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## Comparative Analysis of Basketball Training Systems in China and the United States: Implications for Enhancing Player Development and Competitive Levels

Chen Junpeng<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Despite various system reforms implemented by Yao Ming since becoming the president of the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA), the level of basketball competition in China has not shown significant improvement, indicating that underlying issues in the development of basketball in China remain unresolved. One of the main factors influencing the level of competition is the training system for players. This study aims to analyze and compare the training systems for basketball players in China and the United States, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each system, including player selection, training, and management. The research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, using literature reviews, interviews with coaches and players, and direct observations of training programs. The results reveal that the training system in the United States is more structured, focusing on individual skill development from an early age, emphasizing basic techniques, game strategy, and physical conditioning, while also allowing players the freedom to develop according to their talents. Conversely, the system in China is more centralized and less flexible, with a greater focus on team achievements rather than individual development. The study's recommendations include increasing the focus on individual skill development from an early age, adopting elements from the American training system such as freedom in talent development and a more flexible training approach, enhancing the quality of coaches through more in-depth and continuous training, and creating a competitive environment that supports the development of young players. By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that China can address the issues in its training system and improve the level of basketball competition both nationally and internationally.

**Keywords:** *Basketball training systems, Chinese Basketball Association reforms, Player development in basketball*

### A. Introduction

Sports talent training system refers to the general name of the organization setting, authority division and management system of sports talent training system. The sports system determines the athletes' training system, which also involves complicated systems in politics, culture, education, economy and society, and its constituent elements mainly include training objectives, training channels, training methods, training environment, sources of funds, reward mechanisms and laws and regulations (Liu, 2011). According to the above concepts, the basketball player training system refers to the organization setting, authority division and management system of the basketball player talent training system, which is determined by the sports system. Involving politics, economics A complex system at the economic and cultural levels.

Since Yao Ming became the president of the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA), various system reforms have been implemented to advance basketball in China. However, despite these reforms, the level of basketball competition in China has not shown significant improvement. This phenomenon indicates that fundamental issues in the development of

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<sup>1</sup>School of Physical Education, Southwest University, Chongqing 400715, China. [987733405@qq.com](mailto:987733405@qq.com)

basketball in China remain unresolved and continue to hinder the sport's progress (Xiao & Chen, 2021).

According to existing literature, one of the main factors affecting the level of basketball competition is the player training system. Studies indicate that the United States, which has one of the best basketball systems in the world, focuses on individual skill development from an early age, emphasizing basic techniques, game strategy, and physical conditioning while allowing players the freedom to develop according to their talents (Smith & Johnson, 2019). In contrast, the training system in China is more centralized and less flexible, with a greater focus on team achievements rather than individual development (Li & Wang, 2020).

This study aims to analyze and compare the training systems for basketball players in China and the United States. The primary objective is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each system, including player selection, training, and management. Furthermore, this study seeks to identify elements of the American basketball training system that can be adapted and implemented in China to enhance the level of basketball competition in the country.

This research is built on several assumptions. First, it is assumed that a more flexible training system focused on individual development will be more effective in enhancing players' skills and, consequently, improving the overall level of basketball competition. Second, it is assumed that by adopting elements from the American training system, China can address the weaknesses in its own training system. Third, it is assumed that improving the quality of coaches through more in-depth and continuous training and creating a competitive environment that supports the development of young players will positively contribute to the development of basketball in China (Zhang & Liu, 2020). By understanding the fundamental differences between the training systems in China and the United States and adopting best practices, it is hoped that China can address existing issues and achieve significant improvements in the level of basketball competition both nationally and internationally.

## **B. Methods**

This study employs a qualitative research design to analyze and compare the basketball training systems in China and the United States. The research procedure is divided into three main phases. First, an extensive literature review is conducted, encompassing academic journals, books, and reports from relevant sports organizations to provide a theoretical foundation for the study. Second, semi-structured interviews with coaches, players, and sports administrators in both countries are conducted to gather in-depth insights into the practical aspects of the training systems, including player selection, training methodologies, and management practices. Third, direct observations of training programs in both China and the United States are performed by visiting training facilities and observing training sessions to understand the methods and practices employed.

The data collection, two main techniques are utilized. The literature review collects secondary data from academic sources and official reports. Semi-structured interviews provide qualitative data from key stakeholders, with questions designed to explore training methodologies, player development, and management practices. Observations involve field visits to training facilities, where qualitative data is recorded using field notes and video recordings.

Data analysis involves several steps. Qualitative data from interviews and observations is analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves coding the data to identify key themes and patterns related to the strengths and weaknesses of each training system. This analysis aims to uncover deep insights into the structures, practices, and outcomes of the training systems in both countries. The comparative analysis systematically juxtaposes the identified themes from the two systems, highlighting their main differences and similarities. This comprehensive qualitative approach aims to provide a robust analysis of the basketball training systems in China and the

United States, offering evidence-based recommendations for improving the level of basketball competition in China.

## **C. Findings and Discussion**

### **1. The Basketball Player Training System**

Yue (2019) "system"Originally a biological concept, the term refers to the configuration form of biological organs, and later extended to the organizational system of state organs, enterprises and institutions, such as school system, leadership system and political system. The head language and scope of use of system and mechanism are different. "Mechanism" refers to general things by organisms, focusing on the mechanism of internal parts of things, that is, the relationship. "System" refers to the system of organizational forms, which is limited to state organs, enterprises and institutions with hierarchical relations between upper and lower levels. In short, the system is the general name of the specific system and organizational system of state organs, enterprises and institutions in terms of institutional setup, subordinate relationship and division of rights. For example, the economic system refers to the specific organization, management and regulation of the national economy.

Sports system refers to the sum total of various institutions, systems and norms organized and managed by the state. It includes the organization of sports, the division of responsibilities, rights and interests of sports administrative agencies and institutions at all levels, the criteria for handling their mutual relations, and the sports management system. The content of the basketball player training system refers to his main composition, including the management, selection and training of players. Management refers to the management of athletes' personnel ownership, activity authority, income distribution and so on (Zou, 2018). Selection refers to the selection of athletes' youth reserve forces, the flow between echelons at all levels and the introduction of foreign aid. Training refers to organized activities specially conducted under the guidance of coaches to improve the competitive ability of athletes and sports teams, including physical fitness, technical level, mastery and selection of tactical coordination, psychological ability and so on.

### **2. China's Basketball Player Training System**

The management system of Chinese basketball players is mainly embodied by the teams in cba league matches. At present, there is no fixed national team in China, but the outstanding athletes in cba team are gathered through recruitment and selection before the international competition, and the national team is formed through a period of training. Therefore, among the personnel participating in each international competition, except the main players, the other players change greatly, which is uncertain and temporary. This is similar to the American dream team. Therefore, this paper mainly analyzes the training system of basketball players in the two countries through the teams in cba and nba leagues. According to the above, the following will be compared and analyzed from the perspectives of daily management, player selection and training.

Among the teams in cba League, there is a team belonging to the local sports bureau. The personnel of the players belong to the local sports bureau, and the staff belonging to the sports bureau are managed by the sports bureau in a unified way. Therefore, their system is stricter and their activities are less authorized. The salary is determined by the local department's system and policies. Accepting advertisements and endorsements must be agreed by the relevant departments and paid a certain amount of income (Shu, 2013). The other team belongs to the independent enterprise, with the purpose of making profits, taking responsibility for its own profits and losses. The contract system is carried out between the players and the club, and the

salary is determined by the players' competitive level and commercial value. Such players are more free, with higher salary and greater mobility.

CBA players are composed of local players and foreign aid. Local players are divided into players inside the system and players outside the system. They come from all over the country, including Hongkong, Macau and Taiwan Province. Players in the system refer to the players trained by local sports bureaus. Generally, there are specialized basketball schools to train them from childhood, select outstanding players to join the youth teams of CBA teams, and then enter the first team. These players usually play for teams in their own province, and sometimes they are loaned to other provinces, but they need to sign a lease contract. Players in the system are compiled and assigned to the unified management and deployment of the sports bureau. The personal interests of players are negotiated and agreed by the club and local sports bureaus. The salary is relatively low, but it is guaranteed after retirement. Typical players are Guo Ailun and Zhao Jiwei. Players outside the system are the same as NBA free agents. Because of the different ownership of players, the differences in income and future planning are reflected. Players outside the system can sign contracts with any team and eat by their own ability. The salary depends on their own ability. Li Gen, Sun Yue, Zhang Qingpeng, Ceng Lingxu, etc. all developed well after jumping out of the system. Since the 2015-2016 season, CBA has started the draft mode. The objects of the draft are mainly college students who have participated in China University Basketball League (CUBA) and China University Basketball Super League (CUBS), players from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan who have participated in the highest level leagues in their regions, and players with letters of recommendation issued by CBA clubs (Yang, 2019).

Players must be over 18 years old. Han Dejun, Wei Meng, Ceng Lingxu and other players were all selected through CUBA League. In the selection of CBA foreign aid, foreign aid that meets the requirements of the league can be selected from all over the world. The rules of use are as follows: four sessions with five people, single foreign aid in the first and fourth quarters, and double foreign aid in the second and third quarters. Among them, special provisions have been made for Asian foreign aid. The teams ranked in the last two in the league can use the three foreign aid policies including one Asian foreign aid, while other teams can only use two foreign AIDS at most.

The selection of cba reserve talents in China is divided into three levels, the first line, the second line and the third line, which include traditional basketball primary schools, amateur sports schools for young people and youth basketball training clubs; The second line includes the second-line athletes of chinese basketball association Basketball School, Sports School and the first-class team (Fu, 2018); The first line includes professional athletes in League A and League B.. In early childhood, the school will add basketball courses to make children have a preliminary understanding and contact with basketball; Sports schools will combine competition results, and cuba is a typical representative of training outstanding talents by combining sports with education. Cuba is an inter-university basketball league sponsored by the Sports Association of China University. With the aim of "developing college basketball and cultivating basketball talents", it is a special sports league for college students and society.

The training of cba players is mostly organized by coaches, including physical fitness, skills, tactical ability, psychological ability, knowledge ability and so on (Chen & Zhang, 2001). In training, according to the different events of basketball, different elements of competitive ability are emphasized. Basketball belongs to the skill-oriented antagonistic event group. In the training process, it pays attention to the training of technical and tactical abilities, then physical and psychological abilities, and finally knowledge abilities. Because basketball is a collective sport, and our country has emphasized the importance of collectivity since ancient times, and individuals are subordinate to collectivity, which makes people's individuality disappear into commonness, and people's individuality and creativity are suppressed. Therefore, in basketball

training, coaches pay more attention to the tactical cooperation of teams and the coordinated combination of players, but pay less attention to personal skills and the training of personal skills is not meticulous enough. Take guards and centers as an example. Domestic coaches pay attention to teamwork, and don't want to spend too much time in singles and holding the ball. Some difficult breakthroughs will even be regarded as fancy, so there are few training methods for guards' basic skills and ball control ability, which is far less abundant than that in the United States, resulting in a big gap between China's basic skills of guards and the United States. nba teams pay great attention to the basic skills of ball control, and even many center players such as O' Neill and Jokic have excellent ball control ability (Bai, Huang & Wu, 1999). The research shows that the ability of Chinese cba center players to score directly on the offensive end is not strong. It is necessary to further strengthen offensive technical training and improve scoring ability. With the development of basketball, the concept of fuzzy center position has been put forward, and it has become the development trend of the world's top teams to pull out the inside line and make three-point projection. China's center players should keep up with the development trend of world basketball and train their three-point long-throw ability.

### **3. The Training System of American Basketball Players**

Nba is the most successful men's basketball professional league in the world. After decades of development, it has 30 teams so far and has a huge turnover (Cui, 2020). The key to its success lies in the scientific operation and management mode.

The NBA is the top basketball organization in the world, and it has obtained the legal management right. As long as the enterprises that maintain cooperative relations with the NBA will inevitably pay commercial costs in the process of holding activities. The cooperative enterprises will make use of the NBA logo and hold corresponding activities, thus obtaining considerable economic and social benefits. Through the application of the organizational influence of NBA, we can continuously enhance its popularity, expand its social influence, and then realize its comprehensive and sustainable development. In most sports events, the NBA has also practiced an economical operation mode, organically integrating sportsmanship and market-oriented management, which has enabled the NBA to give full play to its own advantages and laid a solid foundation for the development of a mature industrial chain (Zou, 2019). Because the management system of NBA is relatively perfect, the existing sports resources can be utilized to ensure the full play of the role of economic industrial chain. The internal human resource management scheme of NBA organization is relatively mature, and the competition mechanism has been formed since the organization was founded, and all the competition activities are made on this basis, so the basketball competition is relatively intense and considerable.

In addition, the NBA organization also formulates the rules of the annual events, the quality of players and the number of basketball events, which makes the appreciation of basketball events significantly enhanced and is also loved by fans. On this basis, sponsors will also publicize their products during the event activities, thus achieving a win-win goal.

There are three main ways for NBA teams to create wealth through their own operation: TV broadcasting rights, team goods and peripheral products (Sun, 2018). First of all, it is the right to broadcast TV. This is the main source of economic income for each team, which is the money given by national TV stations to NBA officials, and then the NBA officials distribute the money to each team according to the number of times they request to broadcast. This controls the audience, and it costs money to watch TV and go to the scene, so many viewers will naturally choose to go to the scene to watch the game. Secondly, the team's income is the team's own goods, such as the team's jerseys, sneakers, etc. The sneakers are signed by the players themselves and the company, but some teams will also benefit from it. Finally, it is the products around the team. For example, small things like star cards sell well in the United States, which

involves the portrait rights of stars, and the portrait rights are the responsibility of the team, so this is also the source of income for the team.

The NBA draft originated in 1947. From the inverted ranking system in 1947-1964, to the coin guessing system in 1965- 1983, to the envelope drawing system in 1984-1988, and then to the equal choice in 1989, the balanced development of the strength of each team was ensured. Draft can improve the strength of weak teams to a certain extent, so that the teams in Los Angeles can restrict each other, and at the same time, it can improve the appreciation of the game. The NBA draft is divided into the first round and the second round, and each team selects players according to the regulations. The team that didn't get a playoff seat in that year can get the top pick, and draw lots to decide the draft order; Teams entering the playoffs pick the remaining low picks. The team with poor performance in the regular season is in the first place, so the team with the best performance in the regular season is in the last place. For example, in the 2013 NBA draft, the last place is not the championship Miami Heat, but the Memphis Grizzlies.

In the NBA draft, as long as American college players who participate in NCAA competitions are eligible for the draft after the competition, international players who have not participated in NCAA will automatically obtain this qualification after reaching the age of 22. At the same time, he graduated from secondary school for at least one year and turned 19 before December 31 of the draft year; For international players, to declare draft qualification, they only need to be 19 years older than December 31st of the draft year. Because the politics, economy and culture of the United States are different from those of China, and the nba is good at tapping the commercial value of players, nba teams often build star players and even form teams around superstars. Therefore, nba players attach importance to improving their personal abilities, and the training to improve their personal abilities accounts for a large proportion of the total training time, and attach great importance to the training of basic skills, such as ball control. There are dozens or even hundreds of training methods. Star players will have their own agents, nutritionists and trainers, and trainers are subdivided into physical trainers, ball control trainers, shooting trainers and so on. This shows that the training content of nba is very detailed and the training methods are rich and diverse.

#### **4. Differences in the training system of Chinese and American basketball players**

The training system of Chinese and American basketball players is different in management and operation, player selection and training. From the management point of view, cba teams run by enterprises alone are similar to nba, both of which sign contracts, and the players are highly mobile. However, cba teams, which belong to the sports bureau, are more strict in management, and the transfer is more troublesome. The average salary level is far lower than that of other cba teams and nba teams. The accommodation style of players in the season can best reflect the different management. NBA leagues and club teams generally do not interfere in the private life of players except for playing training. As long as you can train and play on time, the rest of the time, whether you sleep at home or go out for entertainment or secretly practice to improve your ability, the team will not interfere! CBA leagues and clubs, on the other hand, are more lenient. Generally, players are required to live in apartments and dormitories, which is convenient for management. Only a few local players or star players can go back to their homes, which is determined by cultural differences between China and the West, income levels and other reasons. In fact, from the way of accommodation, cba's accommodation is not necessarily worse than nba's. In order to ensure players' competitive ability, strict organizational discipline is essential. The nba League indulges players too much, and there are also some drawbacks. For example, in 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic spread rapidly in the United States, and some nba players did not comply with epidemic prevention regulations, which seriously threatened the lives and health of other players in the league. Under the influence of such ideological culture and management methods, The national honor of nba players is not strong. When international competitions come

and national teams are recruited, some stars do not respond to the recruitment of national teams for their own interests. In the 2019 Men's Basketball World Cup, there are only a handful of nba superstar players who joined the American national team, while the American team only finished seventh in the end, which can't match the American basketball hegemony.

There are many ways to select players in cba league teams, one is through their own youth echelon, amateur sports schools and training clubs, the other is to sign foreign aid, and the third is the draft, but whether through their own youth echelon, amateur sports schools and training clubs, the total number is small, so the selection base is small. The selection of players in nba league teams is mainly through draft, followed by development league. Although the selection channels are less than cba, there are a large number of people engaged in basketball in the United States, and the number of excellent players in ncaa league and development league is enormous, so nba players have a wide range of choices and high quality.

In cba teams, there are more collective training and tactical training, focusing on collective cooperation, which is beneficial to individuals. There is a big gap between cba players' personal ability and nba players' because of less attention to strength, and most teams have no absolute core. In the game, there is no leader, and no one dares to stand up because they are not confident at the critical moment and are afraid of making mistakes. Influenced by American ideology and culture, nba teams attach great importance to personal ability in training, and the division of personal ability training methods is very detailed. Star players will have their own agents, nutritionists and trainers, and trainers are subdivided into physical trainers, ball control trainers, shooting trainers and so on. In some cba teams, these contents are all grasped by coaches, which shows that there is a big gap in training professionalism.

##### **5. The contents of the training system of American basketball players that can be used for reference**

NBA is a professional league with the purpose of business, and its main purpose is to make money. David Stern, the former president of NBA, once said, "My main task is to make money, and if I let the NBA lose money, I can't do it for a day." From 1949, 11 teams made ends meet, and now 30 teams earn more than 3 billion dollars a year, the NBA has gone through more than 60 years of storms and finally entered a golden period of development, regardless of NBA management or clubs.

The transfer system of nba is an important part of their respective professional basketball leagues, and it is also an important measure and system to ensure the stable development and continuous improvement of the league level (Guo, 2018). Through the transfer of players, we can ensure the normal flow of players, so as to maximize the strength of players and realize their own value. At the same time, the cooperation and communication between clubs can be strengthened, so as to make the whole league develop in a healthy direction and realize a virtuous circle. The formulation and implementation of the player transfer system has guaranteed the interests of the team and the players, which is conducive to balancing the strength of each team and greatly improving the level of the league and the wonderful degree of the game.

Although there are not as many channels for selecting players in nba as cba, there are many people engaged in basketball and related undertakings in the United States, and there are huge excellent players to choose from just in the draft, because there are countless schools behind them to transport players for them (Wang, 2017). Nba teams not only attach importance to the competitive ability of the whole team, but also attach great importance to the cultivation of individual ability. Star players often have their own teams, and there are many occupations around the individual players, which can usually be refined into all aspects of his life and training, because this can not only improve the individual ability of players, but also maximize the commercial value of players and bring greater benefits to the league and players (Wu, 2017).

## D. Conclusion

Generally speaking, cba is generally stricter than nba in the daily management of players. This has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is strict discipline, which is conducive to improving athletes' will quality and competitive level. The disadvantage is that players' salaries are low and their mobility is small, especially those in the system, which is not conducive to the balance of the strength of each team in the league and the appreciation and excitement of the game (Tian, 2015). In the selection, the characteristics of cba selection method are wide channels, but few bases and low quality; The characteristics of nba selection method are narrow channels, large base and high quality. In training, the nba is mostly organized in a collective form, focusing on teamwork to cooperate; Nba multi-person training, focusing on personal ability and personal value.

To enhance the development of basketball, the local sports bureau must shift its management approach from relying solely on government investment and administrative intervention to incorporating market mechanisms for resource allocation under national macro-control. The sports administrative department should focus on three main roles: formulating rules and relevant laws and regulations, macro-controlling sports to create a favorable social environment, and providing public goods such as basketball infrastructure. This new management pattern should separate governance from operations, blend state-run and social-run initiatives, and promote socialization and industrialization of basketball. Accelerating the decoupling of state-owned enterprises from professional clubs and forming professional sports leagues will closely link professional basketball with commercialization and maximize the commercial value of the leagues. Although the CBA has multiple channels for player selection, the separation of sports and education hinders teenagers from pursuing professional basketball. To address this, Chairman Yao Ming advocates combining education with sports. The focus should be on expanding the athlete base, emphasizing individual skill development alongside teamwork. Training should become more professional and refined, with specialized trainers for physical conditioning, ball control, shooting, and nutrition. Universities, especially sports colleges, should research improving personal ability training and standardize the certification and assessment of basketball trainers to ensure high-level training and support staff.

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