

**Football in Ghana and Its Relationship with the Rest of the World (Player Transfers)**

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## Abstract

**Research question.** As the popularity of football skyrocketed worldwide, Ghana received an opportunity to advance in the global economy by gaining international attention with the help of its incredibly skilled football team. Therefore, this study will explore the economic opportunities provided by player transfers. The question to be answered is whether the economic opportunities provided by transfers will allow Ghana to advance in the global market and become a more active player within the global governance framework.

**Research methods.** This study utilizes qualitative research tools to investigate the impact of player transfers on the development of football, as well as the emergence of economic opportunities within a country. Specifically, the case of Ghana is considered, although the examples of other states are incorporated into the analysis as well. Key outcomes of player transfers on the football performance, training options, and opportunities for marketing the state team on a global scale are investigated and assessed based on the review of available literature. Particularly, the contextual analysis is applied to the ten research articles selected for this paper.

**Results and findings.** The results of the analysis indicate that the concepts of increased opportunities and the significance of using player transfers as the means of improving the quality of talent management are interrelated. The research results include the presence of themes and concepts associated with the development of skills and the rapid economic growth associated with the exploration of the global sports environment.

**Implications and recommendations.** It is critical to encourage the active development of sports so that Ghana could attract the attention of foreign investors and potential partners. Therefore, investing in the development of football and the active support of teams is vital. By

allocating the financial resources in a way that will allow focusing on sports, one will be able to support the sports industry while encouraging Ghana's foray into the global governance setting.

### **Football in Ghana and Its Relationship with the Rest of the World (Player Transfers)**

Football has become one of the most popular kinds of sport over the past couple of decades. As the pace of globalization increased, football gained the status of an international kind of sport, mostly owing to championships and competitions such as FIFA (Okwechime & Adetiloye, 2019). However, apart from being the source of entertainment for multiple viewers all over the world, football also represents an important source of income both for players and the states that they represent. Having created ample chances for Ghana to enter the global economic field, football may be considered an essential force for economic and social development in Ghana. By encouraging the further development of football in Ghana, one will allow the country to expand its economy and advance in the global market while creating strong economic and cultural connections with the rest of the world and creating premises for the active improvement of its current economic situation with the help of player transfers and the resulting reinforcement of cultural and business ties.

### **Literature Review**

Football, or, to be more precise, association football, commonly known as soccer in the USA, has been quite popular in Ghana as a kind of sport and a type of entertainment. At the same time, despite the presence of a strong inclination toward representing football not only as a sport but also a major opportunity for creating global connections, the Ghanaian government has been neglecting several important options for increasing the performance of the football industry and making the specified kind of sport more lucrative for the state. The study by Shitsi et al. (2017) indicates that the opportunity for franchising football has been mostly overlooked by the Ghanaian government. At the same time, there is still enough room for improvement, particularly, in the direction of the development of a strong and competitive franchise that could

help Ghana in advancing in the global economic field. The concept of a player transfer is far from being an innovative one in the association football context (Tackie, 2018). On the contrary, player transfers have been very popular since the pace of globalization allowed active global collaboration between teams.

However, unfortunately for Ghana, the player transfer market has been shrinking lately, mostly due to the impact of the coronavirus on the opportunities for international communication and collaboration. Specifically, the report issued by the global transfer market has clarified that there was a decrease in global transfer activities for the first time over the past decade. Total transfers of professional male footballers “dropped from 18,047 in 2019 to 17,077 in 2020, a decrease of 5.4%” (“Player trading,” 2021, para. 2). Therefore, there are strong reasons for Ghanaian players to be concerned about the current range of opportunities that they can pursue in the football industry. The specified trend indicates that Ghana needs to consider other options apart from player transfers as the means of expanding its cultural and economic connections within the global context.

Regarding the opportunities available to Ghana currently in advancing its football industry, the ongoing FIFA 2021 competition should be seen as a truly stellar opportunity for Ghanaian players to gain currency in the global football industry. Thus, they can obtain the possibilities for sponsorship deals and other related lucrative options (Shitzi et al., 2017). Given the recent outstanding performance of the Ghanaian team, further improvement in the football industry within Ghana can be expected, with the consequent focus being placed on its expansion and the use of it as the main source of the state’s financial opportunities.

At the same time, several limitations to the current range of opportunities for Ghanaian footballers should be mentioned. The range of investments that Ghana can introduce into football

development is quite limited (Ungruhe & Esson, 2017). Additionally, there are certain restrictions as to what Ghanaian football teams can disclose in media in regard to the information about the team, its members, and their personal details. As a result, the opportunity for bonding between customers and the employed players, as well as the option of creating a more wholesome image of the Ghanaian football team, making it family-oriented, has been unsuccessful so far. Nonetheless, fascination with football has been increasing among general audiences, especially with the recent competition, where Ghana is expected to win.

### **Method**

To collect the data required for research, mainly the secondary data collection technique was used. Namely, the researchers have explored the existing repositories of scholarly journals in an attempt to find the articles that will add a certain amount of credibility to the claims made in this paper. Over the course of several days, the method was developed, with impressive results having been achieved. The results from scholarly studies have confirmed the importance of Ghanaian football for the state economy, as well as the opportunities that can be pursued with it.

The method in question involves conducting a search across the available databases containing scholarly articles, including both primary and secondary research on the topic of Ghanaian football. For this study, a sample size of 10 papers on the subjects of football in Ghana, football as the source of economic growth within the state, and the current situation regarding the economy and the entertainment industry in Ghana, was chosen. In addition to the themes mentioned above, the papers addressing the topics of Ghanaian international policies, as well as the state's opportunities for international collaboration, in general, and in regard to the expansion into the global football industry, in particular, were considered.

To process the data, content analysis was used as the main method of examining the obtained data. The information gathered from the studies in question was dissected and split into several broad categories based on which the further characterization of the current situation with football in Ghana was considered. In particular, the issue of the player transfer strategy as the main method of assisting Ghana in advancing in the global football industry was analyzed. Namely, given the current success streak that Ghanaian football players have been enjoying in the context of the global competition, they are facing an incredible opportunity of closing international deals with organizations and teams that may want to offer player transfers as the methods of learning and experience sharing (Sahin, 2018). Therefore, by considering the available information regarding the analyzed prospects, a prognosis for the further development of Ghanaian football was possible to be made. Additionally, the issues associated with the opportunity to improve the current promotion of Ghanaian football through franchising and the related options were considered thoroughly.

The proposed research method has a range of limitations, the major one being the lack of a personal perspective and direct evidence obtained from players and people within the industry. However, the issue under discussion can be addressed by locating the articles and reports that contain the described information and drawing relevant conclusions based on it. Additionally, the issue of relevance and credibility of the sources could be raised. To prevent the development of research bias, the range of publication date was limited to 2017-2021, therefore, ensuring that the evidence to be used in the study remained up-to-date, relevant, and credible. Additionally, only scholarly, peer-reviewed journals were used for this research. Finally, the search process was performed using the keywords and phrases such as “Ghana football,” “Ghana football opportunities,” “Ghana football player transfer,” and “Ghana football player transfer

opportunities.” Thus, the data pertinent to the case were obtained and incorporated into the analysis.

### **Results/Discussion**

An overview of the latest studies on the subject of football in Ghana and the opportunity of using transfer players as the means of expanding into the global context has shown that the selected concept has ample potential. The importance of knowledge and skill transfer as the main goal of using transfer players on different teams, in general, and for Ghana, in particular, has been analyzed thoroughly in recent studies, which implies that the concept of knowledge transfer warrants another category as a crucial concept.

Analyzing the notion of knowledge transfer in the football setting, one should note that apart from techniques that players can use to improve their strategies and tactics in the field, the concept of cultural sharing is also frequently implied (Akindes, 2019). In particular, the study by Lombardi et al. (2020) points to the need for using the notion of transfer players as the tool for leveraging a team’s competitiveness against the teams representing other cultures. By using player transfer in the cross-cultural context, teams can gain essential cultural knowledge that will allow them to predict the choices made by the opponents and, therefore, respond more promptly and effectively in the field (Lombardi et al., 2020). Therefore, the idea of knowledge transfer should be seen as a vital concept to be considered when examining the context of sports and entertainment.

The concept of a transfer player has also proven to be rather common in the football context, according to most of the papers consulted for this study. Namely, the theme of financial opportunities as one of the main driving factors behind the selection of the specified options for Ghanaian football has proven to be supported by several studies (Acheampong et al., 2019;



Akindes, 2019; Sahin, 2018). Specifically, Matesanz et al. (2018) mention that “professional football is a money game” with a positive correlation between the transfer market investments and sportive team performance (p. 2). Thereby, different league categories, including ‘money’, ‘farm’, and ‘outlier’ leagues, can be identified. Therefore, there is an evident component of financial interest in the current football industry.

In addition, the introduction of the player transfer principle creates further opportunities for franchising, which is vital for building a strong and relevant brand. In his study, Tackie (2018) addresses the themes of franchising and, particularly, market expansion for football organizations. The author outlines the role that the process of franchising will have on the expansion of football in Ghana, explaining that the mentioned opportunity will lead to the chance to introduce merchandizing and similar techniques to advance the development of the football industry, as well as the whole Ghanaian entertainment industry in general (Tackie, 2018). Thus, the themes of marketing and economic growth in relation to football have been examined thoroughly in the latest studies, pointing to the necessity for the Ghanaian government to invest in the kind of sport under analysis.

In fact, the chosen opportunity can be connected with the concept of transfer players. That is, once transfer players become an important part of the Ghanaian football industry, opportunities for partnering with international organizations and, therefore, developing a unique brand strongly associated with the Ghanaian football industry will emerge. As a result, player transfers will lead to international deals that will ultimately allow Ghana to advance in the global market and improve its current economic situation (Ungruhe & Schmidt, 2020). Therefore, the fact that the concept of player transfers provides vast opportunities for Ghana to expand into the global economy and promote the further development of its sports and entertainment industries,

hence increasing its GDP and attracting new partners, proves the importance of using transfer players as a part of the Ghana football industry strategy.

Another concept that emerges quite frequently in several studies addressing the question of transfer players in football is linked to the issue of financing. Although Ghana has been demonstrating significant economic growth since 2000, it has faced a sharp decline recently (Tackie, 2018). In 2020, the Ghanaian GDP showed a -5.70 decline in the second quarter, which can be attributed to the pandemics, namely, the restrictions that were imposed on the trade process (Tackie, 2018). Therefore, Ghana currently needs financial support that will help it restore its economy. In turn, the promotion of the football industry development is likely to spike a rapid increase in the state's economic performance due to the influx of foreign investments. After creating partnerships with companies overseas, Ghanaian football organizations may expect opportunities for receiving investments from foreign partners, along with financial support.

Similarly, extensive opportunities for further success, namely, the development of the brand and the expansion into the global market with the further opportunities for franchising, have been spotted as a critical aspect of the player transfer concept in football. Matesanz et al. (2018) indicate that the necessity to build a dynamic network that would allow coordinating the key activities within the sports industry has emerged due to the increase in the number of involved parties and the threat of rapidly developing inequality in the distribution of resources. Thus, the theme of economic competitiveness as a part of the football industry and an integral characteristic of a team functioning in it is explored in depth. The study proves that the application of the principle of transfer players allows increasing the marketability of a team, as well as its overall performance characteristics (Matesanz et al., 2018). Thus, the significance of

using transfer players is outlined in the themes and concepts that have been identified throughout the article.

At the same time, the topic of mistrust and the lack of reliability observed in the target market has surfaced during the overview, with several studies pointing out that Ghana may face certain threats when engaging in the transfer player process. Specifically, the presence of information leakage and the associated concerns have been outlined in the papers by Fűrész and Rappai (2020) and Tackie (2018). The mentioned issue raises quite a number of concerns given the high hopes that Ghana places on the opportunities for expanding its football industry and using it as a part of its entertainment and sports industry as the means of advancing in the global market. Therefore, the presence of the specified themes in the studies proves the importance of investing not only in the professional development of football players and the marketing campaigns but also in the creation of a strong security system and reliable data management approaches. Thus, Ghanaian football teams will be protected from privacy breaches and personal data thefts.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Due to the prominent opportunities for closing deals with overseas partners, expanding the state economy, and advancing in the global market and the international sports industry, Ghana should consider the use of the player transfer opportunity as the gateway to its further development. The study has confirmed that Ghana currently has massive potential in regard to its football team, as the recent researches, reports, and the team's stellar performance during the world championship have proven. Therefore, by participating in the player transfer program, Ghana will be able to share experiences with other states while also developing stronger business ties with them. Regarding the further development of football in Ghana, partnerships with

foreign companies can generate many opportunities for franchising and the further expansion of its football business into the global context. As a result, Ghana will receive a chance to establish itself in the global economic and entertainment contexts as a country with impressive potential and a plethora of talented players.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the Ghanaian government should acknowledge the importance and the role of the global governance structures and the impact of effective governance in sport organizations. Namely, the Ghanaian government should understand the connection between participating in the sports industry on a global level and gaining the opportunity to create global partnerships, receiving the support and opportunities for collaboration from companies overseas. Therefore, the Ghanaian officials should consider fostering the development of sports, particularly, football, within the state as one of the key priorities and essential assets.

Under the mentioned circumstances, chances for collaborating with global organizations, receiving investments, and creating franchises gaining global recognition will emerge. For this reason, player transfers as the means of sharing skills and exchanging experience and knowledge regarding football should be considered. Additionally, apart from offering direct opportunities for improving the team's performance, the specified change will offer a chance at making global deals and establishing global partnerships, thus, leading to the gradual improvement in the Ghanaian economy. Therefore, the connection and correlation between the level of participation in the global governance process by promoting football development and the extent of economic opportunities need to be drawn.

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