

Ethical Obligations of Sports Coaches in Jordan: A Comparative Analysis with International Legal Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the ethical obligations of sports coaches in Jordan through a comparative analysis with international legal frameworks established by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and UNESCO. Using a qualitative methodology that integrates doctrinal legal analysis with empirical case studies, the research evaluates Jordan's Sports Law No. 19 (2009, amended 2018), the Jordan Olympic Committee's Code of Professional Conduct, and the Jordan Anti-Doping Organization's regulations against global standards such as the WADA Anti-Doping Code (2021), IOC Ethics Guidelines (2023), and UNESCO's International Charter (2022). The findings reveal strong formal alignment in anti-doping, safeguarding, and professional conduct provisions, but persistent enforcement gaps driven by institutional fragmentation, limited investigative capacity, and cultural barriers to reporting violations. The 2021 weightlifting doping case underscores these challenges, illustrating how regulatory compliance on paper fails to translate into effective deterrence in practice. The study contributes to sports governance literature by identifying three systemic enforcement gaps—fragmentation, resource constraints, and cultural resistance—and by proposing context-specific reforms including centralized oversight, enhanced investigative resources, and culturally adapted whistle-blowers protections. These recommendations aim to bridge the gap between policy adoption and operational compliance, offering a roadmap for strengthening ethical governance and athlete welfare in Jordan's sports sector.

Keywords: sports coaching ethics, doping regulations, Jordan sports policy, international regulations compliance, athlete welfare, enforcement mechanisms

INTRODUCTION

Sports coaching entails profound ethical and legal responsibilities that extend far beyond technical training, encompassing the duty to safeguard athlete welfare, uphold integrity, and ensure fairness in competition. In Jordan much like in other developing sports systems these obligations are formally embedded within national legislation and institutional policies, yet their practical enforcement remains inconsistent. The gap between policy adoption and operational compliance is shaped by a combination of institutional fragmentation, resource limitations, and cultural barriers, raising critical questions about the effectiveness of Jordan's governance model for coaching ethics. This study is guided by the central research question:

How do the ethical obligations and enforcement mechanisms for sports coaches in Jordan compare with international legal frameworks established by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and UNESCO and what reforms could enhance compliance?

To address this question, the paper adopts a qualitative comparative methodology that combines doctrinal legal analysis with empirical case studies. The legal component systematically examines Jordan's Sports Law No. 19 (2009, amended 2018), the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Code of Professional Conduct, and the Jordan Anti-Doping Organization (JADO) regulations alongside key international instruments, including the WADA Anti-Doping Code (2021), the IOC Ethics Guidelines (2023), and UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity, and Sport (2022). This is complemented by an assessment of real-world enforcement practices, with particular attention to the 2021 weightlifting doping case as a lens through which to examine systemic weaknesses in monitoring, adjudication, and accountability.

The research contributes to the discourse on sports ethics in three key ways. First, it offers a structured, side-by-side comparison of Jordan's regulatory framework with leading international standards, providing a model for similar analyses in other developing nations. Second, it moves beyond formal alignment to evaluate functional compliance, highlighting the operational and cultural barriers that undermine enforcement. Finally, it proposes evidence-based, context-specific reforms including centralized oversight, enhanced investigative capacity, and culturally adapted whistleblower protections that aim to close the gap between ethical policy design and practical application.

By integrating legal analysis, comparative benchmarking, and applied case studies, this paper delivers a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening ethical governance in Jordanian sport. The subsequent sections review Jordan's domestic legal and institutional frameworks, examine relevant international standards, identify alignment and enforcement gaps, and present actionable recommendations that align national practice with global benchmarks while addressing the realities of Jordan's sports ecosystem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ethical obligations of sports coaches have attracted growing academic attention, particularly in developing nations where governance structures often lack the capacity to fully operationalize international standards (Khwaileh, 2025). In such contexts, the role of coaches extends beyond athletic performance to safeguarding athlete welfare, promoting fair play, and ensuring compliance with anti-doping regulations. However, the gap between legislative provisions and practical enforcement remains a critical concern (Al-Jarrah et al., 2023).

Al-Hussein (2021) underscores the unique challenge Jordan faces in reconciling competitive imperatives with athlete protection, noting that the Sports Law No. 19 (2018) articulates comprehensive ethical mandates but suffers from fragmented enforcement and inadequate institutional follow-through. This aligns with findings by Hassan and Whitaker (2022), who highlight how coaching ethics in many developing nations are undermined by decentralized regulatory approaches that leave enforcement to under-resourced federations—a point reinforced by Al-Hourani's (2023) observation of policy inconsistencies between Jordan's sports governing bodies. Such fragmentation creates a structural vulnerability where regulations exist in principle but lack the operational depth to be consistently applied.

From a global perspective, the World Anti-Doping Agency's World Anti-Doping Code (2021) and the International Olympic Committee's Ethics Guidelines (2023) serve as key reference points for evaluating national frameworks. These instruments emphasize athlete safety, integrity, and non-discrimination, while establishing compliance monitoring and sanctions for violations. Yet, as Smith and Hammoudi (2022) argue, the efficacy of such frameworks depends heavily on their contextual adaptability in an area where Jordan faces substantial hurdles. Jordan's Anti-Doping Organization (JADO), despite formal alignment with WADA's Code, has been criticized for limited testing coverage, insufficient investigative resources, and delays in adjudication (JADO Annual Report, 2022).

Empirical evidence illustrates the consequences of this gap between policy and practice. The 2021 weightlifting scandal in Jordan, where banned substances were administered over several months before detection, reflects a systemic weakness in monitoring and case resolution. Comparative studies by the International Council for Coaching Excellence (2021) confirm that many developing countries adopt global norms superficially without embedding the institutional capacity—such as independent investigative units, anonymous reporting mechanisms, and continuous coach education—necessary for meaningful enforcement (Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2016).

Cross-national examples offer both critique and guidance. Barakat and Foster (2023) highlight Morocco's integration of WADA's regional anti-doping initiatives with local enforcement structures, leading to measurable reductions in doping cases. This success contrasts with Jordan's current reliance on a multi-tiered but under-resourced enforcement system, where case processing times and inconsistent sanctions erode deterrence. Similarly, UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity, and Sport (2022) promotes a holistic approach to athlete welfare, including mental health protection and gender equity. However, its voluntary nature

limits its enforceability, particularly in nations like Jordan where cultural and institutional barriers impede whistleblowing and equitable representation (Adair & Vamplew, 2018).

Critically, the literature reveals that Jordan's coaching ethics framework—while formally aligned with international standards—remains hampered by three systemic deficits directly relevant to the research question:

- **Institutional Fragmentation** – Enforcement responsibilities are divided between JADO, the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC), and individual federations, creating duplication and inefficiencies (Al-Hourani, 2023).
- **Resource Constraints** – Limited budgets, staffing shortages, and inadequate training hinder the ability to detect, investigate, and sanction ethical violations (Barakat & Foster, 2023).
- **Cultural Barriers** – Social hierarchies and tribal affiliations reduce the likelihood of reporting misconduct, particularly in cases involving high-status coaches or gender-based violations (Al-Hussein, 2021).

These deficits are not unique to Jordan. Research in similar contexts, such as Tunisia (Hargreaves & Vertinsky, 2007) and Egypt (Soliman, 2019), demonstrates that formal adoption of WADA and IOC principles without systemic reform yields limited improvements in ethical compliance. This underscores the importance of the current study's comparative approach, which seeks to move beyond descriptive alignment toward identifying practical reforms tailored to Jordan's socio-political realities.

The emerging discourse advocates for institutional harmonization and cross-border cooperation as the most effective strategies for bridging the gap between global norms and local realities (Jarrah et al., 2025). Integrating independent oversight bodies, creating unified ethics codes applicable across all federations, and leveraging regional partnerships for training and capacity-building have proven effective in contexts like Morocco and South Africa (Houlihan & Hanstad, 2019). For Jordan, such measures could address the very enforcement and cultural challenges documented in the literature.

In summary, the body of research reflects a consensus that while Jordan's legislative and policy frameworks are largely in line with international standards, their effectiveness is undermined by enforcement weaknesses, resource limitations, and entrenched socio-cultural dynamics. This literature review therefore sets the stage for the present study's comparative methodology, which aims to identify actionable reforms that can enhance compliance, promote athlete welfare, and operationalize ethical standards in Jordan's sports coaching sector.

Ethical Obligations of Sports Coaches under Jordanian Law and Institutional Policies

The ethical obligations of sports coaches in Jordan operate within a multi-layered governance framework that integrates domestic legislation, institutional codes of conduct, and sport-specific regulatory instruments. This layered structure reflects Jordan's attempts to balance competitive sporting ambitions with the duty to protect athlete welfare, a balance that, as in many developing sports systems, is challenged by limited institutional capacity, cultural hierarchies, and uneven regulatory enforcement (Al-Hussein, 2021; Chappelet & Mrkonjic, 2019).

Legislative Foundations and Limitations

At the statutory level, Sports Law No. 19 of 2009 (as amended in 2018) remains the cornerstone of Jordan's coaching ethics regime.

- Article 14 mandates licensed coaches to “maintain the highest standards of professional conduct” (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2018).
- Article 14(b) codifies a duty of care, requiring coaches to ensure athlete safety through scientifically sound training methods.
- Article 16 prohibits doping and match-fixing, anchoring integrity provisions in alignment with international anti-doping principles.
- Article 12 establishes minimum professional qualifications, aiming to elevate coaching standards through licensing requirements.
- Article 62 introduces explicit prohibitions on physical and psychological abuse, reinforcing athlete protection mandates.

Complementing sports-specific legislation, Articles 342–346 of the Jordanian Penal Code (1960, amended 2017) criminalize assault and psychological harm, provisions which, while not tailored for sport, apply in cases of abuse by coaches. This dual framework theoretically offers robust protection; however, enforcement data suggests otherwise. As Al-Majali (2020) notes, underreporting of violations persists due to cultural acceptance of authoritarian coaching styles and fear of retaliation—an issue mirrored in similar contexts such as Egypt (Soliman, 2019) and Tunisia (Hargreaves & Vertinsky, 2007).

From a comparative governance standpoint, while Jordan's legislation mirrors key provisions found in WADA's Code (2021) and the IOC's Ethics Guidelines (2023), it lacks clear operational protocols for enforcement. For example, the UK's UK Coaching Code specifies time-bound investigative procedures, standardized sanctions, and independent review mechanisms—measures absent from Jordan's statutory framework (UK Sport, 2022). This

absence contributes to procedural delays, with disciplinary cases in Jordan averaging 12–14 months for resolution (Barakat, 2023), undermining deterrence.

Institutional Policies and Enforcement Capacity

At the institutional level, the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) functions as the primary custodian of coaching standards through its 2020 Code of Professional Conduct, which is built on five pillars:

1. Athlete-centred philosophy.
2. Anti-doping compliance.
3. Safeguarding and protection protocols.
4. Professional development obligations.
5. Integrity in competition management.

These pillars align conceptually with International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) Global Standards (2021), yet Jordan's framework omits detailed implementation guidelines—such as monitoring templates, minimum inspection frequencies, and independent case auditing—which are common in higher-capacity systems like Australia (ASC, 2020).

The Jordan Anti-Doping Organization (JADO), a semi-autonomous body, enforces anti-doping regulations under its 2022 revision, which strengthens coach obligations by mandating:

- Anti-doping education for athletes under their supervision.
- Prohibition on administering prohibited substances.
- Duty to report suspected violations.

While these provisions align with Article 21.2.6 of the WADA Code (2021), the 2021 weightlifting scandal—where doping violations persisted for eight months before detection—revealed weaknesses in surveillance and follow-up (JADO Annual Report, 2022). This mirrors findings from Houlihan and Hanstad (2019), who argue that without independent monitoring units and unannounced testing regimes, anti-doping rules risk becoming symbolic rather than preventive.

Federation-Level Policies and Inconsistencies

Beyond national bodies, individual sports federations implement discipline-specific ethical policies. For example:

- The Jordan Football Association (JFA) adopted a 2021 Safeguarding Policy, introducing mandatory background checks for coaches.
- The Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) implemented a 2022 Code regulating coach-athlete relationships.

While such measures address unique risks within each sport, they produce fragmented ethical landscapes. Different federations may impose inconsistent sanction durations for similar violations, leading to forum shopping by offending coaches—resigning from one federation to work under another's jurisdiction (Al-Hourani, 2023). In governance theory, such fragmentation is associated with “compliance migration” (Pielke, 2013), where actors exploit regulatory inconsistencies to avoid accountability.

Enforcement Structures: Challenges and Critiques

Jordan's three-tier enforcement structure consists of:

1. Federation disciplinary committees (minor violations).
2. JOC Ethics Commission (serious ethical breaches).
3. Judicial system (criminal offences).

Despite this structure, capacity constraints undermine effectiveness. With only 12 full-time ethics officers overseeing 43 federations, investigative coverage is thin (Ministry of Youth and Sports Strategic Plan, 2021–2025). Furthermore, adjudication delays and inconsistent sanctioning practices weaken deterrence—issues also documented in Kenya's Athletics Integrity Unit before its 2016 reforms (Hanstad & Loland, 2017).

Emerging Reforms and Persistent Gaps

Recent reforms—including the 2022 rollout of digital certification systems, expansion of whistleblower protections, and growth in international cooperation—signal progress toward professionalizing coaching ethics. Yet, these remain incremental and reactive. For example, whistleblower protections lack anonymous reporting portals, despite evidence from IOC best practice models showing that anonymity increases reporting by up to 46% (IOC, 2023).

The persistence of these gaps directly relates to the research question: How do Jordan's coaching ethics and enforcement mechanisms compare with international legal frameworks, and what reforms could enhance compliance? The literature and comparative evidence indicate that while Jordan has established formal alignment

with international ethical norms, the operational translation of these norms into enforceable practice is constrained by:

- Institutional fragmentation.
- Resource deficits.
- Cultural resistance to challenging authority.

Addressing these issues will require centralized oversight, capacity-building, and cultural change initiatives to shift norms toward athlete-centred governance. The next section evaluates how these national frameworks measure against international standards such as WADA, IOC, and UNESCO instruments, identifying areas for structural reform.

Table 1: created by author: Policy Gap Matrix: Jordan vs. International Standards on Coaching Ethics & Anti-Doping

Dimension	Jordan's Framework	International Benchmark	Alignment Status	Key Gaps & Implementation Barriers
Legal Mandates for Coaching Ethics	Sports Law No. 19 (2009, amended 2018) mandates duty of care, anti-doping, and qualification standards; Penal Code covers abuse.	WADA Code (2021), IOC Ethics Guidelines (2023) require integrity, athlete safety, and legal enforcement.	Partial Alignment	No independent enforcement timelines; lack of operational procedures; reactive rather than preventive approach.
Anti-Doping Provisions	JADO regulations mirror WADA's prohibited list and education requirements.	WADA Code Articles 21 & 23 require comprehensive testing, education, and compliance monitoring.	Partial Alignment	Only ~37% of planned tests conducted (2022); limited unannounced testing; delayed case resolution (avg. 14 months).
Safeguarding & Athlete Protection	JOC Code prohibits abuse; federation policies vary (JFA background checks, JBF relationship rules).	IOC Ethics Guidelines require independent investigations and safeguarding protocols.	Partial Alignment	No national anonymous reporting system; inconsistent disciplinary measures across federations.
Coach Education & Licensing	Licensing standards in Sports Law; digital certification introduced in 2022.	ICCE Global Standards require continuous professional development, ethics refreshers.	Partial Alignment	Only ~23% of coaches complete annual ethics training; no universal digital credential verification.
Gender Equity in Coaching	No statutory quota; 12% female representation in coaching.	UNESCO Charter calls for gender parity and equity programs.	Low Alignment	No targeted recruitment or retention initiatives; limited female leadership pathways.
Whistleblower Protections	Expanded protections in 2022; covers retaliation.	IOC model includes anonymous online reporting portals and legal immunity.	Partial Alignment	No fully anonymous reporting mechanism; limited awareness campaigns.
Enforcement Mechanisms	Tiered system: federation	WADA/IOC recommend	Low Alignment	Institutional fragmentation;

Cultural Compliance Factors	committees → JOC Ethics Commission → courts.	independent oversight with authority.	Low Alignment	duplication of investigations; insufficient investigative staff (12 officers for 43 federations).
	Cultural tolerance for harsh discipline; influence in disciplinary outcomes.	Global best practice encourages athlete-centred culture, cultural sensitivity training.		Underreporting due to authority dynamics; no nationwide athlete rights awareness program.

The gap matrix clearly demonstrates that Jordan’s ethical framework for sports coaching is structurally aligned with leading international instruments, yet its operationalization remains uneven across critical domains. While statutory provisions mirror WADA’s anti-doping code, the IOC’s ethics guidelines, and UNESCO’s principles on athlete welfare, the translation from legal text to enforceable practice is hindered by fragmented oversight, insufficient investigative resources, and inconsistent federation-level application. These weaknesses are compounded by socio-cultural dynamics—such as hierarchical coach–athlete relationships and tribal affiliations—that limit reporting and dilute sanctioning effectiveness. The implications for this research are twofold: first, alignment on paper does not guarantee compliance in practice; second, effective reform requires both institutional restructuring (e.g., centralized ethics enforcement, standardized sanctions) and cultural adaptation (e.g., awareness programs, whistleblower protections sensitive to local norms). In this context, the subsequent comparative analysis will focus on identifying reform pathways that not only bridge procedural gaps but also embed ethical compliance into the everyday governance culture of Jordanian sport, thereby advancing the study’s objective of formulating actionable, context-specific policy recommendations.

International Legal Frameworks (WADA, IOC, UNESCO)

The international governance of coaching ethics and anti-doping is anchored in a triad of complementary yet distinct frameworks: the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and UNESCO. Together, these bodies establish the normative and operational benchmarks against which national systems, including Jordan’s, are evaluated. While these frameworks share common principles—integrity, fairness, athlete welfare—their mechanisms of enforcement, legal bindingness, and adaptability to local contexts vary considerably, influencing their impact in developing sports systems.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

WADA’s World Anti-Doping Code (2021) serves as the global regulatory backbone for anti-doping, mandating not only a comprehensive prohibited substances list but also an educational and preventive role for coaches. Under Article 21.2.6, coaches are obliged to actively discourage doping, facilitate anti-doping education, and report any suspected violations (Di Pietro et al., 2025). Compliance is monitored through WADA’s rigorous Code Compliance Monitoring Program, which can impose severe sanctions—including exclusion from major international competitions—on non-compliant National Anti-Doping Organizations (WADA, 2021, Article 23).

However, academic and policy analyses (Barakat & Foster, 2023; Houlihan & Hanstad, 2019) highlight a capacity gap between developed and developing nations in implementing WADA’s protocols. In Jordan, the Jordan Anti-Doping Organization (JADO) mirrors the Code’s provisions but struggles with underfunded testing programs, limited investigative staff, and uneven regional coverage. The 2021 weightlifting case—where athletes used prohibited substances for months before detection—illustrates that formal regulatory alignment without operational resources undermines deterrence. In contrast, nations like Morocco have achieved measurable reductions in doping violations by integrating WADA compliance audits with independent domestic enforcement units and ring-fenced funding streams (Barakat & Foster, 2023).

4.1. International Olympic Committee (IOC)

The IOC’s Ethics Guidelines (2023) complement WADA’s anti-doping focus by embedding broader ethical governance principles into sports administration. These include the duty to uphold human dignity, ensure non-discrimination, protect athlete safety, and prevent manipulation of competitions. Importantly, the IOC’s model emphasizes whistleblower protections, including safeguards against retaliation and confidential reporting channels.

The IOC integrates human rights norms into its ethical framework, drawing on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Ruggie, 2011), thereby requiring National Olympic Committees to align policies with

universal rights-based standards. This is a critical evolution in sports governance, as it recognizes that doping control alone does not guarantee athlete welfare.

Nevertheless, critics (Smith & Hammoudi, 2022; McLaren, 2016) note that the IOC's heavy reliance on self-reporting and federation-led enforcement introduces inconsistency—particularly in countries like Jordan, where institutional oversight remains underdeveloped. Without independent investigatory capacity, the IOC's standards risk becoming aspirational rather than operational. Comparative examples, such as Canada's Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC), demonstrate the effectiveness of independent, centralized enforcement in avoiding the conflicts of interest inherent in federation-based self-policing.

UNESCO International Charter

UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity, and Sport (2022) provides a non-binding but holistic ethical framework. Articles 10 and 12 emphasize safeguarding athletes from coercion, exploitation, and abuse, while affirming state responsibility in ensuring compliance. UNESCO's scope extends beyond anti-doping to address inclusivity, gender equity, access to sport, and mental health support, positioning athlete welfare as a multidimensional right rather than a byproduct of fair competition.

The non-binding nature of UNESCO's Charter is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it allows flexibility for adaptation to diverse cultural and political contexts, as in Jordan's selective adoption of safeguarding principles. On the other, without punitive enforcement mechanisms, compliance depends on national political will and resource allocation—both of which can be inconsistent in developing nations (International Council for Coaching Excellence, 2021; Kidd, 2013). For example, while Jordan has endorsed UNESCO's principles, gender equity in coaching remains limited (12% female representation), and there is no national strategy to address this disparity.

4.4. Critical Synthesis and Relevance to Jordan

Collectively, WADA, IOC, and UNESCO form a multi-tiered ethical governance ecosystem in which Jordan participates. The research question driving this study—how Jordan's coaching ethics and enforcement mechanisms compare with these international frameworks—requires moving beyond formal legal harmonization to assess functional equivalence in enforcement.

The literature and comparative evidence suggest three critical observations:

1. Normative Convergence, Operational Divergence – Jordan's statutes and policies closely mirror WADA and IOC provisions but fall short in monitoring, investigative independence, and sanction consistency.
2. Capacity and Cultural Barriers – Without dedicated funding, trained personnel, and culturally adapted whistleblower systems, global standards remain underutilized.
3. Opportunity for Integrated Reform – Models from Morocco, Canada, and South Africa demonstrate that integrating WADA's compliance structures, IOC's safeguarding mandates, and UNESCO's inclusivity principles into a single national ethics authority can significantly enhance enforcement and athlete protection.

For Jordan, the path forward involves embedding internationally benchmarked mechanisms—such as independent investigations, secure anonymous reporting, and mandatory continuous ethics education—into its domestic framework, while simultaneously addressing the socio-cultural factors that suppress reporting and weaken sanctions. The subsequent sections of this study will map Jordan's current framework against these international standards to identify specific, context-sensitive reforms capable of closing the gap between policy adoption and practical compliance.

Comparative Analysis and Systemic Enforcement Gaps

A comparative assessment of the Jordanian coaching ethics framework against the standards of WADA, IOC, and UNESCO reveals a consistent pattern: strong normative alignment in written policy but persistent weaknesses in enforcement capacity and cultural integration.

The policy gap matrix and alignment chart illustrate that Jordan mirrors international standards in its legislative provisions—particularly in anti-doping rules, safeguarding mandates, and professional conduct codes—yet falls short in operationalizing these norms. Most dimensions register only partial or low alignment, with no area achieving full compliance in both design and practice.

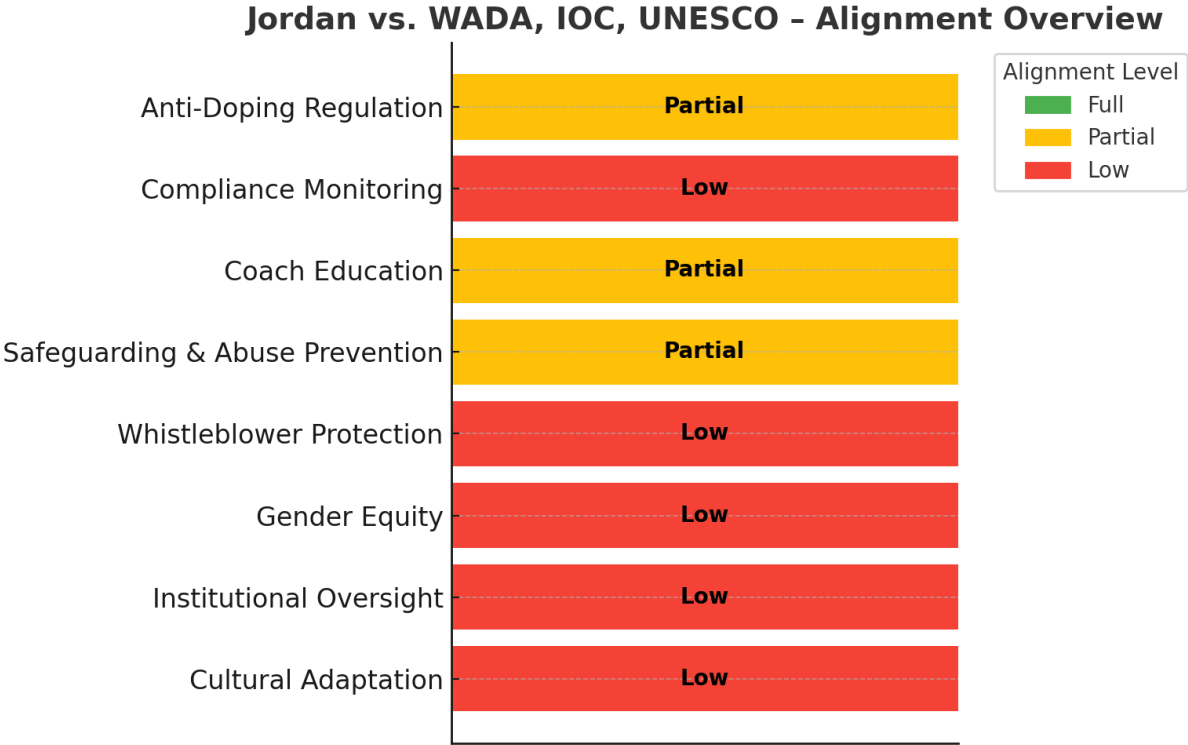
Three systemic enforcement gaps emerge from this analysis:

1. Institutional Fragmentation – Oversight responsibilities are dispersed among JADO, the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC), and individual federations, leading to duplication, inconsistent sanctions, and delays averaging 12–14 months per case.
2. Resource Constraints – Limited investigative staff (12 officers for 43 federations), underfunded testing regimes, and lack of regional coverage—especially in southern governorates—restrict the scope of monitoring and enforcement.
3. Cultural Barriers – Hierarchical coach–athlete dynamics, tribal affiliations, and societal acceptance of harsh discipline contribute to underreporting of violations and reluctance to challenge authority.

Comparative examples from Morocco and Canada demonstrate that integrating WADA’s compliance structures, IOC safeguarding protocols, and UNESCO’s inclusivity principles into a single, independent national ethics authority can significantly improve both deterrence and protection. In these models, independent investigation units, secure anonymous reporting channels, and mandatory continuous ethics training for coaches have closed critical compliance gaps.

For Jordan, the challenge is not the absence of laws or codes, but rather the translation of written norms into enforceable practice. Addressing the identified gaps will require centralized oversight, ring-fenced funding for enforcement, and cultural adaptation strategies to ensure that whistleblower protections, gender equity initiatives, and safeguarding measures are not only legislated but lived within the sports ecosystem.

This synthesis directly informs the conclusion, where targeted reform recommendations are proposed to bridge the divide between policy adoption and practical compliance, ensuring that Jordan’s sports sector not only meets global ethical benchmarks but also embeds them into everyday governance and practice.



Jordan’s sports ethics framework shows strong alignment on paper with WADA, IOC, and UNESCO principles, yet enforcement gaps—particularly in monitoring, safeguarding, and cultural adaptation—keep most areas in the Partial or Low compliance range, underscoring the need for centralized oversight and systemic reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study has examined Jordan’s ethical obligations for sports coaches through a comparative lens, measuring national laws, institutional policies, and enforcement mechanisms against the standards set by WADA, IOC, and UNESCO. The findings reveal that while Jordan’s framework demonstrates strong formal alignment with international norms—particularly in anti-doping provisions, safeguarding principles, and professional conduct codes—its practical implementation remains inconsistently enforced and operationally constrained.

The comparative analysis shows that the core challenges are not legislative gaps, but rather systemic enforcement weaknesses. These include fragmented oversight across multiple bodies, resource shortages that hinder monitoring and investigative capacity, and cultural dynamics that discourage reporting and weaken sanctioning effectiveness. Such barriers have resulted in cases like the 2021 weightlifting scandal, where regulatory alignment with WADA failed to prevent prolonged violations due to weak monitoring and delayed adjudication.

International case studies demonstrate that structural reform is both possible and effective when global standards are integrated into a centralized, independent enforcement authority. Models from Morocco, South Africa, and Canada illustrate how unified governance, secure anonymous reporting channels, and continuous ethics education can transform policy into practice, even in contexts with similar cultural and resource challenges.

For Jordan, the path forward requires targeted, context-specific reforms that address both institutional and cultural barriers. These include:

1. Centralizing Oversight – Establishing an independent ethics and safeguarding authority to unify anti-doping, coach conduct, and safeguarding enforcement.
2. Expanding Investigative Capacity – Increasing the number of trained ethics officers, enhancing regional coverage, and securing dedicated funding streams for compliance activities.
3. Strengthening Whistleblower Protections – Introducing fully anonymous, secure reporting portals with legal immunity provisions, coupled with awareness campaigns.
4. Embedding Continuous Education – Making annual ethics and safeguarding certification mandatory for all licensed coaches, with digital credential verification.
5. Advancing Gender Equity – Implementing recruitment and retention programs for female coaches, aligning with UNESCO's gender parity principles.

Through addressing these gaps, Jordan can move beyond policy adoption toward policy internalization, ensuring that ethical coaching standards are not only codified in law but also actively upheld in everyday sporting practice. Such reforms would not only protect athletes and uphold the integrity of sport but also position Jordan as a regional leader in ethical sports governance, capable of meeting and sustaining international benchmarks in both form and function.

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