

# Leaving the core? Emigration of Scandinavian Female Footballers

Vera Botelho

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# Agenda



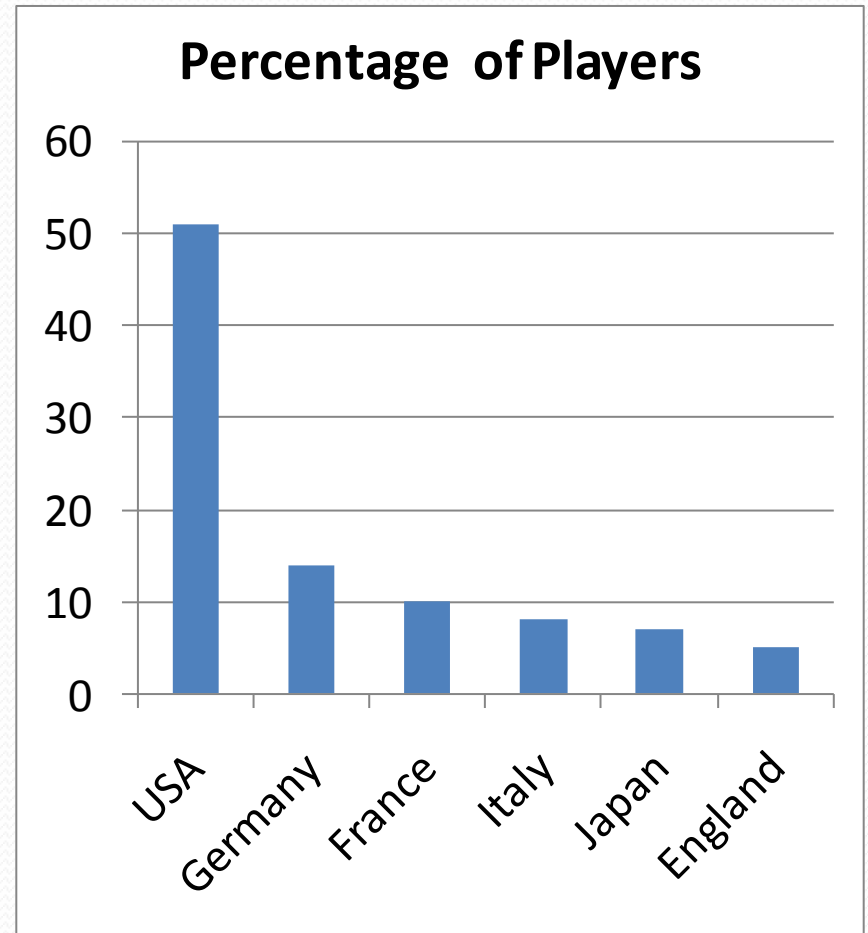
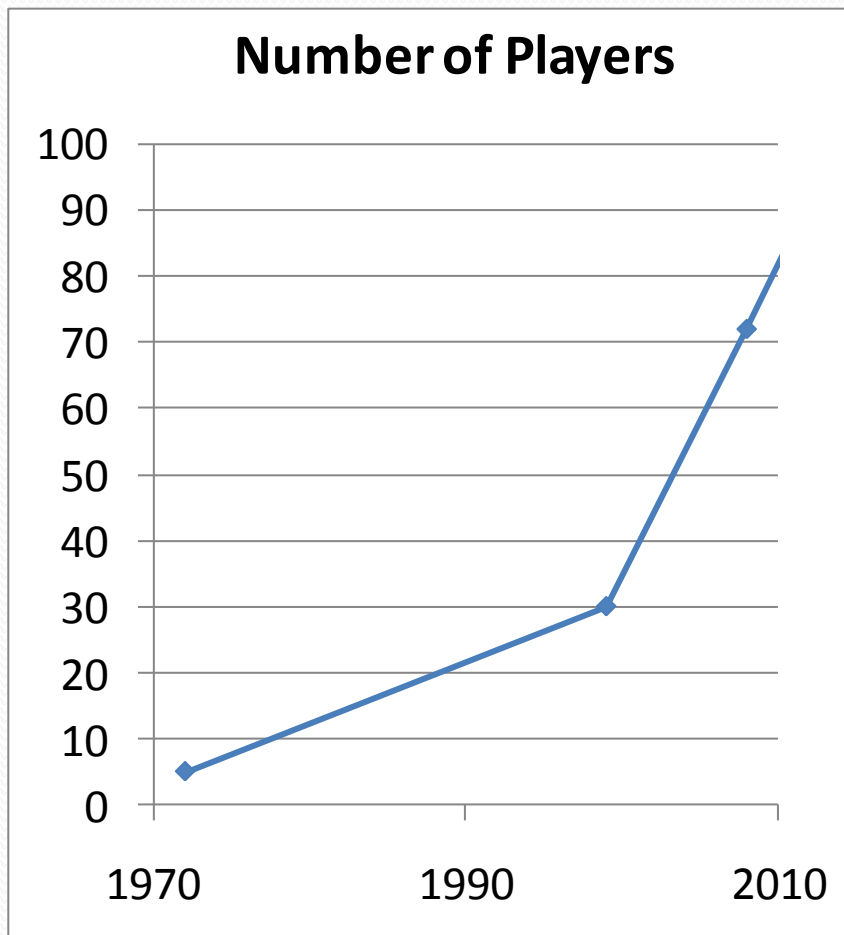
- 1. Scandinavian Female Footballers Emigration as a Topic**
- 2. Historical Background**
- 3. Methods**
- 4. Theories in development**
- 5. Findings**
  - Motives for Migration
  - Adaptation Challenges
  - Outcomes of Migration
- 6. Conclusions and future perspectives**

# Scandinavian Female Footballers

## Emigration as a Topic

- - Group not yet addressed by the literature.
- - “Emigration from the core” = Inverted flow and unusual in sport labour migration.
- - Why do “core” players go abroad despite having the best football league and better living conditions at home?
- - How do “core” players adapt to other countries and to “peripheral” conditions?
- - Which accomplishments do “core” players get from playing abroad?

# Historical Background and Geographic Routes



# Methods:

- **Selection of players:** players that have emigrated to countries outside Scandinavia
- **Subjects:** a randomly sample of 12 players, from all three countries and different historical periods.
- **Data Collection:** questionnaires and semi-structured interviews



# Theories in Development

## 1 - Macro-structural and historical analyses

- Centre and periphery approach

## 2 - Micro-sociological studies

- Typology on motives for migration

- Economic gains
- Settlement
- Cultural experience
- Sporting ambitions

## 3 - Adaptation experience as factor (Agergaard & Botelho 2010; Stead & Maguire 2000)

## 4 - Irrational motive (and outcome) of sports labour migration: Labour of love (Botelho & Agergaard forthcoming)

# Findings

## Motives for migration



- 1 - Sporting ambitions

- A) Football/Education

- *“In USA for a combination of football and education” (Terp-USA-1995).*
- *“I’ve always wanted the experience of playing college soccer and getting my bachelor at the same time in the US” (Cecilie-USA-2007).*

- B – Football experience and to keep playing

- *“In England (2001) was for football experience and to keep playing” (Terp-England-2001).*
- *“I was thinking to stop because I had achieved everything I could in Denmark. To go abroad was a way to prolong my career” (Merete-Italy-1999).*
- *“New experience in football, after long career in Norway” (Colombo-France-2009).*

## Motives for Migration

### ● C – Football career building

- *“To adapt to a new playing style” (Lise Marie- USA-2003).*
- *“To became a better player; to play in a better league” (Leni-Germany-2007).*
- *“To be a high level and professional player” (Sara-USA-WPS-2009).*
- *“For challenge; to prove to myself I was good enough to play at the highest level” (Merete-Germany-1999).*



# Motives for Migration

## Additional Motives

- Cultural experience
- *"...besides playing football I also wanted to have the adventure and to live in another country and work on another language"* (Sara-USA-2009)
- Economic gains
- *"The salary was not high but they offered me good living conditions: housing, car, extra-money for food"* (Merete-Germany-1999).
- *"It was not for money but the salaries there were better than at home"* (Terp-England-2001)
- Settlement
- *"Yes, definitely. There are so many more opportunities in the US, especially in the sport world"* (Cecilie-USA-2007).
- For the Love of the Game
- *"It was for the love of the game but also for the money"* (Pia-Italy-1985)

# Adaptation

- **1 - Playing style** (more technical, harder, physical)
- *“... the game was so different in terms of style, tactics, training. The players are very individualistic and egocentric; ... they keep the ball; they don't pass it on to the other players. They keep it until they lose it...”* (Merete- Italy-2003).
- *“Playing style was different and harder”* (Paaske-Australia-2009).
- *“The game was different. More technical but less organized and physical”* (Pia-Italy-1985).
- *“I would say that in Scandinavia is more technical, but here it is more physical and faster”* (Johanna-USA-2010).

# Adaptation

## ● 2 - Football mentality

- *“It is another way of thinking football; they don't see it as a “colective” game ...and they have great difficulties with organization; they don't act as “professionals” (Merete-Italy-2003).*
- *“More hierarchy; the trainer decides everything and there is no discussion” (Leni-Germany-2007).*
- *“... teams here are put together out of nothing.. there is not the same club feeling as at home (Johanna-USA-2010).*
- *“Everything was different; no team spirit. I never totally adjusted. (Colombo-France-2009).*
- *“...football there is something totally different. It is another football culture” (Pia-Italy-1985).*

## ● 3 - Communication and social integration

- *“During the first six months it was very hard. I could not communicate with anybody” (Merete- Italy-2003).*
- *“The language was a problem to communicate with other players. But off field everyone was nice and took good care of me” (Colombo-France-2009).*

# Outcomes

- 1 - As a football player:
- *“I’ve learned more about my mental game and to assimilate to a different kind of soccer; I’m more prepared for international games” (Johanna-USA-2010).*
- *“I became a much better player. When I came back home I was playing my best football” (Merete-Germany/Italy-1999/2003).*
- *“To be full time professional; to play in one of the best teams in Europe and take part in Champions League” (Colombo-France-2009).*
- *“It motivated me to play for a longer time. It was like a reward” (Kristin-Japan/USA-1998/2001).*

# Outcomes

## ● 2 - As a person

- *“...it gave me a lot for my personal and professional life. I think it is a gift to have the opportunity to live and play abroad. I’ll recommend it to everyone” (Paaske-Australia/USA-2009/2010).*
- *“It gave me other inputs: mental, technical, tactical, physical. It gave me new goals – in football and life” (Terp-USA/England-1995/2001).*
- *“I’ve developed as a person and player. I don’t regret going over here for a second, and I’ll recommend this life to anyone” (Cecilie-USA/Canada-2007/2008).*
- *“As a person, I knew a lot about myself. I learn how to understand foreign people when they came to Denmark. ...” (Merete-Germany/Italy-1999/2003).*

## ● 3 - Sports career after retiring as a player

- *“I definitely decided to work with football after my international experience. I realized how important is to teach young girls a good football mentality” (Merete-Germany/Italy-1999/2003).*

# Conclusions (and questions)

- Trends and Patterns
- - “Emigration from the core to core; core to periphery”
- *Does it fit the macro analyses of sport labour migration?*
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- Motives for migration
- A combination of football/education
- To keep playing
- *New categories for the typology approach?*
  
- Adaptation
- Emphasis on “Football Mentality” as a challenge.
- *Is it a case of “Local Football Culture vs. Football Globalization”?*
  
- Outcomes of Migration Experience:
- - Improvement as a player and as a person
- - Sports activities after retirement
- *New typology for migration outcomes?*

