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Supervisor:		<input type="text" value="DR. Alun Hardman"/>
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CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)

SPORT MANAGEMENT

2014-5

**HAS FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND COMMERCIALISATION OF THE
PREMIER LEAGUE LED TO A DECLINE IN ENGLAND'S
INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE?**

(Socio-Cultural)

Alistair Johnston

ST20034114

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ABSTRACT

ii.

The purpose of this research paper is to critically examine the effect of the creation of the Premier League in 1992 and the impact that this has had on the subsequent performance of the English national team. It will explore the effect of increased migration of professional football players into the UK, from Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa since 1992 and particularly after the Bosman ruling in 1995. It will also include an analysis of foreign investment and ownership in the Premier League, the impact of increasing numbers of foreign players in the Premier League, the commercialisation of the league through satellite media broadcasters and weighing up the effect of these issues against the performance of the English national team to date.

This question is analysed using the theoretical approach, from secondary data and previous research on the topic in order to provide a structured, clear analysis into the subject. It will use articles written by football academics and economists, previous players, managers and experts in order to utilise a wide range of sources to reach a conclusion.

It is undoubtedly true that the Premier League has established itself as the most well-known brand in world football. It is also true that England's performance in recent World Cups and European Championships have been well below expectations given the historic position of England in world football since the Second World War. Whilst money has flooded into the Premier League from foreign owners and media companies, the priority in spending for the clubs has been to buy in skill and experience from abroad, rather than develop the skills of young English players. This has been necessary at each club within the Premier League given the lucrative attraction of Champions League and Europa League for the top teams, and the threat of relegation for the lesser teams. Perversely, the relative success of Premier League clubs in European competitions in recent years may have subsequently increased expectations of England fans and the media on the achievement of the national team in major tournaments. This situation does not bode well for the development of young English players and this together with the successful development of Premier League academy players progressing to the England national team will be assessed.

CHAPTER 1. EXTENDED INTRODUCTION

1.1 The State of English Football

Since the formation of the Premier League in 1992 the percentage of English players starting matches for their clubs has dropped by 47 percent (Williams, O, 2011). The recent performance of the English National side in International Football tournaments, for example, the 2014 FIFA World Cup held in Brazil has been modest. Indeed, England were knocked out of the tournament in Brazil at the first group stage, recording two losses and one draw in three games. For a nation renowned for its attachment with the game of football, and recognised as the country where football began, this result was highly disappointing.

This recent disappointment followed another relatively poor showing at the 2010 FIFA World Cup when they were eliminated at the first knockout stage of the competition against bitter rivals Germany. Again, at the Euro 2012 competition they lost at the last 16 stage against Italy. The table below sees the relative performance of England in International tournaments since the beginning of the Premier League since 1992. The question is, for a nation so strongly associated with football, why does the national team fail to perform well at major International tournaments?

Table 1. Table showing England's performance at major tournaments since 1990.

Year	Tournament Performance
1990	Semi-Finals
1992	Group Stage
1994	Did not qualify
1996	Semi-Finals
1998	Last 16
2000	Group Stage
2002	Quarter Final
2004	Quarter Final
2006	Quarter Final
2008	Did not qualify
2010	Last 16
2012	Last 16
2014	Group Stage

In order for the reader to understand the question and terms used in the question title some of the common phrases used throughout this essay must be understood and defined for the reader.

- Foreign Investment – The flow of capital from one nation to another in exchange for significant holdings in domestic companies or other domestic assets. Typically, foreign investment denotes that foreign based companies or individuals take an active role in management of the club as part of their investment. The notion of foreign investment can be viewed in two different levels, i.e. boardroom level, such as the Glazer takeover of Manchester United in 2005, and performance level, through buying players, coaches, and staff from abroad, Beech and Chadwick (2013) argue that foreign investment in established players to bring quick success to clubs is a common strategy by foreign owners in order to try and increase revenue and gain support from fans.
- The Premier League – The Premier League has a board of directors, with responsibility for running the league, conforming to rules of ownership, and for negotiating brand broadcasting and television rights globally. The Premier League is owned by the 20 clubs participating and has an annual general meeting which is hosted by shareholders of the Premier League organisation. (Barclays Premier League, 2014) The reason for the inception of the Premier League was due mostly to clubs in the English first division in the late eighties becoming concerned at the rising costs of stadium repairs, renovations, improvements, and the increasing costs of player's salaries and transfers. In 1992 the Premier League was created as an independent league to the first division in order for clubs to optimise television revenue and increase sponsorship. Since its inception it has grown into one of the most recognisable and commercial sport brands on the planet.
- The Football Association – The Football Association of England is the main governing body responsible for grass root development of young players and the organisation of teams from local grass roots up to the senior national side. The FA was founded in 1863 and is responsible for all regulatory aspects

related to the game. Downward and Jackson (2003) reviewed the evolution of codes of football in the UK; 'In brief, the important developments in the emergence of football in the UK was the development of football in public schools from unorganized mob football into an organized, and regulated 11-a-side game'. From this development, the FA was introduced as the governing body of the game of association football across England and Great Britain.

The reason for the definitions of the FA and the Premier League is to emphasise that these are separate organisations who since the arrival of the Premier League in 1992, have been portrayed as having a dysfunctional relationship and acting as competitors for the balance of power within English football.

In 2014 ITV published an article featuring former England defender Rio Ferdinand who blamed the lack of success on the international stage upon the fractured relations between The FA and the Premier League, he wrote; 'The Premier League is completely detached from the ideas and vision of the FA and vice versa. The barrier has to be broken down, the big clubs have very little interest in the national team. All they care about is what benefits them, and they think mainly in term of money' (ITV report, 2014). During the critical review and summary this area will be discussed in more detail.

1.2 Brief History of English Football and the Premier League

After the inception of the FA in 1863, following the coding and introduction of rules and regulations, the first football club in the world, Sheffield FC, was created in 1857 by former public schoolboys. In 1873, England participated in the world's first international football match between England and Scotland, with England winning 4-2. After the legalization of professionalism in England, the first league for 12 clubs was created in 1888.

One hundred years later football was now the national game of England and had four professional leagues in operation. England had won the World Cup in 1966 defeating West Germany in the final. In 1992, many first division clubs

resigned from the football league to join a new elite level competition. From the inception of the Premier League, satellite broadcaster Sky was instrumental in commercialising the brand firstly within the UK, and then internationally. It is unlikely that the Premier League would have been developed without a media company prepared to make such a significant investment.

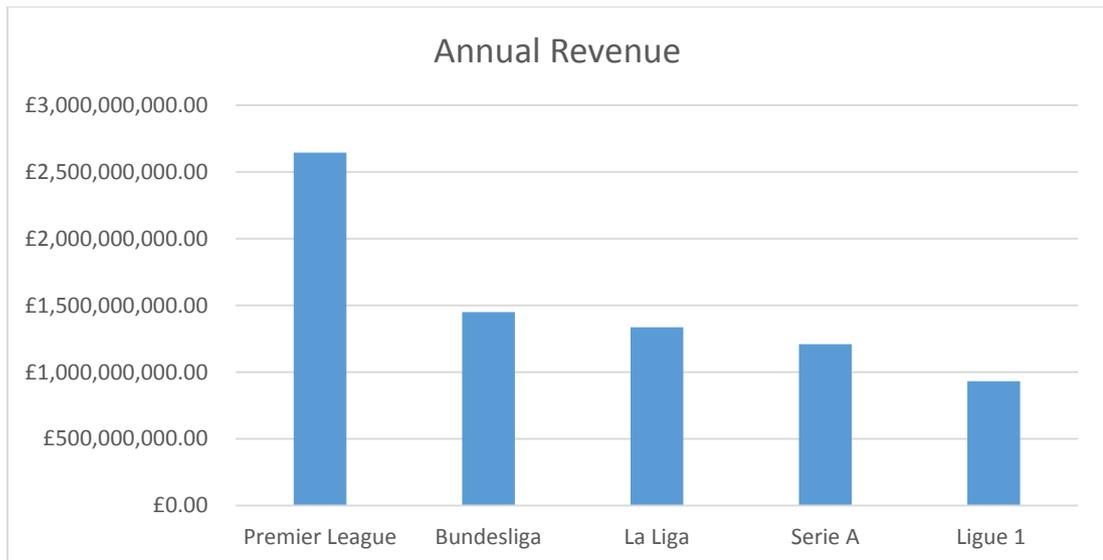
There were certain events in the run up to the disbandment of the old first division which contributed to the commercialisation of the modern day Premier League. Firstly and probably the most relevant, was the Hillsborough disaster of 1989 which led to the deaths of 96 spectators. Subsequently a report was published called the Taylor report. Bale (2000) explained that the Taylor report argued for a new generation of football stadiums that would be surveilled, safe and sanitized. Many believed this led to a 'gentrification' of English football, match day ticket prices increases in keeping with the cost of developing new club stadia. This meant that football became a more middle class sport to spectate, rather than the large working class communities which previously were synonymous with league football (Malcolm et al, 2000).

As the Premier League was developed, with it came a new broadcasting channel for Premier League games, 'Sky Sports'. Previously, throughout the 1980's English division one matches were shown on free to air television for fans. Division One clubs were well aware at this point how potentially lucrative rights for broadcasting matches could be. Sky sports paid £191 million to broadcast the first five seasons of the premier league, Sloman (2012) argues that this led to the monopolisation of English football by media outlets, and overall the commercialisation of the Premier League. As more customers paid for Sky Sports the Premier League clubs took a large portion of the revenue, allowing them to become richer and thus spend more money on transfers of big name players in order to gain an even larger audience domestically and worldwide. Of course, the result of this cash injection into the Premier League was that the FA now had only the FA Cup and England International matches as a source of revenue to develop grass roots football.

1.3 Commercialisation of the Premier League

Other than the fight for the balance of power in English football, another of the main reasons that the FA and Premier league have an ongoing dispute is down to the recent commercialisation of the Premier League. The amount of money being pumped into Premier League clubs by owners, sponsors, media companies and shareholders has allowed Premier League clubs to become extremely wealthy. In doing so they are able to buy in talented players from abroad which excites the fans and increases the standard of performance in the league. In fact, business advisory and market analysts Deloitte (2013) conducted a study on spending habits of Premier League clubs in the summer of 2013. They found that the Premier league had the highest revenue in Europe, of €2.9 billion, far more than La Liga (Spain, €1.9 billion) the Bundesliga (Germany, €2.0 billion) and Serie A (Italy €1.7 billion). Also, £635 million was spent by Premier League clubs during the transfer window, of which, 90% was on foreign players. As we see in the graph below, the Premier League is the highest grossing league in Europe by some distance. This obviously illustrates the financial strength of English clubs. However, this has an adverse effect on the development of young English players to play at the elite level in preparation for full international honours.

Graph 2. Annual revenue of each league in Europe's 'Big 5' for 2014.



This trend of foreign players being imported from abroad is identifiable in all leagues in Europe. However, it is much more apparent in England, where the majority of clubs have access to more money. It becomes quicker and easier for clubs to gain immediate success via investment in established foreign players rather than develop young players through their academies. (Sagar, 2010) found that despite a financial investment of £40million per annum in English youth football, only 25-30 English players of 23 years and under enter the English Premier League playing squads each year.

One of the most important developments leading to the wealth of the Premier League and its clubs was the role of the media and in particular, television channels such as Sky Sports and BT sports who pay billions in order for rights to show these Premier League games. Crowther (2001) illustrates the impact television channels have had on Premier League clubs by explaining how nearly half of Premier League clubs have shares owned by television broadcasters; Broadcasters have taken ownership stakes in a number of clubs, BskyB has stakes in five Premier League clubs, while NTL has stakes in three and Granada with stakes in one.

This investment, particularly in the top teams, e.g. Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea is seen as lucrative for investors due to their ever expanding worldwide fan base. This yields massive potential for

merchandising and advertising revenue, as these clubs matches are broadcast around the world. The reason there has been an increase in wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign owner controlled investment (Jones, 2015) is that they are more likely to make money from selling the rights to their clubs games. If an English club is successful and finishes the season in a top four place, they qualify for the Champions League, a pan European tournament televised by Sky Sports and ITV, and worth an estimated £6.2 million from UEFA, and a further £15-35 million from broadcasting rights depending on how far each team goes in the competition.

Professional sport has become a lucrative investment, particularly the Premier League, Nauright (2010) explained that the commercialisation of the Premier League happened because it was the first league in Europe to have their games shown on paid television or on a pay-per-view basis. This was in contrast to other European leagues, who at that time felt that football should be made available for the public to watch on television for free on terrestrial channels.

While there is certainly a notion that foreign investment is blocking the development of young English players and the English national team there is certainly an argument to suggest that foreign investment in Premier League clubs has raised the standard of English football in certain areas. Haugen (2002) argues that foreign investment in the Premier League is good for the British economy as wealthy foreign owners invest in clubs infrastructure such as new training facilities, new stadiums and stadium improvements which are designed to improve the experience for fans and use British construction companies which benefits the British economy.

Along with this the Premier League has attracted a massive international fan base, Taylor (2013) found that during the 2010/2011 Premier League season 900,000 foreign fans came to England to attend Premier League matches. As well as this tourism income in the critical review there will be an examination on how Premier League clubs look to invest in their local communities.

1.4 Player Development and Football Legislation.

As described earlier, the number of young English players entering Premier League club squads each year is relatively low. In order to improve the rate and number of young players being introduced to elite domestic football a number of proposals by governing bodies such as FIFA have been made. For example, one of the rules suggested was the 6+5 quota which dictated that club sides must have six home grown players starting in each competitive club match. The reason this was proposed was that Blatter (2014) believed that current arrangements in club football undermines national team football in three ways; it weakens national teams; fails to develop national players as it should; and threatens football's national identity (Hardman 2014). However this proposal failed since it contravened international labour discrimination laws.

Probably the most well-known piece of football legislation is the Bosman ruling of 1995 enforced by the European Court of Justice. As McArdle (2000) explains 'Bosman, notoriously, prevents clubs from demanding transfer fees for 'out of contract players' who move from one club to another and prevents the imposition of restrictions on the number of 'foreigners' who can play for a particular club'. This ruling was the beginning of 'player power', where players could negotiate terms with clubs by themselves and find the best deal possible.

Most recently, in 2013 UEFA introduced the FFP (Financial Fair Play) regulation, in order to level out the playing field of elite European Football and limit the effects of excessive cash injections into European clubs (Schubert, 2015). In practise, clubs cannot exceed a loss of £105 million over a three season period otherwise they will suffer a point's deduction (Farquar, 2013). Schubert (2015) goes on to argue that excessive injection of cash by foreign owners is a form of socio economic doping, meaning that, as funding increases this allows the club to buy whatever player they want and give them whatever wage, because football is recognised as a free mobile market with

no known salary caps and no obligations other than the contractual agreement signed by a player when they joined the club. However, after the Webster ruling of 2005 players are now able to leave a club whenever they please, even if they have not completed the terms of their contract. These developments have increased player power dramatically, and that club loyalty is now a thing of the past.

In brief, the FFP applies to all clubs in Europe who hope to compete in the Champions League, Schubert (2015) found that top flight clubs in Europe recorded a record aggregate net loss of over £1.7 billion for 2011. The FFP guidelines requires all European clubs to 'balance their books', or break even, i.e. the clubs are not allowed to run up a large deficit through the purchase of expensive players (UEFA 2013). This topic will be explained in more detailed in the critical review.

As explained above there is an acknowledgement by governing bodies that the combination of the free movement of players and capital within the current structure reduces the potential for domestic young players to develop at the elite level. On the other hand, it does provide the opportunity for talented players from financially poorer associations to flourish in the elite European game.

1.5 Research Expectations

This extended introduction has served to contextualise the study to the reader, and to define certain phrases and explain themes that are important to understand when reading this paper.

The main talking points and areas for discussion in the critical review have been raised in the introduction and will be examined further using other academic articles and previous research related to the subject. It is clear to see that there are positives and negatives to be drawn from the effect of

foreign investment on the Premier League and during the critical review this paper will examine whether foreign investment has had an adverse or positive effect on the English national team performance.

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Key Definitions of Research Terms

Gratton (2010) defines research as; 'A systematic process of discovery and advancement of human knowledge'. Furthermore, Gratton (2010) explained that our understanding of sport is far from complete. Changing social, political, technological, and economic contexts are all influenced by sport.

The research will be conducted using secondary data, this is also known as a desk study. White (2014) described desk research as; 'focusing on examining the relevant literature'. The study will analyse the number of foreign players and English players in each Premier League squad, and then cross examine this data with club success and revenue. This will then be illustrated through the use of a graph to show the relationship between national team successes over time since the beginning of the Premier League.

White (2014) defined methodology as; 'the philosophical basis upon which the research is founded'. It is the research rational and conceptual framework for

the study. It gives the researcher a structure to follow while doing their research, depending on the type of research it is. The data in this paper will be a mixture of quantitative through the use of figures and numbers, and qualitative measures, which expresses its meaning through the use of words from articles and books to then be interpreted by the researcher.

2.2 Research Approach

The reason for choosing this subject to research is because there is much debate surrounding England's underachievement's at international level. It could be due to the commercialisation of the Premier League, and lack of English players being developed by elite Premier League academies. The effects of these factors will be researched by journal articles and academic material written

Saunders et al (1997) divides secondary data into three main forms; 'Documentary, multiple source, and survey'. Throughout this study there will be a mixture of each of these data forms through the use of organisational records, industry reports, and media accounts.

For this research study the most effective method to gain information is to use secondary data. The main advantage is the fact that it is much less expensive to use secondary data than to collect the data yourself (Ghauri et al, 1995). This research proposal will use data collected from international firms such as Deloitte who carry out research into Premier League expenditure on transfers and also on statistics regarding the number of foreign players participating in the Premier League. The advantage with this method is that it allows the researcher to spend more time and effort analysing and interpreting the data in order to make an informed interpretation and conclusion (Saunders et al, 1997). This is illustrated within the critical review when the researcher produces a graph of English world ranking over time, since the inception of the Premier League. This will be carried out using secondary data from FIFA and will be made using Microsoft Excel.

As well as the data being easier to analyse from previous research, furthermore, it is more likely to be a higher quality and more accurate (Stewart and Kammins, 1993). This is relevant to this research proposal because it could be difficult to obtain primary data from Premier League clubs. In some cases such as finance reports, transfer fees, and player quotas in academies, this information can be withheld from the public.

2.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Data

In terms of the data being critically analysed in this study there are two types, quantitative and qualitative. It is important to understand the meaning of both before reviewing the literature. Ghosh and Chopra (2003) define qualitative and quantitative data as: 'Qualitative data is data in the form of descriptive accounts of observations or data which is classified by type. Quantitative data is data which can be expressed numerically or classified by some numerical value.'

Crowther and Lancaster (2008) discussed how quantitative data is perceived as more scientific and is associated with the traditional scientific approaches to research. Quantitative is often expressed numerically and is often analysed and through the use of standard statistical techniques to test for validity (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008, p.75). The benefits of quantitative data are that it shows the reader a physical representation of data and if carried out correctly is extremely precise. Nonetheless, its weakness is that it is only applicable to data which can be measured and quantified which limits certain variables and factors.

The other form of data, qualitative data, is much more subjective and does not rely purely on numerical results. This is why it is related to results that cannot be quantified by numbers (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008, p.75) This kind of

data is often used in social sciences which seeks to understand human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviours.

Throughout this study both qualitative and quantitative research methods will be employed and used for the critical review. In some cases the study will use numerical data as a basis for conclusion and to gather information. However, there will also be a clear use of qualitative data as the study will be interpreting the opinions of others in order to gain a greater understanding, a mix of these two research philosophies should be enough to form a basis in order to come to a fair and correct conclusion to the study.

It is important for studies such as this that the data is fair and unbiased (Saunders, 1998, p.171) it is vital that secondary data is evaluated before being used. This is because it may have some kind of bias, for example, newspaper articles may contain bias toward or against certain organisations and individuals. In order for this study's conclusion to be valid it must use references and data from reliable sources such as journal articles, reports, and books. As well as this it is important to note the date of the research, due to the expansion of the Premier League being a fairly recent phenomenon, it is important the researcher does not use outdated data and research.

Saunders (1997, p.348) explains that in providing an overview of qualitative analysis there are two different approaches to the process; 'These relate to whether you start from a *deductive* position or an *inductive* perspective'. The deductive perspective is demonstrated by formulating conclusions based on firm, analytical data. The inductive perspective is more subjective and looks to build a conclusion which is formed from previous research and personal opinion.

For the purpose of this particular study the researcher has chosen to use the inductive approach because as some the data will be quantitative and numerically based, the majority will be derived from opinion and theories which is left to be interpreted by the researcher. The questions itself is broad and includes researching different subjects and disciplines in order for a

conclusion to be formed. For example, sectors of business, financing, tourism, and opinions from former professionals will be considered in the critical review.

2.4 Research Design

In order for this study to follow a structure it is important for the data analysis to follow a certain research design. This study will be carried out using secondary data, this is known as carrying out a desk based study. As mentioned earlier, Saunders (1997) divides secondary data into three forms; 'Documentary, Multiple source, and survey based data'. A mixture of all of these forms of data will be collective however predominantly Multiple source and documentary will be used most, for example, journal articles, interviews, books, and industry statistics will be the predominant methods of research analysis.

According to White (2000) research design a is term covering a few different issues related to the study, for example; 'Final selection of the appropriate methodology, data collection techniques, chosen methods of data and interpretation, and how this relates to the literature being critically reviewed'.

In order for the researcher to effectively find data and documents to interpret it is important that it is readily available and the researcher is able to find it. Journal articles and books will be found in libraries or online libraries. In order to use this data correctly and interpret a correct conclusion then this information must be synthesised and then critiqued to find a reason for the issue explained in the study.

Bell (2014) outlined that when reviewing literature there are a few basic principals involved; 'Namely, defining the parameters of the study and refining and focusing key words that will allow you to identify relevant sources and... to eliminate sources that are irrelevant to your research project'. The basic

principals involved in identifying the search parameters are; the language of the required material. The date of publish is important for this study, this is because the literature must be fairly recent in order to gain a current interpretation. The research will be carried out using journal articles, books, and reports and will be specifically focused upon areas of football, commercialisation, fan attitudes, and youth development. Following these search parameters will be an efficient tool in the search for sources of data.

In order for the study to have a fair conclusion, a variety of literature and arguments must be considered to weigh up which literature will contribute to the overall answer of the research problem. The use of reliable academic literature will allow for a fair assessment and an informed conclusion.

CHAPTER 3. CRITICAL REVIEW

This section will focus upon the discussion presented to the reader in the initial abstract and introduction. In order to do so, a review of academic literature will be used to bring about an informed discussion on the research question.

When the Premier League was founded at the beginning of the 1992/93' season Hendrick (2014) comments that only 11 (5%) foreign players were in the starting line-ups for the first round of matches for the season. As well as this at the 1990 FIFA World Cup in Italy, England reached the semi-finals of the competition, being knocked out on penalties by Germany, England were

praised for their performance in the tournament and had arguably one of the best squads competing.

Walters (2008) looks into the labour market migration of European football and focuses on the Premier League. He found that, in the 2006/2007 season out of the 498 players that started Premier League games, only 191 players were English, i.e. 38% leaving 62% as foreign players. Taylor (2008) argues that the number of English players starting Premier League matches has fallen in eleven of the fifteen seasons since the Premier League began and in the four seasons where there was an increase in English players, the increase was very insignificant. Coincidentally, the English National football team has since experienced a decline in their achievements at international football tournaments. In order to assess if there is a correlation between national team failure and the globalization of the Premier League we have to consider a number of issues.

3.1 Foreign Ownership and commercialisation in the Premier League

Firstly, we will explore the effect of foreign investment and ownership within the Premier League. At its inception, all 20 Premier league clubs were owned by British owners. However Jones (2014) investigated the effect of FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) upon the Premier League and found that in the 2011/2012 season, 10 out of 20 clubs were either in part or full foreign ownership. Of these 10, all of the so called 'big 4', Liverpool, Chelsea, Arsenal and Manchester United are all owned by a majority of foreign investors. The recent emergence of Manchester City after the take-over by Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed has pushed this club into the same bracket of the big 4, making now a big 5.

During the Glazer takeover of Manchester United Brown (2007) explains how the takeover was perceived by Manchester United fans as; 'a defeat of a

particular brand of football supporter culture to a corporate sports capitalism that now dominates English elite football'. The reason for the hostility toward the Glazer takeover was that Manchester United fans believed that they would have to pay inflated season ticket and match day ticket prices to pay back the debt that the Glazer family had put on to the club as part of the take-over. It was also believed by Manchester United fans that a takeover by corporate investors such as the Glazers, who owned many other North American sports organisations such as baseball and American football teams, would lead to a lack of democracy within the club, meaning that the voice of the supporters would be ignored.

In relation to the Premier League this takeover was important, Brown (2007) explained that Premier League CEO Richard Scudamore met the Glazer brothers and declared himself 'happy' with the Glazers intentions. Some believe that the Premier League could have done more to keep Manchester United from being taken over. However, the Premier League endorsed the takeover because they felt that a strong Manchester United brand would in turn benefit the Premier League brand.

Dobson (2001) outlined five objectives football club owners should attribute to overall success. These were profit, security, attendance, and performance of the team and the health of the league they are participating in. As well as goals for football club owners they are surely the overall goals for English football.

Jones (2014) found that foreign ownership of Premier League clubs generally leads to improved stadia, player quality, managerial practises/training regimes and also club performance, in terms of points and success.

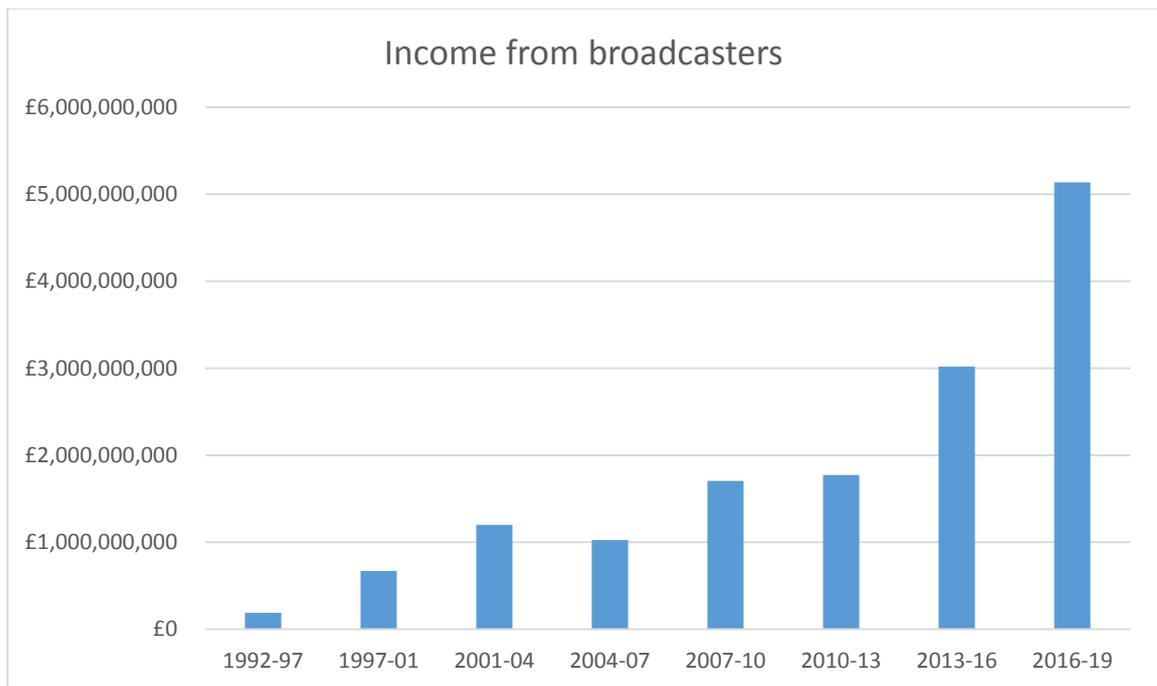
Nauright (2010) explained that the relatively new phenomena of Premier League clubs being bought out by foreign owners is due to a few differing factors; for example, the enhanced televised streaming generated by channels such as Sky Sports, the expansion of European competitions such as the Champions League, and the global marketing opportunities in

continents such as Asia which has made investment in successful Premier League clubs an overall sound investment. Hudson (2001) stated that the increase in money being invested in Premier League teams led to an increase in player wages, which, in turn, led to higher transfers fees being paid for elite players.

The investment and commercialisation in these elite clubs has led to some factions of English football fans describing this development as 'Commodification, or Americanisation' within the Premier League. Particularly now because three of the 'big four' (Manchester United, Arsenal, and Liverpool) have a large American influence within their clubs. Many commentators believe that this investment in English football may result in greater viewing figures in the USA resulting in higher revenues for merchandising and advertising. As well as this Nauright (2010) explained how there is a growing trend of 'cross-marketed sports brands' such as the New York Yankees and Manchester United who use each other's success to increase global reputation for the brands. For example Manchester United in recent years have toured the U.S.A. as part of their pre-season build up and played friendlies in the Yankees stadium to raise their profile in North America. This has become more evident recently when the Fenway sports group took over Liverpool in 2011 and have since developed links between the Boston Red Sox and Liverpool F.C.

Gratton (2000) illustrates the parallels between American football and Premier League football in 'The peculiar economics of Premier League football', he explains that; 'both clubs and leagues have profit maximisation as the main priority. The sale of broadcasting rights has become an increasingly important source of revenue to professional team sports and clubs'. In fact, as recently as February 2015, a broadcasting deal was agreed upon by Sky Sports and BT Sports for Premier League fixtures between 2016 and 2019 of £5.136 billion. As we see from the graph below, the price paid for each Premier League broadcasting contract has increased each time, with a significant increase since 2013.

Figure 3. Premier League income from broadcasting contracts since 1992.



Peck (2015) reported that this recent deal has led to calls from Premier League club fans to lower ticket prices, claiming the inflating ticket prices were hurting fans. This has meant there has been a huge cultural change in football since the 1990's. English club football was viewed by some as the last mass congregation of the working classes, families were taken there for the day and it was often seen as an activity for father and son from working class backgrounds share together on a Saturday afternoon.

Malcolm et al (2000) found that the average age for a Premier League club spectator was 47 years old, compared with Germany, where the average age of a spectator in the Bundesliga is 28. Malcolm et al (2000) believes that this age differences is related to the modernization of all seated stadia and facilities following the Hillsborough disaster of 1989. 'Fans were to become more like customers... who paid more for a better service, and this implied a shift of football support towards more affluent areas of society'.

There is no doubt that foreign owner investment in infrastructure around the stadia has resulted in better facilities for supporters and staff. For example Haugen (2002) described how Chelsea FC owner Roman Abramovic funded a new training facility based in Cobham in 2007. This £20 million facility helps

not only the first team players but also the young English players in the academy and youth teams. From this perspective we see that the money used to invest in new training facilities can positively affect the development of English players.

As well as on the pitch improvements, it is found that foreign investment in Premier League teams also brings about an improved business strategy employed by the clubs. The benefits can be significant, for example, Mainwaring (2013) explained that since the Fenway Sports Group takeover at Liverpool; 'the marketing department at Liverpool has expanded enormously over the past 18 months. They are bringing in American sports marketing expertise.' This improved running of the club ensures that the increase of turnover can allow the club to invest further either in improved infrastructure and signing new talented players, improving the playing performance of the club.

As well as infrastructure and club development improvements, Higham (2009) commented on how well the English Premier League has been marketed, leading to an international fan base of supporters willing to see their club live in the UK. 'In recent years commercial mobility has resulted in a trend towards foreign ownership of sports clubs', he goes on to explain that the reason for investment in Premier League clubs is down to foreign owners wanting to 'leverage' events and matches in order to maximise commercial and financial gains. From an economic standpoint, it is clear to see that the Premier League benefits the tourism industry, Townsend (2012) reported that in the 2011/2012 Premier League season just over 900,000 people spending £706 million came to the UK in order to watch their favourite team, with 1 in 5 of those fans going to watch Manchester United, arguably the most popular commercial football club in the world. This shows that English football and specifically the Premier League, is a valuable asset to the English tourism sector, which in turn strengthens the British economy, serving as a benefit to society as a whole.

The English Premier League is edging closer towards this notion of neoliberalization according to Dubal (2010). Neoliberalism is explained by Dubal (2010) as: 'A global hegemonic doctrine, capable of enacting homogenizing structural change through deregulation, privatization, and other recognizable transformations.' It places responsibility upon the individual and increases their freedom through the growth of a free market. Essentially, in the Premier League, we see neoliberalism through the preferential use of foreign players over young English players as long as they have the skill to compete at the highest level, are willing to work hard and learn their trade, and bring joy to the fans through their performances, who are we to say they should not be preferred to a young English player for their place in a team.

According to Walters (2008) the main concern for Premier League clubs is that some foreign owners perceive the club as purely an investment opportunity and their main aim is to make a profit from the club by securing sponsorship deals, television rights, and inflating ticket prices. Consequently, the fear of the English FA is that foreign owners only want immediate achievement and expect success from quick and expensive investments in foreign players rather than the gradual development of young English players through their academies.

3.2 The Transfer Market and Impact of the Bosman Ruling post 1995

Prior to 1995, European governing body for football, UEFA, set a limit of three foreign players per team who could participate in a European competition match, plus two further players, who were 'assimilated', which meant that they had been living in the country for 5 years uninterrupted. This was known as the three plus two rule (Bernd, 2009). However, Bernd (2009) explained that

post Bosman ruling in 1995 this rule was revoked in court because restrictions on the compositions of teams based on player nationality was deemed to be discriminatory towards players and deemed a violation of article 48 of the Treaty of Rome.

Prior to 1995, player transfers in football worked under two basic principles according to Simmons (1997); 'First, a transfer would be payable even if the player has reached the end of their contract and wanted to change clubs. Second, football clubs operated strict, protectionist controls on the number of foreign born players who could appear for a team in a particular match'.

However, Belgian footballer Jean-Marc Bosman appeared before the European Court of Justice and challenged these principles. When Bosman was out of contract his club RFC Liege offered him a new inferior contract which he refused to sign. Bosman's club then blocked a transfer to French side FC Dunkerque. Bosman then sued FC Liege citing restraint of trade. The case then appeared before the European Court of Justice and a ruling in favour of Bosman which would change the balance of power between players and boardrooms in the football world forever.

This ruling stated that out of contract football players could now leave the club when their contract expired for no transfer fee (Binder, 2012). The European Court of Justice made it clear that professional football players should not be treated differently to other professions in terms of free mobility between European countries (Ericson, 2000). Ericson (2000) further explained that in making this decision the European Court of Justice did not consider that football players do not move around in a common market, consequently, smaller national leagues such as Denmark, Sweden and Holland could not afford to keep their most talented players after their contract had expired.

After the impact of the Bosman ruling giving more liberty to professional players it meant that there was a growing notion of 'player power'. Further changes to the laws of transfers were made in 2005 with the Webster ruling. Downward et al (2009, p.307) explained that the Webster ruling was a case

involving Heart of Midlothian player Andy Webster. He became the first player to exploit the updated transfer regulations of FIFA, which stated; 'Players who signed a contract when aged 28 and under are able to terminate those contracts after three years, and can do so in two years if aged 28 or over' (Downward et al, 2009, p.307). This effectively meant that players could unilaterally walk away from a contract once a fixed period of time had elapsed, regardless of the duration of the contract itself. Consequently, this liberty led to even higher player wages, and transfer fees in professional football.

Some England fans blame the poor performances of the English national side on the increase of club wages relative to what they get paid playing for England. Meaning that, since playing for England is less lucrative than playing for their club they do not perform as well. Downward et al (2009) found that between 1996 and 2001 the range of wage bill increases for clubs was 54% to 476% and between 2001 and 2005 ranged from a cut of 33% and an increase of 319%.

In modern Western European football, Frick (2009) explains that the 'big 5 leagues' (England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain) have seen an increase in the number of players coming from Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America due to; 'a higher ticket demand, more lucrative broadcasting deals, and an increase in salary' (Frick, 2009).

It has become clear that transfer fees for players have increased significantly in the last five years. In 2010, for example, the most expensive transfer made by a premier league side was the transfer of Carlos Tevez from Manchester United to Manchester City for £47 million where as in 2014, this record was broken by Manchester United after the purchase of Argentine international Angel Di Maria from Real Madrid for £65 million. While it is suggested that the impact of these star foreign players has served to benefit the 'big 5' European Leagues in terms of raising skill levels, it is also noted that the last three world cups have been won by national teams from the big 5 leagues (Italy, Spain, and Germany). Nonetheless Binder (2012) found that: 'At national team level,

the competitive balance has not decreased overall (although England, which has been the subject of most discussion, has clearly been affected)'. As Binder (2012) states for some reason the English national team does not perform at international tournaments according to their world ranking.

Particularly in the Premier League, clubs are encouraged by some fans to invest in new players in the transfer market, and with the development of media coverage such as Sky Sports transfer deadline day the pressure for clubs to commit to high profile signings has dramatically increased in recent seasons. For example, world class foreign stars have arrived in the Premier League on deadline day, such as Falcao (Columbia) to Manchester United, Ozil (Germany) to Arsenal FC, and Tevez (Argentina) to West Ham United.

Rather than developing talent through the academies this media hype surrounding Premier League spending has encouraged fans to pressure clubs into signing new players by commenting on forums and having protests on match days. Littlewood et al (2011) found that the 'big 5' leagues, predominantly the Premier League, are more likely to adopt a global recruitment strategy rather than develop players from the academy. This has had an adverse effect on the national side, in the sense that, the English national team seems to have suffered from a lack of young English players breaking through into the first team squad. In contrast, countries such as Italy and Spain, who consistently perform well at International competitions, embrace youth development more willingly (Littlewood, 2011).

Downward (2009) argues that the implementation of the Bosman and Webster rulings has led to a sharp increase in the number of overseas players participating in the Premier League. The main reason would appear to be the short term ambition for each Premier League club to either qualify for European competition or remain in the Premier League. Moreover, at the lower end of the Premier League it may well be more cost effective to import an experienced established foreign players than buy a young promising English player.

3.3 Player Development in Premier League Clubs

Whilst the success of English clubs in the Champions league is positive for English football, a downside to this is the fact that very few of the English clubs participating in the Champions league feature players developed from England, let alone their own academy. In the CIES Football Observatory Annual review of 2014 (Poli et al, 2014) it was found that out of the 'big 5' domestic leagues in Europe England was ranked fourth in terms of bringing home grown academy players into the Premier League with only 13.9% of home grown players in 2014. Poli (2014) explained that; 'The low percentage of club trained players in the Premier League confirms that if clubs have the money to buy talent, they tend to be reluctant to give a chance to youth academy players. So the question is: why are clubs signing the best prospects, if they know they will not play?'

Darby (2012) explained in an article about the export of skilled African football players that the common goal for teams in Ghana is to export their talented players to European leagues and academies. In doing so, the player receives a better standard of life in Europe and the clubs benefit by receiving profit from the sale of these players, which allows them to improve their facilities and make money for the individuals who run the club.

It has become clear that within professional football in England, player development by professional academies is extremely important to nurture individuals, Mills et al (2012) found that elite footballers are; 'built not born', this suggests that in order for more English players to be developed they must be kept in academies and nurtured over a long period of time in order to be integrated into professional football.

One of the difficulties related to the increase in foreign players in the Premier League is that it has become increasingly more difficult for young players in Premier League academies to succeed within the club. Williams (2009) found that within English

professional football clubs, there are some 9000 boys attending for these intensively competitive places. 'More than 90 percent of those who join a Premier League team will fail to make it to the first team, and most won't even become professional football players'.

James (2009) found that English academy players have 9 hours of educational lessons per week, while Spanish and German academy players have 34 hours per week, along with training and careers advice. The Continental approach is more player centred, Roderick (2006) explained that in order for a football player to develop in England, they must possess a 'good professional attitude', which is important for players particularly in terms of career development. It would appear then that the English academy players are being sold short in basic education and this can lead to a lack of self-discipline in their lifestyle and their attitude towards their sport.

The consequence of the increase of foreign players is that there are less English players performing at the highest elite club level such as the Champions League or the Europa League. In an article by Arnott (2014), he found that since 2010 using OPTA statistics the number of English players participating in the Champions League has fallen each year and this season, in 2014/15 only 21 players have played in the Champion's League group stages, Spain and Germany, the two European nations with a similar UEFA coefficient score (performance of a nations domestic clubs in last 5 Champions League tournaments is calculated a 'coefficient' score In order to rank success) to England had treble the number of players participating. Hence Spain had 75 players fielded, and Germany, had 51. It is also worth noting that the past two winners of the FIFA World Cup have been Germany and Spain, respectively.

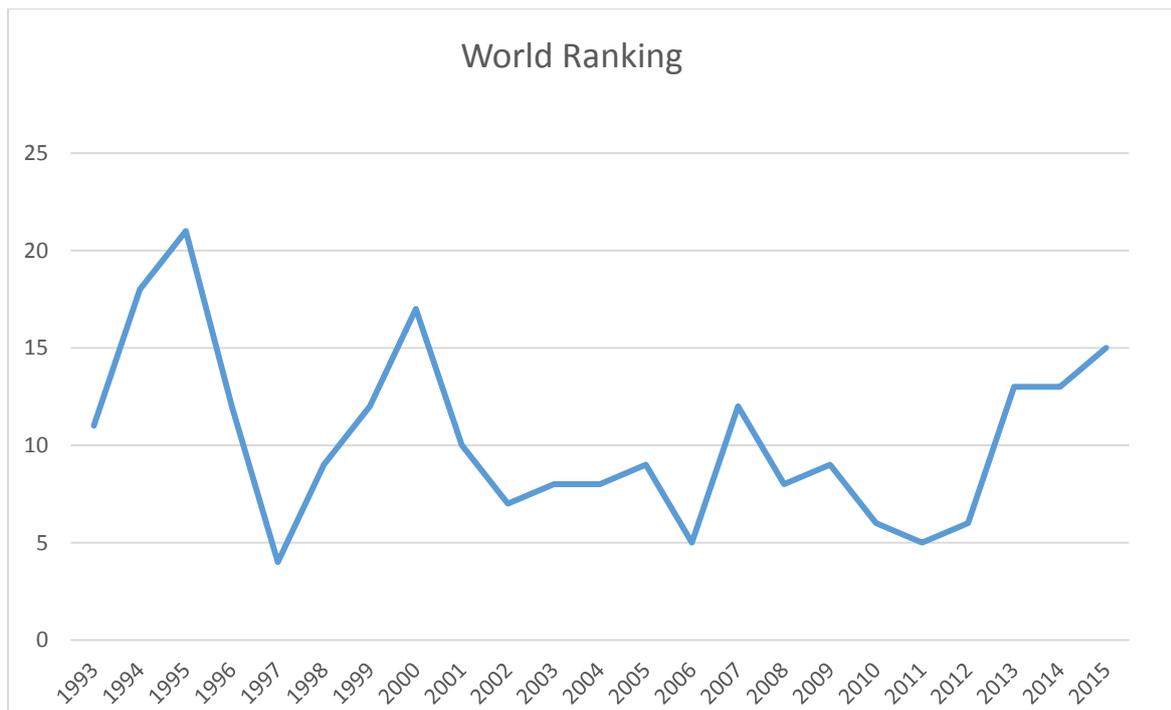
Although annually four teams enter the Champions League from England (the largest team quota allowed to enter in the Champions League for any national league) the evidence shows that there is lack of English players being picked to play by these clubs. As the figures show above, experience at the highest elite club level provides valuable experience for international tournaments such as the World Cup and European Championships.

One of the biggest advantages to foreign owners investing in clubs is the facilities available for young English players at the club, Reily (2003) explained the importance of player development through the use of sport science facilities at clubs; 'Football academies took over the responsibility for nurturing soccer talent within the professional clubs, scientific personnel were appointed to the academies'. Through the use of sport science it does allow players to enter the game at a younger age and retire after a longer career through the use of rehabilitation, strength and conditioning and fitness tests. So, in the researchers view if the foreign investment was directed more towards sports science, education, and personal development of younger players, this would have benefits for both the club and the country in terms of performance and achievement. Hence, their existing substantial investment in young English players would have a much better chance of being successful.

3.4 The English National Team and Footballing Model

Through the use of FIFA's (2015) world ranking for men's international football the researcher was able to use the secondary data to develop a graph showing England's world ranking against each year since the inception of the Premier League in figure 1. From the findings we can see that between 1995 and 1997 there was a sharp increase in world ranking, between the years of 2002 and 2012 England held a fairly steady position between 12th and 5th, since then England has gradually become worse, and now in 2015 England currently has the worst world ranking since 2000. Performances in tournaments have slowly become worse, since the 'Meltdown' report by Taylor (2008) a number of changes have taken place in order to improve the quality of English football and English players.

Graph 4. England FIFA World ranking since 1993.



Essentially, the 'Meltdown report' (2008) was published after England's failure to qualify for the Euro 2008 finals, Taylor (2008) found that the number of English players playing in the Premier League was declining, while the number of foreign players participation were increasing every season. Since 1997, when England held a world ranking position of 4th, the number of English player's consistently starting games for Premier League clubs has dropped 47%.

Often, after a tournament loss, the English national side are berated by the media, and are encouraged to follow the football model used by the winning nation. James (2013) argues the case for England following the football 'model' used by Germany, given their success in recent seasons, and having similar social, economic and political attitudes to England. Interestingly Germany has a lower percentage of home grown domestic players participating in the Bundesliga than England does (Poli, 2014), and consequently they also have more foreign players in the Bundesliga. So does this mean that in Germany it is how the young players are developed, nurtured, and educated that is more important than numbers entering the system?

Firstly, the biggest difference between the Bundesliga and the Premier League is that there are no majority or complete ownership by an individual or company of a German football club in the Bundesliga. This has led to a much more effective method of financing, Bernd (2006) explains the recent developments of club finances

in Germany; 'Compared with situations in England, Spain, and Italy, where teams have constantly been losing money, the situation is less dramatic in Germany: In 2002-2003 for example, whilst 13 of 20 Premier League teams reported a loss, only 5 of 18 in Bundesliga, reported pre-tax losses'.

The reason Bundesliga sides are so efficient financially is because since the 1960's Bundesliga clubs have been required to submit budgets for each forthcoming season, which is to include forecasts of expected revenues and losses. Bernd (2006) explains that this system has purely been introduced in order to keep control over costs and in particular wages. This is why the Bundesliga has the lowest wage to revenue ratio than in any other of the big 5 leagues in Europe.

One of the biggest differences between German and English football, is that there is no German club owned by one individual. Rather, it is governed by the 50+1 rule (Evans, 2013) where the association or club must have the controlling stake, this means that the commercial interests of the club cannot gain control, Audi and Adidas both own 9% of Bayern Munich, however the rest of the 82% of the club is owned and controlled by members via the club.

Due to this rule, it means that fans have more influence over the club. For example, Deloitte (2012) found that Manchester United's annual revenue was £331.4 million, and the cheapest season ticket being £532. In contrast, Bayern Munich's annual revenue was £290.3 million, and the cheapest season ticket was £67. Along with control over the clubs finances, the fan owned method of organisational control ensures that a German core is kept within the Bayern Munich squad, with the development of young German players into the first team in order to continue the conveyer belt of German footballing talent.

To make a comparison between the Bundesliga and the Premier League does not answer all the questions about the relative achievement of each national team. Nevertheless, the way Bundesliga clubs are run surely has an effect upon the national side. Whilst Premier League clubs look to buy talent in from abroad, the German footballing model promotes building players up, and introducing them into men's professional football through the use of 'B' teams. These teams are affiliated to elite clubs such as Bayern Munich and play in the next tier down of German professional football. This gives young players in Germany experience of

professional football and is excellent for player development within an elite club (James, 2013). The best way to develop footballers from the ages of 18-21 years is to introduce 'B' teams into the professional football league, by doing this it will give young players at big clubs the chance to prove themselves at a professional standard while developing them physically. Dyke (2014) in his annual FA chairman review has suggested that a similar system could be implemented into the English league along with reforms to grassroots football in England.

CHAPTER 4. Explicit Summary

At the outset of this research paper the desired outcome was to find out if the effects of foreign ownership, investment, and commercialisation of the Premier League are having an effect on the achievement of the English national side through the use of secondary data related to the subject. From the findings and the research we can conclude that foreign ownership and investment in Premier League clubs has come with numerous benefits and weaknesses.

4.1 Brief Summary of Key Findings

In brief, we have seen that due to the commercialisation of the Premier League (Gratton 2010) there has been an 'Americanisation' of some Premier League clubs aided and partially funded by satellite broadcasters. Hudson (2001) explained that the effect of new broadcasting deals and the takeover of clubs by billionaire owners has led to an inflation in almost every sector of Premier League football including match day/season tickets, merchandise, player wages, and transfer fees.

It is clear that the total commercialisation of the Premier League by foreign owners has led to a neoliberal attitude towards the players and fans both at home and internationally (Dubal, 2010). This means that the fans and managers do not care what the nationality of the player performing for their team is, as long as they are willing to work hard and perform for the fans. The huge investment in the Premier League brand could have a more positive influence in the national team's performance if more of the money was used to provide a better academic and sporting educational experience for young academy players.

Vital contributions to this attitude was the implementation of the Bosman ruling (1996) and the Webster ruling (2005) which increased the level of 'player power' and lead to players demand for wages increasing, along with transfer fees for players (Bernd, 2009). It is difficult to see that the freeing up of the transfer market and increased player power has made any significant difference to the national team performance.

Although there are numerous publications explaining the negatives of foreign ownership Haugen (2002) explained how it does have some benefits such as the improvement in the standard of the Premier League stadia and training facilities.

However, it is also clear that these changes and improvements come at a cost for the fans. Deloitte (2013) found that the cheapest available season ticket for an elite UK club was five times more than the German equivalent. This is due to the fact that the German club ownership system favours the fans rather than international sports companies.

As shown the performance of the English national team has deteriorated since the inception of the Premier League in 1992, both in FIFA rankings and achievements in tournaments (FIFA, 2015). Consequently, the football authorities have tried to introduce measures to counter this trend measures have been suggested.

From the evidence it is clear to me that in order for the Premier League to develop players good enough for the national team there must be some sort of reform to the state of English football.

At a boardroom level, it is too late to make clubs 'fan-owned'. Nonetheless, there could be legislation put in place to make fans members of the board. Along with this the idea of 'B' teams in the national football league seems to be an idea worth trying out, having seen the benefits at Barcelona who produced many first team players from the 'B' team (Messi, Xavi, Iniesta, and Guardiola as coach). This will prepare players for professional football better while staying within the club rather than being shipped out on loan, and will hopefully lead to more English players participating in the Champions League.

Also it seems clear that the system currently being used at Premier League club academies needs to be overhauled to ensure a better educational foundation for the young players so that they may have the correct work ethic and professional attitude to enable them to progress through the club system and eventually be successful at international level.

4.2 Reflection on Methodology

In order to gain information for this study and to cross examine literature the secondary method of data collection was used due to the vast array of literature available on this topic. It saved the researcher a lot of time in terms of collecting and referring to quantitative data (Graphs, studies, and quantitative data). The accuracy

of the data used by FIFA and Deloitte was excellent and completely unbiased which meant the numerical data used was valid.

The articles, reports, journals and books which were used also served the researcher well during this task. These qualitative methods of data were predominantly used in order to gain opinion and insight into the state of the Premier League and English football. This inductive method of research was vital for this particular study as it meant the researcher was able to interpret the data independently. As research was carried out it became evident that there were more factors contributing to the research questions than previously thought so the inductive method was the best choice for this particular study.

On reflection, if a primary method of data collection had been used the most effective would have been through interviews of fans, players, or experts in this field. Perhaps the researcher could carry out a survey of English fans opinion and study in great detail FA reports since this is the body which is responsible for the future of the English national team. Moreover, this process would have had to be fairly rigorous in order to gain fair and valid results. However, the study would have only benefitted from the opinions of fans and spectators rather than professionals, which could have resulted in the results being biased. Other than this, the study was able to use the range of excellent data available through already published material which gave the researcher a deep and broad understanding in to the topic from various points of view, such as the fans, the players, the board members, and our society as a whole, into the modern day view of the Premier League.

4.3 Final Thoughts

From this study we may conclude that foreign investment, and commercialisation of the Premier League can be indirectly responsible for the lack of development of the English National team. Satellite television broadcasting has played a key role in making the investment in Premier League clubs lucrative.

Coincidentally, it has led to an 'Americanisation' of our footballing culture, with the Premier League at the forefront of this new neoliberalist attitude. The demand for instant success has prevailed over the wellbeing and development of our young English players. This has meant that the opportunities of English players to

participate at the elite level in Europe has been significantly curtailed in contrast to young players from Spain and Germany.

It is the view of the researcher that increased commercialisation and wage inflation in the Premier League will lead to further dissociation of the clubs from the fans and unless the attitude to nurturing and educating young English players alters, and perhaps the structure of the league changes, then the fortunes of the national team will continue to decline.

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