

Rural Entrepreneurial Intention and Sense of Social Responsibility: the Mediating Role of TL

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Abstract. Despite the fact that insight of entrepreneurial opportunity of college student and their sense of social responsibility are important for the quality of Entrepreneurship Education in the ever-changing 21st-century, there is still little research into leadership and education factors that influence students' sight of entrepreneurial opportunity and sense of social responsibility. Based on longitudinal data (2020, 2021,2022) from a select sample of 351 college students (being part of a research panel) who participated an entrepreneurial project in university, a quantity method was used for investigating in which areas of identification of entrepreneurial opportunity college students had transformational leadership needs and how their sense of social responsibility was related to leadership style. The findings show that students' insight of entrepreneurial opportunity has been improved and their normative postulated change of entrepreneur's role has yet permeated their practice throughout a two-year entrepreneurial project which aims to improve transformational leadership style, and contribute to confirmation of the combined used theories and concepts of leadership in education, leaderships' influence on student variables. This study also adds to our insights into the complexity of entrepreneurial education in line with social responsibility.

Keywords: Insight of entrepreneurial opportunity, social responsibility, Transformational leadership, Entrepreneurship education, College students, China.

1 Introduction

In the past three years, the Covid-19 epidemic has brought severe survival crises and challenges to all walks of life in the entire society, and the social economy has experienced a slight downward trend, which trigger an ominous chain reaction leading to a high unemployment rate.^[1] Tens of thousands of college graduates are faced with no work as soon as they graduate. In order to provide more employment opportunities and stimulate economic activity in the market, China vigorously develops innovation and entrepreneurship, especially focusing on supporting the entrepreneurship education of college students, and regards entrepreneurship as one of the important strategies to solve the employment difficulties of college students.

The innovation and entrepreneurship plan (IEP)for college students came into being, which is an important part of entrepreneurship education in universities. It refers to helping college students carry out a series of entrepreneurial practice activities, innovative academic research, and cultivating college students' innovative behavior and entrepreneurial intention and ability through national financial funding, so as to improve the success rate of entrepreneurship.

However, according to the "Report on Entrepreneurship of Chinese College Students 2021" (hereinafter Report)^[2] released by Renmin University of China, up to 49.86% of college students have a strong intention to start to run a business, but the success rate of entrepreneurship hovers between 2% and 3%, which is far lower than the average. It has contributed the phenomenon of "high failure rate and low innovation potential" of college students' entrepreneurship in China. The Report says the main reason for the failure of college students' early entrepreneurship life is lack to effectively identify social entrepreneurship opportunities. In the following part, we elaborate on the previous empirical findings and theoretical explanations that explain the relationship between sight of entrepreneurial opportunity, social responsibility and transformational leadership, which can help to form our conceptual framework.

2 Conceptual framework

2.1 Insight of entrepreneurial opportunity

The uniqueness of entrepreneurial activities lies in the discovery and utilization of entrepreneurial opportunities^[1], it is prerequisite for the success of entrepreneurial activities. As the Chinese old saying goes, well begun, half done. The classification of entrepreneurial opportunities is mainly divided into three dimensions, technical business opportunity, market business opportunity and policy business opportunity. Technological business opportunity refers to entrepreneurial opportunities brought about by scientific and technological innovation, mainly from the breakthrough and progress of science and technology. Market business opportunity means that entrepreneurs can sensitively identify changes in the supply and demand relationship of market products or services or changes in the marketing environment. Policy business opportunity means that entrepreneurship can sensitively identify new industries, new markets and new entrepreneurial business opportunities brought about by changes in laws and regulations of the national government.

No matter what entrepreneurial opportunity is, it is inseparable from the entrepreneur's ability to keenly identify entrepreneurial opportunities. Baron (2006) proposed that it is believed that entrepreneurial opportunity recognition ability refers to a special cognitive framework constructed by entrepreneurs based on their past life experience and combined with their subjective cognitive ability, based on the vision of pattern recognition theory. It emphasizes that the key is the subjective cognitive ability of the entrepreneur itself. Many previous studies have analyzed the subjective cognitive ability of entrepreneurs. For example, Comparing Empirical Research in China, Earlier research has proved that the identification of these three types of entrepreneurial opportunities is inseparable from the entrepreneur's sense of social responsibility. Zhuo,el (2022) conducted a survey of 479 college students majoring in agriculture, trying to find out how the behavior of contemporary college students going to rural areas to start businesses was induced. It found that rural entrepreneurship has a strong altruistic motivation, which is an entrepreneurial behavior that highlights social responsibility compared to creating economic value, and belongs to the important category of social entrepreneurship^[9]. Among the many influencing factors of rural entrepreneurial behavior, the sense of social responsibility based on the emotional perspective plays a vital role in rural entrepreneurial behavior. The sense of social responsibility can prompt entrepreneurs to keenly perceive new

technologies, new policies, and new demands to create new services or products for the society and the public, thereby generating innovative value.

Rural entrepreneurial activities have strong characteristics of China's socialist market economy, and their entrepreneurial background is the rural revitalization plan proposed by the 19th National Congress of my country and the era of realizing my country's overall poverty alleviation.

2.2 Sense of Responsibility

Brayfield is the first to explain the influence of attitude on behavior ^[4]. Sense of social responsibility is a stable psychological quality that an individual actively undertakes social responsibility to help others, and it is also an attitude of cognition of social responsibility ^[1]. According to Ajzen's theory of planned behavior, attitude is one of the most important factors in a series of factors that affect behavior patterns ^[6]. We are convinced that sense of responsibility as kinds of attitude can foster entrepreneurial behavior. If contemporary college students start a business solely in pursuit of economic benefits and ignore corporation social responsibilities, it is easy to make wrong business decisions, such as to produce shoddy products, provide illegal services, or other fraudulent business practices. The rural entrepreneurship activities in the rural revitalization plan should be more like this. Rural entrepreneurs help rural farmers sell agricultural products through various sales channels such as webcasts, drive economic development in one area, and help farmers in remote mountainous areas increase income levels and improve living standards. The emergence of these behaviors is inseparable from the initial personal attitude and motivation, that is, social responsibility.

At present, most of the entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities does not offer the CSR course (except for business majors). Rural entrepreneurial activities cannot be completed only by a few college students with a strong sense of social responsibility, otherwise it will be difficult for the rural revitalization plan to develop in the long run. Therefore, there is an urgent need to add social responsibility courses in entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, so as to cultivate the civic awareness of being responsible for oneself, serving others and contributing to society. Furthermore, studies have shown that in the long run, corporate social responsibility is positively correlated with economic benefits, that is, high-profit companies have a stronger motivation to undertake social responsibility. Enterprises that often participate in social welfare activities can or wait for a higher sense of consumer recognition, thereby obtaining higher market returns.

2.3 Transformational leadership

Besides the mental domain part, one of the most essential school organizational factors related to student behavior is leadership (Day et al.,2016;) ^[7]. Focusing on leadership characteristics as an important context factor in relation to student's behavior, the concept of transformational leadership is one of the most researched in the educational context (Bush, 2018) ^[5]. Transformation leadership can increase an individual motivational, attitudinal and psychological aspects (Aryee et al.,2012) ^[3]. Although there are many different dimensions of Transformation leadership to be distinguished, intellectual stimulation has been often identified (Geijsel et al., 2009) ^[8]. Intellectual stimulation means that sufficient support for professional development and to stimulate individual to experience and create new or better educational

practices. Thus, Intellectual stimulation is to sharpen students' skill of identifying entrepreneurial opportunity.

3 Methodology

This study employed logistic regression to examine the model we elaborated above. On the basis of literature sorting and analysis, this paper selects mainstream mature scales at home and abroad to measure variables, and designs a questionnaire for this research. All scales use the Likert five-point scale, where 1 means "completely disagree" and 5 means "completely agree". The variables are measured as follows:

Social Responsibility (SR) mainly draws on Luo Xiangqun's Social Responsibility Scale, with a total of 6 measurement items, such as "I actively participate in social collective activities", the Cronbach's Alpha value of this scale is 0.905. Transformational Leadership (TL): Bass and Avolio first proposed a transformational leadership mentality model: charisma, motivational vision, individualized care, and intellectual stimulation. Based on the research results of Bass et al., the domestic scholar Li Chaoping and Shikan further explored the specific dimensions of the transformational leadership in the Chinese context. On the basis of retaining the four dimensions of Bass, the dimension of morality was added. In view of the research of Li Chaoping and Shikan, Bass and Avolio, this paper selects a total of 17 reminders to measure transformational leadership, and the Cronbach's alpha value of this scale is 0.930. In terms of the item "Do you think you have the opportunity to identify entrepreneurial opportunities in the market", assign the options "yes" and "no" to 1 and 0 respectively, that is, set the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities as a binary variable.

4 Results

This research adopts the method of random sampling to conduct a questionnaire survey on our university students who have participated in the Guangdong University Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Activity Plan, and conducts research and data collection through the online questionnaire in December 2021 and May 2022. In the end, 437 questionnaires were recovered, and after excluding 86 invalid questionnaires, a total of 351 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective rate of 80.3%.

In this study, SPSS 21.0 statistical software was used to test the convergent validity through confirmatory factor analysis. The results show that the fitting indicators have achieved the expected results ($\chi^2/df=1.673<2$, $GFI=0.923>0.9$, $NFI=0.948>0.9$, $CFI=0.978>0.9$, $RMSEA=0.047<0.05$). This shows that the constructed model is acceptable and the model has good convergent validity. Correlation analysis: The Pearson correlation coefficient of each variable is shown in Table 1. Among them, social responsibility is positively correlated with transformational leadership and identifying market opportunities.

Table 1. Correlation coefficient of each variable

	Transformation Leadership (TL)	Social Responsibility (SR)	Insight of Entrepreneurial Opportunity (IEO)
TL	(0.66)		
SR	0.443**	(0.585)	
IEO	0.542**	0.519**	(0.709)

^a Note: ** indicates a significant correlation at the 0.01 significance level, and the value in parentheses is the square root of AVE

Among them, transformational leadership is significantly positively correlated with social responsibility and entrepreneurial opportunity identification behavior ($r=0.443$, $p<0.01$; $r=0.542$, $p<0.01$); social responsibility is significantly positively correlated with entrepreneurial opportunity identification behavior ($r=0.519$, $p<0.01$). The above results preliminarily show that the hypothesized model is correct. At the same time, it can be seen from Table 2 that the relationship between the variables is less than the square root of the average extraction amount (AVE), indicating that the discriminant validity between the variables is good, which further verifies the discriminant validity test results in the signed content. The rationality of the research design is illustrated.

To further test the mediating effect of SR and IEO, use the Bootstrapping method to conduct 5000 repeated sampling, and construct 95%. The unbiased corrected confidence interval was used to test the mediation effect, and the results are shown in Table 2. It can be seen that the corresponding confidence interval of the mediation path does not include 0, indicating that the mediation effect is significantly established. Among them, the mediating effect of entrepreneurial identity is 0.083, the 95% confidence interval is [0.011, 0.184], The direct positive effect indicates that the transformational leadership of college students has a complete mediating effect between the two.

Table 2. Mediating effect of social responsibility and identifying entrepreneurial opportunities

Route	Unstandardized indirect effects	normalized indirect effects	95% Confidence Interval		Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
SR-TL-IEO	0.083	0.079	0.011	0.184	positive

5 Discussion and Conclusion

College students' sense of social responsibility plays an important role in promoting college students to identify market entrepreneurship opportunities, and this role needs to be realized through college students' participation in college students' innovation and entrepreneurship training programs to cultivate transformational leadership. From the analysis of the survey data in this study, it can be concluded that: (1) the ability of college students to identify entrepreneurial opportunities in the market needs to be further improved; (2) most college

students have participated in innovation and entrepreneurship projects for more than one year, and their mastery of transformational leadership still needs to be done. (3) Compared with female students, male students are more sensitive to identifying entrepreneurial opportunities in the market.

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