphasized communication among divisions and monitoring, whereas GIRI Handball Club described meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and activity evaluation.

Overall, the findings provide a descriptive comparison of the organizational governance practices reported by the two informants. The differences reflect the emphasis and level of detail in their respective accounts rather than definitive evidence that one organization has more formal regulations or more effective governance than the other. The findings should therefore be interpreted within the context of the informants' respective roles and the limitations of the available data.

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DISCUSSION

The comparison indicates that both UKM Handball UNESA and GIRI Handball Club regard clear responsibilities, communication, and coordination as important aspects of organizational governance. Both informants described the distribution of tasks according to organizational positions and identified communication as a means of supporting organizational activities. These findings are consistent with research emphasizing the relationship between organizational structures, the distribution of responsibilities, and everyday coordination in sports organizations (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the available evidence is insufficient to determine how systematically these arrangements are implemented in practice.

Differences in Organizational Regulations

The most visible difference concerns how organizational regulations were described by the two informants. The Chair of UKM Handball UNESA emphasized operational discipline, punctuality, compliance with rules, and appropriate conduct among members. In contrast, the Coach of GIRI Handball Club referred to the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), internal organizational regulations, work programmes, and handball rules. This difference reflects the emphasis of each informant's account rather than necessarily indicating a difference in the completeness of the organizations' regulatory systems. Operational norms and formal organizational regulations can coexist, as formal rules provide organizational guidelines while daily practices reflect how members understand and apply those guidelines.

The findings also highlight the importance of communication in the implementation of organizational regulations. The Chair of UKM Handball UNESA emphasized discipline and the application of rules during organizational activities, whereas the Coach of GIRI Handball Club highlighted written regulations and management procedures. These perspectives suggest that organizational governance involves not only the existence of rules but also how responsibilities and expectations are communicated to members. This interpretation is consistent with the importance of organizational structures and coordination in sports organizations (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025). However, because the study did not examine constitutional documents or internal policies directly, it cannot establish whether one organization has more comprehensive written regulations or implements its rules more consistently than the other.

Organizational Structure and Distribution of Responsibilities

Both informants described the distribution of responsibilities according to organizational positions. The Chair of UKM Handball UNESA identified the chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and information and communication division (infokom). Meanwhile, the Coach of GIRI Handball Club described leadership and administrative roles alongside functions related to athlete development, competitions, and facilities and infrastructure. Although the second account provided more detail about specific organizational functions, this difference

should be interpreted in relation to the information provided by each informant rather than as evidence of a more effective organizational structure.

The findings further indicate that communication and coordination were considered relevant to carrying out assigned responsibilities. The UKM Handball UNESA account emphasized communication among divisions, cooperation, monitoring, and evaluation. The GIRI Handball Club account additionally referred to meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and activity evaluation. These practices illustrate the different coordination mechanisms described by the informants and reflect the relevance of organizational structures to everyday management in sports organizations (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the study did not directly assess the effectiveness of these mechanisms. Therefore, the comparison identifies differences in reported practices without establishing that either organization's structure or task distribution is more effective.

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

Decision-making was another area in which the informants described both similarities and differences. Both identified deliberation as an important decision-making practice. In UKM Handball UNESA, the chair retained final decision-making authority, while disagreements were addressed by seeking common ground. In GIRI Handball Club, decisions were discussed through meetings and deliberation, with voting possible when agreement could not be reached under applicable procedures. These accounts indicate that both organizations recognized discussion as part of organizational decision-making, although the mechanisms described differed.

The variation may also reflect the different responsibilities of the informants. A chairperson and a coach may focus on different aspects of organizational governance because their positions involve different responsibilities and perspectives. Consequently, the reported decision-making procedures should be understood as situated accounts of organizational practices rather than equivalent measures of institutional governance. Although deliberation, final authority, and voting describe how decisions may be reached, these practices alone do not establish the transparency, fairness, or effectiveness of the decision-making process.

Regarding problem-solving, the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA emphasized finding common ground when differences of opinion arose. The Coach of GIRI Handball Club described communication, clarification, collective discussion, and evaluation as relevant approaches. Both accounts therefore highlighted communication as part of resolving organizational issues. However, the available responses did not provide sufficient detail about specific conflicts or their outcomes to determine how successfully these approaches were implemented in practice.

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Practical Implications for Handball Organizational Governance

The findings suggest several areas for organizational reflection. First, organizational rules, role descriptions, and decision-making procedures should be clearly defined and accessible to members. In addition to rules concerning discipline and training activities, clear explanations of responsibilities and problem-solving procedures may help members understand their roles within the organization. These considerations are consistent with the importance of organizational structure and coordination in sports governance (Czekanski & Lower, 2018; Springer et al., 2025).

Second, the distribution of responsibilities should be supported by appropriate communication and coordination mechanisms. Meetings, communication groups, progress reports, and evaluations are among the practices described by the informants. Their relevance depends on the needs and capacities of each organization. Establishing clear responsibilities for communication and evaluation may also support accountability and coordination across organizational positions. These points represent practical considerations arising from the comparison rather than demonstrated deficiencies in either organization.

Third, organizational governance may benefit from reviewing the clarity and implementation of existing rules, the distribution of responsibilities, and the procedures used to evaluate activities. Principles such as accountability, transparency, participation, and oversight provide useful considerations for examining sports organizational governance (Parent et al., 2018). However, the present findings do not establish whether these principles are fully implemented in either organization. Further examination of organizational documents and management practices would be necessary to assess their application more directly.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the comparison was based on the written responses of only two informants: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. Their organizational positions were not equivalent, which may have influenced the aspects of governance emphasized in their accounts. Second, the study did not include direct examination of organizational constitutions, internal regulations, organizational charts, meeting minutes, financial reports, or observation records. Consequently, the findings describe the informants' reported perspectives rather than independently verified organizational arrangements or the consistent implementation of particular practices.

Future research should examine organizational documents, meeting records, and programme reports and include comparable groups of administrators, coaches, and members from both organizations. Combining these sources with interviews or observations would allow researchers to compare reported practices with documented procedures and activities. Such triangulation could provide a more comprehensive understanding of organizational governance, including accountability, transparency, participation, and oversight (Parent et al., 2018).

Overall, this study provides an initial descriptive comparison of organizational governance in a university-based handball organization and a club-based handball organization. Its contribution lies in identifying similarities and differences in the informants' accounts of regulations, organizational structures, decision-making, and coordination. The findings offer a basis for further investigation but should not be interpreted as a comprehensive assessment of governance quality or as evidence that one organization performs better than the other.

CONCLUSION

This exploratory comparison identified several common themes in the accounts of representatives of UKM Handball UNESA and GIRI Handball Club, particularly regarding task distribution, coordination, communication, and deliberative decision-making. Both representatives emphasized the importance of assigning responsibilities according to organizational roles and maintaining communication to support the implementation of organizational activities. These similarities indicate that coordination and communication were recognized as relevant aspects of organizational management in both the university-based and club-based handball organizations.

Despite these similarities, differences emerged in the aspects of governance emphasized by each representative. The representative of UKM Handball UNESA particularly highlighted member discipline, the fulfilment of assigned duties, and coordination among organizational divisions. In contrast, the representative of GIRI Handball Club provided more extensive descriptions of formal organizational regulations, management procedures, and mechanisms for coordinating activities. This variation suggests that the representatives focused on different aspects of organizational governance when describing their respective organizations. However, these differences should be understood as differences in the emphasis and level of detail in their reported accounts, rather than as evidence that one organization has more effective or superior governance than the other.

The findings must be interpreted cautiously because the study involved only two participants who held different organizational positions: the Chair of UKM Handball UNESA and the Coach of GIRI Handball Club. Their different responsibilities and perspectives may have influenced the information they provided. Furthermore, the study relied exclusively on written responses, without independent verification through organizational documents or direct observations. Consequently, the findings provide an initial description of the governance practices reported by the two representatives rather than a comprehensive assessment of how organizational regulations and structures operate in practice.

Future research should involve a larger number of participants representing different organizational roles and incorporate supporting evidence, such as organizational constitutions and bylaws, organizational charts, meeting minutes, and programme reports. Examining these sources alongside participants' accounts would allow researchers to investigate how governance arrangements are formally established and implemented in daily organizational activities. Such an approach could provide a more comprehensive

understanding of the similarities and differences between university-based and club-based handball organizations while strengthening the basis for interpreting their governance practices.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The original manuscript declares no conflict of interest.

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