

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Understanding the Quota Systems Applied on Foreign Players in Professional Football Leagues: An Analysis of Spanish *La Liga*, Turkish Super League and Chinese Super League

Aristide Fongang Tchewonpi

Student, Department of Cultural Studies, Sakarya University, Turkey

Abstract:

This paper explores the quota rules on overseas players as it is implemented in three different professional football leagues; Spain's La Liga, Turkish Super League and Chinese Super League. While some leagues are very flexible and attractive concerning the number of foreign players per team, some others are very strict and more protectionist. There are always various reasons that lead football associations to adopt quota policies, seeing that each country has its own specificities and realities. To better understand the functioning of quotas applied on non-domestic players in these three countries, declarations of some football authorities involved in the adoption of such quotas are collected from secondary sources. Then, these data are analysed through the theory of stakeholders and it came to the conclusion that football associations try to implement quota rules that could be beneficial for their national teams and that could contribute to the development of young domestic players. Therefore, strict quotas aiming at preventing overseas players to challenge the local ones is not the solution to build a competitive national team. In this regard, Spain could be considered as a very good example for its model of quotas on overseas players allowed this country to be competitive in international competitions both with clubs and with the national team. Thus, the best solution would be in developing football academies and in getting more qualified coaches in such a way to produce brilliant players ready to compete with other international players.

Keywords: *football leagues, national teams, quotas, domestic players, foreign players*

1. Introduction

The 1995 decision of the European Court of Justice (Bosman ruling) facilitated the freedom of movement in European football. This decision has had an influence beyond the borders of the European continent and has been applied in other continental football confederations. Therefore, "attempts to establish quotas within elite club football teams based on nationality are frequently debated against the realities of transnational talent migration" (Darby, Akindes and Kirwin, 2007). In different countries, various quota policies are applied upon overseas players and one of the central reasons that lead to the application of these quotas is the "preservation" of national teams. For some commentators, the lesser local players are active in national leagues, the weaker becomes the national teams. Another incentive to justify the necessity of quotas on foreign players is the fact that it allows young domestic footballers to play the first roles in their national leagues. Thus, what are the football institutions that are involved in the adoption and the implementation of quotas upon foreign players? Those quotas, can they be efficient? Three countries that use three different quota systems will be analysed: Spain, Turkey, and China. Spain, because the quotas in its major league are almost inexistent; both its clubs and national team are always among the best in the world. Turkey, because its quota policy toward overseas players is very attractive but its national team is still at the reconquest of its 2002 (World Cup), 2003 (Confederations Cup), and 2008 (European Cup) performances. China, because of the recruitment of well-established footballers playing in high-profile European clubs. Unfortunately, the rules upon foreign players became very tough because of the great projects that the football authorities have for their national team in the upcoming years. The objective of this study is to understand the stakes of quotas in professional football leagues and whether they may be a good strategy to balance overseas players with the construction of a strong national team made up of local players.

2. Literature Review

The increased mobility of labour generated by the Bosman ruling has led to new patterns of migration on the part of professional athletes, explain Gardiner and Welch (2011a). They argue that with the 1995 Bosman ruling, the European Court of Justice reviewed the so-called "3+2 rule" under which teams could only play a maximum of three foreign players plus a maximum of two foreign players who were able to be classified as assimilated players in that they had been registered in the relevant national association for a period of at least five years. Gardiner and Welch (2011b) state that this rule was declared to be unlawful constraint on freedom of movement and was contrary to European discrimination law in so far as players from European Union member States were treated as

foreigners. Gardiner and Welch argue that “playing quotas are protectionist in nature and freedom of mobility of labour is a positive consequence of globalization and has a redistributive effect on talent”(2011b).

Elite-level football clubs, the primary instigators, like many other global transnational industries, view international boundaries as regrettable, but ultimately surmountable barriers to the employment of the best talents in the game. This is the view of Hardman and Iorwerth (2014) who also claim that it is misleading to suggest that young players do not develop simply because there are too many overseas sportsmen in the best domestic leagues. For them, if the imposition of quotas would bring to an end the talent migration “without any corresponding adjustment of macroeconomics that affect football in each nation, historical footballing hegemonies would be preserved rather than challenged”.

In Russia, it is because of the poor performances of the national team that the quotas on foreign players had been adopted (Charyev, 2016). According to the Russian Football Union charter, the limit on overseas players should also solve the problem by increasing the competitiveness of national league; enhancing its commercial value; and supporting the national team at different age levels. The quota limits had been initiated by the Russian Football Union (federation) while the Russian Football Premier-League and club’s owners were against these quotas arguing that the limit might prevent high-skilled foreign players from playing in Russia, thereby decreasing the popularity of the league. Georgy Charyev concludes that the limit will not provide new players for the national team but the efficient work of the youth academies will be necessary. Other measures such as a better promotion of the league and new infrastructures are required and the “optimal solution could be softening the rule”.

In the similar way, quotas based on the nationality of players in the Spanish football have been modified many times, in general as a response to the unsatisfied performances of the national team (Lafranchi and Taylor, 2001). Quota ruling have not followed a stable pattern over the years but since 2004, non-EU and non-EEA players are limited to three in the first division. As far as the Turkish football is concerned, Tomislav Žarković (2015) claims that by limiting foreign players to ten (six on the pitch) in the previous regulation, the Turkish Football Federation tried to force the clubs to invest in youth development, which would eventually strengthen the struggling national team in the long run. But with the new rule (14 overseas players per team and 11 on the 18-man matchday list), the Turkish federation has to find another way to improve the investment in the youth development, “the one and only proven way to improve the production of top class local players”.

Chinese President’s ambition to make China a football super power and its national team to win the FIFA World Cup in the next 15 years would be the main reason of the adoption of new quota rule in China according to Richard Pike (2017). Talking about the disadvantage of the massive presence of overseas in a footballer league, Pike argues that the more foreign players that are bought by a country’s clubs, the fewer domestic players get regular exposure to first team football, which in turn harms the performances and future development of national team. Nevertheless, says Pike, the recent large scale recruitment of foreign players by Chinese clubs will bring the standards and quality of the league substantially higher in an instant.

3. Material and Methods

Qualitative approach is used in this study to understand the choice of football authorities to adopt quotas which are applied upon overseas football players in major football leagues in Spain (*La Liga*), in Turkey (Super League) and in China (Super League). The data utilised for the analysis come from secondary sources. Actually, many officials involved in the management of football have given their point of views concerning the application of quotas.

Thus, all the participants in this study are different actors who took position on the topic: the President of FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) and the position of FIFA, UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) and its position, the President of the Spain’s *La Liga*, the President of the Turkish Football Federation, the President of the Association of Turkish Football Clubs, two presidents of Turkish clubs, some Turkish technical directors and a former referee, the Chinese Football Association and a coach of a Chinese club. Their arguments regarding the quota limits on foreign players will be discussed.

In order to analyse the declarations of these football officials and institutions who play a significant role in the amendment and implementation process of limits as well as to analyse the efficiency of these limits, “theory of stakeholders” as proposed by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) will be used. According to Freeman (1984: 46), a stakeholder is “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives”. This theory will help to understand the stakes and the context in which decisions to establish quotas on a particular group of players are taken. Following the quota system which is approved, there are always people who are in favour and others who are against and each camp has its own arguments.

4. Findings

The policy of quotas applied on foreign players has been endorsed by the world football governing body, FIFA. The then president claimed that “sporting talent migration is detrimental to the balance between club and national team football as a whole” (Blatter, 2014: 23). For him, “too many foreign-born players endanger national team football and this also leads to competitive inequality between professional clubs” (Hardman and Iorwerth: 2014: 148). He also argued that the absence of quotas undermines the game at the national level in three manners: it weakens national teams; it fails to develop native players as it should; and it threatens football’s national identity (Hardman and Iorwerth: 2014: 148).

For the FIFA, “the universal development of football over the last century would not continue if there were increasing inequalities between continents, countries and protagonists in football” (Gardiner and Welch, 2011a: 316). Thus, FIFA proposed the “6+5 rule”, that is, on the playground and in the starting lineup, a team must contain six players eligible to play for the national team of the country the club belongs to plus five overseas players. This rule insists that clubs should prioritise the interests of national teams and national identity.

UEFA on its side put in place the “home-grown player rule” which stipulates that a specified number of footballers of a squad need to have been developed by their club or by another club in the same national association for at least three years between the ages of 15-21. UEFA introduced this rule for European competitions and recommended that national associations adopt similar rules for their own domestic leagues. UEFA believes that the home-grown player rule can create a better balance in domestic competitions, prevent clubs from merely “hoarding” players in squads and create a system whereby home-grown players would be given a greater opportunity to play regularly, a strategy that can ensure a large reservoir of talent for national teams.

As far as the expectations from the adoption of quotas are concerned, the then president of the FIFA stated:

- We need to ask supporters around the world the following questions: are you in favour of a strong national team? Are you in favour of national team players playing for the top clubs in your country’s league? Are you in favour of youth players being trained and then getting access to the first team at their original club? Do you want player who have come through the youth system at a club to sign their first professional contract with that club? If you answer ‘yes’ to all these questions, then like me, you are favour of the “6+5” rule (Gardiner and Welch, 2011b: 779).

In Spain, the law in force since 2004 is the “3 non-EU foreigners” regulation. In fact, out of the 25 players a team registers for *La Liga* (the top professional football league in Spain), it must contain no more than 3 non-EU players in their rank. Only a maximum on 3 non-EU players are allowed in each team’s starting lineup. Players from ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) that are signatories of the Cotonou Agreement are not included in this non-EU quota.

Considering the different rules established by FIFA and UEFA, the president of Spain’s *La Liga* asserted that Spain is prepared to face any regulation:

- We are looking at the situation and monitoring it, but we have no problem with these kinds of rules Spanish teams are working hard with young players in their academies and there are players who are home-grown. If they decide to adopt the new rule, we can adapt very quickly because we are developing Spanish players. Other countries may have more problems, because it is more normal for them to contract with foreign players and there is a big discussion about that. We have no problems (Bell, 2009).

The president of Spain’s *La Liga* justified the successes of Spanish national team and clubs on the international arena by the fact they took measures to produce high-profile local footballers long time ago and the results of that policy were positive:

- We have always had strong European Union rules on how many players each team could have from outside Spain, and it is a good practice. We were the winners in Europe because we have good Spanish players. We are one of the best leagues in the world because we get the results and results speak for themselves. If you don’t have results, you are nothing (Bell, 2009).

In Turkey, up until the end of the season 2013-2014, the “6+5 rule” was applied (six domestic plus five overseas players on the pitch). The rule changed first during the season 2015 with six foreign players on the pitch and four in the stand. The rule changed again at the beginning of the season 2015-2016 and it authorized eleven overseas players in the 18-man match day squad list. With that quota ruling, a technical director of the Super League has the possibility to align eleven foreign players in his starting lineup.

The 28-man squad of each team must contain 14 foreigners plus 14 domestic players per season. Out of the 14 domestic players, four must have been raised in turkey and two must have been developed at the club. Players of Turkish origin who play for another national team do not count as domestic players. Seven players out of the 18-man match day squad have to be domestic ones and this must include a Turkish goalkeeper.

The Chairperson of the Turkish Football Federation recalls that the new quota system has been endorsed by all the stakeholders of the Turkish football and explains the objective of the new rule:

- All the 18 clubs of the Süper Lig voted in favour of the new measures; it was a joint decision between the federation and the union of clubs. Only clubs that have paid their taxes, players’ wages and that have no debts to UEFA or FIFA will be permitted to make foreign transfers. Our biggest goal is to give a chance to the junior footballers. Our real aim is not to encourage foreign footballer transfers but to encourage raising home-grown players. We talked and we negotiated with many people before taking this important decision. All the clubs’ presidents support us (Baş, 2015).

The President of the Association of Football Clubs was also satisfied after the adoption of the new quota limits:

- We have removed the limit on foreign footballers that made us busy for a very long time. I thank the President of the federation and the whole administration of the federation for their dialogue with us for this decision (Baş, 2015).

For the president of an Istanbul club, “Turkish teams will be able to better compete with their European rivals if they are allowed to have limitless foreign footballers” (Baş, 2015). Another Istanbul club’s president gave his opinion: “I do not think that it is right to forbid foreign players from playing in Turkey through quotas” (Hurriyet Daily News, 2015). Reacting to the new quotas, the technical director of a club from Istanbul expressed his satisfaction:

- Turkish players will be more willing to move abroad following the recent changes. There will be more competitive footballing environment now in Turkey. The best players will get played; those who work hard and develop will get their reward. The league will reward players based on their footballing attributes instead of meeting quotas. It does not matter where the player is from, this will force Turkish players to work harder (Daily Sabah, 2015).

For the coach of an Anatolian club, without overseas players, there are a lot of financial speculations on modest local players: “I support having no limit on the number of foreign players. We had to spend too much undeserved money on Turkish players because of the limit” (Toksabay, 2015).

A manager of a club from Anatolia appreciated as well the new regulation related to foreign players in Turkey’s football first division:

- There should be some criteria for the foreign players to be transferred, but besides that, this is a good decision. There will be competition between Turkish and foreign players and this will benefit the national team (Hurriyet Daily News, 2015).

It is worth noting here that a club had demanded no quota for European Union citizen players but this request had been rejected: “Unfortunately, Turkey is not an EU member. We cannot do it”, replied the president of the federation (Hurriyet Daily News, 2013). Some commentators argued that it was not fair since Turkish athletes such as Nihat Kahveci (Villareal) and İbrahim Kutluay (Panathinaikos basketball) enjoyed playing as European Union citizens, despite the fact that Turkey was still in the accession process to join the EU as a member.

Therefore, the new legislation had been also criticised by many stakeholders. Among them, a prominent commentator and former referee declared: “It is a wrong and partial move. This will mean an end to our hopes of national team success” (Toksabay, 2015). In addition, a former Super League coach had expressed his disappointment:

- We have 30 million young people in our population. Why they don't build pitches in neighbourhoods instead of allowing foreign players in? If foreign coaches and players are allowed, foreign football executives should also be allowed (Hurriyet Daily News, 2015).

It seems that the detractors of the new rules have started to convince the president of the federation who declared recently that: “We might revise the foreign players limit after discussing it with the clubs. I believe we have to increase the number of native players and decrease the one of foreigners” (Işık, 2017). He also added that:

- If we want to see more successful young Turkish players in the national team and in the big clubs of the Turkish Super League, we have to make sure that our players get the best education and play in a competitive league that is not filled with elderly and fat native foreign players (Işık, 2017).

In China, the format established for overseas players in the Super League previously was “4+1” per team (four overseas players plus one player from the Asian Football Confederation). Nowadays, a maximum of three foreign players is allowed per team; no quota for Asian players anymore. Since 2001, overseas goalkeepers are not authorised in the Chinese football leagues.

The Chinese Football Association which is also the most important football governing body in that country justified their choice to reduce the number of foreign players to only three by the necessity to implement a new project:

- In order to realise the General Plan of Chinese Football Reform and Development and to benefit the overall development of Chinese football and Chinese local players, to enhance the quality of the national team and to keep the professional league on a healthy, stable and consistent track, the Chinese Football Association has adjusted the regulation of the 2017 Chinese Super League and the Chinese Premier League (Wilson, 2016).

Nevertheless, the federation acknowledged the positive role played by overseas footballers in the development of the local football but noticed that those foreign players constituted also a problem:

- High-level foreign players have brought energy to the Chinese Super League and made Chinese Super League games more enjoyable, but they've created financial burdens for clubs and reduced opportunities for main mainland players (South China Morning Post, 2016).

According to the federation, “the new rules would promote the long-term development of every club within the professional league” (South China Morning Post, 2016). The federation plans to go further to improve the management of football clubs:

- Chinese Football Association will continue to release new rules and policies to regulate the irrational expense of the Chinese Super League and the Chinese Premier League clubs, including the overpaying of domestic and international transfer fees and salaries in order to professionalise clubs' operations and management (Church, 2017).

Moreover, “The Chinese Football Association will give clear and specific plans regarding the club youth system and infrastructure, will fight against fake contracts, signing fees and other illegal activities” (Church, 2017).

Thus, the Chinese football federation lashed out at ‘irrational’ spending on foreign player purchases and wages, and limited the number of foreign players on match-day lists to three to allow young Chinese players more playing opportunities. Teams must field at least two Chinese players under 23, one whom has to be in the starting lineup. One of the technical directors appreciates the new rule even if he is not satisfied by the specific time the federation has chosen to implement it, that is, just few days before the beginning of the season: “Incredible timing, but interesting new rules for the Chinese Super League. The U23-rule is very positive, plus one on the bench giving them all a chance”(South China Morning Post, 2016).

Therefore, apart from the Chinese football Association, it is very difficult to identify whether other stakeholders involved in football activities in the league such as the executives of different clubs have been associated in the discussions before taking the decision to reduce the number of foreign players to three in the main football league.

5. Discussion

Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) propose that classes of stakeholders can be identified by their possession or attributed possession of one, two, or all three of the following attributes:

- The stakeholder's power to influence the organisation/institution;
- The legitimacy of the stakeholder's claim on the organisation; and
- The urgency of the stakeholder's claim on the organisation.

There exist various conceptions of the notion of “power”. According to Weber (1947) for instance, “power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance”. The recent reduction to three the number of overseas players authorised to perform in each team of the Chinese Super League was controversial in the sense that it is not clear whether all the football actors have been involved in the discussions before the federation took that decision. A remarked online commentator declared that “the Chinese Football Association are really funny making this look like a consultation, the decision was already made long ago” (Wilson, 2016). Another commentator asserts that this kind of policy is not the result of the research and

discussion on the matter which took place between the clubs and the Chinese Football Association rather, it is a direct intervention from above [Chinese government] (Church, 2017). In the perspective of Weber, it could be argued that the presidents of Chinese clubs constituted a resistance to the new rule because they were involved in the massive recruitment of foreign players and the new rule represented an obstacle to the visions and projects they had for their clubs. Therefore, it is evident that the federation has used its “power” to establish it.

Pfeffer rephrases Dahl’s (1957) definition of power as “a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done”. This is what the FIFA has done; the world football governing body was “shocked” by the fact that many football clubs started to give more importance to overseas players than to domestic ones, something that could have a direct and negative impact upon national teams. They put in place a quota rule, the famous “6+5”, compelling teams to field at least six local players and five foreign players in the starting lineups. The UEFA also imposed the “home-grown players” regulation in all his competitions, allowing to young players trained by their clubs to have the possibilities to game during the international competitions alongside foreign players. As claimed by Pfeffer, those football institutions used their power to impose clubs to do something that it would seem they have not done.

Etzioni (1964) suggests a logic for the more precise categorisation of power in the organisational setting, based on the type of resource used to exercise power:

- Coercive power, based on the physical resource of force, violence, or restraint. This method is not utilised by the football authorities;
- Utilitarian power, based on material or financial resources. If clubs do not respect the regulations in force, they may receive financial sanctions from the football associations;
- Normative power, based on symbolic resources (a normative symbol could be the prestige and esteem of the football authority). The fact that FIFA put on the agenda the “6+5 rule” and because of its prestige and aura, many federations adopted that rule as well or similar to it.

As far as legitimacy is concerned, Suchman (1995: 574) defines it as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions”. When the Turkish Football Federation decided to increase the number of overseas players from ten to fourteen per team, this has been the result of a consensus with other stakeholders such as the Association of Football clubs. Consequently, this decision can be considered as a legitimate decision taken by a legitimate federation. The notion of “legitimacy” is often coupled implicitly with that of “power”. For Weber (1947), “legitimacy and power are distinct attributes that can combine to create authority (legitimate use of power) but that can exist independently as well”. Thus, the legitimate use of power could be the fact that football federations decide to soften the rules toward foreign players (Spain and Turkey) or to tighten these rules (China) following a certain number of circumstances that led them to do so.

Urgency, for Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997), is “the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention; the stakeholder must view its claim on the organisation or its relationship with the organisation as critical or highly important”. The last time Spanish football association changed the regulations concerning the quotas on foreign footballers was in 2004 with a maximum of three non-EU players per team (countries from Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific are not concerned by this rule). So, since that period, the football authorities in Spain did not find the urgency or the necessity to modify the rules because what has been adopted is still efficient to date. In 2015, the rules have been softened by the Turkish federation while in China it has been tightened in 2017. In the latter, many technical directors and presidents of clubs complained about the timing the decision has been taken and implemented by the federation: just few days before the beginning of the new season when most of the clubs had already bought foreign players following the previous rules. For the officials of the federation, it was urgent to implement the new regulation at that time.

Once the regulations are adopted, it seems important to analyse their effectiveness in the long term. As aforementioned, Spain has adopted in 2004 a quota system limiting the number of non-European Union citizen to only three but countries of Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific who are signatories of the Cotonou Agreement are not concerned by this rule. After all, and despite this rule, it explicitly means that Spanish football teams can contain as much as foreign players. It is in that context that Spanish football league (*La Liga*) is one of the best leagues in the world and clubs from this country as well as the national team have won many international competitions during the last decade. Thus, “the key issue for all nations is not where players are located but rather the number of players playing frequently at the higher levels of football competition” (Football Association, 2014). The case of Spain is very striking because it is common to notice that the starting lineups of many clubs are made up of overseas players with very few domestic players and this does not impact negatively the Spanish national team which most of the time perform well on the international arena. So, following this model, it can be argued that it is a successful model in the balance strategy between domestic and foreign players, keeping in the same time the national team in a high level. This model is almost similar to the one of Germany which does not impose a determined number of overseas players per team in its league; as a result, Germany’s *Bundesliga* is also one of the top football leagues in the world and its national team records very good performances in international competitions.

In increasing the number of overseas players from ten to fourteen per team in 2015, Turkey seemed to follow the steps of Spain. Actually, foreign players constitute a barometer that allows domestic players to compete with an international level. This environment can compel local players to upgrade their level of game which finally will be useful for the national team. That’s why some officials of Turkish football clubs want a regulation with limitless possibilities to recruit foreign players. Therefore, Hardman and Iorwerth (2014: 151) think that the true issue that faces most clubs is not the nationality of the sportsmen, but rather the club’s integrity and governance in terms of developing of young talent, communal responsibility and ultimately, the future vitality of the football club. Moreover, in Turkey there are many football personalities who are for the drastic reduction of foreign players in the national leagues

in other to allow local ones to be more exposed to competitions and be ready to strengthen the national team. This position is legitimate in recalling the case of England for instance. In the English Premier League, few domestic players appear in the starting XI with their clubs and the consequence is that England national team has won the FIFA World Cup in 1966 and then nothing else. But, limiting the access of the league to foreign talents, as unique solution, does not automatically improve the performances of the national team.

China, unlike Spain and Turkey, is applying a strict protectionist rule: no more than three overseas players per team. Some analysts explain that this policy reflects the ambitions of the Chinese government to expand and develop football in order to build a powerful country in this sport particularly and host an edition of the FIFA World in a nearest future. For the Washington Times (January 20, 2017) and for many other observers, “the Chinese Football Association has been tweaking its rules after clubs splashed hundreds of millions of dollars over past year [2016] on foreign stars”. In fact, presidents of Chinese football clubs have spent tremendous amounts of money to buy high-profile footballers in such a way that Europeans started to consider China as a serious threat for their squads. Moreover, the issue of the Chinese national team can be added as one of the motivations that led the football authorities of this country to make tighter the quotas on overseas players in the Chinese Super League. It is important to recall here that since 2001, foreign goalkeepers are forbidden in the league. The question of whether this kind of restriction of foreign talents in a football league may help to strengthen the national team remains. But the fact is that, in the recent history, it is difficult to find a national team that performed well in the international competitions while applying severe quotas upon foreign footballers in its major league.

6. Conclusion

The adoption of quota regulations on foreign players by national football associations is a complex issue in the sense that it requires to take into account various factors. Taking the case of Spain, Turkey, and China, it has been shown that each country has its own realities and the quota systems applied in each of these three countries vary from one to another: no more than 3 non-EU players in a Spanish team (African, Pacific, and Caribbean countries excluding), 14 and 3 overseas players respectively in Turkish and Chinese football teams. Some of the main incentives that motivate the implementation of such quotas are the necessity to build a strong national team and the development of young domestic talents. Overall, to ensure a bright future to domestic players, the stakeholders must insist on the youth policies, quality academies and qualified coaches. Establishing tough rules to prevent foreign players to compete with local players is not the solution in the strategy to balance domestic and foreign players and in the perspective to build a strong national team. Spain could be considered as a good role model on this matter, with a successful national team and successful clubs in international competitions.

7. References

- i. Baş, A. (2015, January 6). Limit on Foreign Footballers Removed in Turkey. Retrieved from Daily Sabah: <https://www.dailysabah.com/football/2015/01/06/limit-on-foreign-footballers-removed-in-turkey> [Access date: 04/05/2017].
- ii. Bell, J. (2009, May 19). 6+5 Rule Is 'No Problem' for President of Spain's La Liga. Retrieved from The New York Times: https://goal.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/19/65-rule-is-no-problem-for-president-of-spains-la-liga/comment-page-2/?_r=0 [Access date: 03/05/2017].
- iii. Blatter, S. (2014). Presidential Note. *The FIFA Weekly*, 27 (23).
- iv. Charyev, G. (2016). Consequences of the Limit on Foreign Players in Russian Football. *Soccer and Society*, 17 (4), 571-587.
- v. Church, M. (2017, January 15). Chinese FA Confirms Limits on Foreign Players for Super League Clubs. Retrieved from ESPN FC: <http://www.espnfc.com/chinese-super-league/story/3039771/chinese-fa-confirms-limit-on-foreign-players-for-super-league-clubs> [Access date: 05/05/2017].
- vi. Dahl, R. A. (1957). The Concept of Power. *Bahavioral Science*, 2, 201-205.
- vii. DailySabah. (2015, January 8). Beşiktaş President Slams New Foreign Player Ruling. Retrieved from <https://www.dailysabah.com/football/2015/01/08/besiktas-president-slams-new-foreign-player-ruling> [Access date: 04/05/2017].
- viii. Darby, P., Akindes, G., & Kirwin, M. (2007). Football Academies and the Migration of African Football Labor to Europe. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 31 (2), 143-161.
- ix. Etzioni, A. (1964). *Modern Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- x. FootballAssociation. (2014). The FA Chairman's England Commission Report. Retrieved from <http://www.thefa.com/news/2014/may/08/fa-commission-report> [Access date: 03/05/2017].
- xi. Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Boston: Pitman.
- xii. Gardiner, S., & Welch, R. (2011b). Nationality and Protectionism in Football: Why are FIFA's '6+5 Rule' and UEFA's 'Home-Grown Player Rule' on the Agenda? *Soccer and Society*, 12 (6), 774-787.
- xiii. Gardiner, S., & Welch, R. (2011a). Nationality Quotas in European Football. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 3 (3), 316-320.
- xiv. Hardman, A., & Iorwerth, H. (2014). Player Quotas in Elite Club Football. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 8 (2), 147-156.
- xv. HurriyetDailyNews. (2013, July 6). No Change in Quota for Foreign Players: Turkish Football Federation. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/no-change-in-quota-for-foreign-players-turkish-football-federation.aspx?pageID=238&nID=50139&NewsCatID=362> [Access date: 04/05/2017].

- xvi. HurriyetDailyNews. (2015, January 6). Turkish Football Federation Allows All-Foreign lineups in Top League. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/turkish-football-federation-allows-all-foreign-lineups-in-top-league.aspx?pageID=238&nID=76562&NewsCatID=362> [Access date: 04/05/2017].
- xvii. Işık, A. A. (2017, March 27). The National Team and Foreign Players in the Super League. Retrieved from Daily Sabah: <https://www.dailysabah.com/football/2017/03/28/the-national-team-and-foreign-players-in-the-super-league> [Access date: 05/05/2017].
- xviii. Lafranchi, P., & Taylor, M. (2001). *Moving with the Ball: The Migration of Professional Footballers*. Oxford: Berg.
- xix. Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts. *Academy of Management Review*, 22 (4), 853-886.
- xx. Pfeffer, J. (1981). *Power in Organizations*. Marshfield, MA: Pitman.
- xxi. Pike, R. (2017, February 5). Chinese Super League: Are the Tighter Foreign Player Restrictions Good or Bad? Retrieved from <http://outsideoftheboot.com/2017/02/05/chinese-super-league-are-the-tighter-foreign-player-restrictions-good-or-bad/>
- xxii. South China Morning Post. (2016, December 25). China to Lower Club Quotas for Foreign Players amid New Spending Spree. Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/sport/soccer/article/2057136/china-lower-club-quotas-foreign-players-amid-new-spending-spre> [Access date: 03/05/2017].
- xxiii. Suchmann, M. C. (1995). Managing Legitimacy: Strategic and Institutional Approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 571-610.
- xxiv. Swarbrick, S. (2014, December 12). Does the Bundesliga Need to Limit Foreign Transfers? Retrieved from Bundesliga Fanatic: <http://bundesligafanatic.com/does-the-bundesliga-need-to-limit-foreign-transfers/> [Access date: 04/05/2017].
- xxv. Toksabay, E. (2015, January 6). Turkey Removes Limits on Foreign Players. Retrieved from Reuters: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-soccer-turkey-idUKKBN0KF12P20150106> [Access date: 03/05/2017].
- xxvi. Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Free Press.
- xxvii. Wilson, C. (2016, December 23). CFA One Step Closer to Cutting Foreign Player Quota for Chinese Super League Clubs in 2017. Retrieved from Wild East Football: <https://wildeastfootball.net/2016/12/cfa-one-step-closer-to-cutting-foreign-player-quota-for-chinese-super-league-clubs-in-2017/> [Access date: 04/05/2017].
- xxviii. Žarković, T. (2015, September 14). Turkish Football Auditions for a Bigger Role. Retrieved from Overtime Sport: <http://promovertime.com/turkish-football-auditions-for-a-bigger-role/> [Access date: 03/05/2017].