THE PREFERENCE OF FOREIGN-BASED (MIGRANT) PLAYERS OVER HOME-BASED PLAYERS IN THE SUPER EAGLES OF NIGERIA: A COLORATION OF 'COLONIAL MENTALITY'

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KEYWORDS
Foreign-based players, Home-based players, Super Eagles of Nigeria, Colonial mentality

ABSTRACT
Nigeriais blessed with talented footballers. There abound Nigerian players in the Nigeria Professional Football League and foreign leagues. The Nigeria Football Federation(NFF) is in charge of running football in Nigeria as it superintends over the Nigerian national football teams and recruit coaches. Both home-based and foreign-based players were always invited to the camp of the Super Eagles when there was a competition. However,when it was time for the final list to be drawn there might not be any home-based players in the list or there might be an insignificant number that might end up not playing in such competition.There has been a lot of talk on the preference of foreign-based players over home-based players in the Super Eagles team.Hence, this study analyses the rate of selection in terms of percentage of home-based and foreign-based players in the Super Eagles team by some selected foreign and Nigerian coaches.The Hamitic hypothesis of Seligman is applied to show the nexus to the preference for foreign-based players.This study makes use of primary and tertiary sources of data.Findings reveal that not only foreign coaches solely relied on foreign-based players, as some Nigerian coaches were equally masterminds of the unpatriotic act. Also, home-based players can be instrumental to performance of the team as was displayed in the 1990 and 2013 African Cup of Nations.This study recommends that a law should be passed forcing the coach to include at least four home-based players on the field of play whenever the team is in action.

Introduction

Football in Nigeria was introduced by the British missionary sailors in the 19th century in places like Port Harcourt, Lagos and Warri. The first recorded match took place between Hope Waddell Training Institution based in Nigeria and the crew of the British Gunboat HMS Thistle in June 1904. The match ended 3-2 in favour of Hope Waddel.[1] In 1949, the Nigeria national team played with clubs in England such as South Liverpool, Bromley, Marine Crosby, Bishop Auckland etc. It lost five matches, won two and drew twoand EtimHenshaw was the captain of the team.[2] The national football team also played with Sierra Leone and defeated

Sierra Leone 2-0. In the 1970s, the team participated in the Second All African Games and in1976 and 1978 the team took part in the African Cup of Nations and came third. In 1984, 1988 and 2000, it lost to the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon in the final of AFCON (African Cup of Nations). In 1994 it qualified for its first world cup that was hosted in USA and occupied the fifth position on FIFA (Federation of International Football Association) ranking. The senior Nigerian football team lifted the African Nations Cup in 1980, 1994 and 2013. From 2013 to 2021, the Nigerian team participated in different competitions such as AFCONand World Cup without lifting the coveted trophies. Nigeria's poor performance in football could be glaringly seen in its position in FIFA ranking since after 1994 World Cup. On18thSeptember 2014, it ranked 37th in the FIFA ranking[3] and on 26th June 2022 as at the time of this study it ranked 31st.

From 1949 to June 2022, the Nigerian football team obtained the services of both foreign and Nigerian coaches. Out of 48 times Nigeria hired coaches, 23 of these times the position of coach was occupied by foreigners while the remaining 25was by Nigerians.[4]Before independence, the football team was known first as the Uk Tourists and later the Red Devils. On 1stOctober 1960, the name was changed to Green Eagles and by 1988 to Super Eagles. Past Nigerian players included EtimHenshaw, TeslimBalogun, Daniel Anyiam, MudashiruLawal Emmanuel Okala, Rashidi Yekini, Austin Okocha, Vincent Enyeamaetc. The association in charge of governing football in Nigeria was formed in 1945[5] and was known as Nigeria Football Association. In 2008, it was changed to Nigeria Football Federation.

Foreign-based players in this study refer to Nigerian footballers who played outside the shores of Nigeria. They either played or didn't play for clubs in Nigeria before going outside the country. Nigerians born outside the shores of Nigeria playing for foreign clubs are also referred to as foreign-based players. Going through the list of players invited by the selected coaches, few players were designated 'unattached' meaning they had no club as at the time the selection of the team was done. Such a player is considered foreign-based if his previous club was abroad and home-based if his last club was in Nigeria. Also, home-based players are Nigerian footballers plying their trade in Nigeria as at the time the selection was done.Colonial mentality refers to the idea that nothing good or of high quality can come out from Africa as espoused by the colonialists.This line of thought is being professed by some Africans and Europeans.Some coaches in the past had preference of these Nigerian foreign-based players over local players.This study is built on the Hamitic hypothesis that queries dark skinned African's ability to be innovative. In the view ofC. G Seligman thus

> *Apart from relatively late Semitic influence whether Phoenician (Carthagenian and strictly limited, or Arab Muhammedan) and widely diffused the civilizations of Africa are the Hamites, its history - the records of these people and of their interaction with the two other African stocks - the negro and the bushman, whether this influence was exerted by highly civilized Egyptians or by such wider pastoralists as are represented at the present day by the Beja and Somali. The incoming Hamites were pastoral Caucasians – arriving wave after wave – better armed as well as quicker witted than the dark agricultural Negroes.*[6]

The gist of this theory is that outsiders contributed to the blossoming of ancient civilization that pervaded some parts of Africa in the past. The relevance of this theory to this study is that home-based footballers are looked down upon because they ply their trade in Africa and are believed not to have acquired the necessary football skills. This will therefore make them not to be creative or innovative. The foreign-based players are preferred as it is believed that by playing in European countries like England, Turkey, Germany, France etc and with the organization of their leagues no matter the level, the players have acquired better footballing skills. They are believed to be exposed since they compete with the best in Europe. There is no gainsaying the fact one or two foreign- based players invited plied their trade in Africa, Asia or the Americas.This study is not opposed to inviting foreign based-players for a football match, but advocates for a situationinensuring that home-based players are not only invited but also participate during the match. A team of eleven players on the field of play should be made up of at least four home-based players. This study will lookat the constitution of the Super Eagles under a couple of coaches in major competitions like AFCON, World Cup and FIFA Confederation Cup. With

the constitution of the team, the preference of foreign-based players will be brought to the fore.

Works to be reviewed will focus more on on-line newspapers. ImhonsEronswrites that preference will continue to be given to foreign-based players over home-based players in the Super Eagles.AmajuPinnick blamed the NPFL for this development.[7]IbitoyeOlukosiposits that 98% of Super Eagles players are foreign-based players and that the remaining one or two home-based players in the team list may end up not playing in a match.[8] He does not tell us about the coaches that have picked more home-based players and his idea of 98% is a general view. ObadinaIreti exposes a glimmer of hope as she records thus

> *The Dream continues for players based in the Nigerian premier football league as 15 of them made coach Augustine Eguaveon's 30-man list of Super Eagles for the 2012 African Nations cup qualifier against the Guinean National team on October 10 [9].*

Ireti's position does not cover rate of selection of foreign-based players over home-based players in competitive matches. Collin Udoh notes that Gernot Rohr picked in all 23 home-based players to compete with foreign-based players. Out of which just 11 played mostly in international friendlies.[10]This is in tandem with the fact Rohr was anti-homebased players as will be shown in this paper. Alex Monye states that Finidi George revealed that Jose Poaseiro, the new Super Eagles gaffer would give opportunity to more locally based players to fight for shirt in the team.[11]The rate of selection in terms of percentage of foreign-based players over home-based players is not spelt out. SeyiAlaoattests to Rohr's absolute belief in foreign-based players thus

> *Rohr has now revealed without mincing words that the foreign-based players have a better chance than their Nigeria based counterparts. He said it is not part of his contract to bring in locally based players[12]*

Onwumechili pinpoints wage disputes and strikes as a result of the poor working conditions in the NPFL (National Professional Football League).[13] This study is in agreement with the poor working conditions of players in the NPFL. NnamdiMadiche notes the 'disconnect' between the domestic league and the national team composition, and that Nigeria's first team players played in Europe. He highlights the challenges faced by Nigerian clubsides in the NPFL.[14]James OkolieOsemene and Rosemary Okoh, notice that there were setbacks in the past that caused postponement of new seasons in the NPFL[15] These worksdonot give us a minute detail of the rate of selection in terms of percentage of foreign-based players in comparison with home-based players by selected Nigerian and foreign coaches, hence the essence for this study. This study is divided into three sections namely rate of selection of Super Eagles players by foreign coaches, rate of selection of Super Eagles players by Nigerian coaches, critical x-ray of the major reason forheavy reliance on foreign-based players and conclusion.

Rate of Selection of Super Eagle Players by Foreign Coaches

In this section this study will delve into the number of home-based players in relation to the foreign-based players invited by foreign coaches who actually played the matches. The coaches to be looked at here are Clemens Westerhof, BertiVogts, Lars Lagerback and GernotRohr.Clemens Westerhof, theDutch was appointed as a coach for Super Eagles of Nigeria and lasted from 1989 to 1994. In the 1990 AFCON hosted in Algeria, the Super Eagles went with just three foreign- based players amongst the 18 invited players. The foreign-based players were Andrew Uwe of KSV Roselare(Belgium), Rashidi Yekini of Africa Sport (Ivory Coast) andFriday Elahorof Brondby(Denmark).[16] The implication of this is that on the field of play there were at most eight home-based players and three foreign-based players. This can be translated to 83.3% home-based and 16.7% foreignbased set up. The reason for more home-based players was not unconnected to the fact that some invited foreign-based players did not turn up for the competition. If not for their absence, there would have been more foreign-based players. This could be confirmedin Westerhof's selection of players for the match between Indomitable Lions of Cameroon and Super Eagles of Nigeria in the Italia 1990 World Cup qualifier in Ibadan, where Nigeria beat Cameroon2 - 0 .[17] In the 1990 African Nations Cup, Nigeria was able to reach the final where she lost to Algeria 0-1, after being beaten by the same Algeria 1-5 in the group stage, winning silver. Other teams Nigeria played wereEgypt, Ivory Coast and Zambia.

In the 1994 Tunisia AFCON, Westerhof made useof more foreign-based players though they were mostly players he utilized in the 1990 Nations Cup.These were players he brought up from the then Nigerian First Division League and contributed to some of their exiting to foreign leagues. Out of the 22 players in the 1994 AFCON squad, only three were home-based namely Isaac Semitoje of IwuanyanwuNationale of Owerri, NdukaUgbade of Calabar Rovers and Edema Fuludu of BCC Lions of Gboko.[18] In the camp it was 86.4% foreign-based and 13.6% home based arrangement. Nigeria played against Gabon, Egypt, Zaire, Ivory Coast and Zambia in the final which ended 2-1 in favour of Nigeria. Out of thefive matches played by Nigeria, Ugbade came in as a substitute in three matches and Semitojeplayed only one match. This implies that twohome-based players were used in the competition out of the 22 players, creating a composition of 9.09 home-based and 90.91 foreign-based set up. In USA 1994 World Cup, Westerhof dropped all the home-based players replacing them with foreign-based playersvizMichealEmenalo, ChidiNwanu and EmekaEzeugo.Westerhof that started with home-based players along the line started losing interest in home-based players. Consequently, it was 100% foreign based and 0% home based involvement in the 1994 World Cup.Nigeria was able to beat Bulgaria3-0, lost to Argentina 1-2, beat Greece 2-0 qualifying for the second round. In this round of 16, she was beaten by Italy 1-2.[19]

BertiVogts, the German tactician who occupied the position of Super Eagles' coach from 2007 to 2008 displayed his utter disdain for home-based players. In the 2008 squad to the AFCON he selected only foreign-based players. In the group stage Nigeria lost to Cote d' Ivoire 0-1, drew with Mali 0-0, beat Benin 2-0, qualifying for the quarter finals where she lost to Ghana 0-1. This performance was considered poor by the Nigerian public. The team was 100% foreign-based and 0% home-based. Also, another coach who solely believed in the capabilities of foreign-based players was Lars Lagerback, the Swede. He lasted just forty days in the job, out of which just 10 days were spent in Nigeria as he was in charge of the Eagles in 2010 World Cup in South Africa.[20]His squad to South Africa had no home-based players making it 100% foreign based and 0% locally based. All the players that participated in the 2008 African Nations Cup went to South Africa 2010 apart from about eight that were dropped. The country did not do well as she was booted out in the group stage losing toArgentina 0-1 and Greece1-2, drawing with South Korea2-2.

Another gaffer who preferred foreign-based players was Gernot Rohr who was in Nigeria from 2016 to 2021. The Franco-German tactician was able to qualify the Eagles for the 2018 World Cup in Russia and 2019 AFCONin Egypt. The squad he took to Russia was all foreign-based players apart from IkechukwuEzenwa of Heartland of Owerri who was the only home-based in the midst of 23 players.[21] He was not used in any of the matches and Nigeria still could not go beyond the group stage. The percentage of foreign-based players in the team was 95.7% while that of home based was 4.3%. In terms of participation on the field of play, it was 100% foreign based and 0% home based, since the only home-basedplayer (goalkeeper) did not actively participate in the team. In Egypt 2019, Ezenwa was still the only home-based player among the 23 players, and featured in the match against Madagascar, making the active participation to be 95.7% foreign based and 4.3% home based. Nigeria defeated Burundi, Guinea, lost to Madagascar, defeated Cameroon, South Africaandlost to Algeria in the semi-finals 1-2 and won the third place match 1-0 against Tunisia to lift the bronze.

Rate of Selection of Super Eagle Players by Nigerian Coaches

The Nigerian coaches to be assessed here are ShuaibuAmodu, Christian Chukwu, AugustineEguavoen and Stephen Keshi**.**ShuiabuAmoduhad been coach of the Eagles on different occasions but this study will focus on 2002 and 2010 when he lifted bronze in the African Nations Cup for the Super Eagles. In 2002 AFCON he took almost an entire squad of foreign-based players. The only home-based player was Eric Ejiofor of Enyimba.[22]The percentage of foreign-based players in the team was 95.5% while that of home based was 4.5%. Nigeria got to the semi-finals where she was beaten by Senegal 1-2. In the third place match which was the only match played by the only home-based player, Nigeria defeated Mali1-0. Why Ejiofor must have played this match was likely because it was not the final. It is so shocking that a Nigerian coach who was supposed to give hope to home-based players did not pay attention to them. Shuaibu Amodu himself had in the past managed Nigerian clubssuch as BCC Lions of Gboko, El-Kanemi Warriors of Maiduguri and Shooting Stars of

Ibadan. In 2010 AFCON, he went entirely with foreign-based players, implying 100% foreign based and 0% home basedarrangement. Christian Chukwu was the captain of Green Eagles of Nigeria that lifted the 1980 African Nations Cup hosted in Nigeria. He was then a player for Enugu Rangers. He became coach of the Super Eagles from 2003 to 2005, after a coaching career in Lebanon and working as the coach for the Harambee Stars of Kenya in 1998. About eight players that made the 2002 Nations Cup team were dropped in the 2004 Nations Cupand replaced under the management of Christian Chukwu. VincentEyeama was the only home based player out of the 22 invited players[23]The percentage of foreign-based players in the team was 95.5% while that of home based was 4.5%. Enyeamaplayed in all thematches. Nigeria defeated Benin, South Africa, lost to Morocco, beat Cameroon and lost to Tunisia in the semi-finals. She defeated Mali in the third place match carting away the bronze.

Augustine Eguavoen started coaching in Malta in 2000/2001 season. In June 2005, he was appointed as a caretaker coach for the Eagles and in 2006 he guided the Eagles to third place finish in the AFCON.Just like Chukwu and Amodu, his tenure favoured the foreign-based players. The percentage of foreign-based players in the team was 95.7% while that of home-based was 4.3%. The only home-based player was Dele Ayenugba of Enyimba and he did not play any of the matches, resulting in a 100% foreign and 0% home based active participation. In the 2021 AFCONhosted in Cameroon in 2022, Eguavoen took just one home-based player, John Noble of Enyimbaout of 28 players[24]who didn't even play any match. The Eagles were sent packing in the second round stage by a COVID-19 hit and depleted Tunisian team 0-1. Stephen Keshi took the Eagles to the 2013 AFCON after coaching Togo and Mali. He introduced six home-based playersin his team out of the 23 invited players namely AzubikeEgwueke of Warri Wolves, Ruben Gabriel of Kano Pillars, Godfrey Oboabona of Sunshine Stars, ChigozieAgbim, EjikeUzoenyiand Sunday Mba of Enugu Rangers.[25]The percentage of foreign-based players in the team was 73.9% while that of home based was 26.1%. Apart from Oboabona that played all the matches, Mba played two matches while Uzoenyi played just one match. This means that Keshi used in total three home-based players out of the six home-based players, which was a wonderful improvement in the use of home-based players. Nigeria lifted the trophy by beating Burkina Faso 1-0 with the goal being scored by a home-based player. For the 2013 FIFA Confederation Cup, he invited seven home- based players[26]including three home-based players that were not part of the Nations Cup.They were Solomon Kwambe of Sunshine Stars, Francis Benjamin of Heartland FC and EmekaEze of Enugu Rangers as they replaced EjikeUzoenyi and Ruben Gabriel.The percentage of foreign- based players in the team was 69.6% while that of home based was 30.4%. Not less than two home- based players participated in every match played by the Nigerian team.

Critical X-ray of the Main Reason for Preference of Foreign-based players over Locally based Players

The major reason for the preference of foreign-based players has been linked to the poor organization of the league. The Nigerian league is supposed to be producing players for the national team. A league that was 50 years old in 2022 is fraught with hiccups. In most cases in the past the league did not commence on the scheduled date unlike the European league that always starts as scheduled.[27]The English Premier League (EPL) scheduled to begin in August 2022 had its fixtures out in June 2022. In the case of Nigeria, the League ManagementCommittee (LMC) fixes a particular date which could be shifted. This has made Nigerians to believe that the league organizing body is not serious. At times the league would have no sponsor. Globacom was a sponsor of the league from 2012/13 to 2014/15.[28] The international community will not take Nigeria serious due to her lacklustrepreparation. This development is a minus as foreign coaches and even local coaches for the Eagles will be indifferent to our home-based players.[29] It is true that most times whenever it was announced that the league would commence it would be shifted, but this does not gainsay the fact that it would not start and also come to an end. The postponement syndrome should not be a valid reason for ignoring our players.

Another hiccup was that the matches were rarely shown on television and the commentaries were not run on radio.[30] In the 1980s commentary of matches on the radio and television was a common feature and the stadia were full to capacity. Football commentaries could be heard on Radio Nigeria, Enugu on Saturdays in Tiko in Cameroon. This was the era we had notable football commentators like

Ernest Okonkwo. Clubs like Bendel Insurance, New Nigerian Bank, Shooting Stars, Leventis United, Iwuanyanwu Nationale, Enugu Rangers etc existed in the 1980s. Sometime in the 1990s Minaj was given the broadcast right, but could not effectively execute it due to in house fighting in NFA.[31]Super Sport stopped showing NPFL matches in 2017 after signing an agreement with LMC that was supposed to last from 2015 to 2019. In 2019, AmajuPinick told the public the matches would be shown on television by Next Tv, but this did not happen. The 2021/22 season was not shown on television. It has beenargued that if this league was shown on television, coaches of the Super Eagles could easily see skillful players that could be invited to the team. Since matches were not shown on television, any super eagles' coach ought to be moving from one match venue to the other to watch Nigerian league matches like what Jose Peseiro did. On 25th June 2022, he went to Uyo to watch the match between Akwa United and Plateau United.Gernot Rohr told us there was no quality player in the league which is a white lie.

The issue of remuneration for the players was another teething problem. No season passed without players protesting for unpaid salaries. Players of Heartland FC of Owerri protested for unpaid wages in 2021.[32] They were locked out of a hotel they lodged in Awka. Julius Ubidu, told BrillaFm, Onitsha in May 2022, that he was still owed salaries after playing for Heartland.[33] A cause to the poor payment was because clubs in Nigeria were owned by the government and the government was not ready to bring in initiative that would make a club to be financially independent. Whenever private individuals like Dangote, Otedola, Adenugaetc start owning clubs in Nigeria the fooball scenario will change if they are given the necessary support. This issue of poor payment made some quality players to leave for clubs in India, Malta, Pakistan, Oman, Cambodia etc. They don't mind playing in lower divisions in as much as the payment is more attractive than the remuneration in Nigeria.AnayoIwuala who moved to a Tunisian club before September 2021was rumoured to earn about $50,000 month in comparison to the $1000 he was being paid at Enyimba.[34]These players believe that from non-prominent leagues, they could move to more prominent leagues which have not been really so. A recent FIFA report stated that 1,904 players were sold by Nigerian clubs in the international market in the last ten years.[35] A prayer by some young Nigerian footballers in Lagos goes thus "Oh Lord, you are the Lord who remembered John Obi Mikel, Christiano Ronaldo and Ronaldinho – remember us as you remembered them. . .connect us to people who matter. Let them come and see us play so that they can take us to Europe."[36]Despite the poor remuneration, raw talents could be got and harnessed within a short time.

IfeanyiIfeanyi, formerly of Akwa United complained of the training method deployed by the local coaches of Nigerian league in comparison to that of the Super Eagles. He made mention of Salisu Yusuf and Abdu Maikaba as the few coaches in Nigeria whose training techniques were similar to that of the Eagles when he was invited to the camp. In his Uzbekistani club, he states they had programmes for each day and they made use of the gym which was not in the roster of NPFL teams. He continues

> *There are programs for only the strikers, programs for only the midfielders, programs for the defenders and the goalkeepers. Every department has their special training programs. It's all about tactical training, quick feet and even the balls we use here are different*[37]

Collin Udoh, former Mountain and Fire Miracle and Akwa United player who moved to ES Setif of Algeria corroborates that there was a gap but goes further to indicate his confidence in home-based players by affirming that there are talented, strong and technical players in NPFL who can do well in the Eagles if given the opportunity to play. He says that if he were to be a coach he could choosea home-based player over a foreign-based player, if he could perform better than a foreign-based player. He continues "The late [Stephen] Keshi, for example, played home-based playersintheAFCON and they did well and won it. Sunday Oliseh did thesame thing, and they didverywell, too."[38]

The NFF has not been helping matters. Rather than make the league to run hitch free so as to reduce the hiccups, it gave coaches the liberty to depend on foreign-based players.The NFF chairman,AmajuPinnickwas busy in the past going round Europe scouting for Nigerian players born in Europe to convince them to play for the Super Eagles.Leon Balogun, William Troost-Ekong, Ola Aina, AdemolaLookman and

CyrielDessers were convinced to play for Nigeria instead of playing for their country of birth.EbereEze of Crystal Palace was being enticed to join the Eagles.[39] Others included TyronneEbuehi, CavinBassey and Joe Aribu. Rueben Agbola switched international allegiance from England to Nigeria and played for Nigeria during the tenure of Clemens Westerhof. Also, Victor Moses was brought in by Stephen Keshi into the Eagles despite the right to play for England being the country he grewup.

The afore-mentioned hiccups of the Nigerian league should not be a reason for the sidelining of home-based players. There is no doubt that in the midst of these hiccups, quality players cannot be got. Quality home-based players playing in the midst of difficulties in Nigerian league can be picked up and do well when invited in the camp of the Super Eagles. Victor Mbaoma of Remo Stars, Bobby Clement of Enugu Rangers, ChimaAkas of Enyimba, Ibrahim Alhassan of Akwa United, Destiny Ashadi of Katsina United, Muhammad Muhammad of AbubakarBukolaSaraki FC and Samuel Matthias of El Kanemi Warriors, Bobby Clement of Enugu Rangers etc made the league a beauty to behold in 2017.[40] These players can fit into the Eagles team within a short time. It is shocking a coach like SalisuYusufu said this is not possible within a short time. It is the view of this paper that what stops most foreign and Nigerian coaches from fielding home-based players is their belief that nothing of quality can come from Africa (colonial mentality). This view is connected to Eurocentric views of David Hume, George Hegel and Trevor Roper. David Hume, theScotish Philosopher in 1768 has this to say

> *I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the white. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent in action or speculation. No ingenious manufacturers amongst them, no arts, no science*[41]

George Hegel, the German Philosopher known as philosopher of history and historian of philosophy puts down his thought thus

> *It is manifest thatwant of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes. This condition is capable of no development of culture, and as we have seen them at this day, such have they always been. At this point we leave Africa, not even to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the world, it has no movement of development to exhibit*[42]

These views though expressed in the past are still being held today by a lot of Europeans and someAfricans. European and Nigerian coaches in support of the views will always sideline domestic players even, if Nigerian clubs lift the CAFChampions League and CAF Confederation Cup five times consecutively.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has been able to analyse the preference of foreign-based Nigerian players over home- based players by selected coaches of the Super Eagles of Nigeria. The foreign coaches considered here are Clemens Westerhof, BertiVogts, Lars Lagerback and Gernot Rohr while Nigerian coaches include ShuaibuAmodu, Christian Chukwu, Augustine Eguavoen and Stephen Keshi. All the foreign coaches heavily depended on foreign-based players. Westerhof who started with the use of a reasonable number of home-based players reduced this number to just two he used in Tunisia 1994 out of the three he invited. In USA 1994, he didn't invite any home-based player to the squad. Amongst Nigerian coaches, it was Keshi who invited the highest number of home-based players and also used the highest number in a major competition amongst the indigenous coaches considered here. The percentage of foreign-based players in the 2013 Super Eagles squad led by Keshi was 69.6% while that of home-based was 30.4%.

It was so unfortunate that the other three coaches who initially played for clubs in Nigeria could not motivate Nigerian League players by inviting them to major international competitions. The preference of foreign-based players by most coaches is tied to the Hamitic theory which shows that Africans are not innovative or creative and so cannot produce anything of quality, hence players in Nigerian League are of poor quality. Nigeria could reach the final of the 1990 AFCON with just three foreign-based players and lifted the 2013 AFCON trophy with somehome-based players. This has shown that the inclusion of home-based players on the field of play has neutralized the Hamitic hypothesis. Akin Alabi, a Nigerian House of Representatives member wanted in 2020 to propose a motion in the

house that at least two home-based players should be included in any competitive match.[43] This study recommends that on the field of play at a given time, there should not be less than four home-based players in the Super Eagles in every competitive match, no matter the standard of the Nigerian League. And a law should be made in the National Assembly to that effect.

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