

RESEARCH ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURSHIP BASED ON CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE

Lin Yuxin, Peng Yong, Chen Li and Yin Yan

<https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2025.0937>

ABSTRACT

The continuous evolution of information technology has led to a dramatic increase in the proportion of e-commerce in cross-border trade, prompting more individuals to explore and engage in this industry. Against the backdrop of a challenging employment landscape, entrepreneurship and innovation among college students have gained widespread advocacy and support from various sectors. Building on the current surge of innovation and entrepreneurship, this paper aims to investigate the status quo and challenges faced by college students in cross-border e-commerce-related entrepreneurial activities, identify issues, and propose viable solutions.

Keywords: Cross-border E-commerce; Entrepreneurship Research; Foreign Language Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of accelerating global economic integration, cross-border e-commerce has emerged as a pivotal driver of international trade, significantly reshaping the global trade landscape and unveiling expansive market opportunities for innovative university students. However, the rapid expansion and intensifying competition within the sector, combined with the intricate and volatile legal environments both domestically and internationally, have imposed heightened demands on student entrepreneurs in terms of comprehensive competencies, resilience, and global perspectives. While a substantial body of research exists on cross-border e-commerce, there remains a paucity of studies focusing on the distinctive practices and challenges encountered by the university student demographic. This study seeks to meticulously examine the unique practices and challenges faced by university students in cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship, objectively assess their inherent strengths and existing bottlenecks, and propose targeted and actionable strategic recommendations. Through a comprehensive literature review and case analysis, the study elucidates the entrepreneurial models adopted by university students in cross-border e-commerce and dissects the underlying logic and operational mechanisms, thereby providing prospective and practical guidelines along with theoretical underpinnings for aspiring entrepreneurs. Concurrently, this study aligns with global economic development trends and forecasts future directions and emerging opportunities in cross-border e-commerce, aiming to furnish a scientific foundation for practical operations and to foster the robust development and continuous innovation of university students' cross-border e-commerce ventures.

2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

With the accelerating globalization and rapid advancement of internet technologies, cross-border e-commerce has emerged as a pivotal component of international trade. In recent years, the cross-border e-commerce market has continued to expand, characterized by increasingly diversified product offerings and more streamlined transaction methods. This trend not only drives

the integration and development of the global economy but also provides unprecedented market opportunities for enterprises worldwide.

As a vital force in fostering social innovation and economic growth, college student entrepreneurship has garnered widespread attention across society. Entrepreneurial initiatives by university students not only alleviate employment pressures and enhance employment quality but also stimulate market vitality and propel industrial upgrading. Furthermore, such endeavors serve as a critical pathway to cultivate innovative mindsets and practical competencies, significantly contributing to the enhancement of a nation's overall competitiveness.

Cross-border e-commerce offers vast market potential and abundant resource support for student entrepreneurship. Through these platforms, college students can efficiently access international markets, gain insights into global consumption trends, and consequently develop more competitive products. Nonetheless, this field presents multifaceted challenges, including intense market competition, complex legal and regulatory frameworks, and risks associated with international trade. These challenges demand higher levels of entrepreneurial capability and comprehensive competencies from student entrepreneurs.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aims to delve into the characteristics and challenges of college students' cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship, providing targeted guidance to support their entrepreneurial endeavors. By analyzing their practical experiences in this field, the research seeks to summarize success stories and lessons learned, offering valuable insights for aspiring entrepreneurs. Additionally, the study will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the advantages and challenges faced by student entrepreneurs in cross-border e-commerce. Through comparative examinations of domestic and international market environments, policy frameworks, consumer demands, and other factors, it aims to uncover the unique strengths and obstacles inherent to student-led cross-border ventures. Such findings will empower students to better seize market opportunities and mitigate entrepreneurial risks.

To address the difficulties and challenges encountered in cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship, this research proposes a series of practical countermeasures and recommendations. These suggestions focus on optimizing the entrepreneurial ecosystem, enhancing entrepreneurial competencies, strengthening policy support, and providing robust safeguards to foster sustainable development in student-led cross-border e-commerce ventures. Furthermore, the study will explore the future prospects of this field, analyzing emerging trends and potential opportunities to inform long-term strategic planning for student entrepreneurs.

4. AN OVERVIEW OF CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE AND STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

4.1 Development Status of Cross-border E-commerce

Cross-border e-commerce emerged as a result of the global economy's integration and the ongoing development of logistics technology, and its evolution has been fraught with changes and innovations. From the early days of simple information exchange to today's cross-border e-commerce system that includes commodity trading, payment and settlement, logistics and distribution, after-sales support, and so on, it has grown rapidly from the ground up.

Early cross-border e-commerce depended heavily on e-mail, forums, and other Internet resources to facilitate the exchange of commodities information and inquiries; nevertheless, the

transaction process was laborious and inefficient. Cross-border e-commerce platforms like Amazon, eBay, Shopee, and others have emerged as a result of the ongoing advancements in information technology and the widespread use of the Internet, offering consumers and sellers more practical and effective routes for transactions. Cross-border e-commerce is now a significant component of international trade, which not only makes it easier for goods to move around the world but also encourages the growth of national economies collectively.

The cross-border e-commerce market appears to be expanding rapidly at the moment. On the one hand, rising global consumer demand for high-quality and personalized goods has created a large market for cross-border e-commerce; on the other hand, governments have implemented policies to support the development of cross-border e-commerce, lower trade barriers, and improve trade liberalization. These reasons have all contributed to the continuous growth of the cross-border e-commerce business.

Cross-border e-commerce platforms serve as important bridges between buyers and sellers, significantly lowering transaction and time costs through one-stop services such as commodity display, transaction aggregation, payment and settlement, logistics, and distribution. Currently, the mainstream cross-border e-commerce platforms in the market include Amazon, eBay, Alibaba Express, etc., each of which has its own unique operation mode and competitive advantages.

As one of the world's largest e-commerce platforms, Amazon's cross-border e-commerce business spans a number of countries and regions, offering consumers high-quality goods and a positive shopping experience thanks to its strong supply chain management, logistics, and distribution capabilities. eBay, on the other hand, focuses on cross-border e-commerce for consumers and small businesses, providing a diverse range of items and flexible transaction methods, covering high-profile brands, and occupying a significant market in Europe. Alibaba Speedway, on the other hand, draws on Alibaba Group's vast resources and operates storefronts all over the world, providing a convenient cross-border e-commerce export route for small and medium-sized firms (SMEs).

In addition to these huge platforms, there are several cross-border e-commerce platforms that specialize in certain areas or regions, such as Zara for fashion garments and Mother and Baby Home for mother and baby supplies. They fulfill the diverse needs of consumers by providing precise market placement and specialized services.

4.2 The Current State and Characteristics of College Students' Entrepreneurship

In recent years, with the state's emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as the implementation of a number of supportive regulations, college student entrepreneurship has ushered in new development potential. The government not only provides financial, tax, and venue support, but it also provides a platform for college student entrepreneurs to showcase their skills and trade experiences by conducting entrepreneurship competitions, training, and other activities. The collaboration between schools and businesses also provides college students with two-way employment opportunities and self-improvement paths as they continue to enhance their cross-border e-commerce operations and plan their careers in practice.

In terms of market opportunities, as consumption and industrial upgrading accelerate, several developing fields and market segments show tremendous promise for growth. College entrepreneurs, for example, might use their inventive thinking and professional abilities to build new products or services that fulfill market need in the digital, green, and health economies.

Furthermore, the increasing growth of cross-border e-commerce creates a large market opportunity for college student entrepreneurs. College student entrepreneurs can use the cross-border e-commerce platform to market their products or services to a global audience, resulting in cross-border sales and brand internationalization.

College students' entrepreneurship is currently expanding into a wide range of disciplines, including science and technology, culture, education, medical care, and environmental preservation. Science and technology innovation is one of the key areas of college students' entrepreneurship. With the rapid growth of artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing, and other technologies, college student entrepreneurs can use these cutting-edge tools to create novel and competitive products and services. At the same time, the widespread usage of social media opens up a large potential market for college students, breaking down barriers of time and distance and bringing innovative products and services to the attention of more people.

Additionally, one of the most popular sectors for college students to launch their own firms is the cultural and creative industries. College student entrepreneurs can meet customer need for spiritual culture by developing distinctively charming products or services that draw inspiration from traditional cultural aspects and creative impulses.

As society continues to evolve and science and technology continue to advance, college students' entrepreneurial fields and trends will become increasingly varied and customized in the future. Cross-border e-commerce, on the other hand, will emerge as one of the key avenues for college students' entrepreneurship as globalization deepens, offering them additional market opportunities and room to grow.

5.THE CHALLENGES AND UNDERLYING CAUSES CONFRONTING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship presents complex and multidimensional challenges, encompassing not only the volatility of market environments and diverse skill requirements but also aspects such as funding acquisition, team building, logistics management, supply chain optimization, and compliance with legal regulations. These challenges pose significant obstacles for student entrepreneurs while simultaneously offering boundless opportunities.

5.1 Complexity of the Market Environment

The market environment for cross-border e-commerce is highly intricate, involving multiple factors such as international legal frameworks, currency exchange rate fluctuations, and disparities in tax policies. These elements not only impact product costs and pricing strategies but also directly affect profitability and market competitiveness. For instance, import tariffs, value-added taxes, consumption taxes, and other fiscal policies vary significantly across countries, demanding precise tax planning capabilities from cross-border e-commerce businesses. Additionally, currency exchange rate fluctuations may introduce cost uncertainties, thereby squeezing profit margins.

To address these challenges, student entrepreneurs need to accumulate practical experience through internships, project participation, and business simulations. For example, they could intern at cross-border e-commerce companies to gain firsthand operational insights, join university-led cross-border e-commerce initiatives to simulate running a small e-commerce business, or leverage online platforms for virtual trade to learn problem-solving in real-world scenarios. Through these

approaches, they can gradually master operational skills in cross-border e-commerce, laying a solid foundation for future entrepreneurial endeavors.

5.2 Challenges in Competency Requirements

Cross-border e-commerce demands a comprehensive and sophisticated skill set encompassing, but not limited to, market analysis, digital marketing, customer service, and data analytics. However, tertiary education systems predominantly emphasize theoretical knowledge dissemination, often inadequately addressing the cultivation of practical competencies. Consequently, student entrepreneurs must independently pursue skill acquisition through self-directed learning or enroll in specialized training programs during extracurricular periods.

Taking market analysis as an exemplar, student entrepreneurs must develop proficiency in deploying diverse market research instruments and methodologies—such as survey instruments and data analytics software—to systematically collect and interpret market intelligence. Concurrently, they are required to monitor industry trends and competitive landscapes to facilitate agile adjustments to market strategies. In digital marketing domains, mastery of technical disciplines including Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), and social media marketing becomes imperative to enhance product visibility and sales conversion rates. Regarding customer service, establishing robust client relationship management systems is essential to ensure prompt responses to inquiries and grievances, thereby optimizing customer satisfaction and fostering brand loyalty.

5.3 Challenges in Capital Acquisition

Financial resources constitute a fundamental pillar of entrepreneurial ventures, yet student entrepreneurs encounter substantial obstacles in capital mobilization. The absence of established credit histories and collateral assets typically impedes access to traditional bank financing, while venture capital firms prioritize rigorous evaluations of project viability and team competencies—criteria that pose formidable challenges for nascent enterprises.

To mitigate these constraints, student entrepreneurs may employ multidimensional financing strategies. Primarily, utilizing personal savings or obtaining seed capital through familial and social networks provides an accessible funding foundation. Secondly, soliciting backing from angel investors—who demonstrate propensity to support high-potential ventures—represents a viable institutional alternative. Additionally, crowdfunding platforms offer dual benefits by enabling capital aggregation while simultaneously enhancing brand visibility. Concurrently, active participation in entrepreneurial competitions and pitch events serves as a strategic mechanism to cultivate investor connections and secure growth-oriented funding opportunities.

5.4 Challenges in Team Formation

Student entrepreneurs encounter significant difficulties in team assembly, primarily stemming from deficient managerial experience and underdeveloped leadership competencies, which frequently hinder their capacity to recruit and retain high-caliber team members. To surmount these barriers, continuous enhancement of organizational management capabilities and leadership acumen becomes imperative.

Effective team construction necessitates the explicit articulation of collective objectives and organizational vision, coupled with the implementation of rational incentive mechanisms and operational protocols. For instance, entrepreneurs may establish well-defined objectives and task

allocations for team members, accompanied by performance-contingent reward-penalty systems. Secondly, deliberate cultivation of team culture proves essential to foster a progressive work environment—achievable through regular team-building activities that strengthen cohesion and alignment. Furthermore, persistent skill development in managerial techniques and leadership methodologies enables more competent navigation of team dynamics toward goal attainment.

5.5 Challenges in Logistics Cost Efficiency

Elevated logistics expenditures and operational inefficiencies represent pervasive challenges within cross-border e-commerce enterprises. To mitigate these constraints, student entrepreneurs must strategically select reliable logistics partners and cultivate enduring strategic partnerships.

When evaluating logistics collaborators, multiple determinants require rigorous assessment, including corporate credibility, service quality benchmarks, and pricing structures. Systematic comparison of competing logistics providers' service portfolios and cost models enables identification of optimal partners. Establishing long-term contractual alliances with selected firms facilitates access to preferential pricing tiers and value-added services. Beyond partner selection, technological innovation constitutes a critical lever for cost optimization and process enhancement. For instance, entrepreneurs may implement IoT-enabled tracking systems for real-time cargo monitoring; employ predictive analytics models to forecast market demand and inventory thresholds; and deploy AI-driven algorithms to optimize distribution routes. These technological interventions collectively demonstrate significant potential for operational cost reduction and efficiency amplification.

5.6 The Complexity of Supply Chain Management

The complexity of supply chain management encompasses challenges such as inventory management, product traceability, and supplier selection. To effectively mitigate these risks, student entrepreneurs must employ risk assessment and insurance mechanisms to manage logistics and supply chain risks.

In terms of inventory management, it is essential for students to establish a comprehensive inventory management system to maintain appropriate inventory levels and avoid overstocking or stockouts. For instance, they may utilize advanced inventory management systems to enable real-time monitoring and control of inventory levels; leverage big data analytics to forecast market demand and optimize inventory planning; and adopt automation technologies to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of inventory operations.

Regarding product traceability, students should implement a robust traceability system to ensure product quality and safety accountability. Examples include deploying blockchain technology to achieve end-to-end product tracking and provenance verification; integrating QR code technology for rapid product identification and traceability; and utilizing cloud computing technology for centralized data storage and seamless information sharing across stakeholders.

In the selection of suppliers, students must identify reliable partners and establish stable collaborative relationships to secure consistent raw material supply and quality assurance. Practical strategies include evaluating multiple suppliers based on product quality and service standards to select optimal candidates; entering into long-term contracts with suppliers to secure pricing and supply volumes, thereby reducing exposure to market volatility; and developing contingency plans to address unforeseen disruptions, ensuring supply chain stability and continuity.

This systematic approach enables student entrepreneurs to navigate the multifaceted challenges inherent in supply chain management while fostering operational resilience.

5.7 Legal and Regulatory Disparities

Legal and regulatory disparities across countries significantly impact cross-border e-commerce and cannot be overlooked. To adapt to international trade, student entrepreneurs must conduct in-depth research on the legal frameworks of their target markets and ensure compliance with relevant regulations to maintain business legitimacy.

For instance, tax policies for imported goods in the United States differ substantially from those in China, directly influencing product pricing and sales strategies. To address such disparities, student entrepreneurs must analyze the tax regulations of their target markets and formulate adaptive pricing strategies to ensure profitability and competitiveness. Additionally, they must monitor evolving international trade dynamics, stay informed about the latest policy updates, and implement timely adjustments and responsive measures.

By proactively addressing legal and regulatory variations, student entrepreneurs can mitigate compliance risks, enhance operational adaptability, and foster sustainable growth in global markets.

6. STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS' CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

6.1 Strengthen Cross-Border E-commerce Education and Training for College Students

To date, education and training in cross-border e-commerce for college students have remained limited to theoretical teaching and basic practical exercises. Many students majoring in related fields have not acquired core cross-border e-commerce skills, relying instead on textbook knowledge and idealized technical concepts. Their understanding of e-commerce operational models is superficial, leaving them unprepared for direct entry into the industry. To enhance college students' entrepreneurial capabilities in cross-border e-commerce, universities should deepen the scope of education and training, enabling students to adapt more quickly to employment or entrepreneurship in this field. This includes establishing specialized cross-border e-commerce courses covering market analysis, international marketing, payment and settlement, legal regulations, and more. Additionally, universities should incorporate extensive practical components, such as simulated e-commerce platform operations and hands-on project training, to improve students' operational skills and problem-solving abilities. Collaboration with enterprises and industry associations is also crucial to provide internships and networking opportunities, allowing students to engage with cutting-edge industry technologies.

6.2 Establish a Sound Financial and Talent Support System for Student Entrepreneurship

In inland regions such as Southwest China, governments often undervalue cross-border e-commerce, and related enterprises rarely invest. Startup capital and talent are critical factors for college students pursuing cross-border e-commerce ventures. Governments, universities, and society should jointly build a comprehensive financial support system, offering startup funds, low-interest loans, and venture capital to students with entrepreneurial aspirations. Simultaneously, partnerships with relevant enterprises should be fostered to create a talent support network comprising mentors, industry experts, and successful entrepreneurs. This network would provide guidance, market analysis, business planning, and other services to student entrepreneurs.

6.3 Optimize Cross-Border Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Efficient logistics and supply chain management are pivotal to the success of cross-border e-commerce. Governments and enterprises should collaborate to streamline cross-border logistics systems, reduce costs, and improve efficiency. Measures include developing intelligent logistics platforms, promoting electronic labeling technologies, and enhancing warehouse automation. Meanwhile, student entrepreneurs should acquire supply chain management knowledge, utilize data analysis to predict market trends, and strategically plan inventory and logistics to mitigate operational risks.

6.4 Improve Policies, Regulations, and Market Access Systems

Governments should refine cross-border e-commerce-related policies and regulations to provide clear legal guidance and a standardized market environment for student entrepreneurs. This involves simplifying market entry procedures, lowering barriers to entrepreneurship, and safeguarding consumer rights. Additionally, policy incentives such as tax breaks and subsidies should be introduced to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in cross-border e-commerce.

6.5 Enhance Understanding of Target Markets and Risk Management Capabilities

Student entrepreneurs should conduct in-depth research on target markets, understanding local consumer needs, purchasing habits, and cultural contexts to offer products and services that better align with market demands. They must also cultivate risk awareness, learning to assess market risks, formulate contingency strategies, and maintain business stability amid market fluctuations. Universities and entrepreneurial service institutions should provide training and consulting services to help students improve market insights and risk management skills.

7.CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

7.1 Conclusion of the Study

Through a comprehensive examination of the domain of cross-border e-commerce and the entrepreneurial endeavors of college students, this study elucidates the primary challenges that college students encounter during cross-border e-commerce ventures, alongside the underlying causes of these challenges. The findings indicate that while cross-border e-commerce offers an expansive entrepreneurial landscape and myriad opportunities for college students, significant deficiencies persist in areas such as operational experience, financial backing, logistics management, and comprehension of legal regulations. In response to these identified issues, this study proffers a series of strategic recommendations aimed at fostering the robust development of cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship among college students. These recommendations emphasize the importance of enhancing educational and training programs, optimizing financial and talent support systems, refining logistics and supply chain management processes, and fortifying relevant policies and regulations.

7.2 Research Limitations and Shortcomings

While this study provides valuable insights into the current status and challenges of cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship among college students, there are still a variety of limitations. Firstly, owing to constraints related to time and resources, this research does not comprehensively

analyze all pertinent platforms and lacks extensive empirical data, which may lead to conclusions that are somewhat biased. Secondly, given the dynamic nature of cross-border e-commerce, as well as the continually evolving regulatory landscape and market conditions, the strategic recommendations proposed herein may require subsequent adjustments to align with real-world developments. Moreover, the recommendations offered for enhancing college students' engagement in cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship are primarily derived from theoretical analyses and practical experiences; however, these suggestions may be influenced by various external factors during actual implementation. Consequently, the feasibility and efficacy of these strategic recommendations warrant further investigation and optimization to ensure their practical applicability.

7.3 Prospect of Future Research

Based on the aforementioned analysis, future research on college students' entrepreneurship within the realm of cross-border e-commerce can be deepened and expanded in several key areas. Firstly, there is a need to enhance the analysis of successful case studies pertaining to college students' cross-border e-commerce ventures, thereby extracting more actionable insights and strategies for success. Secondly, leveraging big data and artificial intelligence technologies to conduct real-time monitoring and forecasting of dynamic changes in the cross-border e-commerce market could provide student entrepreneurs with more precise market intelligence. Thirdly, it is essential to explore innovative integration models that combine cross-border e-commerce with other sectors, such as utilizing social media and live commerce as emerging marketing strategies, which would broaden the avenues and pathways available for entrepreneurship among college students. Lastly, attention should be directed towards understanding how fluctuations in the international political and economic landscape influence cross-border e-commerce, as this evaluation can yield crucial insights into the potential risks and opportunities that may affect student entrepreneurs.

As globalization and digitization continue to progress, cross-border e-commerce is anticipated to maintain a trajectory of accelerated growth, thereby offering an expansive landscape replete with opportunities for college students' entrepreneurial initiatives. To this end, students must enhance their operational competencies in cross-border e-commerce and their overall skill set. Engagement in professional training programs, internships, and practical workshops will facilitate the accumulation of essential experiential knowledge, thereby increasing their likelihood of entrepreneurial success. Simultaneously, collaborative efforts among government entities, educational institutions, and various industries are essential to amplify support for college students engaging in cross-border e-commerce ventures. This includes the refinement of pertinent policies and regulations, optimization of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and provision of comprehensive, systematic guidance and services for aspiring student entrepreneurs. Additionally, in light of the ongoing advancements in cross-border e-commerce platforms and associated technological innovations, it is crucial for college students to proactively explore novel technologies and methodologies pertinent to cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship. This exploration includes leveraging applications of artificial intelligence, big data, and blockchain technology to catalyze innovation in entrepreneurial models. Moreover, students should enhance their comprehension and analytical capabilities regarding international markets, thereby improving their knowledge of target demographics and risk management strategies. Approaching the challenges and opportunities present in cross-border e-commerce entrepreneurship with an open and inclusive

mindset will be vital. Through sustained efforts and strategic engagement, it is anticipated that college students will not only achieve their entrepreneurial aspirations within the realm of cross-border e-commerce but also contribute positively to the promotion of economic and social development.

REFERENCES

- [1] Wang Zuodan; Hou Yongxiong. The Deficiency in Understanding of Entrepreneurial Education for College Students and Its Improvement Paths [J]. Journal of South China Normal University (Social Science Edition), 2014(04).
- [2] Yuan Lihua; Luo Ao; Fu Jiali; Lei Na; Zhang Ying'ao; Zhu Xianghui. Research on the Incubation Model of College Students' Entrepreneurship Based on Cross-Border E-commerce Platforms [J]. Industry and Science Forum, 2020(21).
- [3] Li Xiang; Shen Fangli; Zhang Yan. A Study on College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Models in Cross-Border E-commerce Platforms [J]. Market Modernization, 2020(07).