

# An Exploration of Curriculum Reform in 'E-commerce Theory and Practice' based on Innovation and Practice

Yuxuan Li\*, Chun Ye

Wenzhou Polytechnic, Wenzhou 325035, China

\*Corresponding author: Yuxuan Li

**Abstract:** In the context of the increasingly popular "integration of specialization and entrepreneurship" teaching model, it is worth exploring how to better establish the foundational curriculum for the "E-commerce Theory and Practice" course, strengthen the practice-oriented educational approach, and meet the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in entrepreneurship and management. This paper carries out a comprehensive exploration from the aspects of teaching content, implementation plan, assessment and evaluation system. By aligning with the characteristics of the discipline, optimizing teaching content, and integrating educational resources, the course aims to use project-based innovation as a key approach to comprehensive curriculum reform. It helps to enhance students' ability to transfer and apply discipline-related knowledge and improves the overall effectiveness of the teaching process.

**Keywords:** E-commerce, Curriculum Reform, Innovation, Teaching Effectiveness.

## 1. Introduction

China's e-commerce has undergone more than 20 years of development, traversing a path from e-commerce technology to an e-commerce economy, experiencing a development process that integrates with various components of the national economy through innovation and collaborative development. Currently, e-commerce has gradually become a new driving force for the national economy and social development, and an important force in promoting the "Internet Plus" initiative. However, one of the challenges in teaching e-commerce is how to combine theoretical knowledge with practical abilities for students. Many educators have addressed this issue through case studies, experimental methods, and other research so far. This paper aims to innovate and reform the course design of "E-commerce Theory and Practice", integrate the training concepts of "Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Entrepreneurship and Management", and explore the cultivation of students' abilities in independent learning, practical application, and problem-solving. The goal is to enhance students' sense of social responsibility, spirit of innovation, entrepreneurial awareness, and innovative entrepreneurship capabilities. In addition, establishing an innovative entrepreneurship education curriculum system that integrates classroom teaching, self-directed learning and practical application.

The significance of this project is primarily reflected in the following three aspects. From a professional perspective, the application research in the "E-commerce Theory and Practice" course breaks through the traditional classroom constraint led mainly by teachers, enhances teaching quality, and brings the teaching outcomes of the course closer to the training program of "Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Entrepreneurship and Management" major. From a curriculum perspective, curriculum content reform can deepen the course content and enhance the practicality of the course. From the student's perspective, it deepens students' learning and understanding of the "E-commerce Theory and Practice" course, improves their comprehensive abilities in

theoretical understanding and practical application of e-commerce, boosts students' awareness of innovation and entrepreneurship to a greater extent, and meets the current societal demand for professionals in the field of e-commerce.

## 2. Course Problem and Challenges Analysis

China's State Council and the Ministry of Education have successively issued a series of policies and regulations related to vocational education, such as the "National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan." The "13th Five-Year Plan" highlights the important role of vocational education within China's educational system, marking a new historical opportunity for the development of vocational education. One of the challenges facing higher vocational education is how to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills in the teaching process. Many educators are addressing this issue through methods such as case studies and experimental approaches. However, some universities still use traditional methods for practical teaching and lack innovative teaching approaches. Limited school funding restricts the availability of necessary resources to meet practical needs. In the rapidly evolving internet era, mainstream e-commerce platforms in China are constantly being replaced in fierce competition. Consequently, the design of e-commerce courses at universities often lags behind the actual development of e-commerce.

### (1) Single Course Structure Lagging Behind E-commerce Development Trends

The "E-commerce Theory and Practice" course for the "SME Entrepreneurship and Management" major aims to train students in operating online stores on the Taobao platform. While Taobao has been the most mainstream e-commerce platform in China in recent years, the rapid development and continuous innovation of various e-commerce enterprises in China have expanded the e-commerce market. Merely mastering Taobao store operations is far from sufficient to meet the current demands of the e-commerce industry.

## (2) Outdated Teaching Methods and Weak Self-directed Learning Abilities

Many institutions lack clear goal setting for "E-commerce Theory and Practice" courses and do not target specialized content. The overall teaching format is overly traditional and cannot keep pace with the times. The course structure is outdated and lacks innovative content, focusing heavily on theoretical knowledge while neglecting practical operations and real case studies. Emphasizing knowledge transmission over the development of students' autonomy leads to passive learning, hindering the effective enhancement of self-directed learning abilities. Consequently, teaching fails to achieve the desired effectiveness.

## (3) Insufficient Integration with Industry and Lack of Practical Channels

Practical training in Internet marketing is essential to reinforce and supplement e-commerce theory. Due to limited expansion of school-enterprise cooperation, resources available for e-commerce practice are insufficient. Current practices primarily involve preliminary simulation operations on a few e-commerce platforms, constricting students' ability to experience real-world e-commerce applications and operations. This disconnect between e-commerce knowledge and practice results in inadequate practical skills. It is not conducive to cultivating versatile talents who meet market demands.

# 3. Overall Approach to E-Commerce Curriculum Reform

## (1) Integrating Market Realities to Optimize the Curriculum System

By integrating course and knowledge resources, the course aims to advance the modular and integrated development of specialized course teaching content, optimizing the curriculum's educational content. The curriculum must keep pace with the latest developments in e-commerce, promptly incorporating basic theories of operation and platform operation knowledge from mainstream e-commerce platforms. This ensures that the specialized course content aligns with the socio-economic development.

The teaching content should gradually approaching real professional learning scenarios through continuous reform and innovation, creating favorable learning opportunities for students. The goal is to match the curriculum content with the needs of market development, with a focus on cultivating students' entrepreneurial abilities through industry - customized talent training. It is important to conduct a systematic study and to read relevant literature to stay abreast of the latest e-commerce knowledge and market trends. Meanwhile, the course summarizes and organizes teaching methods related to innovation and practice, distill key knowledge points, collect unique case studies, perfect the syllabus content, and ensure dynamic updates.

## (2) Innovating Teaching Models to Enhance the Learning Atmosphere

To address the shortcomings of traditional education, the course explores new teaching models that include project-based and practical methods. These approaches continuously guide students towards innovative thinking and gradually improve their entrepreneurial skills. Organizing or guiding participation in various competitions allows students to communicate and learn from each other, enhancing their skill mastery, overall learning atmosphere, and vitality, thereby

improving their comprehensive abilities.

Case-based and discussion-based teaching are implemented to enhance guidance on student learning methods, foster student interest, stimulate self-motivation, and improve learning efficiency and outcomes. By blending online and offline teaching modes, the course modernizes and incorporates technological means into our teaching. Moreover, the program hold an annual campus e-commerce competition with rewards to boost students' motivation for independent learning.

## (3) Incorporating Entrepreneurial Practice to Strengthen Practical Teaching

In the theoretical teaching process, it is essential to understand the actual needs of the modern market and to innovate teaching concepts through continuous exploration. This approach cultivates students' innovative and practical skills. By combining content related to entrepreneurial practice and blending practical experience with theoretical knowledge in the context of real-world entrepreneurship, students can be effectively trained, enhancing their comprehensive professional capabilities.

Schools and teachers can utilize various channels to seek cooperation with enterprises or merchants to provide product sales opportunities, offering students numerous chances for practical online business experience and assisting in the creation of self-employment platforms. Additionally, students are encouraged to intern at e-commerce-related enterprises during winter and summer vacations. This allows them to apply their knowledge in real-world settings, creating diverse practical conditions that further their learning and professional development.

# 4. Overall Course Design

## (1) Course Design Concept

This course focuses on e-commerce job skills and is guided by industry experts. It involves task and vocational ability analysis for e-commerce positions, driven by actual work tasks and fundamental e-commerce theories, with core e-commerce business operations serving as the central theme. The curriculum is designed based on the common vocational abilities required across specialized directions, utilizing a progressive, process-oriented structure tailored to students' cognitive characteristics. Teaching content is presented through scenario simulations, case analyses, and other project-based activities, encouraging students to acquire e-commerce operational skills and develop foundational vocational abilities in e-commerce operations.

## (2) Assessment Scheme Design

Considering the applied nature of vocational students, this course's assessment scheme integrates various methods such as classroom questioning, business operations, assignments, and module assessments to enhance the evaluation of practical teaching components. The course assessment criteria consist of three main components: the final practical assessment, which accounts for 40%, conducted as an on-site assessment during the final exam week to evaluate students' practical skills; classroom and post-class tasks, accounting for 35%, which examine the timeliness, accuracy, and standardization of task completion, as well as teamwork and learning attitude; and regular assessments, which make up the remaining 25%, based on attendance and classroom participation to gauge students' engagement and initiative. This comprehensive assessment scheme aims to reflect students' mastery of theoretical knowledge and practical

application abilities, thereby improving teaching effectiveness and cultivating high-quality applied talents.

## 5. The Effectiveness of E-commerce Curriculum Reform

### (1) The Efficiency of Multifaceted Education

Education should not confine students within the pages of textbooks. It should bridge classroom learning with real life, constructing a "theory + case study + practice" multifaceted innovative content system from a collaborative and integrative perspective. This approach helps students to build a complete knowledge structure, ensuring the cultivation of knowledge, abilities, and qualities in e-commerce professionals. E-commerce is not just the digitization of traditional commerce or conducting traditional business activities through the internet; it involves establishing a new business relationship through the assembly of various industries. Therefore, adding basic concepts such as e-commerce transaction models, logistics and supply chain management, electronic payments, and cross-border e-commerce to the limited class hours helps students to re-recognize and understand e-commerce beyond daily online shopping. On the foundation of theoretical teaching, introducing real business cases and platform practice in content and form, not only solves the monotony of theoretical teaching but also helps students digest conceptual knowledge. This interdependence and mutual promotion aim to cultivate students' ability to apply knowledge in practice.

### (2) The Importance of Practical Training

Due to the development characteristics of the e-commerce industry, where frontier technologies and industry hotspots emerge and update rapidly. Utilizing the internet and other digital media for e-commerce course teaching has significant advantages. The teaching process must constantly adapt to updates in e-commerce platform rules, training operations, marketing technology innovations, and enterprise employment needs. In the course practice section, the course design guides students to find e-commerce wholesale sources that match their online store's positioning, combining platform characteristics and product selection techniques to launch products and achieve drop shipping with no inventory. This not only addresses the issues of low start-up capital, unfamiliar platform operations, and storage difficulties faced by most new e-commerce students but also brings real order profits from the internet to these new e-commerce store owners, allowing them to enjoy the pleasure of entrepreneurship and significantly advancing teaching quality and effectiveness.

### (3) The Necessity of Ideological and Political Construction

Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized in his important directive at the National Vocational Education Conference, "To maintain the correct direction of schooling, adhere to the principle of moral education first, and optimize the positioning of vocational education types." Moral education is the fundamental task of vocational education and an inevitable requirement for serving the industrial economic transformation in the new era. Currently, neither e-commerce course design nor actual teaching fully accomplishes this mission. Therefore, merging ideological and political elements into e-commerce courses is a natural choice, necessitating the cultivation of students' professional ethics and a dedicated work attitude during the learning process. Besides, the state's strong support for rural e-commerce helps

more impoverished people to start businesses locally, significantly contributing to poverty alleviation efforts. The clever integration of these ideological and political elements into the classroom can inspire students' patriotic sentiments, merging individual destinies with the fate of the nation and society.

### (4) Practical Activities in Course Teaching Reform

During the one-year e-commerce course teaching reform of the program, a campus e-commerce live-streaming competition was successfully organized, attracting nearly one hundred enthusiastic participants. By integrating classroom content with the practical experience gained from e-commerce live-streamers, the competition featured various innovative e-commerce live-streaming formats, such as bilingual live streams, rap live streams, and scenario simulation live streams, bringing the event to a climax. Additionally, under the guidance of faculty members, students achieved excellent results in several national and provincial innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, setting new records for the program.

These achievements greatly boosted the morale of both teachers and students, further advancing the development of e-commerce education. Competitions have proven to be effective in enhancing teaching and learning, as well as fostering entrepreneurship and employment. Participating in various e-commerce competitions has significantly improved students' entrepreneurial practice abilities and increased the employment rate and satisfaction within the program.

## 6. Conclusion

"E-commerce Theory and Practice" is a core course for the Entrepreneurship and Management of Small and Medium Enterprises program at vocational colleges. In response to the current state of traditional teaching methods and the issues present in talent cultivation programs, this paper proposes a course design and practice based on innovation and practical concepts. The goal is to enhance students' abilities in self-directed learning, innovative practice, and teamwork. By innovating and reforming the e-commerce course teaching model through theoretical instruction, practical training, and assessment methods, an initial teaching model combining "innovative capability and practical skills with entrepreneurial practice content" has been formed. This teaching reform aims to help students develop professional ethics, team spirit, and a sense of sharing, providing valuable insights and references for the innovation of applied talent cultivation models.

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