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The influence of entrepreneurial experience on college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

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ABSTRACT
Entrepreneurship is the key force in promoting economic development, but it is also the main way for college students to show their abilities. Many students try to start a business while in school. These experiences have a significant impact on their self-confidence and actions. Students who have experienced entrepreneurship tend to be calmer when facing challenges and have better problem-solving skills. Therefore, this paper will explore how entrepreneurial experience shapes college students' self-confidence by analyzing the differences in college students' entrepreneurial experience to help schools optimize the way of entrepreneurship education and provide more effective support for students.

KEYWORDS
entrepreneurial experience; college students' entrepreneurship; self-efficacy

In a rapidly changing job market, entrepreneurship is becoming the choice of more and more college students. Whether opening a small shop or participating in a campus entrepreneurship competition, these experiences will change students' perceptions of their abilities. Self-confidence is the key to entrepreneurship, and if students believe they can solve problems and manage risks, they will act on their ideas. Therefore, this paper will analyze the path of promoting entrepreneurial experience to college students' self-efficacy, reveal the relationship between entrepreneurial experience and self-confidence, and provide a reference for schools to design entrepreneurial guidance programs closer to students' needs.

1 The impact of entrepreneurial experience on self-efficacy

1.1 The concept and classification of entrepreneurial experience

Entrepreneurial experience refers to the process in which individuals directly participate in entrepreneurial activities and accumulate experience, skills, and cognition. It is not confined to the narrow act of starting a business but encompasses a range of real-world actions, from coming up with a business idea, organizing resources, and managing a team to dealing with risk. For college students, entrepreneurial experience is manifested as formal entrepreneurship (such as registered companies), quasi-entrepreneurship (such as participating in entrepreneurial competitions), or implicit entrepreneurship (such as operating campus media). According to the different driving forces, it can be divided into active and passive entrepreneurship: active entrepreneurship stems from personal interests or career planning needs, such as students opening campus coffee shops; passive entrepreneurship is triggered by external opportunities, for example, designing a business model for a course assignment. In addition, according to the organizational form, it can be divided into individual entrepreneurship and team cooperation. The former emphasizes independent decision-making ability, while the latter tests the ability of communication and resource integration. These categories are not absolute, but they reveal the diversity and hierarchy of entrepreneurial experience[1].

1.2 The definition of self-efficacy and its theoretical basis

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in whether he or she can complete a specific task. The key is the belief that "I can do it." Bandura, the psychologist, suggests that this belief stems from four channels: past success, the demonstration effect of others, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. For example, a student who earns living expenses by selling a stall will gain more confidence in his business ability because of the actual profit. In the field of entrepreneurship, self-efficacy is a self-assessment of key abilities such as opportunity identification, risk control, and resource acquisition, which is different from pure optimism or confidence; It is a dynamic judgment based on specific situations. Even in the face of failure, individuals with high self-efficacy will still maintain their beliefs because of the ability to improve in the process. However, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is domain-specific; for example, students who excel in product design may lack confidence in technology development. This differentiation suggests that entrepreneurial

education should avoid a “One-size-fits-all” approach to skill development instead focus on the belief-shaping mechanisms in specific scenarios.

1.3 How does entrepreneurial experience shape college students' self-efficacy

Shaping entrepreneurial experience on self-efficacy follows the spiral path of "Experience-feedback-correction." On the one hand, small successes in practice (such as getting the first users through ground promotion) can positively affirm an individual's ability, directly reinforcing the belief that "I can solve a problem." For example, Students who participate in entrepreneurial competitions are more likely to attempt complex projects if they receive recognition from the judges during a roadshow. Failure experiences, when adequately attributed, can also increase self-efficacy: students are more likely to take action to improve rather than give up when they realize problems stem from a lack of experience rather than personal disability [2]. On the other hand, the division of roles in teamwork allows individuals to reposition their strengths in a complementary way, such as technical students discovering that they also have managerial potential; this process gradually breaks down the stereotype that "I am not cut out for entrepreneurship" and builds an open mind that "I can learn and grow." However, it should be emphasized that changes in self-efficacy have a cumulative effect. Initial attempts are often accompanied by self-doubt. However, as practical experience accumulates, individuals will form a solid belief based on real feedback, thereby demonstrating stronger goal orientation and resilience in subsequent entrepreneurial behaviors.

2 The main components of college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

2.1 The connotation and evaluation criteria of college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

The core of self-efficacy is the individual's confidence in whether he or she can complete a specific task. In the context of college students' entrepreneurship, it refers to the strength of the belief that "I believe I can do it" when facing the entrepreneurship challenge. This confidence is not blind optimism but is based on a true understanding of your abilities, such as your ability to marshal resources, solve unexpected problems, and persevere in the face of failure. For example, a student who believes he can communicate with investors directly reflects entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Assessing this kind of self-efficacy usually involves focusing on two dimensions: breadth and resilience. Breadth refers to balancing individual confidence in different aspects of entrepreneurship (such as market analysis and team management); resilience refers to maintaining beliefs after setbacks. In practice, behavior observation can indirectly judge it, such as whether students actively seek opportunities and tend to adjust strategies or give up directly when facing difficulties. However, it is important to note that people with high self-efficacy do not necessarily have all the skills they need to excel, but they do have a clear understanding of their strengths and learning methods. This growth mindset is also a key dimension of evaluation.

2.2 The influencing factors of college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

Multiple factors influence the formation of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. At the individual level, previous practical experience is most critical. Students with successful project experience are more confident that they can handle new problems. Without failure, their sense of efficacy is fragile and disconnected from reality [3]. Psychological traits such as stress tolerance and goal orientation also directly affect confidence. For example, students who habitually make plans are more likely to accumulate positive feedback through periodic outcomes. Family support and social resources are more important in the external environment: if parents encourage trial and error and provide funds, students are more willing to take risks. However, if others deny the value of entrepreneurship, individuals will fall into self-doubt. At the same time, the education system needs to pay attention to guidance. Traditional classroom indoctrination undermines initiative, while hands-on entrepreneurship courses help students build a sense of experience that I can control by simulating scenarios. It should be noted that these factors do not work independently. Even if students have the entrepreneurial ability, if they are in a negative evaluation for a long time, their sense of efficacy will still be gradually eroded.

2.3 The effect of entrepreneurial experience on self-efficacy

As a fluid state, entrepreneurial experience continuously shapes self-efficacy through dynamic feedback. Specifically, entrepreneurial experience provides an actual competence frame of reference. For example, students found themselves sensitive to pricing strategies when setting up a stall, and the results of such specific actions (such as increased sales) directly reinforced the belief that “I'm good at making business decisions. ". And the trial-and-error process in entrepreneurship can break down fixed perceptions of competence. For example, students with technical backgrounds

who try to market to customers realize that communication skills are not innately limited but can be improved with practice and extend the boundaries of self-efficacy. In addition, the experience of team collaboration during the entrepreneurial process can correct for self-assessment bias: when team discussions optimize an individual's solution, it is understood that "Others can complement my deficiencies"; this contributes to the resilience of self-efficacy. The key to the accumulation of self-efficacy is the continuous positive cycle; each action will accumulate experience and experience into the confidence of the following action. For example, students who are nervous at their first roadshow become calmer after repeated training, a change that is essentially an evolution of a sense of efficacy from swaying to steadiness, eventually forming the belief that "Problems can always be solved with effort"[4].

3 The path to improve college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

3.1 The mechanism of entrepreneurship education on self-efficacy

The principal value of entrepreneurship education is to transform abstract business logic into perceived action ability through systematic training to enhance students' trust in their potential[5]. Traditional education focuses on knowledge transfer, while entrepreneurship education emphasizes the immersive experience of "Learning by doing." For example, in the simulated entrepreneurship program, students must complete market research and financial budgeting tasks. Each decision and feedback reinforces the belief that "I can handle business problems.". The key to this mechanism lies in the progressive design: setting up low-risk tasks at the beginning (such as analyzing the secondary market on campus) to help students accumulate initial success experiences; increasing complexity at the later stage (such as designing cross-campus collaborative projects), enabling them to integrate multi-dimensional competencies. At the same time, the role-playing method can break the self-limitation and stimulate the students' unconscious communication potential when they are in charge of customer negotiation. The teacher's guidance method has a far-reaching impact: when the evaluation standard changes from right and wrong judgment to iterative optimization, students are more likely to establish the cognition that "Errors are opportunities for improvement" and then improve their psychological resilience to uncertainty. Entrepreneurship education is through the structural experience output, gradually replacing the students' minds. I can not do the preset to form a practice-based sense of self-competence.

3.2 The influence of social support system on college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy

The social support system directly affects college students' ability to respond to entrepreneurial challenges through multi-dimensional and multi-agent cooperation. As the main support unit, the family plays an important role in material support and reducing psychological burden through trust transmission. When parents are tolerant of entrepreneurial trial-and-error behavior, students are more likely to establish the perception of "Controllable failure" and avoid giving up innovation attempts prematurely. The interaction of peer groups forms a practical knowledge circulation network, and members of the entrepreneurial team or community can obtain strategies (such as product pricing methods) at the executive level by solving problems together. They can also calibrate their competency assessment criteria through peer feedback. In addition, the value of the school-enterprise joint training mechanism lies in bridging the gap between theory and practice. Through the analysis of real business cases, corporate mentors help students distinguish between universal obstacles and individual deficiencies in the process of entrepreneurship to prevent the stage difficulties from being mistakenly attributed to ability defects. When external support and individual needs form an effective resonance, students will gradually eliminate the excessive shackles of external evaluation and construct an objective cognition of their ability based on real feedback.

3.3 The role of policy environment and entrepreneurial resources in promoting college students' self-efficacy

The policy environment systematically broadens the action space of college students' entrepreneurship through institutional guarantee and resource allocation. The simplification of the administrative process reduces the interference factors of the start-up and focuses more on the construction of the core competence. The physical space supply of campus business incubators is the support of infrastructure and the embodiment of institutional commitment. Such spaces continue strengthening the environmental implication that "Innovative behavior is encouraged." At the level of financial support, it is significant to shift from outcome-based rewards to process support: the subsidy mechanism covering research and prototype development can guide students to focus on long-term ability accumulation rather than short-term results, fundamentally adjusting the criteria of value judgment. At the same time, the effectiveness of entrepreneurial support policies depends on the long-term operating mechanism: temporary entrepreneurial activities may trigger short-term enthusiasm, but lasting mentor docking, financing channel maintenance, and other services

support students across the "From idea to action" critical point. When the institutional environment forms a stable and predictable support framework, college students' self-efficacy will break through the limitations of individual experience and transform into a more resilient socialized ability system.

4 Conclusion

This paper clarifies the components of college students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. It reveals that its essence is a dynamic belief system influenced by ability cognition, experience accumulation, and external support. Individual confidence in entrepreneurial behavior is not determined by one-way ability. However, it is spirally strengthened through the action verification of educational empowerment, the risk buffer of social networks, and the path support of policy resources. Therefore, colleges and universities should abandon the simple knowledge indoctrination, turn to the"Experience-feedback-iteration" closed-loop entrepreneurship education, and introduce a long-term project-tracking mechanism into the curriculum. The purpose is to enable students to accumulate the basis of self-efficacy through stagereal problem-solving so that entrepreneurial self-efficacy can truly become the underlying motivation for college students to break through cognitive boundaries rather than a short-term psychological incentive.

About the Author

Huaguo Liang (1982.08 -), male, Han nationality, born in Pingdingshan University, Henan Province, master, lecturer, research direction: Software Engineering, entrepreneurship education for college students.

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