

Comparative Analysis of Chinese and American Basketball Player Training Systems

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Abstract: Chinese basketball have not achieved satisfactory results in international play for a long time. Many researchers have tried to find the reasons for the weaknesses of Chinese basketball, but most of the researchers have not thought from the perspective of training system. As the birth place of basketball, America is in the lead in many aspects, such the achievements in international plays, the level of professional players. American basketball training system must be heuristic and progressive. So, the research topic of this text is the differences between Chinese basketball training system and American basketball training system. The research methods of this text are: case study method, literature survey method. Research findings: (1). the training systems for students players in China and America are similar. But Chinese major training system is youth academy, instead of campus basketball. (2). In China, youth academy untimely professionalize players. Players in youth academy are generally lack of education. (3). In China, youth academy hinders the development of campus basketball, because the youth academy holds most of the outstanding coaches and youth players. Research suggestion: (1). Youth academy should be canceled (2). Government should clarify what state sector should be responsible to promote the development of campus basketball, and invest more to improve the facility in public schools.

Keywords: case analysis method, training system, campus basketball, youth academy

1. Introduction

Chinese basketball level has remained stagnant for a long time. For example, in Olympic Games in 2004 and 2008, China Men's basketball team finished eighth twice. This is the best results China have made in Olympic. In Olympic Games in 2012 and 2016, China both came last. And in 2021 Olympics, China even did not get the eligibility to play the game. Basketball is extremely popular in China, and China is the most populous country in the world. According to the Report on the Development of Basketball in China which was published by Chinese Basketball Association, there are 125 million of people are play basketball in China. Based on these two advantages, Chinese basketball is supposed to be high-level. The level of Chinese basketball do not match the popularity of basketball and the huge population base in China. Physical culture workers and the public have tried to find the reason for the weakness from different aspects. For example, the physical quality and the cultures. These researches do find some problems of Chinese basketball from these aspects, like students' understanding of basketball is low and has not yet risen to the relevant cultural level

[1]. However, the training system, as the base of personnel developing, have not been talk about often. Admittedly, there are some researches talk about the Chinese basketball training system. For example, the” Research on the cultivation system of students basketball players in China” shows that on the whole, the quality of talent training is not high and the motivation for sustainable development is insufficient in campus basketball [2]. But still, most of these researches just talked about the issues of the training system individually. America, as the country with the highest basketball level, its training system must be heuristic and progressive. Chinese people can get inspiration from American basketball training system to improve Chinese training system. This text is based on the situations of American and Chinese training system, aims to find the issues of Chinese training system and the way to improve it by comparison and horizontal analysis. This research compares and analyzes the training systems of China and America from different aspects, try to find the differences between the two training systems. The aspects include: history of the training systems; the analysis of cultivation models; players’ training/teaching methods; career development models.

2. History of Chinese and American Basketball Players’ Training System

2.1. History of Chinese Campus Basketball

Before the First CUBA. In 1949, the first Chinese basketball team composed by the college players appeared publicly on the international play. In 1950s-1960s, Chinese government introduced a lot of policies to lead and construct the campus basketball. At that time, Chinese campus basketball developed rapidly and healthily [3]. In 1960s, the Chinese State Education Commission officially introduced basketball sports into teaching program. In the late 1960s, because of the Great Cultural Revolution, the development of Chinese campus basketball almost completely stopped [2]. After the Great Cultural Revolution, China gradually formed the developmental line of “sports school -- sports team -- national team” for basketball players. In some degree, basketball in sports school was a part of campus basketball because sports school was also a kind of school. But from other perspectives, basketball in sports school and campus basketball were totally different. The core of campus basketball is “the integration of sports and education”, but sports school neglected education and focused on sports only. Sports school was more like a youth version of sports team. At that time, China had no professional basketball league. The training system only served mainly for National team. At the same time, the real campus basketball was promoted by the policies which were made by governments. In 1987, some qualified universities began to recruit some ranking basketball athletes. This action made the early preparation for using campus basketball to cultivate reserve talent of competitive basketball [3].

After the First CUBA. In 1998, FUSC held first CUBA (Chinese University Basketball Association). The CUBA was beneficial to the further development of campus basketball, and it initiated the new model of students’ basketball players’ cultivation [2, 3]. In 2015, CBA opened up draft for the first time. Benefit from this, college players can entry the highest level of professional basketball league in China. The college became an important part of the basketball training system in China.

2.2. History of Chinese Basketball Youth Academy

In the developmental line of “sports school -- sports team -- national team”, the sports team shared some common factors with youth academy. They both professionalized the young players too earlier. After the establishment of CBA in 1995, youth academy gradually formed as the subsidiary of the CBA team. The provincial basketball team gradually faded away from the history, because the goal setting of the training system was not selecting talent to the national team, but the CBA

team. But some of the provincial basketball teams remained and play the role of youth academy. Some of the CBA teams could not support their own youth academies. For these teams, they signed contracts with the local sports bureaus. The local sports bureaus let the CBA teams to select and conclude the contracts with the players who were cultivated by the local sports teams. In return, the first teams of the CBA team were forced to play some games for the provinces, like the National Games of the People's Republic of China. A perfect example of these teams is the Liaoning Shenyang Sansheng Flying Leopards Basketball club, one of the greatest basketball club in the CBA history. Liaoning Shenyang Sansheng Flying Leopards Basketball club have signed contract with Liaoning Provincial Sports Bureau and entrusted the Liaoning Provincial Sports Bureau to cultivate young players for the club.

2.3 History of American Campus Basketball
There are two main basketball events for campus basketball in America. The first one is AAU (Amateur Athletic Union). This union established in 1888. The second event is NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). This association established in 1906, and set up basketball in 1939. After 1939, the framework of American campus basketball was driven to mature. The developmental model of campus basketball formed. The model is primary school - secondary school - university and college [4]. Players' performances in primary school in AAU are essential to determine which secondary school they can enter. Then, their performances in secondary school in AAU determine which university or college they can enter. After that, their performances in NCAA is a guideline for whether they can enter professional league or not.

3. Analysis on the Training Mode of Chinese and American Basketball Players

3.1. Chinese Training Mode

3.1.1. Operational Body of the Training System

The major basketball training system in China is youth academy rather than colleges and universities. According to the 2022-2023 Season CBA National Player Basic Information White Paper, in 2022-2023 season, there were 63 Chinese players first registered in CBA, and 43 of them were came from youth academies of CBA teams, only 14 of them were came from the colleges and universities, and the rest 6 players were came from other organizations (like other professional league). Also, in 2022-2023 season, there were 365 documented national players in CBA, 276 of them were came from youth academies of CBA teams, the rest of them were came from other organizations (included colleges and universities). The number of college players in CBA are much less than the number of the youth academy players. Also, the college players are less competitive and powerful than the youth academy players [5]. Their minutes and opportunities to perform are relatively low [5]. Based on the data, the research concludes that the operational body In China is youth academy, instead of the colleges and universities.

3.1.2. Goal Setting

For campus basketball, the goal setting is not clear [6]. In general, Chinese sports department and Chinese education department are responsible to promote the development of campus basketball. But these two departments have different goal setting. Sports department values the results of competition, and the education department values the academic performance of student. The difference between the setting goals makes the effective cooperation between the two departments very difficult to achieve. On the other hand, for the educators, like coaches and teachers, do not have a consensus about the goal setting of campus basketball. For example, some educators think that the campus basketball should benefit students' comprehensive development, but some of them just view campus basketball as an assistance of schools' reputation and fame [2, 3]. These

divergences greatly hinder the healthy development of campus basketball.

For the youth academy, the goal setting is simple. That is: Cultivating the talented young people into high-level basketball players. Youth academy does not need to concern about the comprehensive development of players. All of its efforts are paid to transfer talents to the club.

3.2. America Training Mode

3.2.1. Operational Body of the Training System

Draft is the base of the development of NBA, and the main source of the draft players is NCAA [7]. So the main operational body of the training system is school. America have formed complete mechanism of training system. Once American children find their interests in basketball, they can only improve their basketball level through campus basketball. There is no youth academy in NBA, schools have the best training and competition level for native young players in America. Also, the campus basketball in America has strict management of the study of students' player, which makes the training system in America a healthy one. Almost all the Native American NBA players were all students' players.

3.2.2. Goal Setting

The goal setting of American training system is comprehensive development [3]. The campus basketball focuses on both students' physical health and academic performance. For example, NCAA have strict academic requirements for the students' players who want to play NCAA. The students must have high school diploma, and their numbers of courses, ACT/SAT scores have to meet the standards [2]. The campus basketball in America even focuses on students' mental health, like interpersonal skills, team spirit, good ethic [3].

3.3. Comparison

The goal setting of Chinese and American basketball is different. The clear goal setting allows American campus basketball to develop purposefully. By contrast, the goal setting of Chinese campus basketball is unclear. School cannot focus on the key points of campus basketball. Therefore, the efficiency of the development of Chinese campus basketball is low.

This research suggests that the government should clarify who should be responsible to promote the development of campus basketball. Thus the goal setting of campus basketball will be clear. The development of Chinese basketball will go purposefully.

As mentioned, youth academy does not value the comprehensive development of players. It does not provide general knowledge course, and in general, the age range of youth academy toward the players is 12-18 years. So, youth academy players have to give up at least the college education, even the secondary education. For the youth academy players who cannot become successful athletes, it is very hard for them to get a good job. But for student player, their chances to enter high-level basketball league are extremely low. The training and contest level in college is much worse than in the youth academy. Also, students' players have to enter CBA at a comparatively older age. When youth players enter the CBA at 18, the student players are just begin their college life. The choice between youth academy and campus basketball is a choice between a better career and a better comprehensive development. Because of this risky choice, in China, parents do not support children to become professional basketball players, and the public opinion does not always view basketball practitioner as successful and respectable one.

Unlike the young players in China, young players in America do not need to choose between professional career and comprehensive development. Because the campus basketball is the main

training system, so the students' players can get the best training and competition conditions and education both.

This research suggests that the youth academy should be canceled, so that young basketball players can develop healthily and comprehensively. Thus, the parents and society will be more willing to support the children to become basketball athletes. This solution can be promoted by government or professional basketball league by banning the existence of youth academy.

4. Comparison between the Development of Chinese and American Young Basketball Players

4.1. Comparison of Training/Teaching Methods of Chinese and American Young Basketball Players

In general, the training/teaching methods of Chinese American basketball players are similar. Players and coaches mainly focus on three areas: Basic skill, tactic and stamina. The differences in details can be caused by objective factors, like the level of coaches, the site facility. These differences in details make the training/teaching methods of American young basketball players much more effective than of Chinese young basketball players. For example, according to a research, only 47.1% of coaches were asking the student players to do strength training by using equipment to do circuit training, because most of the schools in China cannot afford plentiful training equipment [3]. The restriction of site facility constraint the prosecution of training method [3]. For coaches, their level is directly related to the basketball level of the whole country because most of the coaches were players in their young ages. The teaching level of Chinese coaches cannot match the teaching level of American coaches, because there is huge difference between the states of tactic and skill between the coaches in two countries.

Also, because of some culture or value factors, American training/teaching methods focus on individual skills and individual orientation more than Chinese training/teaching methods do [2, 8]. But it does not mean the American training/teaching methods do not value tactic and cooperation. As the young players enter different stages of their careers, coaches and teams will value tactic and cooperation more and more. For example, NBA does not allow high school players to attend the draft because players cannot reach the tactical level of NBA without the experience in NCAA, where value tactic and cooperation more than AAU. So American professional basketball players have both excellent technical and tactical levels. By contrast, in players' every stages, Chinese teaching/training methods focus on tactic more than individual skills and individual orientation and tend to homogenize players [9]. This causes their individual skill relatively weak and hinder Chinese basketball players' development of mentality. Mental factor can be for the results of high level of competition [10]. But Chinese basketball players' mental strength, like confidence and creativity are repressed by their training concept.

The training levels of campus basketball and youth academy in China are different. The youth academy have better site facility. Also, the youth academy can pay higher salary for coaches, so the outstanding coaches are always attracted by youth academy instead of school.

This research suggests that the government should invest more money to improve the facility and salary of coaches in public schools. Most of the schools in China are public, so their major source of funds is government. Public schools can hardly improve their facility and coaches' salary without the specific support from the government. So the investment of government is essential to improve the training level of campus basketball comprehensively. Also, as mentioned, the youth academy should be canceled. The cancellation of youth academy can benefit the training level as well. Without youth academy, more outstanding coaches become available to campus basketball.

4.2. Comparative Analysis of Professional Development Models of Chinese and America Basketball Players

4.2.1. Chinese

There are mainly two development models of Chinese basketball players. The first one is for youth academy players. The model is sports school -- youth academy -- professional league. For youth academy players, after they retired, they are very hard to obtain employment, because in their professional development models, there is no segment can provide them with necessary education. The second one is for students players. The model is: secondary school -- university -- professional league. As mentioned, the youth academy is the main training system for basketball players in China, so the first model is dominated in China. For the students' players, though they are very likely to find satisfactory jobs after they retired, the chance for them to become high-level basketball players is too low. So from the perspective of an athlete, this model is not optimal.

4.2.2. America

For American basketball players, most of them follow one professional development model. The model is: secondary school -- university -- professional league. Student's players in America are very likely to become high-level basketball player, and can easily find good jobs after they retired. This model is optimal and the only choice for students players in America.

5. Conclusion

In general, campus basketball training system in China and America are similar, though Chinese campus basketball has a lot of things to improve compared with the American campus basketball. The real difference between the training system of China and America is the existence of youth academy in China. Youth academy directly related to high-level professional team, so it has better training and competition level. In China compared with students' players, youth academy players are more possible to become high-level professional basketball players. But at the same time, youth academy players are generally lack of education. The future employment is a big problem for academy players who cannot become extremely outstanding and famous. So, parents are always unwilling to encourage their children to become basketball players, because this choice is too risky. By contrast, in America, campus basketball is the best way for young players to realize their dreams. Also, campus basketball in America provides students player with necessary education, thus guarantee their future employment. Youth academy hinders the development of campus basketball, because the youth academy holds a lot of the outstanding coaches and talented young players, then cause the level of campus basketball to stagnate.

None of the previous researches suggests to cancel the youth academy completely, instead, some them even try to improve youth academy to improve the basketball level in China. This research provides a pioneering way to improve the basketball level in China. Also, the solution will benefit a lot of physical culture workers and the young basketball players by increasing their social acceptability and treatment. Admittedly, youth academy had deep rooted foundation, so canceling it may cause some problems, like the decline of Chinese basketball level in short term. How to solve this problem can be the direction of the future researches.

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