Comparative Analysis of Basketball Culture between the USA and China

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【Abstract】The American spirit advocates freedom and individualism, as well as Chinese culture emphasizes the discipline and collectivism. I often felt a little confused through the contrast and the cultural analysis of the two countries' basketball, why this collective sport was played so well in the hands of Americans who uphold individualism; while under the influence of collectivism, the sports like basketball which needs cooperation and teamwork have always been a stumbling block on China's way to sports superpower?

American individualism reflected in their opposition to delimit themselves on any group, even when they join a group, they also consider themselves as special individual who kept doing the best efforts to show their ability, we can see that the inner competition is very fierce and everyone is eager to express themselves, even extreme player contradicts the coach; Chinese collectivism requires that all the players give priority to the interests of the collective, even if you are the biggest and most influential players. For the best and biggest interests of the team, everyone was silent, quietly waiting for the day when his talent was uncovered and appreciated, no one dared to challenge the authority of the coach.

【Key Words】 basketball; value; culture; individualism; Confucianism; collectivism
1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Because of a Japanese comic Slam Dunk I have fell in love with the basketball, from my sixth grade to now I have played the basketball for over 15 years. Although I am neither a professional athlete nor a master, the pure love is enough to drive me into obsession. In the Olympic Games and the world championships I cheer for Chinese team, meanwhile I give my applause to the dream team for the picturesque performance and felicitate on their hearty victories. After I have enjoyed the excellent game, I can't help thinking about the inner spirit and the deep cultural background of basketball in China and the United States. In real life and the network I was often involved in the discussions with friends.

The basketball game in China and the United States has a good foundation that more and more young people get into the event, from the perspective of culture and cultural background analysis of basketball in China and the United States this movement, and extend to sporting culture and influence each other. It will be great useful for the culture exchange between U.S and China.

1.2 Purpose

To insight into the developing condition and development prospect of US and Chinese basketball, to understand why the US achieves excellent fruits in basketball games in terms of cultures. Expand the market of basketball in the global.
1.3 Significance

To understand the cultural differences in basketball between US and China. Prompt the deep understanding and exchange between US and China, solve the problems we meet in the process of basketball’ development, and find out a system suitable for self development.

2. The rise and development of basketball in US and China

As is known to all, basketball was originated in the United States, early December of 1891 in Springfield, Massachusetts in the United States. At the international training school of Young Men's Christian Association, the school physical education teachers James Naismith invented basketball in order to solve the problem that Football, baseball was unable to played in the cold outside, which he used the rule of netball for reference.

The US Basketball is a legend in basketball history that the United States men's basketball team was called the dream team who achieved a total of 14 times champion in modern Olympic Games from 1936 to 2012.

China's basketball sport was introduced into China by Tianjin Young Men's Christian Association of China around 1896, soon afterwards then spread into Beijing, Shanghai. On the old Chinese first national games held in 1910 men's basketball was performed for the audience. In the history of the Olympic games, the Chinese men's basketball
team finished joint eighth at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, eighth is also the best grades of the Chinese men's basketball team in the Olympic Games; The 2004 Athens Olympics, the Chinese men's basketball narrowly beat Serbia and Montenegro at critical moment, again broke into the last eight; In 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the Chinese men's basketball team was ranked a third No.8 at home.

The basketball has a broad mass base in both US and China, basketball player has tall and strong body which attracts you. NBA star is household and the union is one of the four major leagues. NCAA also attracts widely attention that the annual March Madness is a national holiday, the Final even drives NBA to make way for it. 2015 NCAA final was held in Indianapolis Lucas oil center which is a comprehensive course that enjoy the total capacity of 70000 people. On that day the arena was packed by a sea of people, atmosphere was even hotter than the NBA finals.

Young people in China also like basketball very much, we talk about the historical air Jordan, Shaquille O'Neal, Allen Iverson, current players like the black mamba kobe Bryant, King James, Kevin Durant, and the hottest Splash Brothers-Clay Thompson and Stephen Curry. Young people imitate the moves of these superstars on the court, dressed in their endorsement sneakers. When these stars came to China, the fans flocked to welcome for their arrivals.

2.2 The characteristics of the basketball in US and China
2.2.1 The characteristics of US basketball

American basketball players are first-class in physical quality, they got speed, strong power, combat ability is strong, the American basketball is not a simple inheritance but bold to create and constant innovation. The emergence of a new attack technology means another a new defense technology springs out, makes its level always been at the forefront of the world basketball. The skills and tactics is not limited to the rigid mode and a pursuit of improvisation and the style of the random make its leading easier. The unique innovation spirit of American culture characteristic is full of cultural atmosphere that advocating personal performance and questioning mind, inspired the players to increase the ability of creating and performance desire. This is one of the main reasons for American basketball hold the lead for a long time. Unique individual character forms unique players who might be proud and insolent because of their talents, extreme players will even fight against the coach.

2.2.2 The characteristics of Chinese basketball

Relatively Chinese basketball players are of thin bodies but good tactical abilities, they perform the arrangements of the coach and the collective obediently. Always attaches great importance to the overall coordination and pursuit of the overall strength, but ignore cultivating athletes who have certain unique characteristics and personality. Especially the whole of China traditional thinking method affected the athletes' creativity and performance for athletes' lack of creativity which is engaged in the basketball movement. Chinese collectivism requires that all the players respect the
priority of the collective interests, every player prepares himself psychologically to sacrifice personal interests even if you are the biggest and most influential player when necessary. For the biggest interests of the team, no one dared to challenge the authority of the coach. Everyone is silent, quietly waiting for the one day his talent was uncovered, appreciated.

3. The characteristics of US and Chinese culture

3.1 Brief analysis of American culture

American culture emphasizes individual value, the pursuit of democracy and freedom, advocating pioneering and competitive, whose core is the individualism that Supremacy of individual rights, supremacy of personal desires, the pursuit of personal interests and personal enjoyment. It stresses that realize the individual value by individual struggle and personal design. It arouse the enthusiasm of the individual to reach people's wisdom and potential, so as to promote the revitalization and development of the whole nation and the country.

The American public notice accomplishment, admire heroes, they have the psychological accumulation of profound achievement worship and heroes worship. Personal achievement is one of the highest value for all American core values. Americans have very strong achievements (or success) consciousness. Success is the pursuit of all Americans, which is tempting prospects and motivation. They believe that a person's value is equal to his achievements in his career. Some successful
entrepreneurs, scientists, artists and all kinds of stars, has become the heroes of a new era.

3.2 Brief analysis of Chinese culture

The characteristics of Chinese culture could be generally classified into four parts: First, the importance of Confucianism; Second, the family ethics; Third, harmony and moderation. Fourth, the importance of collectivism.

The core of Confucianism is conventional hierarchies, to maintain ‘rule by rites’, advocating ‘rule of virtue’, attach importance to ‘benevolence’.

Family ethics requires people to respect elders, care for their relatives, attaches to the the importance of seniority, a strong sense of collective honor.

Chinese culture emphasizes harmony and moderation, which means handle everything in the world by peaceful and rational attitude.

Chinese collectivism requires that all the people in the country respect the priority of the collective interests.

4. The influence of American and Chinese culture to basketball
4.1 The influence of American culture to basketball

American culture's influence on the basketball movement is very huge, typically an American child began his career at about 4 or 5 years old, the league is private and NGO. A few parents who understand the rule can organize a team, the game is fit to the growing children. Then as children grow elder, improve the level of body confrontation, increasing technology and tactics level. Afterward enter into the high school league, even university league where the basketball star is very popular. In this process, the background of individualism culture makes the self-expression consciousness very strong. Everyone is eager to upgrade their own level, to make their own efforts to lead the team to victory, enjoy the praise and recognition from coaches and teammates, which makes the team competition fierce. Everyone is eager to express themselves, this is a constant pursuit of personal value, a good way of improving their ability for competing.

Every player tries their best to go into a higher league, if you are the lucky dog who enters the NBA and signed a contract, that means success, fame and fortune, gradually became a household name hero. Playing basketball in the United States is a very promising job that after retirement the player also have many jobs to do, such as coach, scout or commentator. This is a happy thing that you have been engaged in your beloved career. The process is just the portrayal for pursuit of the individual struggle, personal value.
4.2 The influence of Chinese culture to basketball

In China, the lack of systemic and normative training is obvious that most of the young man's first official game was after they entered high school. Only those who are committed to be a professional basketball player will actively accept training, meanwhile Chinese universities league only transports a few basketball talents for CBA, the basketball player who accepted the professional training end up as a professional basketball player is not a easy thing. China has a huge number of basketball fans, but there are a lot of people don't think basketball is a normal career. Generally speaking China lacks a hotbed as American owned.

Confucianism believes that people should maintain harmonious relations between people instead of being much too offensive. Basketball is not that close to the fundamental values of the Chinese people because of its severity and confrontational, In many amateur competitions in China, ‘friendship first, competition second’ is the most important. Chinese traditional culture attaches great importance to the awareness of ‘home’. Respect the elder, make much account of the smooth and steady. The coach and the ‘big brother’ in the the team have the formidable authority. Everyone is most willing to act as a supporting role, the team is lack of inner competing and the consciousness of against each other.

Chinese collectivism requires that all the players give priority to the interests of the collective, even if you are the biggest and most influential players. For the best and
biggest interests of the team, everyone was silent, quietly waiting for the day when his talent was uncovered and appreciated, no one dared to challenge the authority of the coach.

5. Conclusion

The basketball cultural background lead to different styles of basketball between China and America. A perfect fusion of collectivism and individualism is a good way to release the full power of the collectivism and individualism, can better adapt to the competitive sports. Through exchanges and cooperation in culture, it will be a win-win.

Reference

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