

A Study on the Characteristics and Laws of Basketball Sport Dissemination

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Abstract: The sport of basketball was inaugurated by Dr. James Naismith in Springfield, Massachusetts. On March 11, 1892, the inaugural public basketball match took place in Springfield, Massachusetts. Within the same year, the first set of rules was disseminated by the YMCA Sports Association, facilitating the swift propagation of the sport across Canada and the United States. As the 20th century progressed, the sport experienced rapid proliferation and gained immense popularity, initially within the United States and subsequently across various global regions. Following the establishment of basketball in American universities, professional competitions ensued. This paper aims to delve into the origins and development of basketball, its localized dissemination in China, and its international spread, with the objective of synthesizing and categorizing the patterns and methods of basketball's proliferation.

1. Introduction

In December of 1891, the sport of basketball was conceptualized and brought to fruition by Dr. James Naismith in Springfield, Massachusetts. Dr. Naismith, serving as a physical education instructor at the YMCA International Training School (now Springfield College) located in Springfield, Massachusetts, was tasked, in response to an institutional directive, with the creation of an indoor athletic activity. This initiative was aimed at providing a means for individuals to engage in physical exercise indoors during the winter season. The initial iteration of the game comprised a soccer-style ball and a peach basket, with the primary objective being to throw the ball into a fruit basket affixed to the lower railing of the gymnasium's balcony. Upon each scoring event, the game would come to a temporary halt to allow for the retrieval of the ball with the assistance of a ladder by an administrator. Subsequent modifications led to the removal of the bottom of the peach basket, facilitating continuous play. On March 11, 1892, the first public basketball game took place in Springfield, Massachusetts. Within the same year, the YMCA Sports Association disseminated the inaugural set of rules, propelling the rapid spread of the sport throughout Canada and the United States. The sport made its debut in England at the Birkenhead YMCA following a business trip to Canada by a club president. By 1893, the sport was introduced to Hampstead's Physical Training College (now Dartford Physical Training College) by Ms. Bertha Berman Osterberg, marking its inception in educational institutions. In 1898, the professional basketball league was established in the United States, and by 1911, the sport had gained widespread popularity across the entirety of the

United Kingdom. Basketball made its Olympic debut as a demonstration sport at the 1924 Paris Olympics, with Great Britain clinching the championship title. In 1927, Abe Saperstein became associated with the world-renowned Harlem Globetrotters, further elevating the sport's global profile. The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) was established in 1931, appointing a Welsh individual as its inaugural secretary, marking a significant milestone in the sport's international governance and organization^[1].

The England Basketball Association was established in 1936, a full 13 years prior to the inception of the National Basketball Association (NBA) in the United States. By 1957, the English Schools Basketball Association had been formed. The 1970s saw the introduction of national leagues for both men and women in the United Kingdom, culminating in a total of 219 teams across 16 national leagues by 1999. By 1990, the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) boasted a membership of 117 countries, making basketball the second-largest global governing body and the fastest-growing, most widely participated sport worldwide^[2].

As the 20th century progressed, basketball rapidly spread and gained immense popularity, initially in the United States and subsequently around the globe. Following its establishment in American universities, professional competitions quickly ensued. The NBA, founded in 1946, had evolved into a multi-billion-dollar enterprise by the end of the century, with basketball becoming an integral part of American culture. To date, basketball enjoys a global presence with 212 member countries. In the United Kingdom alone, over half a million individuals regularly participate in recreational basketball, making the inclusion of the sport in school curriculums at all levels increasingly common. The sport is also widely utilized as a community activity, accessible to individuals of all ages and genders.

2. Dissemination of Basketball in China:

2.1. Government and School Promotion of Basketball

In 1910, the Qing government introduced men's basketball for the first time at the "National Collegiate Athletic Meet" in Nanjing, marking the beginning of basketball's expansion across various cities nationwide. Following the demise of the Qing Dynasty, by the 1930s during the Anti-Japanese War period in regions controlled by the Communist Party, basketball had become the most popular recreational activity among the troops. Red Army soldiers frequently engaged in basketball matches at the Jinggangshan revolutionary base. During the final stages of the Long March, Zhu De himself organized basketball games, utilizing balls filled with turf, which notably lacked elasticity. The 17 years following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 represented a period of rapid development for basketball, driven largely by governmental support. This era marked a phase of accelerated dissemination of basketball in China. The government of the time actively promoted a fitness policy encapsulated by the slogan "Develop sports activities, enhance the people's physique," with basketball becoming widely popular due to its simplicity and accessibility. In the early 1950s, governmental authorities established basketball management institutions, advocating for a technical style characterized by being "firm, fast, accurate, and agile." Comrade Mao Zedong further underscored the importance of physical fitness in 1952 at the All-China Sports Federation, calling for the development of sports activities to strengthen the physical constitution of the people, which positively influenced the growth of China's sports sector, including basketball. In the first decade of the new China, basketball was incorporated into physical education curriculums, leading to the establishment of the National Basketball Federation, the league system, and initiatives to train coaching staff^[1].

In the mid-1960s, domestic basketball competitions flourished in China, with a series of basketball tournaments organized by socialist countries' military and police teams. However, the

onset of the Cultural Revolution brought organized competitions to a halt, and it was not until 1972 that they gradually resumed, ushering Chinese athletes onto a larger sporting stage. By 1976, the Chinese National Basketball Association had become a member of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). The late 1990s witnessed a peak in the development of basketball in China. With the establishment of the socialist market economy, basketball experienced profound reforms. China began to overhaul its traditional competition system, initiating home and away games for the top eight men's A-level teams for the first time. In 1997, under government initiative, the Basketball Sports Management Center was established, marking significant progress in China's basketball management system. In addition, the continuous deepening of reforms in the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) league fostered a healthy development of the league, which steadily supplied backup talent for the sport. Following 1998, the launch of college basketball leagues in China, such as the CUBS and CUBA, also played a role in promoting the grassroots development of basketball. These collegiate leagues quickly became the most representative competitions for university students. The proliferation of basketball competitions and training programs conducted by social organizations further spurred the vigorous development of mass basketball, under the dual impetus of government and school leagues. Moreover, the increasing number of basketball research and teaching activities in China paved the way for the further scientific development of the sport^[2].

Initially, basketball's spread in China was heavily influenced by the YMCA, with students being their primary target audience. For instance, the majority of participants in China's first National Sports Meeting basketball event were students, including teams from six universities: St. John's University Shanghai, Tianjin YMCA Day School, Tianjin University of Technology, Wuchang Cultural University, and Hebei Union University. These institutions played a pivotal role in introducing modern basketball into Chinese schools. In summary, after basketball was introduced to China, it merged with local cultural phenomena, gradually adapting to the local environment, and playing specific roles in different historical periods.

2.2. Impact of the National Basketball Association (NBA) on the Dissemination of Basketball in China

Over a century ago, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) undoubtedly had a positive impact on the global dissemination of basketball, gradually popularizing the sport. Similar to the YMCA, the NBA today is renowned for its worldwide presence. Unlike most countries that are economically open to the United States, China has been relatively closed off to American and Western liberal values. Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are blocked, making public diplomacy by the United States to influence Chinese citizens exceedingly challenging. A figurative wall impedes the infiltration of American culture and values. However, the rapid development of American basketball has facilitated the integration of American basketball culture into China, resulting in a mutual blending of Chinese and American basketball.

In the 1990s, the rise of the NBA led to an increasing number of basketball enthusiasts in China, particularly among the youth. The basketball fan base in China continued to grow robustly. In many parts of the world, parks and schools are filled with available fields, and boys playing football are a common sight. However, in China, whether in rural areas or urban communities, the most common recreational facilities tend to be ping-pong tables and basketball hoops. According to a survey conducted in the late 1990s, the participation rate in basketball compared to other sports was 19%, while football was at 11%, indicating that basketball had already far surpassed football in popularity in China. The appeal of basketball may be attributed to its accessibility and ease of learning; anyone can effortlessly engage with the sport. From the onset, the inherent characteristics of a basketball game make it easy for both participants and spectators to embrace, and even though official

basketball matches demand higher standards, the sport remains relatively easy for participants, aligning with Dr. James Naismith's initial vision, both technically and aesthetically. The NBA's expansion of influence in China is, to a certain extent, due to young people's admiration for NBA superstars. Additionally, related consumer products associated with the NBA have entered the Chinese market. Fan-favorite player jerseys, endorsed shoes, basketball bags, and various basketball equipment subtly educate young people about the sport, gradually drawing them into the basketball community. Another crucial factor contributing to basketball's popularity in China is the combination of broadcasting, television, and NBA, which has effectively packaged and promoted the sport. Television broadcasts of NBA games have expanded the league's influence, popularizing basketball across China. Through watching games and reading related basketball information, the general public's understanding and perception of basketball have undergone a transformation. For instance, over the past decade, live broadcasts and recorded games on China Central Television (CCTV), provincial, and local television stations have significantly increased the Chinese people's awareness of the NBA^[3].

The most conspicuous impact on China's basketball views and practices stems from the systematic, long-term, and global marketing strategies orchestrated by former NBA Commissioner David Stern. His efforts have made American basketball and its stars widely recognized across the globe. Contrary to football, which has widespread influence throughout Europe, Latin America, and Africa, basketball primarily owes its global presence and the growing number of world professional men's leagues to the NBA. The NBA has made no secret of its global ambitions. Sometimes, the language of basketball expansionism has even unabashedly taken on an imperialistic tone: "The sun never sets on the NBA," proclaimed an article on the organization's official website. Stern recognized overseas investment as necessary, remarking to American sports journalists a decade ago that "ten years ago, we ran out of room." So far, China has not become a hot destination for live NBA games in Asia. By contrast, since 1990, the league has held a regular-season game in Japan every two years. A youth basketball participation program sponsored by the NBA first took place in Taiwan in March 1998, involving 96 teenagers from eight Taipei high schools. The NBA Jam Session, which the NBA calls its "interactive fan festival," visited Taiwan for several days in August 1999. team of retired NBA "legends," including Moses Malone and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, played four exhibition games in China in the fall of 1998 (the Chinese national team won 3-1). Although China has not become a destination for live NBA games, this has not hindered the sport's popularity in the country. This is largely due to Chinese players successively entering the NBA, with the most notable examples being Wang Zhizhi and Yao Ming. Wang Zhizhi was the first Chinese player to make it to the NBA, selected by the Dallas Mavericks in June 1999. This move was undoubtedly a milestone in the history of Chinese basketball, opening doors for his compatriots to play in the NBA. This, in turn, further propelled the number of Chinese fans watching the NBA, as well as boosting participation in the sport domestically^[4].

2.3. Emergence of the Chinese Professional Basketball League

Influenced by the spread of American basketball culture on the mainland, China began to establish its own local basketball leagues, among which the most notable was the original China National Basketball Association League (CNBA). Unfortunately, this league was short-lived. It commenced in November 1996 with participation from eight teams, representing major cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Fujian, Tianjin, and Jilin. After just one year, the CNBA was forced to cease operations due to an official complaint from the NBA, which claimed that the CNBA was infringing upon its name.

Another influential basketball league is the Chinese Men's Basketball Professional League

(CBA), established in 1995. By 1999, numerous sports companies had established a presence in the mainland, including Adidas, Converse, and others. The rise of basketball also promoted the sales of a series of derivative products, such as basketball shoes. Due to the presence of the CBA league, officials began encouraging the hiring of foreign coaches and players to promote the development of local basketball. For example, during the 1998-1999 season, the Beijing Shougang Men's Basketball Team employed two American players, while the Nanjing team hired one American player and one Russian player. In order to improve local players and attract more foreign players to China, foreign players often receive salaries significantly higher than their local counterparts, in addition to bonuses and rewards^[5].

The advent of the CBA league undoubtedly provided the Chinese people with another avenue to watch basketball, serving as a medium for the spread of the sport. The rise of new media in the 21st century added new luster to the popularization of basketball. People were able to watch CBA broadcasts via radio, television, and even mobile phones. Despite being far from the level of the NBA, the games attracted enthusiastic viewership. With the presence of a local league, and as the league continuously progresses through reforms and development, basketball became a regular highlight in newspapers, sports magazines, and sports columns. CCTV programs like "Basketball Park" and "Basketball Magazine" became focal points of attention. Additionally, the emergence of the CBA facilitated transnational exchanges in basketball; inviting foreign teams to China for friendly matches and exchanges became an important measure to enhance the level of local basketball.

In summary, basketball in China is part of a constantly changing cultural landscape that must be examined from a historical perspective. The sport has been propelled by evolving societal pressures and its place within global cultural, economic, and political interactions, accompanied by the desires and expectations of its citizens.

The progression from the promotion of basketball by the YMCA to the establishment of the domestic league CBA undeniably reflects the transformation of basketball culture. As basketball in China continues to develop, a relatively complete development system has begun to take shape. Since the various components that constitute basketball, such as culture, institutions, organization, and environment, are integral and inseparable, China cannot blindly replicate the models of the United States or other Western countries. Instead, it must rely on its own cultural environment and people, drawing from the basketball systems of developed countries while continuously developing a basketball system characteristic of socialism with Chinese features. For instance, China could learn from the NBA's transfer and draft systems, as well as its integration of sports and education, to establish a diversified basketball player training system. However, given the fundamental differences between China's and the United States' systems, it is unrealistic to expect the CBA to become the NBA. While there is a considerable gap between China's basketball scene and that of leading nations, especially the birthplace of basketball, China's overall development has achieved remarkable results. The support of the country's leaders and policies for basketball has facilitated the rapid development of the sport domestically, and the establishment and development of the CBA league has added to this progress.

In conclusion, the development of basketball in China should refer to the paths practiced by Western countries. At the same time, we need to acknowledge the overall current state of basketball in China and accelerate the process of basketball reform.

3. International Dissemination

Basketball primarily spread throughout the United States via organizations such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the armed forces, and universities including Yale, Harvard,

Princeton, and Cornell, which were among the first to form college basketball teams. By 1898, basketball leagues had started forming across the country, with the National Basketball League (NBL) being one of the earliest. Over the years, other leagues such as the American Basketball League (ABL) and the American Basketball Association (ABA) were established. The National Basketball Association (NBA) was founded in 1949, emerging from the merger of the NBL (founded in 1898) and the BBA (founded in 1946).

In 1917, Dr. James Naismith, the inventor of basketball, personally went to France to promote the sport, teaching its rules and methods. The 1919 Inter-Allied Games in France introduced basketball to soldiers from other countries. During the World Wars, soldiers from European countries further spread the game globally, positively impacting basketball's worldwide dissemination. The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) was established in Geneva in 1932, promoting basketball worldwide and organizing the first World Cup in 1935. The establishment of the NBA in 1949 furthered basketball's global reach and popularity, making it one of the world's most beloved sports. By the time the NBA began its international expansion, almost every country already had its own basketball leagues^[8].

3.1. The Role of YMCA in Global Basketball Dissemination

The basketball sport, established in 1891 by James Naismith, a Canadian educator at the YMCA in the United States, quickly spread to gymnasiums of communities of all sizes. Following its inception, the sport was swiftly exported outside North America by other YMCA educators, playing a part in the organization's mission to build character and promote moral values.

The YMCA played a significant role in spreading basketball to the United States, Canada, and around the world. In 1893, Melvin Rideout, who had been influenced by Naismith, introduced the sport in France. The first game on European soil took place in December of that year at the new YMCA building on Rue de Trévise in Paris, which now houses the world's oldest original basketball court. Basketball then spread across the African continent and laid deep roots in Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and Russia. The sport was introduced to South America in 1894, becoming particularly popular in Brazil^[6].

In 1895, YMCA missionaries brought the game to the treaty ports of China, such as Shanghai and Tianjin, and to Australia two years later. In the Philippines, locals enthusiastically watched games played by American colonial troops and administrators until basketball was introduced into the school system in 1910. When World War I broke out in 1914, and the American army began fighting in Europe in 1917, the American Expeditionary Forces took basketball wherever they went, greatly aiding the sport's global movement. Hundreds of physical education teachers who knew basketball also joined the expedition.

The sport's success was due to its ease of play and its perception as a healthy, non-violent activity. However, the two world wars helped to popularize basketball among a broader audience. The YMCA and the American Red Cross organized basketball games for off-duty and demobilized soldiers during World War I, endearing the sport to people of all nationalities. They separated the sport from its Protestant YMCA roots, seeing in the vigorous play of young men an embodiment of youth, strength, and vitality. The American Red Cross later helped to implement the sport in Central and Eastern Europe, further popularizing it.

By the 1930s, basketball had become China's de facto national sport, and Chinese coaches further popularized the game while training and coaching teams in neighboring countries such as Cambodia. The liberation of occupied Europe, Africa, and Asia by the Allies in 1944-1945 only reinforced basketball's "cool" image, even though it lacked the widespread popularity and commercial appeal of football (soccer) in most parts of the world^[7].

In conclusion, the YMCA played a foundational role in spreading basketball worldwide. Despite the lack of rapid information dissemination through new media over a century ago, word-of-mouth was sufficient to popularize the sport. During the world wars, basketball served as a form of leisure, solidifying the YMCA's pioneering role in the global spread of basketball.

3.2. The Establishment of the NBA and the Global Spread of Basketball

The establishment of professional basketball leagues in the United States in the mid-1940s was spurred by two trends: the country's wartime enthusiasm for the sport and the need to fill often-empty arenas. When the National Basketball Association (NBA) was finally formed in 1946, scouts, coaches, and owners were more focused on solvency and survival than on seeking out top talent from the growing pool of international players. Early league rosters weren't completely devoid of international player representation; in 1946, the first foreign-born NBA player was Hank Biasatti, and the first player was drafted from overseas in the 1950s. However, it wasn't until 1984 that the first European-born and trained player, Hervé Dubuisson from France, donned an NBA jersey with the New Jersey Nets, paving the way for an influx of international players into the league.

The birth of basketball in America, along with the NBA's further globalization of the sport, laid the groundwork for the spread of basketball worldwide. In the 1980-81 season, when only 7 of the NBA's 23 franchises were profitable, the league faced a crisis. New commissioner David Stern implemented drastic measures, including establishing a robust anti-drug policy, building collective bargaining between owners and players, and enforcing a salary cap. Coupled with the emergence of a new generation of star players led by Magic Johnson and Larry Bird, these changes signaled the league's potential for renewed prosperity. The NBA rose to prominence through innovative and revolutionary means, as league administrators creatively utilized the expanding channels of media under the guidance of Commissioner David Stern, revitalizing the image and popularity of the sport. Stern had a clear understanding that American culture had become a "society of the image," and his goal was to transform the NBA into one of the popular commodity symbols that had come to replace tangible economic goods. This was achieved through a proactive reorganization of the NBA, transforming it from its original state as a professional sports industry into a diversified marketing and entertainment conglomerate consisting of over 20 departments, including NBA Properties, NBA Entertainment, NBA International, and NBA Ventures.

By the mid-1980s and early 1990s, the NBA had redefined itself to the extent that it could legitimately market itself as "a quintessentially American pastime, as mainstream as baseball." The growth in total revenue for the NBA came from ticket sales, television contracts, corporate sponsorships, and retail of licensed merchandise. Quantitatively, the NBA's total revenue skyrocketed from \$110 million in the early 1980s to well over \$1 billion by the end of the 1993-94 season. However, for very pragmatic reasons, the NBA was compelled to venture into worlds and markets outside of the United States.

In the early 1990s, the NBA officials realized that after nearly a decade of expansion, the domestic market in the United States was almost saturated. If the NBA wanted to continue its growth, it was imperative to tap into overseas basketball markets. Don Sperling, the director of NBA Entertainment, expressed in 1991, "Looking at the NBA product in terms of game attendance, television viewership, and retail amounts, there is a visible stagnation in growth. Additionally, NBA Commissioner David Stern issued a warning: "In today's economic landscape, both in the United States and globally, you must continually reassess your business strategies. To attract your target audience and maintain a positive growth trajectory, you must relentlessly push forward and globalize your perspective, or face a potential decline." Recognizing the need to sustain its spiraling economic model, the NBA understood that venturing into international markets was crucial. As

Stern put it, "There are 250 million potential NBA fans in the United States, and 5 billion outside of it. We like those numbers."^[9]

To facilitate its transnational operations, the league established an overseas branch, NBA International. The personnel at NBA International were experts in business, marketing, and international relations, with the mission to mobilize media and merchandise distribution to cultivate talent. The primary goal was to expand the league's global presence, thereby increasing revenue from international broadcasts of games and licensed products. NBA International built its organizational structure around regional offices in Geneva, Barcelona, Melbourne, Hong Kong, Mexico City, and Miami, negotiating television and licensing merchandise deals through these hubs. In terms of television contracts, most deals were signed with national networks of various countries, such as the recent 54-game contract with Mexico's TV Azteca. The NBA also signed numerous strategically important regional agreements with satellite and cable distributors like Star, ESPN International, and Sky Sport. In sum, the finals in 1995 were broadcasted in 160 countries and regions.

Moreover, the television coverage sold by NBA International paved the way for derivative products. For instance, in the late 1980s, Nike utilized its most famous basketball athlete, Michael Jordan, for promotional advertisements, cultivating global recognition through the widespread distribution of commercials, thereby preparing the ground for increased sales. This undoubtedly amplified the global influence of NBA superstars, adding value to the NBA's official merchandise. Serving as the largest source of overseas market revenue, the global retail total neared \$300 million during the 1993-94 season. The worldwide circulation of NBA-licensed merchandise created a connection between the masses and the NBA, mutually reinforcing each other through the distribution of hats, T-shirts, jackets, and various other products, all showcasing one or more popular symbols of the league, thus becoming an essential promotional tool for the league^[10].

Another strategy that the NBA employed to spread its influence overseas was to host local NBA games in other countries. For example, the NBA held games in Japan five times during the 1990s, but there have been no official NBA games in Japan since 2004. Notably, since Chinese basketball star Yao Ming signed with the Houston Rockets in 2002, the NBA has shifted its main Asian target market from Japan to China, attracted by China's massive population and the potential for greater profits. For instance, an NBA game in China (between the Houston Rockets and the Sacramento Kings) was held for the first time during the 2004 preseason. Subsequently, the NBA China Games were also held in 2007 and 2008. In addition, in 2007, the NBA established NBA China.

NBA Commissioner David Stern confirmed that despite the overall decline in profits from Japan, the strong Chinese economy made China a more lucrative market. He commented that the NBA had signed television broadcasting rights contracts with 51 Chinese television stations, which would potentially own the Chinese Basketball League in the future. He also pointed out, "Broadcasting NBA games worldwide has increased the number of foreign players in the NBA and has influenced the development of local basketball leagues, emphasizing that the globalization of the NBA is a positive phenomenon." He believed that globalization had promoted the development of the NBA and basketball worldwide. Furthermore, Stern also planned to own Chinese and European leagues and deepen cooperation between the NBA and NFL to continue improving the NBA. He started to explore overseas markets in the late 1980s and formulated a successful growth strategy for the NBA. However, if the NBA took over teams from the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA), the CBA might become a farm system for the NBA in the future. Just as Major League Baseball operates baseball leagues in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela as farm systems due to recruiting elite talent, the NBA could potentially disrupt local leagues in Asia and Europe. Therefore, the NBA needs to focus on maintaining harmonious relationships with local leagues^[10].

The establishment and development of the NBA have significantly contributed to the global

spread and development of basketball, paralleling the efforts of the YMCA a century ago. Basketball has been popularized on a massive scale worldwide, thanks in large part to the NBA's establishment and growth strategies. However, unlike the YMCA, the NBA has benefited from a new historical context, with the rapid dissemination of the sport, particularly through new media such as television, mobile phones, and radio. The NBA's global basketball marketing strategies and the emergence of basketball superstars have added countless fans to the sport.

3.3. International Basketball Federation (FIBA) and Global Basketball Promotion

The International Basketball Federation (FIBA), established in Geneva, Switzerland in 1932, serves as the leading authority in global basketball, uniting 213 national basketball federations worldwide. Recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the sole governing body for basketball, one of FIBA's key missions is to promote the sport of basketball on a global scale. FIBA plays a crucial role in developing and promoting basketball, updating and revising the Official Basketball Rules, standardizing basketball equipment and facilities, organizing referees for the Olympics, facilitating the transfer of players between countries, and overseeing the organization of all international competitions. FIBA's premier tournaments are the FIBA Basketball World Cup and the FIBA Women's World Cup, held every four years. In addition to overseeing basketball competitions in the Olympic Games and Olympic qualifying tournaments, FIBA continues to promote and develop 3x3 basketball through various competitions worldwide, culminating in the inclusion of 3x3 basketball in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. FIBA's global outreach is further enhanced through partnerships with major sportswear brands such as Adidas, Nike, and Converse. Recently, FIBA announced a new multi-year partnership with Nike, making the brand an official partner for products and marketing across FIBA's flagship competitions, including the FIBA Basketball World Cup. As FIBA's supplier and strategic partner, Nike aims to promote and develop basketball worldwide, holding exclusive category marketing rights for FIBA events beyond the Basketball World Cup. Craig Zanon, Vice President and General Manager of Nike Global Basketball, expressed excitement about the partnership, emphasizing Nike's commitment to leveraging its unparalleled global influence to foster player development and inspire fans around the world. Beyond brand partnerships, FIBA is also utilizing modifications to its qualification system to foster the global popularity of basketball. A significant overhaul of the ranking system announced on the FIBA website will result in more frequent international play for national teams, with up to 1,200 international games taking place during the FIBA Basketball World Cup. For fans, this means more opportunities to see their national teams compete in major FIBA competitions. Lin Ning, Vice President of Global Basketball Marketing, highlighted the victory for basketball fans worldwide, anticipating that the increased schedule and renewed focus on international play will help fans connect the energy and inspiration of their national teams and players. FIBA plays a proactive role in promoting basketball, facilitating international exchange, and mutual learning between countries. Each country's basketball style, influenced by local culture, institutions, and environment, varies, and FIBA's world championships undoubtedly provide a platform for global basketball exchange and mutual learning. This not only promotes the collective progress of basketball skills across nations but also makes an indelible contribution to the global spread of basketball.

Basketball's global dissemination can be traced back to its initial spread by missionaries from the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), laying the groundwork for the sport's worldwide popularity. Furthermore, the establishment of the National Basketball Association (NBA) has accelerated the global spread of basketball. The emergence of television and a new business model in the 1990s directed the NBA's attention to overseas markets. Television has introduced more people to basketball, encouraging participation in the sport. The NBA has also marketed its

derivative products worldwide, such as apparel featuring basketball stars. Additionally, by incorporating overseas players, the NBA has strengthened connections between basketball in other countries and the American professional league. The emergence of star players representing various countries has further amplified basketball's global reach, attracting individuals who previously had no interest in the sport.

The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) has played a vital role in promoting basketball worldwide, spreading the sport through standardized rules, and organizing world-class competitions, thus fostering coordinated development of basketball skills across different countries.

4. Laws of Basketball Dissemination

Basketball's rise to prominence can be attributed to the efforts of its creator, Dr. James Naismith, in the 19th century. The sport spread globally through the YMCA, gradually reaching all corners of the world with the help of the American Expeditionary Force during World War I. Throughout World War II, basketball served as a recreational activity for soldiers. In the thirty years following World War II, basketball's status rose significantly in both the United States and internationally. The invention of television deepened global interest in the sport, and the advent of cable TV in the 1980s led to explosive growth at all levels. The NBA, coupled with the rise of social media in the 21st century, has significantly increased basketball's global popularity.

4.1. From the YMCA to the International Basketball Federation (FIBA)

The sport of basketball, invented by James Naismith in December 1891, spread rapidly within a decade through educators from the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), reaching France, Brazil, China, and Australia. By 1914, it had expanded further to countries including Russia, Argentina, Belgium, Spain, and Italy. The early pattern of dissemination highlighted a human-centered approach to spreading the sport. For instance, the YMCA organized missionaries to introduce basketball in France, China, India, Japan, and Persia in 1893. The two World Wars further popularized the sport, as young missionaries in various countries played a significant role in spreading basketball, using it as a form of recreation and physical exercise for soldiers.

The YMCA played a crucial role in the early global dissemination of basketball, laying the groundwork for the establishment of national basketball associations in various countries. The advent of cable television in the early 1990s facilitated the comprehensive global popularization of basketball. Influenced by the NBA, countries established their own basketball leagues, contributing to the global development of the sport.

4.2. The Rise of the NBA Accelerates Global Basketball Dissemination

The emergence of the NBA brought forth a wave of outstanding players, significantly contributing to the development of basketball worldwide. Specifically:

1) **Brand Partnerships:** Players collaborated with major brands such as Nike and Adidas, helping to spread these brands globally and imbuing them with basketball's value.

2) **Development of International Players:** The presence of basketball superstars has facilitated the growth of players from other countries, enriching their knowledge and skills in basketball.

3) **Inspiring Participation:** The emergence of these superstars has motivated people worldwide to participate in the sport. For example, the entry of Chinese players like Wang Zhizhi, Yao Ming, and Yi Jianlian into the NBA has made basketball one of the most popular sports in China. This pattern of international players joining the NBA is common in other countries as well. According to the FIBA Migration Report, during the 2018 NBA Draft (both the first and second rounds), a larger

number of international players were selected, with 11 out of 14 drafted players making their way into the NBA afterwards.

This narrative outlines the significant role of the YMCA, NBA, and individual players in the rapid dissemination of basketball across the globe, highlighting the sport's evolution and the factors contributing to its widespread popularity.

4.3. Subsection Titles

In the 21st century, the advent of social media has significantly increased the popularity of basketball. To illustrate, the NBA's official Twitter account boasts more followers (13.8 million) than both the National Football League (NFL) with 10.8 million followers and Major League Baseball (MLB) with 4.3 million followers. Social media also plays a crucial role in engaging NBA fans across different countries.

An analysis conducted by Forbes last year on the world's highest-paid athletes revealed that among the top 100 athletes, 18 were basketball players with a combined follower count of over 150 million on Facebook. The NBA's recent games held in Mexico City, Shanghai, and Barcelona serve to establish an international fan base, promising an increase in revenue. In 2017, the NBA announced a record-breaking recruitment of 108 international players.

The NBA integrates social media, community engagement, mobility, and streaming, ensuring that geography is never a barrier to becoming a fan. For this reason, the league was an early adopter of social media, allowing players to share their personal interests and connect with fans worldwide. The emergence of social media has undoubtedly facilitated the global dissemination of basketball.

4.4. Main Modes of Basketball Dissemination Worldwide

Basketball has primarily spread across the world through six main modes:

1) **Missionary Work:** In the 19th century, missionaries from churches played a pivotal role in spreading basketball globally, establishing its presence in various regions.

2) **Formation of Sports Organizations:** The establishment of sports organizations in different countries led to more widespread dissemination. A prime example is the NBA, which promoted its brand through merchandise endorsed by its stars, gradually expanding from the United States to the rest of the world.

3) **Event Broadcasting:** The broadcasting of basketball games and tournaments has helped to popularize the sport globally.

4) **Corporate Partnerships:** Partnerships with major brands and corporations have played a significant role in promoting basketball.

5) **New Media:** The advent of new media, particularly social media, has greatly increased the sport's visibility and accessibility.

6) **Player Migration:** The movement of players, especially international players joining the NBA, has fostered global interest and participation in basketball.

In summary, the dissemination of basketball has evolved over time, reflecting a shift from person-to-person transmission to a more widespread and multifaceted approach, driven by advancements in technology and media. The sport's global popularity is a testament to its ability to adapt and thrive in a changing world.

In summary, the dissemination of basketball comprises these six main modes shown in Table 1. From the sport's inventor to the emergence of influential basketball leagues and the advent of new media technologies, the methods of spreading basketball have evolved and diversified.

Table 1: Modes of Basketball Dissemination Worldwide

Mode of Dissemination	Description
Inventor's Spread	Canadian James Naismith invented basketball in 1891 in Springfield, Massachusetts. Naismith, a 31-year-old graduate student at the time, created this indoor sport to keep athletes active during the winter. Initially popularized in the United States, basketball eventually spread worldwide.
Influential Leagues' Spread	Basketball leagues such as FIBA and the NBA have played a crucial role in globalizing the sport. FIBA promotes basketball through organizing international tournaments, while the NBA focuses on brand promotion for international outreach. These leagues attract more viewers through annual major basketball events, contributing to the sport's global popularity.
Event Broadcasting	Large-scale sporting events like the Asian Games, the Olympic Games, and the European Games serve as platforms to broadcast intense basketball matches, helping to spread the sport.
Corporate Dissemination	The NBA collaborates with numerous global corporate sponsors and partners, including major international brands like Adidas, Nike, and Converse. These partnerships enhance basketball's visibility worldwide and contribute to the sport's popularity.
New Media	The rise of mobile internet has provided significant opportunities for promoting basketball, enhancing the value of sports events before, during, and after the game. With technological innovation, social media has become an essential tool in the modern business world, playing a crucial role in basketball promotion.
Migration Dissemination	Historically, individuals and groups proficient in basketball have taken the sport to other countries and regions. For example, during World Wars I and II, wherever the U.S. expeditionary forces went, basketball spread. Similarly, YMCA missionaries brought basketball to China.

5. Purpose of Dissemination

5.1. Adaptation to Weather Conditions

In December 1891, college professor James Naismith faced a unique challenge. His students were confined indoors due to the winter season, brimming with energy but lacking an outlet for it. Playing soccer or baseball was too cold, and these sports were too dangerous to be played inside a gymnasium. Consequently, the school tasked Naismith with inventing a new indoor sport. The initial intention behind the creation of basketball was to provide a form of exercise that could be engaged in during the long winter months. At the time, many sporting activities were exclusively outdoor pursuits, and basketball fulfilled the need for an indoor option. This adaptability to indoor play led to the rapid spread of basketball in the New England region and subsequently throughout the rest of the United States. By 1896, enough colleges had formed teams to hold the first intercollegiate games, albeit with only five players on each team due to the smaller size of most gymnasiums. Two years later, the first professional basketball league was organized, and facilities began to emerge nationwide to accommodate the dozens of teams that had been established. In summary, basketball initially spread as a means of facilitating indoor exercise, offering a sporting option during harsh winter conditions.

5.2. Dissemination for Entertainment during World Wars

International students who had learned the sport of basketball gradually brought it back to their

home countries, and physical educators from the YMCA began introducing the sport to other parts of the world. However, it was during the World Wars that the U.S. military played a significant role in accelerating the global spread of basketball. For instance, World War I began in 1914, and U.S. forces joined the conflict in 1917. By that time, there were many physical educators in the military, and basketball had become a popular activity among U.S. troops. As they were deployed across Europe and other parts of the world, they brought basketballs with them, playing the game during their downtime. As people in other countries and regions witnessed the sport, its popularity grew worldwide. Additionally, during World War II, basketball saw further dissemination, partly because soldiers used the sport as a form of recreation and entertainment. Wherever the war spread, traces of basketball could be found, making it an important tool for leisure among soldiers. The entertaining nature of basketball contributed to its spread during these tumultuous times.

5.3. Dissemination for Positive Impact of Basketball

People generally believe that sports have a positive impact on many individuals. The sports industry worldwide is growing, especially basketball, which is second only to soccer. The global popularity of basketball is undeniable, especially among the youth. Basketball is a dynamic team sport that involves alternating, active, and skillful physical activities. There are composite demands that blend individual skills, teamwork, strategy, and motivation. For example, studies have shown that boys and girls participating in basketball learn certain positive character traits. Due to their involvement in the sport, their school attendance improves, they perform better academically, and there is a decrease in violent conflicts and dropout rates. Additionally, in the NBA, teams exhibit nationalism in their cities. Each city has a team representing them in the national basketball league. This, in turn, brings about healthy competition, paving the way for socialization, support, and unity among individuals. NBA players can have a positive impact on individuals and even entire countries. ESPN believes that NBA player Jeremy Lin has the ability to expand basketball extensively in China. This is due to Lin's demonstrated scoring ability and leadership while leading the struggling New York Knicks to a resurgence, encouraging those involved in the sport to cultivate a team spirit and a never-give-up attitude towards life.

5.4. Dissemination to Cater to Media Development

Today, with the rapid development of modern science and technology, the ways of news dissemination have changed. Internet media plays the same role as traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers. As the media form with the greatest potential for development in sports and cultural exchanges, its timeliness, convenience, and increasing advantages have been demonstrated in public forums. In the process of sports culture dissemination, the internet has become a new important force in media. The influence of this process on sports news dissemination is both positive and negative. We should face both sides directly, improve the positive aspects, and avoid the negative ones to achieve overall health in sports culture exchanges. In basketball, the rapid growth of interest in the sport is inseparable from the development of the internet. As more and more households have access to broadcasting and television, media coverage of sports events like basketball has increased dramatically. In fact, television media has contributed the most to the transformation of basketball. Media has shaped the public's perception of basketball, and through media, people seem to have developed a deeper interest in the sport. For instance, a study showed that media coverage in the NBA increased the number of fans for teams, primarily due to the invention of television and other technological advancements trying to bring games and players into homes. Enthusiasts of the sport can enjoy the entertainment of basketball games in their own homes. Media indeed extended basketball games to the international stage, and countries now have

established their own leagues, which are actually competing with American leagues such as the NBA and CBA. Various forms of media have created such an audience for basketball in these countries, and despite the established leagues, players in these leagues are competing with the NBA. Although they may not have acquired the best players yet, the growth of these leagues shows the potential to reach NBA standards.

6. The Global Spread of Basketball

The worldwide spread of basketball cannot be separated from the initial efforts of the sport's inventor and the members of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to popularize the sport globally. One of the reasons why the sport was not widely promoted initially is because it was spread from single or multiple points, resulting in a relatively scattered dissemination. Therefore, during the first few decades of basketball's development, the spread of the sport was not very rapid. However, during the First and Second World Wars, basketball began to spread more widely, thanks to the expeditionary forces bringing the sport wherever they went. At that time, basketball served as a form of leisure and was also used as a diplomatic tool, as exemplified by the basketball games between the United States and China in the 1970s. This further enhanced the global spread of basketball. In addition, the emergence of modern new media has made the spread of basketball almost unimpeded. The use of electronic devices such as TVs, computers, and mobile phones has added momentum to the spread of the sport. The National Basketball Association (NBA) in the United States and the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) have also played a positive guiding role in the spread of basketball.

6.1. The Spread Effect of YMCA

After basketball was invented by James Naismith in December 1891, it quickly spread to France, Brazil, China, and Australia within a decade through educators from the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). It further expanded to countries such as Russia, Argentina, Belgium, and Spain. At that time, the sport was considered an ideal form of physical and moral training for young men and women. Therefore, basketball was welcomed by schools and youth organizations in the United States and elsewhere. Although the game was established in the early 20th century, especially in North America where it was played in high schools and colleges, it had not yet been widely adopted globally. However, because graduates from YMCA schools traveled extensively, basketball spread in a multi-point fashion around the world during this period, laying the foundation for improved dissemination effects in the future. Moreover, Naismith freely disseminated the rules of the sport, and because there was a need for a simple game that could be played in winter, those who came into contact with the sport quickly accepted and spread it, leading to an increase in basketball games. For example, Forrest "Phog" Allen, one of the first great basketball coaches trained by Naismith, served Naismith at the University of Kansas and went on to win 711 games in Kansas. The relatively large number of games played during that time also increased the potential for the sport's dissemination.

6.2. Basketball's Spread during World Wars

During the World Wars, basketball not only served as a form of entertainment and unity for people amidst conflict, but it was also used as an auxiliary sport for the rehabilitation and healing of the wounded. Whenever time and conditions allowed, soldiers and staff often played basketball. For example, during the First World War, when the British and French empires arrived in northern France, people from different cultural backgrounds mingled together, and they watched and actively

participated in basketball games during their rest periods. This shows that the World Wars, to a certain extent, enhanced the spread of basketball. Additionally, in the years leading up to the First World War, the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States and the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (the precursor to the NCAA) were in a dispute over control of the game's rules. The first professional league, the National Basketball League, was established in 1898 with the purpose of protecting players from exploitation and promoting a less rough game. This league only lasted for six years, but it played a significant role in helping to standardize basketball rules and laid the groundwork for the wider dissemination of the sport^[8].

6.3. The Impact of Basketball Diplomacy on the Sport's Spread

Basketball diplomacy was once considered a "link" that could ease relations between countries, and it paved the way for the further spread of basketball worldwide. For example, over 30 years ago, the Washington Bullets, the champions of the American Basketball Association, visited China at the invitation of Deng Xiaoping, becoming the first NBA team to visit China in history. This visit witnessed the normalization of Sino-US relations and boosted the spread of basketball to a certain extent. Additionally, after North Korea's third nuclear test in February 2013, which strained relations with the United States, some media boldly speculated that the United States sent NBA star Dennis Rodman for "basketball diplomacy" to ease tensions between the two countries. Using basketball for international diplomacy undoubtedly made the sport more popular worldwide. The media's coverage of diplomatic activities deepened people's understanding and emphasis on the sport. There have been many successful instances of basketball diplomacy in history. Indirectly, basketball diplomacy has also served as a medium for spreading the sport, helping to popularize it worldwide.

6.4. The Impact of Basketball Diplomacy on the Sport's Spread

The advancement and development of media technology have greatly influenced the ways in which people, groups, and companies communicate. Mass media channels such as radio, television, and the internet are among the more popular media channels used for communication with large audiences. However, in recent years, social media has become a major channel for communication with a broad audience. Nowadays, social media is utilized by millions of people and businesses around the world. Social media has had a special impact on professional sports teams and fans, changing the way professional sports leagues communicate and stay connected with fans worldwide. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter provide professional sports teams with opportunities to increase brand awareness and fan engagement. For sports fans, social media has become a channel to stay connected with their favorite sports teams and athletes. According to "Sports Fans 2.0" by David M. Suter, "Twitter alone has over 100 million active users globally, producing nearly 230 million tweets per day." The emergence of new media has had a positive impact on the effective spread of basketball. For example, the Women's National Basketball Association and the NBA both invest in social media platforms to maintain interaction with fans. Additionally, according to data from the website Fan Sports Graph (Sauer, 2010), the total number of Facebook and Twitter followers of the National Basketball Association (NBA) exceeds 6.7 million. The article explains that the NBA allows teams to create and control their own social media platforms and online content, while the league has established centralized policies that all teams must follow (Sauer, 2010). Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, said, "The players are smart and understand the value of social media, and the league has been able to leverage it." (Sauer, 2010). Sauer stated that the NBA's Facebook page influenced fans to watch over 1 billion videos on nba.com, a 45% increase compared to the 2008-2009 season. In addition, Facebook also helped

increase the audience for televised games (Sauer, 2010)^[11].

7. Conclusions

From its origins to its development, the characteristics of basketball's spread have continually changed. Depending on the historical context, the channels, methods, purposes, and means of spread have varied. From the initial spread through churches, to its spread during the World Wars, its spread during diplomatic periods, and the emergence of new media, basketball has experienced a widespread transition from a localized to a global presence, illustrating an increase in both the effectiveness and speed of its spread. This paper analyzes the characteristics of the spread of basketball based on existing literature and research available. The data and resources may be limited, and given the space constraints, it is hoped that further supplementation and enrichment will be made in future research.

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