

Research on the Performance Management of Chinese University Football Teams: Based on the Qualitative Perspective of Coaches

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the performance management of Chinese university football teams.

Methods: We used the explanatory research paradigm to conduct in-depth interviews with 15 Chinese college football team coaches and administrators, which was the main source of empirical data.

Results: Coaches and administrators gave a holistic description of the performance planning, implementation and evaluation of college sports teams. They found that class management affects the systematic development of football team training; there is a contradiction between learning and training; the competition management is not in place; a lack of funds, medical care, etc.

Conclusion: The results show that using the balanced scorecard method to evaluate the performance management of university sports teams can improve the performance management of sports teams, this includes listening to the voice of the players, meeting the needs of the players, and focusing on the health, welfare and sustainable performance of the players.

Key words: university football teams; performance management; qualitative research

1.INTRODUCTION

The advent of the knowledge economy has substantially improved sports science and culture, and brought new opportunities to develop competitive sports in China (Liu, 2014). Israel (2022) pointed out that the development of sports talents

needs an environment to train young people with sports potential to become talents. The development of sports cannot be separated from education. The combination of competitive sports and higher education will enable China to succeed as a world class competitive sports power and is the inevitable

trend of its historical development. The future sustainable development of competitive sports in China should follow the aforementioned general trends (Wen, 1997). The establishment of sports teams and the training of sports talents in China's colleges and universities is important to measure the trend of competitive sports and plays a significant role in promoting the sustainable development of competitive sports in China (Zhang et al., 2022). Cultivating athletes at a highly competitive level and with high cultural quality in higher education institutes is a strategic measure for China to train excellent sports talents in various forms, through diverse channels and at different levels (Zhong, 2020). Since 1987, when the State Education Commission initially established 51 universities to recruit high-level student athletes, high-level sports teams in Chinese universities have been developed from scratch and continued to grow (Hong & Zhou, 2013). The football programme was one of the earliest projects launched by high-level sports teams in universities as a way for China to explore and improve the overall level of football. As such, it has an important mission (Li et al., 2020).

The achievement of constructing football teams in Chinese universities is certainly worthy of recognition (Jinxia & Mangan, 2001). However, it is undeniable that the level of the overall development of these teams is not high, and the purpose of universities in developing them is to achieve good results in provincial or Chinese college student competitions, which is far from the original intention of the football teams piloted by the State Education Commission (Su et al., 2018). There are currently many problems with the operation mechanism and management of Chinese universities' football teams, leading to the inability to cultivate "high level" outstanding young athletes. Hence, there is an urgent need to identify the problems that exist in the current

management model and replace it with an innovative management structure that can succeed in producing high-quality Chinese university football teams (Meng et al., 2018). According to Sanderson (2001), performance management was applied by enterprises in western countries in the early stages as a modern management tool that shifted the focus from results to process management and then developed into a combination of results and processes. Developmental Performance Management (Greene et al., 2022), which integrates organizational strategic goals and key stakeholders, has been widely used and developed in different fields, and an endless stream of relevant theoretical frameworks, empirical research and practical results have emerged from it (Huang, 2018).

Performance management is a relatively mature management method, which is well-suited to the management of college football teams (Dries, 2013). This is not only an advanced management concept, which is conducive to improving the overall level and sustainable development of Chinese college football teams, but it can improve them from a new perspective. Kodi and Kumar (2021) argue that performance management is important in identifying strengths and weaknesses to improve efficiency. However, attention should be paid to the way the concept of performance concept is applied because it is a complex mechanism that is based on the interweaving and integration of various ideas and methods (Sonnenwald & Pierce, 2000). The evaluation of the performance management of members of an organization needs to be systematic and comprehensive because it is not only focused on their current performance, but also their potential future sustainable development (Hristov et al., 2021). Hence, they are objectively required to become dynamic (Progressive) individuals (Bao, 2012). At the same time, performance management pays

attention to the echelon construction of the team, and requires different members to be regularly trained in a planned way (Li et al., 2018). This management concept is based on organizations' overall strategy and the driving force that propels them to maintain sustainable development (Liu & Cheng, 2018). As such, it has incomparable advantages to other management modes when it is applied to university football teams (Yang, 2005).

According to the current research results, performance management is applied to relatively few university sports teams, and there are even fewer related studies (Stanton & Nankervis, 2011). This paper attempts to fill the gap in the research of this field by establishing performance management measures and solutions under the background of a Chinese culture college campus football team. In constructing a team performance management system, the study attempts to determine if this is an appropriate management mode to manage the campus football team (Carlsson-Wall et al., 2016). The main purpose of the research is to examine the management status of Chinese university football teams, explore the main factors that affect the management of these teams, and propose some effective implementation strategies to manage their performance.

2.THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1 Team Effectiveness Theory

When researchers first began to explore the development of teams' performance, their main focus was on the satisfaction of team members and their psychological changes (Pescosolido, 2003). Fung (2014) proposed that the teams' satisfaction and the degree of team efficiency referred to the cohesion of team members and their ability to take action, as well as their enthusiasm and attitude toward work. The team's output is derived from the

hard work of the team members to achieve their goal; in other words, the team's success is the result of the team members' efforts (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2003). A team's performance changes dynamically with the passion of team members or the internal and external environment (Stone & Veloso, 1999). According to Mathieu et al. (2015), the mode of operation of team efficiency consists of input, process and output.

2.2 Balances Scorecard Theory

Ax and Bjørnenak (2005) proposed that, to some extent, the balanced scorecard (BSC) represents trendy management ideas that include evaluation, management and communication. Zanon et al. (2021) believed that the emergence of the BSC effectively improved the clarity of enterprises' financial calculation and changed their strategic stance into action. As a result of his research, Somers (2005) recommended that the BSC should be used to complement enterprises' overall strategy. The design process should not involve too many indicators that could lead to the inability to control the correct measurement. Overall, the BSC is a relatively common and effective model to evaluate performance (Banker et al, 2008).

3.LITERATURE REVIEW

Swann et al. (2015) have researched on using performance theory to solve the practical problems of cultivating excellent athletes in universities. In the performance management system of sports team, performance communication has emerged as the core part (Molan et al., 2019). Hancock et al. (2015) take the view that timely and effective communication can avoid the emergence and the deterioration of problems. Good performance communication is the link between team managers and team members, which not only promotes the interaction and communication between the two, but also effectively improves the cohesion of the team,

thus improving the efficiency of the team (Mach et al., 2010). Performance optimization belongs to the category of management extension in the sports team performance management system (Sparrow & Makram, 2015). The main role of performance optimization is to improve the level of performance management and the performance management effect, optimize the performance management system, so as to achieve the performance target (Cai et al., 2009). The construction of the performance management system is to promote the improvement and experience of the personal ability of the sports team and the team members, improve the optimization of the overall business of the sports team, and finally ensure the completion of the goals of the sports team (Amaratunga & Baldry, 2002). In the construction of sports team performance management system, it is necessary to be fair, just, reasonable, accurate, scientific and effective. Sports team managers should make good work records and timely handle related matters of sports team (DeNisi & Smith, 2014).

Chiesa et al. (2009) found that, on the basis of performance theory, the team was performance-managed according to the process of the evaluation target of performance technology. Roscoe et al. (2019) took the system view and the sustainable development concept as the guiding ideology, focusing on the sustainable development of sports teams and the long-term, diversified and all-round development of athletes. Taking the view of system from the internal and external factors affecting the sports team system, researches reported the high-level sports team system consists of six first-level indicators: athletes, coaches, class teachers, school supervisors and social environment, 49 secondary indicators: (athletes) special sports potential, (coaches) dedication and so on, and uses hierarchical analysis analyzing the weight of the system and

index and contribution rate. Fletcher (2001) took the organization strategy oriented, learned from the common cycle steps of enterprise performance management, namely the goal setting, strategic objective decomposition and deployment, performance planning, performance tracking counseling, performance monitoring, performance communication, incentive and feedback established a set of sports performance management system framework on organization strategy guidance of ordinary university, and supported suggestions for each link of "management path" and "executive", as well as combined with the university empirical study on the management framework. The pursuit of performance is the goal of all actions of the organization, and organizational strategy is the overall plan of the organization to achieve the goals and complete the mission (Pfahl, 2010). Taking the performance objectives of high-level sports teams as the guide, the organizational strategy is defined and the strategic objectives are decomposed (Engelsman et al., 2011). The enterprise strategy is transformed into specific assessment indicators, and the achievement of the overall performance objectives is assessed through the assessment of each index. Based on the high level sports team of Chinese university management system, hierarchical relations and structure system, etc., from the venue conditions, management system construction and human resources using several dimensions, Zheng et al. (2019) reported that if China can establish an evaluation panel, it will play a good role in expanding strong capital, improving venue facilities and the use of material resources.

At the end of the 20th century, some developed sports countries have applied performance management and evaluation to sports organizations, especially for the study of coaches, and formed a relatively mature theory (Hancock et al., 2015).

Team managers and team members work together to achieve team performance goals through effective communication (Austin, 2003). Ruth et al. (2021) believes that the performance management system has fixed processes: performance planning, performance implementation, performance appraisal, and performance feedback. In the construction of performance management system, performance plan is the first link, and also the foundation of all links (Ecem et al., 2020). In the system of the sports team performance management, the team manager makes a work plan, leads the team members to complete it together, discusses and reaches an agreement on the job responsibilities, work standards, salary and benefits in the plan, and then comes the process of performance implementation (Arnold et al., 2012). The ultimate goal of performance management is the realization of performance goals (Lee et al., 2020), while the realization of performance goals is the specific process of performance implementation, and the essential part in performance implementation is performance communication. Through the effective communication between team managers and team members, it would find the problems in the performance implementation in time (Lee et al., 2008), and exchange opinions on the improvement of the problem, in order to find the most effective way to solve the problem. In this communication, the importance of interaction between team managers and team members is fully reflected, and this effective communication also helps to promote the team members' enthusiasm for the work. Elizabeth (2021) referred that, in the construction of performance management system, performance appraisal is to test the completion of performance goals, but also an effective way to test the work results of team members, as well as in sports team management. Performance appraisal is conducted to evaluate the goals of team members according to the

set performance appraisal method (Islam et al., 2020). The performance appraisal cycle can be quarterly and annual, and the performance appraisal of the sports team can be set according to the internal performance appraisal means of social enterprises to set the assessment result rating, so as to urge the sports team members to work harder to achieve the goal (Carling et al., 2008). The construction of sports team performance management system cannot be separated from performance feedback and interview. Wohlfart et al. (2019) reported that through face-to-face conversation, the team manager would inform the team members of the results of the performance appraisal, and discuss with the team members according to the performance appraisal, so that the team members can timely understand the work status and the cognition of self-ability. The performance feedback helps the team managers and team members to timely understand. Through performance interviews, the performance evaluation results are open to the performance evaluation, so as to ensure the fairness and justice of the performance evaluation and promote the long-term development of the team organization.

4. RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative research method of explanatory description is used in this study (Næss, 2020). Interpretative descriptions represent an open and exploratory scientific approach and generate categories that describe the phenomena contained in the collected data (Rowlands, 2005). In order to understand the views of Chinese college coaches on performance management, this study relies on in-depth interviews to obtain empirical data. The design of this study helps us understand how Chinese college football coaches describe their sports team management while ensuring the overall development of athletes.

Research process

The data presented in this paper are derived from in-depth interviews with Chinese college football coaches. We interviewed coaches and administrators with more than 10 years of teaching experience. According to the ethical guidelines

provided by the Scholars National Ethics Committee (DPUHRECO058/65NA), the coaches signed an informed consent form and set a date and location for the interview. The final sample included 15 football coaches and administrators. Basic information about these personnel is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Basic information of expert interviewees

Experts	Universities	Position	Lead years
A1	A University	High-level women's football coach	21
A2	A University	Campus group of men's football coach	16
A3	B University	Men and women's football coach	32
A4	B University	High-level men's football coach	17
A5	B University	Sports department football coach	22
A6	C University	Director of the International Football Academy	31
A7	C University	High-level men's football coach	23
A8	C University	High-level men's football coach	22
A9	D Normal University	High-level men's football coach	26
A10	D Normal University	High-level women's football coach	19
A11	D Normal University	Director of the football teaching and Research Section	23
A12	E Sports University	President of China Football Academy	25
A13	E Sports University	High-level men's football coach	24
A14	F Normal University	High-level women's football coach	18
A15	F Normal University	High-level men's football coach	17

Data production

Data are mainly obtained from in-depth interviews (Eppich et al., 2019). Based on constructivist learning theory, a comprehensive interview schedule was developed to guide the research group in conducting interviews (Charmaz, 2020). The topics of the interview include (1) training management; (2) Competition management; (3) Logistics management. In the interview process, the researcher mainly listens, not only records the main points of the interview content, but also records the expression, tone and actions of the interviewees

when they speak, and gives certain responses to the interviewees' answers. The whole interview process is about 30 minutes, some coaches are willing to express their ideas more, the interview time will be more than one hour, the specific time depends on the actual situation of the interview. After the interview, the researcher will organize the interview recordings into written materials in time.

Data analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to understand the performance management of Chinese college football coaches and the development of sports

teams. In this analysis, we use the abductive data analysis method, which allows us to carry out the dialectical process of considering data and drawing on theory (Meyer & Lunnay, 2013). Abduction means avoiding theoretical imposition on the one hand and acknowledging that theoretical explanations can strengthen empirically based conclusions on the other (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). The research is exploratory (Thunnissen, 2016) and interpretive in nature (Bourguignon, 2004).

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Current performance management of Chinese university football teams

5.1.1 Chinese university football teams' awareness of performance management

The investigation of six Chinese universities, namely, A, B, and E Universities, D and E Normal Universities, and C Sports University, revealed that university football teams have a high level of recognition of the performance management mode at their current stage of development, which affirms the value of performance management to university football teams. The particularity of the sports industry, its performance measurement standards are different from other products and industry sectors (Lohman, et al., 2004). It could be seen that the six university football teams applied a training management process based on the attitude toward performance management adopted by the universities themselves. Smith and Smolianov (2016) mentioned that there is a kind of effective sports performance management called high performance model. Hence, the performance management mode was built on a firm foundation based on experience, and the football teams' clear cognition of the use of performance management was responsible for the construction of that firm foundation.

5.1.2 Implementation status of Chinese university football teams' performance management

Performance plan

The interview questions in relation to the current performance management of the college football teams were divided into three parts: performance plan, performance implementation and performance evaluation (Verweire, 2006). Performance planning is a very important factor as the starting point of the whole process of performance management (Ferreira & Otley, 2009). However, as performance management generally has some problems, single applications are less used or difficult to implement. According to several surveys, professional athletes have relatively inadequate training goals. The six university football teams in this study were established to serve the physical health education of the university students and improve the reputation of the university. Therefore, the strategic positioning of the performance management plan of college football teams tends to enable both the universities and the team players to achieve their goal. The six university football teams reported common problems with the implementation of the performance management plan, such as poor communication between managers, or coaches and athletes, which has a negative effect on the football team's training progress. The athletes have a passive attitude toward the training tasks, which affects their personal subjective initiative and self-value, which is contrary to basic concept of performance management. Paris et al. (2000) believes that in order to achieve the task of superior performance, team members should do a good job of performance planning.

Performance implementation

Despite a low-level status of performance management, university football teams have certain advantages if they divide their performance plan into

two parts, namely, task analysis and competency analysis, and divide their performance implementation into building training teams and competency integration (Eric Soderquist et al., 2010). Although some universities apply a functional system management mode to their training programme, this training concept is consistent with performance management (Otley, 1999); hence, it lays a foundation for the implementation of performance management.

Performance evaluation

Based on the investigation of the performance evaluation of the six college football teams, the training managers and coaches have a clear understanding of the importance of performance appraisal and affirm the value of a performance appraisal. However, the effect of applying performance appraisals to university football teams in China is not good due to the influence of the traditional management mode and the organisational structure of the teams. Taking the training performance and competitive performance as the main form and basis of the performance assessment, the insufficient analysis of the key performance indicators affects the comprehensive evaluation of athletes and is not conducive to arousing their enthusiasm. In addition, the process of the performance appraisal is only reflected in the evaluation of the athletes, while the assessment of the coaches' performance is relatively insufficient (Ford et al., 2010). Again, this does little to incentivise the athletes due to the lack of enthusiasm of coaches toward training, which has a negative impact on the high-quality development of China's college football teams.

5.2 Current Problems with university football teams' performance management

5.2.1 Problems with professional training management of football teams

There are two main forms of the professional management of Chinese university football team players; a centralised class arrangement and a class placement, each of which has its own advantages and disadvantages. A centralised class arrangement is convenient for the concentration of training, and more conducive to the management of the athletes (Larsen et al., 2013). The assessment requirement of cultural courses is relatively low. This form of professional management has certain advantages for the management of sports teams, but it has obvious disadvantages for the management of cultural courses. A professional management class placement system involves athletes and college students receiving a combined cultural education, but this professional management mode of learning and training causes prominent contradictions. Football players come from different majors and classes, and training time is not guaranteed due to huge differences in professional settings and teaching conditions. Football players and ordinary college students attend classes and are assessed together. As it is difficult to pass the assessment due to weak training and the cultural foundation itself, football players are unable to complete their studies smoothly. In the interviews of the managers of the football teams of the six Chinese universities, all of them, apart from C university, reported that they applied the professional management form of class placement.

Expert A7: Although the centralised arrangement has advantages, it has influenced by the teaching mode and structure of comprehensive universities. In many cases, it only uses the form of shift placement training. Although some training

results have been achieved in fact, systematic training cannot be guaranteed.

Expert A12: The first obstacle to overcome in the training of a football team is the contradiction between cultural learning and sports training. In the case of training, it is a test for the training and learning of athletes.

Football players come from different majors and classes through the form of class placement and professional management, and the unified management is relatively weak. The inconsistent training time and the prominent contradiction of learning and training are two of the main problems (Kristi & Megan, 2022).

5.2.2 Competition management problems of football teams

The training of excellent sports teams at home and abroad is generally based on "training instead of competition". Participating in competitions is regarded as a way to identify their shortcomings in order to lay the foundations for the formulation of the next training plan (Halsom, 2014).

The contradiction between learning and training and other safety problems leads to a low frequency of participation in school competitions.

From my perspective, more participation in competitions plays a positive role in improving the athletes' technical level, but it is difficult to achieve from a training practice perspective.

It can be seen that there are deficiencies in the competition management of Chinese university football teams and a lack of opportunities to participate in competitions, which is not conducive to the cultivation of the combat ability of football team players.

In summary, it is evident that, from the perspective of the training and competition

management of college football teams, the form of class placement management affects the systematic development of football team training to a certain extent. Although the training time complies with the scientific law of sports training, the contradiction between learning and training has a negative impact on the actual training effect. The management of the participation in competitions is inadequate and the cultivation and improvement of the actual combat ability of the football team is sabotaged by the low frequency of participation (Hyatt et al., 2013).

5.2.3 Football team logistics management problem

Security management plays an important role in football team management. It is the basis of a guarantee of the sound development of football team training in terms of funding, site facilities, medical insurance, publicity, technical issues, transportation and other aspects.

(1) Funding guarantee

Universities are attaching more and more importance to football, and there is also an increase in investment in the development of football. The investment in campus football funds in China has been increasing year on year, and colleges and universities have made a large contribution to them. In this way, college football has been able to develop in good conditions.

The overall development of school football in China is relatively good, but it is unbalanced in different regions. 13 teams from the eastern part of China participated in the National College Football League in 2012, two from the eastern part of China, two from the central region, and only one from the western region. This phenomenon shows that the development level of college football

between regions is unbalanced due to the gap between regions' economic conditions. Universities in the developed regions of eastern China benefit from high football fees, good field equipment, high-level coaches, and excellent athletes. High-level football teams frequently appear because the economic level is relatively high so that they have sufficient material support.

Some universities with high enrolment qualifications receive special education funding from the Ministry of Education and they use part of that to construct football teams. Common problems are the small scale of funds and the lack of other funding channels outside the university to construct college football teams (Sigelman & Bookheimer, 1983). This also causes a lack of funds for the training of college football teams, which has a negative impact on the development of competitive activities.

(2) Site guarantee

Basic field facilities are guaranteed to meet the training needs of college football teams, but they are also one of the important factors that restrict their development (Hjelm, 2011). A good foundation can be laid for the training of a football team if there are relatively good field facilities that meet their basic training needs.

(3) Medical security

Great attention needs to be paid to preventing injury in sports training (Wang & Ao, 2020), but professional medical personnel are required to treat any injuries that do occur in training and competition. Football players mostly handle minor injuries themselves, but if serious sports injuries occur, they are often treated by the university hospital or other medical institutions that have insufficient medical security. Hence, there is an urgent need to improve the material security management of Chinese

universities' football teams.

(4) Technology and transportation security issues

Technical support mainly refers to the guarantee of technical analysts and technical analysis equipment (Sarmiento et al., 2020). Technical analytical equipment and professionals can provide athletes with professional training guidance and lay the foundation for the next stage of their development. However, according to the interviews and investigation, the training of Chinese college football teams does not have professional technical support, which affects the development and progress of these teams to a certain extent. Transportation is an important part of logistical support to enable members of football teams to travel for external training and competitions. However, it was found from the interviews that university football teams rarely have full-time drivers, and their transportation mainly consists of renting vehicles, which has certain hidden risks.

In summary, it is evident from the analytical results of the current problems of the management of Chinese college football teams that the guarantee of material support and field facilities can basically meet the development of the teams' training. However, there are different degrees of deficiency in financial, technical, medical, publicity and promotion, technical and transportation guarantees, which have a negative impact on the subsequent development of these college football teams.

5.3 Construction of a performance management rating system of Chinese university football teams

A relatively perfect and scientific performance management system is based on the inheritance and development of the existing management system, and the research and practice of the performance management system of college football teams are also based on these factors (Otley, 1999). Therefore,

building a performance evaluation index of college football teams as an important basis of a management system relies on a perfect internal management status, evaluation methods and important evaluation indicators of the existing university football teams, as well as the government at all levels, education management departments of all kinds of ordinary colleges and universities that research, devise, develop and implement regulations and policies in relation to school sports.

The current national authoritative evaluation indices are those that were produced in 2005 and 2010. Based on the national policy, various theorists

have conducted rich research on the indicators of sports teams' performance evaluation (Hughes & Bartlett, 2002). In 2010, the Ministry of Education issued the "Approved Schools" High-Level Sports Team Construction Project Evaluation Index System " as the main framework. Other scholars of Chinese ordinary universities of the results of high-level sports teams' performances combined with the commonly-used performance evaluation method of the balanced scorecard (Zülch et al., 2020), constructed in four dimensions with 23 data indices, to build the performance evaluation system shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Performance evaluation system of university football teams

Level 1 indicators	Level 2 indicators	Level 3 indicators
Direction of building football teams	Guiding ideology of running teams	
	Football team training goals	Development project Specific plan Training venue facilities Funding input Training assistance facilities Ideological and ethical standards
	Facilities and funding	
Conditions for building football teams	Qualities of coaches	Professional proficiency Administrative capacity Ability to research Medical control Athletic nutrition Exercise recovery Institutional framework
	Training guarantee	
	Organisation and leadership	Importance to university leaders Selection mechanism Coaches' training and competition management Coach reward and punishment mechanism management
	Administration of coaches	
Management of football teams		Training and further study Enrolment management

	Administration of athletes	University roll management Daily life management Reward and punishment management for athletes Athletes' training and competition management
Results of football teams	Records of studies	Training effect
	Sport performance	Competition effect
Reputation of football teams		

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to explore the performance management of Chinese university football teams. The research results show that the functional management mode is a more common management mode, which has certain management advantages, but it also reflects the problems of unclear power and responsibility and poor communication. The research also shows that the weak foundation of athletes' enrollment, the relatively single selection form, and the contradiction of learning and training are the important problems that trouble the development of Chinese college football teams. In conclusion, the results show that using the balanced scorecard method to evaluate the performance management of Chinese university sports teams can improve the level of performance management of sports teams, including listening to the voice of athletes, meeting the needs of athletes, paying attention to the health, welfare and sustainable performance of athletes.

7. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

It can be concluded that there are currently very few theoretical studies and even fewer practical applications in relation to the performance management of Chinese university football teams. Therefore, the research perspective and content of this paper reflect some innovation in this area based

on an investigation of the current performance management of Chinese university football teams. The existing problems with Chinese university football teams and the factors that cause them were analysed and a strategy for the performance management of Chinese university football teams was proposed for implementation. Finally, countermeasures were recommended to improve Chinese university football teams' performance management based on theoretical references, as a positive contribution to the research in this field.

However, the research was also deficient in some aspects, which will need to be improved in subsequent studies. The first is the research methods. This research was based on the application of semi-structured interviews with experts to collect the data. However, the use of richer research methods to conduct in-depth research would better serve the need to improve the performance management of Chinese university football teams. The second aspect that needs to be improved is the research object. The sample size in this research was relatively small, but future researchers would be advised to include more universities and participants for a more comprehensive understanding of the status of Chinese university football team performance management. Future studies could target the issues that influence the implementation of a performance management strategy for more substantial research content. The third aspect that needs improvement is

the research scope. The development strategy and evaluation indices constructed in this research were applied to the practice of football performance management based on the current analysis and problem summary of the status quo of Chinese university football teams' performance management. Future studies could be based on testing the value of the performance management mode of Chinese university football teams from a practical perspective to improve the breadth and depth of the research scope.

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