
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Research on the Application-oriented Talent Training Mode of "Post-Course, Competition, Certificate, and Creation"

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| ABSTRACT

In the context of the escalating global turnover of cross-border e-commerce, there exists an imperative to delineate a pedagogical paradigm that is congruent with the distinctive attributes of the sector and the developmental trajectories of businesses. Such a paradigm should be designed to enhance the cultivation of talent within the cross-border e-commerce domain, thereby elevating the quality of education and training for professionals in this burgeoning field. This study introduces an applied talent cultivation model called 'Post-Course, Competition, Certificate, and Creation,' which emphasizes an integrative approach to classroom instruction. The model advocates for a synergistic blend of theoretical knowledge and practical application, thereby reinforcing the development of students' hands-on capabilities. It proposes to elevate the comprehensive and vocational competencies of learners through structured internships and competitive events. Additionally, the model seeks to fortify the nexus between certification examinations and academic curricula, with a view to bolstering students' innovative and entrepreneurial competencies. The paper employs the reform of cross-border e-commerce course instruction as a case study, examining the efficacy of the 'Post-Course Competition Certificate and Creation' cultivation model. It delineates the practical outcomes of this model in the cultivation of cross-border e-commerce talent, offering insights into its effectiveness in enhancing educational strategies and professional development.

| KEYWORDS

Mode of talent cultivation; Post-Course, Competition, Certificate, and Creation; cross-border e-commerce.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

According to the '14th Five-Year Plan' for e-commerce development, a collaborative initiative by the Ministry of Commerce, the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, and the National Development and Reform Commission, China's international e-commerce trade is projected to soar to a staggering 2.5 trillion yuan by the year 2025. Over the subsequent half-decade, the workforce engaged in e-commerce is anticipated to swell to 70 million individuals. However, this rapid expansion is juxtaposed with a significant shortfall in skilled e-commerce professionals, with a projected talent gap of 9.85 million individuals. The industry's meteoric rise is not matched by the educational institutions' ability to cultivate talent at a corresponding pace, resulting in a conspicuous discrepancy that leads to a challenging recruitment landscape. Despite lucrative remuneration packages, the scarcity of adept e-commerce professionals creates a predicament for employers in the field.

In 2021, the National Vocational Education Conference introduced the innovative concept of 'post-course competition and certification' as a comprehensive educational strategy for the first time. This novel approach, uniquely crafted in China, is recognized as a pivotal move to foster the high-quality progression of vocational education in the contemporary era and has swiftly emerged as a burgeoning focal point within the vocational education sphere. The 'post-course competition and certification' model offers innovative perspectives on the cultivation of talents in the realm of cross-border e-commerce. To nurture high-caliber,

multifaceted professionals in cross-border e-commerce, this research integrates the 'post-course competition, certification, and innovation' talent development framework into the pedagogy of cross-border e-commerce courses. The objective is to construct an educational system tailored to the cultivation of undergraduate cross-border e-commerce talents in an applied learning context.

2. The role and significance of curriculum reform

2.1 Enhancing Teaching Precision and Post-Course Integration

This subject focuses on meticulous teaching methodologies, aligning with professional standards to enhance students' practical job skills, ensuring that academic learning seamlessly integrates with workplace competencies.

2.2 Transforming Learning Dynamics and Fortifying Educational Impact

The subject represents a paradigm shift from the conventional classroom approach, advocating for a project-based, interactive, personalized, and impactful teaching model. This shift is designed to ignite students' intrinsic motivation to learn.

2.3 Refining the Supplementary Curriculum and Bolstering Practical Skills

The harmonious amalgamation of the primary and secondary educational stages is pivotal for nurturing talent and augmenting the employ-ability and marketability of students' skills.

2.4 Fostering Industry-Education Synergy and Driving Sectoral Progress

Engaging in profound partnerships with local industries, such as hosiery and pearl enterprises, facilitates a lower barrier to entry for student entrepreneurship. This approach aims to unleash entrepreneurial potential and incubate viable entrepreneurial ventures.

2.5 Intensifying Ideological and Political Education to Enhance Professionalism

The curriculum is further developed to integrate civic and political education organically, instilling a sense of national pride and patriotism among students thereby cultivating a professional ethos.

3. Specific practice of curriculum reform

3.1 Investigating the Job Market for Cross-Border E-Commerce Professionals

The ongoing digitalization of conventional international trade has spawned various occupational categories within cross-border e-commerce, such as business operations, platform management, and supply chain logistics. The integration of advanced technologies like big data analytics, AI, and VR has revolutionized the field, leading to the emergence of new roles such as online hosts, data analysts, and visual marketing experts. Despite its nascent stage, the cross-border e-commerce sector is expanding swiftly, facing not only a shortage of professionals but also a mismatch between the supply of trained talent and the actual job market requirements.

The goal is to develop competent cross-border e-commerce professionals by adhering to the National Teaching Quality Standards for Undergraduate Programs and by staying attuned to the market's dynamic demands. The current curriculum has been critically evaluated and refined through enterprise surveys, consultations with industry leaders, and collaborative deliberations among academic faculty.

Employing a multifaceted approach that includes enterprise surveys, expert consultations, and faculty discussions, we delve into an analysis of job positions, tasks, and the vocational competencies outlined in the existing educational program. By conducting thorough research on cross-border e-commerce firms, understanding their talent needs, and co-creating a curriculum that aligns with these requirements, we aim to establish a curriculum resource base that matches job demands. This initiative is designed to synchronize the curriculum with the overall talent acquisition goals of enterprises, thereby addressing the disconnect between academic training and real-world job roles.

3.2 Revamping the Curriculum Structure and Implementing a Tiered Educational Approach

The curriculum for cross-border e-commerce is meticulously organized into seven distinct knowledge modules, each dedicated to a unique facet of the subject matter: from foundational concepts of cross-border e-commerce to an in-depth exploration of major platforms and their regulations, market analysis and product positioning, promotional strategies, logistics management, payment solutions, and customer support services. Building upon a solid foundation of theoretical principles, the curriculum employs an interactive, hands-on teaching methodology. Utilizing the SmarTone virtual simulation platform, students are progressively guided from mastering fundamental to advanced skills and from isolated to integrated competencies. This phase of the curriculum, facilitated by the Speedmart simulation platform, substantially lowers the initial learning curve for students, minimizes the impact of the live online environment, and streamlines the assessment and management processes in education.

Concurrently, the curriculum actively incorporates Civics education, selecting optimal integration points for Civics content and employing innovative pedagogical strategies that resonate with students. The curriculum seamlessly merges ideological elements with professional knowledge, ensuring that moral and ethical teachings are subtly and effectively conveyed, akin to the natural integration of salt in water or the blossoming of flowers in spring, thereby achieving a form of imperceptible moral education.

3.3 Adopting Task-Driven and Project-Based Instructional Strategies

Throughout the educational journey, the curriculum is anchored by a task-driven approach that mirrors real-world work processes. Educators dissect complex projects into manageable tasks, assigning them to students via practical training platforms, enabling them to engage in authentic store operations and task completion. This process situates the instructor as a business executive, the team leader as a project manager, and the students as operational staff, thereby crafting an immersive and realistic learning scenario.

In the offline classroom setting, instructional techniques such as demonstrations, discussions, and case studies are strategically utilized to seamlessly integrate the operational dynamics of a comprehensive, live, cross-border e-commerce platform. This integration amplifies the educational impact and enriches the learning experience.

The overarching aim is to expedite the development of an intelligent educational infrastructure that fosters a profound fusion of cutting-edge information technology with pedagogical practices. This integration aims to transform static classroom environments into dynamic, interactive learning spaces. By embracing the flipped classroom model, the traditional model of passive student reception is disrupted, empowering students as the protagonists of their educational odyssey.

Students are encouraged to leverage online platforms for self-directed learning, combining targeted online and offline educational activities to gauge their knowledge acquisition in real-time. Educators transition from being the primary knowledge providers to facilitators and guides, offering support, resources, and direction to nurture independent learning competencies.

This paradigm shift from teacher-centric to student-centric pedagogy embodies a move from didactic, knowledge- and skill-focused instruction to a more action-oriented, experiential approach. It signifies a transition from the compartmentalization of theory and practice to an integrated model that harmonizes both, fostering a holistic educational experience.

3.4 Establishing a Progressive Skill and Capability Enhancement Framework

In the realm of cross-border e-commerce practical teaching, it is imperative to expand the scope of the secondary classroom platform to effectively augment the primary classroom, thus establishing its significance as a vital channel for nurturing applied professionals. The practical teaching framework is crafted with a dual approach: the primary strand focuses on classroom instruction, which includes public practice sessions, hands-on teaching segments, and simulation software training exercises. This is meticulously designed to equip students with a comprehensive foundation, precise skill targeting, and formidable capabilities, adhering to the "broad knowledge base, accurate skill positioning, strong execution" criteria of the job group. The secondary strand encompasses extracurricular activities such as provincial and municipal competitions, industry-specific cross-border e-commerce skill contests, professional certification exams, field recognition and practical experiences, innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives, and off-campus social engagements, which serve to enrich and support the primary educational thrust. Utilizing the practical application of real-world cross-border e-commerce projects, we fully leverage corporate resources to train students under the guidance of actual business operations. This approach ensures that students' professional education and skill development are seamlessly integrated and elevated, aligning with the operational benchmarks of corporate positions and meeting the industry's evolving demands for cross-border e-commerce expertise. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to bolster students' professional competitiveness within the cross-border e-commerce sector, laying a solid groundwork for their swift adaptation to the employment landscape upon graduation.

3.5 Developing a Comprehensive and Multi-Dimensional Assessment Framework

The assessment system is designed to emphasize the evaluation of key competencies, constructing a holistic, quantitative assessment model that spans the entire educational process and involves multiple evaluators. The priority is placed on assessing core competencies, including digital skills on cross-border e-commerce platforms, product listing proficiency, logistics management, order processing, marketing and promotional strategies, customer service, and store operations. It is imperative to facilitate continuous monitoring and implement strategic, targeted enhancements.

The assessment methods are diversified, ensuring that the application of theoretical knowledge is valued while also focusing on the reflection and consolidation of practical methodologies. Based on hands-on operational experience, students are encouraged to articulate their practical insights in written form. Assessment criteria are formulated to meet the demands of professional coursework, skill competition standards, industry certification benchmarks, and job-specific requirements.

Furthermore, the system incorporates a range of evaluation approaches, including institutional assessments, corporate evaluations, peer reviews, industry assessments, societal feedback, and skill competition evaluations. These diverse forms of assessment serve to regulate educational practices and ensure the maintenance of teaching quality.

3.6 Establishing an Integrated Teaching Team with Synergy of Dual-Expertise

Each academic term, we engage with the executive leadership of cross-border e-commerce firms to deliver industry-specific lectures and classroom instruction, fostering a collaborative teaching team that pairs academic faculty with industry professionals and trainers. Annually, we facilitate academic staff exchanges with cross-border e-commerce enterprises to enrich their practical expertise. This initiative is designed to bolster the 'dual-teacher' model within cross-border e-commerce education, enhancing the pedagogical and research capabilities of our faculty, as well as their contributions to societal development.

4. Curriculum Reform Outcomes

Adhering to an application-oriented talent development framework of "post-course competition, certification, and innovation," we have established a practical teaching system that aligns application skills with job requirements while concurrently refining the professional ethics education component.

A thorough assessment of cross-border e-commerce talent needs has clarified the qualifications and competencies sought by these enterprises. The operational workflows of cross-border e-commerce roles should inform curriculum design, advocating for the enhancement and streamlining of existing educational structures to integrate more cross-border focused courses. Central to this is curriculum reform, which drives innovation in talent cultivation models and embodies the modularized "post-course competition, certification, and innovation" comprehensive education system. We maintain a dynamic interplay between talent development and regional economic needs, exploring collaborative educational frameworks involving government, educational institutions, and businesses to tightly interweave talent cultivation with regional industrial growth. Joint efforts with industry have led to the formation of a "dual-teacher" team proficient in cross-border e-commerce, characterized by a blend of extensive theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience.

The execution of this project has addressed issues such as unclear teaching objectives in cross-border e-commerce courses, the integration of real-world job tasks into the syllabus, the infusion of engaging skill competitions into case studies and scenario-based training, and the use of vocational certifications as a benchmark for evaluating learning outcomes, thereby promoting industry-education integration, innovation, and entrepreneurship. This fusion of theory and practice aims to invigorate the curriculum, embodying a holistic model of applied talent development that values both academic knowledge and practical skills and encourages the use of both hands and mind.

Post-curriculum reform, our students have achieved notable success, including winning the special prize at the Alibaba International Station competition and securing first place in both the Alibaba International Station contest and the cross-border e-commerce independent station category at the Zhejiang Provincial level of the Three-Chance Competition's practical track. Additionally, they have garnered first prizes at the national level in numerous Speedmart simulation software industry contests, significantly enhancing their practical competencies.

5. Conclusion

The project has significantly bolstered the execution of an educational paradigm that places students at the core and embraces an active pedagogical approach. It has introduced a novel teaching reform concept grounded in an applied talent cultivation model that emphasizes "post-course competition, certification, and innovation." This model meticulously dissects the functional duties associated with cross-border e-commerce roles and the requisite knowledge and competencies to fulfill these tasks effectively.

The initiative actively fosters the development of high-caliber cross-border e-commerce professionals endowed with a robust set of integrated qualities and multifaceted practical skills. This cultivation process is strategically aligned to invigorate the local economy and drive social progress. By leveraging the Aliexpress platform as a training ground and adopting a pedagogical strategy that integrates "blended learning, project-based instruction, and the seamless fusion of learning and teaching," there has been a marked enhancement in student engagement, comprehensive professional capabilities, and competitive achievements in skills contests.

This approach has not only accelerated the pace of educational reform within the institution but has also charted a pioneering course in curriculum development. It has sought to establish a curriculum teaching model that is both efficacious and quantifiable successful in nurturing high-tech and proficient talents. This has set a precedent and direction for educational institutions aiming to cultivate such talents.

Looking ahead, the project aims to delve deeper into the post-class competition teaching system, establishing enduring reform mechanisms and broadening the scope of competition participation. It seeks to foster greater interaction and collaboration among educational institutions, local communities, and corporate entities. This will ensure that vocational competitions evolve into a pivotal catalyst for nurturing students' innovative and practical competencies. The ultimate goal is to refine the reformative vision for the cultivation of high-quality, innovative talents, ensuring a robust and sustainable educational framework that meets the dynamic demands of the modern workforce.

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