

# **The development experience of English Premier League as a reference to Chinese Super League in football**

Bailing Su

<b>Author(s)</b> Bailing Su.	
<b>Degree programme</b> Degree Programme in Sports Coaching and Management	
<b>Report/thesis title</b> The development experience of English Premier League as a reference to Chinese Super League in football	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> <b>41</b>
<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>Football, as the world's largest sport, also accounts for a large proportion of the sports industry. English premier league has been among the five major leagues in Europe, which has been highly attracted by social media. In China, the development level of the Chinese super league is far less than that of the premier league, which is reflected by both at competitive and management levels.</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to extract the experience of the premier league by providing the effective experience not only to help the Chinese super league to develop but also to promote the successful business model.</p> <p>Firstly, the data collected by literature research and relevant authorities are analyzed and competed. Then useful information is extracted, and the data are studied and summarized in detail. Finally, conclusions are drawn.</p> <p>Studies have shown that, at present, the attention received by the Chinese Super League in China is still increasing. However, the Super League still faces some problems, mainly manifested in the imbalance of the organizational structure of the Super League and the lack of commercial business development capabilities. The commercial development capabilities of the various clubs in the Chinese Super League are low.</p> <p>In addition, the lack of young players in Chinese professional football clubs has led to a low level of appreciation and competition in the league. The Chinese Football Association needs to establish a complete youth football league to provide a platform for Chinese professional football clubs to transport outstanding young players and clubs in the Chinese Super League need to manage their own clubs to avoid losing money year after year.</p> <p>Therefore, we should also take China's own practice into consideration when we learn from the premier league of the UK, finding a suitable route to develop Chinese football.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Chinese super league, English premier league, development, current situation	

## Table of contents

<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research schedule.....	2
<b>2 Theoretical Foundation.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Definition of professional sports and The Premier League.....	3
2.2 The development background of China's professional football league.....	5
2.3 Factors that affect Chinese professional football league development.....	5
2.4 The development of the English football league.....	12
<b>3 Research Methods.....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Literature research method.....	14
<b>4 Research Results.....</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1 The influence of Premier League clubs in Europe.....	16
4.2 Revenue of Premier League clubs.....	19
4.2.1 Total Revenue.....	19
4.2.2 Match Day.....	20
4.2.3 Media broadcasting and commercial sponsorship.....	22
4.3 Premier League experience.....	24
4.3.1 Fair and reasonable distribution of profits.....	24
4.3.2 Use competition ability to build the club brand.....	24
4.3.3 Advanced organizational system.....	25
4.4 Chinese Super League.....	26
4.4.1 Income structure and serious losses.....	26
4.4.2 Excessive concentration and singleness of club shares.....	26
4.4.3 Relationship between Chinese super league and The Chinese football association.....	27
4.4.4 Imperfect personnel training mechanism.....	28
<b>5 Conclusions.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6 Suggestions.....</b>	<b>33</b>
6.1 The Chinese Super League needs to be reformed.....	33
6.1.1 Diversification of club shares.....	33
6.1.2 Create a professional league.....	34
6.1.3 Strengthen cost management and improve the club's operating level.....	34
6.1.4 Build a national youth league.....	35
<b>7 Acknowledgement.....</b>	<b>37</b>
References.....	38

# 1 Introduction

Football is the most popular and attractive sport in the world. Whether in developed European countries or in developing African countries, football has a large number of fans. According to incomplete statistics, more than 1.6 billion people in the world are football fans, and about 300 million people in China are football fans. Therefore, football is also known as the world's number one sport. Moreover, football is also the single sport with the largest proportion in the global sports industry, with the annual output value of the football industry exceeding 500 billion dollars, accounting for more than 40%. (Yang 2017)

In China, the football industry is also the most important content in the sports industry. According to the development space of the entire sports industry of China with a market value of RMB 200 billion, the market value of China's football industry is at least RMB 800 billion. The Chinese Super League is the most important component of China's football industry. (Li 2017)

The English Premier League, the world's most successful commercial football league, was founded in 1992 and is hugely important among the five major professional football leagues in Europe. At the same time, the English Premier League has a huge appeal around the world. The Chinese Super League, founded in 2004, lags far behind the English Premier League in terms of brand value and influence. (Zhang 2013)

We will focus on different data analyses and comparisons to discuss the development situation of China football super league and the premiersip, Finally, we get the future development trend of Chinese Football Super League. If we want to know a more detailed understanding of the development gap between Chinese super league and the Premier League, we need to understand some basic concepts of the professional soccer league.

First of all, we need to know what the professional football league is and when we understand the concept of the professional football league, we can have a better idea of where we are going.

Secondly, it is necessary to understand the factors affecting the development of the Chinese football league and the background of the development of the Chinese professional football league, analyze the past situation, find out some reasons, and then deduce the future development of the Chinese professional football league.

Finally, we also need to know about the rest of the developed countries of the development of professional football leagues. Here it is mainly referred to refers to the premier league, based on the research of the development of the English premier league, we can get some information about the development of the football league experience and enlightenment and help to think and solve the difficulties encountered in the development of China's professional football league of and challenges.

### 1.1 Research schedule

Time Span	This study began in January 2021 and ended in November 2021.
2021.1	The research purpose and direction were determined
2021.2	I systematically understood the development history of the Premier League and China Football League.
2021.3	In early March to determine the research method, and then I use the literature review method, collect data, search information, find suitable materials for the research topic.
2021.4	I filtered and sorted the materials.
2021.5-2021.9	Since the beginning of May, I have studied the current situation of China Super League and analyzed the development obstacles of China Super League.  Later, through literature and some journals, I studied the differences between the Chinese Super League and the British Super League from June to September.
2021.10-2021.11	I summarized and analyzed the results of this study in October and November and put forward suggestions for the development of Chinese football and Chinese Super League in China and modified thesis, completed the study.

## 2 Theoretical Foundation

### 2.1 Definition of professional sports and The Premier League

Professional sports, also called commercial sports. They are competitive sports activities that profit from commerce. In Western countries of Europe and America, professional sports have developed quite well, especially in ball games such as football, basketball and rugby. Professional sports have perfectly combined with these sports, created great economic value and achieved excellent competitive results. Nowadays, professional sports have been integrated into people's daily life and are an important part of social culture. (Zhang 2013)

The football league, a competition for regional football clubs centred around the sport of football, is called the Football League.

The Premier League is the highest professional football league of the English Football Association, formerly the English Football League A. The Premier League is one of the five major European football leagues. It consists of 20 teams, and the Super League is responsible for the operation. After the end of the season, the final three of the score list fell into the English Football Champions League. The Premier League has always been regarded as one of the best leagues in the world, with fast pace, fierce competition and numerous strong teams. It is the most successful league in business operation and the highest-income football league in the world. (Baiké 2021a)

Table 1. Taking the 2020-2021 Premier League season participating teams as an example. (Baiké 2021b)

Team	Last Season Ranking	Clothing Sponsor
Manchester City	1	Etihad Air
Manchester United	2	Chevrolet
Liverpool	3	Standard Chartered

Chelsea	4	Yokohama Tire
Leicester City	5	royal duty-free shop
West Ham United	6	Bet Way
Tottenham Hotspur	7	Friendship Insurance
Arsenal	8	Emirates Aviation
Leeds United	9	Adidas
Everton	10	Sportpesa
Aston Villa	11	Opel Sports
Newcastle United	12	FUN88
Stoke City	13	Bet365
Crystal Palace	14	Wan BO
Southampton	15	Virgin Media
Brighton	16	American Express
Bernley	17	Dafa
Fulham	18	LG
West Bromwich Albion	19	Palm Stock
Sheffield Wednesday	20	OPE SPORTS

## **2.2 The development background of China's professional football league**

On April 17, 1994, the Chinese National Football League A was inaugurated, which marked that Chinese football has had its professional league since then. Chinese football bid farewell to the model of the professional team under the planned economy system, conform to the development trend of world professional sports, and change to the modern sports professional model. (Zhang 2013)

China's professional football league has been developing for nearly 30 years since it was officially launched in 1994. In the past 30 years, the development of China's professional football has been accompanied by numerous controversies. (Zhang 2013)

The Chinese Super League was founded in 2004 and its predecessor was China's Football League A. To ensure the smooth operation of the league, the Chinese Football Association has formulated the rules of the League and updated its operation mode. To further improve the business model of the Chinese Super League, the football clubs involved in The Chinese Super League and the clubs jointly invested in the establishment of the CSL Co., LTD. (Zhang 2013)

The Chinese Super League was established on October 24, 2005, with the approval of the General Administration of Sport of China. It is a limited liability company under the Chinese Football Association. It is directly responsible to the major shareholders of the company and holds the intangible assets of the league. (Huang 2019)

## **2.3 Factors that affect Chinese professional football league development**

Compared with the more mature professional football league, the Chinese Super League still has some problems, which are mainly manifested in the construction of the organizational structure and commercial development. From the perspective of the organizational structure of The Chinese Super League, the operation mode of The Chinese Super League is not yet mature.

To explore the immature operation mode of the Chinese Super League, we first discuss the mature operation mode and profit of professional football clubs. Generally speaking, mature club operation and profit mainly consist of the following parts: club commercial development, broadcast rights revenue, game-day revenue, off-court development revenue.



Professional football club Business Path Development: An excellent football club must be inseparable from the sponsorship fees, advertising fees, and player transfer fees of third-party companies. Sponsorship fees and advertising fees: some famous companies will inject capital into European football clubs to buy shares of the club, to benefit from the advanced management concept of each other 's professional football, to absorb each other 's operation methods and skills in football management. Some large companies rely exclusively on sponsoring football clubs to increase exposure to enhance their global visibility. (Yang 2017)

Player transfer fee: excellent clubs can cultivate football talent through their own youth training system, and then spend a lot of money after being discovered by other club scouts before the players become famous. Of course, there are risks in investment. For the subsequent development of these young players, but also to see the late player performance. If it isn't live up to the expectations of the opposing club, it is certainly a failure. If it exceeds expectations, it must be successful. The club that spends a lot of money to buy young players can also sell the players to other clubs at the highest price when the players become famous, so the club will get a huge income.

The income of broadcasting rights: Each country's leagues, cups, and even sub-Champions League, European Champions League, and other events have the sharing income of broadcasting rights. The event organizing committee sells the right to broadcast to the major broadcast and live media and gets rich income. Finally, the club is divided at the end of the year. The mature European luxury club has a revenue share of just over 200 million euros per year. The Chinese football club is still groping for development, although revenue cannot be compared with the mature five leagues, broadcast rights share revenue is also available.

Matchday income: This income is also a huge cake for the club. Like Europe's five major leagues, where there is often a full-court, unabated fire scene, a stadium can hold at least 30, 000 to 60, 000 people, which is ticket revenue. The stadium can also sell snacks or drinks, beer, tens of thousands of people consumption that is also a lot. There are also incomes such as jerseys and props, and hotel accommodation fees outside the stadium. A season so many games down, the European Mature League club in this piece to earn more than 150 million euros of income is not in words.

Development income outside the stadium:

Clubs can be built near the stadium some large shopping malls, apartments, etc., can receive rent.

The Chinese Football Association is under great pressure to manage the national team as well as the Operation of the Chinese Super League. At the same time, from the perspective of the management effect, the Chinese Football Association operation of the national team and the professional league has not reached the level expected by fans.

First of all, The Jiangsu Suning Football Club, the champion of the Chinese Super League in the 2020 season, disbanded due to financial problems and withdrew from the Chinese Professional football League. In September 2021, Evergrande Group also faced a financial crisis. Guangzhou Football Club, which had won eight Chinese Super League titles, also faced a very uncertain future after agreeing to terminate its contract with coach Fabio Cannavaro. (The Chinese Football Association 2021a)

It is certain that Chinese football has entered the “cold winter ” ahead of time, and once there is no team to support it, the “ cold winter ” of Chinese football will continue to increase. In addition, the national team represents a national football development level. The performance of the national team affects the popularization and development of football, and also affects the attendance rate of the league to a certain extent. Since its professionalization in 1994, the international rankings of China ' s national team have been stagnant or even backward. The poor performance of the national team will have a negative impact on the Chinese Super League. Therefore, from the management effect of China Football Association on the national team and the operation of the professional league has not reached the fan expected level.

As a result, the Chinese Football Association should consider returning some of its power to the market and using the power of the market to manage the professional league. Although the Chinese Football Association has been separated from the General Administration of Sport, there is no denying that the association still retains some administrative power. Chinese Football Association has not completed the real sense of the separation of management and running. Chinese Football Association plays an important role in the development of professional football. Once professional football is mixed with too many administrative factors, clubs will lose their independence and autonomy.

The Chinese Football Association has some mandatory administrative intervention in the management of the league, which also exposes the unclear responsibility and power of the Chinese Super League, leading to bad influences and results, such as the hasty introduction of the U23 policy.

In 2017, the Chinese Football Association reformulated its U23 policy, according to its official website. The policy specifies the number of players under the age of 23 in each team in the same match. It is right to develop young players through professional leagues and encourage clubs to increase the development of young football talent. But what is certain is that the effect of this policy has not made any difference. We may try to extrapolate the policy effect on the Chinese Super League, the number of foreign players and U23s according to the law, if the number of U23s decreases, the number of foreign players will also decrease. The capital-driven football craze of recent years is set to fade fast; If you don't want to reduce the number of foreign players and add 3 in the match, then the corresponding U23 players will also add 3. Of course, in terms of the overall performance of China's under 23 players, most of their abilities are not good enough to enter the professional league, otherwise there would be no such administrative order to create time for them. (The Chinese Football Association 2017a)

So more often, U23 's appearance is a last resort, therefore, to be replaced, or garbage time will appear repeatedly. This is not the worst. The worst thing is that this ' there is a countermeasure under the policy ' approach, forced to use the replacement quota, seriously affecting the head coach 's on-the-spot command of the tactical adjustment and program implementation. If not, put them on the field for a long time, the ability of U23 will become a short board that hinders the overall construction of the team, the formation of the formation, and the good implementation of the tactical effect. Therefore, this is a policy of perniciousness without benefit. It will only cause the erosion of the quality of the league, thus quickly destroying a league that has been built up by capital in recent years. As the top and sub-top leagues of Chinese football, the Chinese Super League and the Chinese League should not be the training ground for U23.

The professional top league is the locomotive of a national football game. It can pull the rear compartment forward, but it is not obliged to dedicate itself as a training ground for the junior generals. This kind of closed doors to engage in their own, ignoring the law of the market-oriented operation of football. The correct approach should be to improve our cascade leagues, and even to establish U23 leagues to ensure that each age group can accept enough high levels of competition and screening, and then make waves and sands, and gold flashes. It isn't need high enough attention; it just needs high enough participation. This is slow work. The top league is the top of the pyramid, which should get the highest attention, create the highest level of non-administrative intervention, and be the representative and image of the whole football professional movement. The U23 New Deal is in the water injection top league, the demolition of professional, is not waiting for the day arched chicken eggs. Frankly speaking, the U23 New Deal is an absurd act of

Chinese football under the cover of the administration. From the date of its introduction to several years later, it will be regarded as a major laughingstock of the football industry.

The Chinese Football Association should play the role of guiding and supervising the operation of the Chinese Super League, rather than directly participating in the commercial development of the Chinese Super League. Take the English Premier League for example. The English Premier League is separate from the English Football Association and both sides are on equal footing.

In terms of the commercial development of the league, the whole Chinese Super League lacks a sustainable and stable way to make profits. Generally speaking, the main income sources of professional football include investment from advertising sponsors and the sale of TV broadcast rights.

Many sponsors invest heavily in professional football in order to promote their businesses, increase their brand awareness and ultimately gain commercial benefits. The ownership of Chinese Super League clubs is owned by their main sponsors, so they cannot gain financial and operational independence.

Table 2. Commercial sponsorship of the Chinese Super League 2020 season. (Deloitte 2021)

The official business name	China Ping An
Official media broadcast partner	IC photo, sports motivation
Official Game Partner	KONAMI
Official partners	Nike, SAIC, Laoshan Beer, Mengniu, Yibao, 58 Tongcheng, Ebinson, Tianmao

After overcoming many challenges and difficulties, the Chinese Super League has still completed the 2020 season of investment, the total amount of sponsorship over 300 million yuan, covering 13 industries, is still one of China 's most commercial value of the top sports IP. (Deloitte 2021a)

During the epidemic season, with the strong support of the sponsors and the adjustment and improvement of the rights and interests plan, the league ' s investment promotion and marketing work proceeded smoothly : the epidemic led to the suspension of the league, the development of commercial resources was forced to stagnate, and the China Super League quickly restarted its investment promotion work after determining the resumption plan, gained the strong support of the existing sponsors, and introduced 58 Tongcheng and Yibao two new official partners. Restricted by factors such as the competition system and the number of on-site spectators, some rights agreed by the sponsors are limited, and the league level adjusts the rights plan in time and compensates the sponsors accordingly.

When enterprises invest in football clubs, they only see the immediate benefits and do not pay more attention and investment in the long term, which is unhealthy for the development of clubs. At the beginning of the investment, some investors may invest a lot of money to buy the top players and coaches, and pay them high salaries, hope can quickly improve the team's performance in the short term and the strength of the team. However, they did not improve the facilities at home, the reserve team, the youth team and other infrastructure. If enterprises can't over a period of time to get enough return on investment, or investments reach the expected effect of ideal performance of the team most investment companies will lose interest and confidence in investing in a football club, choose to give up investment, cause halfway divestment, once a stop investment club's parent company, the club will meet operational crisis, severe cases team's may even be disbanded.

When a new enterprise takes over and invests on the team, the team will be faced with changing the team's name, team emblem, and even the city and home stadium will be moved. This situation is the most common problem in China's professional football league. Every time a new enterprise invests in a team, the team will change its name because of the invested company. In this way, fans of the club and the culture of the club will be lost faster.

Without a culture-building league, it's simply a tool for businesspeople to make money. It's not really a professional league, which flourishes with money and will be completely forgotten when capital retreats. However, the policy of title neutrality has brought about a negative impact on the Chinese Super League clubs. The primary problem of the neutralization policy is that the old clubs forced to rename will face huge loss of intangible assets. Since the professionalization of Chinese football in 1994, China Super League has had some ' old-name ' teams, such as Beijing Guoan, Shanghai Shenhua, Henan Jianye, etc. Although these team names also have corporate names, but for Chinese fans, these

names have been called nearly 30 years, has become the intangible assets of the club.

This practice is not conducive to the long-term healthy development of the football club. Most of the Chinese football clubs are sponsored and invested by a company with only one investment. If the investors are doing well, if the money is not in trouble, it does not matter to the football club but if the money is in trouble, then the football club will be out of money, and then there will be a whole series of problems.

Table 3. The Chinese Super League 2020 ranking. (Baiké 2021c)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
Jiangsu Suning Football Club	1	Suning Group
Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club	2	Evergrande Group Alibaba Group
Beijing Zhonghe Guo An Football Club	3	Sinobo Group
Shanghai SIPG Football Club	4	ShangHai Guo Ji Gang Wu Group
Shandong Luneng Taishan Football Club	5	Shandong Electric Power Group
Chongqing Dangdai Football Club	6	ChongQing LiFan Group

Shanghai Greenland Shenhua Football Club	7	Greenland Group
Hebei Huaxia Xingfu Football Club	8	HuaXia XingFu Group
Henan Jianye Football Club	9	Hu Baosen (Construction Housing Group )
Tianjin Taida Football Club	10	TEDA Investment Holding Co., Ltd
Guangzhou R&F Football Club	11	Tension, Li Silian (Fuli Real Estate)
Dalian Ren Football Club	12	Wang Jianlin (Dalian Wanda Group)
Shenzhen Jiazhaoye Football Club	13	KaisaGroup Holdings Ltd.
Qingdao Hainiu Football Club	14	ZhongNeng Group

#### **2.4 The development of the English football league**

Modern football was born in the United Kingdom. In 1888, the United Kingdom established and implemented the football league system, which has been extended to the present day. On February 20, 1992, the English Premier League was founded. The Premier League has developed into a world-class football league. The competitive level and business model of the Premier League lead football leagues all over the world. (Baiké 2021d)

After the implementation of the English Premier League, England soon came out of the Great Depression of Football. The competitive level of the English Premier League has been continuously improved, and famous football players from all over the world have been arriving. The successful commercial operation has also made the English Premier League become the most expensive football league in the world. The British football association's main sources of funds is the FA cup game operating income and Wembley stadium own assets such as business income, the allocation of capital is mainly used for the popularity of football sports and the development of the premier league and football league most operating income are assigned to members of the club or for league development. In the English Football League pyramid system, the English Premier League and the Football League form the top four leagues, which are completely professional leagues, operating independently and with a complete management structure. (Chen, Wang, Wang, Lin, Chen 2018)

In terms of business nature, the Premier League is a limited liability company, and all 20 Premier League clubs are shareholders of the company. Each club holds an equal share of the shares of the Premier League. In terms of equity structure, the ownership of the Premier League belongs to all the Premier League clubs. From the perspective of power structure, the Premier League has set the Premier League Committee as its highest management body, which is responsible for the decision-making and implementation of various affairs of the Premier League. (Li 2017)

Each of the Premier League's 20 shareholder clubs can make a proposal at a joint meeting. A normal proposal requires the approval of more than half of the clubs. If it involves changes to Premier League rules or important business partnerships, at least two-thirds of the clubs need to agree. (Yang 2017)

English professional football league and the England football association can be summarized as: the relationship between professional league is one of the important members of the football association unit, the league of the specific operation, especially the commercial operation is independent of the football association of the premier league have commercial use, independent of the FA and the alliance has independently broadcasting and sponsorship contract rights of business negotiation. (Chen, Wang, Wang, Lin, Chen 2018)



### **3 Research Methods**

The purpose of this part is to analyze and discuss the current situation and future development of Chinese Super League and English Premier League. This chapter introduces the following commonly used research methods: literature research method and data analysis method.

Through the analysis of the data, this study summarizes the current situation and deficiencies of the Chinese Super League and puts forward suggestions according to the conclusions.

#### **3.1 Literature research method**

According to the purpose and content of the research, this paper searched for relevant information through academic websites such as China Knowledge Infrastructure, China Scientific Journal Database, etc.

These are all about the history and factors of the development of the Premier League and the Chinese Super League, which are helpful for us to understand the development of the Premier League and the defects of the Chinese Super League, and to sort out and analyse them, and then provide theoretical knowledge for this paper.

Firstly, the data collected by literature research and relevant authorities are analyzed and compared. Then useful information is extracted, and the data are studied and summarized in detail. Finally, conclusions are drawn. I used the following methods in the process of literature research.

The first is the literature method. After selecting the direction of the subject and the specific subject, I search to determine the scope and depth of the literature. First of all, according to my understanding of the subject, my knowledge structure, and the existing data, determine the scope of the literature to be consulted. The retrieval methods are focused on the content and scope of the retrieval subject.

In this process, the retrieval methods I use mainly include:

1) Direct search method. This refers to a method of directly retrieving documents from books and periodicals related to this retrieval topic. Retrieval subject single, literature concentration, for the retrieval of books and periodicals and more understanding, so suitable for the use of this method.

2) Traceability method. This refers to the use of the literature has been retrieved citations, notes, notes and appendix references as a clue, one by one to track the search, a method of finding the required literature.

3) Sequential method. According to the time range of retrieval topics, the literature is searched from far to near, from old to new. A more systematic and comprehensive literature was obtained.

Then I collated the documents I collected. In this process, I used the following sorting method.

1) Read the literature. The methods of reading research literature generally include browsing, rough reading and intensive reading. These three reading methods have their own advantages and disadvantages. For me, reading and analyzing literature are very useful methods, which should be well mastered and be good at comprehensive and flexible application in the research process.

2) Documentation. The process of recording can retain valuable information found through reading for further analysis. Recording can help memory, exercise thinking, improve the ability of text expression, and help to study new problems. The methods and forms I used in the process of recording and studying literature mainly include: marking and marking, copying, abstracting, note-taking, summarizing, etc.

3) Literature identification. The ways to identify the authenticity of literature can be divided into ' external audit ' and ' internal audit '. Four methods of ' external review ' : identifying the authenticity of the version, analyzing the language style of the book, analyzing the style of the literature, and analyzing the basic viewpoints and ideas in the literature. Four methods of ' internal audit ' : mutual authentication of literal documents, verification of literal documents with authentic objects, historical background of producing documents, life, position and basic ideas of the author.

## 4 Research Results

### 4.1 The influence of Premier League clubs in Europe

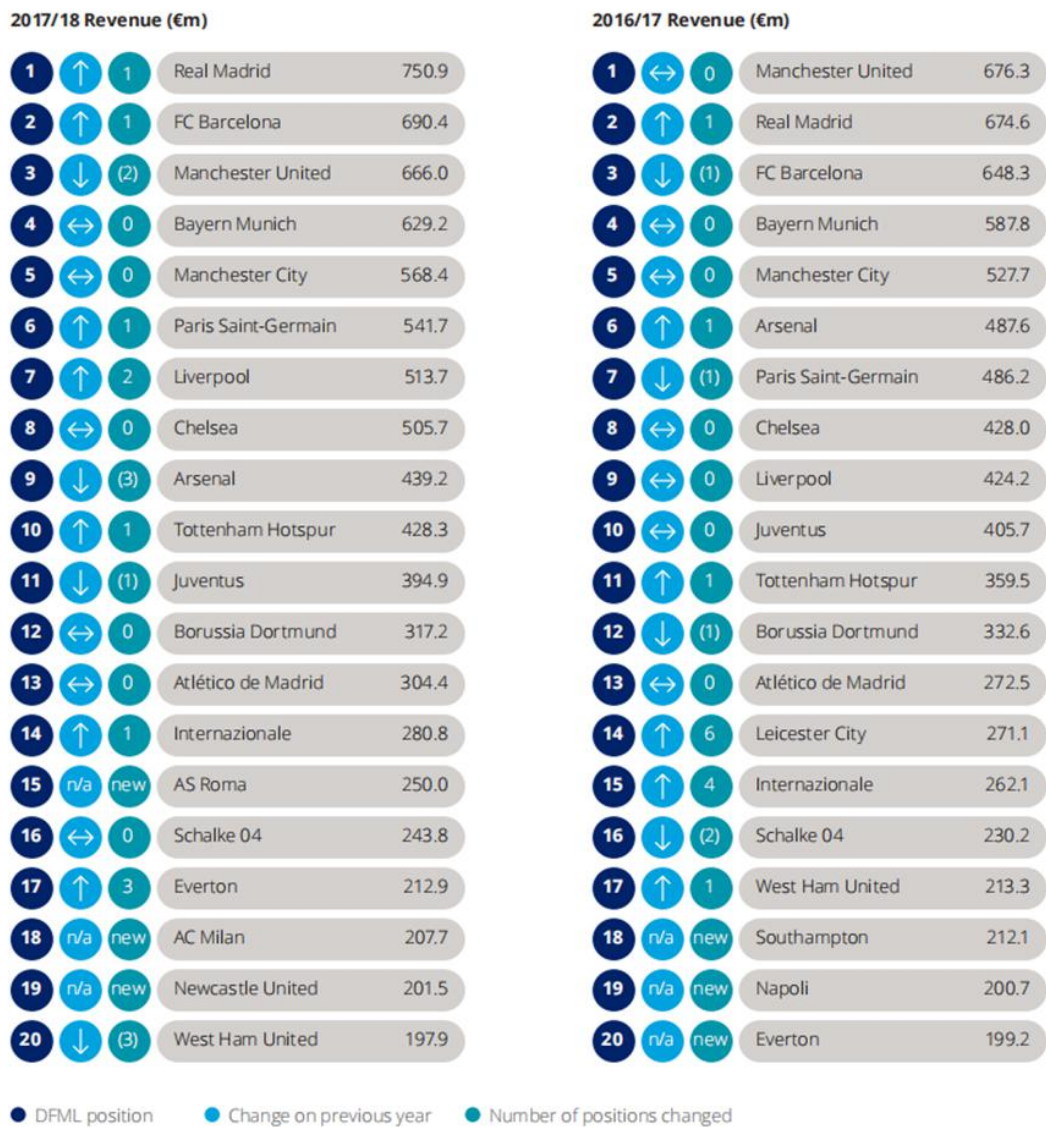


Figure 1. Football Money League. (Deloitte Sports Business Group 2020)

According to the Figure 1, a total of 10 Premier League clubs made it into the top 20 in 2016-17, accounting for a staggering 50% of the total. In the 2017-18 season, there were also nine clubs in the top 20.

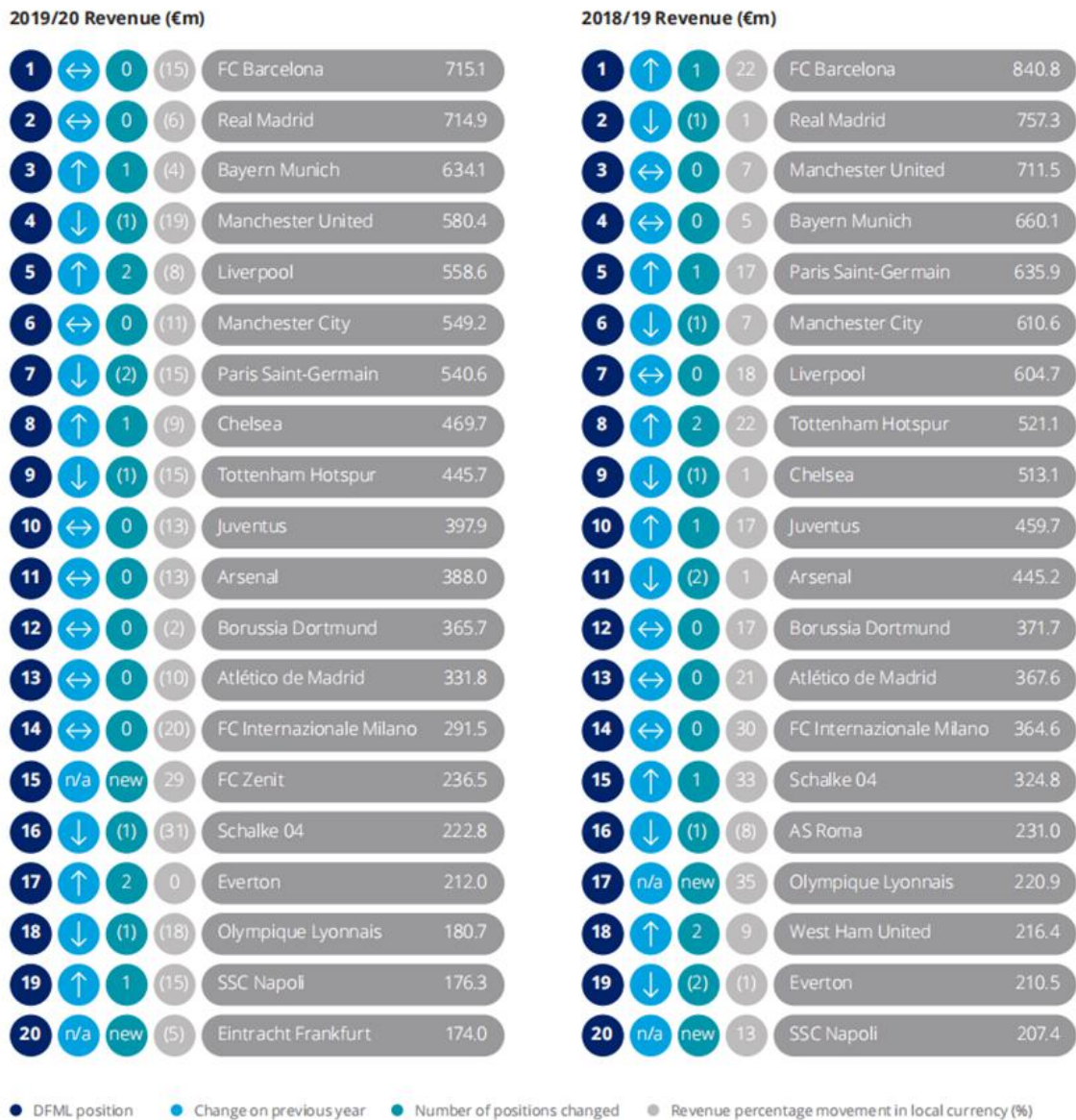


Figure 2. Football Money League. (Deloitte Sports Business Group 2021)

According to the Figure 2, In the 2019-2020 season, due to the impact of the COVID-19. Even the top club in the European, Barcelona, saw a decrease in their income compared to the previous season, but the Premier League still had 12 clubs in the top 30. However, Premier League clubs still account for seven of the top 20 clubs.

#### 2017/18 Money League clubs 21-30

Pos.	Club	Revenue €m
21.	SSC Napoli	182.8
22.	Leicester City	179.4
23.	Southampton	172.0
24.	Crystal Palace	169.0
25.	FC Zenit Saint Petersburg	167.8
26.	Beşiktaş	165.7
27.	Sevilla	165.2
28.	Olympique Lyonnais	164.2
29.	Brighton & Hove Albion	157.4
30.	S.L. Benfica	150.7

Note: 2017 financial results for FC Zenit are in respect of the calendar year to December 2017.

Source: Deloitte analysis.

Figure 3. Football Money League. (Deloitte Sports Business Group 2020)

#### 2019/20 Money League clubs 21-30 (€m)

Pos.	Club	Revenue
21.	Valencia	172.1
22.	Leicester City	171.0
23.	Benfica	170.3
24.	Borussia VfL Mönchengladbach	167.9
25.	Crystal Palace	161.3
26.	West Ham United	158.0
27.	Ajax	155.5
28.	Sheffield United	152.0
29.	Wolverhampton Wanderers	151.2
30.	AC Milan	148.5

Source: Deloitte analysis.

Figure 4. Football Money League. (Deloitte Sports Business Group 2021)

According to the Figure, in 2016-17 seasons, a total of 10 Premier League clubs made it into the top 20, representing a staggering 50%. In 2017-18 seasons, there were also nine clubs in the top 20. Even in 2020, which was affected by COVID-19, Premier League clubs still accounted for seven of the top 20 clubs.

## 4.2 Revenue of Premier League clubs

### 4.2.1 Total Revenue

Chart 2: 'Big five' European league clubs' revenue - 2018/19 (€m)

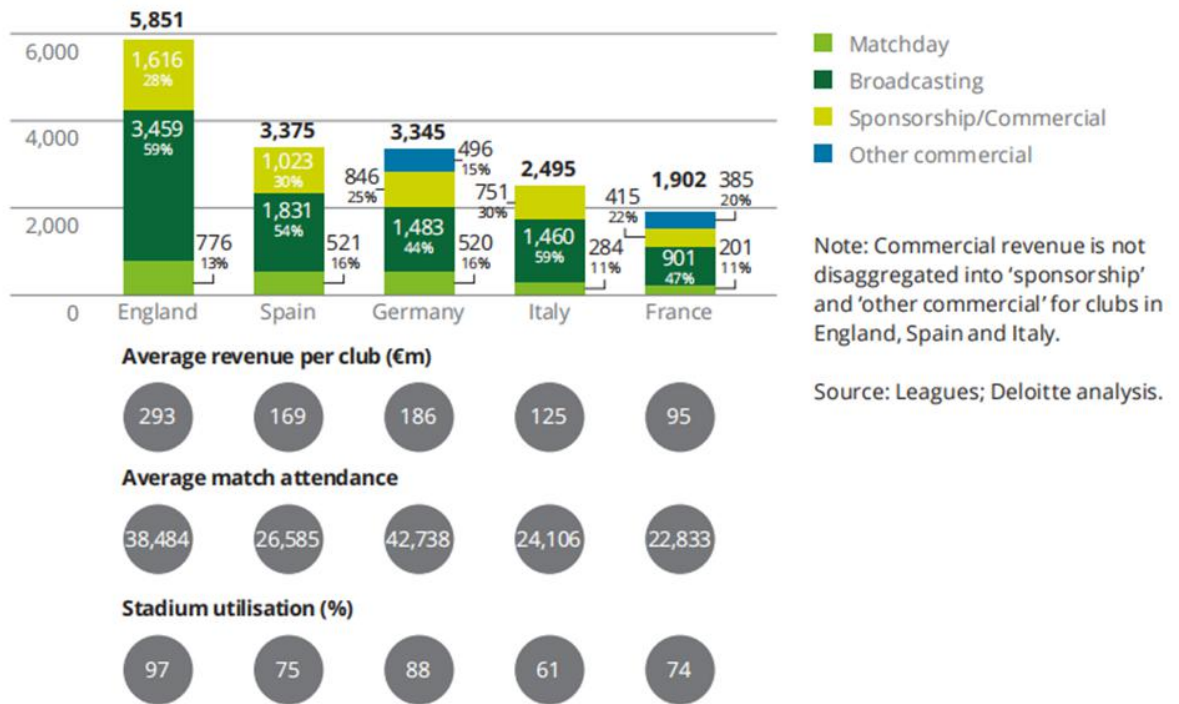


Figure 5. Big Five European league club's revenue. (Deloitte 2020)

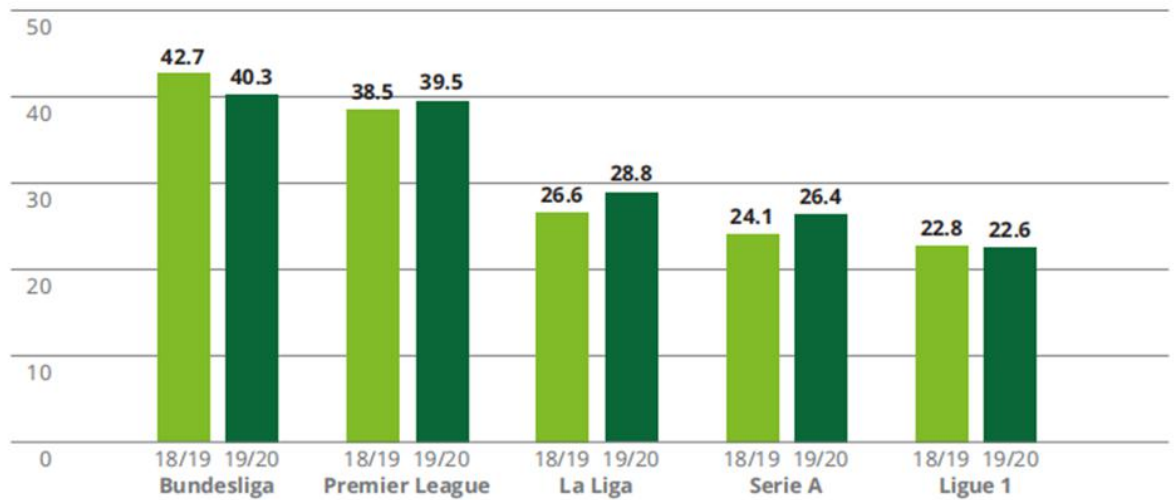
According to the data in Figure 5, European football has been a huge success story in its ability to generate revenue growth, led by broadcast but supported by commercial and match day revenues. The impact of COVID-19 with all major leagues severely disrupted, or ended prematurely, and the postponement of Euro 2020, will mean 2019-20 will see a marked reduction in revenues. Also, according to Figure 5 data, the average annual income of English league clubs is 293m, far ahead of the clubs in the second German league. Moreover, English clubs also account for 97% of their stadium utilization, which is also 88% ahead of the German clubs in the second place.

The Premier League continues to generate the highest revenues across the 'big five' (€5.9 billion). The 20 clubs' combined revenue grew by 7%, driven by commercial revenue growth of 9% and clubs competing in UEFA competitions benefiting from increased distributions. (Ajadi, Ambler, Udwadia, Wood 2020)



## 4.2.2 Match Day

**Chart 19: 'Big five' European leagues average matchday attendances  
- 2018/19 and 2019/20 (000s)**



Note: 2018/19 averages are for the full season; 2019/20 averages are up to the point of suspension.

Source: Leagues; Deloitte analysis.

Figure 6. Big Five European leagues average matchday attendances. (Deloitte 2020)

Match day revenue is the smallest contributor to total revenue of the three primary revenue sources in the big five European Leagues. In 2018-19, match day revenue contributed only 13% of total revenue in the Premier League, compared to 59% for broadcast and 28% for commercial. It is a similar situation across the big five European Leagues where match day contributes between 11% (Ligue 1 and Serie A) and 16% (Bundesliga and La Liga) of total revenue. (Ajadi, Ambler, Udwadia, Wood 2020)

**Chart 18: Premier League and Football League clubs' average matchday attendances – 2015/16 to 2019/20 (000s)**

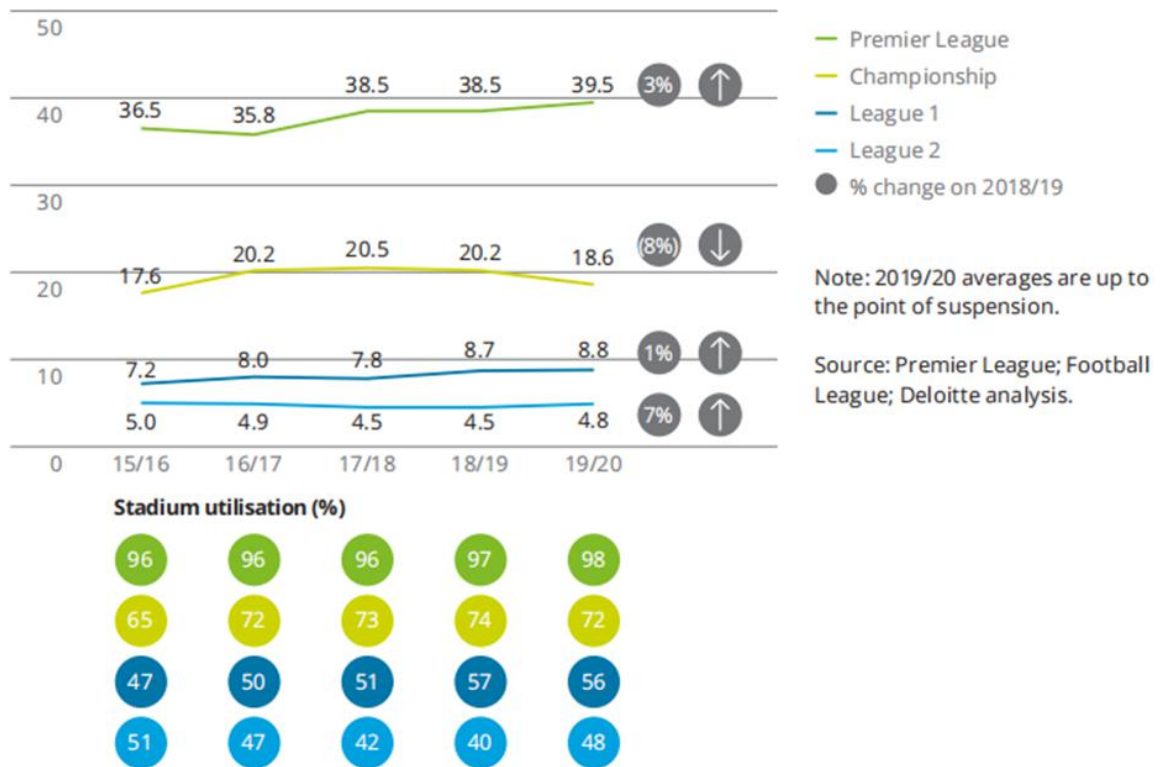


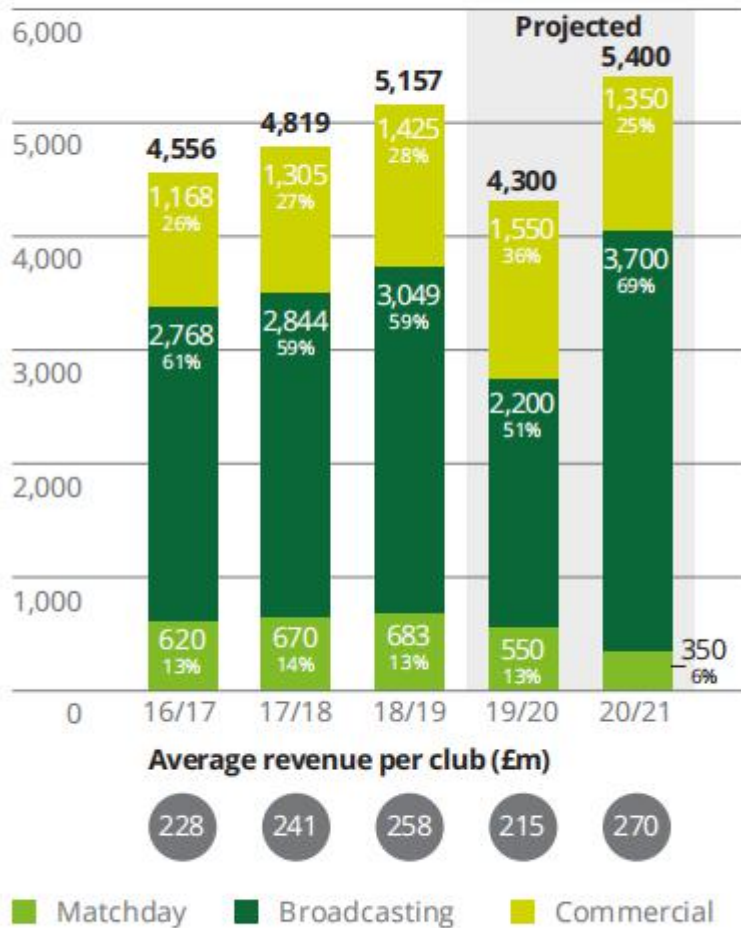
Figure 7. Premier League and Football League clubs' average matchday attendances. (Deloitte 2020)

Affected by the global Novel Corona virus outbreak, whole season is played in front of empty stadiums, the 'big five' European Leagues are facing an 11-16% reduction in total revenue from earning no match day revenue. Clubs lower down the football pyramid are facing an even greater proportional decrease in total revenue. According to the data in Table 10, the utilization rate of Clubs in England has remained above 95 since the 2015 and 2020 seasons, the highest among the five major leagues, which means that their profits are higher. (Ajadi, Ambler, Udwadia, Wood 2020)



### 4.2.3 Media broadcasting and commercial sponsorship

**Chart 7: Premier League clubs' revenues 2016/17-2020/21 (£m)**



Source: Deloitte analysis.

Figure 8. Premier League clubs' revenues. (Deloitte 2020)

According to the data in Figure 8, Premier League clubs' total revenue exceeded £5 billion for the first time in 2018-19, an increase of 7% compared to the previous season. Clubs' total revenue increased by £338m in 2018-2019 taking average revenue per Premier League club to £258m, an increase of £17m compared to 2017-18. Total revenue increases to new club record levels were seen at the Premier League clubs.

Media rights transfers, ticket sales, sponsorship and football merchandising are the main sources of revenue for the Premier League. In the 2020-2021 season, according to the

data, broadcasting revenue is significantly higher than the previous season, reaching 18 percent.

Table 4. Broadcasting revenue for The Premier League (Zhao Jie, Li Cui Xia 2016.)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Television company</b>	<b>Pound</b>	<b>The number of broadcasts</b>
2001-2004	Sky	1.1 billion	66
2004-2007	sky	1.024 billion	110
2007-2010	Sky setanta	1.704 billion	138
2009-2010	ESPN	90 million	46
2010-2013	ESPN sky	1.782 billion	138
2013-2016	Sky BT	3.01 billion	154
2016-2019	Sky BT	5.136 billion	168

According to the Table 4, with the increase of the number of broadcasts, the media broadcasting cost of the Premier League has also increased. Revenue increased across all three streams with the majority of growth in broadcast revenue. Increased distributions from participation in UEFA club competitions were received by clubs as a new cycle of broadcast agreements commenced and changes to the distribution model adopted by UEFA for its Champions League and Europa League competitions became effective. Commercial revenue grew faster than broadcast revenue, due to the commencement of multiple new commercial deals, particularly at the largest clubs. (Ajadi, Ambler, Udwadia, Wood 2020)

According to the analysis of the Deloitte data, approximately 80% of the increase in broadcast revenue was generated by the four Premier League clubs that participated in the 2018-19 Champions League, with the winners Liverpool generating £264m in broadcast revenue across all competitions, a 19% increase on the previous season. As

expected, match day revenue continues to be the smallest component of total revenue and its share of total revenue decreased marginally to 13%. (Ajadi, Ambler, Udwadia, Wood 2020)

### **4.3 Premier League experience**

#### **4.3.1 Fair and reasonable distribution of profits**

The Premier League makes most of its money from ticket sales, television and sponsorship fees, but also from overseas television contracts and franchises. The FA is not in-involved in any of these profits but splits all the money between the 20 clubs. All foreign income from league split between the clubs. For example, in the Premier League, TV broadcast rights are sold in a package. The average domestic income of 50 % is to 20 clubs, and 25 % of the remaining 50 % is allocated from high to low according to the ranking of each club in the Premier League. Finally, 25 % is allocated according to the number of equipment TV broadcasts. (Li 2017)

The distribution system of the Premier League effectively protects the rights of the weak and is conducive to the maintenance of a good competitive order. This is also a reflection of the good coordination function of the League. Under the coordination of the League, the 20 clubs take unified actions and obtain the maximum benefits together. (Li 2017)

#### **4.3.2 Use competition ability to build the club brand**

Professional football is also characterized by commercial and international characteristics. Professional football matches and related products are regarded as commodities to participate in market competition. The competitive ability of each club determines their profit level, while the value of the club is reflected through its economic form. (Lu, Feng 2019)

This is why the final phase of each season, the top teams will be hard for a top four places, because of the top four is the champions league, 5 to 7 seats in the champions league are this This means that, before entering into seven teams, the team next season can have more dividends from the European international competitions.

By cultivating superior competition ability can promote the club's brand image, to obtain high brand, in order to maintain its own brand image, the clubs are willing to improve their comprehensive strength. Now the premier league's big six have formed a relatively stable brand image, brand effect for them to bring huge commercial profits, a larger gap with other clubs.

### **4.3.3 Advanced organizational system**

The successful development of the Premier League is inseparable from the management of the Premier League. The overall marketing of the Premier League does not affect the operation of the 20 clubs. Each club has its own independent management rights and has a large operating space, which can obtain greater interests through competition. As a community of interests, the profits, obtained by the league and the clubs will be distributed through a reasonable system This business model not only protects the weaker clubs to a certain extent, but also plays an important role in maintaining the internal order of professional sports. (Li 2017)

The Premier League is made up of 20 football clubs and the Premier League is the highest governing body of the league. The English Premier League Limited is a commercial organisation independent of the English Football Association. It is responsible for the broadcasting and sponsorship of the Premier League and other commercial operations. Fair distribution is an important guarantee to maintain the vitality of the Premier League. Fair distribution is not equal distribution. The focus of fair distribution is to reflect the effect of the game and motivate the team to achieve higher terms.

## **4.4 Chinese Super League**

### **4.4.1 Income structure and serious losses**

As a model of football business model in the world, the premier league club sports event broadcast into league reward income mainly comes from income, the proportion of commercial sponsorship and match day income generally maintained at 27% and 17%. In contrast, Chinese Super League clubs' main income comes from commercial sponsorship, accounting for more than 60% of their income, while tournament income and match-day income only account for 14% and 3% respectively. This shows that the income structure of Chinese Super League clubs is relatively simple, and the profit model is still in the traditional commercial sponsorship model. (Huang 2019)

During the 2016 winter transfer window, Chinese Super League clubs made contact with well-known international clubs such as Inter Milan, Atletico Madrid, Roma, Galatasaray, Chelsea and Paris Saint-Germain. Meanwhile, the Chinese Super League transfer record was broken five times in 2016, when Ramires joined Jiangsu Suning for 25 million pounds, Jackson Martinez 31 million pounds to join Guangzhou Evergrande, Teixeira 38.4 million pounds to join Jiangsu Suning, Hulk 46.1 million pounds to join Shanghai SIPG, Oscar 60 million pounds to join Shanghai SIPG, transfer fees have set new records. CSL clubs spent too much on the transfer of players, as well as players' wages, resulting in clubs spending more than their income, resulting in a serious financial imbalance and, eventually, serious losses. (ifeng News 2016a)

### **4.4.2 Excessive concentration and singleness of club shares**

All the football clubs in the Chinese Football League have the background of real estate developers. Take two clubs in Guangzhou for example, Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club in 2010 and Guangzhou R&F football club in 2011. In the 2010 season, Evergrande Group acquired all the shares of Guangzhou Football Club with 100 million yuan on March 1st, and the club was renamed as Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club. Therefore, all the shares of Guangzhou Evergrande Club are held by Evergrande Group. On January 22, 2021, Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club announced that the club's name had been changed to Guangzhou Football Club in accordance with the relevant regulations of Chinese Football Association. (Baiké 2021e)

Guangzhou R&F football Club was not originally located in Guangzhou, Guangzhou R&F football Club originated from Shenyang Football Club which was founded in 1987. However, the club was forced to move to Changsha because Shenyang did not have a stadium that qualified for the Chinese Super League. In 2007, the football club also changed its name to Changsha Jinde Football Club. In February 2011, MAZAMBA, an American company, acquired Changsha Jinde and relocated the club to Shenzhen. The club also changed its name to Shenzhen Phoenix Football Club. Then in June 2011, R&F Group acquired the Shenzhen Phoenix Football Club. The club changed its name again and Guangzhou R&F football Club was born. On December 18, 2020. Guangzhou R&F football Club officially announced that in accordance with the relevant regulations of the Chinese Football Association, the team has officially changed its name to Guangzhou City Football Club. (Baiké 2021f)

Football clubs in China, most of the clubs are sponsored and invested by a single investment company and if the investor is well run and there is no problem with the money invested, it doesn't matter to the football club, leave out right. However, as long as there is a problem in the sponsorship fund of the investment company, the football club will also suffer from the shortage of funds, which will lead to a series of problems.

#### **4.4.3 Relationship between Chinese super league and The Chinese football association**

According to the articles of association of Chinese super league Limited Liability Company, the Chinese Football Association, as a minority shareholder, holds 36% of the shares, while 16 clubs, as joint major shareholders, hold 64% of the shares. From the perspective of equity distribution, Chinese super league clubs have absolute control over the property rights of the league. However, the Chinese super league's corporate structure means that the Chinese football association has a majority of seats on the league's management and board, as well as the right to vote on major issues. (Huang 2019)

This series of evidence, the Chinese football association in essence of the Chinese super league has absolute control key elements such as money or people. Taking economic benefits as an example, no matter how much the league's profits are, the Chinese Football Association, which invested only 1.8 million yuan to become a shareholder of the Chinese super league, will distribute the most profits, while the clubs are asymmetrical between profits and risks. (Huang 2019)

At the end of 2015, China Sports Media acquired the copyright of the 2016 and 2020 Chinese Super League at a price of 8 billion yuan. The brand value of the Chinese Super League has become the biggest increase in the global league brand value in 2016. The annual copyright fee of 1.6 billion yuan is higher than that of CCTV before 7.3 million yuan, 219 times increase. (Li 2017)

The Chinese Football Association has some mandatory administrative intervention in the management of the league, which also exposes the unclear responsibility and power of the Chinese Super League, leading to bad influences and results, such as the hasty introduction of the U23 policy. Collect transfer coordination fee and other documents, not only disrupted the club personnel in the technical and tactical training and other aspects of the preparation, but also hit the enthusiasm of some investors. (The Chinese Football Association 2017b)

For example, Jiangsu Suning, Shanghai SIPG, and other clubs bought foreign aid at a high price, but they could not play because of U23 policies, resulting in a waste of human and financial resources. Also due to the influence of these policies on broadcasting, part of the broadcasting sponsorship fees of Chinese Super League were lost. Due to the lack of competitive U23 players in the Chinese Super League, some of the clubs can only buy these U23 players with unequal strength and value at a high price. At the same time, such behavior has also created turmoil in the player market. (Sina Sports News 2018)

Finally, because of the U23 policy, some people see huge potential profits, which makes some people take the risk of using the ' curve to make money ' way into Chinese football. First, the Chinese football is mixed with funds. Then, under the protection of the U23 policy, as long as you can enter the Chinese Super League to play, you can enjoy the "high " income of the Chinese Super League. In this way, in addition to deducting the cost of entering the Chinese football before, there is a big profit. Thus, a large number of mediocrity into the Chinese football team, greatly destroyed the competitiveness of the Chinese Super League.

#### **4.4.4 Imperfect personnel training mechanism**

The above mentioned U23 policy was intended to allow more young Chinese players to get playing time in the Chinese Super League, but it did not work well. Many teams only bring on their U23 players in the final stages of a game, or the starting U23 players will be taken off a dozen minutes into the game. It even appeared in the Chinese Super League,

U23 players were replaced one minute after the game started. This approach, instead of bringing growth to these young players, will hurt their confidence.

The Chinese Super League club's policy on U23 runs counter to the original intention of the Chinese Football Association. As a result, these U23 players do not get good training and practice in the Chinese Super League, which is not good for their growth. So, this policy does not bring growth to young players. Professional football leagues in Europe or South America, at the age of 23, many players are already first-team players. Or they already have consistent playing time, rather than having to rely on the policy to get a chance to play. So, it's reflected from the side, there is a shortage of young talent in Chinese professional football.



## 5 Conclusions

At present, compared with the English Premier League and other foreign high-level football leagues, China's Super League still has many shortcomings in many aspects.

First of all, the football environment in China is not as strong as that in England. Compared with the English Premier League, the Chinese Super League has not been established for as long as the English Premier League. In addition, the total number of registered soccer players in China is still far lower than in many other countries with advanced football. Therefore, the Chinese football league will keep for a long time in a lower level.

Secondly, although the commercial operation of the Chinese Super League has made great progress in recent years, compared with the Premier League, it is still possible to find some deficiencies which can be reflected in the peripheral products of the teams.

In addition, compared with the Premier League, most Chinese clubs lack long-term investment. The reason for the poor development of Chinese football is not in line with market rules. Mainly in the team cost is too high, unable to self-reliance, self-financing to feed themselves. Too dependent on government intervention and off-industry investment.

The Chinese Super League should stimulate the enthusiasm and effectiveness of the commercial development of each club in the league and standardize the capital operation of the football club.

Because Chinese professional football development cycle is short, so in many ways it still faces many problems. Height of professionalization process is far from ideal, constrained the development of the Chinese super league football industry lack of independence of the operation of the business is due to its management to a certain extent, bound by the football association, lead to delay in professional football marketization process in club's brand building needs the enthusiasm of each club, and the enthusiasm needs to be guaranteed by commercial interests.

Finally, The Chinese Super League should take the road of market-oriented development, establish an open, fair and inclusive market, establish a league with complete organizational structure, reasonable management and efficient operation, manage the operation team and avoid excessive administrative intervention.

The quantitative data in the study were collected from Deloitte and The Chinese Football Association. The data it provided is authoritative and dependable.

During the progress of this thesis, I have had a clearer cognition of the history and development of Chinese Super League and English Premier League. Now I have a systematic and comprehensive knowledge of Chinese Super League and English Premier League. I had a unambiguous awareness of football industry and sports industry.

Through the research on the development of Premier League, I have learned about the important factors of the development of professional football league. By studying the development of Chinese Super League, I also know the deficiencies and defects of Chinese football at present.

With the men's football Asian Cup to be held in China in 2023, the sport will become more and more popular in China.

Table 5. The following is a comparison of the operation modes of the Premier League and the China Super League to explore the advantages of mature operation modes.

	<b>The English Premier League</b>	<b>Chinese Super League</b>
Management Mode and Organizational Structural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Premier League is independent of the FA and the two sides are in an equal position. At the same time, the FA, as a special shareholder of the Premier League, has a veto over resolutions in many areas of the Premier League</li> <li>2. Other areas of affairs are managed by the board of directors formed by the president of the League and the chief executive, and the FA has no right to interfere.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Chinese Super League is regulated by the Chinese Football Association</li> <li>2. The Chinese football association is a non-profit social group, supervised by the General Administration of Sport of China and the Ministry of Civil Affairs.</li> <li>3. The Chinese football association has a majority of seats on the league's management and board, as well as the right to vote on major issues.</li> </ol>

Commercial Development	1. The alliance is mainly responsible for the franchise of the main products and the TV rights of the Premier League.	1. From the league ' s commercial development point of view, the entire league are lack of a sustained and stable way of profit.
Organizational Structure	<p>1. The decision-making body of the Premier League is the shareholders' meeting, composed of representatives elected by 20 clubs,</p> <p>2. British Premier League adopts modern enterprise management system, there are non-permanent institutions and permanent institutions.</p>	1. From the organizational structure of the league, the Chinese Super League is still in the initial stage of the operation mode. While managing the national team, the Chinese Football Association also takes into account the operation of the Chinese Super League.

## **6 Suggestions**

Although there is a gap between China's domestic environment and England's, the operation of the Chinese Super League is likely to be improved by learning from the successful experience of the English Premier League.

The Chinese Super League needs to get independence from the Chinese football association. Also, the ownership of the league should be taken over by all the Professional football club of the league. The Chinese Football Association is supposed to supervise and manage, not the operation of the Chinese Super League.

### **6.1 The Chinese Super League needs to be reformed**

#### **6.1.1 Diversification of club shares**

The Chinese Super League's clubs need to optimize their ownership structure. Compared with single ownership, the diversification of ownership structure is considered to be more beneficial for professional football clubs to avoid the business risk of the parent company. A single-shareholder structure in which only one company controls a football club is risky.

In the event of a parent company adjustment or accident, that means a professional football team is likely to disappear from the league. Such influence is too great, it will also have a big impact on the ecology of football where professional football clubs are located. The diversification of stock rights in professional football clubs is beneficial to avoid the negative consequences caused by the withdrawal of stock rights by investors. At the same time, it also reduces the risk of club operation.

Diversified investment by the government, enterprises and individuals, form reasonable investment source structure. The Chinese Super League's clubs should improve their governance structure, accelerate the construction of modern enterprise system for football clubs. Maintain the steady development of the football club. Only the long-term stability of professional football clubs can be maintained, it is possible to build "century-old clubs" like premier League clubs.

### **6.1.2 Create a professional league**

The Chinese Super league should have its own professional union, just like the Premier League. The Chinese Super League should be formed by the Chinese Super League, with the clubs owning all the shares. The Chinese Super League also needs to be separated from the Chinese Football Association. The ownership of the league should be taken over by all the clubs in the Chinese Super League. The responsibility of the Football Association should be supervision and management, not the operation of the league.

The functions of the Chinese Football Association should be transformed. The Chinese Football Association should avoid directly interfering in the operation of The Chinese Super League and give full play to the autonomy of the Chinese Super League companies and the Chinese Super League. The Chinese Football Association should do a good job in policy making of The Chinese Super League, it also has to supervise the clubs and referees, as well as youth training. The Chinese Football Association needs to do a good job in macro-control of the development of The Chinese Super League.

### **6.1.3 Strengthen cost management and improve the club's operating level**

At the same time, Chinese professional football club need to implement cost management and adjust expenditure structure reasonably. The Chinese Super League should follow the example of professional Football leagues in Europe and Establish policies to control expenditure and income of the team.

The Union of European Football Associations has developed a policy called the “UEFA Financial Fair play”. This is a financial law enacted by UEFA in 2010 for teams participating in UEFA competitions. The purpose is to regulate the financial behaviour of each club, control the financial deficit of the club and punish the teams that violate the regulations. Chinese Super League’s clubs need to improve the scientific and normative use of funds, stimulate the enthusiasm and effectiveness of business development of clubs in the league, and standardize the capital operation of football clubs. (Baiké 2021g)

In addition, The Chinese Super League can learn from “THE SALARY CAP” management method of NBA to set salary cap for The Chinese Super League’s clubs. This is especially true for ultra-high-income groups such as foreign players and coaches. Their salaries should be kept within a reasonable range so that the running costs of the football clubs can be reduced.

This point, in the 2021 season, the Chinese Super League has been implemented: The maximum annual salary after tax for newly signed foreign players by the Chinese Super League clubs is 3 million Euros and the maximum annual salary for domestic players on new contracts is 10 million yuan before tax, with a 20 percent increase, or 12 million yuan, to be selected for the national team. In 2021, the spending and salary limits will be reduced to 900 million yuan and 55 percent. (The Chinese Football Association 2020a)

#### **6.1.4 Build a national youth league**

Chinese Football Association needs to establish a complete system of youth football league. A complete youth football league system helps to produce more outstanding young players, compared with the implementation of U23 policy, there will be a fundamental change. In the 2019 Men's football Asian Cup, the national average age of China's men's soccer team is nearly 30, one of the oldest of any team. This also reflects that the practice of U23 policy has failed. (Baijiahao News 2018)

The ability of young players is not up to the professional level, which will lead to a lack of opportunities for them to play. This is the situation faced by many Chinese Super League teams, as well as many young Chinese players. The Chinese Football Association needs to establish a perfect youth football league, through the combination of youth training on campus and professional clubs, constantly expand the population of Chinese youth football and increase the reserve of football talents.

First of all, there are different stages of football training for different age groups. From the campus dimension, football should be included in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. The schools should encourage sketching to participate in football without affecting their studies. This will also help select talented young football players.

Therefore, the main task of primary and secondary schools is to cultivate students' interest in football. Let these young players learn the basics of football and then play at the corresponding level games. However, the main task of senior high school is to strengthen football skills through actual matches and prepare for the selection of excellent football talents for universities.

High school is the watershed for student-athletes, with potential student-players going to pro football, non-potential student-players going to colleges, and college student-players who are able of playing profession football can also go to pro football. Only when the

Chinese Football Association establishes a perfect system can campus football provide competitive young players for professional clubs.

## **7 Acknowledgement**

First of all, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Kari Puronaho and Dr. Junjie Feng, for their instructive advice and useful suggestions on my thesis.

Their instructions have helped broaden my horizon and their enlightening teaching has provided me with a solid foundation to accomplish this paper and will always be of great value for my future career and academic research.

Secondly, I am deeply indebted to my English teachers, Sirpa and Mikko. They help me improve my English and let me get better English skills. Also, I would like to thank the teachers at Vierumaki campus. They gave me a lot of help when I was studying in Finland, both in life and study. I also thank my classmates, who gave me a lot of advice on my thesis.

Last but not least, I want to thank my parents for supporting me to study in Finland. I would like to express my special thanks to my parents, whose care and support motivate me to move on and make me want to be a better person.



## References

Ajadi, T. & Ambler, T. & Udwadia, Z. & Wood, C. Annual Review of Football Finance 2020. Sports Business Group. June,2020.

Ajadi, T. & Bridge. T. & Hanson, C. & Hammond, T. & Udwadia, Z. Football Money League. Deloitte Sports Business Group. January,2021.

Ajadi, T. & Bruton. Z. & Dwyer, M. & Hammond, T. & Ross, C. Football Money League. Deloitte Sports Business Group. January,2020.

Baijiahao. The average age of China's 2019 Asian Men's Football Team. 2018

URL:

<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1621152162498991687&wfr=spider&for=pc>

Accessed: 26 July 2021.

Baike. 2021a. The Premier League.

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%8B%B1%E6%A0%BC%E5%85%B0%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E8%B6%85%E7%BA%A7%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B/1552935?fromtitle=%E8%8B%B1%E8%B6%85%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B&fromid=210878&fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 10 October 2021.

Baike. 2021b. The Premier League Rankings for the 2020-2021 season.

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%8B%B1%E6%A0%BC%E5%85%B0%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E8%B6%85%E7%BA%A7%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B/1552935?fromtitle=%E8%8B%B1%E8%B6%85%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B&fromid=210878&fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 1 October 2021.

Baike. 2021c. The Chinese Super League Rankings for the 2020 season.

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E5%8D%8F%E4%BC%9A%E8%B6%85%E7%BA%A7%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B/3715729?fromtitle=%E4%B8%AD%E8%B6%85%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B&fromid=368454&fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 22 July 2021.

Baike. 2021d. The Premier League.

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%8B%B1%E6%A0%BC%E5%85%B0%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E8%B6%85%E7%BA%A7%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B/1552935?fromtitle=%E8%8B%B1%E8%B6%85%E8%81%94%E8%B5%9B&fromid=210878&fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 10 October 2021.

Baike. 2021e. Guangzhou F.C

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%B9%BF%E5%B7%9E%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E4%BF%B1%E4%B9%90%E9%83%A8/55426581?fromtitle=%E5%B9%BF%E5%B7%9E%E6%81%92%E5%A4%A7%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E4%BF%B1%E4%B9%90%E9%83%A8&fromid=9910383&fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 3 July 2021.

Baike. 2021f. Guangzhou City FC

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%B9%BF%E5%B7%9E%E5%9F%8E%E8%B6%B3%E7%90%83%E4%BF%B1%E4%B9%90%E9%83%A8>

Accessed: 3 July 2021.

Baike. 2021g. UEFA Financial Fair Play.

URL:

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%AC%A7%E8%B6%B3%E8%81%94%E8%B4%A2%E6%94%BF%E5%85%AC%E5%B9%B3%E6%B3%95%E6%A1%88/7580447?fr=aladdin>

Accessed: 6 July 2021.

Chen, B. & Wang, G. & Wang, X.L. & Lin, X.J. & Chen, P. Operating Mechanism of England Professional Football League. Vol. 34, No.4, 2018

Deloitte. 2021a. Chinese Football Association Super League, 2020 season commercial value white paper

URL:

<https://www2.deloitte.com/cn/zh/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/chinese-football-association-super-league-2020-business-value-evaluation-white-paper.html>

Huang, Y. Z. The Status Analysis and Development Strategy of CSL Commercial Value. Journal of Shaoguan University · Natural Science, Vol.40 No.9. September,2019.

ifeng.com. 2021a. 2016 Chinese Super League winter transfer list.  
URL: [http://sports.ifeng.com/a/20160227/47612586\\_0.shtml](http://sports.ifeng.com/a/20160227/47612586_0.shtml)  
Accessed: 5 July 2021.

Li, X. The potential crisis behind the rapid surge in the commercial value of the Chinese Super League. Economic Research Guide. No.10, 2017

Li, Z. Study on FA Premier League and the Enlightenment to Chinese Football. 2017

Sina Sports News. 2018. Transfer fees for U23 players  
URL: <http://sports.sina.com.cn/china/j/2018-01-23/doc-ifyquptv8820933.shtml>  
Accessed: 16 September 2021.

The Chinese Football Association. 2021a. Jiangsu Suning Club disbanded  
URL: <http://www.thecfa.cn/qttz/20210301/29342.html>  
Accessed: 22 July 2021.

The Chinese Football Association. 2017a. U23 player appearance policy.  
URL: <http://www.thecfa.cn/lstz/20170524/8328.html>  
Accessed: 22 July 2021.

The Chinese Football Association. 2017b. Collect transfer coordination fee  
URL: <http://www.thecfa.cn/lstz/20170620/19047.html>  
Accessed: 22 July 2021.

The Chinese Football Association. 2020a. The highest salary for a player in the Chinese Super League  
URL: <http://www.thecfa.cn/lstz/20201214/29162.html>  
Accessed: 22 July 2021.

Yang, L. The enlightenment of the commercial operation of Premier League to the development of Chinese Super League. Economic Research Guide. No. 16, 2017

Zhang, A.B. Comparative Research Study in business Model of England Premier League and Chinese Super League. 2013

Zhao, J. & Li, C. X. Management and Operation Mode of Premier League. Journal of Sports Adult Education. Vol: 32, No.5, October,2016.